

A sorority is born

New sorority to increase Asian-American awareness

By Amber Clark
 THE BATTALION

Texas A&M will witness the establishment of a new colony this semester. An Alpha Kappa Delta Phi colony, that is. This Asian American sorority originated in 1990 at the University of California-Berkeley, but after five years and bundles of paperwork, A&M has its own chapter. Alpha Kappa Delta Phi President Lillian Mak, junior industrial distribution major, began the tedious process of establishing the sorority with several friends at the beginning of last semester. After a long communication process with the national board in California, a sorority was born. The six founders said they hope to have 20 members by the end of the sorority's rush week. Mak said the new members and founders will immediately focus on reaching the group's goals.

"We're here to promote Asian-American awareness across campus and throughout the community," Mak said. "I think it will help unite Asian-American women. I notice many of them don't get involved here (at A&M)." Rae Ann Uy, a sophomore chemical engineering major, said the sorority also gives women a group of friends for social and academic support. "Many Asians just concentrate on school, not on having fun," Uy said. "We want people to do both and still enjoy their college years." Alpha Kappa Delta Phi does not set racial limits on membership and welcomes anyone interested in promoting Asian awareness. The founders said they do not anticipate any ethnic problems within the sorority, despite the different Asian cultures represented. Historian Susan Chong, a senior biomedical science major, said the ethnic diversity does not create barriers between the members.

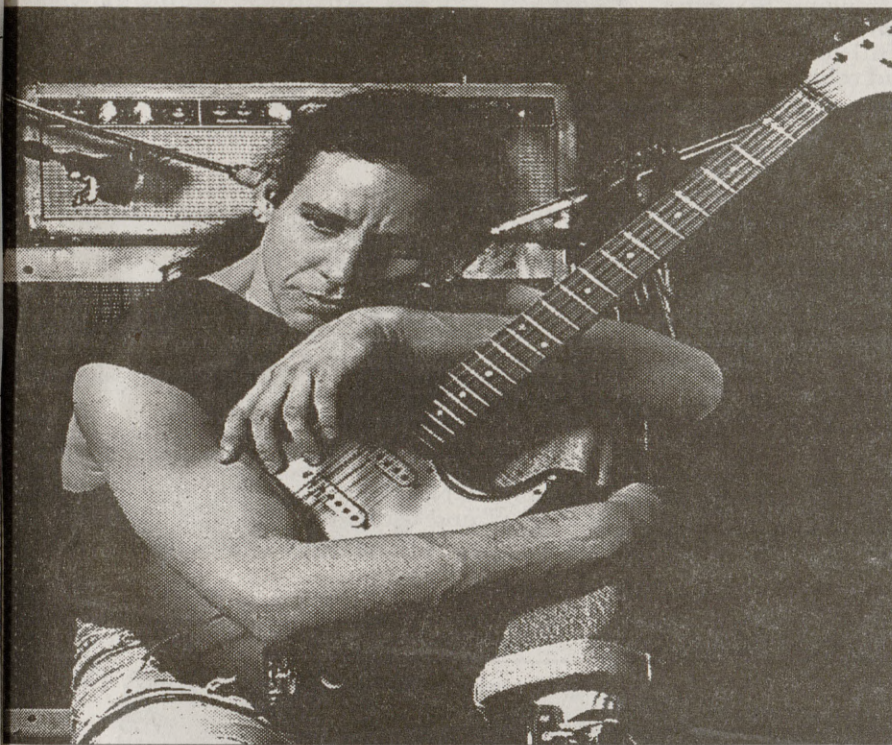
"Surprisingly everyone seems to get along," Chong said. The women said their biggest challenge will be gaining recognition from other Asians on campus. They said another problem is that many Asians may stereotype the sorority, assuming the members are only interested in social activities. Chong said the women will concentrate on fund-raisers and community service, including the Big Event. The founding members will travel to California in May to present records of the sorority's activities to the national board to receive associate status. Until then, the women said they will continue to spread the news about the sorority and push for increased membership in the fall. "Right now we're just slowly putting the pieces together," Mak said. Alpha Kappa Delta Phi is not the only Greek organization aimed toward Asian-American students.

Lambda Phi Epsilon is a fraternity with virtually the same origins and goals of their sister club. Michael Hoang, a senior petroleum engineering major and president of the 16-member fraternity, said the organizations will work together to provide support to Asian students. Lambda Phi Epsilon has already gained recognition as the first Asian-American fraternity in the nation. Both organizations face small numbers for recruitment since Asians make only 3.7 percent of the University's enrollment. This percentage is low compared to other schools, as is Lambda Phi Epsilon's membership lower than the other 25 chapters across the nation. Hoang said the fraternity will overcome its size and ethnic diversity and achieve its goals. "We're trying to unite the Asian community as a whole here," Hoang said. "Unity is the most important thing for us right now."



Members of Alpha Kappa Delta Phi sorority.

Eddy Wylie/THE BATTALION



Rock and blues artist Chris Duarte plays Saturday night at the Stafford Opera House.

