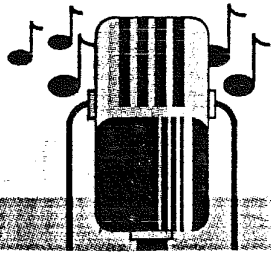


Golden Rock returns to WWTC airwaves



RICK SHEFCHIK/12B

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Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' roll! TC's Golden Rock is back!

When Danny and the Juniors sang "Rock 'n' Roll Is Here to Stay," they weren't kidding.

The proliferation of rock 'n' roll oldies stations in the Twin Cities indicates that the baby boomers have no intention of giving up their music as they get older. The continuing commercial appeal of '50s and '60s rock 'n' roll has even made it possible for a resurrection no one thought possible.



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WWTC, the Golden Rock station of the late '70s and early '80s — in fact, the best oldies station the Twin Cities has ever known — will return to the air at 3 p.m. next Friday.

At that time, the station will drop its current call-letters, KSNE, as well as its current format, the satellite-supplied "Breeze" service that has been an outgrowth of another former favorite Twin Cities station, KTWN-

FM. More about that later.

The immediate cause for celebration is the comeback of 'TC, the station with the enormous record library, disc jockeys who weren't ashamed to be called disc jockeys and a fanatical audience made up of people who wouldn't stop listening to oldies.

The driving force behind the new WWTC is Del Roberts, who will act as program director and afternoon drive-time DJ. Roberts, who has been heard for the past several months on KLBB hosting a Saturday night oldies show from the Frogtown Diner in St. Paul, was one of the original WWTC jocks when the station first adopted its oldies format in 1979.

Roberts was a DJ on KDWB in 1965 but halted his radio career in 1969, when he saw the fun going out of the music.

"Somebody really screwed up and took rock 'n' roll music seriously," Roberts said this week. "It was never meant to be. Rock was an electronic whoopee cushion. Then the radio people took themselves seriously."

Roberts spent most of the '70s as a private eye — really — but was talked into returning to radio when WWTC went oldies in 1979. He left again a few years later — before the format and call-letter vitch — because "I knew where it was going. I saw things being fixed that weren't broken."

WWTC eventually dropped oldies in favor of an urban dance format, followed by all-weather, nostalgia and The Breeze formats, before station owner Brian Short apparently decided to fix something that was broken by restoring the Golden Rock to the airwaves.

"It will never be the same, but it will certainly be a hundred percent in the spirit of the old WWTC," Roberts said. "The DJs will do exactly what every DJ wishes he could get away with if the manager's out of town. The music is not purely oldies, but everything, including some currents."

Roberts promises a far more extensive play list of oldies than on the satellite-fed KDWB-AM and WMIN-AM, or on the FM Saturday oldies shows on WLTE or KSTP. The records are mostly his.

"I've been collecting since 1954 — I remember having to decide between 45s and 78s. But we're making every attempt to put everything on the air on CD. We're looking at AM stereo."

Lack of a stereo signal is the prime reason why KSNE and The Breeze parted company. Jack Moore, former station manager at KTWN and co-founder of The Breeze, says most of his service's 22 out-of-state affiliates are FM stereo stations, which is the way progressive pop-jazz music was meant to be heard.

"We're pursuing several different leads as far as (local) FM goes," Moore said.

His old station, now called KMGK-FM, might be a prime possibility. Magic 108 is in the process of being sold to an owner in Missouri for a reported \$9 million. (Moore and his partners originally sold KTWN for \$3.8 million in the early '80s.) A format change at Magic 108 is a distinct possibility, although general manager Greg Sher said Thursday it would be premature to speculate, since the papers on the sale have not been signed.

But now that WWTC is back, what could be more logical than for Moore to be reunited with his old KTWN signal? Only one of the national Breeze affiliates has been through a full ratings period, but that Seattle station shot up from 0.9 percent of the audience to 4.5 percent. The commercial potential is there, but Breeze listeners need a good FM signal to take advantage of their \$3,000 stereos.

The Golden Rock is back. Perhaps KTWN will be next.