

MSC Newsroom a Busy Place During Space Flights

Editor's note: Bob Peek, Battalion photographer-columnist, is working with the Associated Press news team covering the Apollo 12 moon shot from the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston. During his week-long employment, Bob hopes to write an article a day for The Battalion to provide an inside glimpse into happenings at the MSC during a space flight.

By Bob Peek

SPACE CENTER, Houston — In a small room in a modern office building across the street from NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center, ten newsmen awaited the launching of the Apollo 12 spacecraft. Also waiting in the room were

eight typewriters, three tape recorders, three TV sets, and four Associated Press broadcast wire machines.

AP coverage of the world's second attempt at putting men on the moon was about to begin.

With 30 seconds to go, the room was virtually silent, save for the incessant clattering of the incoming wire machines. All eyes were glued to the three TV sets.

At the end of the countdown, the 36-story missile sat on its flame for nine seconds before rising from the launching pad.

"Go!" shouted Ken Siner, Dallas assistant bureau chief. The stillness in the press room disappeared, replaced instantly by the pounding of reporters' fingers

on the wire machine keyboards, the rustling of copy paper, and the clacking of typewriters.

Over the din in the office, the voices of the astronauts and Mission Control personnel could be heard on closed-circuit speakers.

In one corner of the L-shaped room, Bill Stockton, a writer from Albuquerque, N.M., sat beside the three tape recorders. As the tapes captured the words of the astronauts, Stockton typed their words as quickly as possible. As soon as he had typed about three quotations, it was his job to rip the paper from the machine and distribute carbon copies to all the writers.

They could then use the quotes in their stories. Speed was essen-

tial.

Early speculation about the Apollo power failure soon became a matter of considerable concern. Was the spacecraft struck by lightning or not? The Apollo crewmen thought it might have been lightning. Mission Control was convinced that the jolt was caused by an immense charge of static electricity which discharged as the rocket sped through the stormy skies.

Correspondents at Cape Kennedy called in, saying they had seen lightning around the ship, but could not be sure whether any actually struck the spacecraft. The AP science writers in the Space Center decided to compromise. The lead on follow-up

stories mentioned Apollo 12's "scary brush with earth's lightning-spiked skies."

Soon after the AP main desk in New York called to say that United Press International was saying flatly that lightning apparently struck the rocket, and several newspapers were using UPI's lead stories as a result. This eventually backfired on "Brand X," as the UPI is snidely and unfairly referred to by AP staffers. NASA announced later in the day that lightning definitely did not strike Apollo 12.

After that, the newspapers turned more often to the AP for their stories and pictures. By Monday night, the New York office had called to tell us that our

stories were "killing the UPI's in the world press." In the photo department national and foreign papers were going 13 to 1 for the AP.

The day after the launch activity in the Space Center bureau had calmed considerably. Cartoons lit the TV screens and the staffers spent a lot of time watching for the UPI's copy girl. The UPI office is right down the hall, and my counterpart with "Brand X" is a pretty college-age blonde.

"Wow! There she goes again," said Howard Benedict, one of the AP's best science writers, as he looked out the window.

"You may be more efficient, but you'll never be better looking," sideburned science writer

John Barbour confided to me.

Besides distributing transcripts of the astronauts' conversations, it's my job to watch four incoming wires and distribute copies of certain stories to the appropriate writers and editors.

I also run errands to the MSC about a half mile away, and keep the coffee pot filled. We all work 12-hour shifts.

The atmosphere in the Space Center newsroom will remain fairly calm until the lunar module separates from the command module and head for the moon. From that point, until the LM reunites with the command module after the moon walk, there will be little rest for any of us, for we will soon be working 20-hour shifts.

The Battalion

Vol. 65 No. 38

College Station, Texas

Tuesday, November 18, 1969

Telephone 845-2226

African Students Add 'Quality' to SCONA

Discussion of "Black Africa — The Challenge of Development" at Texas A&M University's 15th Annual Conference on National Affairs will have substance and reality.

