

IRS payroll coffer empty

United Press International
DALLAS — Nearly one quarter of the state's 5,600 Internal Revenue Service workers were furloughed Tuesday because federal money to pay them ran out, but local officials said they hope to jury-rig funding to keep skeleton staffs employed.

"I can't recall this kind of action ever happening to our office before," said Peggy Moore, Dallas district IRS spokesperson. "But we have operated in the past years on stop-gap continuing funding resolutions."

Moore said funding was stopped for the agency's criminal investigations, employee plan and collection divisions, but skeleton staffs will be maintained by switching funds originally designated for other purposes.

Even then, she said "such interim appropriations transfer within the agency will take several days."

The furlough notices went out early Tuesday she said.

The statewide breakdown is:

the Dallas district (which includes much of west Texas) will lose 525 workers; the southwest regional office will lose 27 workers; Houston 360; the Austin office 230; and the Austin service center 250. An estimated 1,392 Texas IRS workers of 5,635 were laid off, she said.

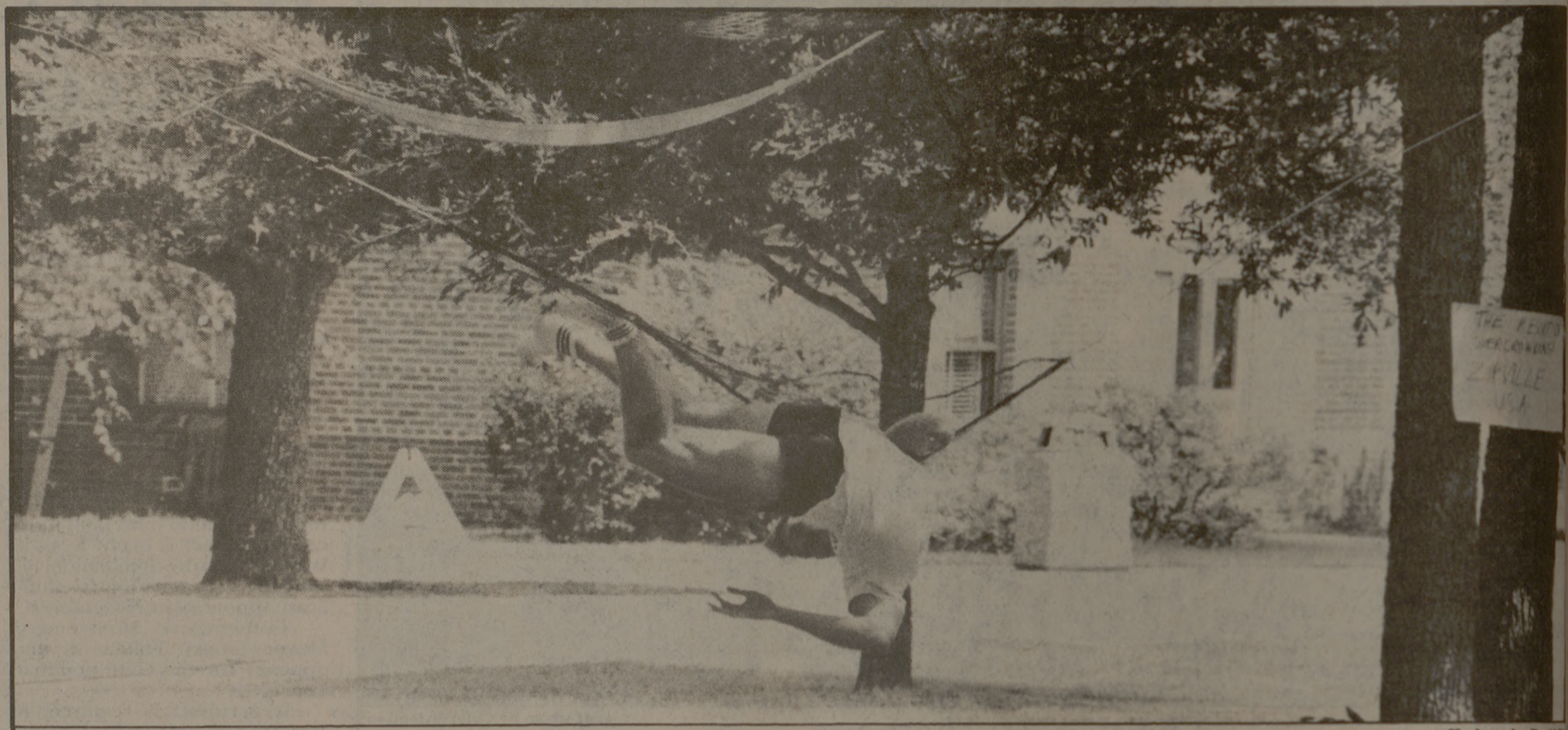
She said the agency told workers the furlough remains in effect until the president signs legislation providing funding.

