

"Our Daily Show!" Hits 1M Views in 2023, Host CJ Nasello Reflects

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - For [Our Daily Show!](#) host CJ Nasello, every morning from 9–11 a.m. is a chance to share the community he loves.

Our Daily Show! has amassed over 1,000,000 views since Jan. 1, 2023, on the hundreds of interviews that CJ has done with Riverbend community members. Now, he's looking back on how it all got started, his favorite interview ever (the answer may surprise you) and what's next for the hyperlocal community talk show.

"So many people have an awesome story," CJ said. "Think about it. You drive by Hayner Library every day, but you don't realize all the really cool stuff and genealogy and distribution they're doing. We drive by buildings all the time. I thought, well, heck, let's start focusing on those and really exploring that. We all have history here, but it's never really talked about. So that's what the whole point was."

CJ is a natural in the studio, but he didn't start out with the goal of becoming a radio personality. With a background in business, CJ took a job at KTRS in St. Louis when he was 19. He ran the board for a Sunday talk show and a real estate show, then worked his way up to Mizzou basketball games.

He was comfortable behind the scenes, but he began attracting attention from the hosts he worked with. Finally, one of them decided to give him a shot.

"They said, 'Can you run the board for Ray Hartman?' And I said, 'Absolutely,'" CJ remembered. "And then Ray said, 'Do you want to come on the air and talk with me a bit?' And I said, 'Hell, yeah.'"

A new passion was born. CJ became the daytime board operator for Jennifer Blome, Wendy Wiese, Heidi Glaus and Josh Gilbert, then went on air with Ray Hartman at night.

CJ learned from "the best St. Louis personalities in media," but after a while, he wanted to see a more modern approach to the talk shows. Listening to the radio on his commute one day, he realized that most of what they covered wasn't relevant to him or his community.

"When you drive in your car, you listen to everything that's all St. Louis-related. You never hear anything about what's happening here locally," he pointed out.

He met with John Hentrich, RiverBender.com CEO, and pitched a talk show that would be "the primary town square," the go-to spot for news, business, events and history in the Alton area.

One year and a million views later, that vision has become even more successful than CJ imagined. He's on the air every weekday from 9–11 a.m. on Our Daily Show!, and almost every community leader, nonprofit organizer or small business star in the Riverbend has joined him in the studio at least once.

Those interviews are natural, easygoing conversations. CJ tells every guest to pretend they're sitting at a bar, catching up about the cool things happening in the community. He never knows for sure what will come up during an interview, but he always tries to connect with his guests and “get the sense of the person talking to and the brand.”

“My big goal is just to make sure I could make everyone comfortable being on the air,” he said, adding, “Without being on the RiverBender.com platform, the show wouldn't be successful. There were already podcasts around. There was already local stuff. With the distribution platform of RiverBender, we were able to capitalize on that and grab the blueprint and grow from there and become the prominent talk show. Without them, I wouldn't be here.”

Over the past year, CJ has had a lot of fun and poignant moments on the show. He enjoyed his conversations with his former football coach [Eric Dickerson](#), his brother and the [Veterans Golf Association](#), and his father [Greg Nasello](#) when he returned as head coach for the Alton High School boys' soccer team. He loved speaking with [David Zimmerman](#), and his interview with [Anne Montgomery](#), one of the first female sportscasters, also stands out.

But his favorite interview was with World War II veteran, former POW, and RiverBender.com neighbor [Bob Ryan](#). CJ remembers chatting with Ryan in the lobby every morning as they both arrived at the RiverBender.com building. He was honored to bring Ryan on Our Daily Show! to hear about his life, which just further proved to CJ that everybody has an important story to tell if you're willing to listen.

Looking forward, CJ hopes to do more with Our Daily Show!, with plans to add more cameras and increase the audience interaction. The show has already grown since he started one year ago, but there's a lot more in store.

“The goal was always going to be to grow and expand it,” he explained. “The sky's the limit. But the big goal really is just to grow, and you do that with local support and local sponsors like RiverBender's done for 18 years...It's bigger than me, bigger than one person. That's why it never was ‘CJ in the Morning’ or anything like that. It was ‘Our Daily Show!’ because to me, the show is going to be here hopefully years after I'm gone. But it's my commitment to be here for the community every day.”

That's the goal for Our Daily Show!, but what does the ideal future look like for CJ? He has a ready answer.

“The ideal would be to stay here,” he said. “RiverBender's got the platform. I don't need to move to New York. I don't need to move to Los Angeles. We can keep growing with me driving five minutes from my home and being a part of the community I love.”

Congratulations to CJ Nasello and [Our Daily Show!](#) for one million views! Tune in to Our Daily Show! every weekday from 9–11 a.m. on [RiverBender.com](#) or wherever you listen to podcasts. Anyone interested in a sponsorship on CJ's show can e-mail him at cj@riverbender.com.