

## Klingons, elves, belly dancers gearing up for AggieCon XXI

By JOHN RIGHTER  
Of The Battalion Staff

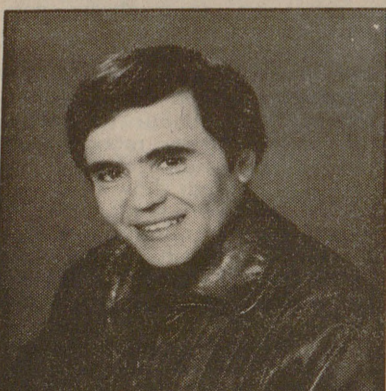
Mayhem and madness are the scheduled guests this weekend in Rudder Tower and the Memorial Student Center.

For four days, Klingons, belly dancers, elves, transvestites from outer space and an assortment of other bizarre characters will take part in MSC Cepheid Variable's 21st annual AggieCon.

The extravaganza is one of the largest science-fiction, horror and fantasy conventions in the southwest United States, AggieCon director Patrick Edwards says.

This year's activities include something of interest for just about everyone. On the agenda are celebrity guest speakers, panel discussions on topics in the science fiction, horror and fantasy fields, a Lazer Tag maze in Dewar Field House, a live-action role-playing game called Quest, a dealer's room, board-game areas, an art auction, nonstop movies and animation films and much more.

AggieCon XXI officially begins at 2 p.m. Thursday, when the dealer's room, art show, party room and Ja-



Battalion file photo

Walter Koenig, who has played Chekov in both the television and movie versions of "Star Trek," will speak at 5:30 p.m. Friday in Room 201 of the MSC as part of this weekend's AggieCon XXI.

panimation and movie rooms open.

Members of Cepheid Variable will open a "Drench the Wench" dunking booth outside Hart Hall at 10 a.m. Thursday to attract publicity for AggieCon.

At 5:30 p.m., opening ceremonies will begin in the MSC Flag Room, featuring a performance by Nancy Winds of Magic Belly Dancers.

Highlighting the weekend, Edwards says, are the Con's four special awards. Author and "Star Trek" actor **Walter Koenig** will speak at 5:30 p.m. Friday in Room 201 of the MSC. He will sign autographs in the Serpentine Lounge at 8 p.m.

From 9:30 a.m.-noon on Saturday, **Richard Pini**, editor and co-creator of the popular "Elfquest" graphic novel series will speak, nar-