"Then they come in on the first work day after the signing," she said.

She said she knew of no additional layoff plans.

The furloughs, which will virtually halt tax collections and investigation, is the result of the inability of Congress and the White House to reach agreement on a supplemental appropriations.

The president last month vetoed a proposed \$14.2 billion supplemental bill passed by Congress. Unless such a measure is enacted, several agencies will run short of funds by Sept. 31, the end of this fiscal year.



staff photo by David H.

Very uneasy repose

Hammocks can be comfortable, but getting into them isn't as easy as it looks, as Barry Stevens found out.

Stevens, an agricultural economics major, took several falls before he managed to stay in. The hammocks,

slung in the trees on the Quad, were supplied by companies I-1 and E.L. Stevens is a senior from Lubbock.

Private rocket launching today

United Press International
ROCKPORT — Where the cattle once roamed, former astronaut Donald K. "Deke" Slayton was to have pushed a button this morning and ignite a rocket that carries the hopes of American private industry.

Pioneer commercial satellite launch company Space Services Inc. of Houston is banking almost \$5 million that their 43 foot Conestoga I will rocket 326 miles out over the Gulf of Mexico on a suborbital test flight.

SSI is aiming at competing for business with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and with the French Ariane program to push private industry's satellites into low earth orbit by late 1984. SSI hopes to become the first private American firm to commercialize space.

Launch was scheduled for 10 a.m. Six hours earlier a final countdown was to begin in a sandbagged trailer on the desolate cattle grazing land owned by Dallas oilman Toddie Lee Wynne.

His cattle have been driven from the launch area near the southwest tip of Matagorda Island.

Promoters of America's first commercial rocket test-fired a miniature version Monday to test radar equipment and said signs were good for a scheduled launch today despite some malfunctions.

A check of ground equipment on barren Matagorda Island revealed a false alarm signal.

"Rather than find out what caused the spurious signal," he said. "We decided to rewire that piece of equipment. That

caused us some delay."

"All went well," Walter Pennino, spokesman for SSI said. "The rocket looks like a stove pipe and we calibrated our system by tracking the missile's metal skin."

SSI's first experimental engine test 13 months ago ended in an explosion and fire.

The firm hoped to use a success today to begin marketing a satellite launch capability. That capability looked bleak when the explosion in August 1981 cost SSI \$1.2 million. The company says this test brings its expenditures to \$6 million.

This time the firm is using a more reliable solid fuel system and the knowledge of longtime space industry contractors. Space Vectors Corp. of Northridge, Calif., and Eagle Engineering designed and engineered the vehicle, and DFVLR of Stuttgart, West Germany, is responsible for the radar and telemetry during flight.

Residents along the middle Texas coast from Port O'Connor to Rockport expected to get a spectacular view of the rocket soaring out over the Gulf to 195 mile heights.

The 13,592-pound Conestoga was to lift off from a 3-foot launch stool on concrete slab. The booster was to generate 46,000 pounds of thrust in 60 seconds and then quit.

At the five-minute or halfway mark in the flight, the rocket was to dump 40 gallons of ballast water into the ionosphere and give observers with telescopes an icy indication that the flight's highest point had been reached.

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