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Breuse Hickman

Breuse Hickman has been a reporter for more than 15 years at Florida Today newspaper where he has covered everything from interesting local humans to national celebrity specimens. His weekly "Airwaves" column covers and discusses issues that relate to local and national media.

A graduate of University of Central Florida with a technical writing degree, Hickman is a single dad of two cats and makes his home in both Brevard County and Orlando.

January 18, 2007

Amy Goodman returns to Brevard, a year after show debut

BY BREUSE HICKMAN
FLORIDA TODAY

It was October when Air America - Al Franken's radio venture that was supposed to provide a bona fide alternative to conservative hosts such as Rush Limbaugh -- filed for bankruptcy.

Air America's ongoing failures, not to mention the demise of several left-of-center talk shows across country, have provided plenty of I-told-you-so fodder for reining talk jocks.

Then there's Amy Goodman

Other than leveling her "Democracy Now" radio program with an "advocacy

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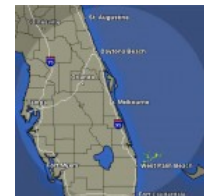
Amy Goodman
FLORIDA TODAY file

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The details

Who: Talk show host Amy Goodman
When: 7 p.m. Feb. 10 **Where:** Gleason

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 what her presence wfit.org/AmyGoodman2007details.htm
 will mean on talk radio.

"I don't think of her as a talk show host," says David Musgrove of Space Coast Progressive Alliance, a group instrumental in getting her show heard on Brevard's airwaves. "The listeners she attracts, they don't just want to hear opinions. Everyone's got opinions. She interviews people and not just the talking heads and the Jesse Jacksons and Al Sharptons. She talks to the people who are really involved in the story. "

In the past year, "Democracy Now" picked up 200 affiliates, bringing the total to 500.

In Brevard County, if a commercial-free radio show's success can be determined by how much money it makes during a pledge drive, then WFIT-FM (89.5) has a hit with "Democracy Now."

During the station's fall pledge drive, her show was No. 1 for attracting the largest amounts of money during her time slot. During the April drive, the show came in No. 2.

"The pledge drives indicate the community support," says Barbara Bingnear, WFIT's director of gifts and outreach

The show premiered on WFIT last January, coinciding with her first Brevard County appearance.

"At first, WFIT wasn't sure it would work because they had a relatively conservative audience," Musgrove says.

It's a risk WFIT says paid off, evidence that goes beyond pledge drive results and positive listener feedback.

The buzz already is growing for Goodman's Feb. 10 appearance at Florida Tech's Gleason Performing Arts Center.

While regular tickets remain, at Press time, only two of 40 backstage tickets were left. Those willing to fork over \$50 to meet Goodman backstage will be awarded a signed copy of her latest book "Static," and get to pose with Goodman for a photo.

'Big Show' in limbo at The Pirate

Now you (almost) hear them, now you don't.

What's with the bait and switch going on over at The Pirate (95.5-FM) recently?

Here we were expecting the arrival of the John Boy and Billy "Big Show" Monday on the Cumulus-owned Brevard County rock station after the show bid a farewell from Orlando station, Q96-FM.

After days of on-air promotion, so far the "Big Show" is a no-show.

Cumulus' Brevard market manager Dan Carelli said "last-minute contract complications" on the show being pulled. Any decisions are on hold until those pesky matters get worked out.

Meanwhile, morning hosts Eric DeNiro and Jim Callahan, who were set to take over The Pirate's drive time from 3 to 7 p.m., might return in the mornings. Will such a move be temporary? Stay tuned.

Contact Hickman at 242-3789 or bhickman@brevard.gannett.com.

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