

## Students show support for troops

By Terri Welch

Red, white and blue ribbon, a spirit sign, the American flag, yellow bows, a door covering.

What do these things have in common? All are symbols of the support Texas A&M students have for the troops who are now part of Operation Desert Storm.

David Wallace, a senior political science major from Houston and a member of the Aggie Band's B Company, created what he has named "Operation Desert Support."

A small piece of red, white and blue ribbon worn on Corps of Cadets' uniforms or civilian clothing is what Wallace calls "...a simple ribbon to support our troops."

Wallace said he and his father, Joe C. Wallace, Class of '53 and head of development for the College of Geosciences, came up with the idea last Thursday morning after the allied attack on Iraq.

Freshmen cadets in B Company went door to door telling others about the ribbon and Wallace's roommate helped him cut pieces to distribute, Wallace said.

"It caught on like wildfire," he said. "I went to classes and returned periodically noticing that lots of people

had them on and were asking where to get them. At evening formation, my entire outfit had them on."

The ribbon is not just for those who agree with the war, Wallace said.

"It is for everyone, even protestors," he said. "If you have any sympathy for the sacrifices the troops are making, you should wear the ribbon."

With a similar idea in mind, Melody Wilson, a senior political science major from Blue Ridge and a resident advisor in Hobby Hall, decided to make yellow bows for the doors of residents on her floor.

"The girls were out in the hall talking about the deadline," Wilson said. "They were worried about whether we would go to war, so I decided to make the bows to show our support for the troops."

She said the bows were passed out Wednesday night at their floor meeting and everyone was happy to receive them.

"I've always been a patriot," Wilson said. "I stand behind our troops and I think it's important for people to do that."

In another residence hall, a simple and meaningful message is sent out to the troops on a door covering.



Melody Wilson, a senior resident advisor in Hobby Hall, made yellow ribbons for the residents of the dorm. She has several friends serving in Saudi Arabia.

Phelan M. Ebenhack

Tricia Sakowitz, a junior anthropology major from Houston, and Niki Kruckenber, a freshman marketing major from Alice, are residents of Underwood Hall and made the covering last August when the troops first arrived in Saudi Arabia.

The idea for the door covering came to them while they were on a trip to Houston.

"We heard the song 'God Bless the USA' on the radio with taped messages from families to soldiers in the Middle East," Kruckenber said. "It made us cry."

Red and blue letters spell out "Come Home Soon" on a white background decorated with yellow bows and American flag stickers.

They added the names of servicemen later, Kruckenber said.

"At first we wrote the name of one friend of mine on the covering," Kruckenber said. "Then we added more names as people asked us to."

Two navy servicemen whose names are written on the covering have returned to the United States safely, Sakowitz said, and the girls have written the word "home" in red over the names.

"We hope we will be writing 'home'

through all of the names," Kruckenber said.

Both of the girls urge others to support the troops.

"Not believing in the war is OK, but don't protest it," Kruckenber said.

The girls do not plan to take down the covering until the war is over, all of the servicemen have returned, or at the end of the semester when they must move out.

"If we leave, it will be the last thing we take down," Kruckenber said.

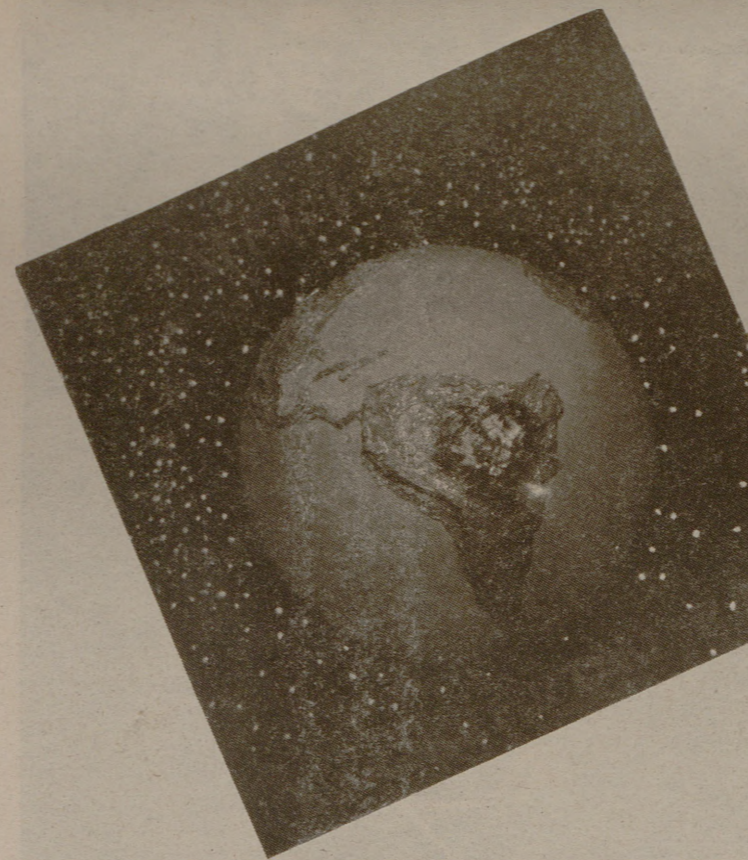
Not far from Underwood Hall is the Quadrangle where Company C-2 has hung a "spirit sign" in support of the troops.

