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Texas A&M University cadet Charla Gwin of Fort Worth wears an insignia over her left pocket that is not too common seen on Aggie uniforms. She earned the airborne wings recently at a Fort Benning, Ga., Army school.

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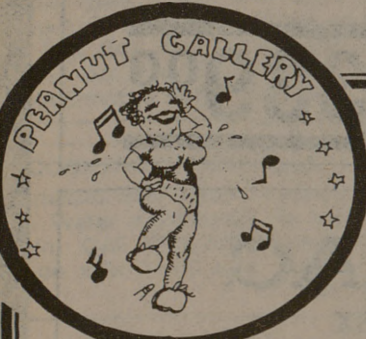
Woman cadet wins paratrooper wings

A jumper has to weigh at least 87 pounds to open a military parachute.
Charla Gwin made it by 13 pounds. The 5-foot-2 Texas A&M University junior recently became the first woman cadet here to earn airborne wings in Army training.
"I was the first, but I definitely will not be the last," declared Gwin, now of Fort Worth.
She and four male Army ROTC cadets completed the rigorous three-week Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga. Fourteen women were among more than 500 who enrolled. Six women were among the 430 graduates. The women consisted of three Regular Army officers and three cadets.
"There were no blue and pink doors up there," commented Gwin. "They kept saying the strong will make it, the weak won't."
Conditions were less than ideal for the training, consisting of a week

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each of ground school and phase training, tower training and jumps. Rain, snow, ice and were abundant.
Turbulent weather, including tornado watches, grounded us two days of the final week.
"We're all extremely pleased with Charla's performance," an officer remarked.
A member of Company W of the A&M cadet corps, Gwin has a 3.73 grade point average and semesters as Distinguished Student in biomedical science studies. Her goal is a degree in veterinary medicine, a commission in Army career.
The blonde, green-eyed Texas A&M cadet grew up in a military family. She attended schools in Texas, Alaska, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia, on Okla. and in Germany.
"Texas A&M is my 13th school," she smiled, "but I'm not superstitious."
Gwin said there's a myth that the 400 women who have earned through airborne school since 1974 with thousands of men.
"The myth is that women's airborne is easier. That's not true," she assured.
"Women are completely integrated with males for training," explained. Whether running a three-mile course or quickly marching to classes, they are together.
"It created a problem for me with my short legs," Gwin grinned. "To keep up with that 6-foot when we were quick-timing between classes, I had to do extra time."



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campus activities
Sigma Delta Chi, Don and Dave Reed, McDaniel
California Hometown Cities Club, 139 MSC
Class of '80, 7:30 p.m., 401 Rudder
SCONA, hosts, hostesses and 120 delegates, 7:30 p.m., 228 MSC
American Nuclear Society, 7:30 p.m., 103 Zachry
A&M Classical Piano Group, 7:30 p.m., MSC Lounge
SCONA, general meeting, 8:30 p.m., 401 Rudder
Wednesday
Omega Phi Alpha, carnation sales, 6 p.m., 601 Rudder
Omega Phi Alpha, pledges, 7 p.m., 401 Rudder
TAMU Handball Club, 7 p.m., 401 Rudder

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