

Sense of Humor During Space Flights a Must

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bob Peek, Battalion photographer-columnist, worked with the Associated Press news team covering the Apollo 12 moon shot from the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston. During the flight, Bob wrote two stories giving readers an inside look at happenings in the MSC during a space flight. Bob is back now, tired but rich, and here is the list of his inside looks at the mad life in a newsroom.

By Bob Peek
Battalion Staff Writer
"Apollo 12 crewmen turned

scientific ghouls today, stripping the carcass of a surveyor craft that had been bleaching in the deserts of the moon for 31 months."

Even science writers have a sense of humor. This lead sentence never saw an editor's desk, but then it was never intended for use in a story. It was some harassed writer's way of relieving the pressure of trying to cover the Intrepid crewmen's dramatic lunar exploration. When four hours of moonwalk tension have built up, any bit of laughter is welcome.

Luckily for the newsmen at

the Space Center, the pressure wasn't continuous. Their week was attuned to the spacemen's week. When the moon-men slept, the AP slept. When each crisis was reached, the AP was sharing it, with the astronauts and with the world.

Coverage was nearly instantaneous. Within 10 minutes of any major event detailed stories were on the wire to newspapers and radio stations around the world. Parts of stories were often written ahead of time. Thanks to the abundance of technical information provided by NASA, the writers knew exactly what would

happen at any given moment, unless something went wrong.

With this knowledge, the writers could write "skeleton" stories in advance, leaving room on each page for quotations from the astronauts. As soon as each event was accomplished, the writers finished their stories and handed them to the editors, who made quick revisions and handed them to the typesetters.

The night of the moon landing, writers Harry Rosenthal, Howard Benedict and John Barbour, and editor Ken Siner were discussing possible leads for the lead story on the landing. Noting the length

of time the astronauts were taking in dressing for the walk, and length of time they were scheduled to walk, Rosenthal suggested a paraphrase of astronaut Neil Armstrong's first words on the moon.

"How about 'Twenty minutes for me, seven hours for mankind,' he deadpanned.

Silence.

"Oh, well. It was just an idea." Stories on the families of the astronauts are boring to read and discouraging to write. But competition between AP and UPI extends into the never-never land

of family writing. Both wire services and magazines ranging from "Life" to "Ladies' Home Journal" crowd the lawns in front of the astronauts' homes, and follow the wives and children wherever they go.

Wives' quotations are seldom original. On the day of splashdown, one reporter radioed quotes to me from his car. I took down the quotes from the radio in the wirephoto room, which was crowded with editors and technicians.

"I've got a quote from Mrs. Sue Bean," the reporter said. "She

said 'When I saw the parachutes open, . . .

"It was the most beautiful sight I ever saw," the wirephoto crowd finished the sentence for the reporter.

. . . it was the most beautiful sight I ever saw'."

It was the the astronauts' kids that kept the family beat from being dull. After a week of pranks, one of the kids topped it when he climbed onto the roof of the Bean house, in the rain, and bombarded the soaking photographers and reporters with firecrackers.

The Battalion

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WORK CONTINUES

A civilian Bonfire crew puts its back into it Monday afternoon while hauling logs up to the second stack. Completion of the Aggies' symbol of their burning desire to beat the hell out of Texas is estimated at Wednesday afternoon. (Photo by Bob Stump)

Bonfire Stack Grows Larger

As Ags Crank Up Machinery, Pour Coffee, Check ID's

By Bob Robinson
Battalion Staff Writer
"May I see your ID please?"
The sound of buzz saws and heavy machinery almost covered shouts for assistance, coffee and more men. Two trucks loaded with logs from the cutting area were pulling up the street between Duncan Hall and the stacking area.
"Thank you, sir."
A loudspeaker cut above the din, requesting someone to report to the safety tent.
"May I see your ID please?"
The 105-foot centrepole loomed high in the floodlights. Work on the third stack was in progress.
"Thank you. Go on ahead."
The field was muddy. Dozens of tired, haggard looking men were heading to the control trailer, safety tent, coffee trailer and back out toward the centrepole. They were carrying axes, shovels, and coffee. Spirit seemed high, as most were laughing or

joking.
A long-distance call for Sam Torn, head yell leader, was announced over the loudspeaker.
"I'm sorry, you can't come in beyond this point unless you're working on the stack."
Security was being handled—adequately—by the athletes in the stacking area at 10 o'clock last night. They were polite, but insistent. Proper identification was needed to be admitted. Even proper identification wasn't good beyond certain points.
The Aggie Bonfire had already cost thousands of man-hour of hard work. It was not going to be lit pre-maturely by anyone, local or otherwise, if the guards could help it.
Two Aggies, wearing heavy field jackets and protective helmets, covered with mud, were hurrying toward one of the small fires around the centrepole area. One almost slipped in the mud, almost spilling the two cups of

coffee he was carrying.
Spirit was high in the control trailer. Aggies with three and four days growth of beards, perspiration — stained sweatshirts and parkas, and mud-caked boots were drinking steaming coffee out of plastic and styrofoam cups.
One student, a senior in G-1, Larry Jenek, hadn't had over eight hours sleep since Saturday morning.
"We're gonna burn this thing Wednesday," he said, "and then beat the hell outa tu!"
One of the seniors in the trailer picked up the mike that connected with the loudspeaker.
"Somebody get over and start unloading those trucks," he said. "We need logs on the stack." The words echoed back into the trailer.
"We're hauling logs around the clock," Janek said. "And we need all the help we can get. It's all volunteer work from now on."
Classes start again today and work can no longer be required on the Bonfire.
Tom Condry, a senior and one of the four stack bosses, said that work is still a little ahead of schedule.
"The mud has been a hindrance," he said, but it's packing pretty well and hasn't been a major problem.
Equipment has been holding up real well but there is still a shortage of trucks," he said.
"The Bonfire should be complete early Wednesday afternoon," he said.
Activity to and from the control trailer was heavy. People were constantly coming in for instructions or requests and then leaving to go back to their units.
"I think somebody better have a talk with the weatherman. It was supposed to start raining at