Besides leading a group of featured speakers and roundtable chairmen whose livelihoods are directly connected with the topic, SCONA XV will have several African students at A&M for the 10-13 conference.

Among them are Richard A. Jolowo, 27-year-old final-year student at the University of Lagos, and Awori Kataka, 25, English literature major at University College in Nairobi, Kenya, announced SCONA chairman Harry K. Lesser.

Both will be attending the internationally-flavored conference scholarships provided by International Telephone and Telegraph, which also is providing several of its top executives as roundtable chairmen and speakers.

Kataka, whose father farms on the northern slopes of Lake Victoria, headed the Nairobi college's Student Union last year, is a veteran debater and takes a keen interest in international affairs, including the role of the U.S. in world affairs.

An outstanding student with top marks in his secondary school class, Kataka was secretary and chaired the debating society of his high school. He also was house prefect, deputy head prefect and participated in the Historical Society.

Jolowo is interested in SCONA in terms of economic development and political stability. He also hopes to strike up some exchange on the role of the military.

The final-year honors student chairs the Lagos University Students' Union and is second vice president of the National Union of Nigerian Students. His father is a trader.

Among speakers for the annual

conference which also will have participants from Mexico and Canada is Ambassador Ebenezer M. Debrah of Ghana, Atlantic Coast neighbor of the West African republic of Lagos.

Roundtable chairmen include ITT officials of London and Africa, the former minister of finance in Zambia and representatives of the Nigerian and British embassies in Washington, D. C.

For Problem-Solving U.S. Democracy Is Appropriate Way

By Clifford Broyles
Battalion Staff Writer

Democracy is an appropriate method for solving the problems of government, according to an associate professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin.

Mrs. Walt Rostow, wife of a former Special Assistant to former President Lyndon B. Johnson spoke to about 75 persons on the topic "A Critique of American Democracy" Monday night at a Political Forum presentation in the Memorial Student Center Ballroom.

Mrs. Rostow said there are three problems that face government no matter what type it is: security, welfare and justice.

A democratic society is the best for solving each of these problems, she said.

Government was set up, not because people like it, but because they prefer it, because it gives people responsibility, she continued.

A good definition of security, Mrs. Rostow said, is preservation

from intruders from the outside and subversion on the inside.

America in the nineteenth century placed importance on internal conflicts and, as this trend grew, America's problems became so big inside that it did very little in the world outside, she said.

Changes began to take place in this outlook in the twentieth century, Mrs. Rostow said, especially in 1947, which was the turning point in U.S. diplomacy.

Three significant events occurred that year which brought about the outlook that is still with the United States today, she said.

The first of these took place in January when the United States proposed arms control, she noted.

The Truman Doctrine in March was the second major happening. This United States agreed to help all countries who needed it due to internal or external problems in (See Democracy, page 3)



GETTING THINGS READY
Members of company D-1 (Spider D) were hard at work Monday preparing the Bonfire centerpole for erection. Rainy weather, seemingly typical of Bonfire time at A&M, prevented the pole from being raised yesterday as planned. Head yell leader Sam Torn has said that he hopes to have a 105-foot bonfire this year, the largest ever. (Photo by Mike Wright)

Thanksgiving Services Planned For Students, Staff in All-Faiths

Thanksgiving services will be conducted Nov. 27 in the All-Faiths Chapel by the YMCA for students, campus visitors and the public, YMCA Cabinet President Donnell has announced.

He said services will be held at 9, 10, and 11 a.m. for the convenience of people attending the 4:30 p.m. A&M-Texas football game in Kyle Field.

Logan Weston, YMCA general secretary and religious life coordinator, urged students and

faculty-staff to make plans to attend one of the services and bring their guests and visitors.

Speakers will include Donnell, psychology major of Freeport; Ronnie Owens, architectural construction major of Dallas, and Ed Rogers, sociology major of Fort Worth.

