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Virginia attorney enjoys testing the radio waves

By Tom Kirvan

The University of Virginia campus is dotted with buildings that reflect the influence of its founder, Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States.



Daniel G. Krasnegor
Member
Goodman Allen Donnelly

Moonlighting comes naturally for attorney Daniel Krasnegor, a partner with the law firm of Goodman Allen Donnelly in Charlottesville, Va.

A lifelong love of music spawned Krasnegor's interest in becoming a part-time radio DJ at WNRN, a listener-supported FM station in the Virginia city that was home to two U.S. presidents, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe.

"When not lawyering, I DJ on the air at WNRN two to three times a week," said Krasnegor, the law firm's lead attorney with its veterans benefit group. "The radio

gig is volunteer, but it definitely balances my life out."

His interest in radio broadcasting began in college at Washington University in St. Louis, traditionally ranked among the top 20 academic institutions in the country.

"I got involved with the college radio station there, working as a DJ in a role that was a lot of fun," Krasnegor related. "It just sort of scratched a different itch than all the academic stuff attached to college. And then when I went to law school at Emory University [Atlanta], the college was trying to start up a radio station for the undergraduates at Emory, so I got involved

in that as well. I did whatever they needed to get it up and running."

Krasnegor's involvement even extended to teaming up with another music aficionado in a publishing venture.

"While at Emory, I met another music fan who was interested in publishing a discography of a certain genre, so I collaborated with him on publishing a little book that was a descriptive catalog of musical recordings," Krasnegor noted. "Of course, this was back before the internet, which would have made a project like that of little consequence."

Upon graduating from law school in 1993, Krasnegor put his radio interests on hold while he launched his legal career, a path that included jobs with a title company, the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and the Veterans Affairs General Counsel Office before entering the world of private practice in 1998.

"There wasn't much time for side interests during those years, as I was building a practice focused on the welfare of veterans and their dependents," Krasnegor indicated. "It offered me an opportunity to be pretty entrepreneurial in developing a practice specifically designed to help veterans and their families obtain the benefits they deserve."

"When I first started focusing my work on representing veterans, I had clients from World War I and World War II," he noted. "Of course, in recent years, I've represented clients who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf Wars, and in Afghanistan. This representation includes claims for VA compensation benefits, widow's benefits, pension, education benefits, and more."

Once his private practice began flourishing, Krasnegor said he was "itching" to get back into radio work in his spare time, volunteering with a public radio station that was in need of someone to read news clips at the top of the hour one day a week.

"I'd get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and write up little 15-second news clips and then read them live on the air all morning," he said. "I did that once a week for several years, before I was approached by one of the leaders of the station who wondered if I would be interested in doing some DJing. That was back in 2009, so it's been about 16 years that I have been doing regular radio shifts. I'm also finishing up my final year of six years on the board of directors of the radio station, since it is a nonprofit."

Krasnegor said he has been a music buff since his youth, even if he never was a musician himself.

"I don't know if young people feel this way now, but when I was growing up, I felt like radio was this magic and wonderful thing," Krasnegor admitted. "I still feel that way to a degree, as I'm happy that I get the opportunity to be part of a radio team that regularly connects with an audience."

Broadcasting since 1996, WNRN is an independent music radio network with 12 stations throughout Virginia, including the state capital Richmond, Charlottesville, Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Harrisonburg. As a nonprofit, the WNRN radio network derives 85 percent of its funding from listener support and sponsorship underwriting.

"We play a mix of everything from folk to rock and roll with about half of it new and the other half going back to the '60s," Krasnegor explained. "Some of what we play now is what's called in the music industry as 'Triple A,' which stands for Adult Album Alternative. And there's sort of a branch of country music that appeals to non-country folk called 'Americana.' So, there's a little dash of Americana, but there's also a bit of New Wave and stuff like that. I specialize during a two-hour show on music from the '70s, '80s, and '90s."



At home behind the mic, Krasnegor has indulged his love of music by DJing part-time for radio station WNRN in Virginia.



On a family outing, Krasnegor with his wife, Kristin, and their daughter, Zelda.

In addition to his DJ duties, Krasnegor participates in a weekly focus group "where we listen to all the new music that's come in" to determine whether it is air worthy.

"It serves as a nice break in the day and inevitably gives me a boost in energy and makes me smile," Krasnegor said of his radio work. "We've got a really good team at the radio station that is dedicated to best serving a loyal and diverse audience."

Krasnegor grew up in Reston, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C., where his late father, Norman, was a psychologist for the National Institute of Health and his mother, Rebecca, worked as a sociologist before owning an art gallery. One of two children, Krasnegor has a younger

brother, Josh, who is a consultant in the tech industry.

In 2023, at the age of 54, Krasnegor became a first-time father of a now "precocious two-year-old named Zelda, who keeps my wife [Kristin Jensen] and I hopping but in a good way."

Krasnegor and Jensen were married in 2016 following a seven-year courtship. A project manager for the library system at the University of Virginia (UVA), Jensen earned her bachelor's degree from Mount Holyoke before obtaining her doctoral degree in English from UVA.

"She's a huge opera fan and recently traveled to Oslo to see a production there," Krasnegor related. "It's a real

passion of hers. We've gone to a number of interesting places as part of her opera travels and that makes it extra fun."

Parenting a young child has also brought a special joy into Krasnegor's life, as he relishes each opportunity to interact with his baby daughter.

"Fatherhood is amazing and puts everything else in life into perspective, as it obviously is the most important thing out there for me," said Krasnegor, who enjoys cooking for the family. "It's really a blast to watch this little person emerge and develop on a weekly basis." 