Julian Schwartz, a senior political science major from San Antonio and company commander of C-2, said the sign and the meaning behind it is endorsed by the entire outfit.

"The sign is to show our solidarity, our support for the men and women who are over there," he said. "It's not a matter of right or wrong."

The sign displays bold letters that spell out "Company C-2 Supports Desert Storm. Beat the hell outta Iraq." They have received positive feedback on the sign, Schwartz said.

Freshmen cadets in Company C-2



## 9 ways to Sunday offers promise

By Rob Newberry

Sting  
The Soul Cages  
A&M Records

I must admit I was sort of excited when I heard that Sting would have a new album out this year. ...*Nothing Like the Sun* has aged well since its release in 1987, and the first single off the new release is as catchy a pop tune as Sting has done in a while.

But I suppose great expectations just make the disappointment of *The Soul Cages* more bitter. Sure "All This Time" is catchy, but the rest of the album is a heavy, sluggish mix of the jazz and soul that the former Police-frontman can perform so much better.

Sting's folksy storytelling on "Island of Souls" is stale and bland; he would have used as much originality if he had just recited Shakespeare for us (and he might have given a more emotional recitation). "Mad About You" is one more of Sting's love songs set against Biblical imagery, but it doesn't live up to standards set by earlier songs like "The Secret Marriage."

The album is not an entire mess, however. "Saint Agnes And The Burning Train" is a beautiful classical guitar piece, but it's purely instrumental. The poetry and music in "Jeremiah Blues (Part 1)" is more like what I expect from Sting — a disenchanted vision of the world combined with an upbeat, jazzy melody to exaggerate the inconsistencies Sting sings about.

Lyrical, Sting still plays off lots of religious and historical allusions. His storytelling gets monotonous more than a few times on the disc, mostly

because he lays it against a boring musical backdrop. When he sticks his lyrics in a more rock-oriented tune like the title track, he reassures me that he is capable of far more than this album offers.

Roger McGuinn  
Back From Rio  
Arista Records

Former Byrd Roger McGuinn returns to AOR radio just in time for his induction to the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. Good thing he waited 'til he was already in; this record might have made people take a second thought. Not that it's bad; there just isn't anything classic about it, nothing to remind me it's from one of rock music's greats.

McGuinn certainly is heavy on the love songs. Granted, I usually like songs that deal with relationships and problems and such. But McGuinn devotes nearly half the album to "Baby, I Love You" or "Baby, You Left Me" songs that, frankly, all sound the same. Lyrics that kinda grab you right here...and try to bring your lunch right back up.

McGuinn has some pretty impressive helpers on the record: Tom Petty, Elvis Costello, David Crosby, Petty's guitarist Mike Campbell and acoustic guitar greats Michael Penn and David Cole all show up on several songs. But their help isn't usually enough to make the songs stand out.

Some of McGuinn's ideas are well-intentioned, but fall short of the prize. "The Trees Are All Gone" laments en-

vironmental problems, but it makes you think about as much as some preachy sermon. "Car Phone" is a clever idea — associate society's incredible problems to this one technological toy — but unfortunately, the lyrics don't really carry the cleverness all the way through the song (I do dig that line from the Beatles "A Day in the Life," though).

Occasionally, the songs are worthy of McGuinn's reputation. Elvis Costello's "You Bowed Down" is done intelligently, and the collaboration with Tom Petty on "King of the Hill" is pretty good. McGuinn even improves "If We Never Meet Again," a song recorded in 1988 by Tommy Conwell.

McGuinn may just need a little more time to get back into the groove. He's hanging out with the right musicians; when he performs one of their songs, the results are convincing. But his own songwriting leaves something to be desired and that affects the entire disc.

9 Ways To Sunday  
9 Ways To Sunday  
Giant Records

New on the American alternative-pop scene is 9 Ways To Sunday and their self-titled release. This six-man band shows promise in several aspects, even though they could stand to focus their musical style a little.

The release opens with "Midnight Train," using some electronic percussion that quickly feels like a dance track. Then frontman William Robertson and Kenny Boyd kick in acous-

tic guitar and bass that rescues the track from techno-crap and puts it in that rare category of danceable rock. A lot of 9 Ways' songs have this feel; dancy with electronic percussion, but still using traditional acoustic guitars and drums. "Restless" even opens with a banjo solo.

Robertson's voice is often characteristic of British pop bands like the Soup Dragons or the Charlatans U.K. But sometimes he brings out a darker, deeper sound, recalling Peter Murphy's style, on songs like "Get Back Home" and "Only the Innocent."

9 Ways' lyrics, mostly Robertson's own, are refreshing, too. "Only the Innocent" and "Fire & Rain" show that some songwriters can still be intelligent when they make words rhyme. Songs like "I Survive" and "The Means Becomes The End" may not be incredible, but they are near enough to cause excitement about a young band.

The American pop world is getting so crowded; everything seems to spill over into everything else. 9 Ways To Sunday shows the many influences they've had by covering a lot of ground, making danceable rock-pop tunes and retaining musical integrity. I hope their style will become more focused, but as long as these guys keep coming up with music as good as this, I won't be disappointed.

Note: Copies of Sting's *The Soul Cages* and *9 Ways To Sunday's 9 Ways To Sunday* were loaned for review courtesy of *Marooned Records*.