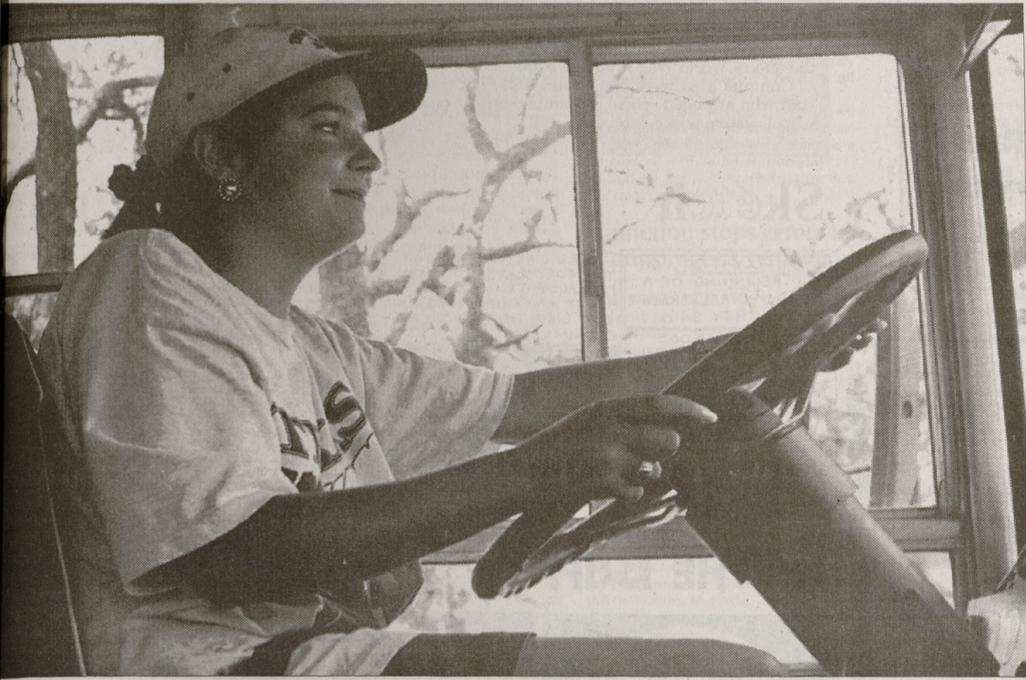


Bus Ops puts students behind the wheel



Amy Browning, THE BATTALION

Heather Hewlett, a senior marketing major, drives the Yell Practice bus on Wednesday afternoons. Drivers are expected to say "howdy" to all passengers as they board the bus.

By Rachel Barry
THE BATTALION

Asking a stop sign out on a date may seem a little extreme, but training for A&M bus drivers wouldn't be complete without it.

Twice a year, 80 to 100 students go through two weeks of intense testing and training before they start driving routes on the streets of Bryan-College Station.

Mike Hutney, head dispatcher, said the two-week training takes place in May and December and includes unusual conditioning.

"If you roll past a stop sign, you broke the stop sign's heart, and now, you have to apologize," Hutney said.

But training isn't just about making amends with concrete and planning dates with metal signs.

Suzanne Skrabanek, manager of Bus Operations, said drivers go through special training and intense interviewing before they drive on their own.

An A&M bus driver has to be willing to sit in an non-air conditioned bus for three or more hours straight and say "howdy" to every passenger as they board the bus.

Casey Wiefels, a sophomore environmental design major, said she puts on the radio and talks to passengers to keep her route from getting boring.

Chris Buck, a senior geography major, said drivers often get to know a group of regular riders on the routes they drive.

"If you pick up someone you know every time you make the route, then

time goes by that much quicker because you have someone to talk to," Buck said.

If conversation is slow, drivers have each other to greet as their busses pass one another.

Nathan Plake, a senior construction science major and bus driving trainer, said the tradition of drivers waving to each other goes back to the early days of bus operations. Plake said that before buses had personal radios, it was easy to get lonely on the bus.

"It (waving) would give everybody a sense of belonging," Plake said. "It would let you know that there are other people out there with you."

Arriving at the bus lot at 6 a.m. every day with the engines of all the busses humming is one of Wiefels' favorite parts of the job.

However, Wiefels said, sharing the streets with people who do not understand the simple physics behind a bus in motion can be one of the most frustrating things to deal with.

"Buses that are 45-feet long with a heavy passenger load don't stop well," Wiefels said. "People still run out in front of us and pull out in front of us."

