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# Apollo 16 overcomes minor problems

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — Apollo 16 astronauts heading toward a moon landing worked with ground controllers Tuesday and overcame a guidance problem that briefly froze their spaceship in one position and an antenna problem that affected radio communications.

Systems worked out at Mission Control were promptly put into effect by the spacemen to correct both deficiencies.

"One of the things we need in this program is some octopuses," astronaut Thomas K. Mattingly II commented at one point while

the men were busy resetting a series of switches.

The men thus spent part of the day dealing with the third and fourth problems they have encountered since they were launched Sunday. The others involved peeling paint and a faulty latch, neither of which turned out to be of serious concern, either.

Their spacecraft has been gradually slowing since it rocketed out of earth orbit. But it will begin picking up speed Wednesday morning when the moon's

gravity starts tugging it forward.

The command ship, Casper, and its lunar lander, Orion, will hurtle around the moon Wednesday afternoon and the astronauts will fire a long rocket burst to settle the spacecraft into lunar orbit.

Astronauts John W. Young and Charles M. Duke Jr. will guide Orion to a landing on a crater-scarred volcanic plateau high in the southern mountains of the moon Thursday. Touchdown is scheduled for 3:41 p.m. EST.

Officials said an errant elec-

trical surge confused a spaceship computer early Tuesday and caused it to send commands which locked the guidance system. This, in effect, wiped out the basic reference needed by the spacecraft to locate and steer itself in space.

Mattingly fed instructions to the computer which then realigned what is called the inertial guidance system platform.

The system was operating properly again within 18 minutes.

The astronauts were in no dan-

ger from the guidance problem because the spacecraft has a backup system. However, the primary system could not have been repaired the moon landing would have been canceled.

## Moon may have had volcanic past

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — The moon is calm and peaceful now but Apollo 16 astronauts think they'll find evidence on a rugged plateau where they land Thursday that she had a hell-raising past.

The site is interesting and important, says Dr. Leon Silver, lunar geologist at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, because in the highlands he believes there are clues that the moon was violent and exciting in her youth.

Astronaut John W. Young is scheduled to set the landing ship

down in the Descartes region, on a tableland 8,000 feet above the level of the lunar mares. With fellow moonwalker Charles M. Duke Jr. he believes he will step down on a bed of lava spewed out in the explosions of ancient volcanoes.

Dr. Paul W. Gast, chief of the NASA Planetary and Earth Sciences Division, says that in the first billion years of the moon's life, when she was being battered by the fiery impact of countless meteors, volcanic rock boiled up through fractures in the lunar surface.

Many scientists are convinced, he added, that a boiling, bubbling sea of lava with a scum of rock on top may have covered the moon's mares at a depth of 30 to 60 miles and in cooling it formed the lunar crust.

But if such a layer existed, it had to be 4.6 billion years ago, Gast believes, and "Descartes almost surely is not any older than 4 billion years." By that time, he thinks, volcanic rock on the moon was being formed like that on earth — melting deep below the surface, being squeezed out like a boil, and erupting

through volcanic cones.

The Cayley Plain on which Young and Duke will touch down is believed to be a layer of lava that poured out of such cones.

Although the moon has cooled from the outside, it is believed that it still has a hot, active interior like the earth.

"But I doubt that there is still volcanic activity," Gast said. "There may be cold gas eruptions coming out of the moon today. But the liquid material could be 800 miles deep. It couldn't come all the way up without freezing."

## EPA orders ruling test

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Environmental Protection Agency, in its first test of a tough new antipollution provision, has ordered an electric power plant to switch to low-sulfur fuel within

12 days. William D. Ruckelshaus, EPA administrator, issued the order Monday, requiring the Delmarva Power and Light Co. at Delaware City, Del., to comply with

federal air-quality standards by May 1.

In fact, however, Ruckelshaus is taking on the large Getty Oil Co., which both supplies the high-sulfur fuel now used by the plant and uses its electricity and process steam for a nearby Getty refinery.

A Delmarva spokesman said compliance with the order would cost about \$2.5 million a year, which would be passed along automatically in charges to customers, creating little impact on the power company itself. But he said Getty has estimated the switch would cost it some \$10,000 a day or \$3.65 million a year.

Getty unsuccessfully sought a variance from the state air-quality standard, but has continued legal efforts to avoid the low-sulfur requirement.

Ruckelshaus acted under a provision of the 1970 Clean Air Act, which required the establishment of state implementation plans for achieving national air-quality standards, subject to federal approval.

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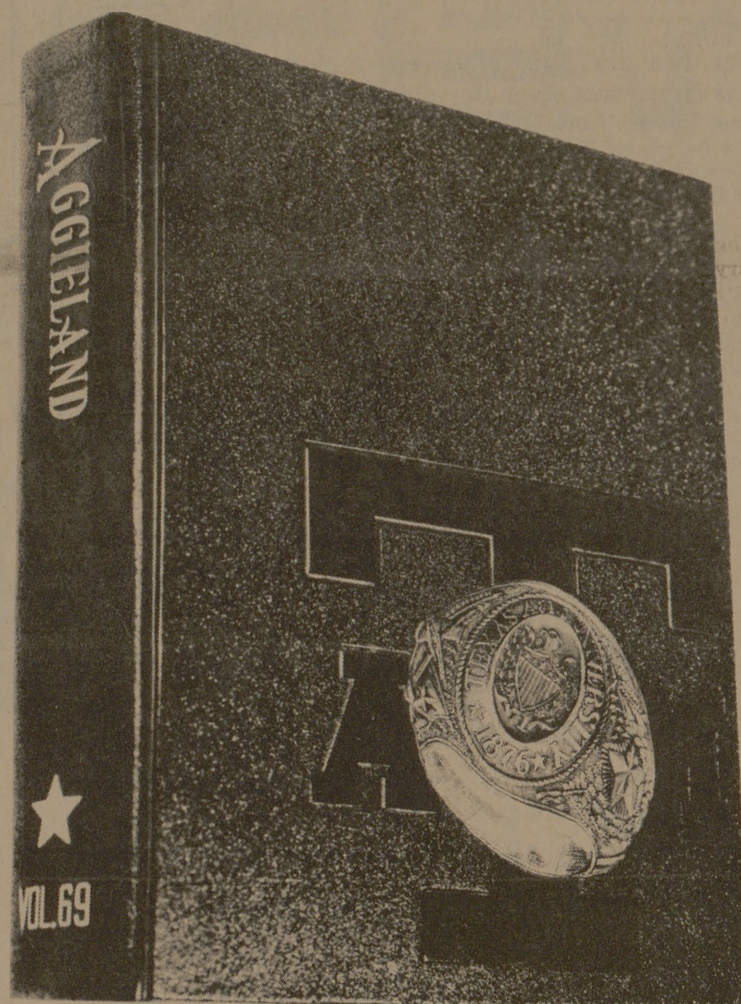


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