>> From WXXI News, it's 1370 Connection.

[Background Music]

>> I'm Bob Smith and my guest for this segment, for all their presentation at 8 o'clock tonight at RIT's Web Auditorium, the Happy Mutant's Guide to the Modern Maker Movement. Now, that leaves you just as curious and as just puzzled as it did me when I started looking into it, but stay with us. Hear all about it from Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair for the latest from the Caroline Werner Gannett series of lecture speakers. They're gonna tell us all about how they found fulfillment, helping people rediscover the joy of making things, not just buying it. They are proprietors of the the Boing Boing website and blog, and Make magazine. Miss Sinclair is also editor of Craft Magazine and you are going to be seeing them this coming May and the broadcast is gonna be taped next week on Martha Stewart Show which, of course, airs on another station here in town at 10 o'clock every weekday morning and you're also going to be able to take part of the participatory workshop tomorrow from 9 to 11:30 A.M. over the Carlson Auditorium. The RIT will actually get to roll up your sleeves and build and brainstorm stuff too. Meanwhile, we get to talk about it all right now. Thanks for coming and thanks for joining today.

[Inaudible Remark]

>> First of all, how come a lot of us have gotten alienated from the act of making and creating something tangible, whether it's craft or art or something purely functional with no particular static aim to it other than accomplishing some other purpose? How come a lot of us aren't doing it anymore?

>> Yeah. Well, there are several reasons, you know. For a long time, there was a huge DIY movement that really hicked up after World War II when service men were coming with newly acquired skills and they were moving to suburbs where there was a lot of room to build workshops and there were a lot of projects to do, you know, making go cart with lawnmower engines and things like that. But they're -- things were also expensive at the time. People would repair their own television sets by pulling the tubes out at the back and replacing them and things like that but as things become cheaper and cheaper in this kind of flood of cheap consumer goods from overseas came over, not only did it become more expensive to pick something and to buy something. It became really hard to fix things. Around that time, we started seeing labels that would say "no user serviceable parts inside" and things, you know, they were glued together or put together with tamper-proof screws and people were discouraged from maintaining their own things. So they didn't have the skills to fix things, therefore, they didn't have the skills to make new things and the, you know, the computer came along, the internet, video games, kind of took attention from DIY. People forgot about it for a while.

>> Yeah, you certainly -- even in your transportation, I remember the days when probably dating myself a little bit when you could wile away an afternoon adjusting and rebuilding a quadrajet carburetor on top of good, old GM V8. They don't even make that many V8's anymore for cars and they sure have no carburetors on top of them either. So everything is all closed box, electronically controlled fuel injection. Have we lost something with that in

the process of getting something of what's allegedly more reliable than what came before but hardly fixable if it did break?

>> You know, we did lose something with that and I think crafting was a little -- we lost that in a different way I think for a while because of the -- in the 1970's with the Women's Liberation Movement. I think people started to equate crafting and making things with the domestic life and you know, people were trying to move away from that. But I think that making things and crafting things are inherent to being a human being and I think that even in the '80s when crafting and making wasn't mainstream, people were still doing it. People were pressing their own magazines which people called "zines" and during the Punk Movement, people were passing their own records in their basements. People are always making things but in different ways. So, maybe they weren't fixing their cars but they may have been, you know, creating their records and magazines.

>> Yeah.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Was something lost when some of those people actually ended up getting signed to record contracts and going mainstream?

>> I don't think necessarily so. I mean, you know, some people did go mainstream but I think the DIY Movement has flourished and people find areas where they can do DIY. It is hard to work on your own car now. I remember reading somewhere saying -- somebody wrote that "there's a hood under the hood for cars today" and that's very true. You know, you open it up and it's inaccessible.

>> Yeah, that's the air plant for the fuel injection.

>> Yeah. Exactly. And so, you have to look at where you can make things and it might be making older cars or it might be taking an older car and converting it to electrical powered, which a lot of people to.

>> It occurs to me that one of the few places that's finding commercial application right now that may have started moving things along is knowing about the history of the Hip Hop Music Movement where they really were doing it in their basements and spreading around on tapes and starting in community auditoriums, and that's where everybody from Run DMC to P. Diddy got their start, and there are still some more, including OutKast and other groups that are doing there and moving up the line that way now. So in a way, the hip hop folks rediscovered it.

>> Well, I, you know, I think that, you know, the hip hop scene and the punk scene have actually helped revive this new crafting and making movement. They've definitely -- they are behind a lot of the steps that's going on now. There is, you know, people -- we know people who are -- like this Greg Der. Ananian who does Bazaar Bizarre Craft Fair across the country. He was very much into the punk scene actually and he now has this craft fair in a book and it's all about crafting and making things that are appealing, I think, to younger crowd so that crafting isn't that just in the granny section anymore of the craft store.

