

Op-Ed

KWAX offers classical music niche

By Mike Handley
Emerald Columnist

Rolling Stone magazine's "College Radio" charts usually indicate that groups such as the Screaming Blue Messiahs, the Replacements, and (of course) R.E.M. are receiving a lot of airplay on university stations.

On the station affiliated with the University, though, one is not likely to hear these groups. That station, KWAX, plays none of the rock music generally associated with college radio, instead programming an all-classical format.

The broadcasting of classical music is not, in most minds, an injustice. Many University students, however, have voiced the opinion that a University radio station should broadcast music that appeals to the majority of University students, and that an all-classical format simply does not fit under that heading.

Furthermore, some believe that KWAX should be entirely student-operated. Currently, five of the station's 16 employees, including the operations director and the station manager, are non-students.

The problem with these arguments is that they are based on the premise that KWAX exists only to serve the University.

This is a false assumption, but an easy one to make. KWAX is, after all, the University's public radio station.

There are many factors which divide the two institutions. Simple distance is the most obvious; KWAX broadcasts from a remote location in north Eugene, well away from the main campus. Its listening audience, about 10 percent of the Eugene area's total radio audience, includes people from all segments of the community, not just University students.

More importantly, KWAX receives less than one-third of its funding from the University. The remainder of its budget is

student jobs, five of them on-the-air training positions, and by providing those students and faculty who do enjoy classical music the chance to hear it.

Some defenders of the station, furthermore, point out that classical music is ideal for studying or background music. Though it would make composers cringe, this is a valid point. A classical station may well serve a simply functional purpose in a university setting.

As it stands, Eugene is without a truly interesting rock station, but it does have a successful classical station with a loyal audience. Reversing this would, at best, make a different

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provided for by direct financial support of listeners, and by federal funds matching those donations.

Financially, then, KWAX's debt to its current audience is twice that of its debt to the University. It repays the audience, of course, by playing the classical music that some people enjoy hearing. It repays the University by providing 11

set of people unhappy.

The ideal situation, of course, would be to have both a classical and progressive rock station on the air. Harassing KWAX won't achieve this; perhaps instead the staid commercialism of the local private stations should be attacked. KWAX, in any event, is justified in occupying its niche in the Eugene radio band.

Et al.

MEETINGS

EMU Board Budget Committee budget hearings for the EMU administration and the EMU Board of Directors today at 3:30 in the EMU Board Room, Room 337.

ASUO Health Insurance Committee meeting Monday at 3:30 p.m. in EMU Century Room C.

Foreign Students Organization meeting tonight at 5:30 in EMU Century Room B. The topic is the International Festival '88, FSO election and spring term plans.

Holocaust Memorial Week planning meeting today at 3 p.m. in EMU Century Room F.

Ad Club meeting today at 8:15 a.m. in Allen Room 319. Featured speaker is Joachim Krueger, psychology graduate teaching fellow, discussing "Social Influence in

Advertising."

Riverfront Design Advisory Committee meeting Saturday at 9 a.m. in the City of Eugene Permit and Information Center, 244 E. Broadway St.

LECTURES

"**The Social and Economic Development of Yugoslavia**" is the topic of a lecture by visiting Fulbright Lecturer Vladimir Petkovski from the George Washington University political science department and the Institute of Economic Development at the University of Skopje, Yugoslavia. Lecture begins at 3:30 p.m. today in Gilbert Room 330.

MISCELLANEOUS

German majors, minors and undeclared students are invited to sign up now for spring term

advising. Sign up sheet is posted on the door of Friendly Room 312. For more information, contact Helmut Plant, undergraduate adviser, at 686-4059.

Eugene Big Mountain Support Group information table at the University School of Law Conference "Land, Air and Water" this weekend. A video presentation of "The River That Harms" is planned for sometime during the three-day conference. For more information, call 485-5786.

Deadline for submitting Et als to the Emerald front desk, 300 EMU, is noon the day before publication. Et als are run only once. Events with a donation or admission charge will not be considered. Events occurring nearest the publication date and campus events will be given priority.

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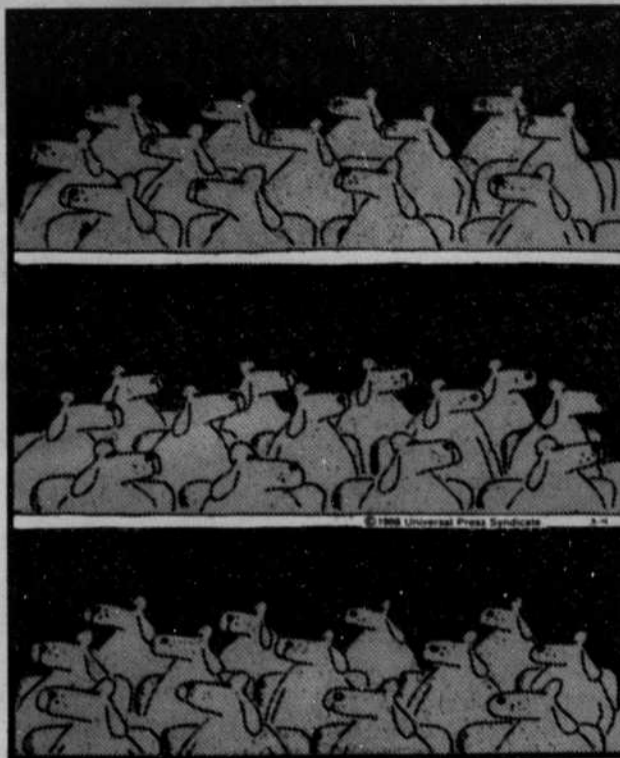
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