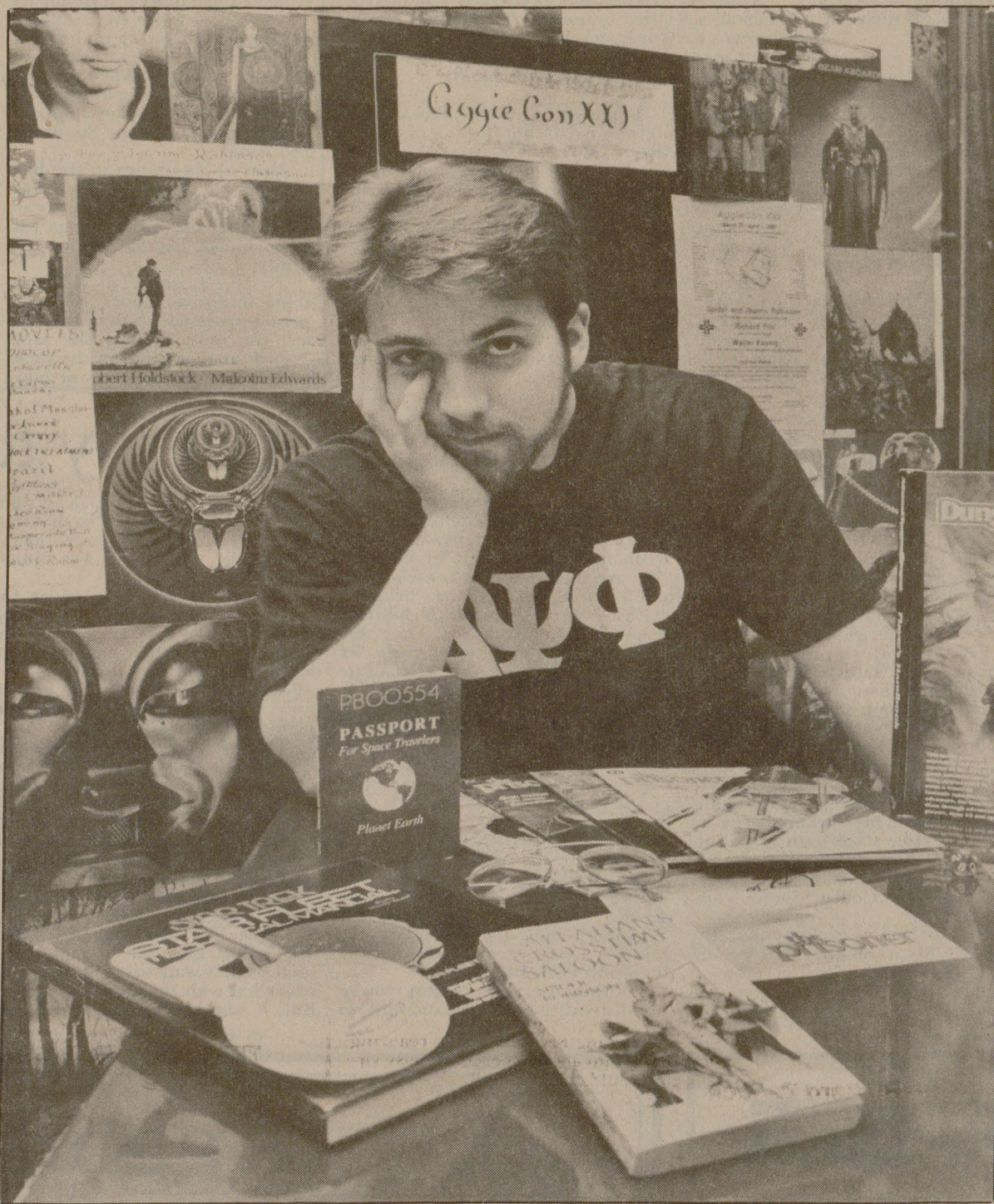


Photo by Steven M. Noreyko

Under a lot of stress from last-minute preparations, weary AggieCon XXI Director Pat Edwards

displays various science fiction and fantasy items which will be on sale at the convention.

rate a slide show and sign autographs in Room 261 of the MSC.

**Spider and Jeanne Robinson**, winners of the Hugo and Nebula, science fiction's most prestigious awards, will speak at 4:30 p.m. Saturday in Room 201 of the MSC, followed by an autograph session in the Serpentine Lounge.

Many regional writers and artists also will participate in the panel discussions and autograph sessions.

AggieCon activities will run from 8 a.m.-2 a.m. on Friday and Satur-

day, and will end at 2 p.m. Sunday. A comprehensive schedule of events will be posted outside the AggieCon headquarters in Room 203 of the MSC.

A full-Con pass costs \$16 for adults, \$13 for students and \$6 for children ages 4 to 12. A one-day pass costs \$9 for adults, \$7 for students and \$3 for children. Tickets are available at the MSC Box Office and at all Ticketron outlets.

A ticket into the dealer's room can be bought for a quarter, but it will

not allow you into any other Con activities.

Additional tickets are also necessary for the Lazer Tag games (\$1), to participate in Quest (\$5) and for the movies shown each night (\$2).

Tickets to the Friday and Saturday midnight showings of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" at the Grove will cost \$1.50. Edwards recommends buying tickets in advance, since he says "Rocky Horror" is one of the Con's most successful attractions each year.

## Rodeo cowboys' athletic talent often unrecognized

By VINCE SNYDER  
Of The Battalion Staff

Eight seconds may not seem that long, but for a rodeo cowboy it can be an eternity.

Rodeo is a sport that pits man against beast, skill against power, luck against winning.

Not many people appreciate the talents displayed by the cowboy and animals alike. But both are key athletes in a sport that has been around for more than a century.

The sport of rodeo may not be as popular today as it has been in the past. But with the help of a certain rodeo producer, the past may once again join the future.

Hoping to attract a young audience, Bad Company Rodeo producers have brought the sound of rock 'n' roll music to the rock 'n' rough style of rodeoing.

"We're trying to offer a different flavor to the sport," Bad Company producer Mack Altizer said.

"Rodeo is heading in the wrong direction of politics instead of entertainment. We think we've found a way to turn it around and continue the entertainment into the '90s."

Tunes are played over a state-of-the-art sound system as two-ton bulls attempt to discard unwanted passengers straddled across their backs.

Each bull is named to a hit song, and that song is played during the eight-second ride, encouraging fans to rock to the beat and cheer for the cowboy.

"Funky Cold Medina," "Wild Thing," "Takin' Care of Business" and "Wooly Bully" are just a few ex-

amples of the "animal-song" combinations used during the performance.