>> That's right. It's for under a 3,000 too. 263-WXXI by the way, 263-9994. We're talking about people who will bring back the art and the science of making

things and marrying them up to instruction by technology. We're talking with Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair of the Boing Boing website and blog, Make Magazine, Craft Magazine, soon to appear in the Martha Stewart Show, appearing right now on 1370 Connection from WXXI AM and FM HD2. I'm Bob Smith, your number to call in. If you're doing this or if you're curious about how to get started, call me in 263-WXXI, 263-9994 or write in asktalk@wxxi.org. All lines and the electronic mail box are open right now for you. What's the most unusual thing you either made or remade?

>> Personally, well, I think one of the things that a lot of people would think as unusual but I'm really happy with is I've modified my Espresso machine. I have a really nice Expresso machine. It costs 5 or 600 dollars. The problem with it is that the temperature variation of the water can swing as much as 40 degrees Fahrenheit and that makes a huge difference in the quality of coffee and it's something that's really hard to control and for years, people who have owned this particular Espresso machine called the Rancilio Silvia have come up with these methods of trying to lock in the temperature, they called it temperature surfing where they turn on the boiler, turn it off, do this and that, turn the steamer on for a little while but around 2001, a fellow who works at the Bureau of Standard came up with a way to control the Espresso temperature -- the water in the machine by attaching a device called a Proportional-Integral-Derivative-Temperature-Controller and it's used to really tightly control the temperature of fluids in scientific or industrial applications. And so, he said, "Well, I'm gonna add this to my Espresso machine and see what happens," and he was writing about this on the alt.coffee usenet group on the internet and it ended up working and people really loved it. And so, I did it to my coffee machine and the temperature only varies by one degree with this and it really makes excellent Espresso and it's reliable now.

>> How much does it cost to do that?

>> About a couple of 100 dollars in parts. The interesting though is this is very much a DIY-driven technology. These Espresso companies that have been making machines for hundreds or not a hundred but over hundred years -- some of these companies have been in business and they have teams of R&D engineers who work on refining their machines for cafes and home use, never thought of doing this. They've been using the old bimetallic thermostats to control water temperature but these guys who created this did it on their own. They're not Espresso experts, they're just DIY generalists. Now, the Espresso companies have started adding this to their machines and the high-end machines in cafes are using this system and they're starting to arrive in home machine but it's a great example of the user's driving innovation which is really what a lot of this is about.

>> Is there anything that you can't do with a few parts and a little know-how and research?

>> Well, it depends on what you are doing, you know. The good thing is it used to be a hard to source certain materials that you might need for a project, certain parts or components but eBay has -- and Craig's List have turned into like these giant surplus parts store so you can find almost anything you need to make anything which is incredible and then the internet has also connected people to each other so that, you know, if you're interested in making Tesla Coils, giant Tesla Coils in your backyard that throw off 10-foot long lightning bolts, chances are you're not gonna find another person on your block that

shares that interest. But if you go on the internet, in 15 seconds you're gonna find a thousand other people who are into it and are actually excited to help you make sure you make the best Tesla Coil on your block.

>> I've never thought of making Tesla Coils although I know what they are. I've seen them and do you ever wonder whether, "Hey, I might shoot a straight bolt and bother my neighbor's cat," or something like that?

[Laughter]

>>It's possible. But at the same time, when you think of, Carla, what you've worked o and put together, what's the kind of strangest thing you've ever built from scratch or repurposed?

[Laughter]

>> I don't know if I know strange crafting as much as I like reading about it and learning from other people but I'm more main -- a little more mainstream. I -- there's a woman Jenny Ryan who revived the whole embroidery scene by making really cool patterns for people. She said that she wanted to embroider but when she went to the craft store, it was all kind of old fashion, you know, stuff from the '60s and '50s. And so, she started creating patterns like, you know, hulla girls and bats and skulls--

>> Zombies.

>> -- and zombies and those kinds of pattern which you can get, it called sublime stitching.

>> Yeah.

>> And you know, you can go online and get her patterns and now, she's commissioning artists to do patterns. And so, I've been, you know, doing things that are fun and more urban crafting but I would -- don't know if they're strange. I wish I could say I have.

[Laughter]

>> But you find that you're able to take a lot of things that are originally made for one purpose and adapt it to another. Is there anything that can't be adapted to do something else, maybe a lot different from what the original designer bought of?

>> What do you mean by that?

>> Well, I mean could you take any object and preferably find another purpose for it or to tweak it so that it would do something else?

