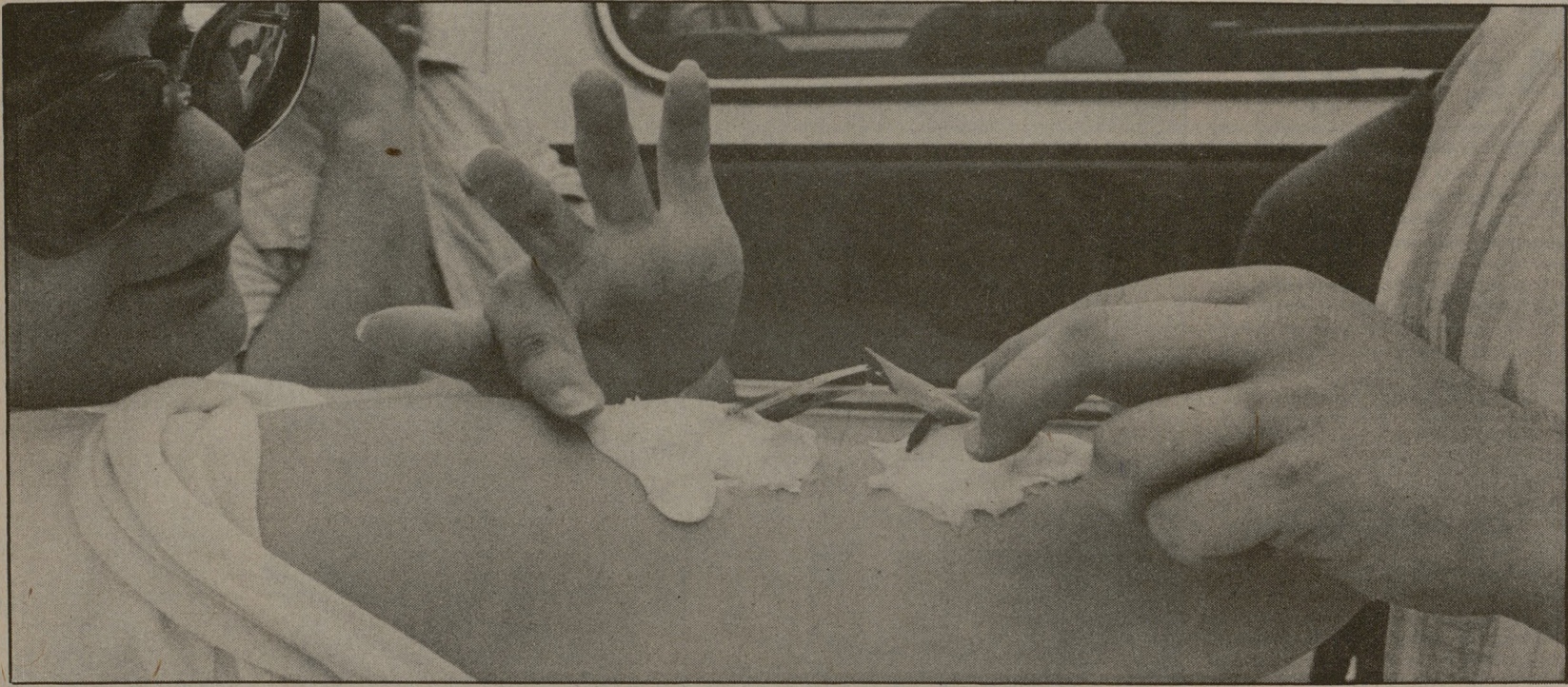


Mock disaster tests emergency service



By SCOTT PENDLETON
Battalion Staff

Blood spurting from jagged wounds on some. Others had broken bones jutting through their shredded flesh.

Most of the accident victims moaned in agony. One girl was in shock, therefore silent. Her left arm had been severed at the elbow.

There were too many victims for the College Station firefighters to treat them all at once.

"Once you get 'em stabilized, leave 'em and move on to another one," one fireman called out to the others.

Fake though they were, the injuries looked as grisly as the real thing. That was intentional, since the accident was part of a disaster simulation conducted Sunday afternoon to test the emergency facilities of Brazos County.

The mock disaster, at Highway 2818 across from the Southwood Valley entrance, was a collision between a bus and a tank truck carrying chlorine gas. Fifteen "bus passengers" (Emergency Medical Care and Emergency Medical Technician trainees) with various injuries lay strewn by the road while chlorine gas supposedly drifted toward the Southwood Valley subdivision.

The College Station Fire and Police Departments, the County Sheriff's office, county Civil Defense officials, St. Joseph's and Bryan Hospitals and Companies A, B, and C of the Texas State Guard's 203rd M.P. Battalion cooperated in responding to the emergency.

