



There's only so much room on a two-page spread in a magazine for text, especially when you have a giant photo of a radio superstar that takes up a whole page. And Johnjay Van Es can talk. A lot. 3,500 words. On the following pages is the 45 minute-long transcript of Johnjay's interview- including all the extra dirt we couldn't fit in our pages.



Why so serious?

When did you start tweeting?

Years ago, Rich taught me about Twitter and I was like "That is stupid." But that was years ago, No one was on it. '08 maybe? '09?

When did you become addicted to tweeting?

I don't know when that happened. It's like your own little reality show.

Any awkward twitter situations you'd like to share?

I can't tell you how many times I've gotten in trouble for tweeting at meetings. Tweeting while driving. I got a photo radar picture. I'm tweeting in the picture. I know it's dangerous and stupid and I shouldn't do it. People shouldn't do it. But it's addicting right now, I'm trying to stop doing it.

Johnjay Van Es Interview- Uncut

Written by Claire Perkins

Has Twitter ever gotten you in trouble?

Oh god, yeah. I got in trouble with advertisers. Because I said something about something I was doing that was countering something an advertiser was doing on our show. Just yesterday I was in a meeting about a new endorsement, and the problem is I just trashed them on Twitter two weeks ago. I got in trouble with my sister for tweeting things about my mother. I tweeted a picture of her and I hugging and she said "she looks like she's on her death bed." She was. I got rid of it.

Does your wife get pissed at you for tweeting inappropriate things or at inopportune times?

Every day. Every day my wife is mad at me. Every day. I tweet in church. My mother passed away recently. and she said "You're not going to tweet at the funeral, are you?" and I said "Absolutely. Why wouldn't I tweet at the funeral?" So that's a dilemma coming up.

Obviously this allows your listeners to provide you with instant feedback- any cool stories?

I found out Michael Jackson died on Twitter. Before I heard about it on CNN. All the time, we have such a cool audience, they tweet, it's like a conversation. They're all a part of our show, they'll say "why don't you talk about this today?"

Does it ever drive your show?

All the time. Or if we have a satellite problem, we were off the air in Tucson yesterday and nobody called, they tweeted at us to tell us.

How has Twitter boosted your fanbase?

That's a good question. I don't know. Our audience is pretty strong. I think it works hand in hand. I don't think I'd have as many followers if the show wasn't doing as well as it is.

Tell us about what you consider to be your big break. When do you think you "made it"?

I don't think I'm there yet. I've made it at different levels, as far as radio goes. I've made it as far as my wife and I struggled to have babies and we finally have three beautiful boys. I struggled for a long time to get back home to Arizona and now we're back home in Arizona. I feel like I've made it there. I struggled to lose weight and get healthy and I've made it there. As far as radio, I don't think we're there yet. Our show is going forward and picking up new cities. We've had the opportunity, we had the chance to take our show to Los Angeles and instead we wanted to base it out of Phoenix. If we had based it out of LA we would probably be more successful monetarily or what not, but as far as quality of life we decided not to take the show to LA. I probably would be hosting some TV show if I'd taken the show to LA three years ago. I love it here. I will live here the rest of my life. And Pinetop. Look at the weather right now.

Read On for More from Johnjay Van Es.

Has anything weird ever happened in the studio that you had to cover up so your listeners wouldn't hear?

No, you know, Rich and I made a pact years ago that on the show we weren't going to hide anything. So a lot of time we have ADD behaviors. I'm OCD and ADD, so a lot of times there's really nothing, and if we do start to hide something one of us calls the other one out on it. We might keep something private if it's something in somebody's lives, but if we drop something, it's "What's that noise?" We get into it. We've done the show before. It was unbelievable, so much drama going on on the radio. This girl had sex with a guy in her sister's house. The guy put the condom in the trash, and they left. Then the sister didn't know she had keys to the house, she thought the husband was cheating on her, divorced the husband, they had a baby. As they're confronting them on the radio, we're on the fourth floor on Van Buren, and this guy is cleaning the windows and he has those suction cups... The woman is crying and you hear [makes thunk and squeegie sounds]. It's so much drama, and we [interrupted and said] there's a guy cleaning the windows. Now, professional radio people wouldn't have done that. Should have never done that. But the beauty of the show is we're not professionals. You driving in your car is like sitting in the studio because we're not trained in any way. I don't even speak right.

