



left: Bill Stephey at WBAU studio, 1983; right: Stephey at a WBAU appearance, circa 1983. Photos courtesy of Bill Stephey.

after making *Straight from the Basement of Koolay High!* with Original Concept and touring as the Beastie Boys' DJ.

"I left the show in [co-host] Wildman Steve's hands, went on tour, and came right back and took it over again," Dre says. "We always kept the crew together, and we'd always find somebody registered at Adelphi so we could put them in the interview so they'd keep giving us shows." Around this time, a pre-LONS Busta Rhymes and Charlie Brown began cutting classes at Uniondale High School to answer phones and hang out at the station. Dre could use the help. "I had Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, and I was on Monday through Friday in the mornings, the first hip-hop morning show anywhere," says Dre, who would go on to host "wake-up" shows on major commercial radio stations like New York's WQHT-FM ("Hot 97"). "I used to go to school, work in a store, do BAU, and DJ parties every weekend. I had a van with a big double bed in the back and I'd sleep there or at the station, get up and go to class."

Following Dre and T-Money's departure for *Yo! MTV Raps* in 1988, "Wildman" Steve Adams's *The Hip-Hop Spot* held down Monday nights until the station's closure. Spinbad, DJ Eclipse, and Cipa Sounds are among the DJs who got their radio feet wet spinning alongside the show's resident DJ, Riz of Crooklyn Clan fame.

While hip-hop shows had become standard on college radio by this time, Steve and co-host Marnie 411 blazed new directions with *First World Dialogue*, a newsy, hour-long call-in segment. "People like Chuck and Doug E. Fresh called in and discussed issues," Steve says. "To this day, no one is really discussing topics *and* playing music."

Long before it would become the nation's highest-rated urban morning show, an early version of *The Star and Buc Wild Show* aired on BAU for several months in 1995. "I needed a way to promote my magazine I was publishing at the time," explains Star, aka Troi Torain. "It was my first dabble into radio. Eventually too many letters of complaints to the dean's office got me tossed off. The things we were talking about, like interracial dating, were too risqué, which was amusing, because Garden City was the same town supporting Howard Stern. Ah, Garden City—the

home of Susan Lucci."

Several months later, Adelphi president Peter Diamandopoulos, who would soon be ousted for using school funds as his own personal bank account, sold off the station's license for a fraction of its value without consulting the student government association, which funded WBAU. "Being in Garden City, some people felt the station might have been too Black," Wildman Steve suggests. "But the administration was probably afraid the faculty might say what was really going on with Diamandopoulos."

The downfall was inevitable, Steve suggests. "Hot 97 kind of destroyed underground radio. Before, hip-hop was only on the weekends. Even two years down the line, kids growing up only knew Hot 97."

Ultimately, Chuck notes matter-of-factly, BAU "went the way of the tape deck." But, while Adelphi itself failed to recognize the significance of their defunct station, its former DJs remain profuse in their praise for their radio alma mater.

"Those were the best years of my life," says Dre. "All the doors that opened for us, opened because of what we did there. Other colleges were doing hip-hop. The difference was, at BAU, the show was the icing. The work, the promotion, the parties, everything else—that was the cake." ●

JESSE SERWER is a writer from Long Island, New York. He currently lives in Brooklyn.