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Yeah, I think you can -- yeah, you can take probably anything and you know, right now, I'm interested in -- I've been doing some knitting and I'm interested in knitting with shopping bags. A lot of people are taking plastic shopping bags and creating beautiful dresses. Some people have created very beautiful things by knitting, creating -- taking these plastic bags and turning them into pieces

of yarn and then stitching with them and people also fuse plastic bags together to make tote bags and raincoats and hats and they're really cool-looking and so, that's what my next project is going to be.

>> 263-WXXI, share your projects. So if you've got some people who make things and make things out of different t things. You're here with us right now. Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair will present the Happy Mutant's Guide to the Modern Maker Movement today at RIT's Web Auditorium. They're bringing craftsmanship to a new and different place than it's ever been before, marrying it to the technology of information as well and they're sharing it with us this hour on 1370 Connection. We'll be getting the phones in just a moment at 263-WXXI, 263-9994. In the meantime, are a lot of people doing this now out of necessity because they may get a desire to have something but they can't necessarily afford and so easily buy it anymore?

>> Oh, I wanna tell the story of Mark. I mean we can afford woodens spoons but Mark, when he's on the phone talking to people, he always needs to fidget. And so, he goes outside and collects a branch outside in the backyard and within half an hour, he widdles his wooden spoons and they're beautiful. They are really cool and of course, that is something people can afford but, yeah, I think that -- it's actually cheaper to take a branch from your backyard and make a spoon and it's fun and they're unique and that's just one example of something you can make from almost -- for free.

>> Yeah, that people are wanting to understand where their food come, how it's produced, where their energy comes from, all these pipes and wires that are leading into our houses and just investigating if there are ways reduce or eliminate those inputs, both for financial reasons and environmental reasons. And so, that's just a natural tendency and then in, you know, tough economic times like this even more so. So, you know, the idea of figuring out ways to really increase their vegetable gardens through, you know, geeked-out gardening techniques or, you know, obtaining energy from the wind or the sun or even running water. Those things suddenly become a lot more interesting to people in times like these.

>> And to the phones, we go at 263-WXXI, 263-9994, starting with Emily in Rochester on the line. Hi Emily, you're on the air with us.

>> Hi there! I was really excited to hear the topic because this weekend there's a DIY fest at the School Without Walls and I'm doing a workshop there. So, a great time to sort of plug it.

>> And for those who don't know, School Without Walls is an alternative high school here in the city in Rochester which is if I'm not mistaken Broad Street is?

>> Yeah, right at Alexander.

>> Right.

>> And from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM, there will free workshops and I'll run down a little list of them here if that's okay?

>> Oh sure, why not.

>> Like solar home system, making vegan soup with food nut buns, knitting, vegetable fermenting, know your rights, alternative menstruation that's my workshop, [laughter] eating local year round, starting your own business, urban agriculture, wheat pasting, free schooling, making sour dough bread. There's tons of activities going on and workshops and I didn't even list them all but I'm really excited about it. There's definitely more of a movement towards DIY that's just happening.

>> That sounds like a pretty eclectic agenda. Is that what usually happens when craftspeople do-it-yourselfers get together?

>> Yeah, I think so. It sounds really cool to me. You should be writing articles for us.

>> Okay. And thanks very much, Emily, for checking in. We have Betsy in Brighton next on the line. Hi Betsy, you're on the air.

>> Hi, I was glad to hear her talking about knitting. We had -- I'm a member of the Rochester Knitting Guild and we had a session I think a year ago about extreme knitting and people were making hammocks using poles as knitting needles and rope and also, there was an art teacher over at the Twelve Corners Middle School who was also using plastic shopping bags and she was crocheting them into these beautiful handbags using the different colors from the different stores and making like desert scenes. And somebody else was knitting recycled plastic tablecloth into beach totes because you don't have to worry about them getting wet. You can wash them down and get the sand out of them. And I think with the economic environment, it's probably good for our society that such a throw-away society to look into how do we reuse some of those things that we consider so disposable instead of just filling up landfills.

>> Yeah, that's great. There's also someone who uses salvages, the very edges of fabric bolts and she created a beautiful dress out of that as well.

>> 263-WXXI, we have Chris on the cellphone next. Hi Chris, you're on the air.

>> Oh hi, and thanks for taking my call. I'm a piano rebuilder and I've actually lent a piano to WXXI. So I've -- anyway--

>> Thank you.

>> I'm getting like a call a week from people that want to discard old pianos, which was major industry, you know, a hundred years ago and there was tremendous resources, metal, steel, copper, wood, first-growth timber bound up in these pianos and I'm running out of things to tell people. There's just this massive giveaway going on and it's very upsetting and perplexing to me as to what to do with those resources. So I wanted to put that out there, if anybody's got any great ideas, boy, I'd like to hear 'em.

>> Okay. Well, by the way, thank you for your piano. If you want to hear what we're doing with it, check in some of the performance programs that we air quite periodically on our FM sister station and you'll hear it.