Johnjay Van Es Interview- Uncut

Written by Claire Perkins

Tell us something we don't know about Rich.

There are two things about Rich people don't know. He shaves his arms, I don't know why he shaves his arms. He's a weird pee-er. If we go to the bathroom just to pee he takes forever to pee, he goes in a stall- won't pee in a urinal. He also plays accordion. Nobody knows that. He's totally kickass at accordion, but never plays it. He can play anything.

Tell us about your family.

My wife, born and raised in AZ. I just finished college, I just finished college at San Diego State, and she was, a lot of people in Arizona go to San Diego. She got a job at a radio station and I had a job at a radio station. That's how we met. Two different stations, same building, same company general manager and owner. She was doing radio sales, and I just started radio sales. I [first] started in promotions as an intern and then I got a job getting paid with promotions, then I realized all the sales guys are driving the fancy cars and the morning radio guys are driving the fancy cars so I tried to get into sales and do that for a while. I was with my wife, we were dating, and I had one of those moments where I was like "this isn't what I want to do." and she asked and I said I wanted to have my own radio show, or I'd love to perform on Saturday Night Live. So she said "let's backtrack from there." I thought getting my own radio show is impossible, that's where you have to do midnight to 6 a.m. for years, then they put you in the afternoon. You know, there's a system. So she said "let's go after Saturday Night Live" so I went to Los Angeles and auditioned for The Groundlings. I did Groundlings for a couple years. When I did Groundlings I was getting married, and I went to my bachelor party in New Orleans. [Later] a friend of mine, the first guy who ever hired me for my promotion job, was doing a job in Cincinnati, and he flew out with the General Manager to go to the Grammy's. We were looking at pictures of the bachelor party, I was telling him stories and the guy said "you're really funny" and when he went back to Cincinnati he called me and said "We're looking for someone for a morning show, we don't want to hire a DJ." So I flew out there and did the show for four days, and they hired me. My first radio job on the air was in Cincinnati in 1996. I got hired away by the competitors in Houston. Houston sucks, I lived there for three years. Three worst years of my entire life. I never ever ever will take a job for money again. I took the job in Houston because it was a crap ton of money being thrown my way and I struggled through a pregnancy, we lost twin girls, I had a nightmare time, the weather sucks there. And I was in country music, I hated country music. That's where I partnered up with Rich- he was in Dallas. We put together a tape and sent it out, we got offers from Chicago, Seattle. It was cool because Tucson wanted us right away. It was a legendary radio station. The bigger the city the more the management would get involved in the show. We wanted to have freedom. We worked a deal out, they'd let us do whatever we wanted, so we took the Tucson job. I have three boys, too. 8 year old, a 7 year old and 4 year old. All born in Arizona- Yuma, Tucson, Paradise Valley. All Arizona boys.

If you could come back in your next life as a popstar, who would you be?

Come on, Justin Bieber. Why would I not want to be Justin Bieber? The guys been famous for a year and two months and he's already worth a hundred million dollars. I love his haircut. What's funny about his haircut is every guy, in their past, has had that haircut. I had that haircut on my junior high ID. That's like a \$700 haircut. I go to V's. \$30.

Who is one underrated musician you want to give credit to?

I like Tyo Cruise. Enrique Iglesias is pretty darn underrated. He's a pretty good pal.

What are your favorite things about living in the Valley?

I love living here because my roots are here. I moved here when I was a month old to Phoenix. And to Tucson. My whole life has been, everywhere I go, everywhere I move, I always come back to Arizona. When I was a kid I moved to Mexico for a while, came back to Arizona. Then we moved to New Mexico, came back to Arizona. Then we moved to LA and San Diego, came back to Arizona. My wife's family, they're all in Arizona. I think there are so many great things connected to Arizona. Super Bowl champs, Arizona. Guy who ran for President, Arizona. The girl who won American Idol was from Arizona, the girl who won The Biggest Loser was from Arizona. Movies are filmed in Arizona, the weather is beautiful, nothing bad happens in Arizona. You go to California, there could be an earthquake, you could fall in the ocean. There are tsunamis, hurricanes, tornados, volcanos. There's nothing in Arizona. There are just good people. It's great, everybody flocks here. I love this place. I'm into routines, I have my routine, I love it, I don't want to change it. I love my neighborhood, I love my house, I love the restaurants, I love the places I go shopping, I love the people I know already, I don't need to meet new people. All my buddies are here.

