

SUBSCRIBE TODAY
 Star-Telegram
 Subscriber Services

Current: 90°
 96° / 69°
 Complete Forecast

Find a **Roommate**
 a room Free search

SPECIALTY SURGERY CENTER OF FORT WORTH
AFTER 100 pounds gone forever!
 World's #1 Lap-Band® Provider!
Their experience made the difference.
 Attend a **FREE LAP-BAND® System Seminar!**
 Seating is limited. Reserve your space **NOW.** Call 817-520-4000
www.aigb.com

Search Recent News Archives Web for Welcome **Mike**
[My Classifieds](#) | [My Account](#) | [Sign Out](#)

- [Jobs](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Apartments](#)
- [Local Shopping](#)
 - Find Sales & Deals
 - Shop Local Stores
- [All Classifieds](#)
- [Personals](#)

[Back to Home](#) > [Living](#) > [Columnists](#) > Tuesday, Jun 21, 2005

Robert Philpot

[email this](#) [print this](#) [reprint or license this](#)

Posted on Mon, Jun. 20, 2005

Tesh show spins info for New Age

By **ROBERT PHILPOT**
 STAR-TELEGRAM STAFF WRITER

John Tesh knows that the title *The John Tesh Radio Show* will prick up the ears of some folks and strike fear in the hearts of others. It stirs an image of the former *Entertainment Tonight* host flooding the airwaves with his New Agey piano music, and, well, not everyone's up for that.

But this show, which debuts locally at 8 tonight on KEGF/97.1 FM -- aka "Sunny 97.1" -- isn't about Tesh's music. He leaves the songs up to people like Gloria Estefan and Boyz II Men. Between tunes, Tesh dispenses what he calls "intelligence for your life." It's a gimmick that has caught on; from its weekend start about five years ago in Los Angeles, *The John Tesh Radio Show* has blossomed into a syndicated hit aired on 160-plus affiliates. But for Tesh, it's always been personal.

"This show was created to serve my wife," he says, referring to the actress Connie Selleca. "She's a working mother, with her own business, and also a wife who wants all the information she can get. She's an information junkie. She's always got the news on. But she doesn't have time to read all these magazines, like *Prevention* or *Women's Fitness* or any of that stuff, and it all piles up. The show was created for people just like her."

In other words, despite Tesh's musical reputation, this isn't a goopy romance-advice show a la the syndicated *Delilah*. Tesh and the show's producers use many analogies to describe it, including calling it the world's biggest magazine rack. More accurately, it's a magazine rack where someone actually reads the articles, not merely the eye-catching headlines. Between the Mariah Carey and Phil Collins songs, Tesh -- whose smooth baritone makes for a great radio voice -- might tell you how to get better sleep or how to impress your mother-in-law. Or he might share the results of an oddball study, such as the University of Illinois' investigation into the five-second rule. You know, the one that says that food dropped on the floor is safe to eat if you pick it up within five seconds. (It turns out to be a falsity.)

"People will tell you how they use the show," Tesh says. "When five people call in and say, 'I love your tips on parenting. I tried them, and they work.' Or, 'I'm wearing yellow to a party now, and it gives me more energy.' Or 'I sniff peppermint before I go into a job interview.' Or 'I went into a job interview at 2 p.m. on a Thursday and I got the job. Thank you.' That's what's cool about radio, and also about e-mail -- you get that instant feedback, and you go, 'OK, people are digging this, let's write more about this.'"

Tesh was inspired to get into radio in the late '90s, when he subbed for American Top 40 host Casey Kasem during a contract dispute. After Kasem's battle was settled, Tesh was offered his own show, which quickly flopped -- a failure Tesh blames on a lack of syndicator support. Tesh decided he could do it on his own, and recruited a cohort, Scotty Meyers, to work affiliate relations and let radio stations nationwide know of the program's existence.

The show employs a staff of seven researchers, each with his or her own specialty, and you could come up with a variety of tags for what they concoct: water-cooler conversation, cocktail talk, bathroom reading. Well, maybe the last is a little too vulgar for a show that strives to keep it clean -- so much so that Tesh counts among his fans 8- and 12-year-olds who've told him it has helped them with their homework.

"You can tell that our researchers enjoy it," he says. "On *Entertainment Tonight*, for me, it was 'What's Demi Moore doing

- News**
- Opinion**
- Sports**
- Business**
- Entertainment**
 - Reviews
 - Weekend
 - Movies
 - Video & DVD
 - Restaurants
 - Concerts
 - Music
 - Stage
 - Arts
 - Books
 - Television
 - Celebrities
 - Comics & Games
 - Horoscopes
 - Attractions
 - Visitors Guide
 - Columnists
- Living**
- Obituaries**
- Columnists**

- ONLINE EXTRAS**
- [Front Page \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Archives](#)
 - [Traffic](#)
 - [Weather](#)
 - [Yellow Pages](#)
 - [Maps & Directions](#)

Discussion Boards

Newsletters

SITE SERVICES

RSS Headlines

Contact Us

Advertise

Newspaper Services

Employment

Site Map

today? What's Bruce Springsteen doing?' You're sort of living someone else's life the whole time. Here, you're like, 'I'm getting paid to find stuff that I'm interested in.'"

The only nonsinging voice you'll hear is Tesh's. Some radio stations use only his portions of the show, wrapping their own music programming around Tesh's sound bites. It's meant to be a nighttime show -- Sunny will air it from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Sunday-Friday -- but some stations air it in mornings or middays. Its '80s- and '90s-skewing soft rock isn't a perfect fit for Sunny, which is heavy on '70s music, but it's not so jarring that Sunny listeners will be bothered by it. It may even help the station, which placed 20th overall in the most recent Arbitron survey. Tesh says he tends to snag channel-surfers who like what they hear and stick around.

"Our biggest supporters are truck drivers," he says. "Truck drivers can listen to anything, and they spend so much time listening. So when a truck driver calls us, man or woman, and says, 'Oh my gosh, I had to pull the rig over because I didn't want to miss the third way to divorce-proof my marriage,' you're like, 'OK, we've got something here.'"

Despite the competitiveness of the Fort Worth-Dallas market, where getting 4 percent of the listening audience is good and attracting 6 percent or more is phenomenal, Tesh believes he'll do well here. Sure, out-of-town shows that enter this market often struggle, but Tesh says he has a big fan base in the Metroplex and that he sells more CDs in Dallas than he does in Los Angeles. He performed his first post-*Entertainment Tonight* concerts at Fort Worth's late, lamented Caravan of Dreams and still visits often, with a free gig coming up Aug. 14 at Plano's Prestonwood Baptist Church.

He contends, however, that he's not the hook for the show -- he believes it's the things he says that count.

"You don't really have to like me," he says. "Just enjoy the information we provide. We will make sure that there's something that you need in this show. That's what I've always been about, is provide a concept that's stronger than your performance."

ONLINE: www.tesh.com, www.kegl.com

Robert Philpot, (817) 390-7872 rphilpot@star-telegram.com



SUBSCRIBE TODAY
and enjoy convenient
home delivery at
your doorstep!

 [email this](#)

 [print this](#)

 [reprint or license this](#)

REAL Cities Click here to visit other Real Cities sites

News | Business | Sports | Entertainment | Living | Travel | Shop Local | Classifieds | Jobs | Cars | Homes
About the Real Cities Network | Terms of Use & Privacy Statement | About Knight Ridder | Copyright