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SUMMER '85

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no longer struggle to achieve respect

By TRICIA PARKER
 Staff Writer

In the bad old days, they'd be spit at out of dormitory windows as they went by on runs. Upperclassmen and even lowly freshman would refuse to "whip out" to them. Their dates were few and far between.

"We were avoided or shunned, I guess you'd call it," says Laurie Hazen, a senior in V-1. "I'd have freshmen in a class and after we'd get to talking, he'd say, 'Well, you're nice. I don't know why they tell us not to talk to you.'"

"They," Hazen says, were some of the upperclassmen in the corps when she joined in 1982 as a freshman. As they graduated and left the corps, she says, so did much of the prejudice against women that had flourished since women were admitted to the organization in 1974.

"I never get any of that anymore," she says. "They seem to realize that not only are we here to stay but that we really have something to offer. They know we're not just women playing army."

When women were first admitted to the Corps in the fall of 1974, they lived spread out around campus or in apartments. They drilled in civilian clothes because no uniforms were available. And they faced widespread disrespect from other cadets and non-regs, many of whom thought women had no place in the Corps and never would.

Now there are two female units in the Corps, three women in the band, and one woman on Corps staff living in the all-male Corps staff dorm. And although there are no women in the Ross Volunteers, Kevin Whitaker, commander of the unit, says women's applications are being considered seriously for the first time.

"There presently are no women (in the Ross Volunteers)," he says. "But that's not saying that it will stay that way."

Whitaker says women have applied for membership in the elite unit before, but that their applications had never been taken

seriously until this year.

"It's basically a change in our attitude," he says. "It's like the band. Once we sat down and thought about it, there's really no reason why they shouldn't be in it."

The change in attitude has stretched beyond one single group through the whole Corps, he says. And if the change hasn't been complete the prejudice has submerged to the point where it's no longer acceptable for cadets to make derogatory comments about the women in the Corps, Whitaker says.

"I'm not saying that every guy in the Corps likes them but the attitude has changed dramatically," he says.

Probably the most dramatic example of the change is Mandy Schubert, who joined the Corps staff as administrative sergeant last year. As part of her job, she supervises Corps communications and assists the chairman of March to the Brazos. As a member of Corps staff, it's also part of her job to live with the rest of the staff in an all-male dorm.

"They gave me a choice about where to live," she says. "But to really do my job, I felt like it was best to live with the staff. It's worked out so smoothly. They respect me and I respect them."

Schubert, a junior from Houston, also says the mutual respect she enjoys now wasn't always there.

"But it just evolved to the point where the people that didn't like us and who were brainwashed against us were out of the Corps," she says. "Now I hate to talk about male and female in it. To me we're all cadets."

Schubert says she joined the Corps because she wanted to be involved on campus.

"I knew what I was getting into but I didn't predict some of the reactions I was getting," she says. "It hurt not being accepted but you have to overcome that and sell yourself."

An opportunity for a military commission was the traditional reason for joining the Corps, Schubert says. Nancy Hedgecock, a junior from Hamburg, Arkansas

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