

State and Local

Story of trapped child prompts emotional impact from nation

MIDLAND (AP) — The ordeal of 8-month-old Jessica McClure, trapped for days in an abandoned well shaft, had an impact that went beyond the rescue effort.

Perhaps it was her isolation in the well deep below ground level or the arrowing way she hummed, sang and cried "Mama" while passing 58 hours in darkness. Or maybe it was just a glimmer of mischief her eyes revealed in a family snapshot.

When a mud-caked paramedic freed the scratched and bruised girl to the chill night air Friday, a period of agony ended for the girl's family — and for people half a world away.

As rescuers with a water-powered drill chiseled rock within inches of McClure, calls from around the world backed up at the Midland Police Department, which had 12 dispatchers answering the phone instead of the usual one night-shift dispatcher.

The child's plight was an extraordinary story during an extraordinary week. On Friday alone, the Dow Jones industrial average plunged wildly, wiping out \$145 billion worth of stocks in one day and forcing President Reagan to check into a hospital for a breast cancer operation.

Paramedic: Leaving infant in hole was difficult decision

MIDLAND (AP) — The hardest thing a paramedic said he ever had to do was to leave toddler Jessica McClure behind in a dark underground shaft.

"I told her we would be back," said Robert O'Donnell, who was the first person to touch the 18-month-old girl more than two days after she fell into a dry backyard water well.

Grasping the child and pulling her out might have snapped her neck or spine, O'Donnell said, so he reluctantly radioed back that the tunneling job was not yet finished.

Back above ground, O'Donnell and the other paramedics avoided each others' eyes for fear of breaking into tears, he said.

Several of the pediatricians questioned whether O'Donnell should be sent back down once the tunnel was widened because they sensed his disappointment and the emotional drain of his first try, he said.

But he insisted he could handle the descent and was allowed down the final time at 7:30 p.m.

O'Donnell estimated he took about 10 minutes after getting a good grip on Jessica's pants to ease her from the tight trap.

Then O'Donnell locked eyes with Jessica and thought, "That's the prettiest girl that I have ever met," he said.

American flag, wounding the American captain.

But none of the events tugged at hearts and drew compassion on such a grand scale as the saga of "Spunky Jessica," as some newspapers called her.

Famous and obscure, rich and

poor, people responded as if they had known McClure all her life. The outpouring of emotion was particularly striking to Harvard University sociologist David Riesman, author of "The Lonely Crowd" and other landmark studies of Americans.

For years, Riesman has lectured on what he calls the boy-in-the-well syndrome.

"Americans are extremely generous when we can identify with a person or a small group and the most dramatic example is a boy in a well," Riesman said from his home in Cambridge, Mass. — where he, too, followed accounts of McClure's rescue.

"People can be slaughtered in Angola or Israel can bomb Lebanon three times in a week and neither invites similar American interest, not to mention generosity," he said.

But some people saw the toddler's retrieval as an example of patriotic valor in the face of trouble — something like the rescue of hostages.

"Whenever you see something like this, it makes you realize we're a great nation," said James Powell, a resident of Midland.

The baby's mother put it another way. "I'm just so glad we got her back safe," she said. "The whole world has her back."

Former singer Stevens cancels talk at A&M

By Elisa Hutchins
Staff Writer

Yusuf Islam, known during his singing career as Cat Stevens, will not be appearing at Rudder Theater tonight as originally planned.

The former singer converted to the Moslem faith in 1977 and was to speak at A&M to promote a better understanding of the religion on behalf of the Muslim Students' Association.

Before converting to the Moslem faith, Islam/Stevens had many recording hits during the '70s includ-

ing "Morning Has Broken" and "Oh Very Young."

Islam, a British citizen, was not able to leave London with his family as scheduled because his four children did not have the appropriate visas.

"The visas will be issued, but it will take a few days," said Ahmad Jarrah, MSA member and coordinator of Islam's visit to A&M. "His schedule is too full to arrange another time to speak at A&M during this lecture series."

He was to have arrived Sunday night in Houston and begun his lec-

ture series at A&M. Islam will now begin at Southern Methodist University in Dallas on Tuesday.

Islam apologized by phone to Jarrah and to A&M students for cancelling. He told Jarrah the situation was out of his hands, and that he could not let his family meet him at A&M. His wife is pregnant and he did not want her traveling alone.

Islam's lecture series is intended to make American students more aware of the Moslem faith and relate it to world events — such as the current Persian Gulf situation, Jarrah said.

After speaking at SMU Tuesday, Islam will conduct two lectures in

Houston including one at the University of Houston and at universities in Tucson, Ariz. and Ann Arbor, Mich. before returning to England.

His first lecture in Houston on Thursday will be on the importance of the Koran, the sacred book of Moslems. It will be held at 1 p.m. at UH in the student lounge.

Later in the evening, "Islam — Future of Mankind" will be discussed at 8 p.m. in the Houstonian Hotel at 111 N. Post Oak Lane. Anyone interested in attending either lecture in Houston can call (713) 467-2337 or (713) 520-6010 for more information.

What's up

Monday

HILLEL, JEWISH STUDENT FOUNDATION: will have a meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Hillel Building, located at 800 Jersey St.

PI SIGMA EPSILON: will have an executive board meeting at 6 p.m. on the second floor of the Pavilion and team B — Beepers will play volleyball at 9 p.m. in the Read Building.

MUSLIM STUDENT ASSOCIATION: The scheduled appearance of Cat Stevens to speak at 7:30 p.m. at Rudder Theater has been canceled. Check the story on this page for details.

HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND RECRUITMENT: General information about the High School Public Relations and Recruitment Committee will be given at 5:30 p.m. in 226 MSC.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION: will have a guest speaker from Hurst Murchison Investment Bankers at 7 p.m. in 153 Blocker.

FRESHMAN LEADERSHIP DYNAMICS: will meet at 8:30 p.m. in 301 Rudder.

ATHEIST, AGNOSTIC AND FREETHINKERS SOCIETY: will meet at 7 p.m. in 305A-B Rudder.

ALPHA PHI ALPHA: The Rev. Arthur Hernandez will speak at 8:30 p.m. in 701 Rudder.

LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP: will have a meeting at 9 p.m. in Rudder. Check the screen in Rudder for the room number.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS: Entries open for bowling singles in 159 Read.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY: will have a symposium on religion in classical antiquity Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in 601 Rudder.

CLASS OF '90: Applications for committee positions are available until Friday in 216 MSC.

Tuesday

POLITICAL SCIENCE SOCIETY: will meet at 7 p.m. in 229 MSC.

PI SIGMA ALPHA: will meet at 7 p.m. in 229 MSC and team C — Dotted Lines will play volleyball at 9 p.m. in the Read Building.

WRITING OUTREACH: Martha Casey will discuss "Correspondence: Business Letter Writing" at 6:30 p.m. in 110 Blocker.

TAMU SADDLE AND SIRLOIN CLUB: will meet at 7 p.m. in 115 Kleberg.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, no less than three working days before desired publication date.



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Room 308
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On-campus interviews will be held Friday, October 23rd.
Please contact the Placement Office for more details.

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