

## Boot Scootin' Aggies

### Celebrating a decade of Aggie Wranglers

By Amy Lee  
THE BATTALION

With an eight count, a twist, a lift and a turn the Aggie Wranglers have been dancing their way into Aggies' hearts for the past 10 years.

Having started in 1984 by Kim Norris, the Aggie Wranglers are celebrating a decade of dancing.

The Wranglers began when Norris put five couples together for a fair in Calvert. She advertised, saying, "We need good dancers — those interested come and try out."

Since then, the Aggie Wranglers have grown, and now consist of 12 couples who dance and perform.

But becoming an Aggie Wrangler is no easy task.

"It took a lot of practice with my partner," said Russell Graham, president of Aggie Wranglers. "We would reserve a racquetball court three or four times a week (to dance on) plus we'd go dancing on the weekends."

The Wranglers' schedule is a hectic one. Between practicing, performing three times a week and teaching dance lessons, the Wranglers spend an average of six to 15 hours a week being a Wrangler.

"You know you'll be busy, so you're ready for it," Smith said. "Nothing is sprung on you."

The Wranglers' routines consist

of all the couples doing the same moves, unless it's a jitterbug song and then couples do their own solos.

"That's what's funny — you can look around and see if you're messing up," Smith said.

The Aggie Wranglers performances include appearances at Fish Camp, T-Camp, Howdy Camp, the Parents Weekend Bevo BBQ, Open House, The Big Event, the Tyler Texas Junior College Shrine Bowl and the National Honors Conference.

Smith said the group has become extremely close.

"It's like a family," Wrangler Leslie Smith said. "We all have our disagreements. When we watch each other and critique each other it can get frustrating. But when we all sit and talk or whenever we get together, we're all friends."

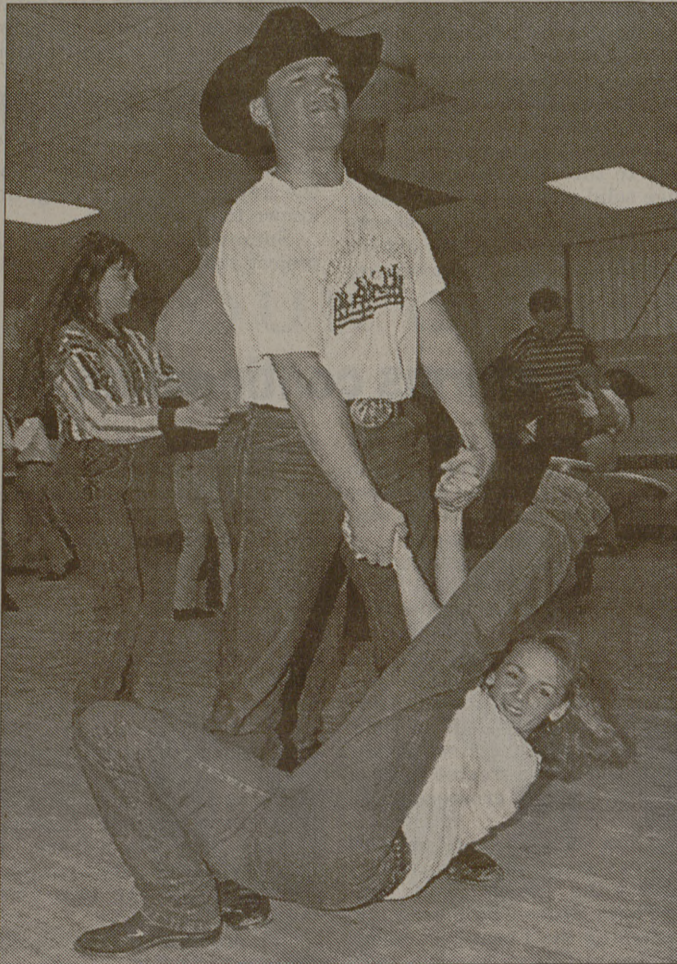
"A lot of the moves we do usually come from us goofing off," Graham said. "You learn (the moves) from friends. We make them up ourselves. That's what's unique about us. People don't do what we do unless they mimic our moves."

The advice given to people who aspire to be Wranglers is to have fun and dance as a couple.

"Practice on smoothness," Smith said.

"It's not what you can do, but how well you can dance together as a couple," Graham said.

"We teach you a lot," Smith said. "So don't be worried if you don't know a lot of moves."



Tim Moog / THE BATTALION

Aggie Wranglers Russell Graham, a senior business analysis major, and Julie Blackburn, a senior Spanish major, demonstrate a "drop dip" to dance class in G. Rollie White.

### Muslim student programs to promote Islamic awareness

By Constance Parten  
THE BATTALION

The Muslim Students' Association at Texas A&M is sponsoring a series of programs this week in recognition of Islamic Awareness Week.

The events are intended to educate non-Muslims in the history and faith of Islam. The first program, a lecture on the beliefs of Muslims, was presented Monday night in the Memorial Student Center.

Zillur Rahim, president of the Islamic Community of Bryan-College Station, spoke to an audience of about 25 people on the religious practices and beliefs of Islam.