Anything else you'd like to share?

I want to thank the readers, if they have already, for listening to Johnjay and Rich at 104.7 KISS FM.

Read On for Reader Questions & Answers with Johnjay Van Es.

Johnjay Van Es Interview- Uncut

Written by Claire Perkins

Reader Questions

You watch a lot of shows. How do you fit in all that TV?

Easy, I love this question. OK I'm a total TV a holic. What I do is, about 15 years ago, I was able to, there was a weird way of pulling strings (you can't do it anymore) but I get the East Coast feeds. 15 years ago, a friend of my wife's lived in New York, and you had to somehow use an East Coast address. I was living in Houston at the time, I lied, it was really bad karma, and I got the east coast feed. It sticks with you wherever you go, and if you cancel it, you're done, you can't ever get it back again. So let's say Survivor is on at 7, I watch it at 5. Isn't that crazy?

So with American Idol, I know before anyone else. I'll Tweet it, I'll call my sister. My sister at the time used to live in Los Angeles, I'd find out who won and every year I'd ruin it for her. And I would go to great lengths to ruin it for her and he caught on, so my dad at the time lived in China, and I called my dad in China and I'd three-way him and say "I need you to call my sister, and all I need you to say is 'Carrie Underwood'." I'd be like "She knows it's a joke, she'll get it." So she'd get a call from China, she'd answer it and she'd go "Hello? Hey Daddy!" and he'd go "Hey, Carrie Underwood." "What?!" She'd go ballistic. So [another year] when Jordin Sparks won, she wasn't taking any phone calls, nothing. So I paid the guy an extra \$30 so when she asked "Who's the pizza from?" he'd say "Jordin Sparks". I knew. So that's the benefit of east coast feeds.

How do you fit in your TV now?

I watch- now, the good thing is, there's not a log of good TV. Modern Family is great, American Idol is good- it just started.

Are you liking the new judges?

They're OK right now, it's still so new. I think Jennifer Lopez is fantastic. Randy Jackson thinks he's all that cause he's been there for so long. You stack up his credentials against the other two...you know. So that's it, there's not a lot of good TV. Modern Family, The Bachelor was good in the beginning and now it's silly. Jersey Shore, that kinda thing. So I can get all my TV in OK.

What kind of car do you drive?

Really? (laughs) That's embarrassing. Do I have to tell the truth on that?

I don't know. Probably not.

I have three. I have a BMW 650, I have a Sahara four-door jeep, and I have a 1977 Oldsmobile Convertible Delta 88. it's embarrassing to say I drive a BMW because that's a stupid car for a man with a little penis. I totaled my other car, I had to get another car, I was emotional when I got it. It didn't make any sense I had three kids that didn't fit in my car, and so...

How much weight have you lost, and have you done it by changing your habits, or the pills advertised on your station?

Both of those. I lost 110 lbs three and a half years ago. I kept most of it off, I added a lot of muscle. I did a lot of it with eating right and exercising a lot, the healthy trim. Eating right. I had a serious eating disorder. I could kill food nonstop. Literally nonstop. I go to Stingray, my favorite sushi joint here and kill it. I get the bill and I freak out. I'd be like "What are you talking about? How is this \$200?"

How do you feel being on the radio even though you have no knowledge of music?

The good news is, with Kiss FM, it's a Top 40 radio station, it's pop music, and all I've ever enjoyed my entire life is pop music. I listened to Kiss when I was a little kid, living in Chandler. It's pop music. I actually love pop music. My partner Rich loves rock and roll, he grew up on rock and roll, and actually knows a lot about music. So I'm more about pop culture and TV, he's more about music.

Johnjay Van Es Interview- Uncut

Written by Claire Perkins

What do you like and dislike about your job?

