

Prater likes the new format because it gives him the opportunity to be an adult and a forum for talking about the concerns of adults. "Maybe once a month I get on a soap box," he said. "It is good to be funny, but if you tell a joke after every record, it's like the Japanese water torture. You can't come from the same direction all the time. This is a lot harder to do than rock 'n' roll. With a teen-age audience, the adrenalin flows because the phones ring all the time. Adults don't call unless there is a reason. I remember once a guy wanted some advice on what to do about a swarm of bees and we had five people call to help. I realized then that either all the beekeepers in the Roanoke Valley were listening or we had a big audience."

Prater is a tinkerer, still, with electronic equipment and a man intensely interested in satellite communication. It was on his recommendation that

WROV installed a piece of equipment that helped its fidelity, making it one of the clearest AM stations around.

Frelantz says that when he began with WROV in 1961, the station was without competition because the other valley stations "didn't know what to do with themselves. In 1962 we had more listeners than all the other stations combined. The ROV air personalities were like little stars. We couldn't go anywhere without signing autographs. WROV has been a status symbol for DJs, so the good ones gravitate there.

"They realize at WROV that radio should be an event. They slow down and take the time required to make it one. It is hard to find good DJs — a guy like Bart, for instance — because they are entertainers. A DJ who thinks he is a personality and isn't is terrible. The genuine talents are few and they are valuable."