

Ann takes over



Governor Ann Richards waves to spectators during the Inaugural Parade on Congress Avenue in Austin.

Photos by
Mike C. Mulvey

Story by
Isselle McAllister

Texas A&M's elite Ross Volunteers escorted Gov. Ann Richards in her inaugural parade Tuesday through downtown Austin.

The RVs have been the official color guard for the state of Texas since 1940, and Company Commander John Brotemarkle believes he is lucky to be a Ross Volunteer at this time.

"It is a great honor to participate in a parade that only happens every four years," the senior industrial distribution major said.

First Sgt. Sam Curtis agrees. "I knew as a Ross Volunteer I would get to participate in activities like this," he said. "I've been looking forward to this since I found out about it."

The RVs left College Station at 5 a.m. Tuesday for a full day of activities in Austin.

At 10 a.m., they participated in the "People's March to the Capitol," in which the governor-elect led about 5,000 supporters in a 12-block walk to the Capitol where the inauguration ceremonies took place.

Richards said the idea for the march was something of an accident.

"On the campaign trail, I was making a speech and I just said, 'We're going to win this and when we do, we're going to join arm in arm and take the Capitol back for Texas.'"

Upon reaching the Capitol, Richards was sworn in as the 45th governor of Texas and proceeded through a saber arch formed by the RV honor guard.

"Today, we have a vision of a Texas where opportunity knows no race, no gender, no color — a

glimpse of the possibilities that can happen in government if we simply open the doors and let the people in," said Richards in her speech. "Tomorrow we have to build that Texas."

Following the inauguration at 3 p.m., the 105-member company escorted the governor in the inaugural parade.

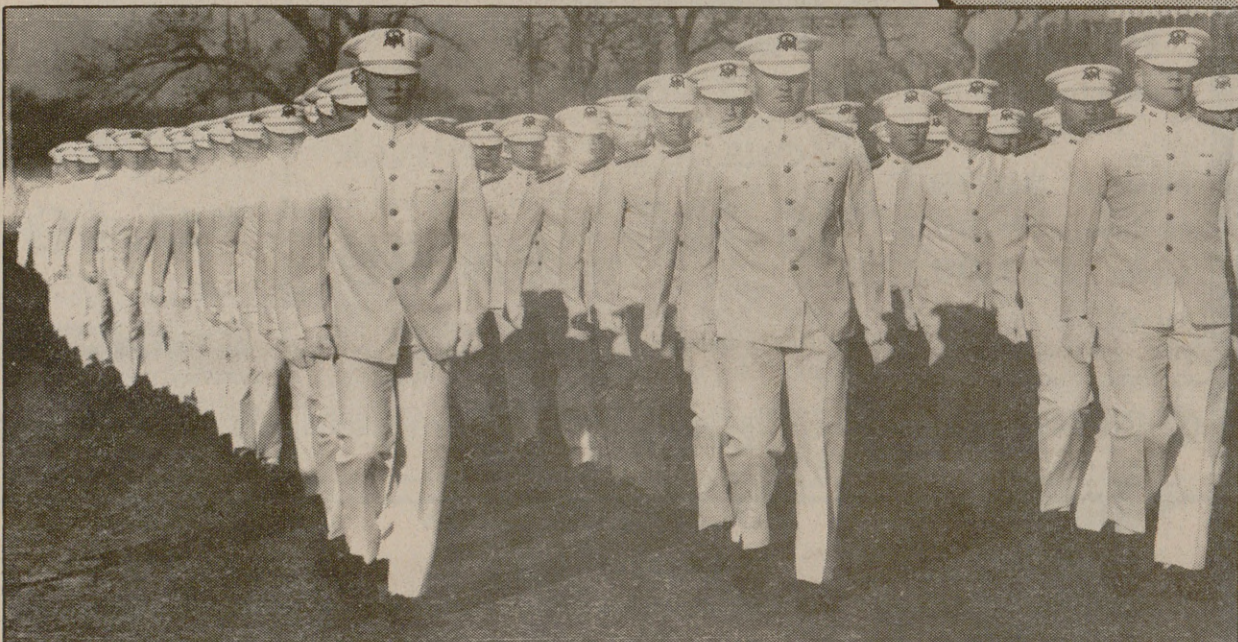
The Ross Volunteers were scheduled to participate in four inaugural balls throughout Austin Tuesday night, forming saber arches for the governor to walk through.

Brotemarkle said the company had been working hard to prepare for the event.

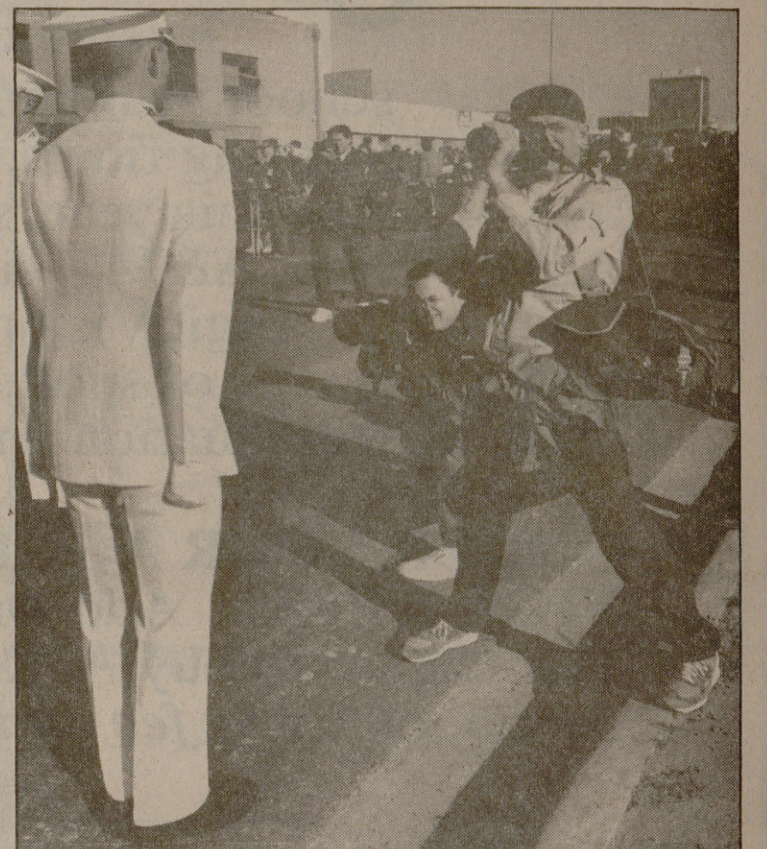
"We've been putting in lots of hours to get it right," he said. "It should be a great experience."



A spectator yells to Governor Richards during the Inaugural Parade.



Members of the Ross Volunteers march in cadence out of Palmer Auditorium on their way to the People's March.



Members of the photography pool surround a member of the Ross Volunteers before the People's March To The Capital.