



Tim "T" Campbell of Tunes by T hits the right note for holiday entertainment.

Turning Tunes

by Judy Barker. Photo by Terri Shaver.

Despite the best-laid plans, the wrong choice in musical entertainment could take the sparkle out of any holiday party this season.

Assuring a successful event means choosing the right professional music service from the start. Among the most popular ways for providing customized party sound is to hire a mobile disc jockey (DJ).

During the past few decades, the DJ profession, once very localized, has become a national business, as it's gone from a hobby to a full-fledged profession, observed an industry expert in a *Mobile Beat* magazine article (May/June 2001). In addition, it reported an interview of disc jockeys nationwide revealed a universal vein in their responses: Personal service is what separates one company from another.

The evolution of longtime area mobile DJ services leader Tunes by T mirrors both trends. As a kid, owner Tim "T" Campbell remembers listening to Casey Cassem's Top 40 and said, "I knew every song on the radio by heart—including artist, title and words." He went from carting his 45s and vinyl LPs to parties in the '70s, to launching his business in 1983. He started out with "a couple of turntables, speakers and amplifier from Marshall Music," eventually growing into the full-fledged, multisystem professional service it is today.

Campbell embraces the idea of individualized service as key to his success and always strives to put the clients' wishes first. "When they're hiring Tunes by T, it's our job to deliver what they want." It means meeting with clients to define thoroughly their wants and needs, long before the actual event, to guarantee a professional and polished service. He claims "99 percent of the people we talk to worry that we may be cheesy or steal the show," which he can assure will never happen to his clients.

Finding and training good DJs is a big part of the company's success. "To be good at an event, we need to teach them to be on their toes, pay attention to everything and know how to finesse and adjust," said Peter Mayor, Campbell's operations manager, who joined the company several years ago.

Wedding receptions, corporate parties, school dances and other occasions represent a large percentage of Campbell's clientele, but he's also developed an enviable niche in sporting venues. A framed *Detroit Free Press* arti-

cle from May 2002 hangs in his office. An excerpt sums up his key role:

“... the Wings’ seventh man steps in. He has no stick, no skates, and no pads. Just eight tape decks, a box full of mini-discs and a musical sense as attuned to the fans’ moods as Dominik Hasek’s on-ice sense is to the Avalanche offensive line. ...”

Today, Campbell has four units dedicated to stadium/arena events including the Detroit Red Wings and Michigan State University hockey games as well as MSU basketball games. About his sports clientele, Campbell has said, “I’m there to enhance the game atmosphere. I don’t want to compete against the game, or make it sound like a three-ring circus!” Also, key—his almost 40 years playing competitive hockey himself makes Campbell that much more uniquely qualified for the job.