Owens will speak at 9 on "The Meaning of Thanksgiving," Rogers at 10 on "Friendship," and Donnell at 11 on "Thanksgiving: A Trap."

CS Planning Commission Refuses Rezoning Request

By Jay F. Goode
Battalion Staff Writer

The College Station Planning and Zoning Commission Monday night turned down a request to rezone a tract south of Holleman Drive and east of the proposed extension of Welch Avenue.

Alphonse Holik, the property owner, had asked that the land be rezoned from single family residences to duplexes.

Commissioner Jim Gardner was the only member who voted against the motion for rezoning.

His vote amounted to a veto because commission rules require unanimous approval when only five of the seven commissioners are present. Commissioners Douglas Stone and Carl Tishler were absent.

The commission has been too generous with multiple family zoning, Gardner said, claiming that there is not enough single-family space near the University.

"I think the zoning change is premature until we get a subdivision plan approved for the area," Gardner said. "I suggest that the commission withhold action until Welch street is extended."

A member of the audience asked if the duplexes would cause a traffic problem on Welch street.

This is one of the problems that have not been solved yet, City Planner Lee Roy George said.

"We may have to have an alley to allow traffic in and out" to eliminate the danger of traffic pulling out on Welch street," George said.

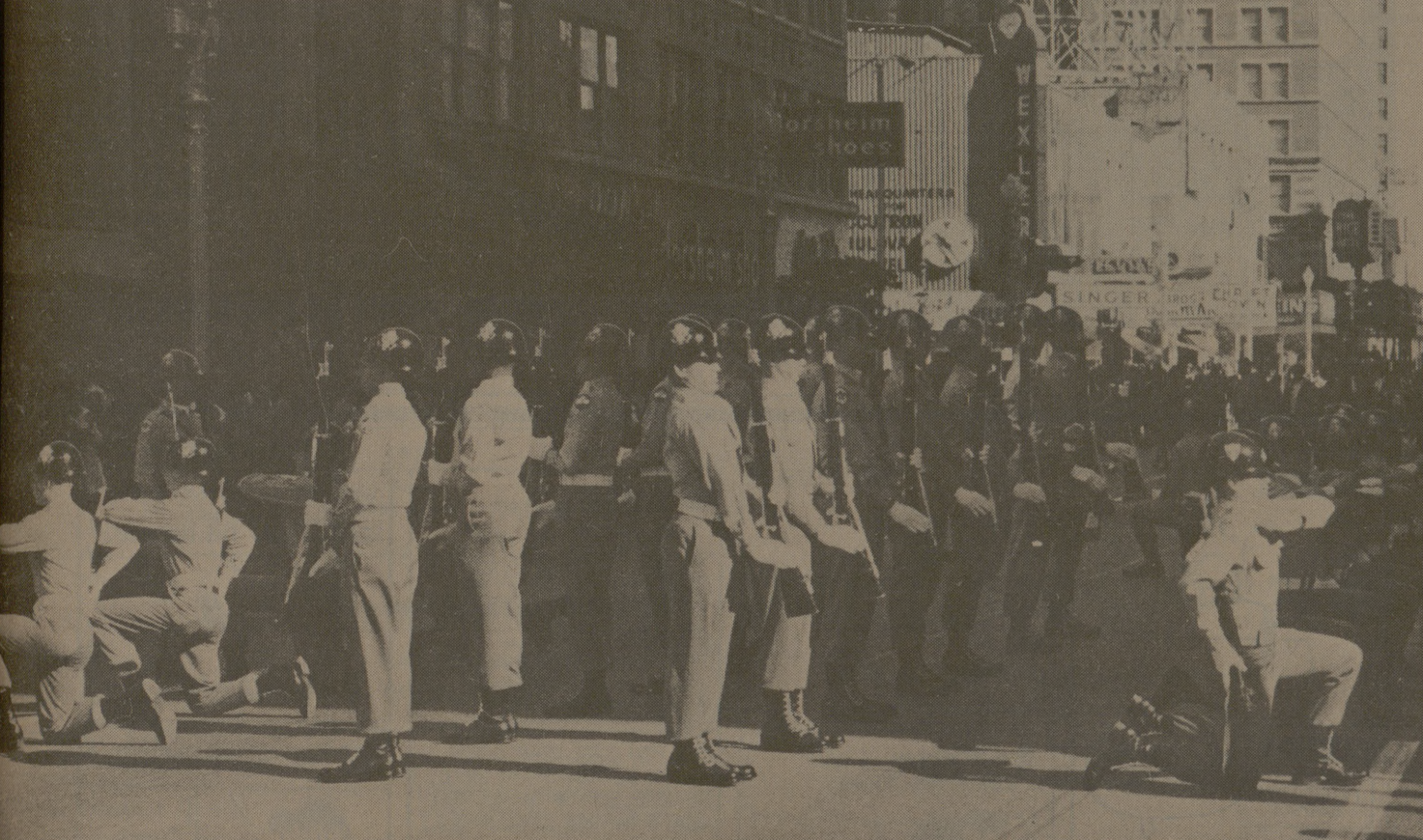
The driveways in the duplex property would have to be sufficient to allow cars to turn around; chairman Codie Wells said, because city ordinance forbids lots that force cars to back out onto major streets.

