

Dan's Papers

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By Dan Rattiner

Radio personality Lisa G, who is one of the three members of the team on the *John Gambling Show* on WOR every morning, is a frequent visitor of the Hamptons and the Quogue/Westhampton Beach area. She is a vivacious, pretty, blond woman in her thirties, and was hired, she said, to bring a younger sound to the long-running *John Gambling Show* and to let listeners know what is happening in New York City, where she lives.

"John is based in New Jersey," she said, "and of course he's been running the show from 5-9 a.m. for more than twenty years, and I give it a kind of Manhattan/Long Island feel."

Lisa G grew up in Woodmere, Long Island, the middle child of a man who was the president of a hair brush company. "I discovered radio when I was about twelve," she said. "I became an intern at WLIR in Garden City when I was at Hewlett High School, and the reason I got fascinated with it, my parents said, was that I sometimes seemed to have an on-air button go off in my head, which was because as a middle child, nobody was really listening to me at home."

I asked her about her older and younger siblings. Both are girls. Her older sister lives in Quogue full time. Her name is Bonnie Fuchs and has a daughter, Casey, six and a half, and her younger sister is Andrea Cantor and has a daughter Jennifer, who will be eight in September. This is a world of girls.

"Both of my sisters and both of their children have been on radio with me," Lisa said. "Jeanie seems most interested in it."

Lisa went to Hofstra on a scholarship and did a morning show on college radio. In the afternoons she worked at WBAB in Babylon. She graduated in three years. "During my college years," Lisa said, "I lived in Point Lookout with three law students. That's across from Jones Beach, next to Lido Beach. I love living on the water."

After Hofstra, she went to Chicago where she got a job as an afternoon news person on a rock radio station. "One day the morning news person called in sick, and I filled in. I've been a morning person since, and I love it. I get up at four, I'm at work at five."

Who's Here:



Lisa G Radio Personality

After a few years in Chicago, Lisa returned to New York – this was in the late 1980s – to the rock station WNEW-FM. In 1990, she moved to Hot 97. She's had an apartment on the Upper East Side of Manhattan ever since she has been back. "I never felt that I ever really left Long Island," she said. "There are lots of beautiful places out here, and I'm just a Long Island girl."

In the early 1990s, Lisa, still at Hot 97, now a hip hop station, founded a morning show, 6-10 a.m. with Ed Lover, who bills himself as the number one black Jew in America, and Dr. Dre. "It was not hard to learn hip hop, for me anyway," Lisa said. "It's just another subculture, like

Hasidim is a subculture. I'm certainly not closed-minded about it. Anyway, we were all Long Islanders. Ed from Queens, Dre from Westbury and me from Woodmere. We had a great time. When we started the new show, the producer said, can I talk the talk, and I said, 'Absolutely. I'm a white Jewish woman in a hip hop world and comedy and personality are not about the color of your skin.'"

I asked Lisa about some of the highlights of her career. She said she had been selected as the Billboard Air Personality of the Year last year, and she was very proud of that. "I've sung 'It's Not Unusual' with Tom Jones, I've sung 'Can't Get Enough of Your Love' with Barry White, I've interviewed Tito Puente. I recently sang to Placido Domingo the menu of his new restaurant in Manhattan at East 49th street, and I tried to invite him to join in, but he just laughed instead." Lisa smiled. "I think in real life I am rather quiet," she said.

I asked what she thought would be the future of talk radio. "It's cooled off a little bit. With the Internet and satellites, you'll be able to get anything, anywhere, all over the country. All cars in 2001 will have systems for satellite radio installed, and of course you'll be able to download to mp3 players."

What does she do in the Hamptons, I asked her. "When I am out here in Quogue visiting my sister, it's kind of like the Summer Olympic Games 2000: I run, swim, play tennis, kayak, go golfing, and I know where the scene is, and I can go to it or I can leave it and just be very low key. One night, for instance, I can be at Ted Field's party, and another night I can be at employee's night at the Stephen Talkhouse in Amagansett. Lisa smiled. "I am having a great time," she said. •

As we went to press on Tuesday we learned that the show *Rambling with Gambling*, which features Lisa G, will be having its last performance this week. There have been three generations of *John Gambblings*. The first, opening on the show on WOR in 1925. Altogether there have been 23,616 *Rambling with Gambling* shows – certainly the longest running radio show in history.