

Sgt. Hack's recruiting style is out of sight

By REED HINMAN
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CUYAHOGA FALLS — Staff Sgt. David Denton Hack, the U.S. Army's No. 1 recruiter, says a business is good.

"They've got a cover story on me going 1 October in Soldier's Magazine. Hugh O'Brian's coming from the coast to film a documentary and my classified ad for recruits in the newspaper is getting a lot of response."

Not to mention, he says, the Sgt. Hack Wants You tee shirts that are selling in 36 states, the interviews on radio and television talk shows and a mounting pile of fan mail.

Then there are the stories in national magazines and his psychedelic-painted Army jeep with the mag wheels and racing tires that

was on exhibit at the State Fair.

All of which, says Sgt. Hack, is helping him recruit more people to make "a quality, not quantity Army."

And none of which, Sgt. Hack hastens to point out, is gaining him anything except less sleep. Army regulations don't permit any financial rewards for his extra work.

"I'm an idea man," says Sgt. Hack, a 32-year-old Vietnam veteran who entered the Army after he went broke running a restaurant in his native Kentucky.

He decided he needed some ideas after the Army reprimanded him for failing to get any recruits his first two months after moving to Cuyahoga Falls from Akron.

"We had some obstacles to overcome here," explains

Sgt. Hack, not the least of which were occupying the former headquarters of the American Nazi Party and not being listed in the telephone directory.

His most brilliant creation was a wild tee shirt with his name and phone number emblazoned on it.

He passes out the tee shirts on campuses and at teen-age hangouts where he drives during off-duty hours in his own custom-painted Corvette.

His mod gimmicks serve to "break the ice," says Sgt. Hack, but it is his straight talk that convinces young people to sign up.

"Young people today are smart . . . boy, are they smart. You can't fool them with fancy cars and tee shirts. What they want are the facts."

His prize catch, Sgt. Hack says, was enlisting one of the Kent 25 indicted after the May 1970 tragedy at Kent State University.

"He was the farthest to the left kind of guy there is, but he enlisted because I didn't fool him. I sold him on being a medical corpsman and now he's down in Texas happy as a lark."

"When you go in the Army," Sgt. Hack tells a potential recruit, "I will follow you all the way through. This is my personal approach."

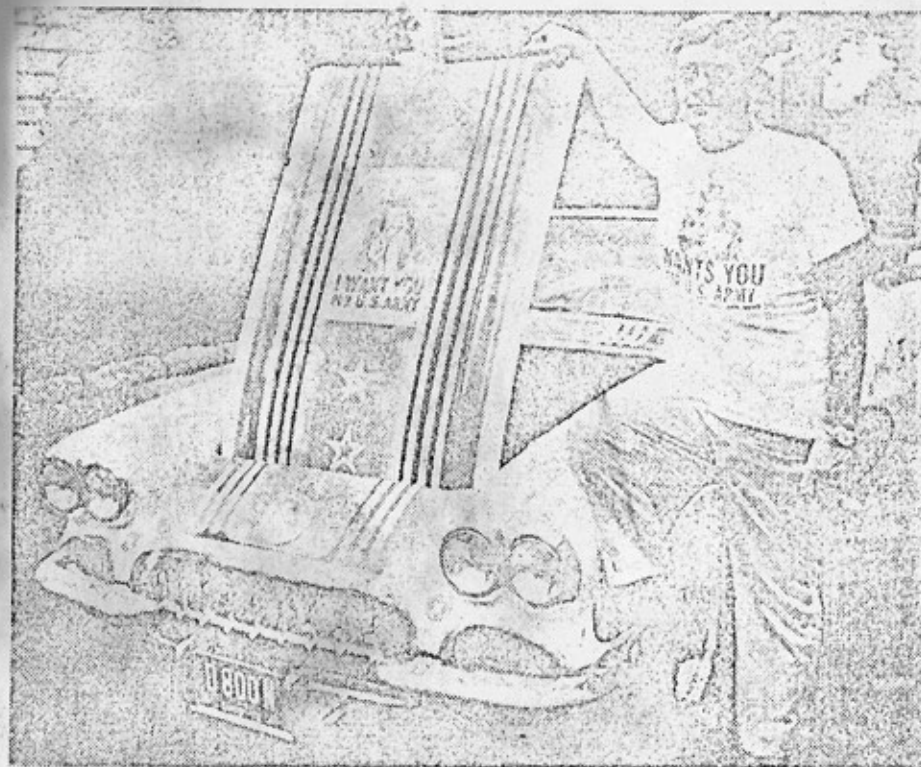
"If you're down in basic training and a drill sergeant gives you trouble, just call me collect and I'll take care of it. Here's my home phone number. Our last phone bill was \$1895."

Using his straight talk and his groovy gimmicks, the

idea man in Cuyahoga Falls is attracting flocks of recruits for the Army he loves.

But Sgt. Hack doesn't think the Army is for everyone. "If you're anti-military or want to join a n o t h e r service, that's fine."

"Now, here's your personal Sgt. Hack Wants You tee shirt," he tells a reporter. "When do you think you might want to join?"



Sgt. Hack and his custom-painted Corvette