Despite such actions, Skrabanek said student bus drivers have become an institution at A&M.

"Students enjoy seeing students driving them around," she said.

Tom Williams, director of the Department of Parking, Transit and Traffic Services, said student bus drivers are a big part of A&M.

"It's the best job on campus," Williams said. "We couldn't run our system without them."

Moore to play at Dixie Theatre

Folk musician's style centers around rebellion and culture

By Amy Uptmor
THE BATTALION

Moore is a self-described "typical example of a misunderstood artist." Having toured almost non-stop for the last six years, Moore has made a living out of expressing his innermost self through his music and performances.

"I never made a conscious decision to be a musician until recently," Moore said. "Music is something I've just always gravitated towards."

The 26-year old performer, who is playing at the Dixie Theatre tonight, described College Station as "a real old crowd" and said he likes playing to people close to his age.

"I love playing here," Moore said. "It's a real college crowd that seems to be into what we do."

Moore is promoting his second al-

bum, *Modernday Folklore*. Although his sound is not traditionally associated with modern folk music, he said folk is the perfect description for his music.

"Today's definition of folk is a misuse of the word," Moore said. "Folk music traditionally defines a culture, time, period and an attitude of rebellion. That's the closest thing to what my music is about."

As an Austin-based singer and songwriter, Moore said he is excited to see so many Texas-based bands, such as Tripping Daisy, the Toadies and the Reverend Horton Heat, break into mainstream. As for his own success, Moore said he does not aspire to sell out stadiums.

"I don't really care about how big I get," Moore said. "I just want to have a following that likes my music. I think playing places slightly

bigger than what I'm playing now would be ideal."

Moore said he enjoys small audiences because of the nature of his lyrics, which are largely autobiographical. Moore said his songwriting process is often determined by his mood.

"I write the darkest songs when I'm happiest," Moore said. "When you're in a bad place, you don't want people to see that."

In addition to his personal life, Moore said he pulls a tremendous amount of inspiration from a number of modern artists, especially Daniel Lanois, whom he worked with on *Modernday Folklore*. Lanois has done projects with U2 and produced Peter Gabriel's album *So*.

"If you love music, you will love him," Moore said. "He's an amazing

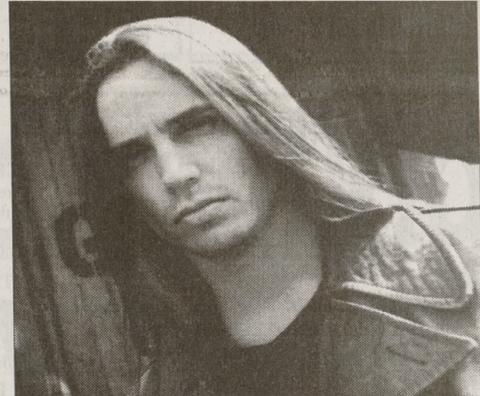
producer and a very soulful artist."

Moore also said he was a fan of Kurt Cobain, although he described Nirvana as being "often a one-dimensional band."

"I really liked Kurt Cobain's writing, his melodic sense and his take on music," Moore said.

In addition to *Modernday Folklore*, Moore recorded a track for Hempilation, a compilation album benefiting the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws. Although Moore does not advocate the use of marijuana, but he said the education NORML offers is necessary.

"There's been such a smear campaign about marijuana recently," Moore said. "There needs to be a re-education campaign where people can see the benefits and the drawbacks of it."



Moore

Students dealing with rape

Aggies Working for a Rape-Free Environment

Students help to raise awareness on campus

By Amy Protas
THE BATTALION

Last year, the protective glass bubble many believe surrounds the A&M campus was shattered when a student was sexually assaulted on campus. The student body expressed shock and disbelief when they heard of the incident. The Brazos County Rape Crisis Center reports that one out of four college students is sexually assaulted, but no one wanted to believe it could happen here.

While researching for a women's studies project, Kelli Connell, a senior psychology major, said she realized many students were not informed about sexual assault.

She teamed up with Lora Bertleson, coordinator of women's programs, and Tayna Williams, a graduate student in student affairs administration, to create Aggies Working for a Rape-Free Environment.

"We created AWARE to increase students' awareness of the dangers of sexual assault," Connell said. "We brainstormed, went through the training and decided the organization was greatly needed on the A&M campus."

The group relies on peer education to inform the campus about sexual assault. The members do presentations on rape for dorms, fraternities, sororities and any other organization that requests information. Presentations aim to shatter myths students have about rape.

