

# KWVA

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staff expects even more when students return in the fall.

It is also popular among other radio stations, including commercial ones, and particularly with the crowd that started the KAVE.

"We're not stepping on anybody's toes," said Foote, meaning that other stations don't feel threatened because there will be no competition for advertising.

Another reason local stations should not feel threatened is that KWVA fills a deep, black musical void. It plays a volatile mix of music, with artists such as Cypress Hill, Bob Dylan and Megadeth all being played during the same hour.

The station has about 2,000 CDs to choose from, along with several hundred records. Almost anything is fair game, except for top 40, country and the most classic of classic rock. When KWVA does play KZEL-type music, it plays something like "Rip This Joint" by the Rolling Stones, not a dinosaur like "Satisfaction."

People can call up the station and request a song, as long as KWVA has it and it is not obscene, it will get played, usually one or two songs later.

Obscenity is definitely something to watch out for, especially at an experimental station, and KWVA does everything it can to avoid the \$10,000 fine the FCC slaps on offenders. The station orders "clean" versions of questionable songs, and even words in other languages are checked to ensure listeners are not hearing a foreign version of 2 Live Crew.

Occasionally there is the inevitable slip-up, but there have been no formal complaints.

Of course, the station is not for everybody. Many feel that it is too alternative, too "out there." Many have complaints about the rap or the metal, two types of music that receive heavy airplay. KWVA certainly is not for those looking for the familiar.

Derek Walker, a University senior, calls in requests often.

"The station's great because it doesn't play the same stuff you hear constantly — there's always a surprise — songs you would never hear on any other station," he said. "The only problem is that the DJs tend to ramble on."

The reactions vary, not only from DJ to DJ, but from song to song. The station is hard to pigeon-hole simply because it plays such a variety of requests that you might love it one minute and hate it the next.

Probably the most common reaction to the station is exemplified by student Jake Panowicz, who by no means likes all of the music, but "appreciates them trying new things."

As for the DJs, they work pretty well together,

## 'It was a learn-as-you-go experience.'

— Alyssa Jensen,  
KWVA general manager

considering how diverse they are. Most are in their early 20s, but a few are as young as 17 and as old as 30. The station will hire just about anybody, regardless of radio voice or lack of quirky personality.

The only way to get fired is by not showing up or knowingly playing obscene music. Almost every one of the 15 to 20 DJs has a core following of devotees who will call up and request songs while they are on the air. And almost everyone, including the core staff, started out with zero radio experience.

"It was a learn-as-you-go experience," Jensen said.

All of the disc jockeys are volunteers who receive no pay, but there are six paid staff members who receive \$120 a month. Working at the radio station is difficult and requires a great commitment.

The FCC requires that the DJs write down virtually everything that they do, and there is a lot of off-air time spent in the office, including a weekly meeting.

So why not take a less stressful job that actually pays? It's the love of radio, but it's also the invaluable experience of working in a station, which is like an internship, and a way to make contacts for the future.

KWVA has big plans for the future, the boldest being not having to constantly beg for money. This situation might be remedied by courting local business.

There are already three or four businesses that have expressed interest in underwriting the station. Jensen believes that it could "maintain what we have" on \$35,000 to \$40,000 annually, and the business funding, if it happens, should provide much of this.

Other plans for next year include a show that spotlights local bands, a talk show, a sports show (interview format) and a greater emphasis on local news.

The station would also like to develop relationships with student groups. The groups would get free publicity through public service announcements advertising.

The station's IFC funding ends in 1994, when there will be another measure on the ballot for refunding.

You are encouraged to take a listen, and if you like what you hear, request a song. If you hate the station, call up anyway and request a song you like. Maybe they'll play it.

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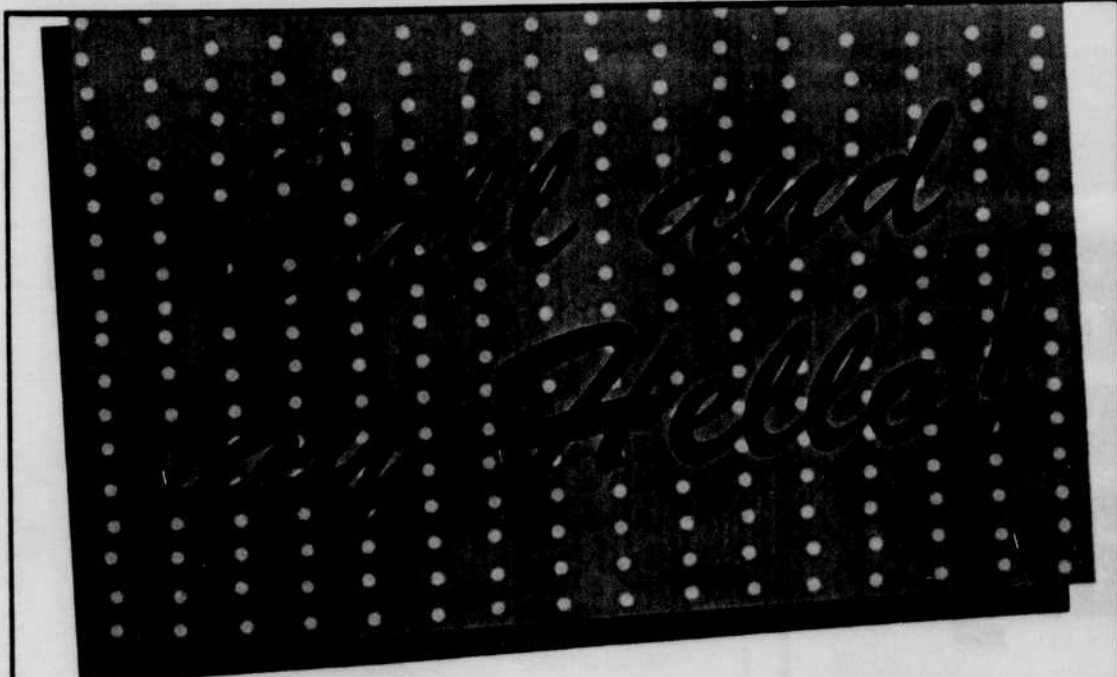
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