Bad Company displayed their

new innovation last weekend in the National Intercollegiate Rodeo for the southern region. The event, sponsored by the Texas A&M Rodeo

Association, was held at the N.W. "Dick" Freeman Arena in College Station.

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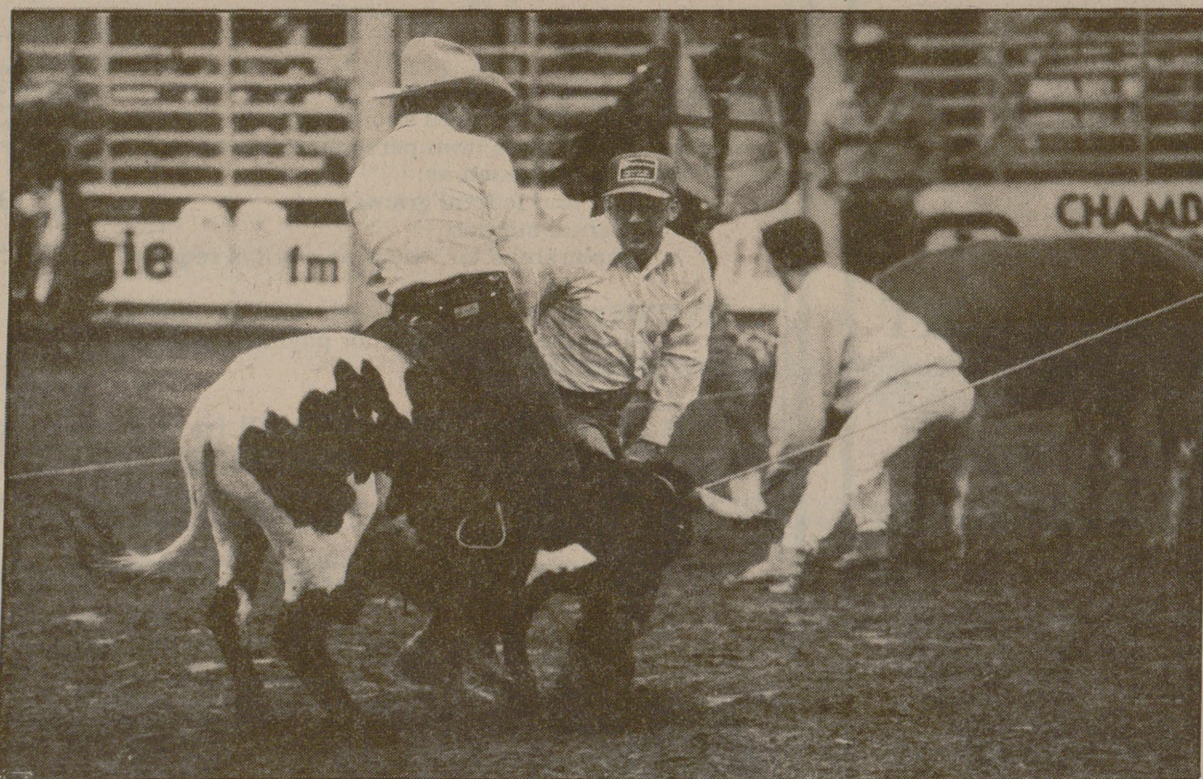


Photo by Eric Roalson

The three-man "Saddling Sirloins" team won the Bad Company Rodeo steer-saddling competition

Friday night by being the first to cross the finish line with a rider on a saddled steer.

## Austere 'Angels Fall' draws audience inside, inspires its compassion

By CHIP SOWDEN  
Of The Battalion Staff

The Aggie Players' Fallout Theater is host to a radioactive production that will leave you with a special glow. "Angels Fall" is a play about six people trapped together in a small New Mexico mission after the release of radioactive dust from a nearby uranium mine.

But "Angels Fall" is really about the people involved and how their lives are changed by the time they spend together. And as the characters get to know each other, the audience gets to know them.

Although the play seems simple at first glance, the characters relate in complex ways and as they reveal more about themselves, the audience is drawn into the action.

The austere set also draws you into the play, quite literally. The benches that serve as pews in the mission come right up to the first row of seats in the theater.

As you walk in and take a seat, it seems you could be sitting in the back row of this little church where the action takes place. You feel like a part of the set.

At the beginning of the first act, the Rolling Stones' "Wild Horses" comes over the sound system. Don Tabaha (played by Ross Lambert), an Indian who grew up living in the mission, comes into the church and sits down after tossing his knapsack aside. It takes a second to realize that the show has begun.