There are so many likes about my job- I have so much fun getting on the radio, trying to entertain people, make people laugh. I usually try to make my parter laugh. I love going out to a restaurant and hearing people at anther table talking about something they heard on the show in the morning. When we make people talk about what they heard, there was so much passion they talk about what they heard, if it's sad, if it's funny, even if they hate us. I love it all.

What I don't like- Sometimes I look at the alarm clock in the morning and it's 2:30 or 2:45 or 3:00 [a.m.] and I go "you gotta be kidding me" cause it's the time when some people are just coming home.

What are you going to do about Lego, the dog that keeps escaping?

Lego is one of the most beautiful dogs, he's a cockapoo, but he is a daily struggle in our lives. Today I went home for fifteen minutes, altogether we have 3 rescue dogs- the other two are great, they don't escape. Yesterday, I wish you guys could see this, we have a normal fence around the backyard, he would dig through it. So we'd put chicken wire around the fence, which kind of devalued the neighborhood, then he still dug through that. Put the chicken wire underground, dug through that. Then we put cinder blocks- we had it professionally done, like a prison, then we did [more] because he figured out where it ended. Then we tried an electric fence, so he couldn't get through the electric fence. He didn't care, he ran through it and got out. So we had to amp up the charge on the fence. My wife and I talked about it, we live kind of close to Camelback. It's going to be a sad story if he ever gets hit. So we thought maybe there's someone in Chandler or Gilbert who has a farm who could take him. But we thought maybe that's too far, maybe there's a trainer who can help. We were also looking at sending him away to school. I started thinking he had too much energy, so I'd ride my bike for five miles with him on a leash, wearing him out. We take him to the dog park. On my bike I feel guilty cause the other dogs don't get the exercise. I'm going to take him on a steep hike next. When he's home, he's lovable, beautiful, just wants to be there. When we're with him.

Did you ever figure out who stole your tire cover?

No. The tire cover story. Well I kinda did figure it out. Kinda. My dad always said "life is good" and he died three years ago and I always honor him with different things and one of them is "life is good". It says it on my e-mail and I have a "life is good" tire cover. Rich and I went to San Diego to do the show from there for a few days, I left my jeep at the radio station, and someone stole my tire cover. And then the person started leaving me messages at work and he was disguising his voice and we didn't know what he wanted. He kept saying "Why won't you call me back?" but he never gave me his number. And then I came home one day and the tire cover was on my car. But I don't think it was the same tire cover. I'm thinking about moving because I think too many people know where I live.

Read On for Johnjay Van Es' Favorite Valley Hotspots.

Favorite Mexican Food

That's a tie right now. Los Sombreros and Blanco.

Favorite Newscaster

Tara Hitchcock

Favorite Coffee Place

Starbucks

Favorite Brunch

Paradise Valley Country Club

Favorite Brunch

I kill Taylor's Cafe every weekend

Best Place to Buy Jeans

Moody Blues

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Written by Claire Perkins

Best Place to Stay in the Valley

Montelucia

Best Place to Watch the Big Game

Majerle's

Most Glamorous Place to Party

Downstairs at the US Airways before Suns Games

Favorite Annual Event

The PANDA fashion show for kids, and the Christmas Wish-a-Thon broadcast at Tempe Marketplace

Best Golf Course

The White Mountain Country Club in Pinetop

Best Outing

Pinetop

Best Place for Gadgets

I have a gadget guy who brings them to my house. Theater X. They're phenomenal.

Most Influential Man in the Valley

Pastor Terry Crist, and Kurt & Brenda Warner

Best Hair Salon or Barber Shop

V's Barber Shop

Best Spot for a Birthday Party

Airworks Indoor Trampoline Center in Chandler

Best Place to Break a Sweat

Bikrham Yoga Paradise Valley

Most Romanic Date

Eddie V's, St. Francis, Stingray or Geisha-a-Go-Go

Best Kids Restaurant

Chelsea's Kitchen

Photos by Werner Segarra

Styling by Diane Aiello

Art Direction by Leigh Arthur

Location- Ritz-Carlton Phoenix

Clothing by Saks Fifth Avenue