>> Oh, I've been listening, thanks.

>> Very good. Thanks very much for checking in at 263-WXXI. Yep. Are a lot of perfectly good things getting thrown away?

>> Yeah, they are. People throw things away all the time and you know, in a way that's a big benefit of people who are interested in making things because they can pickup free stuff on Craig's List or they can just pickup things off the curve. My friend found an old Captain Fantastic pinball machine just in the middle of the street and took it home and spent a few days figuring out how to repair it. He had never seen the inside of a pinball machine before but he figured it out. It was -- he described it as a great adventure and now he's got this awesome pinball machine in his garage.

>> All based around an Elton John theme?

>> Yeah, Captain Fantastic pinball machine.

>> And from the album Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy, which I didn't know that a pin -- I knew there was a pinball wizard machine that depicted Elton John from the Tommy movie. I didn't know there was that too.

>> Yeah.

>> It's a great album but I didn't know it inspired a pinball machine, in't it? You learn many new things everyday. Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair who together are proprietors of the Boing Boing website and blog, Make Magazine, Ms. Sinclair also editor of Craft Magazine are bringing the art and the science of crafting back to all of us and they're going to be speaking this evening at 8:00 at RIT's Web Auditorium as part of the Gannett lecture series on the Happy Mutant's Guide to the Modern Maker Movement. 263-WXXI, we got Jennifer in Brighton on the line with us in 1370 Connection. Hi, Jennifer. You're on the air.

>> Hi, Bob. Earlier you said you were wondering why people would wanna make things and I really wanted iPod speakers for Christmas and I just didn't want my, you know, I wanted my kids to give them to me but they're expensive. So, my son signed on this website instructables.com, a way to make iPod speaker out of like a little, mini cereal box, and the speaker from a musical greeting card.

>> Hmm.

>> And he's 12 and he did it with very little help from his father and it's awesome speaker.

>> That's really cool. Instuctables is a great site.

>> Yeah, and we get Make, I mean, you know.

>> Oh cool, thank you.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> We don't forget Make Magazine, but I just thought that was great. And so, he's off and running with some of the stuff and make it really technical and hard for kids but some of the stuff they -- both my kids enjoy doing.

>> Oh good! Well, you know, near the end of the year we're going to have a "Make For Kids" issue, so I think your son will really enjoy it.

>> Oh, do you know about the Maker Fair that we have every year?

>> No, is it here? [Laughter] Where is it?

>> No, there's one in Austin. I don't know if they're doing Austin this year though and there's one in Northern California but there's so many kids that come to that. It's very family friendly.

>> Oh, cool.

>> It's in May.

>> Yeah, we really like the magazine, and what time is the lecture tonight?

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> 8 o'clock.

>> It's 8 o'clock.

>> 8 o'clock, okay. Cool.

>> And then there's the workshop tomorrow at 9 are Carlson Auditorium too if you care to take part in that. Thanks very much for calling in at 263-WXXI. We're talking with Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair who are couple of the leaders of the new movement to marry good old fashioned craftsmanship with modern information technology and modern dissemination of information. They're here with us right now on 1370 Connection from WXXI AM and FM HD2 and you can be a part of a conversation. 263-WXXI, 263-9994 or write to us asktalk@wxxi.org. Wonder if we're changing our attitudes in a way and maybe that explains perhaps the success of television networks like Food Network, House and Garden Television, that kind of thing, the shows that takes you through the steps and shows you how to do something, whatever it is, whether you wanna replicate a restaurant quality meal or whether you want to build something or fix up your house or create a piece of furniture or what have you. Well, out of the weekend programming on public television stations across the country that people like Norm Abram or the folks at this old house.

>> Yeah, I mean people -- it's so much easier sometimes to watch someone else doing it rather than, you know, the magazine is a great way also to learn how to do something but of course when you're watching on television, you know, you get to actually see the person doing it and you know, we have a podcast too, you know, the video instruction on makingcraftzine.com, and I think that we do -- we're very successful with that. We get over a million downloads a year. So I think people, you know, they wanna see how it's done. So yeah, the television is really a great way to go.

>> Yeah, and Make has a television show actually too, produced by Twin Cities Public Television. It's going into our 5th or 6th episode now.

>> Hmm.

>> We have a lot of projects in that.

>> Great! So the idea being if people see it, they'll try it.

>> I think so.

>> Right.

>> Yeah, or at least they'll appreciate the process that goes into making something.

>> 263-WXXI, Elizabeth in Penfield is on the line. Hi, Elizabeth. You're on the air.