The commission approved a zoning change on other property owned by Holik. The tract which was rezoned from single family to commercial is east of the proposed extension of Welch Drive and south of the existing commercial district on Holleman.

The change was made subject to the acquisition of the right-of-way for the extension of Welch.

The zoning changes must now be passed by the City Council before going into effect.

The commission passed a resolution recommending that the



WAYS OF A CHAMPION
The Fish Drill Team, national champions for an unprecedented two years straight, does its thing Saturday during the Corps of Cadets parade in downtown Houston prior to the A&M-Rice football game in Rice Stadium. The Aggies may have taken over Houston that morning, but the Owls took the Cadets in the afternoon contest, 7-6. See related story, page 4. (Photo by Mike Wright)

Carter Talks Tonight on Early Man

The second presentation in A&M's 1969-70 University Lectures Series will be tonight at 8 in the Memorial Student Center ballroom.

Dr. George F. Carter, named this year's "Faculty Lecturer of Texas A&M University," will discuss "Problems in Pre-Columbian Cultural Exchanges Between the New World and the Old World."

Carter has received national attention for his theories on antiquity of man in America. He joined the A&M faculty in 1967 as distinguished professor in geography.

The lecture will be presented free of charge and is open to the public, noted Dr. George M. Krise, University Lectures Committee chairman.

city extend its limits 500 feet south of the West By-Pass from Highway 6 to Welborn Road.

"We cannot control zoning outside of the city limits," therefore it is important that the city annex property on both sides of the by-pass," Wells said.

A member of the audience asked if the city had any plans to extend sewer and water services to the area.

If the city does not provide services to this area in three years after annexation, "they can ask to be deannexed," Wells said.

Ski Committee Sets Nov. 26 As Deadline

The deadline for signing up for the Ski the Alps 1970 program has been extended to Nov. 26 according to Dave Mayfield, chairman of the Memorial Student Center committee in charge.

"We originally had room for 150 students," Mayfield said, but because the University of Houston has not been able to sell their portion of the seats, we can sell 75 more reservations."

Mayfield said that any A&M student wishing to make the trip should file his \$50 deposit with the Student Finance Office at the MSC by the deadline day.

Mayfield added that Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. two color films of the Courchevel skiing area in France will be shown in the lobby of the MSC for interested students.

University National Bank
"On the side of Texas A&M."
—Adv.

Bryan Building & Loan Association. Your Saving Center, since 1919.
BB & L —Adv.