

## More than just a pretty face

**It takes more than looks and curves to make UNLV's Cheerleading/dancing squads a success.**

BY JAN WILLIAMS  
FEATURES EDITOR

They stand at attention, hands on their hips. They watch intently, looking for signs of victory or defeat—their cue to break into action.

They are engineering, radiology and communications majors. They can shake, rattle and tumble with the skill of an Olympian. Their exuberant voices and choreographed stunts are designed to raise the morale of thousands.

They are the UNLV cheerleaders and dance team members, always on hand to rally spirit at Rebel football, basketball, soccer and ladies basketball game.

UNLV's first cheerleading squad appeared when the university opened in 1957. Songleaders were added in 1980, which, three years ago became known as the dance team.

As time progressed, so did the complexity of the routines. Intricate dance moves and daring stunts with aerial drops are all part of being a collegiate cheerleader or dancer in the '90s.

In addition to the changes

in venue, academic focus of the participants changed as well. Instead of all physical education majors, there are members like Heather Hunt, a third-year veteran and a junior in radiological sciences; Gene Ramos, a junior civil engineering major; and cheerleading squad captain, Cheryl Jackson, a junior secondary education major, who wants to specialize in mathematics instruction for high school students.

The second week of each April brings approximately 60 young women from high school and college come to campus to try-out for 20 cheerleader and 14 dance team positions. Participants must be registered for a minimum of six credits and maintain a 2.0 to 2.5 grade point average.

Scholarships to cover tuition for dancers who return for additional seasons are also available. A 2.75 GPA and qualifying application is required.

A similar program is available for returning cheerleaders, according to coach Mary Renee. The Valerie Pida Scholarship Fund, set up by the Board of Regents and friends of the late cheerleader, provides one outstanding cheerleader candidate with a tuition scholarship for one year. Jackson, this year's recipient, exemplifies what the scholarship is all about.

Cheering since her high school days at Las Vegas' Cimmaron High, Jackson lives the dream many grade school to college-age young women have: to be a cheerleader or

dancer.

"It helps me to be involved and participate in school," said the squad leader between cheering duties. "You have a reason to be there. If you love cheering, you'll stay in."

Jackson's secret to raise morale is simple. "You just have to keep going and remember we're out there for the team; so you never give up." And a good turn-out in the stands helps the squad keep things up. "You want to do even better when everyone gets excited."

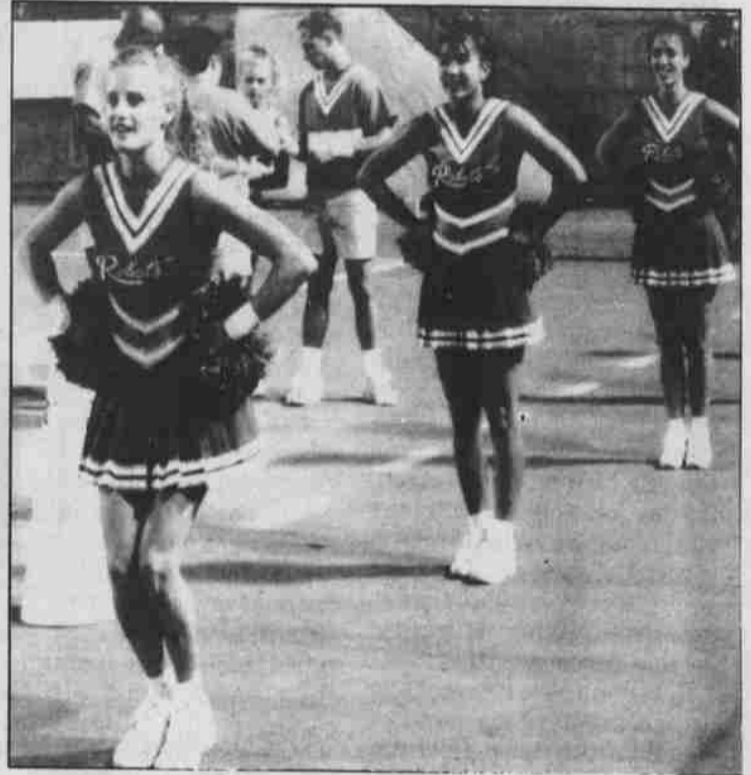
But there's more to being a cheerleader than just practicing routines and performing at games.

Sandy Roberts, coach of the dance team, is very involved with her team in the community. "We've been over to the Boy's and Girl's Club, volunteer time to the Valerie Pida Candlelight Foundation and walked for national charities like the March of Dimes and Aids Awareness."

Training camp gave Roberts even more to be proud of. Her squad's performance at this year's regionals, held at Southern California's UCLA campus, garnered four first place trophies, including first place for their home routine.

Four-year veteran and senior communications major Lisa Loss, also the dance team captain, shares her views on why the relatively new team did so well.

"Our strength is that we really worked hard. We spend a lot of time making sure we look alike and compliment each other. Practice is what



does it—repetition is the key—when you're ready, it's all there."

Dancing and cheering since age four, Loss has logged thousands of hours in the activity. "School comes first, dance second," the vivacious captain pointed out, adding the squad is never asked to miss class to perform.

Renee's cheerleaders also do fundraisers. Carwashes are often held, enabling them to travel to out-of-town games with the team. "They want to travel with the team as much as possible," Renee explained. "Even if they don't cheer, they sit in the stands. They all feel it's important to represent the school spirit."

The cheerleaders did well at camp, taking home United Cheerleading Association honors for the Most Collegiate Squad, receiving superiors for Best Sideline Event and Best Fight Song. In all, seven trophies were brought home by the male/female squad.