>> Hi! I was compelled to call because one of the things that -- I have an environmental background in conservation and I'm also an artist, and I've decided to go full time with my art in the past couple of years as a -- I work with clay and then spending are huge conflicts to me whether I wanna continue working with new materials 'cause I've always worked with recycling materials as well, you know, in the winter months, making things out of old fabrics and old wool sweaters and things. But the thing that has driven me to make some decisions, you know, I still have all my equipment and I'm not sure what to do with it but I've -- so, the conflict is there. Do I wanna create out of new materials, the clay and continue doing that but, you know, the more I get frustrated with there's so much, you know, there's so many materials out there you can't, you know, you can't go over to the grocery store anywhere without being confronted with the dilemma of what do you do with these? So, you know, I'm on the internet at least twice a week looking up a piece of material, what can I do with this. [Laughter] So, I think this is a great thing that you're doing and I just wanna let you know there's a lot of people out there who's giving more interest and I hope you have a great turnout tonight.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Well, thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> Alright. Thanks.

>> Yeah, thanks very much for calling in at 263-WXXI, 263-9994. We have Tim in Russia on the line next. Hi, Tim. You're on the air.

>> Hi! I just wanted to comment that I'm making paper out of recycled materials that I'm getting from just around town, the library in town and there's whole sorts of things you can do. I've just made a birthday card for my mom. It got a little flower petals in there and just, you know, having a mindset, I think, of using whatever at hand in a creative fashion, whether it's to save money or to just, you know, say "I care about somebody." There's a real shift, I think, in our mindset and I'm really happy to hear that WXXI is making this happen.

>> How did you learn how to make paper?

>> I went to the library to find out how. I just got a book. I mean this project is really kind of fun and very low cost. I don't think I spent more than 20 dollars in the process.

>> I've seen paper made out of sliced orange peel, oranges and lemons and people have made paper out of vegetables. Have you seen any of that?

>> I -- only in books. I haven't yet seen anybody actually making paper but it's definitely gonna be something I have my eye on in art shows coming up this year in Rochester. There is a display at RIT that I saw. They have an artist who made paper themselves and made landscapes out of it. So, this -- it's just very -- it's something that's very fun, very versatile, and very affordable.

>> And I've heard about making paper out of wood. I've heard about making paper out of textile fiber and that kind of thing. I haven't heard about making paper out of food products.

>> Yeah I've seen it and it's beautiful.

>> Yeah, it's quite amazing, and it also can have a pleasant scent too depending on what you are going for, like I just added cinnamon to mine so [laughter] smells good.

>> Oh, cool.

>> It smells like --and I'm [inaudible].

>> Now, that's something new. Yes, as we wrap up this particular segment which has been a lot of fun, I'd like to know if more people and people of all ages are starting to get into this now and giving it a try and seeing if they've got the neck.

>> Yeah. I mean I think more and more people are getting into it. I think that the readership of Craft and Make is constantly growing and there's more and more websites online that are, you know, all about DIY and crafting. So, it's definitely a growing movement.

>> Is the web where the action is as far as learning these days?

>> Well, it's such a great place because you can connect with people all over the world and find people that have similar interest as you. So -- and it's just such a great resource.

>> Yeah, and then the web is the primary place where all this is happening and then I think the other really cool thing are these kinds of maker spaces that are popping up around the country and the world where people get together to show off their things and teach each other and hold informal workshops and lend tools to each other and things like that. There's an organization called DorkBot that's been around for the last 5 or 6 years and they have chapters all across the country in cities and the people get together. I think their sub tag is "People doing strange things with electricity." And so, they have cool robotics and electronics projects or mechanical projects and it's a great place to learn and meet out the people who like to do what you do and be, you know, that kind of physical meeting and interaction is really great and important.

>> And our thanks to our guests of this segment, Mark Frauenfelder and Carla Sinclair who are the proprietors of the Boing Boing website and blog, and Make Magazine and Carla, editor of Craft Magazine.

>> As well, they're going to be presenting the Happy Mutant's Guide to the Modern Maker Movement tonight at the Web Auditorium in the RIT campus as part of the Caroline Werner Gannett lecture series and they're back on campus tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock at the Carlson Auditorium on the RIT Campus and they've been here with us during the last half hour or so here on 1370 Connection here on WXXI AM and FM HD2. I'm Bob Smith. There is more of 1370 Connection to come. We're heading to Albany next right after this short pause.

[Music]

[Background Music]

>> She made the best-selling album of all time and can boast of sales in the tens of millions in Japan, but her first English language album fell flat. Now, Utada is back and hoping to make a splash with her second album in English, "This Is The One."

>> My intent for making this album was to make really good serious pop.

>> Meet Utada next time on Tell Me More.

[Singing]

>> Tonight at 8 on WXXI AM Rochester, and WXXI FM HD2 Rochester.