"Islam is the only religion that has retained, in its entirety, its written word in the language in which it was written," Rahim said. "This leaves little room for interpretive mistakes."

The Koran, the written teachings of Islam, was written in Arabic and is the basis of Islamic creeds, morality, worship, knowledge and the God-man relationship.

The Islamic word for "God" is "Allah," an Arabic word which is genderless and cannot be used in a plural sense.

"Allah is the personal name of the one and only God," Rahim said. "It cannot be used to mean anything other than God himself."

Rahim also discussed the Islamic view of the prophet known as Jesus.

The Koran describes Jesus as the "son of many." He said the Islamic religion believes there were five major prophets: Abraham, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

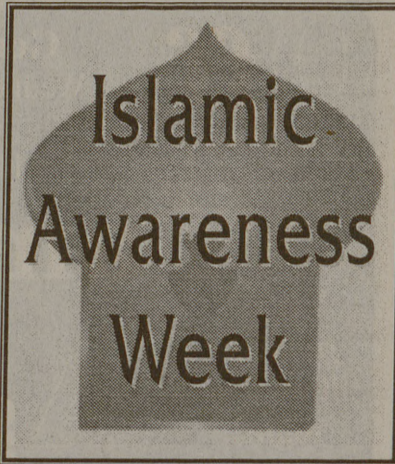
Rahim said Islam considers none of these prophets more important than the rest, nor were any capable of performing miracles but through Allah.

"All of the prophets in Islam have the utmost sublime character and morals," Rahim said. "God chose them himself and they were here to lead mankind."

A discussion on the role of women in Islam will take place tonight at 7 p.m. in Zachary 203, and a Muslim Cultural Display will be held in the MSC Flag Room at 3 p.m. on Wednesday.

A lecture, entitled "Why Islam?," will follow the display in room 226 of the MSC from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

The week's programs will end with a panel discussion "American Muslim Experiences" on Friday in room 201 of the MSC at 7 p.m.



### 'Unplugged' provides triumphant ending to Nirvana's musical brilliance

By Rob Clark  
THE BATTALION

Nirvana  
"Unplugged in New York"  
Geffen Records  
\*\*\*\*\* (out of five)

Kurt is gone. But the music of Nirvana lives on with the release of "Unplugged in New York," performed for MTV last November.

But this isn't just any live performance. The loose acoustic format of the "Unplugged" series allows a whole new side of Nirvana to shine through. Without the usual distortion of the "Nevermind" and "In Utero" albums, the acoustic guitar provides a perfect backing to Kurt Cobain's moody vocals.

Replacing the distortion is excellent musical accompaniment by a variety of instruments. Lori Goldston provides beautiful cello playing to "Dumb," "Polly," and "All Apologies." And bass guitarist Krist Novoselic even brings out the old accordion for "Jesus Doesn't Want Me For a Sunbeam."

The acoustic format allows for a more versatile Nirvana. Versions of hit songs "Come As You Are" and "All Apologies" are different, but a fresh change.

But the songs on the album are not all Nirvana originals. Cobain sings David Bowie's "The Man Who Shot the World," and the Vaselines' "Jesus Doesn't Want Me for a Sunbeam."

And the guest appearance by the Meat Puppets provide three of the strongest songs on the album — the Puppets' "Lake of Fire," "Plateau" and "Oh Me."

But ultimately it is Cobain's immense talent that was everything to Nirvana. His bold guitar playing, his rough voice and his amazing lyrics made him one of the most talented performers of our generation.

And his "Unplugged" performance is one of his best. Cobain's vocals excel, especially on "About a Girl," and "Where Did You Sleep Last Night."

If there is one thing missing, it is the conspicuous absence of Nirvana's monster smash

"Smells Like Teen Spirit." Drummer Dave Grohl said in a news release that including the song wasn't even considered.

"We knew we didn't want to do an acoustic version of 'Teen Spirit,'" he said. "That would've been horrendously stupid. We felt it would be better if we found other songs."

Grohl added that the band wanted a relaxed feel to the acoustic performance.

"We didn't want to do 'Unplugged' the conventional way," he said, "where bands show up with acoustic guitars and the drummers drum as hard as they usually do and it's not different at all except it's not electric. We wanted it more loungey."

Nirvana was widely considered to be the best band in the land before Cobain's suicide in April. Cobain took himself away from us, and with him he took his incredible music talent.

At least "Unplugged in New York" gives us just a little bit more.



Krist Novoselic, Dave Grohl and the late Kurt Cobain of Nirvana at their "MTV Unplugged" performance.

### Yes/No People ready to bring unique rhythms of 'Stomp' to A&M

By Jennifer Gressett  
THE BATTALION

The Yes/No People are about to put the boot into contemporary culture.

Their performance tonight in Rudder Auditorium will be among the most unique that the Opera and Performing Arts Society will present this year. It is known simply as "Stomp."

OPAS Student Committee Chair Andi Stevenson said, "The most unique thing about 'Stomp' is that they don't use anything expensive or elaborate; they find rhythm in the everyday."

"Found objects" is the term the British performers give their instruments, which consist of oil drums, hubcaps, broomsticks and lighters to name just a few.

