"DJ Using Spotify" Lessons Learned During High School 50ᵗʰ Reunion

PCHS/PSHS 50th

Playlist for Palatka Central High School (PCHS) and Palatka South High School (PSHS) Class of 1972 50th Reunion

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Administrivia

For those with a QR Code Reader, here's a QR Code pointing to a WWW URL for

where you can get the slides for this talk-and the original February 2022 talk-whenever you want; during or after this session. Just click on the URL that comes up.
I'll show the QR Code again at the end of the talk.
No Dropbox Account is needed.

Michael E. (Mike) Pafford
mepafford@verizon.net

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I'm happy to take Questions at any time during this talk.

Those who would rather, just put your Questions into the Zoom Chat, and I'll be happy to answer them at the end.

Also feel free to put into Zoom Chat any URLs or other info (files, etc.) you think others might think are relevant to this talk.

* Especially helpful to me (and others I'm sure) would be any comments about your own experiences with providing this kind of service at any event.

What Are We In For?

Here's what I'm going to run through today:

- **Project Motivation (What did I get myself into?).**
- **What I Mean By 'DJ'.**
- **What I did Before the Reunion.**
- **When I got to the Reunion Venue.**
- **What Happened At the Reunion.**
- **What I think are Important Lessons Learned.**
- **Remember, a good amount of detail on what I'm talking about today, is in the February talk, which is in that Dropbox folder via this QR Code.**

What Did I Get Myself Into?

Palatka Central High School (PCHS) and Palatka South High School (PSHS) Classes of 1972 50th Reunion

- I volunteered to provide the "Background Music".
- Two evenings; 10 & 11 June 2022.
  - One "Very Informal Socializing" Evening
  - Second "Sit-Down Dinner" Evening
- The Organizing Committee said, "We don't want a regular DJ; just background music while we mingle, eat, and sit around and talk."
- The venue: a single big room; maybe around 100-150 people seated at several 10-person tables.
- Questions for me ahead of the Reunion (10-11 June):
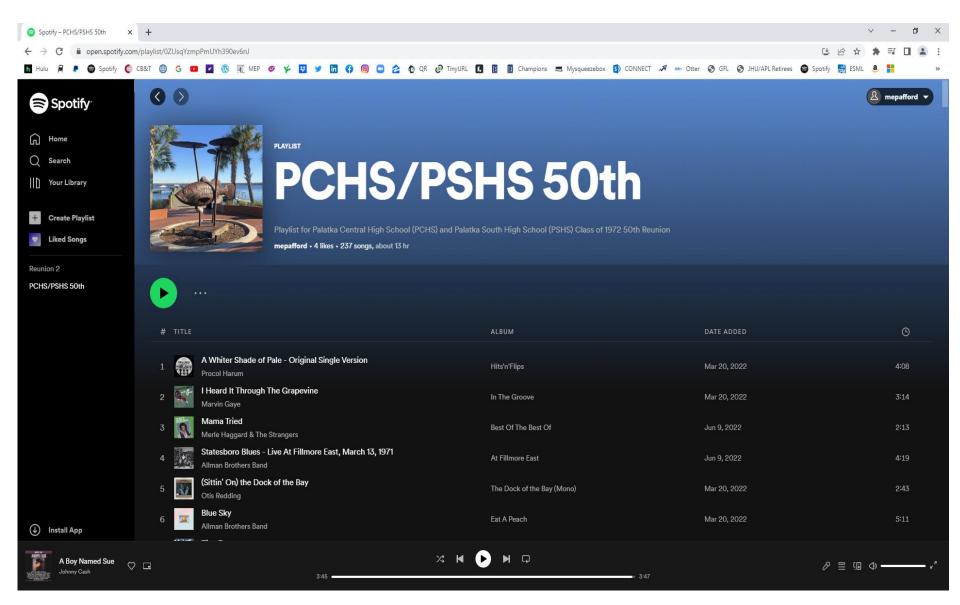 - "Can you play CDs?"
  - "Can you take requests?"

What I mean by 'DJ'

- By 'DJ' I don't mean 'Disk (now Disc) Jockey'.
- No 'Mixing With Beat-matching' or 'Remixing'.
- I also don't mean using Music Streaming Services along with 'DJ Software' (there's several apps out there).
- Rather, I mean Providing Event Background Music using the 'DJ Mode' available in Music Streaming Services.
- In my case, I chose 'Spotify' music streaming.
- I'd never done this before, but I had an Account.
- I Guessed that maybe I could use my Spotify Premium Account capabilities-with a decent Internet connection-to provide this service.