[Music]

>> 1370 Connection continues on WXXI AM and FM HD2. I'm Bob Smith. The state's budget, well, it's certainly continuing to worry the 20 million New Yorkers on a continuing drama in Albany as the budget process edges forward in its final days largely behind closed doors. We gotta get an update in perspective from our Capital Bureau Correspondent Karen Dewitt and Gannett News Service Albany Bureau Chief Jay Gallagher and thanks for being with us today. We really appreciate it and I have to have--

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Hi Bob, glad to be here.

>> Hi Bob, me too.

>> Gotta ask you both, have we ever seen anything quite like this, quite like these times with this degree of drama and tension playing at?

>> Well, I guess we're good people to ask because Jay spent here even longer than I have and I've had this job 19 years. I would say--

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> How is that possible Karen? That's amazing.

>> Well, you started [inaudible] so you know. You know, I think actually it does seem to be going back to sort of 1980's, early '90s where we had some fiscal crises and what happens usually is everything goes underground which we're seeing now. It's back to 3 men in a room, the governor and the majority party legislative leaders. Sometimes we hear about the leaders meetings and sometimes the leaders come out and talk to reporters but they don't tell us anything other than, "Oh, everything's, you know, going smoothly. We're gonna have an on-time budget." But what's really kind of interesting this week is that the governor, and this is a particular problem for us broadcast reporters, the governor has not talked publicly since Monday morning. He just is avoiding any comments in the media which, you know, when you're driven by tape as we are in sound, it makes it difficult to do stories because you don't really know what the governor thinks about all the things that are happening including an announcement to reduce 8,900 state jobs. He hasn't commented on that or any of the other issues that are going on right now.

>> He just basic--

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> What makes this I think worst than even the times Karen was taking about is the stakes are so big this year. The deficit has been taking about 16 billion which is by far the biggest deficit ever. We have these huge issues about maybe a higher income tax, probably higher taxes on things like utility bills and health insurance policies. The big tax in services it seems, public tax in education aid or at least not big increases and so, we have this huge 120-billion dollar budget or so, and there's big decisions to be made, maybe the biggest in decades and virtually total blackout on what's actually happening.

>> Yeah, and I think that's partly right, you know, because they saw what happened to Governor Paterson. One the reasons why his poll numbers are at historically low rates is because he proposed a lot of unpleasant things in December. So maybe the legislatures think if we don't talk about it, then we won't get blamed which I think [simultaneous talking].

>> Well, that's -- what's -- and of course, what happened after the governor proposed those unpleasant things especially to health care and education, then the lobbyist started to beat up on him and ran TV ads around the state and now, the TV ads have been proven to be effective in moving polls. That's certainly a big part of the governor's poll problem. And so, you the govern -- you have very essentially a weak governor. In fact, some people are calling this process the "two-and-half men in the room" because he is so politically feeble.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> You're so mean, really, you know.

>> So it's -- so we have a big problem and we don't have strong leadership right now.

>> Well, that brings me to one question and given that the approval rating for the governor according to one very recent poll is down around 19 percent which puts him somewhere in public estimation below George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Can we say that he's got any real negotiating power left with the leaders of the legislature?

>> Well, he has a lot of institutional power, that the way the New York system is set up. The governor has a probable position in terms of having to approve every nickel that's spent in the budget in terms of all the appointments, all the agencies that report to him. So, he doesn't have much political leverage but he does have institutional leverage. Now, I think he really missed the big chance frankly with the blast, you know. He had a chance to prove himself to become a strong and decisive leader and say, you know, this is really a difficult thing to do but times are tough and the people in the private sector know that. He decided not to do that and as Karen said, he's been essentially hiding out well, in fact, we're calling his office now at Fort Paterson. We used to refer to the place as Fort Pataki after the former governor put up state trooper guards so that you couldn't get near his office.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> That didn't serve Pataki well in the end. It probably diminished his popularity and visibility enough so that he couldn't go ahead and run for the 4th term that he probably wanted but--

>> That's true but what it wants for Pataki, he had a controlled kind of message. He had very limited access to the press but he had a certain message and he had an agenda though. You know, some might say it was kind of a limited agenda. He did have one and he stuck to it and people whom, you know, are very critical of George Pataki now kind of, you know, missed that in a way that he did seemed to have a lot of discipline about what he did. With Governor Paterson the problem is he doesn't seem to have a clear message. He talked a lot about cutting spending. That's about the only message that he has had but he doesn't seem to be able to follow through with it and yeah, the decrease in his popularity has been just stunning because people did really like him when he started and that's -- it's just amazing how that's gone away.