Soon, the other characters enter the church, having no place else to go since they are trapped by roadblocks due to the accident at the mine. The confrontations begin immediately.

In one humorous scene, Zappy Zappala and Marion Clay (played by David Roberto and Kathy Schultz), are arguing about the delay while Niles and Vita Harris (played by Allen T. Horton and Kelly Roman), look on. Roberto repeatedly asks, "Do you mind?" as though the Harris should go somewhere else. But they have no place to go.

In fact, everyone in the play seems out of their natural element, except, of course, for Father Doherty (played by Billy Thomas).

We know that we are seeing just one facet of each character as they pass through this stopping point on their way to somewhere else. But the play gives just enough information to imagine the other facets of the characters, and it is this process of imagination that makes them come alive.

The most immediately likeable character is Zappy Zappala, whose aggressive, well-meaning but not terribly smart demeanor is well-played by Roberto.

The play's major theme is knowing who and what you are crystallizes during Zappala's speech about his realization that he was to become a professional tennis player.

On the other hand, Niles Harris, a professor who has lost confidence in his profession, suffers an emotional crisis. But he is still able to convince the young Tabaha that the direction his schooling is to take is his choice alone. Unfortunately, some of the professor's lines were difficult to understand.

Although the production of this play isn't up to the standards of larger productions by the Aggie Players, "Angels Fall" is perhaps better for it. As it is, the characters are able to shine through unencumbered.

The real measure of a play like "Angels Fall" is the extent to which it makes you care about its characters. And as I left the theater, I noticed that most people were talking about what was to become of the characters. They cared.

"Angels Fall" will play every night at 8 tonight through Saturday in the Fallout Theater, in Room 144 of the Blocker Building.

Tickets are available at Rudder Box Office. Prices are \$4 for students and the general public and \$2 for season ticket holders. For more information and reservations, call 845-1234.

## Preservation Hall relives heyday of New Orleans jazz

By PATRICK HAYS  
Of The Battalion Staff

The New Orleans jazz group Preservation Hall brought a piece of the Crescent City to AggieCon Friday night, playing original Dixieland jazz for more than two hours in a well-packed Rudder Auditorium.

The concert, sponsored by MSC OPAS, gave the audience a taste of the music which came out of the roaring 1920s and made New Orleans the birthplace of jazz.

The group's two sets included upbeat instrumental and vocal arrangements and blues tunes which had the musicians' instruments crying with feeling. Each of the band members played solos on most of the songs, trading off moments in the spotlight.

The band consists of seven members: Wendell Brunious (trumpet and band leader), Frank Demond (trombone), Frank Parker (drums), James Prevost (bass), Lars Eddegran (piano), Narvin Kimball (banjo) and Willie Humphrey (clarinet).

The spirited Humphrey was the highlight of the show. In addition to playing fantastic clarinet parts, he danced and bounced about the stage, making gestures and jokes as well as winking at women in the audience—all at the tender age of 89.

Included in the band's sets were "Tiger Rag," "St. Louis Blues," "Because of You" (featuring Kimball), "Sugar Blues," "Louisiana-i-a" (featuring Demond) and "Little Liza Jane" (featuring Humphrey).

"Sugar Blues" was one of the best songs of the evening, showcasing Brunious' trumpet and fantastically sweet voice.

The band closed the show with an extended version of the jazz classic and Preservation Hall trademark, "When the Saints Go Marching In."

As Brunious and Demond paraded through the audience and led dozens of fans onto the stage, the rest of the crowd responded with a standing ovation.

Throughout the show, the band members were thoroughly relaxed, chatting and joking with each other.

The band maintains an informal atmosphere—rather than following a set playlist, the band chooses its songs as the show progresses. They

even took a couple of requests Friday night.

It was clear that the crowd enjoyed the performance. Looking down rows in the audience, not every foot could be seen tapping the music. Fans responded with cheers after the solos.

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The show carried with it a certain amount of nostalgia. Not only are these musicians preserving and carrying on the tradition of jazz music, they created it. Some of them were around when jazz was in its infant stages, being played in backstreet bars and small clubs. The years of experience can be seen on the faces of these men as they play the music which has been so much a part of their lives.

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Preservation Hall is also the name of a jazz club in New Orleans, established in 1961. Jazz music was at a low point at that time, and a group of musicians opened the club in an attempt to preserve jazz music, the only truly American art form.

The club, located at 726 St. Peter Street in the French Quarter, provides a relaxed listening atmosphere, with wooden benches and odd chairs for seats, and the same wicker collection basket used in the early days of the hall.

The band is one of several groups which plays at Preservation Hall when not on tour.