

JUST FOR KICKS

Different types of boots fit different occasions, types of people for personal style

By Lauren Smith
THE BATTALION

From the runways of Milan to the pigpens of Future Farmers of America fairs, cowboy boots cover all the bases. Boots have evolved with the times as the current trend in the footwear is vibrant color and detailed design.

Robert Garcia, assistant manager of Cavender's Boot City in College Station, said the trend right now of colored boots coincides with new trends emerging in general country and western fashion.

"The fashion is getting more preppy as Wranglers are starting to look more like Levi's or even something like Gap jeans," Garcia said. "Pearl snap shirts, which are definitely vintage, are still popular as well. The trend of colorful boots started about two years ago and is going nowhere but up in popularity."

A boot with a trendy shaft, which is the top of the boot, does come with a price though. The classic brown Justin boot runs around \$99, and the price goes up as more colors are used or the design gets more embellished.

"The skin that a boot is made of also dictates price. Like ostrich boots are the most popular kind that we sell and those run about several hundred dollars," Garcia said. "Because we cater more toward college students, we don't carry a large selection of alligator boots, which cost around \$1,100."

Although Justin Boots are the most popular brand the store carries, the most expensive brand at the store is made by Lucchese. Lucchese boots are handmade, which is the reason for the increase in price.

"It is mostly the alumni who will come in here to buy the more expensive boots," Garcia said. "Parents also come in here to buy a nicer boot for a student's graduation present."

While western boots are everywhere on the streets of College Station, one cannot forget the king of all boots on campus, the Corps of Cadets' senior boots.

Leo Belovesky has been a bootmaker at Holick's since 1991 and said each pair of boots takes about three working days to complete, which is close to 24 hours total. A team of several bootmakers work together in the back of the shop.

"We first take six different measurements of a cadet's foot, and then we go to the wall of lasts, which are wooden blocks in different foot shapes, to find the best match for the measurements," Belovesky said.

Crafting of the boots is done in house, but the leather is imported from France. "After the boots are tacked together using our machine, the pattern used for the lining is ready and the boot is wrapped around the last, it is a fairly easy process," Belovesky said. "The finishing touch is hammering the heel onto the boot."

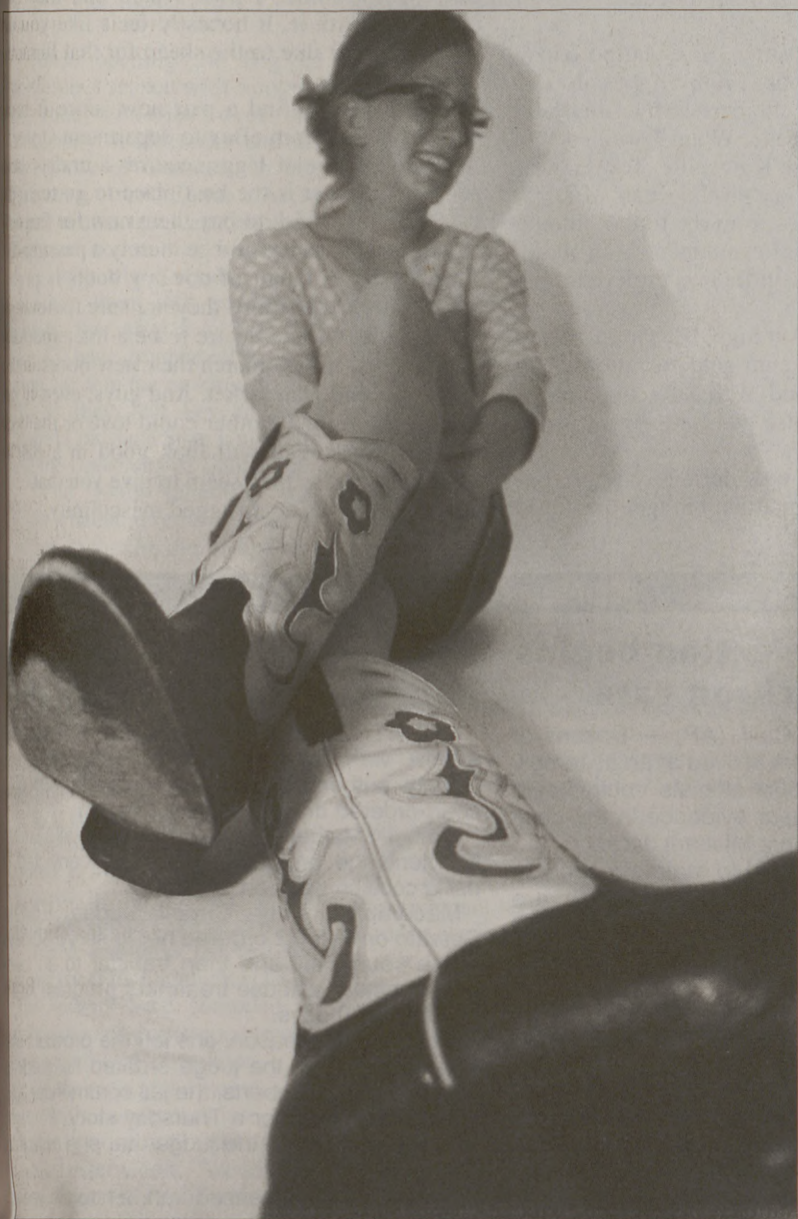
Belovesky knows his leather footwear and said someone on the market for a handmade boot can find one at Lee Miller's in Austin.