>> And he didn't have, as it turned out, a terribly tough act to follow either because Governor Spitzer had basically dissipated a lot of the goodwill with which he started in office in 2007 even before he got caught literally with his pants down. So I--

>> Yes, that's right. That's why I think in retrospect, Bob, his fall is even more tragic now than it appeared to be a year ago because a lot of people thought that when he'd came in, including me, what Albany needed was then somebody to kinda pick up by the scruff of the neck and shake it and really make it a totally different place so we can operate totally differently. But now, because he was such in the end a disliked figure, the college -- now, let's go back to the old days when we were more collegial and we didn't really try to rock the boat and maybe we could do better. Well, the old days of Albany were nothing [inaudible] all about. And so, if that is kind of what your goal is, you're obviously gonna not accomplish very much.

>> Of course, [simultaneous talking] David Paterson grew up in that time though and came of age politically and institutionally in that time moving up through the ranks of the state senate. In a way is he -- I'm not gonna say necessarily a prisoner of that culture, but very much a man who bears the imprint of that culture of the 1985 to 2005 period in which he is a legislature.

>> I think you're right. That's a good point, because even though he talked about reform the whole time he was senate democratic leader and he ran with Elliot Spitzer, they were gonna reform Albany, I mean he was part of that ticket too. It's true, he has reverted to what he know best which was this secret of backdoor culture although I think he was cordially left out of that culture in a lot in Albany being in the minority party in the senate. But that's true, he has reverted to that more than -- I mean he portrayed himself as a reformer but he has not followed through with any of those reforms as far as we can say.

>> Our Bureau Correspondent Karen Dewitt and Gannett News Service Albany Bureau Chief Jay Gallagher on the line with us from the state capital, filling us in on what's going on right now with the state budget that's going to have a lot to do with a lot of our lives in the coming months. I'm Bob Smith with you on 1370 Connections from WXXI AM and FM HD2. Let's talk a little for a moment about some of the mixed messages that are coming out of Albany in a way.

>> One which I got from State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli who told me yesterday that if you take into consideration the federal stimulus money that's coming in specifically for state expenditures and ongoing programs, the deficit is not 16 billion dollars in practice but in the end, it's more like 10 billion after you factor in the federal stimulus money for health care and education which lightens the load. Our law maker is factoring that in right now and beginning to craft a budget that takes that into account and looking at the deficit as a smaller figure that they can maybe get their arms around with more modest combination of tax increases and budget cuts than the governor had originally presented them with.

>> As far as we know--

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> I think [stuttering] not only are they taking conservation but we think that they're trying to count it 2 and 3 times if possible, you know. [Laughter] The two things the legislation likes to do the least is cut spending and raise taxes. And so, even though allow this money was earmarked, for example for health care restorations, the governor has proposed moving that around to other areas to try to cut down on some of the revenue raise versus the proposed. So, [simultaneous talking].

>> Maybe he wanted to -- he wants to use the chunk of it to get rid of those so-called nuisance taxes, those 137 taxes in season, from everything from theater tickets to haircuts to you-name-it. But most people think in the end it's gotta be one third of each, one third stimulus money, a third cuts and a third raising taxes on the wealthy since they seem to be the most popular groups to beat up on these days. [Laughter] Easy one now that they're [inaudible].

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Well, because they also -- they also have the most money so let them explore.

>> Well [inaudible].

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> And in the public mind, they are -- they tend to be blamed for a lot of the problems that we're in right now because they are identified with the Wall Street Mobiles who helped mess up the financial services industry and create the crisis. Now, whether that's fair or not is something to be debated at another time but that's what's in the public mind.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Yes, of course, on the other hand, Bob, we have this golden goose or the golden egg problem too.

>> Yeah.

>> That there's a fear that if you raise the tax too high, well then they're just gonna leave and if they leave, they take their wealth with them and maybe their companies with them as well. So, that's the [simultaneous talking] -- that gets the balance disrupted.

>> New York State, duh, really benefited from this Wall Street boom and all these moguls that are hated now because they did pay a very high tax rate on a lot of their bonuses and other earnings capital gains had a high tax rate. So New York was really kinda living off for that money and now that it's gone it's just compounding the problems. But yeah, I do think what rich people are left in the state, they're probably gonna raise the income tax bracket which was cut on them in the 1990's and they're probably gonna have to do that when they eventually come to some kind of budget agreement which mean -- and it's a kind of an exposable that Governor Paterson continues to say that he's against it because that seems like in this day and age a very easy way to score political points to say you're against the rich and you want a tax but he's not biting on that one.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Karen, I know you have to--

>> I think [stuttering] that the schism of a pretty good chip is the negotiations wind down kind of keeping the -- do you find given on that and try to create that for something that the legislation -- maybe some actual cut to the legislation will approve.

>> Karen, I know you have to go in a moment.

>> Yes.

>> One final question I want to put to both of you, and this has to do with the word we just got from Tom Golisano, the billionaire founder of Paychex and former gubernatorial candidate on the independence line. He says he's promising to bank role any New York legislator who butts legislative leaders and votes NO on the state budget that's being drawn up. So there's only a few independent democrats need to stand with the republicans or a few democrats and republicans can break with both of their party leaderships to break the majority in the senate and he says even deadlock and delay is better than a big spending in high tax and budget.