Their performance helps you to begin to see things in a different way," Stevenson said.

Founded in 1986 by lead performer Luke Cresswell and director Steve McNicholas of the British band Pookiesackenburgers, the Yes/No People have already managed to tour the world, perform in several films and rack up a few awards for television commercials.

In fact, you may have seen them stomping away at an ice block in last year's Coca Cola commercial, or performing on "The Late Show with David Letterman" earlier this year.

"Stomp" can currently be seen in a

series of commercials for Target stores, directed by Cresswell and McNicholas. Other ongoing projects include record, film and soundtrack production, as well as a nine-piece band which involves several members of the cast.

The six men and two women that make up the Yes/No People consist of musicians, actors, a tri-athlete and one trained dancer.

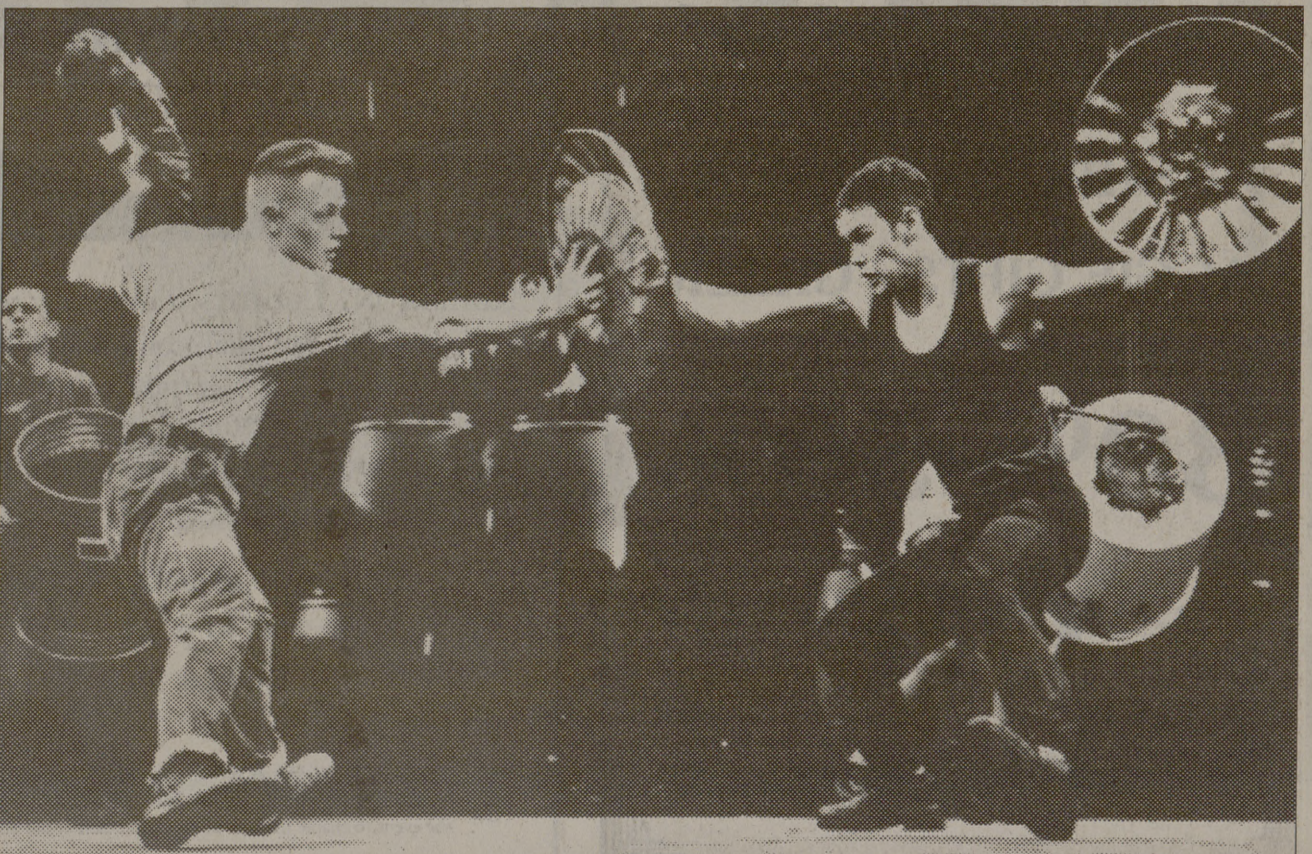
Each is clad in a uniform that is not quite grunge, but somewhere along the lines of frustrated laborers: crewcuts, torn-off jeans, athletic vests and, of course, boots — also used as basic percussion items. Stevenson says this informality should make the performance a little more laid back than the previous OPAS events.

"This is not a dress up and go to OPAS thing," Stevenson explains. "You should wear blue jeans or whatever you would normally wear to class."

She added that while the performances are expected to sell out, the majority of the audience will be students.

"This is just one of those things that we looked at and said, 'This is for the students,'" she said.

"Stomp" can be seen tonight and Wednesday night in Rudder Auditorium at 8 p.m. For ticket information, call the MSC Box Office at 845-1234.



Members of Yes/No People use unique percussion instruments in "Stomp."