

# "Gotta Get Down" at 80!

By Helen Marketti

Murray Saul is celebrating 80 rockin' years of life that has spanned a vast career of experiences including traveling salesman, carnival worker and business owner.

During the mid seventies Murray enjoyed listening to the music and programming at WMMS radio station in Cleveland and decided he wanted to become part of the action. He contacted the station and asked for an interview which was granted. He then wanted a position with WMMS which he got. Landing a position in the sales department was a natural fit for Murray as he has been a salesman his whole life in one way or another. From selling calculators when they were first introduced to selling ads for WMMS radio Murray has the ability to get the point across and make it successful.

A unique individual with a gruff and snappy voice, Murray Saul's love for the rock and roll scene is still going strong today as he freely admits that he often indulges in the partying life style just as he did years ago.

Murray does not "act" as though he is 80. In fact he has never acted his age or lived the safe and practical life as many of his peers. Born on May 14, 1928 in Cleveland, Murray was already twenty years older than the listening audience and staff when he arrived at WMMS. He had always maintained a rapport with the younger generation. He mingled with them, went to their parties, hosted his own psychedelic galas and listened to their music.

How did all of this really begin for Murray? Watching movie footage of the 1969 rock festival, Woodstock, awakened something in Murray that he knew he needed to explore further. "That movie changed my life. It connected something. It was

Murray's brother-in-law at the time was a student at Kent State University and Murray was spending a great deal of time with him and being part of the college crowd which eventually lead to the break up of his first marriage. It was a new life that Murray embraced and consumed from that point on.

While at WMMS Murray's voice of bellowing opinion and thought howled through the hallways as John Gorman (Music/Program Director, 1973-1986) would overhear him on the telephone talking to his elderly aunt about what day of the

week he would be planning to visit her. She was hard of hearing and listening to Murray trying to converse with her was a comedy skit within itself without even trying. John Gorman knew somehow, some way that Murray's voice and personality would need to find its way on the WMMS airwaves for listeners to have another reason to tune in.

Eventually that pathway was found as Murray hosted three different styles of programming for WMMS which included, "We the People" and "Jabberwocky" where Murray engaged in conversation with such individuals as Dennis Kucinich, hippies, teamsters and activists with a cause. His most noted or notorious (depending how you look at it) was his Friday night rant of the "Get Downs." The "Get Down" came about innocently enough as Murray recalls, "I was the loud mouth who said dumb things. I kept yelling "get down" to someone dancing at a party. John Gorman listened to what I said and watched what I was doing. That's how it all started."

The Friday night "Get Downs" was the listener's way of kicking off the weekend with Murray Saul as he encouraged everyone to "Gotta...Gotta...Gotta...Get Down!" because it was the weekend and time to boogie.

After a few years of making his mark at WMMS, Murray moved on to the next phase of his career which was promoting acts at Elektra-Asylum Records. He is amused when recalling a story involving Freddie Mercury (of Queen). "I took Freddie to the Record Rendezvous on Public Square. The place was crowded and fans were

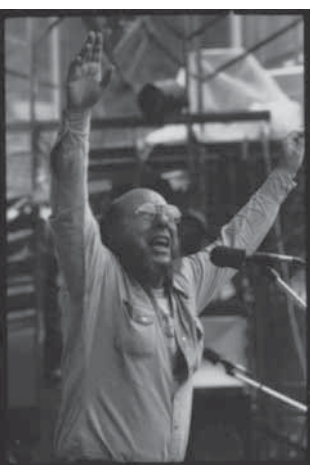


yelling to me, "Get Down...Gotta Get Down, Murray!" They were fussing over me and not paying much attention to Freddie. He was miffed." Celebrating 80 years with a birthday party at the Beachland Ballroom in Cleveland on May 16, Murray dove into a "Get Down" segment for old times sake and the crowd went wild! To this day he is remembered, still has a fan base and when asked how all of this makes him feel he said, "What a rush! WMMS reached out and grabbed people. I was glad to be a part of it." Murray continues, "I'm enjoying the fuss, being 80 and doing what I'm doing. I feel good."

For more information on Murray Saul check out: BuzzardBookBlog.com

Volume 1 of the "Get Downs" CD is available through Amazon.com

Yowza!

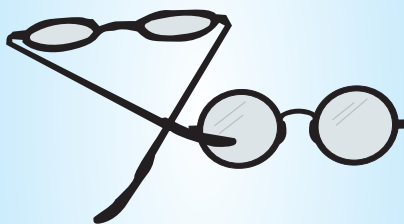


a passport to a new generation," Murray explains during our interview. "I thought it was a magnificent time. I wasn't offended by the younger generation and what they were doing."

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