

# THE BATTALION

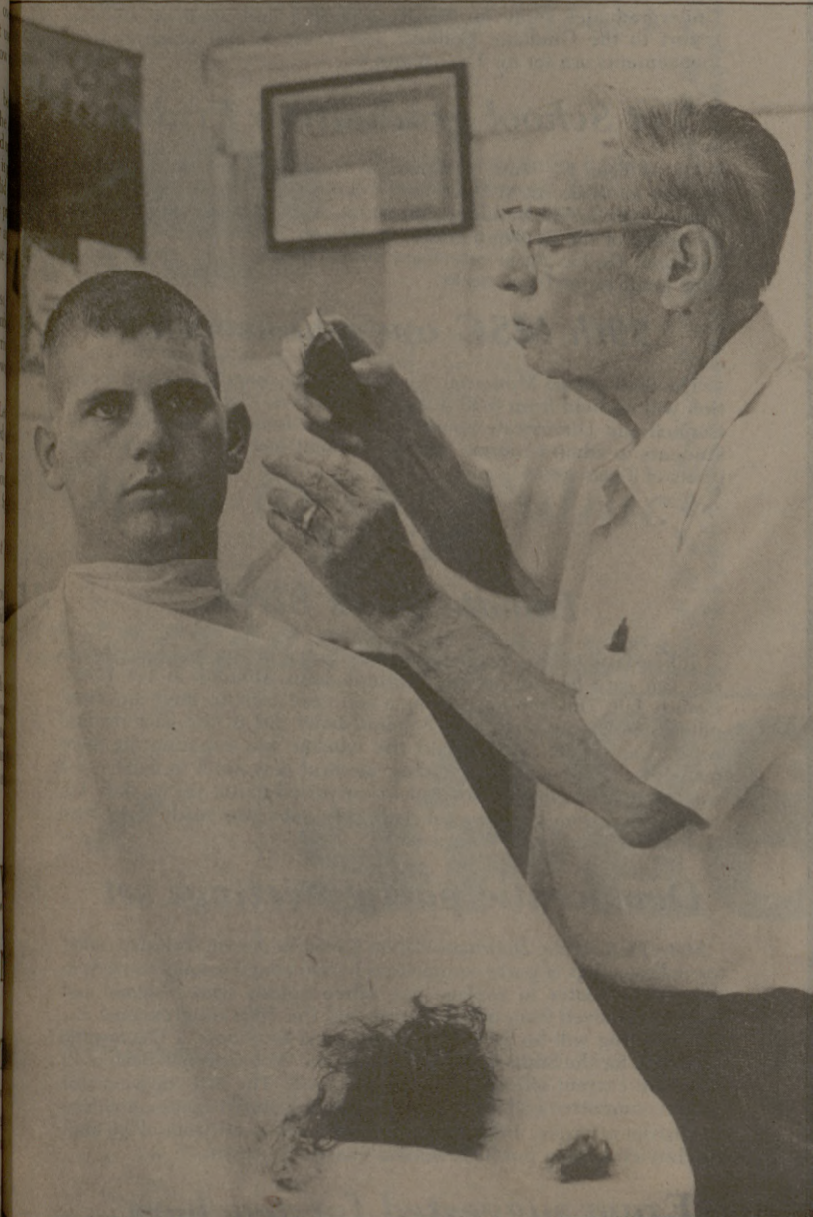
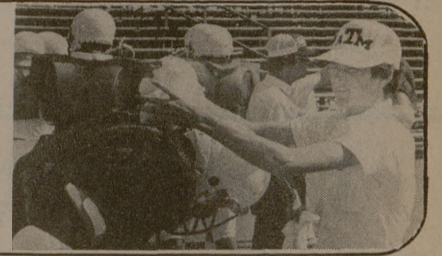
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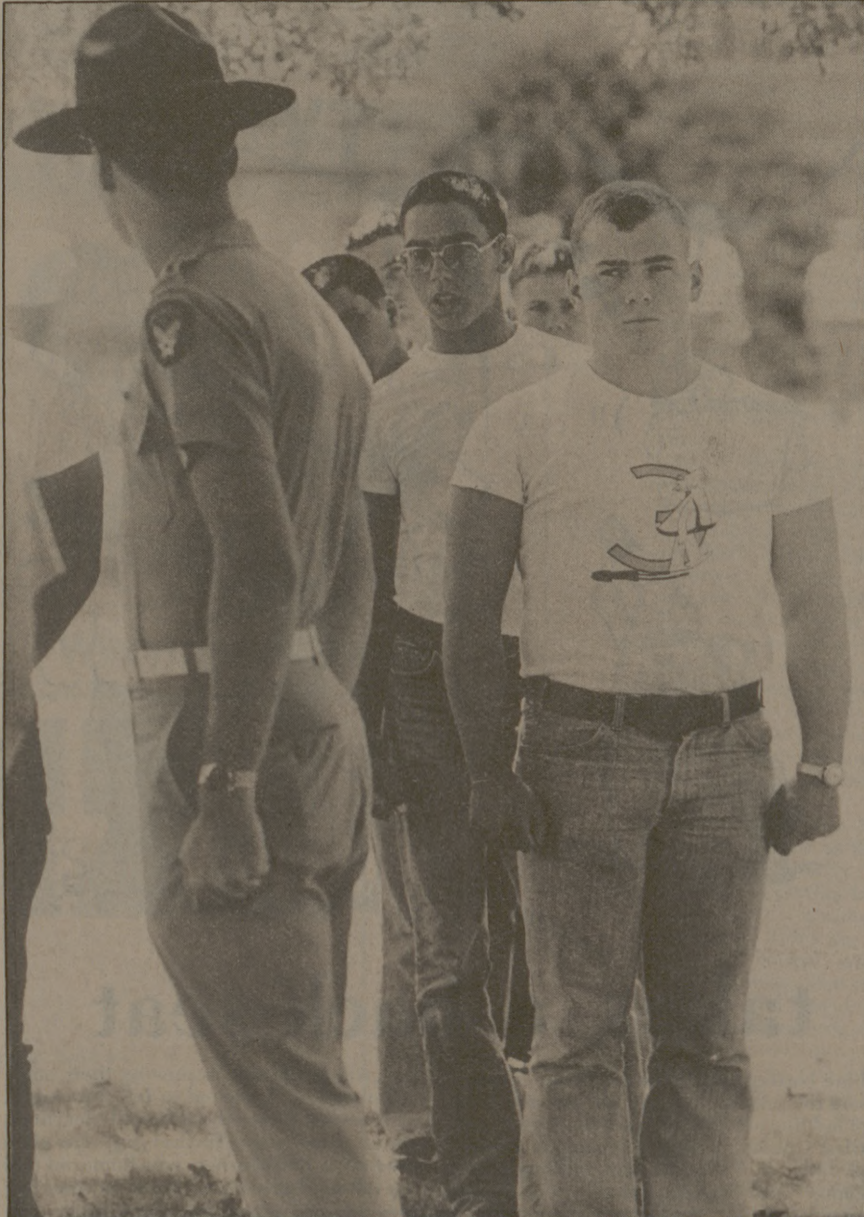
## Inside Wednesday:

