

Folk dancers meet for fun, dance under summer stars

By Marcia Warkentin

If you pass the sculpture garden behind Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery some Friday night this summer, you may find a group of people dancing under the stars.

They aren't professionals. In fact, they probably wouldn't even mind if you joined them. They are members of Lincoln's International Folk Dance Club, a group of people who get together to dance just for fun.

"We've always been an open group," said Dee Hughes, assistant professor of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and adviser for the group. "Anyone is welcome to come."

Hughes said she and a friend started the group about 10 years ago. It met on Sunday nights in the Nebraska Union. Now members meet to dance every-Friday from 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. in Mabel Lee Hall 119. Another group practices Appalachian clog dances from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. In late May, when it is warmer, the dancers will meet in the sculpture garden, she said.

About 30 people, all amateurs, usually meet to dance, she said. Although the group is sponsored by UNL, not all of its members are students. Members include several teachers and even a clinical psychologist.

Hughes said they perform all kinds of dances, from British to Slavic to Latin American.

"We are quite international," she said. Although Hughes teaches many of the dances, other members of the group often go to folk dance workshops and teach the others the new dances that they have learned.

Hughes said they try to meet everyone's needs, from the beginning dancers to the more advanced. During the first part of the evening, they learn new dances and review those they learned before. The last part of the evening requests for favorite dances are taken. Hughes encourages people to come and try one dance to see if they enjoy it.

"There's something about it (folk dancing)," she said. "Once you're hooked on it, you want to do it all the time."

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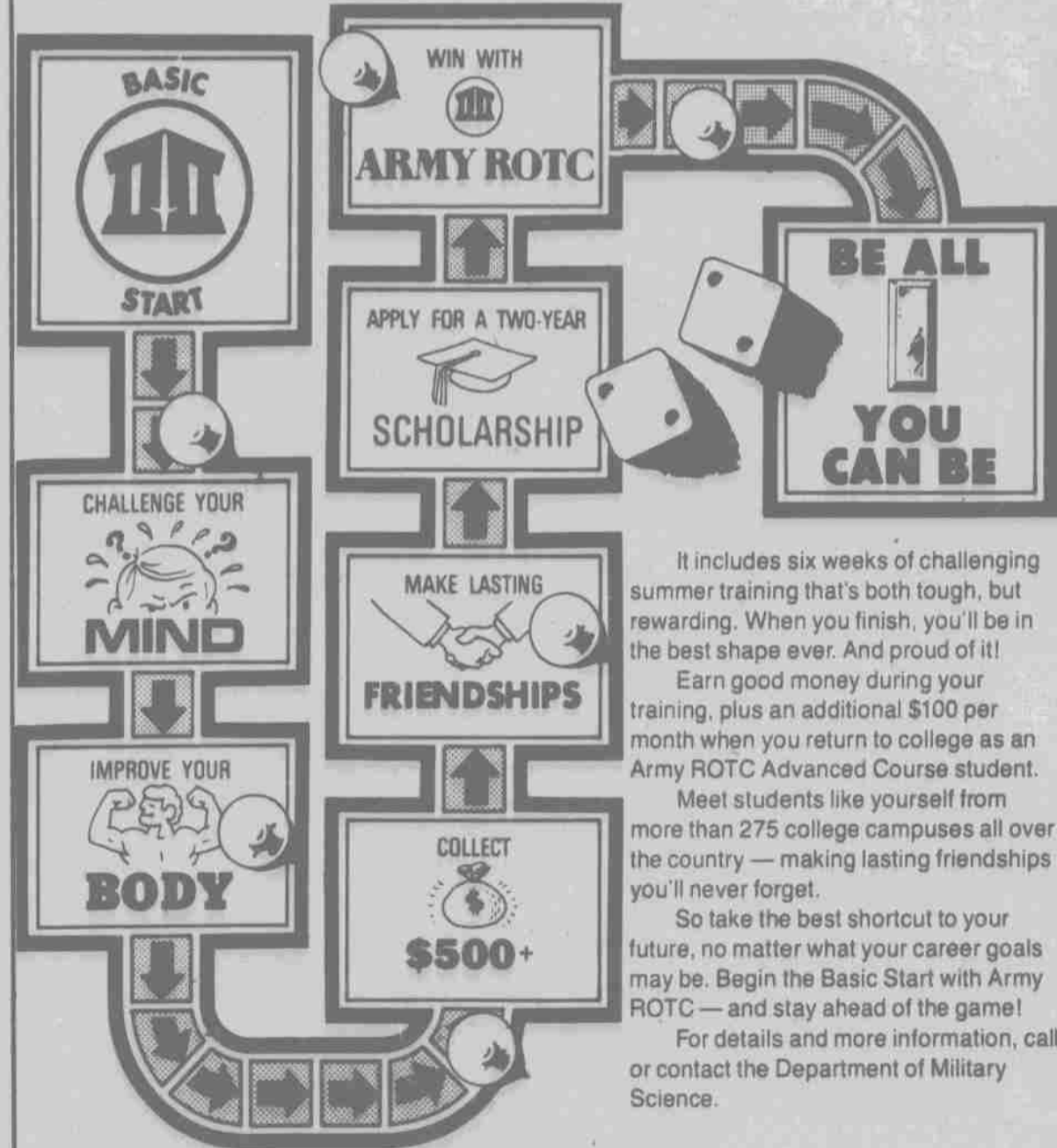
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