What I Did Before the Reunion

- **Confirmed my Spotify Premium Account Capabilities:**
  - **Playlist was possible to Build and Share ahead.**
    - **Share for Committee Review.**
- **Built Two Playlists of 1968-1972 Pop, R&B, and C&W music:**
  - **One for June 10; additional songs for June 11.**
  - **Used 'Rule of Thumb' of 100 songs for each 3-hour event.**
- **Confirmed my 'remote' capabilities (WiFi/MiFi Internet, etc.).**
- **Confirmed I could reach and use my Spotify Account on my PC laptop, as well as my iPad, Android Phone, and Chromebook.**
- **Confirmed my Spotify "Offline Mode" in case Internet failed.**
- **Downloaded all Playlist songs as MP3 files-just in case.**
  - **Downloaded to PC laptop-and Thumb Drive.**
- **Updated the Playlists based on Email and Text suggestions.**
- **Put the Playlist songs into an Order (mix of genres) in Spotify.**

What the Playlist Looks like in Spotify

What Else I Did Before the Reunion

- **Gathered together-and tested-all the Adaptors, Cables, Extension Cords, Headphones, etc, I thought I might need.**
  - **Included USB Hub-for multiple dongles if necessary.**
  - **Included USB CD Player-for CD based requests.**
- **Reviewed my own February 2022 talk slides!**
  - **Made sure I followed All the Tips I researched before.**
- **Gained access to the venue a day ahead to see what was already there (power, AV equipment, Internet access, etc.).**

Here's the Link (and QR Code) to the Reunion Playlist:

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0ZUsqYzmpPmUYh390ev6nJ?si=5b3520ccc5664e6b

When I Got To the Reunion Venue

- **Attended (and helped at) the Reunion Set-Up Session at the County Fairgrounds venue the day before the first event.**
- **Confirmed:**
  - **Venue AV Set-up:**
    - **Two Large Pedestal Speakers at the front of the room.**
    - **Both Speakers wired into an AV Controller Box at the front of the room.**
      - **I confirmed I could work the AV Controller Box.**
  - **Folding Table (and chair) next to the Controller Box.**
  - **Electrical power within easy distance to the table.**
  - **Venue WiFi Internet via provided Password.**
- **I set up-and tested my PC laptop:**
  - **Access to the Venue WiFi Internet.**
  - **Connection to the AV Controller Box (via provided USB cable and adaptor).**

What Happened At the Reunion

- I arrived at the Reunion Venue an hour early.
- I set up my PC laptop on the table, and connected it to the AV Controller Box; confirming the sound played in the Speakers.
- I accessed the Venue WiFi Internet, then my Spotify Account.
- The Venue WiFi failed due to overheating of the closet server.
- My PC laptop stopped 'talking to' the AV Controller Box.
- I set up my personal MiFi Device and confirmed a good signal.
- I disconnected my PC laptop, and USB connected my Chromebook-which talked to the AV Controller Box just fine.
- I accessed the Internet via my Chromebook and MiFi Device.
- The Spotify "PCHS/PSHS 50th Reunion" Playlist played through the Chromebook, AV Controller Box, and Speakers just fine.

What Else Happened At the Reunion

- **Both days the Chromebook, MiFi, Spotify, and Venue AV set-up worked fine.**
- **I was able to do several things with my Spotify Premium Account:**
  - **Use just the Day One Playlist, since it had plenty of songs.**
  - **Re-arrange the Playlist Order in real-time (ensuring a good real-time mix of Pop, R&B, and C&W).**
    - **I did this several times during the two events.**
  - **Update the Playlist Order On Demand (for any requests for songs already on the Playlist).**
  - **Update the Playlist Order In less than 2 minutes if a new song was requested.**
    - **Stop the Playlist; Search Spotify for the new song (it was always there); Add it to the Playlist; then make it the next song in the Order.**

Important Lessons Learned

- **Providing Event Background Music, using an Internet Connection and a Spotify Premium Account-Does Actually Work!**
- **FWIW, the 'Tips' I researched and included in my February talk-Worked! At least This Time, it Didn't become 'Shelfware'.**
- **The PC laptop, Chromebook, iPad, and Android Phone-all with Internet and Spotify Access-were Not overkill.**
- **A Persistent Internet Connection-is Crucial!**
  - **My personal MiFi Device saved the day.**
  - **The Playlist Downloaded onto a Thumb Drive-almost became the Main Plan B. But real-time manipulation would be gone.**
- **Stick to the '100 Songs for 3 Hours' Rule of Thumb.**
  - **That number is good, and it provides a Playlist that can easily be manipulated in near real-time during the event.**
- **New technologies will come along. But for now, this turned out to be a Very Easy way to provide Event Background Music.**

Administrivia Redux

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I'm happy to answer any other questions if there's time.

THANK YOU!