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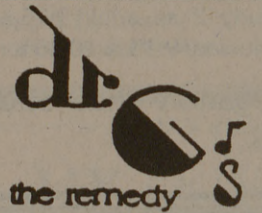


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Parsons' members are busy riders

By JODI FELTON
Reporter

Parsons' Mounted Cavalry plans to participate in several parades and conduct fund-raisers throughout the year, Commanding Officer Danny Godinich said Monday. "And that is just the beginning of what we have planned."

"Besides riding in parades, the Cavalry rides in all the home game march-ins and attends two out-of-town games," Godinich said. "The two games this year will be SMU and t.u."

This semester the Cavalry will attend a parade in Sugarland in October and the Second Annual Christmas Parade, Dec. 8 in San Antonio.

Next semester includes trips to Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio for livestock shows, said David Goldring, first platoon leader. "But the big trip next spring will be to Mardi Gras," Goldring said.

"We'll be going to the San Antonio Battle of Flowers Parade too, which is the climax of Fiesta Week," said Danny Hill, executive officer. Last year the Cavalry won the first place ribbon for mounted groups in that parade, Hill said. "We also took the first place trophy and \$100 prize at the Beeville 'Be Western' Rodeo Parade."

The funding for the trips comes from dues, donations and the Memorial Student Center fund, said David Wierschem, operations officer.

"Dues are \$160 per cadet per semester, which goes towards feed for the horses," he said. "But it costs \$996 a month for hay and \$1,806 a month for feed." The Cavalry received \$9,000 this year from the MSC fund and about half the cost of every trip is paid for through donations.

But that doesn't begin to cover the costs, Wierschem said. "The rest of the money is made up by cutting out other expenses that we have," he said. "A lot of the money even comes from our own pockets."

The Cavalry began a sponsorship program this year where former students sponsor a cadet in the Cavalry.

"But not all of the cadets have a sponsor yet, so the money is being pooled," Wierschem said.

To raise money, the Cavalry will sell figurines and Aggie patches after the football games in the MSC, said Hill. The figurines are lead soldiers that look like the cadets on the track during a football game. The figurines are two inches tall and will sell for \$7, he said.

The Aggie patches are the old patches worn from 1925 until 1946. They have a five point star and spell out Aggie. They were worn on the right shoulder of the cadets. Drill and ceremonies cadets also wore the patch on their left front coat pocket, while commissioned cadets wore colored patches. The patches will sell for \$2, Hill said.

The Cavalry also will conduct its Second Annual PMC Trail Ride next semester to raise money, said Godinich. Last year the ride was from the Bryan Civic Center to Kurten and back. It took two days (Saturday and Sunday) and there was a dance in Kurten on Saturday night, he said. "As of right now, we're not sure yet where the ride will go next semester."

"This will be the best year for the Cavalry because we're no longer in the survival mode," said Capt. Edwin Kennedy, military advisor. "The Cavalry now has some funding and more time for proper training. We've done major reorganization at the stables and bought new equipment."

A new training program has begun which standardizes the training of the cadets and their horsemanship, Kennedy said. "The old advisors had never ridden before and didn't know what to tell the cadets," he said.

The Cavalry is hoping it will be asked to attend the President's inaugural parade in January, Kennedy said. "We've made the necessary contacts and written Senator Tower requesting his assistance," he said.

It would be great publicity for Texas A&M and the state of Texas, Kennedy said. "Our Cavalry is the only college level ROTC Cavalry in the whole United States." All cavalry units were disbanded in 1943, including the one at Texas A&M, he said. It was reorganized here in 1973, and the cannon became active again in 1982.

The cannon was found in 1974 on a bonfire cutting site, said Andy Ericson, half-section chief. It was actually used at Texas A&M during the 1930's, he said. It was restored with the help of John Gunter, Class of '79.

The cannon will be at every game and will be fired, but the amount of times it will be fired has not been decided yet, Ericson said. "We used to load it ourselves with black powder, but we'll be using preloaded shells from now on," he said.

"The money used for maintenance, repairs and any other expenses on the cannon was donated

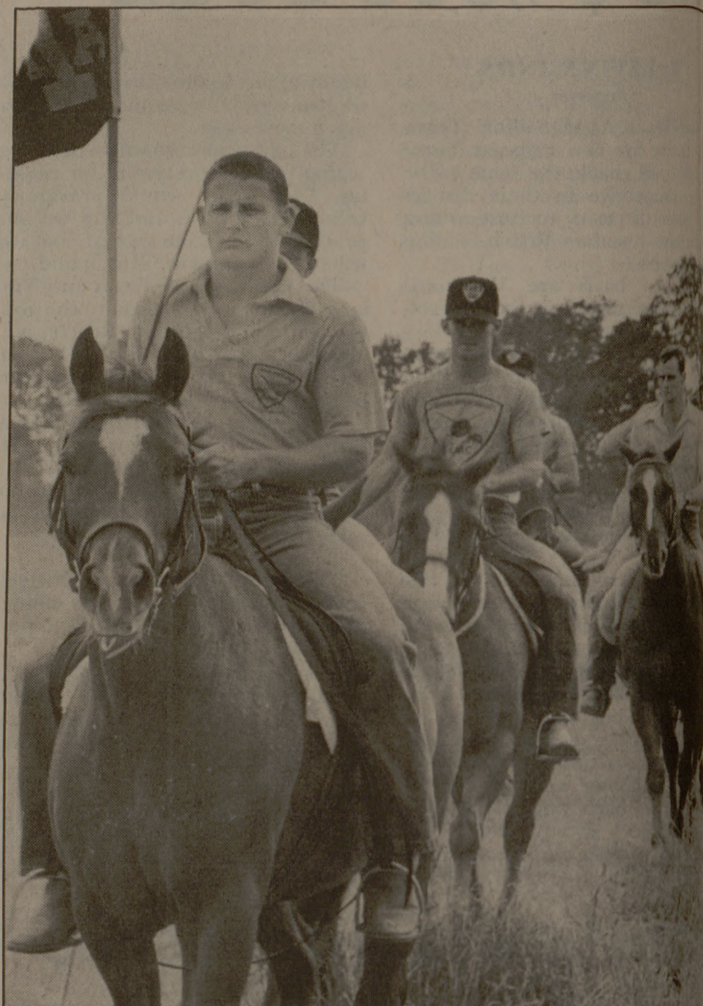


Photo by MICHAEL SANCHEZ

Dan Godinich drills his company during Cavalry practice.

by L. F. Peterson, Class of '36," Ericson said. Peterson donated \$2,500 just for use on the cannon, he said.

"To be in the Cavalry, you must be really dedicated," Godinich said. "It takes up a lot of your time since you must be at the Fiddler's Green from 4 to 6 p.m. everyday at least." The time is spent drilling, taking care of the horses and repairing the stable, he said.

"Most of the horses belong to people in the Cavalry, but it's not required to have a horse," Godinich said. Some of the 33 horses are donated for the year and about 12 of them actually belong to the Cavalry.

People can donate their horse for a cadet to ride and the Cavalry pays for its feed. The cadet in charge of

the horse pays for all medical expenses, he said. The owner of the horse can ride it whenever the Cavalry is not using it. "We make an agreement at the beginning of the year that Cavalry has first priority," Godinich said.

Kisha White is one student who has donated her horse to the Cavalry, he said. "I donated him for the year and they take care of him," White said. "I can see him almost anytime I want, except when the Cavalry needs him. But it doesn't matter that much because my grade won't permit me to ride all the time anyway," the sophomore from Dallas said. "At least he's here with me and not at home getting fat."

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