- The feel of graduation - p. 3A.
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**Fish get their first taste of Corps life**

Dave Staehlin (left), who will be a freshman this fall in outfit M-2, received the traditional fish head shave at the Northgate Barber Shop Tuesday afternoon. The new freshmen in Squadron 3 (right) listen to their



platoon sergeant, George Saxon, who is instructing them on the proper method of making a right pivot. The new fish could be seen in the Quad Tuesday afternoon going through some rigorous practice sessions.

Battalion photos by Pat O'Malley

## Local fireman dies in blaze

Bryan fire investigators were searching through the charred wreckage of a Bryan apartment complex this morning looking for the cause of a fire that claimed the life of a Bryan fireman Tuesday night.

About half the 26 apartment units at Tropicano Apartments, 2701 Kent St., were destroyed in the fire, a Bryan fire department spokesman said.

Officials were delaying release of the dead fireman's name pending notification of next-of-kin. Two other firemen were hospitalized, one for smoke inhalation. Fireman Herman Rice remained in St. Joseph's Hospital this morning in satisfactory condition. The other fireman was treated and released.

Fire units from Bryan, College Station, Hearne, Navasota, Huntsville, Caldwell, Brenham and the Precinct 3 Volunteer Fire Departments fought the blaze for almost three hours before bringing it under control about 2:30 a.m. The first alarm on the fire was sounded at 11:31 p.m. Tuesday.

A representative of Culpepper Realty, which owns and operates the complex, said Culpepper representatives will meet with insurance officials later today to estimate the cost of damage done by the fire.

The Tropicano fire is the second major apartment fire in the area in less than two weeks. A fire August 10 destroyed or damaged 16 apartment units at Doux Chene Apartments in College Station. No one was injured in that blaze.

## New herbarium rising from ashes

**HUNTSVILLE** — On Feb. 3 Claude McLeod smelled smoke and saw fire in the herbarium at Sam Houston State University. He saved a stack of near-extinct plants, but that was all.

He watched as 15,000 plants — carefully selected and dried, some rare, all unusual and difficult to replace — burned, taking 30 years of McLeod's work and dedication with them.

