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LIVE FROM AGGIELAND

Students begin work on campus television station

By BROOKE CORSO
The Battalion

Texas A&M is going Hollywood. The campus will have a public-access channel during prime-time hours as early as March. AgTV will hit the airwaves, providing on-campus viewers with an entirely student-run TV channel.

Director Annabelle Cortina, a junior speech communication major, and co-founder Josh Kaylor, Residence Hall Association president and a junior agricultural business major, began brainstorming ideas for a student-run TV show last summer. With Kaylor as the liaison between AgTV and Residence Life and Cortina doing the field work, they took their ideas to Director of Residence Life Dr. Ron Sasse. Sasse was extremely receptive, even agreeing to contribute funding from the Residence Life budget to help get the project started.

When the campus had cable installed in every residence hall, various educational programs were aired, including help sessions with professors, Sasse said. A graduate student researched student programs on other college campuses to see how the infrastructure was developed and what types of programs were aired. Cortina was offered channels 82 through 89, but she chose to start with only one, Channel 88.

"Students can expect to see a show at least in early March, but if all goes well, there could be a February edition," Cortina said.

Sasse introduced Cortina and Kaylor to Dr. Rod Zent of KAMU-TV, the local public access station.

"Dr. Zent was also very excited about the project and had been waiting for a student-run channel to come up again," Cortina said.

Zent said a pilot format needs to be simple, adventurous and entertaining enough to generate interest. The first aspect of a TV channel that needs to be developed is the organizational structure; with that intact, policy can be developed and the organization's members can begin sifting through programming ideas.

"This is a brand-new organization, so everyone will be learning as we go," Cortina said.

At this point, airtime will be allotted for educational shows and campus news, entertainment and sports.

Sasse said they may include the student body elections so the candidates can be on air.

If the station is a success, comedy sketches or game shows might be introduced.

Cortina said she hopes that organizations will use the station to publicize events or philanthropic projects that might call for public help.

AgTV will be accessible only to on-campus students for now, but off-campus residents may see shows on the local channel sometime in the future, Sasse said.

AgTV is open to any student, regardless of experience in TV production. Training in areas like camera usage, stage direction and scriptwriting will be available to AgTV members by both experienced students and qualified professionals from KAMU-TV.

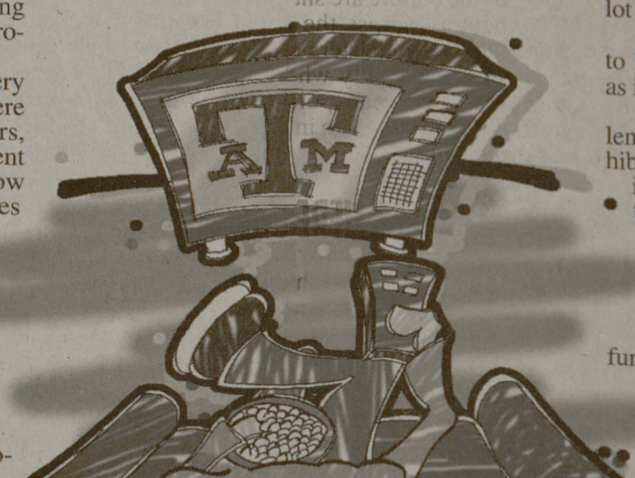
AgTV shows and segments will be produced at the KAMU station, on campus next to Kyle Field. Zent, who teaches a journalism class in broadcast casting, said students who join AgTV will spend a lot of time working on it.

"Students should give themselves at least 10 to 15 hours a week to focus on their AgTV work as if it were a three-hour class," Zent said.

One obstacle to AgTV has been funding problems. As a public access channel, AgTV is prohibited by law from raising money with advertising, so AgTV will have to seek donations through fund-raisers or possibly the Association of Former Students. Since operating a station requires thousands of dollars worth of equipment, Kaylor said A&M is lucky to have access to KAMU's equipment.

"The Residence Hall Association will provide funding for now, but once AgTV becomes an independent student organization, it will have to find its own funding for things like advertising," Kaylor said.

With student involvement and leadership and the proper resources, AgTV will bring a little bit of Hollywood to Aggieland.



ADRIAN CALCANEI/THE BATTALION

Volume Control

Parachutes Coldplay

Throughout Coldplay's debut album *Parachutes*, the English band seems to be walking a fine line between optimism and pessimism. On the first listen, Chris Martin's vocals fall into the moody, Brit-pop genre of bands like Radiohead and The Smiths. But undercutting Martin's voice is a true yearning — a beautifully breathy groping for happiness. On most of *Parachutes*' tracks, Martin reaches that comfort.

The album's first track, the reassuringly titled "Don't Panic," opens with the images of "bones sinking like stones" and the warning that "all of us are done for." But in the chorus, Martin croons that "we live in a beautiful world," and he ends the song with the thought that "there's nothing here to run from because everybody here has got somebody to lean on."

Coldplay's current single "Yellow" can be heard everywhere from MTV to local radio stations. While Martin's lyrics are somewhat un inventive, his voice alone makes the track float along the simplistic chords plucked out by guitarist Jon Buckland.

Martin's voice is the star of *Parachutes*, but the band's performance carries the album through its 10 tracks. *Parachutes* mixes the lush guitars of The Cure with the catchy hooks of Blur to produce a

decidedly British sound that will appeal to listeners on this side of the pond as well. (Grade: A)

—Eric Dickens

Little Sparrow Dolly Parton

Parton's latest album is an attempt to revamp her image. She aims for a kinder, gentler Dolly, with all acoustic songs on the disc but misses the mark.

In *Sparrow*, Parton tries to follow a theme of soaring, but this theme gets confusing when mixed with the cover tunes on the disc.

Although confusing, these tracks make listeners perk up and pay attention.

The most interesting track on the disc is "Shine," Parton's version of the song made famous by alternative rock band Collective Soul. The song begins with the same chords, but with a country twang. Parton's version features her sweetly singing the lyrics, and nobody would head-bang to her version.

Another cover tune is "I Get a Kick out of You," made famous by Cole Porter. The song

does not fare well in the translation to bluegrass. Ultimately, this album fails to change Parton's image. She sounds the same on this album as she always has, failing to be altered by the absence of electronic enhancement.

This album is worth the money for Parton's

long-time fans and listeners curious about Collective Soul songs sung by other people, but people who do not want to hear the same Dolly Parton without the electronic enhancement should avoid her attempt to make alternative rock country-fied. (Grade: C)

—Anne

A Touch of Class Planet Pop

New to the American pop scene comes A Touch of Class with its debut album, *Planet Pop*.

The group consists of Joe, Sarah, Tracey and Livio, who come from four different parts of the world: New Zealand, Australia, England and Italy. The group met while dating for the German production of *Cats*. After the production came to a close, the four went on to form

Touch of Class.

The lyrics, combined with a new-age techno beat, give the music a dance-worthy sound.

From the first beat of a drum in "Around the World" to the last note on the synthesizer in "Love is Blind," A Touch of Class keeps the beat rocking and ends on a high note. The melodies catch and stick in your head.

The album's sound incorporates a broad range of musical instruments as well as sounds.

A refreshing pop sound can be found when listening to *Planet Pop*. (Grade: A)

—Lauri Lea McDermott

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