**The WEFT Revue**

_VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3 MAY-JUNE 1995_

**WE DON'T MEAN TO BOAST, BUT...**

**IT'S OFFICIAL: WEFT IS THE 'BEST'**

WEFT-FM (90.1) was honored recently by the Community Media Coalition, a locally based organization that assists nonprofit agencies in gaining access to Champaign County media. WEFT was recognized for "outstanding local media coverage" in the Best Overall Radio category at the group's first annual awards program.

Of course, none of the station's volunteers and staff do what they do for fame or fortune, but what the heck—it's nice to get a little recognition from the community. Congratulations to all involved!

**Shop till you drop**

**GARAGE SALE**

**Saturday, June 3**

Put on your sailing shoes and direct your little feet on over to the annual WEFT garage sale. (But please don't trip over the bad puns along the way)

This year's sale takes place Saturday, June 3 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1205 S. Randolph, Champaign. As always, this is the sale where you'll find the area's very coolest of cast-offs—including records, tapes, CDs, radio equipment and the usual assortment of livers and gizzards, knick-knacks, gizmos, bric-a-brac and other funky stuff. Naturally, all proceeds benefit your favorite little radio station.

If you'd like to donate items for the sale, call Melissa at 328-5542.

**WEFT Public Affairs Listening Sessions**

**CHECK OUT SOME EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVE RADIO PROGRAMS**

WEFT is currently airing some of the best of what Pacifica and community radio stations around the country are producing. However, there is a wide range of material available free or at low cost that could be added to our programming schedule. Interested WEFT listeners who would like to sample some of these offerings are welcome to attend an alternative listening session and give us some input on what programs you would like to hear on your community radio station. Sessions will be held at the WEFT production studio, 113 N. Market St, Champaign at 7 p.m. June 7 and 21.

Other information-programming concerns will be addressed at periodic discussion sessions open to anyone with an interest. Among the proposals currently under consideration is one that would result in a repeat of Pacifica Radio News at a later evening time slot, which would make the news available to a larger audience. The next session is scheduled for 7 p.m. May 23 at the station. The meeting will be facilitated by Bill Thomas, former WEFT station manager and veteran of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and Pacifica Program Service.

For more information, call Paul Moon at WEFT (359-4338) on Saturdays at 11 a.m.; Sundays at 6 p.m.; or Tuesdays from 3 to 5 p.m. You also may call WEFT from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays and leave a message. Or, send e-mail to pmoon@uiuc.edu.
Excellence on music... less positive, some listeners shared specific critiques and told us: “Don’t change or sell out”; “Don’t let Newt run you off the air.”

Chicago style guitar”; “More blues and news”; “Would like management: “Keep crankin’ out the new music”; “Keep up the wish there was more”; “Love the industrial dance techno Champaign-Urbana worth listening to.”

Want more indie rock during the day”; “Like the programs - except religious shows” ; “The gospel programs are fine and productive”; “Outstanding, but weekends are a problem for some folks: “Oldies 92 interferes. I can’t receive WEFT in downtown Champaign during the day.” We will update our listeners on this situation again in the near future.

Finally, I came across a letter written with a sense of humor and regret. The author makes the case that WEFT requires an active commitment from the listeners, for what would the airwaves be like without this type of radio station? Read on:

“I have - at great personal risk - had this letter unnumbered out of the not-so-great beyond to warn your listeners while there’s still time for them: There’s a special place in hell for anyone else here in the Radio Moocher Zone would give everyone else here in the Radio Moocher Zone would give up now! They’re not already a member, you can join at the training session (cash, checks and VISA/Mastercard accepted). The course covers everything from the history and current structure of the station to rules and licensing requirements.

WEFT-PM (901) is grateful for the ongoing support of the many local businesses that underwrite programming on the station. In turn, we encourage our listeners to support these underwriters — and tell them that you appreciate their role in keeping community radio on the airwaves in East Central Illinois.