Included in the collection were specimens gathered by Dr. S.R. Warner, former head of the biology department at Sam Houston; the collection of F.M. Thurov, a botanist who worked along the Gulf Coast from 1862 to 1925 and hundreds of plants gathered by McLeod — an authority on the plants of the Big Thicket — or under his direction.

"It's all burned; it's gone," McLeod, in a daze, said later that day to Dr. Maynard Yoes, chairman of the Department of Life Sciences. "If you want this space for something else, it's all right with me."

That was despair talking. Concern, hard work and re-dedication have rebuilt McLeod's herbarium.

"We're coming along very nicely," McLeod said. "We hope to be back in the herbarium within a couple of weeks. We are very cheered. Very optimistic. We are back in business."

The effort began within a few days of the fire. University President Elliott T. Bowers led the support and encouragement which has raised the money to rebuild the herbarium. McLeod has supplied the work and leadership.

The Sam Houston student government donated \$300. The Beta Beta Beta biology honor society coordinated the raising of \$1,000 from former biology students. Other persons donated money with the largest donation of \$16,500 from Wilbourn S. Gibbs, senior partner of Gibbs Bros. & Co. of Huntsville.

The money was used to build the herbarium in its original location and to buy file cabinets, stereoscopic microscopes, specialized containers, high quality herbarium paper, insecticide for the cabinets, presses, books — some no longer in print — and to employ students to mount, label and file plants.

"We're lacking plants," McLeod said. "It will take a matter of years and years

collecting plants to get these things back. It takes a lot of time. You don't just go out and get the volume. Some were quite rare. We lost a few plants over 100 years old.

"Collecting is difficult. Some are seen very infrequently. Some are only collected on a seasonal basis.

"But, despite all that, we hopefully will have, by the end of the summer, a teaching herbarium. About 5,000 to 6,000 plants. We'll have a good cross-section of plants in East Texas."

Donations established the foundation for the new plant collection.

Sul Ross State University in Alpine sent what McLeod described as a "fine trans-pecos collection." Texas A&M University and Lamar University — which were assisted recently by McLeod in establishing herbariums — and St. Edwards University in Austin, Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos and Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde also contributed.

## Reward posted for missing pair

**DEL NORTE, Colo.** — Authorities hope a \$3,000 reward will cause more volunteers to join the search for a newlywed Texas couple missing in the southern Colorado mountains.

Undersheriff Barnett Bauer Jr. said Tuesday that Connally Lockhart, an Amarillo, Texas, attorney, offered the reward for information leading to the discovery of the honeymooners.

Lockhart is a family friend of James Judge Jr., 26, and his wife, Meanette Margene, 24, of Amarillo. They have not been heard from since Aug. 8, when they were in South Fork, Colo., on a camping trip.

The couple's van was stolen by a gang comprised of Arizona prison escapees Randy Greenawalt, 29, of Thornton, Colo., and Gary Tison, 41, and three of Tison's sons.

Bauer requested any volunteers wishing to search for the couple to check with the Rio Grande County sheriff's office in Del Norte and tell officers where they will be searching.

## Hearing may free Davis on bond

### Friend testifies Davis plotted 15 murders

**FORT WORTH** — Driven by a passion for vengeance against those he hated most, millionaire T. Cullen Davis turned to his closest friend to plot a total of 15 hired murders, that friend testified Tuesday.

Dave McCrory testified in a hearing to determine if Davis, now jailed, should be freed on bond on charges of trying to buy the murder of the presiding judge in his divorce case.

In secretive restaurant parking lot meetings with Davis, McCrory said a young woman who testified in the industrialist's trial last year on charges of murdering his 12-year-old stepdaughter was at the top of the list of persons he wanted dead.

"He said he had thought about it and decided to go ahead with hiring someone to kill Beverly Bass and I was going to do the hiring," McCrory testified. "He did not want the person who was going to do it to know who was paying for it."

"I got shook up. He said 'if you cross me this time — and you know I've got the money and power to do it — I'll have you and your wife and you're whole damn family killed.'"

"I was shook. I started to hit him. He said 'don't get excited.' He said 'I know some things you don't know. Miss Bass) is the only one the jury believed. She's got to

die. I've got others who could do it, but you're the only one I could trust."

In Davis' trial and acquittal last year for the Aug. 2, 1976, death of Andrea Wilborn — killed in an assault that also resulted in the wounding of Davis' estranged wife, Priscilla, the death of her lover, Stan Farr, and the wounding of Miss Bass's date, Gus Gavrel — Miss Bass identified Davis as the assailant.