nine this evening," someone said.
"Nine, hell," another Aggie answered. "It's supposed to rain clear through tomorrow."
Another added that there has been rain during Bonfire work nine out of the last 10 years.
Janek said Coach Gene Stallings has been at the stacking area every morning since Saturday.
"He was here this morning," he said, "and said it looks like we're winning here, so we're going to have to win Thursday, too."
Janek said one of the students asked Stallings what he thought about the Ohio State-Michigan upset. He said Stallings' only comment was that should make Texas number 1 and the higher they get the easier they fall.
On the edge of the stacking area, nearest Duncan Hall, was one of the coffee trailers. A&M coeds were again working long hours, serving coffee, working in the safety tents and, in general, helping to boost morale.
The loudspeaker sounded again with another request for men to unload the trucks and get more logs to the centrepole.
The buzz saws stopped momentarily and all that could be heard was the sound of shouts giving orders and directions. A truck started up and spun its rear wheels in the mud as it drove off the field into the street. The saws started up again, covering the area with their high pitched whine.
A guard stopped someone coming into the area.
"May I see your ID please?" he said.
"Here's my senior ring," he said, raising his left hand, "Is that good enough?"
He started to walk around but

(See Bonfire, page 2)

Johnny Rivers To Perform At Town Hall after Bonfire

An entertainer who has won six gold records in as many years will perform Wednesday at Texas A&M to a sold-out audience.
Johnny Rivers will go on the G. Rollie White Coliseum stage as the first Town Hall Special of 1969-70, announced chairman Rex Stewart. About 19,000 tickets have been sold for the post-bonfire performance.
Tickets will be required for admission, Stewart reminded. As a Town Hall special, the ID-activity card admission policy is not in effect. Stewart noted the show has been sold out for more than a week.
The Thanksgiving game bonfire yell practice starts at 7:30 p. m., coliseum doors open at 8:15 p. m. and Rivers starts his one-hour show at 8:45.

A diversified talent with his own record label and involved with the successes of The 5th Dimension, Al Wilson and poet-singer James Hendricks, Rivers shaped his personal career from the heart of the traditional blues area, Baton Rouge.
From there, the 27-year-old superstar observed music world happenings in Nashville and New York. He wrote songs, sang dem-

onstrations records and occasionally performed in clubs.
Rivers worked closely with Roger Miller, Elvis Presley and Johnny Cash, learning, exchanging ideas and meanwhile admiring and studying the works of Fats Domino, B. B. King, Ray Charles and other southern blues performers.
Armed with solid roots, a burgeoning musical talent and considerable enthusiasm, he went to Los Angeles in 1960. After three years of writing and occasional performing that made him known throughout the world, the popular performer hit gold with "Memphis."
Gold records for "Seventh Son," "Mountain of Love," "Mabilene," "Secret Agent Man" and "The Poor Side of Town" followed in rapid succession.
John Rivers has recorded eight albums for Imperial Records,



RIVERS

'Ideal' Weather Forecast For Bonfire and Game

Ideal bonfire and football weather is predicted for mid-week at Texas A&M, when almost 50,000 persons will begin assembling for the A&M-Texas football game.
A&M meteorologist Jim Lightfoot, who called the shots precisely for early Monday rain showers, said the intermittent precipitation should begin clearing Tuesday.
Lightfoot had no revisions in the seven-day forecast he made last Thursday.
It calls for northerly winds of 10 to 15 mph and temperatures in the mid-50s for 7:30 p. m. Wednesday, when Aggie yell leaders put torches to the annual Thanksgiving Day game bonfire on the drill field south of Duncan Hall.
The thermometer is expected to dip to 33 Thursday morning and, under clear to partly cloudy skies, climb to an afternoon high of 61 by the time the 1:30 p. m. game gets under way. The wind is expected to remain from the north, at about five to 10 mph during the game.
No rain is forecast for either Wednesday evening or Thursday.

Former Student Named Dean Of Harvard Business School

Lawrence Fouraker, A&M class of 1947, was named Dean of the Graduate School of Business Administration Monday by Harvard University President Nathan Pusey.
Fouraker, who is currently director of research and holder of the Edsel Ford Chair, succeeds Dean George Baker Jan. 1.
A native of Bryan, he is a pioneer in experimental economics using computers.
University National Bank
"On the side of Texas A&M."
—Adv.

Speaker at last fall's Century Club luncheon, Fouraker did his graduate work at the University of Colorado and taught economics at Penn State for 10 years before joining Harvard, J. Wayne Stark, director of the Memorial Student Center, said.
He joined the faculty of the Harvard graduate school in 1961, Stark noted, and became a full professor in only three years.
While at Harvard, he has been a friendly contact for former A&M students and has helped in recruiting for the A&M College of Business Administration, Stark said.

Coeds to Sign Up At Housing Office

A&M coeds are to accomplish their Housing Office pre-registration for the spring semester at the Housing Office instead of the Leggett Hall lounge, as previously announced, according to Allan M. Madeley, housing director.
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