The state guard passed out leaflets in Southwood Valley advising the residents that chlorine gas was being carried into their neighborhood by the prevailing wind and that they should evacuate. The residents were also

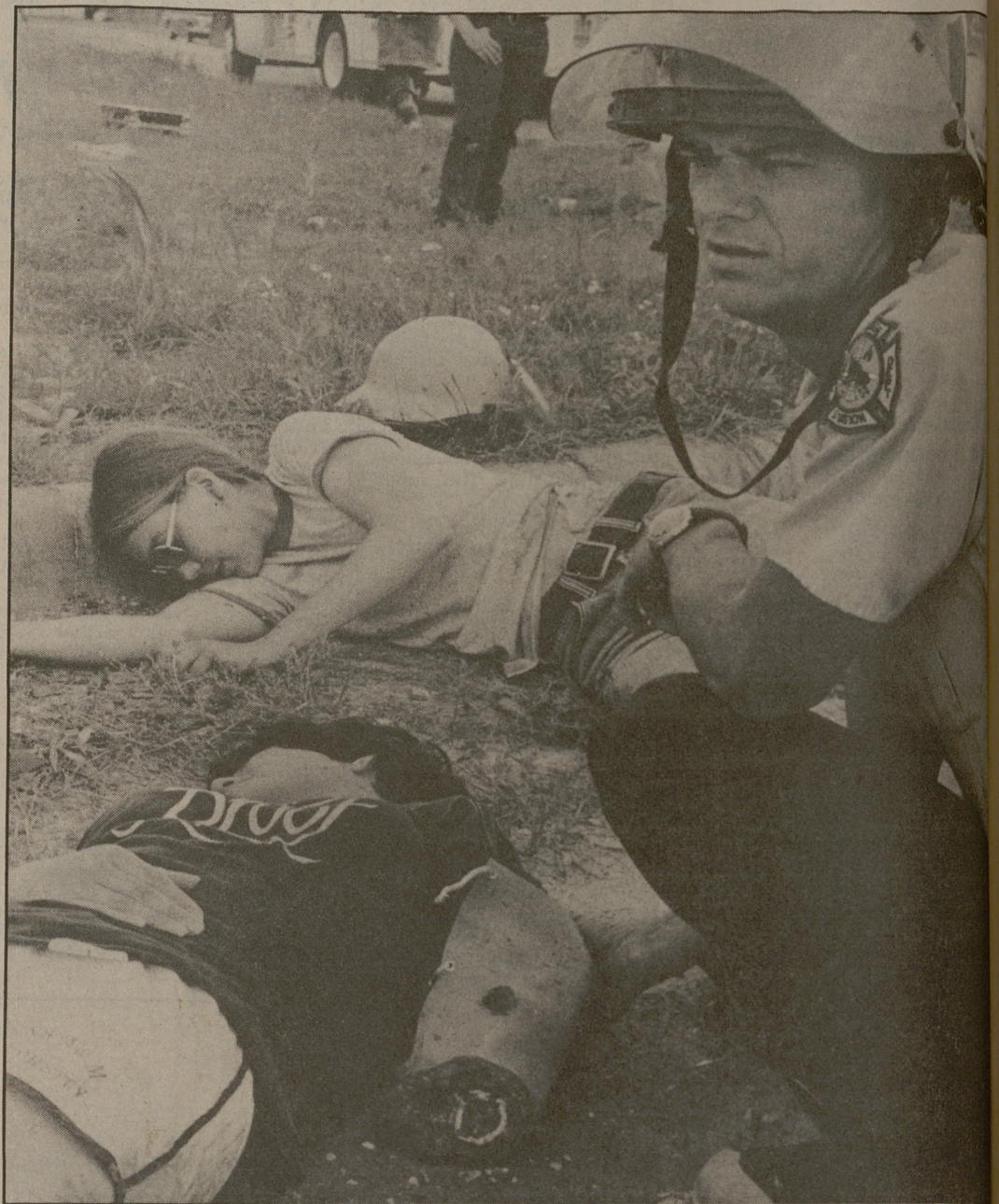
told, of course, that the disaster was just a drill.

The police blocked traffic and coordinated the emergency activity while the firefighters performed first aid on the accident victims, then rushed them to the hospital emergency rooms. Once there, the doctors and nurses continued the simulation to the point of ordering X-rays for some of the victims.

On hand to evaluate the exercise for the Texas State Guard were Lt. Col. Joe T. Haney of Bryan and Col. Waterman of Austin. Both were impressed.

"I thought it was outstanding on everyone's part, even though it was a simulation," Haney said. "They did what they were supposed to do." He considered it to be one of the best he has seen in the state.

"The participants were highly motivated," Waterman added.



Above left: The accident victims prepared for the simulated disaster using putty, chicken bones, fake blood and plastic wounds. Above: Just arrived at the scene, Lt. Rod O'Connor of the College Station

Fire Department aids Tracy Kelly while setting up the extent of injuries to be treated. Below: Two firemen put a cervical collar on Mary Frazer.

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Photos by Lee Roy Leschper Jr. and Scott Pendleton

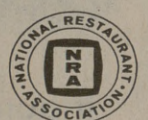


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