

Freshmen privileges

staff photo by Guy Hood

Being a freshman in the Corps of Cadets has its ups and downs. Fish Brian Bordic, a computer science major from Kingwood, does a few push-ups for Ted Lucas, a junior geosciences major from Riverside, Conn. Lucas gave Bordic junior privileges at dinner for his exhibition of "good bull." Bordic's fishhood is almost over, though.

Electronic devices head list of graduation gifts

United Press International
Many parents these days buy video tape recorders, home computers and electronic typewriters as graduation gifts for their children, said Frank McCann.

aids, "That's how they justify the cost. Parents are the primary purchasers of graduation gifts. "Our market research people keep pretty good track of these things," McCann said.

Size is important to young people because they're living in small quarters, he said. "A nine-inch color television is a very popular size for kids going off to college or graduating from college. Even smaller units are in demand. Black-and-white portable TV-clock-radios with screens of five-inch diagonal or less

account for 17 percent of all black and white TV sets sold, a total of 5.8 million industrywide in 1981, he said. "Typewriters are always popular, and new small computers," he said.

McCann said word processors are still an office product, because their prices usually run over \$1,000 or more, but home computers are becoming more affordable, some in the \$99 to \$199 price range.

Because video cassette recorders are getting smaller, he said, "They're more ideal for young people to use."

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'Maquilas' benefit workers on both sides of border

United Press International
CHIHUAHUA CITY, Mexico — Mario Gonzalez looks out over the barren stretch of desert north of Chihuahua City and points to the mesquite and sage brush with an air of certainty.

"This desert will be filled with factories within three years," he said. "Already there are plans on the drawing boards to build 22 new plants here within a year, in spite of the economic crisis."

Gonzalez' optimism is shared by his associates in Complejo Industrial Chihuahua, a new in-

dustrial park under construction outside of Chihuahua City, capital of Mexico's largest state.

And there's a Ford plant planned that's already serving as a harbinger for additional heavy and light industry.

The Complejo offices are visited regularly by American industrialists, some looking for a good location to invest in a so-called twin-plant or "maquila" assembly operation.

With the "maquila" or twin-plant concept, American companies own 100 percent of the

companies established in Mexico. All raw material used in maquila plants must be imported. The material is not taxed until the product is finished. Tax is charged on that portion of the product improved in Mexico, and the finished product must be exported.

All along the border, from Tijuana to Matamoros, American plants are helping prop up Mexico's sagging economy with maquilas. A companion facility is usually constructed in an American border city, creating jobs

not only in Mexico but in the United States as well.

The greatest selling point of many American industrialists is the need in Mexico to create new jobs. In Chihuahua City the minimum wage is 365 pesos per day. That's \$2.43 in U.S. money at the exchange rate of 150 pesos per \$1.

Twin plants must use the exchange rate of 105 pesos per dollar and employers are required to provide another 30 percent in fringe benefits.

Ten workers hurt in plant explosion

United Press International
OTTAWA, Ill. — An explosion and fire at the Borg-Warner chemical plant just before midnight injured 10 people, five critically, authorities said Thursday.

A tank containing cumen hydroperoxide, a plastic resin, exploded and started a fire on the third floor of the 16-year-old plant while up to 85 employees were working, officials said.

Plant manager W.J. Reagan said the cause of the explosion was not determined, and an investigation was conducted by an internal team. He did not know when results would be released. Five of the victims were taken

to hospital burn units in Rockford and Springfield. They were listed in critical condition.

Two others were admitted to Ottawa Community Hospital for smoke inhalation. Three other employees were treated at the same hospital for smoke inhalation and released.

Damage was "not extensive but significant," said Reagan. It was the first explosion and fire since the plant was built.

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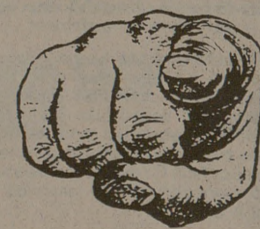
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