If your business is interested in underwriting a program on WEFT, please contact us at 217-351-9368 for more information on how you can get an announcement on the air.

WEFT is a non-commercial radio station locally owned by Prairie Air Inc. a non-profit organization. WEFT is an accessible, non-commercial radio alternative serving the diverse communities of radio listeners in East Central Illinois. We are located at 113 N Market St, Champaign, Illinois. We broadcast at a power of 10,000 watts at 90.1 FM. Questions, comments or suggestions should be addressed to:

General Manager, WEFT
113 N. Market Street, Champaign, IL 61820

Airshifter training courses planned in June and July

The first step toward getting your own show on WEFT is to successfully complete one of the single-session airshifter training courses offered periodically at the station. The courses will be offered next on June 24, and again on July 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the WEFT studios, 113 N. Market St., Champaign. The course covers everything from the history and current structure of the station to rules and licensing requirements.
**"BOYS ON THE SIDE" SOUNDTRACK**

By Tracey Rose, host of Womyn Makin' Waves, 1 to 3 p.m. Sundays

Hail the folks at Arista for putting together an all-female soundtrack! Some of the best women in mainstream music appear here, delivering a great mix of covers, new and original music.

New songs are heard by Melissa Etheridge, Sheryl Crow, Stevie Nicks and Sara McLaughlan. The lyrics of Dement indicate her "hope that songs that make me feel good will bring us all together to create a shared culture and sense of community that we might not otherwise recognize. For instance, several months ago, one of Dement's CDs was playing while the plumbing-and-heating guy was at my house installing a new thermostat. I'd never met him before, and while he seemed like a regular kind of guy, I never would have guessed that he'd necessarily appreciate the music he was being subjected to. Not only did he like it, he made me write down what he was listening to so he could look for it at the record store. (Of course, I told him he could find Dement's music on 90.1 FM, as well!"

Anyway, in the liner notes to "Infamous Angel," Dement indicates her "hope that songs that make me feel good will effectsomeone else in a good way."

Wienke, host of WEF'T Revue

DEMENT

Continued from page five

real world has the luxury to put life on hold just to grieve. Dement expresses our collective frustration with this insane pace so eloquently when she sings:

"I've got no time to look back, I've got no time to see The pieces of my heart that have been ripped away from me. And if the feeling starts to come, I've learned to stop 'em fast Cause I don't learn, if I let them go, they might not wanna pass And there's just so many people trying to get me on the phone And there's bills to pay and songs to play and a house to make a home I guess I'm older now and I've got no time to cry.

Even though I've heard this song many times, I'm still stopped dead in my tracks by its opening chords whenever and wherever I am when I hear it again. If I'm in at home in the kitchen, I usually have to stop mopping, chopping, stirring or whatever and pause for yet another moment of pure, unadulterated listening. If I'm at work - writing - I usually have to let the keyboard sit idle for a few minutes.

It quite simply boggles my brain to think of the incredible power and ability songwriters have to affect everyday people like me in small, yet appreciable ways. In most cases, the artists will never meet or speak directly to the people who buy their CDs, who attend their concerts, who share their music on radio stations like WEF'T. Yet, they are able to use their extraordinary gifts to bring us all together to create a shared culture and sense of community that we might not otherwise recognize. For instance, several months ago, one of Dement's CDs was playing while the plumbing-and-heating guy was at my house installing a new thermostat. I'd never met him before, and while he seemed like a regular kind of guy, I never would have guessed that he'd necessarily appreciate the music he was being subjected to. Not only did he like it, he made me write down what he was listening to so he could look for it at the record store. (Of course, I told him he could find Dement's music on 90.1 FM, as well!"

Anyway, in the liner notes to "Infamous Angel," Dement indicates her "hope that songs that make me feel good will affect someone else in a good way."

Well, she got me good. She snagged the heating-and-cooling guy, too. And I'm sure there have been others. A year ago in April when I returned to the MerleFest, Dement herself was up there on stage. No doubt, she touched more than a few previously uninitiated souls who had at first looked at the program thinly and wondered, "Who?"

