

Perspectives



I want my WAKE TV

Where the magic happens: Behind the scenes at Channel 6.

By Susannah Rosenblatt
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From a small corner in the basement of Carswell Hall, a bank of television monitors casts an eerie glow. Videotape silently unspools, Kleig lights glare hotly, and another night at WAKE TV unfolds.

Founded by students in 1993, WAKE TV featured its first pilot in the fall of 1994. Transmitted campus-wide, including faculty apartments, WAKE TV airs student-produced programming of all kinds; everything from comedy to cooking to college sports has hit its airwaves.

The basement studio is equipped with a smattering of modern broadcast technology, including a teleprompter, cameras and various editors. "Wake Forest has some of the best digital equipment in TV stations that you can get across the country," WAKE TV executive board member sophomore Damon Chang said.

What's on Tonight

WAKE TV's current lineup includes the long-running *Sportsline*, a live call-in show about sports; *The Eve and Alison Show*, a variety half-hour; *The Advocates*, a *McLoughlin Group*-esque political roundtable program; and *The Struggle*, a minority issues talk show.

The channel also offers Burlybear Network and College Broadcasting programming every weekday from 1 p.m. - 8 p.m. These are outlets of free student-made programming, available to colleges nationwide. Offering comedy and variety shows, Burlybear is helmed by *Saturday Night Live* producer Lorne Michaels; College Broadcasting is created in Canada and features music shows and independent films.

Behind the Scenes

WAKE TV is run by an annually-elected executive board of six; the board approves new show ideas and allocates budgets to the programs, which range from \$250 - \$400 per year. A board member oversees the new show and assists with technical aspects.

Working for the station requires no experience, although an interest in broadcasting is always helpful. Students that wish to man a camera are welcome, and anyone with a project idea can present it to the executive board. A new show must conform to Federal Communications Commission guidelines and provide a sample script.

"I think WAKE TV gives students an outlet for creativity," *Advocates* producer freshman Ryan Eanes said.

But the responsibility of creating a quality show every week daunts many potential producers; not all the aspiring Tom Greens, Oprahs and Regises are able to make it on the air and to the big time.

"A lot of people want to get involved," senior Melissa Painter, the station manager said. "They can if they have the time commitment and dedication it takes to get a show on the air."

Looking to the Future

As a result, the show lineup often fluctuates as some programs are born and quickly die, like this fall's news program that lasted seven episodes. The programming possibilities are

endless, and the never-realized ideas number in the hundreds. But Painter is enthusiastic about the direction the station is heading. "I'm really excited that we got new software that will enable us to do a lot more advertising of campus activities," she said. "That will do a lot for the image of WAKE TV, to serve as a true source of information. It's about improving WAKE TV's image on campus so people see it as not necessarily a journalistic thing, but as a service and as entertainment."

Chang agrees: "I think we need to incorporate the student body more, the faculty more, and have more student shows on during they day so administrators can watch," he said.

The station does feature topical university programming, like the recent Student Government election coverage.

Keeping it Real

This was a banner year for WAKE TV, featuring the most regular programming ever, in addition to several special offerings. *Real Forest*, a *Real World*-style *cinema verite* work starred seven students chosen from auditions and one outside cast member.

The eight subjects spent a weekend cooped up together in a cabin in the mountains of Bryson City, N.C. *Real Forest's* crew of seven, rotating four cameras, taped their stars all the time, capturing their unscripted interactions. Not only was one cast member wrestling with both his homosexuality and newfound Internet relationship, there were hookups, roommate controversies and high drama in abundance.

Chang and crew braved mountain driving, failing equipment, and various on-the-job hazards for their art.

"In looking back on the experience of *Real Forest*, doing this project, going to school and being so inexperienced, we should have fallen flat on our faces," Chang said. "Due to the talent and determination of the crew, it came out a lot better than I expected; it's a tribute to everyone involved."

Chang and company have a second installment of *Real Forest* in the works, slated for taping this summer. The sequel will last a week on location in Wilmington, N.C. Chang has higher hopes for this new *Real Forest*, hoping to send it to festivals for competition. Although he will not reveal the identities of the new cast, he will admit he looks for certain "types," from the alternative poet/artist, to the All-American boy and girl.

Also aired was *Continuity*, junior Christen Balady and Marguerite Corvini's original short film.

That's a Wrap

For the executive board and all those who work to put show on the air, WAKE TV is a labor of love. "It's exciting to see a new program start. Everyone knows how much work goes into that; it's a huge reward to see (a show) done," Eanes said. Painter stresses the importance of professionalism at WAKE TV, which she feels has only been increasing over the years. "It's important to set high standards of production," she said. "If you set high standards we'll reach for them; if you don't, we're just a bunch of college kids, that's what we'll look like."

Channel 6: let the cameras - and the good times - roll.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-----------------|---|---------|-------------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 p.m. - 8 p.m. | Programming by College Broadcasting and Burlybear Network | | | | |
| 8:00 p.m. | | | | | |
| 8:30 p.m. | | | | | |
| 9:00 p.m. | | | The Advocates | The Struggle | |
| 9:30 p.m. | | | | | |
| 10:00 p.m. | | | The Eve and Alison Show | | |
| 10:30 p.m. | | | Real Forest | | |
| 11:00 p.m. | | | | | |
| 11:30 p.m. | | | | | |
| midnight | | | Sportsline | | |
| 12:30 a.m. | | | | | |
| 1:00 a.m. | | | | | |



Photos by Gretchen Crook

ABOVE LEFT: Junior Aleia Naylor and freshman Whitaker Grannis set up a shot while taping *The Struggle*. ABOVE RIGHT: Junior Janelle Jenkins positions the camera just so. BELOW RIGHT: Freshman Lindsay Barr, part of the *Real Forest* crew, captures the magic. BOTTOM RIGHT: *Real Forest* cast members sophomore Megan Cooper and freshmen Anna Curnes and Nikki Harding snuggle during their week of *Real Forest* bonding. BOTTOM LEFT: Sophomore Shariq Torres behind the cameras on *The Struggle*. BELOW LEFT: Junior Kendra Ferguson and Torres monitor the camera feeds on *The Struggle*.

WAKE TV CHANNEL 6



Photos courtesy of Lindsay Barr

