

Cheerleading is in finalist's blood

By Reid Warren

Liz Held is trying to be low-key about it. But when a person is trying out for the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders, word travels fast. Held, 22, has cheerleading in her blood. She said the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders are just the next step in what she has been doing the past eight years—cheerleading. "Some people are really good at math or whatever," she said. "I think I'm really good at this."

Held, captain of the UNL Yell Squad the past year, does not just lead cheers. She is a senior broadcasting major from Bellevue, member of Alpha Omicron Pi sorority and ready to live in Dallas even if she doesn't make the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders squad.

But what started out as a whim has turned out to be a very important matter for Held.

"I didn't tell hardly anyone before I went down," she said. But after surviving the initial cut from 2,000 potential cheerleaders down to 168, Held is excited about the possibilities.

She will fly to Dallas tonight for the semi-finals on Saturday. If she makes that cut, she will be in the finals May 9 trying to fill one of six available positions.

Relaxed audition

Although she was "very, very nervous" the night before the first tryout, Held said the auditions were conducted in a very relaxed and comfortable atmosphere.

The preliminary tryouts consisted of coming out in a line with six other women, introducing herself and telling her background and "just doing your own thing" when the music started, she said.

In the semi-finals and finals the women will be taught a routine by a choreographer and will be graded on how well they perform and how quickly they learn, she said.

Held said she was surprised she was chosen for the semi-finals, but that her height, 5-10, and high kicks may have helped her.

"But there are 167 other girls that can do the same things," she said. "I just hope that what they're (the judges) looking for is what I have to offer."

Held said that people in Nebraska and on campus have been very encouraging and supportive, so much so that she added, "I hope I don't disappoint anyone if I don't make it."

"I can't believe the reception I'm getting," she said. "I just wish all this was going on after I'd made the team."

Misleading image

Held said that the sexy image of the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders is misleading because the Cowboy organization is religious and strict.

A cheerleader cannot pose in the nude or fraternize with any member of the Cowboy team or organization, she said.

"I think that's great. Nebraska also had a real conservative squad," she said.

"Just because they wear those sexy outfits doesn't mean they're that way," she said.

Held said she is not doing it for the money, because the cheerleaders are paid only \$15 a game.

"I'm doing it for the fun of cheerleading," she said.



Liz Held

"It's always been a big part of my life."

Held is hoping, however, that if she makes the squad it will open up opportunities for her in broadcasting.

Her parents are behind her all the way, she said, although her mother wanted her to remain in Nebraska at first.

All the attention she has received is a double-edged sword.

Held said that the people that have supported her have "inspired" her.

"I appreciate people caring as much as they do," she said.

But she added that all the undue attention has made her feel that "sometimes I wish not that many people know about it."

Still, she has nothing but hope and determination that she will make the squad.

"My goal in life is happiness, and this would fulfill that goal," she said.

"I like to dance. I like to cheer. I like the sport. But I don't know if I can get into one of those uniforms."

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Hospital oversupply . . .

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Unfortunately, there is a disincentive toward efficiency.

"No hospital wants to give up something without getting something in return," Hayden said.

As a result, patients pay more for care from their own pocket or for insurance.

The certificate of need program will not require consolidation in these areas because it does not review present services.

In addition, the CON law "will have no significant impact shaping the health care delivery system in the future," said Ron Jensen, administrator of St. Elizabeth Community Health Center.

Funds for federally sponsored Health System Agencies will be eliminated if President Ronald Reagan's 1982 budget cuts are passed, leaving the State Health Department to administer CON alone.

As chairman of the Health Committee, Cullan is working for state legislation to eliminate certificate of need. In a bill introduced next fall, Cullan wants to do away with what he called bureaucratic regulation which is only "adding to hospital costs."

The American Hospital Association is concerned that "if CON is eliminated, costs would increase, and a dramatic increase in supply of hospital beds would result," Hayden said. Added is concern "that there would be an unrestrained growth without certificate of need."

Both Jensen and Hayden agree that improving the CON, instead of eliminating it, is the best policy.

Specifically, the program's effectiveness could be improved if it "were concentrated only on major expenditures," Jensen said.

Because CON reviews all equipment purchases for more than \$100,000, time and paperwork often are wasted on applications to replace routine equipment that is worn out, Jensen said.

Nationally, the certificate of need law has had little impact because it only turns down 1 percent of the total applications, Hayden said.

In Nebraska, the certificate of need program has prevented the expense of some \$9 million over the last two years, Diamond said, at an administrative cost to the state of \$400,000.

However, the actual number of applications rejected by the state reviewers is low. In the last 14 months ending in January, 50 requests have been considered and only three have been rejected.

The costs of preparing, processing, and filing these applications are all passed on to the consumer in the form of higher rates. Each application costs the hospital, and ultimately the patient, at least \$10,000 Cullan said.

Adding to CON expenses, every Lincoln and Omaha hospital has at least one full-time employee acting as a link between the regulators and the hospital, Jensen said.

"The industry complains they are the most regulated industry in the United States," Diamond said. "The government has a perfect right to regulate the health care dollar," because 40 percent of a hospital's revenue comes from Medicare and Medicaid funds, Diamond said.

All unpaid volunteers, the 18-member project review board of the Southeast Nebraska Health System Agency is responsible for recommending approval or disapproval to its Board of Directors and the State Health Department.

Although there are advantages to this kind of "grassroots approach" to health planning, the system lacks credibility with area providers because these volunteers do not have enough professional input, Jensen said.