

La Ventana: a reflection of life on campus

By KERRY CASWELL
UD Staff

With the summer arrival of each new freshman class, members of the Tech yearbook staff begin once again to organize, promote and sell the coming year's edition of La Ventana.

Through the utilization of a magazine format initiated in 1959, the staff arranges photographs and copy into a publication reflecting the experiences and attitudes of the University and its students during the course of the academic year.

There are 10 sections to the Tech annual, according to Lynn Reeves, co-editor, along with Tricia Tate, of the 1975 La Ventana.

"The sections are named after nationally famous publications and deal with related subjects, but on the University level," Reeves said.

For instance, the section entitled, Sports Illustrated deals with University athletics, summarizing in words and pictures Tech's achievements in sports.

Another magazine section, Playboy includes photographs and stories on male student organizations on campus, including fraternities and men's dormitories. It features a Playmate of the Year, complete with a color foldout of an attractive Texas Tech coed.

"Time and Fortune were the only two magazines that didn't give us permission to use their names," Reeves said. Therefore, La Ventana uses the title of Tyme in a section featuring the Man of the Year on its cover. The Future section, substituted for the copyrighted Fortune, includes the College of Engineering, Business and the School of Medicine and School of Law.

"La Ventana was the first yearbook in the country to have a magazine format like

this," Reeves said, "but since then many other yearbooks have adopted the approach." La Ventana has been named All American by the Associated Collegiate Press each year since 1971. Being named All American is the highest honor given a yearbook in national competition.

In addition to the All American title, La Ventana and the Taylor Publishing Co, the firm that prints the annual, received the Printer's Industry Award in Graphic Arts Award Competition in 1968. The award is based on the quality of graphics and content of the publication.

The staff of La Ventana, in addition to co-editors Reeves and Tate, includes 10 paid staff members responsible for the various magazine sections and between 40 and 50 volunteer staff members.

"The co-editors are each required to put in 20 hours on the annual a week," Reeves said, "while the other paid staff members must put in eight hours combined for the magazine section for which they are responsible. Usually, however, everyone puts in at least 50 per cent more time than we are required to."

Presently, La Ventana costs \$8.40, including tax, which, according to Mrs. Jean Finley, administrative assistant for student publications, is cheaper than many high school annuals.

"La Ventana gets nothing from student fees," Finley said. "Operating costs, labor and publishing costs all come out of sales."

Publishing costs alone for the 1974 La Ventana came to approximately \$6.70 per copy.

According to Finley, half of the salaries paid Darrel Thomas, chief photographer of Student Publications, and herself, and a quarter of the salary paid Dr. Bill Dean, as faculty adviser to the annual, are paid by La Ventana sales.

'It is a unique format...

kind of a memory and history book of the year'

"Because it is a fall publication," Finley said, "the cost of each year's edition is paid for by the following year's sales."

Sales for the 1974 edition of La Ventana totaled 6,900 copies and staff members this year would like to sell at least as many copies to balance out the costs.

"We haven't quite made that 6,900 mark," Finley said, "and of course we'd like to pass it but this last push before April will be to at least reach that previous number of sales."

According to Finley, before 1970 a student could check off on his fee statement whether he wanted a yearbook, football tickets or other optional extras. Then the bill, including tuition, fees and the cost of the options was mailed out all together.

"We sold 10,500 copies consistently every year," Finley said. At that time, Tech ranked second in the nation in total yearbook sales among schools with optional purchases of yearbooks by students.

However, the following year the options were taken off the fee statement.

"We lost \$23,000 that year which we are still trying to make up," Finley said.

"Advertising defers very

little of the cost," Finley said. In fact, in 1975 our total advertising sales only came to \$2,000."

"The pages in the yearbook that are taken by organizations which pay a dollar per photograph help a great deal," she said.

Reeves believes that the reasons why students are not buying quite as many La Ventana copies this year as previously has nothing to do with the quality of the publication.

"If anything," Reeves said, "the quality of the annual

improves each year, but money is a lot tighter now than it has been in the past."

Finley said that students were, "not being tradition-minded."

"However," Finley said, "students are beginning to realize how important the annuals will be in the future."

"People would be surprised," she said, "at how many ex-students contact us about annuals that they either purchased and forgot to pick up or never got around to buying, wondering if they could still get a copy."

The department maintains records up to and including five years ago on who bought a yearbook and when.

"Except for one year we have copies of every year's edition of La Ventana," Finley said.

Presently, there is a storage factor involved in maintaining extra copies and records. However when the new journalism building is completed it is expected that the problem will be alleviated.

Reeves felt that there were

a couple of good reasons to buy a yearbook.

"There is having a permanent record of the year to keep," Reeves said, "and it's not only a quality kind of yearbook but something designed to let each individual student identify with some part of it."

"The fact that it is a unique format and publication - a

particular year's publication is unique to that year, identifies with that year and won't ever be printed again," she added.

"It is a kind of memory and history book of the year," Finley said. "Parents and other relatives want their children to buy them and someday the student will want

to look back at a particular time in his college life and seeing his friends and the University the way it was will be special to him."

The 1975 edition of the La Ventana commemorating Tech's 50th anniversary will be the best yet, according to Finley.

"We've gone all out for this one," she said.

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