"As soon as the cadets come in here to get their boots, they cannot get the smile off of their faces," Belovesky said. "That is what makes this job worthwhile."

A perfect-fitting pair of boots does give that extra kick in your step, even for audience members at New York City Fashion Week.

Garcia said he believes their staying power lies in the longevity of boots.

"You can have your boots resoled every couple of years, making them look and feel brand new," Garcia said. "I can even still wear a pair I have had since high school. A great pair of boots can last forever."



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Genevieve Baker, a senior industrial distribution major, first became infatuated with different styles of boots when she was in Future Farmers of America in high school.

PHOTOS BY JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

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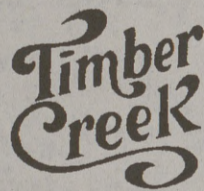
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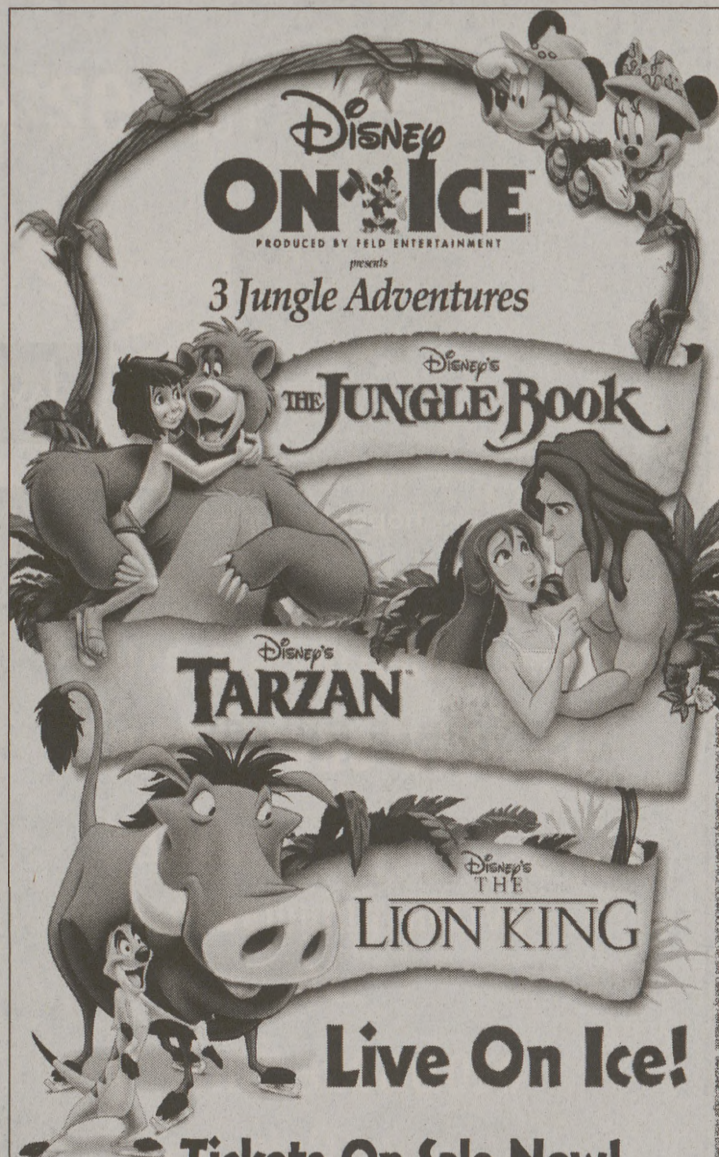
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