Austin guitarist lives up to lofty reputation

By Michael Landauer
 THE BATTALION

As Z-Rock's national "Rockline" was winding down an interview with Eddie Van Halen, the interviewer threw one last question at the Van Halen guitarist. He was asked how it felt to be the world's greatest guitarist. Van Halen responded, "I don't know. Ask Chris Duarte." Duarte, who will be performing at Stafford Opera House Saturday, said he has been told about Van Halen's statement, but only hesitantly accepts it as a compliment. "It sounds like a cruel joke to me," Duarte said. "It's very humbling for Eddie to say that. It's passing the buck. No one wants to be called that." The Austin-based blues guitarist is playing in Bryan in the midst of a grueling tour, playing more than 300 dates a year. He said audiences come as much for the music as they do for his band's unique appearance. Often clad in ripped jeans and pink high-tops, Duarte said he cares more about creating his own style of music than he does about fame. "People don't have to follow me," he said. "I just want to do my own thing." But people have been following Duarte and comparing him to other established artists.

John Windlow, a freshman nuclear engineering major who was buying a ticket for Duarte's performance, said Duarte outshines late Texas-blues artist Stevie Ray Vaughan. Being compared to other Texas-blues artists helps audiences define Duarte, but he said he has a more aggressive style and draws inspiration from a mix of punk, jazz, swing, rock and blues. "He's gotta be the most intense guitar player I've ever heard," Windlow said. This intensity comes from a commitment to playing with integrity and passion, Duarte said. "I'm trying to develop a mood with the music," he said. "I'm there to party with the chord changes and the music itself." Duarte said that although he spent time in the studio cutting his debut album, "Texas Sugar/Strat Magik," he prefers to play live because his audiences react to the intensity he brings to the stage. "They get into it," he said. "I see a lot of air guitarists out there. They're crazy and they listen at the same time." A high school dropout at age 16, Duarte said he has found his purpose in life by playing music for the last 15 years. "I'm here to blaze my name across the sky just so long as it's in music," he said. "But I guess if I get the Nobel Peace prize that would be cool too."

Peeping Tom taps into local success

By Amber Clark
 THE BATTALION

The fluid sounds of Peeping Tom reverberate through the poster-covered walls of a small storage shed that doubles as a rehearsal hall. Lead singer Peyton Lowrey, a senior kinesiology major, pushes an electrical cord across the floor. He strikes an Eddie Vedder-esque pose and begins to wail the rich lyrics of an original song entitled "Become One." Performing every Friday night at The Tap is virtually a dream come true for Peeping Tom, a local four-member band that is quickly making a name for themselves in Bryan-College Station. After officially forming in August 1994, Peeping Tom played at local clubs and fraternity parties before becoming a regular performer at the Tap. Guitarist Scott MacTavish, a sophomore marketing major, said the members of the band always hoped to play regularly at The Tap. While performing at a Bryan club last year, they were scouted out by The Tap. "They came out and saw us, and picked us up," MacTavish said. "Last semester was a trial run, and we were competing with another band for a regular show time." Peeping Tom won the battle of the bands and now performs Friday nights at The Tap and



Peyton Lowrey of Peeping Tom. The band performs Friday nights at the Tap.

does an acoustic set there occasionally on Wednesdays. The band performs mostly cover songs, ranging anywhere from Stone Temple Pilots and Pearl Jam to the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Jane's Addiction. Although they are usually regarded as a rock/alternative cover band, this label doesn't stop Peeping Tom from playing original music on stage. "We probably have five or six originals we play," Lowrey said. "But we stick with covers because people like to know the songs." Large crowds have re-

sponded well to the band in recent performances at The Tap, MacTavish said. Bassist Howie Pollard, a sophomore marketing major, said that by the end of each performance, the band has managed to win over the crowd. "We've even had a few stage divers," Pollard said. MacTavish said the band has enough confidence in their original material to record a demo in the near future. Peeping Tom plans to record a demo this spring and possibly release a CD during the summer. "We're going to give it a shot," Lowrey said.

'Sunrise' probes deeper side of romance

By Michael Landauer
 THE BATTALION

"Before Sunrise"
 Starring Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy
 Directed by Richard Linklater
 Rated R
 **** (out of five)

"Before Sunrise" captures its audience with dialogue and a storyline that shy away from major Hollywood projects. While girls will flock to theaters for what looks like another aggressive romance starring Ethan Hawke ("Reality Bites"), the film is more than just a "girl" or "date" movie. The film throws Jesse (Hawke) and Celine (Julie Delpy) together on a train trip to Paris. Celine grows tired of hearing a married couple argue in the seats next to her and sits next to Jesse and they begin to talk. And they never stop. The audience soon feels as comfortable listening to the conversation as the two strangers seem to feel having it. Jesse decides to ask Celine to join him in Vienna (the next stop) and bum



Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke star in "Before Sunrise."

around all night until he leaves in the morning on a plane back to America. Although this may seem far-fetched, the chemistry between the two characters makes it seem perfectly believable. Against the backdrop of a mystic European city, the couple dives into candid, and often random, dialogue. Their no-holds-barred conversations would make the audience feel like eavesdroppers if they were not busy relating to the characters. The characters are given a chance to step out of themselves and hold nothing back, an opportunity that most college students can appreciate. They discuss life, death and almost everything in between. They even talk a little about what the future holds for their "relationship." But there is much more to the film than their romance. The sightseeing and dialogue may grow old for some, but the day-in-the-life strategy used by director Richard Linklater ("Dazed and Confused") serves the film's purpose well. "Before Sunrise" offers audiences a break from the norm. For those who need a fast-paced, plot-driven movie, rent "Speed" again. For audiences looking for a more meaningful dialogue than they've heard on the big screen in a long time, this film delivers.



Richard Linklater