A lot of work went into the competition, which included students from schools in Nevada, California, New Mexico and Arizona. "They go to learn, but they have to practice weeks in advance because they have to compete with cheers," explained Renee, who assumed coaching responsibilities this past Au-

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## The Price is Right

**Part two of the series on living well on a college budget looks at alternative dining at prices students can afford.**

BY STEPHANIE RUSHIA  
STAFF WRITER

Food, clothing, and entertainment are the quintessential staples of college life. Last week we showed you how to look cool for less, and next week we'll talk cheap thrills.

But what about food? Five dollars and a word like quintessential will get you nowhere at McDonald's, especially after upgrading to biggie this and biggie that.

To save money, you could pack a lunch. Cram some stale bread and wilted lettuce into a sandwich bag, throw it into your book bag next to that hard cover college algebra book and warm coke. Sha!

Within walking distance, however, are inexpensive, more edible alternatives that

far surpass the lousy lunches blues.

**FLOMAR DELI BAKERY**  
Big pastry, little chocolatey cakes and hot, fluffy bread make up part of the fare at Flomar's. Forego the Snickers breakfast and drop in to see Jorge and Carmen.

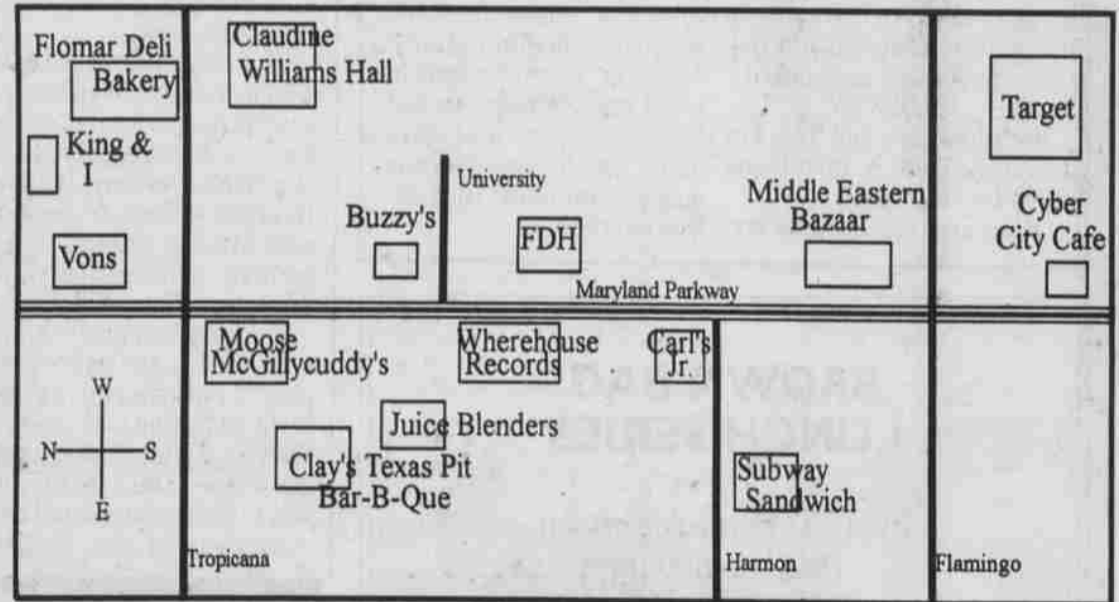
If you have the time, sit down and let Jorge sweeten breakfast a bit more with his wistful description of the old country, Cuba. Then practice your Spanish by reading and ordering from the menu. The bakery offers a 10 percent discount to UNLV students and faculty.

### KING AND I

This restaurant serves up Thai food with or without a vengeance. Hot and spicy dishes are prepared with one to four degrees of fire, sure to please everyone from the lowly coward to the native Thai-lander. Discounts are not available here, but lunch specials at \$4.95 each that include entree, egg roll, fried rice, and a Coke more than make up for it.

### MOOSE

**MCGILLYCUDDY'S**  
Affectionately known as Moose's, this bar and restaurant is famous for half-price happy hour. Seven days a week from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., any drink (alcoholic or not)



and all appetizers are half price. Such a deal.

### CLAY'S TEXAS PIT BAR-B-Q

Looking for fast service? A quick lunch? Then don't bother.

But if you have more than 10 minutes and are interested in classic barbecue food, including beef sandwiches, ribs, coleslaw and most excellent baked beans, see Clay today.

With its mom's diner atmosphere, be prepared to finish everything on your plate or answer to Clay. Bring a friend and your UNLV ID for a 10 percent discount.

### JUICE BLENDERS

One step into the bright room and you're feeling health-

ier already. One look at the menu and your mouth craves everything. Fresh fruit juice is mixed on demand into smoothies, like the Desert Sunrise and Rainbow's End.

An easy way to get some extra protein or vitamins is to add one or two of the free supplements available at no extra charge. The difficult choice is which item to apply the 50 cent coupon to, provided in the UNLV Coupons Fall '95 booklet.

### BUZZY'S ESPRESSO

For a light lunch and a change from the beloved Cafe, Buzzy's is the new word in coffee bars. Bagels, biscotti, or brownies paired with a Big Buzz double espresso will

boost your brain power and allow you to keep busy as a bee. Everything is 10 percent off for university students and faculty.

### MIDDLE EASTERN BAZAAR

With all the cash being saved elsewhere, the Bazaar can be an occasional treat. Discounts are unheard of here, but exotics like shawarma in pita and bourrani, are priced moderately, from around \$4 to \$8 a dish. And, as they say, save room for dessert. Ever had rose flower ice cream with pistachio and saffron?

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