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KXCJ adds Cave Rock with DJ Whiplash



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Christopher “DJ Whiplash” Sabionski in the KXCJ studio Saturday, March 9.

Tristan Stocker
IVN Contributing Writer

On Jan. 26 local radio station KXCJ added to its airwaves Cave Rock with DJ Whiplash, a fresh new program that brings listeners in and around the Illinois Valley ‘90’s centric heavy rock, hard metal, industrial, grunge, alternative rock, and beyond.

DJ Whiplash, or Christopher Sabionski as he’s known outside of the station, spends hours each week compiling his playlists to fill his two-hour time slot, pulling 600-800 CDs, a few LPs and the occasional cassette tape he’s been collecting since he was 8 years old.

“I’m a firm believer in hard copies myself,” Sabionski said. “Even if you’re not doing hard copies,

I’m a firm believer in paying for music. So for me, this is a great tool for me to represent albums and songs on albums that aren’t necessarily hits.”

In fact, Sabionski makes it a point on his show to feature songs that haven’t necessarily had much (or any) airplay over the years: B-sides, deep cuts, rare tracks, etc.

“I figure the hits have already been played to death and I’d like to let people hear other songs,” Sabionski said. “I’m attempting to not play a single song twice over a period of a year as well so that people can tune in and they can be guaranteed that they won’t hear the same track they just heard a month ago. They’re actually gonna hear something fresh each time.”

Sabionski was born and raised in Houston, Texas, but his love for rock music blossomed in Germany after moving there with his family for a few years. When he was 7 or 8 years old, he heard bands like Van Halen, KISS, AC/DC, the Scorpions, Black Sabbath and Iron Maiden on the radio and was blown away.

But being more of a ‘90s guy, Sabionski lists the late Chris Cornell of Soundgarden fame as one of his favorite artists and enjoys bands such as Ministry and Faith No More.

“So even though my show is ‘90s-centric, I definitely go before the ‘90s, I definitely go after the ‘90s,” Sabionski said. “But my whole ‘90s focus is because just in my opinion the heavy rock element in the ‘90s was the heyday for a huge variety of reasons. The number of different styles of heavy metal and hard rock and alternative rock that came into being in the ‘90s was mind boggling.”

Sabionski recalls attending hundreds of shows throughout the period and noting that many of the bands are now considered classics, something that people go back to and listen to as influences or just great music to enjoy.

“I suspect like all things there will be a resurgence of rock and I think we’re on the beginning stages of that,” Sabionski said. “I feel very strongly that the 2020s will be a little bit more on the rock end of things. I think people are gonna be burned out from some of the repetitive electronic things—not that it’s bad music, but I think there’s gonna be a shift... because there always is.”

Cave Rock with DJ Whiplash airs every Saturday from 5 to 7 p.m on 105.7 KXCJ right after the all reggae show Catch A Fire with DJ Odd-io.

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