

Local

Female drillers ready

By MARCY BOYCE and CATHIE CREW
Battalion Staff

As a six-time champ, the Texas A&M Women's Drill Team has a record to live up to this year. Commander Lydia Berry has no doubt her team will.

Determination has been the key in the past, she said, bringing the precision drill team the prized Texas State Champion title in the unarmed division every year since its creation in 1975. And the commander of one of the few women's drill teams in the nation said this year should be no different.

Like the Fish Drill Team, who currently holds the Texas State Champion title in the armed division, official competition for the women's team doesn't start until the spring. However, Monday marked the eighth week of drill practice for Berry, her 16-member team and two advisors.

"We have a record to keep up. We realize that we're representing Texas A&M University, the Corps and the women of the Corps," Berry said. "And people (at the tournaments) expect even more of us just because we're from Texas A&M."

Besides the Air Force Academy, Texas A&M is presently the only school that competes with an all women's drill team, said Anita Bowden, team commander last year and senior advisor this year. Most of the other schools either have only a men's drill team or a women and men's mixed team, she said.

For that reason the Academy is the Women's Drill Team's biggest competitor, Bowden said.

Although both the Women's and the Fish Drill Teams usually attend tournaments together, they compete in different categories so they have never had to face each other in an event, Berry said.

She explained that because the women use mock M-30 drill rifles, their team enters the unarmed division, while the men's team enters the armed division.

But even if either the Fish or Women's Drill Team did better than the other in the overall competition, Berry said, no rivalry exists between the two teams.

"We're both trying to pull state champ, but there is no rivalry because we're both looking out for each other," the commander said.

"We're not there to compete against each other. We're there to compete with other schools because we're both representing A&M."

Besides the weapons used the only other main difference between the two teams is their composition, Berry

said. The Fish Drill Team is made up of only freshmen, whereas the Women's team is open to any senior, junior, sophomore or freshman who maintains a 2.0 grade point ratio.

The first Women's Drill Team was created in 1975 as an extracurricular activity for women who were permitted to join the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets only the year before.

And every year since its existence the team has captured the state championship in their division by winning two out of three statewide tournaments — "something the guys can't say," Berry said.

Generating enthusiasm for the team among women in the Corps has never been any problem, the commander said. But about this time of year, midsemester, she said grades frequently pose a problem and members are forced to quit the team.

Since September the team has dropped to 16 marching members from its original 25, Bowden said.

Linda South, the commander of the team at the beginning of the year, was among the nine who dropped from the team. She was replaced by Berry in part due to her grades and disagreements regarding her responsibility as commander, said Bowden, who as senior advisor has the sole authority to replace any member of the team.

Military advisor for the team Capt. Rolla Adams of the U. S. Air Force said the title "commander" creates some confusion, but as outlined in the operational procedures guide the senior advisor is in fact the one who implements policy and is the actual leader of the drill team.

The commander is the senior marching member of the team but has no real authority regarding the formulation of policy, he said.

The Bryan Street Fight Parade, Dec. 6, will mark the team's first performance of the year. Then official competition will begin in the spring with meets in Austin (no date yet), and San Antonio April 25. Texas A&M will host the competition April 11. And the team will also march in the Battle of Flowers Parade in San Antonio April 24.

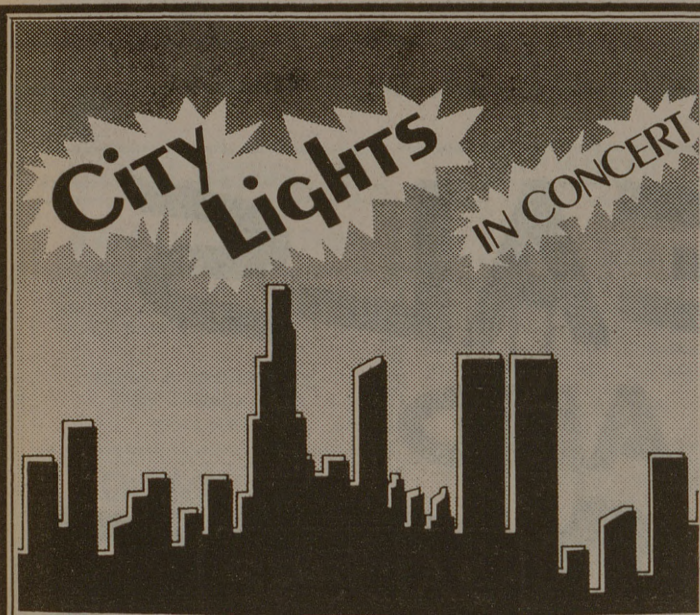
Marching in their neatly pressed uniforms of dark green and gray with white ascots and gloves, the drill team will be judged on overall appearance, standard drills and fancy drills at the three state competitions.

