

A familiar voice on the radio

KNCE launches a new biweekly call-in family radio hour

BY RITA O'CONNELL

IT'S BEEN ABOUT seven months of stay-at-home orders, with no end in sight.

As our community looks toward colder months, and prepares new strategies for sanity in quarantine, we at KNCE have been thinking about ways to help us all stay connected to community.

When we first launched KNCE in 2014, we had a vision of an older-school radio experience – a platform where hundreds of community members could bring their own voices, thoughts, personalities, ideas and love of music to the

AT HOME WITH TWIRL

and Friends

public airwaves – and we have been so grateful to keep bringing you this kind of programming throughout this international crisis.

As trust in national news falls to an all-time low, listeners are finding their way back to local media for the comforts of home. I know that when I hear a familiar voice on the radio, a little part of me is soothed – I'm reminded that our community is still here, all around us, even if we can't share a hug or a handshake.

I'm almost surprised how much I mourn those passing interactions – in the grocery store, at the bowling alley, on the trail – with people I wouldn't necessarily seek out, wouldn't call on the phone or meet for a drink, but am always happy to see for a brief catch-up. In a close-knit community like ours, these peripheral relationships are, I believe, essential.

I recently got to enjoy one of those

TAOS FAMILY RADIO HOUR

Every other Friday from 5-6 p.m.

Beginning Oct. 23

KNCE 93.5 FM, streaming at truetaosradio.com



COURTESY HOWIE ROEMER

Inside the KNCE trailer. The new program every other Friday at 5-6 p.m. will welcome family call-ins – parents, grandparents and kids can speak live with a panel of local professionals, teachers and community members to get advice and support or even just have a good old-fashioned vent.

moments with Siena Sanderson, Enos Garcia Nurturing Center coordinator. Masked up and six feet apart, in line at Smith's, we talked about the rising feelings of isolation and anxiety all around us.

Siena particularly sees this among the families she works with. With most kids now at home all day, every day, and parents juggling work, health, personal lives and other obligations, people are getting closer to panic and burnout.

We need to help people feel less alone, Siena said. What about a call-in radio program, where parents, grandparents and kids can speak live with a panel of local professionals, teachers and community members, to get advice and support or even just have a good old-fashioned vent?

So KNCE, under Siena's guidance and in partnership with many members of our community who work in early childhood, family care, parenting support and more, is excited to launch a new biweekly call-in program. The Taos Family Radio Hour launches Friday (Oct. 23) from 5 to 6 p.m. on 93.5 FM, and online at truetaosradio.com.

In preparation, I reached out to my friend Julia Bergkamp, an early childhood consultant. What would you say to someone who called in to the station and is just completely overwhelmed, struggling, feeling hopeless?

"It's so difficult right now, balancing multiple roles. As a parent myself, the thing that is most important is taking care of myself, and making myself my first priority," said Julia.

Isn't that hard? I asked. Doesn't it seem selfish, to make yourself the priority?

No, says Julia – just the opposite. "You're good for nothing if you have nothing more to give. You have to ask, 'How are you caring for yourself so that you can be a good enough parent, or even be the parent you would like to be?'"

OK, but how do you even find the time for self-care? "Someone years ago taught me the concept of 'micro self-care,'" Julia told me. "People get really hung up on self-care being another thing they have to add in, but actually all you have to do is ask: What are little ways you can care for yourself throughout the day? Is it waking up a half-hour

early and having a cup of coffee by yourself? Is it a walk around the block? Small things add up."

I'm not even a parent and I still felt better, less alone and more hopeful, after our conversation. So join us on KNCE every other Friday to chat with your friends and neighbors; to reach out, remember that we're all still here and keep each other company into the winter months.

If this sparks anything that you want to contribute right away, you can call the What's Up, Taos? Hotline at (800) 588-6132. Leave a message – a question, comment or idea – and we'll play it on the air. And you can always reach us at info@truetaosradio.com, to learn more or pitch your own ideas.

KNCE is here for you, so let us know what you want to hear.

Now, I don't know about you, but I'm going to close my laptop and go for a walk.

See you on the radio, Taos.

Rita O'Connell is, among other things, a co-founder of 93.5 FM, True Taos Radio.

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