The music of Iris Dement can be heard on several WEF'T programs, including "From the Joshua Tree Inn," 6-8 p.m. Tuesdays; "Ridin' the Rails," 6-4 p.m. Wednesdays; "Another Country," 6-8 p.m. Thursdays; and "Song of the Soul," 12 a.m. to 1 a.m. Saturdays.
What's New PussyCat?

Fridays 5:30-6
$2,000

WEFT will turn in all receipts received at the station. In return, WEFT will receive a check for the station's proportional share of the $2,000.

By Melissa Mitchell

"...I listen to this music, this Iris DeMent. It's good for you."

The first time I ever heard of Iris DeMent, I was packed cheek to jowl to lawn chair — onto a shuttle bus with a happy crowd of bluegrass and acoustic music enthusiasts. We were on the last leg of our journeys from all compass points to the 1993 Merle Watson Festival in Wiltshire, N.C.

The trip from the Holiday Inn parking lot to the festival site couldn't have taken more than three or four minutes, but in that short time, I wrapped recent-concert-experience stories with a woman seated beside me. I gushed about a Laurie Lewis/Tom Romoz show I'd attended the previous month at the Cactus Cafe in Austin. She traded her praise for this amazing new singer/songwriter she had just heard — Iris DeMent.

Iris who? I knew if I didn't write the name down immediately, I'd have a tough time extricating it from the gray matter a little later. Two years later, I couldn't forget it if I tried. Shortly after returning from Merlefest, I stumbled upon DeMent's "Infamous Angel" at a local used-record store. Since I'm inclined to live dangerously when it comes to feeding my music habit, I laid my cash down and didn't look back.

The first thing that struck me about DeMent was her intangible voice and original vocal styling. It's fresh. It's honest. It's homey/sweet and unpretentious. And although the music has a definite country/gospel/old-timey accent, it just wasn't like anything I'd ever heard before. In interviews, DeMent freely admits she's never considered herself to be a particularly talented singer. Not that she hasn't always loved to sing. She grew up in a religious — and musical — family that placed a higher premium on becoming a preacher or a singer than it did on earning a college degree. Some of her fondest girlhood memories are of her mother allowing her to crank up the phonograph so the pair could sing along with tunes by Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family.

When she eventually moved to Nashville and began to seriously pursue a career in music, DeMent wasn't particularly interested in becoming a recording artist. In fact, she regarded herself as way too shy to make it as a performer. She also didn't put much stock in her guitar-playing ability. Her main concern was writing songs and figuring out how to get them recorded. But, as fortune would have it, audiences and producers responded not only to her songwriting — which can hold its own with the likes of John Prine or Dan FGuth — but were drawn to her unique vocal style as well.

While I'm certainly no expert on songwriting, I know what I like. And I like much of what DeMent has produced so far on her two Warner Brothers releases: "Infamous Angel," 1992, and "My Life," 1994. My favorite songs — by any artist — are musically simple and uncluttered by unnecessary instrumentation and superfluous noise, songs that allow the emotions and the meaning to come through in soft and subtle ways. Sometimes, they're the kind of songs that — through some magical combination of music and lyrics — speak to something very deep within one's soul and elicit the chill-down-the-spine effect. Other times, they're the songs that you may hear 19 times, and on the 20th listening, something new jumps out and trips you. Iris DeMent's songs can do both. I'd listened to "Sweet is the Memory," the opening song on "My Life," a number of times before the understated elegance of one particular line grabbed my attention: "An arm's just an arm till it's wrapped round the shoulder."

Maybe it's just the way she phrases it, or maybe it's just me, but, geez, what a simple, yet poignant, observation. Similar treasures are tucked away throughout her work.

The best song on the album — for my money, anyway — is a different species of song altogether. No sneaker, "No Time To Cry," belongs to that other category of hits-you-where-you-live, grabbing my attention: "An arm's just an arm till it's wrapped round the shoulder."

More DeMent on page six.