"We really want to target the dorms with our presentations," Connell said. "A lot of freshmen live there, and they need to know how to prevent

sexual assault from happening."

All AWARE members go through a three-day training program to do presentations. Connell said the members are confronted with many questions and people wanting to dispute the presentation's information.

Mashara Whitt, staff assistant at the Brazos County Rape Crisis Center, said most victims of sexual assault on college campuses are assaulted by someone they know. She said that only 10 percent of all rapes are reported to police in Brazos County. Of those reported, she said 60 percent are committed by acquaintances.

"It's really upsetting... There is nowhere to go (on campus) that's specifically for rape victims."

— Kelli Connell
member of AWARE

Whitt said date rape is the type of sexual assault victims are least likely to report.

"When it (the rapist) is someone the victim knows, they are very reluctant to go to someone and tell what has happened," Whitt said. "They have been betrayed by someone they thought they knew and trusted. They don't know what to do."

The prevalence of date rape prompted Paula Bingham, a junior speech communications major, to join AWARE.

"I have always felt passionate about the subject," Bingham said. "I

have too many friends that have been in a situation where date rape was attempted. I joined AWARE to open people's eyes to what they believe and what is really true."

Sarah Oltrogge, a junior management major, said AWARE is needed on the A&M campus because many students have misconceptions about rape.

"Some people feel rape is over-exaggerated, especially with date rape," Oltrogge said. "A lot of guys don't want to believe it happens because they've never been in that situation. They have friends that it could happen to, and they need to be informed."

Connell said during her research, she was appalled at the lack of services available to victims on campus.

"It's really upsetting if you think about it," Connell said. "There is nowhere to go (on campus) that's specifically for rape victims. There aren't even support groups for victims of rape."

Victims of sexual assault can go to the Brazos County Rape Crisis Center. The center has a 24-hour crisis hot line, a 24-hour escort service to hospitals, face to face counseling and support groups. Whitt said most of the victims at the center are students.

Pat Troy, a sophomore political science major and member of AWARE, said last year's assaults prompted him to join the group.

"After the rapes that occurred last year, I knew these were things I didn't want occurring on our campus," Troy said. "I found out there is an organization, and I hope we can prevent these things from happening."

Victim shares date rape story and tells others to speak out if they are sexually assaulted

By Amy Protas
THE BATTALION

Note: The names in this story have been changed for the source's privacy.

When "Michelle," a junior at A&M, was 16, she started dating "John" who was 21 and attending college. While Michelle says the beginning of the relationship was heaven, everything fell apart a year later when John raped her.

Michelle says she is sharing her story to let students know that rape can happen to anyone — even when the attacker is someone the victim thinks he or she can trust.

One evening, John convinced Michelle to spend the night at his house under the pretense that his parents would be there. Michelle was to sleep in his sister's room. When she arrived at John's house, she realized they were alone. There was no way for her to get home, and Michelle's parents were also out of town for the weekend.

"I agreed to spend the night in John's parents' room," Michelle said. "He came in there to kiss me good night and wanted to go further. I refused, and he raped me."

Michelle said she felt hurt and betrayed — like she had no one to turn to. It wasn't until she arrived at A&M that she sought counseling.

Michelle said when she got to A&M, she was appalled by the lack of on-campus services available to rape victims.

"My freshman year, I called the crisis hot-line," Michelle said. "They told me I needed the help of a psychological counselor, but they didn't give me a

number or anything. I felt like they just left me high and dry."

Michelle says she has noticed a slight increase in campus awareness in the two years since she sought help at A&M. Fliers with information of available resources have been posted in the dorms, but Michelle said many students still don't take the problem of rape seriously.

"I think people have almost a light-hearted attitude toward rape," Michelle said. "This university is so conservative, especially about things like this. Students don't want to think this can happen."

Michelle said she was disheartened when a fellow student told her he could not believe an Aggie could be a rapist. She said students should not look at this as an Aggie issue. Rape is about individuals being responsible for their actions, she said.

It took three years for Michelle to tell anyone what had happened to her. She said that after she talked about the rape, she felt like a great burden was removed from her shoulders. Michelle said her experience has prompted her to give advice to people who find themselves afraid to talk about being sexually assaulted.

"Tell someone; tell someone; tell someone — I don't think I can say that enough," Michelle said. "I carried around my story for so long that it just ate me up inside. Once I told my family and friends, there was such relief."

To recover from being raped, Michelle said she had to lean on others, and having someone to talk to was the greatest help.

"I couldn't get through this without my family and friends," Michelle said.