>> Yeah. You know, I think the governor and legislative leaders would disagree with that but that does bring up a good point. There's a lot of disarray among the senate democrats of the slim 32 senate majorities. So any agreement that they get, who knows if they have the votes and there is opposition already among senate democratic conference for taxing the rich, at least by two or three of them don't wanna do it. So yeah, that just is feeding fuel to the fire, I think, at this point.

>> Of course--

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> I have to go hear the republicans give their point of view at the budget. They're largely shutout and they're gonna have a complaining session at 1 PM. So that's what I'm [inaudible].

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> That is interesting. The shoe is very much on the other foot. It's mirror image of the recent past, isn't it?

>> Interesting to watch.

>> Yeah, it is. We'll be looking forward to hearing your reports later on and all thing's considered.

>> Okay.

>> Karen, thanks for joining us. Jay, stay with a we consider--

>> Okay.

>> -- some of the new things that are coming forward, not only Tom Golisano's call for people to rebel against the agreement of the "three men in the room" and vote NO on it which I guess would create a certain amount of delay, wouldn't it?

>> Well, it sure will. But first of all it's -- we don't know what he's -- we want to avoid against it. There's actually no budget yet. There's no deal. I know he says that when you oppose to the higher taxes the issue is of course how do you pull the deficit without doing that. But that would certainly, you know, that would certainly delay things and it adds more confusion. I guess, Bob, one thing we're still getting used to here in Albany is the republicans, when they were in the senate were very disciplined and pretty much all went in lockstep but the democrats were far more fractious groups. You have 5 people from upstate who tend to have different constituencies obviously than the -- I think 23 from New York City and then couple of members from Long Island democrats who have different agendas as well. As a credit, Malcolm Smith is a strong enough leader to whip them all into shape and if he can't, I mean he has no wiggle room whatsoever because as Karen mentioned, the margin's only 32-30 so if he loses just 1 or 2 people, then they can't pass the budget. And the republicans have said that they can provide no help, that they're not gonna -- that no one's gonna vote for budget among 30 republicans including the 4 from the North County and that really makes Smith's job all the more difficult.

>> Seems to me though although we are over a year away from legislative and gubernatorial elections, that it's a very difficult double-edged sword and that each party maybe ending up having a grab-it-by-the-blade and risk getting cut simply because if you block a budget and plunge the state into the kind of chaos that we live through these budget stalemates in the past back in the '90s, then you get that blame. If you pass a budget that people don't like even if it's on time, then you get clobbered too. Is it a case of damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't that both parties may face depending on what popular program gets cut and what taxes rise for whom?

>> Well, I think that the republicans are in far better positioned than the democrats because what they have said and what they keep saying is, "Hey, the democrats are running things. We can't do what we want." So in any blame that there is to be had, they will say it should all go into democrats and they can continue to say they're against the spending more in the aggregate but not really to cut any individual programs. They're also against -- really against the higher taxes. So, I think they -- the republicans see this as a golden opportunity to improve their chances of winning back control next year and that's why I think they've been so adamant about not cooperating at all and not giving many help [inaudible].

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> Will they be able to get away with that as long as somebody doesn't ask, "Okay, what's your ideas? What do you propose to cut to do it your way?"

>> Yeah. Well, they have had some ideas but just sort of general things, nothing very specific and I mean the politicians, they dance all the time and then it's usually pretty effective. And so, I think they're in a good spot. On the other hand, when you look at around the state individual raises, almost all the vulnerable seats next year are now held by republicans versus the democrats. Obviously there are other seats in New York City are really solid and even the 5 upstate seats, the republicans made runs, hard runs of several this year and last year rather. So I mean the democrats are pretty trenched. You know, it all depends between now and next November, [background music] whatever is the economy. You know, if the economy recovers, then [stuttering] the governor's numbers will -- I'm sure will rebound and then people would look more kindly on the legislature.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> He's hoping for a lot weeks like this week on Wall Street then?

>> Yeah, exactly. That's right.

[Simultaneous Talking]

>> On the other hand --

>> Yeah, it'd be interesting what happens, Jay. I wish we had more time and we will talk once again as this drama continues, as it undoubtedly will. Our thanks to Jay Gallagher who is Bureau Chief for Garnett News Service in Albany and to Karen DeWitt, our Upstate Correspondent in Capitol Bureau Correspondent for being with us in this hour at 1370 Connection updating us on the budget debate

here from WXXI AM and FM HD2 Rochester. I'm Bob Smith. There's more of 1370 Connection to come after the news.

[Music]

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