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# Something new and something familiar at WBGO

WBGO | By [Stevan Smith](#)

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Drive Time

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Drive Time



As stated in our [Mission, Vision, & Core Values Statement](#), WBGO 88.3 FM / Newark Public Radio is a non-profit, publicly funded arts and cultural institution, dedicated to the curation, presentation and preservation of music created out of the African American experience.

In many ways this mission has governed WBGO's presentation since its inception more than 40 years ago. Our devotion to jazz and blues programming has carried this organization into the 21st century with a legacy that fosters nostalgic admiration. Where do we go from here? How do we take the next step in a world where public media faces fierce competition from digital media and more?

WBGO is taking giant steps towards preserving its history while embracing the future. There are plans to improve and broaden our digital footprint in 2022, but we must first strengthen our broadcast presentation. Broadcast has been at the heart of what we do since 1979, and we believe it is important to begin there. Change is inevitable, and we embrace the inevitable.

One of the key changes driving our plans for 2022 and beyond is the departure of Michael Bourne. His recent retirement, along with [the passing of Bob Porter](#), has made it necessary to enact some changes to our programming schedule. Our goal is to create a strong lineup of shows that seamlessly complement one another and keep the music flowing seven days a week, 24 hours a day. These necessary changes will affect our weekday and weekend programming.

Weekdays will now feature less stops in your music listening experience. Aesthetically, we will rebrand our dayparts as "Daybreak" for mornings, "Drive Time" for afternoons, and "Lights Out" for evenings. These changes are in step with the common daily routines of most listeners' lifestyles, but the definitions of these shifts can be retrofitted to include the lifestyles of many. There will also be more time to spend with our professional and knowledgeable host as we extend their time to strengthen the core of our presentation.



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We will also introduce a new program to the weekly line-up in the form of *Favorite Things*, hosted by **Pat Prescott**. This is a thematic show featuring the music you love, with special guests. Bringing Prescott's extraordinary talents to the WBGO family speaks directly to our core mission and vision.

Weekends will now be branded as "Rhythm & Song Weekends." The plan is to take the strength of our weekend programming and increase its footprint.

*Rhythm Revue*, hosted by **Felix Hernandez**, is synonymous with WBGO weekends. That core audience is historically loyal to supporting this program and WBGO. It makes the most sense for us to embrace that commitment by increasing the hours of the Saturday broadcast from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. In addition to increasing the hours of the Saturday airing, you will now also be able to enjoy *Rhythm Revue* on Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. In addition, Jazz, Blues, and News shows will continue to offer listeners variety programming on the weekends. It is our goal to support our strong weekday lineup with an equally as strong weekend lineup, and we believe this is it.

These changes to WBGO's programming schedule come as a result of extensive audience research and an aggressive campaign to raise brand awareness amongst lovers of this music we present. Our commitment to jazz music specifically remains steadfast as the genre represents over 90% of the content presented on 88.3 FM and over our digital stream at [wbgo.org](http://wbgo.org). We believe that these changes to our broadcast will deliver the fresh and satisfying programming that is designed to engage the listening public for years to come.

[Click here to see WBGO's new Program Schedule.](#)

## Stevan Smith

Chief Content Officer at WBGO

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## Stevan Smith

Brooklyn born Stevan Smith graduated from the exceptional Boys and Girls High School and attended the Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management at Morgan State University (Baltimore, MD), where he decided to switch to a path that would allow him to follow his passion for music. Introduced to Jazz music via Hip-Hop, Stevan started a radio programming internship at the MSU owned WEAA 88.9 FM, where he rose to Assistant Program Director. He then spent 12 years at WBGO as Traffic and Continuity Manager, where he contributed to the station's digital efforts, produced features for broadcast, and filled in as a guest announcer. For three years, Smith then served as Assistant Program Director at WNYC, during which time he continued to produce podcasts for himself and others. He returned to WBGO in 2021 as Chief Content Officer.

[See stories by Stevan Smith](#)

**WBGO'S 2024 TRIP TO**