

Secrecy, competition add to fun

# A little wire and a lot of work

By MARYANN HAKOWSKI  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

"We are . . . Penn State may well be the most popular cheer at football games, but it is also the theme of the Homecoming parade this fall.

The floats highlight the parade, but few people know how they are made or how much work is involved.

The common materials used to build the floats are plywood, two-by-fours and chicken wire. The platforms are usually rented flatbeds, but the backs of pickup trucks can also provide suitable bases to build on.

Sue Reich, chairman of floats for Homecoming, said that while some floats use paper mache and paint, pumps are used to give the floats their basic color.

"Pumps are four-by-four inch pieces of colored paper that are stuffed into chicken wire," she said. "They are the equivalent of the petals used in the Rose Bowl parade."

While pumps are a staple in float building, cardboard and many other materials are also used. All the floats have some kind of construction, and it is usually to their advantage to have moving parts as well.

"In the past there has been everything from tail wagging to large portions of the float in motion," Reich said. "A motor with a generator is often used to bring motion to the displays, but sometimes a person inside the float will create the motion by hand."

Reich said there is quite a bit of secrecy among groups involved in the float building at first, but "it is only for the sake of being original; and once you get started, it's a very supportive thing."

Some groups spend weeks working on their floats, while others do it all the night before.

"Many pull all-nighters, but it is really a lot of fun," Reich said.

David Vanchina, chairman for Beta Theta Pi's float building operations, said, "We started structuring the float

on Monday. It will be pretty well finished by Thursday, but we always leave the finishing touches for Friday morning. We had a little trouble at first with conflicting themes, but everyone really pitched in to work on the float."

Sigma Pi, whose float features an elaborate moving lion, divides the work over several days.

"The weekend is our major push, but we'll work on the madhatter on one specific day and save the standard for another day," Sigma Pi float chairman Paul Hyland said. "Our committees are basically broken up to work on different projects, but it is always the few who get motivated who do the most work."

A judging committee made up of six people, three from the University and three from the community, judge the floats in several categories. Creativity and the quality of construction are the main factors they look for, but the use of color, moving parts and the originality of the ideas also play a big role.

Anyone is eligible to enter a float in the Homecoming parade. A group planning to enter a float will usually get together and brainstorm to find a workable idea to fit the theme.

"Groups try to find practical and creative ideas," Reich said. "They then vote on the idea and select a chairman to organize the whole operation."

Every year groups wishing to enter the competition are given a set of rules by the IFC/Panhel office. Before they can begin to build the float, a sketch must be submitted to the office for approval. As soon as the group comes up with an idea that fits in with the theme, construction can begin.

Floats may cost no more than \$250, and the money usually comes from the treasuries of the fraternities and sororities participating. Most of the expenses come very close to the limit, and receipts of all materials bought must be submitted before the parade.

All floats must be built safely, carry a

fire extinguisher, and not exceed seven by 25 feet. They are inspected by safety services before the parade to make sure all safety standards are followed.

Motor vehicles are used to pull the floats, which can have no more than four people on board at one time. The names of the groups sponsoring the float must be displayed in a prominent place.

Reich said there are more floats this year than in recent parades. In addition to the 18 floats entered by sorority and fraternity teams, there is also one independent entry.

"We'd like to see an independent Homecoming that is for everyone," she said. "Before it was a totally Greek thing."

Greeks like to participate in the Homecoming parade, Reich said, because it gives them public exposure to show the alumni that they are involved. This is important because alumni are important source of contributions to their organizations.

Floats are only one part of the overall category, which also includes standards, banners and madhatters.

The standard, which is carried on a pole by one person, is three dimensional, may not be more than six-feet long and two-feet deep, and is constructed from the same materials used for float building.

The banner is four by six feet and is carried in front of the float by two people. Material is used for the backing, and anything from yarn to felt can be used to decorate it. The name of the sponsoring group is often used in the central design.

The madhatter, a hat of any height, may not extend below the waist of the person wearing it. The madhatter walks with the float and the standard.

These entries must use the same theme as the float. The total number of points accumulated after the judging of all three is the score for the group's standing in the overall competition.



Photos by Lynn Dudinsky and Mark McIntyre

Greeks and non-greeks alike will have been crawling all over paper-and-chicken-wire contraptions like the one above for the past week, attempting to create a finished product like the one in the inset.

COMMERCIAL FREE

stereo 91

# w d f m

## check it out

Keep Happy Valley beautiful. Don't litter.



## A NATIONAL ONE-DAY VACATION FROM SMOKING

JOIN 10 MILLION OTHER SMOKERS ON NOVEMBER 16

You might just find that if you can quit for one day, you can quit for good. Last year, 1 out of every 3 smokers who quit for the day were still not smoking one month later.

Tell your friends you're going to quit—in fact ask a friend to join you. You'll support each other.

This public service message in the interest of your life and your future sponsored by American Cancer Society & Barash Advt., Inc.

I Promise Not To Smoke on Thursday, November 16, 1978

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

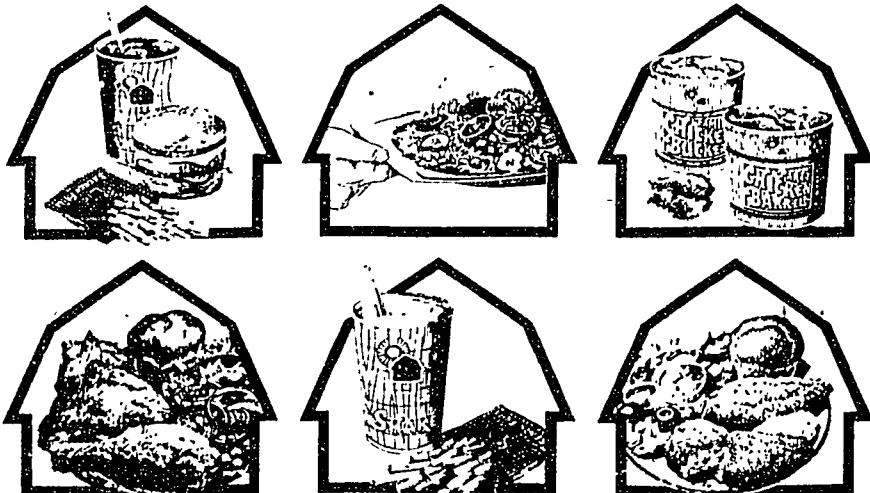
City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ # Packs/Day: \_\_\_\_\_ # Years have smoked: \_\_\_\_\_

\* For help call YOUR AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY Mail or take to 121 1/2 E. Beaver Ave. It might save your life.



# Only Red Barn has it All



**Barn-buster,**  
fries and drink **99¢**  
Regular \$1.77

Right now get a Barnbuster, fries and regular size drink all for only 99¢. Must present coupon Expires Sun. Oct. 29 805 S. Atherton St. State College, PA 16801



RED BARN

# HUR'S MEN'S SHOP



THE IMAGE MAKERS

Hur's stocks the largest selection of Robert Bruce sweaters in the area . . .

Check out the always popular Shetland crewneck — available in 16 different colors!

When you think of sweaters . . . think of

## HUR'S MEN'S SHOP

OPEN MON. & F. 9:30-9:00 All other days 9:30-5:30

114 E. College Avenue