



Karen Heller, ordinary run-of-the-mill Aggie.

From staid student Karen Heller takes

By LORA BEST
Reporter

Karen Heller, who sports short, brown hair, a hint of make-up and flashing brown eyes sits on the bench, animatedly talking and occasionally breaking to talk to friends who walk by. The 21-year-old wears her Aggie ring, a gold chain and a gold ear cuff. Her books are on the bench nearby, much like any other Texas A&M student's.

But six days a week she dons heavy make-up and a bubbly personality to become Karen Kay, a video jockey for KOSHU, better known as TV-5, a low-power music television operating in Houston.

Heller commutes from Houston to A&M every Tuesday and Thursday to take her final six hours toward her journalism degree. She got the job last summer as a result of her persistence and the keen eye of a friend.

"I knew that I wanted to do something in broadcast or in law," Heller says. She had a summer internship set up with a lawyer in Virginia because she wanted to learn more about law and has the desire to go to law school. Then a friend of hers saw the TV-5 advertisement for VJs in a newspaper.

"The ad said to mail in a resume but I hand carried mine," she says. She even insisted on an interview because she said her resume wasn't capable of describing her the way an interview could.

Out of the 2,000 people who sent resumes to the station, Heller and 600 other people were granted interviews. Of those, 150 got auditions and 50 got second auditions. The station hired 25 people.

"I was so happy and excited to get the job that I walked around with a smile on my face for a week," she says. "I couldn't even talk, I just smiled. I knew that I could do it, but I had never done it before."

She says she was very nervous at the auditions because the other applicants seemed more qualified. Some of the people who auditioned for the station were models and people with previous experience and backgrounds in television.

But she got the job and even has her own show, called Hit City Video. It airs from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. She also has a Sunday show called Sunday Brunch with Special K.

But don't expect Karen Heller, the student, to appear on your screen. A new Karen Heller appears, Karen Kay.

"Karen Kay is happy all of the time," Heller says. "She never gets angry and she is never in a bad mood."

Heller explains that her first few weeks on the job were difficult because she couldn't find her niche as a VJ. She tried using props, being goofy and then she tried being herself. Karen Kay is an extension of herself for the camera.

She uses some props in her technique is to use puns dealing or the titles of songs.

"C'mon and take a right turn with Aretha Franklin ...," Heller is a ple of her style.

But her change to Karen Kay is constant. To prepare for her 7 p.m. start getting ready at 4 p.m. She's putting on makeup and fixing her hair lots one hour for the drive to the cause of the infamous Houston

One hour before she goes on air, she has materials she can use during the show.

"I read Rolling Stone and I never read otherwise," she says. "I read trivia and interesting facts about Houston slated to be seen during her show."

Fifteen minutes before her show

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her makeup again. "I need a mirror to follow me around," she says. "I needs to wear a lot of make-up because the lights will wash-out her face."

Once on the air, Heller has a music that plays because a DJ hosts the show. She does have a show during the breaks in the music that last from 15 seconds to one minute breaks per hour. Another duty is the request line.

"Sometimes it seems like no one except for children who have the chance to call," she says. "Occasionally I call and say that her kids want to see she likes it too." She says it is rare to see people other than little kids want to see her.

She also has regulars that call her. One is an old boy who does a Billy Crystal impersonation she looks marvelous. Another is a girl who always asks her out.