Davis was arrested Sunday after allegedly giving McCrory \$25,000 for supposedly killing divorcee Judge Joe Eidson. McCrory had been cooperating with authorities since Thursday — when he realized Davis could not be talked out of the alleged murder-for-hire plot.

Eidson was never harmed and authorities tape recorded and photographed the exchange of money.

McCrory said he and Davis had been close friends since 1969 and he and his then wife, Judy, frequently went out socially with Davis and his now estranged wife, Priscilla Davis.

McCrory said Davis paid for the trips because "I didn't have the money."

McCrory said he met with Davis throughout the early part of this year to discuss the killing of Miss Bass. Then, at a meeting in June, he said Davis added more names.

"He told me he decided to add some names to his list and rather than just Beverly Bass he wanted Beverly

Bass, Gus 'Bubba' Gavrel and Bubba's father and Judge Eidson killed.

"I never thought he was serious. I thought he was half-way serious, but I didn't think it was something that I couldn't control or talk him out of. I never had any intention of doing it."

"He said he felt very sure that Judge Eidson was going to try to break him and he knew Judge Eidson was in cahoots — was in bed with Ronald Aultman and Jerry Loftin was the way he put it — who I knew to be Priscilla's (divorce) attorneys. He said that unless I did something quick that old son-of-a-bitch was going to try to ruin him. He said it was time for something to start happening."

McCrory said he met again with Davis later and the list again was expanded.

"He told me he had 15 he wanted killed," McCrory testified. "He named those people or most of them at that time. We went over the list. I told him 'maybe it would be easier if you tell me who you don't want killed.'"

McCrory said the expanded list included Mrs. Davis, Miss Bass, Gavrel, Gavrel's father, Eidson, District Judge Tom Cave (who has jurisdiction in charges still pending against Davis from the shooting spree), W.T. Rufner (a former boyfriend of Mrs. Davis) and Davis' younger brother Bill.

## Heavy rains damage dam

### West Texas lake to be drained

**CANYON** — The U.S. Department of Interior ordered the drainage of Buffalo Lake to begin Tuesday because of structural damage to the spillway. The project

was expected to take four months to complete.

The decision to drain the body of water for the second time in five years was reached after the spillway was declared unsafe by Parks and Wildlife engineers, the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Texas Department of Water Resources.

A department spokesman said Monday the lake, widely used for recreation purposes by residents of the Amarillo and Lubbock areas, is suffering from structural damage caused by recent heavy rains which boosted the water level to within three feet of the spillway.

"Because of the structural weakness in the spillway we will have to drain the lake and control the release of water through the dam," said W.O. Nelson, regional di-

rector of the Parks and Wildlife Department in Albuquerque, N.M. Nelson said Monday the spillway would be unsafe if flash flooding occurred.

Following drainage of the lake, negotiations will begin with the Bureau of Reclamation to study what corrective measures can be taken at the spillway. The dam was built in the 1930s by the Soil Conservation Service.

Government officials have known of the structural weakness for years and it was for that reason the lake was drained five years ago. But no funds have been made available for repair of the spillway and the water level in the lake has gradually increased because of rains in the area.

Heavy rains this year brought the level of the lake dangerously close to the spillway.

## Man killed trying to save dog

**BOSTON** — Steven Johnson, 26, died early Saturday along with the dog he was trying to save from a heavily traveled highway when a taxi cab struck both of them.

A Metropolitan District commission spokesman said Johnson parked his car on the shoulder of the outbound lane of Storrow Drive when he saw the dog crippled

in the center of the highway. He walked back and, in an effort to get the animal off the road, darted into the passing lane about 2 a.m. near a pedestrian overpass. Witnesses said the cab struck him and the dog, killing both of them.

Cab driver John Carroll Jr. and his passenger told police he saw Johnson in the highway, but didn't have time to apply his brakes. Carroll was not charged.



Battalion photo by Mark Penny

## Practice makes perfect

Albert Pedulla, 16, helps friend of the family Jake Atlas, 4, master the art of floating. The practice

session was held at the Art Adamson Pool in Bee Creek Park last weekend.

## Fall schedules for late-payers in fiscal office

Fall semester schedules for Texas A&M University students who paid their fees late are being held in the fiscal office.

Assistant controller Robert Smith said the University did not mail out those schedules and they can be picked up in the fiscal office.

"We deliberately didn't send out some of these for fear that the students would be in transit," Smith said. "We've got literally hundreds and hundreds of them that are waiting to be picked up."

"Obviously, there's a date past which we can't process a schedule and get it to a student," Smith said.

Bills were sent to students in July. Deadline for fees payment was Aug. 1. The University sent out schedules upon payment by the student.