

Area 'Fatheads' to Gain Sustenance

By Matthew Arnett
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If your radio has been on a diet too long, starting next weekend it will once again have a chance to get "Fat," much to the delight of "fatheads" in the area who have gone without their brand of music on the airwaves for more than a year.

Former KFAT disc jockeys Sister Tuffy, Gordy, Sully, Amy Airheart, Buffalo Bob, Terrell Lynn Thomas, Cuzin Al and Felton Pruitt will be programming "Fat music," three hours a week via two syndicated shows distributed by Pruitt Productions in Watsonville.

"Fat" music "is basically centered around the 'Austin outlaw sound' and branches out into bluegrass, standard country, rock 'n' roll, blues, comedy, Cajun and even some Hawaiian," said Pruitt from his home, where the shows will be produced.

Loyal Audience

The sound was originally created on the now-defunct Gilroy FM radio station KFAT. With an outlaw country-based sound, "go for it" attitude, and mature, risqué sense of humor, KFAT developed between 1975 and 1983 a small but very loyal audience which referred to itself as "fatheads."

"Thin may be in, but Fat is where it's at" was the station slogan. "Mooseturd Pie," by Utah Phillips was one of the station's most requested songs. KFAT editorials advocated reckless driving and spoke out against temperance in favor of the "age old art of bending the elbow." You get the idea.

The one-of-a-kind radio station had ratings in at least four different markets, a rarity for an FM station. Proud "fatheads" could be found north of San Francisco, south of King City, and east of Fresno.

The two-hour long "Fat Show," hosted by Felton Pruitt each week with a special guest "Fat" disc jockey and a "Fat" musician, will debut Saturday at 9 p.m. on Salinas country radio station KTOM 100.7-FM and 1380-AM.

Interview

The first "Fat Show" will feature disc jockey Terrell Lynn Thomas and an interview with Steve Earl.

"Cuzin Al's Bluegrass show," will air Sundays on KTOM starting next Sunday from 8 to 9 p.m. According to Pruitt, Cuzin Al is the most respected bluegrass disc jockey on the West Coast, with 20 years of spinning bluegrass on the radio under his big belt.

Meanwhile, KTOM Sales Director Bob Sherry is happy to be able to broaden his weekend programming.

"I'm delighted their loyal fans will have a chance to hear them every week. They don't play the mainstream country that we do and we don't play the music they do, but the root of their music and the root of ours is country, so it's a logical marriage. They'll make us some new friends and we might make them some new friends," Sherry said.

Not only is "Fat" music different, but so is the "Fat" approach to radio broadcasting.

Like Friends

"One of the strengths is the way it is presented. It's like a person called up a bunch of friends and said 'grab some beer and come on over, I've got a bunch of records that will knock your socks off,'" said Sherry.

"It was an attitude of trying new things and sticking with them. Keeping it fresh and being honest with your audience by always being yourself. That's what the audience appreciated and the audience is still there. We've received a lot of sup-

port from the business community," Pruitt said.

Ever since the owner of the KFAT died, which forced the station to be sold, the programmers have stuck together to find a place to spin their records. For a year they broadcast on a small Hollister station and built the station its first rated audience, only to have the new owner of the station fire them and change the format.

From a trailer in Gilroy they broadcast over a satellite channel, "Fat-Sat," which found an audience in rural areas in the Deep South, but little sponsorship.

Now the "Fat Show" seems to be a logical direction. Radio stations in San Jose, Santa Rosa, Oklahoma City, and Annapolis, Md., have expressed interest in carrying the show.

"It's a lot easier to sell three hours a week than 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Pruitt. "This is totally a 'fat' operation. Nobody is going to can us or sell us out."