Meets, as well as the supplies needed for them, are funded from the Memorial Student Center student activities fund and the sale of bumper stickers and name tags, Bowden said.



Staff photo by Marcy Boyce

Although competition for the Women's Drill Team does not begin until spring, the team drills during both the fall and spring semesters. Guidon bearer Tanya Wright leads the team in a practice drill.



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Chi-O's to host Songfest '80

By SUZANNE HEMBY
Battalion Reporter

Chi Omega has something sure to please the song and dance person. The sorority will sponsor "Songfest '80" — a fund raiser featuring local sororities and fraternities participating in song and dance medleys.

"Songfest '80" will debut Nov. 22 at 8:00 p.m. in the Bryan Civic Auditorium, Songfest chairman Beth O'Brien said. Price of admission will be \$1.50 in advance, and \$2.00 at the door. Proceeds will be presented to the Brazos County Rehabilitation Center to help handicapped children, O'Brien said.

The program, which has been held for three consecutive years, will feature Richard Boone, the director of the Texas Singing Cadets, as emcee. O'Brien said Chi Omega got the idea for "Songfest" from other colleges.

"Songfest '80" will last about two hours, O'Brien said, and will use

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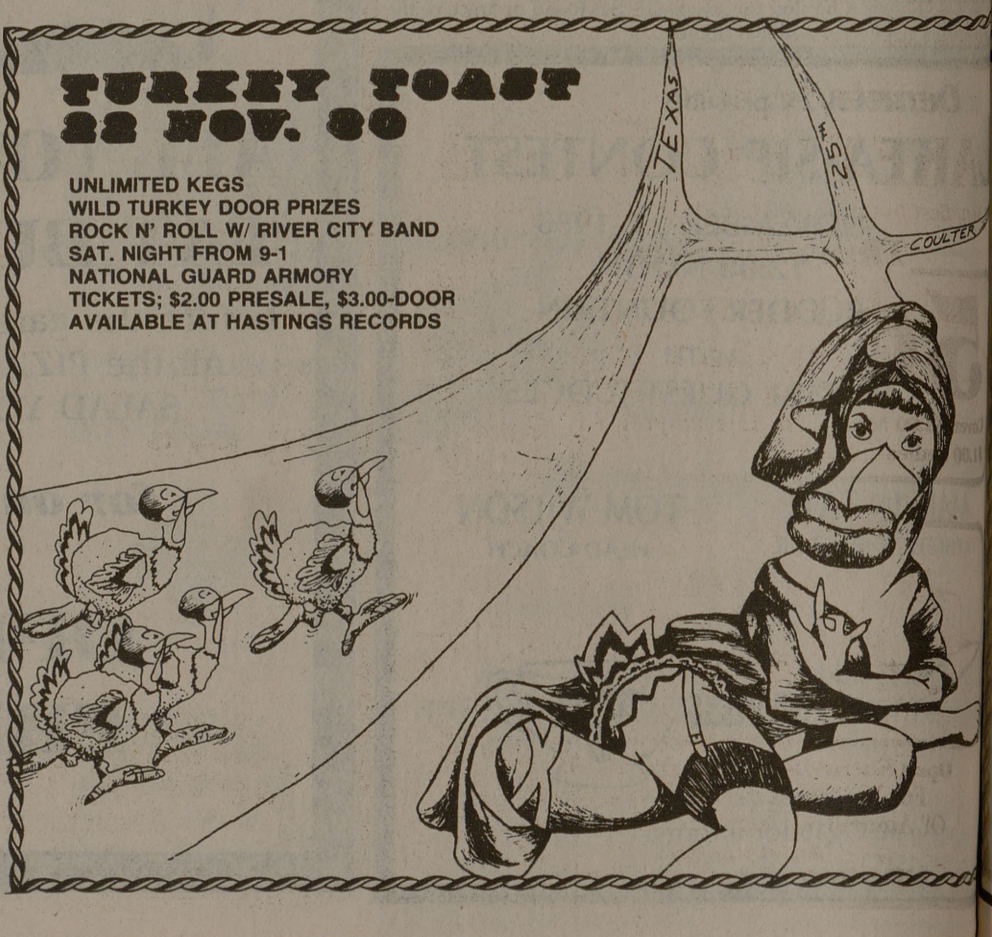
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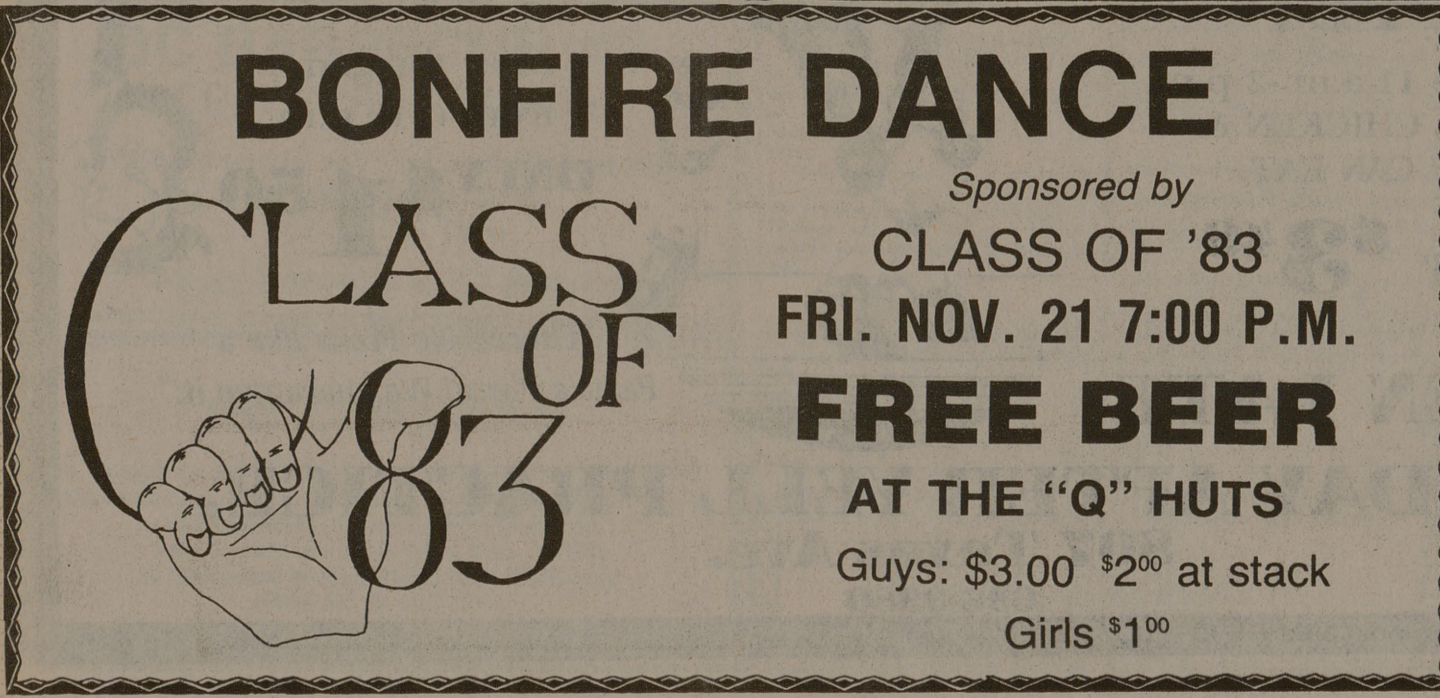
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