

# KWVA provides diversity and variety for listeners

■ Now in its seventh year, the campus radio station continues to present an eclectic collection of music

By Rory Carroll  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Seven years ago this May, University radio station KWVA finally took to the air with the apt choice of "Hey Mr. DJ" by They Might Be Giants.

After three years of fighting red tape, KWVA [88.1 F.M.] finally received its permit to broadcast from the Federal Communications Commission. Its first broadcast came at 1:32 p.m. on Thursday, May 27, 1993, three years after students voted to use fees to support a college radio station.

At that time, KWVA only had a staff of about 20 people and was not yet running 24 hours a day.

KWVA has seen many adjustments in the last seven years, but General Manager Kelly Lea said the station's dedication to diversity is unaltered.

"I can't think of any factions of the student populace that aren't in some way represented here," Lea said.

Lea points to the over 100 volunteers and their wide variety of musical tastes as being KWVA's

main resource.

"They cover pretty much every genre you could want," Lea said. "It's definitely not the same thing every day."

Since its infancy, KWVA has been greeted with mixed reviews. While some students praised the station's diversity, others complained, saying that they rarely recognized a single song and didn't appreciate the overall musical selection.

"There is always going to be people that don't like what's different," Lea said.

"I can't tell you that I don't hear music here that scares me occasionally," she said. "But I also hear a lot of music that I really like that I haven't heard before," Lea said. "It's kind of luck of the draw."

Junior Lydia Nelmes likes that KWVA is student run and thinks that KWVA is an acquired taste.

She said that although the programming seemed random to her at first, she has recently been giving the station more of a chance and in turn has begun to like it more.

"You need to listen to it more than just turning it on," Nelmes said.

KWVA will be celebrating its birthday with a concert at the WOW Hall on Monday with The Dub Narcotic Sound System. Dub

Narcotic front man Calvin Johnson, also the founder of indie label K Records, is no stranger to campus airwaves himself. Johnson worked for 15 years at Evergreen College station KAOS in Olympia, Wash. He was a DJ and still drops in occasionally to lend a hand.

Johnson said that non-commercial radio is significant because it provides a voice for the disenfranchised. He said he believes that the mainstream media is becoming more and more homogenized.

"The fact that fewer and fewer people are controlling the voices of mainstream media means that alternative perspectives aren't being heard," Johnson said. "The most exciting thing that non-commercial radio is doing is public affairs and news broadcasting."

Johnson said that alternative news sources are important because the mainstream media are not always an objective news source.

Lea says that KWVA's alternative news program, has a loyal following and that the station receives a flood of phone calls if for some reason the show doesn't air.

"So much of the news you hear on the commercial stations or even on your nightly news is so questionable. You really have to wonder what it is they're not telling you and how accurate what



Ryan Starkweather Emerald

KWVA DJ Eugene Chism does 'Phat Tracks' a hip hop show on Friday evenings.

they are telling you is."

Lea said that the show is getting away from that because it is a sphere where you don't have to please everybody all the time.

"There are all kinds of music out there, but you're not hearing it on mainstream media. That's why non-commercial radio is providing such an important outlet for people to hear and to be heard,"

Johnson said.

Although Lea's job as general manager may seem thankless, she says that there are payoffs.

"When a person calls up to say, 'I've never heard this band before, they're great,' — that's very rewarding."

The Internal External and the Sub-Debs will open the WOW Hall show, which starts at 8 p.m.

# Lesbopalooza: concert gives Eugene a real alternative

■ The Murmurs and Alix Dobkin are featured at the Queer Pride event

By Joe Walsh  
Oregon Daily Emerald

A month of Queer Pride festivities will conclude Saturday with Lesbopalooza, a music festival featuring several lesbian artists from around the country.

The University's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Alliance organized the festival, which will be the first of its kind in the Northwest, according to LGBTQA co-director Gabrielle Hendel.

By sponsoring Lesbopalooza, the LGBTQA hopes to present the University as an environment that promotes diversity. It also hopes to place Eugene and the Northwest's alternative music scene in the national spotlight, Hendel said.

"I'm hoping that it will make Eugene a hotbed for alternative and progressive music," Hendel said. "It kind of shows that Eugene and the Northwest are capable of pulling together a show with so many different people who have really influenced the course of the queer rights movement."

Among the performers will be Alix Dobkin, The Murmurs, Sarah Dougher, Madigan Shive, The Deb Cleveland Band, Tracy + the Plastics, The Culottes and Stephan. With its broad assortment of artists, Lesbopalooza offers a variety of music from a cross-section of generations and genres.

Dobkin, one of the festival's main draws, is known as the first openly lesbian musician. She came out in 1972 and has since been such a mainstay in lesbian culture that she has taken on the title "head lesbian."

No stranger to all-lesbian music affairs,

the San Francisco resident helped found the Michigan Women's Music Festival and has performed in several Lesbopaloozas, including the first one in New York in 1994.

"I love Lesbopalooza," Dobkin said. "It's a great celebration of femaleness and a great cultural celebration. It's a pure, refined woman energy. It's not your typical, run-of-the-mill, corporate mainstream pap."

Senior linguistics major Hawley Mathieson who will attend Saturday's show, agrees.

"I'm really excited about the show," Mathieson said. "I think it's an awesome opportunity to be able to attend an event with all these women-focused bands."

The Murmurs, considered a co-headliner on the Lesbopalooza ticket, is a well-known duo, especially among the lesbian community. For one, The Murmurs are signed with a major record company in MCA.

For another, one of the members is the girlfriend of alternative/pop megastar k.d. lang, bringing added attention to the group.

With their catchy, pop-influenced sound, The Murmurs appeal to a younger crowd, while Dobkin appeals to the older women in the lesbian community, Hendel said.

Lesbopalooza's range of music, which will include electronica, punk, indie, folk, funk, blues and queer-core, should further broaden the audience.

"Hopefully we'll be getting a huge variety from all across our community," Hendel said. "I think that living in a lesbian or queer community, you kind of search out music that you can relate to and that has a message that you identify with. But also, it's just good music, and I know a lot of people who aren't queer who are going to it just to hear some good music."

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