

109-Day Journey To Venus Would Be Lonely, Perilous for Astronaut

Editor's note: Each generation has been stirred by the exploits of its explorers—Columbus' lonely voyage of discovery; Livingstone's steamy trek through Africa; Peary's bleak struggle to the North Pole. Now man has planted a tentative foot in space, with his eyes on the planets themselves. What dangers face him in that vacuum; what glories will he see? The following dispatch, based on the flight of the Venus exploration rocket Mariner II, provides some of the answers.

By JOSEPH L. MYLER

Washington (UPI)—For an astronaut, the 109-day journey to Venus on which Mariner II is so brilliantly embarked would be a terribly lonely and perilous venture.

It also would be an introduction to beauty and grandeur on a scale hardly imaginable.

The Mariner astronaut would see the magnificent slow-motion dance of the sun's sky-filling coronal streamers, the luminous and seemingly endless ocean of the zodiacal light, and a blinding closeup of the great shining globe of Venus.

Mariner II left Cape Canaveral, Fla., Aug. 27, 1962, on a 180.2 million mile voyage to the outskirts of Venus, the "twin of earth" in the family of planets which wheels perpetually around the sun.

Climax of the flight will be a 30-minute period on Dec. 14 when Mariner passes across the sunlit face of Venus only 9,000 miles from the brightest

and most mysterious of earth's near planetary neighbors.

Most Glimmering Spacecraft
The 447-pound Mariner, resembling a miniature oil derrick with flaps, is the most intricate and gifted spacecraft ever launched. It carries instruments which should tell us, on Dec. 14, whether life is possible on the cloud-masked planet whose surface has never been seen by man.

Direct descendants of Mariner II some time in the 1970s will carry even better instruments—the eyes and mind of a human pilot. But for this pioneering venture there was no room aboard for a man.

Nevertheless, many an astronaut would be glad to risk his life to see what Mariner II's eyesight instruments can only infer. Given a picture window looking out on solar space, what might a human observer see and feel on the way to Venus?

If he looked sharp, he might have seen the blue horizons of earth described by astronauts John H. Glenn Jr. and M. Scott Carpenter. A minute later he might have seen simultaneous auroral flashes in the northern and southern hemispheres.

Pulling free of the earth's gravitational domination, thousands of miles out into space, a backward glance would reveal a monster gray-blue globe little resembling the green earth he had left.

Shocking Sight
When the astronaut had got as far from the earth as the moon, what he saw might give him a shock—the lovely

globular earth at that distance might resemble a giant tadpole with a tail of luminous gas streaming behind the planet under the pressure of the solar wind like a comet's tenuous appendage.

The big jolt would come moments later. With the mass of the earth and moon out of the way, he would abruptly become aware of the sun's corona and the zodiacal light.

The sun, if he looked at it through eye-shielding glasses, would be a crisp, sharp disc, erupting into space all around would be the ever-changing corona, a seething region of pearly white streamers shooting perhaps half-way from the sun to near planets such as earth.

The streamer material surges into space at something like 500 miles per second. But from the Mariner astronaut's perspective they would seem to change in shape and size imperceptibly, like clouds.

About half-way between sun and earth he would see the streamers break up into blobs and patches, showing where the magnetic fields containing the streamers had begun to lose their control.

Another Brilliance
The corona owes its beautiful diffuse light to the scattering effect of electrons amongst the charged particles spewed constantly from the dynamic sun. In the so-called plane of the ecliptic, the great wheel in space within which are embedded the planets revolving around the sun, there is another brilliance, as bright as the Milky Way.

It is the zodiacal light, a glowing sea created by the diffusing effect of cosmic dust on the sun's radiance. This dust may be the residue of comets.

Whatever it is, it appears to fill solar space, and wherever Mariner II goes its imaginary pilot will see it as a gigantic glow extending toward and away from the sun.

These lights, coronal and zodiacal, may merge and blend. They are thin. Distant stars and planets are visible through them. Far away from the earth's obscuring and distorting atmosphere, the sky background is black, stars no longer twinkle, and the sun becomes sharper and brighter.

Few Physical Sensations
On his way to Venus the astronaut would have few physical sensations, assuming he was appropriately shielded against the sun's unobstructed brilliance in space.

At mid-course correction on Sept. 4, when Mariner II responded to whispered radio instructions from earth with the promptness and grace of a cow pony, the astronaut might have thought the sky was revolving around him.

Actually, the spacecraft was tumbling nearly 140 degrees to put its guidance rocket in the right position to fire. This pitching maneuver might have gone unnoticed by a human observer if it had not been for the fact that the visible stars and planets would

appear to have swung loose from their moorings.

When the course-changing rocket fired, pushing the craft into a tighter orbit around the sun and pulling it therefore closer to the path of Venus, the astronaut might have felt a slight sensation comparable to the tug of gravity on earth.

But it was soon over and the feeling of weightlessness, which had prevailed for more than a week, would return. In this condition, with motion counteracting the pull of the various competing heavenly bodies, the astronaut would feel lighter, in fact, than a feather.

By the time it passes within 9,000 miles of Venus, Mariner II will have plunged one-third of the distance from the earth to the sun. The sun then will be a far sharper and brighter and larger and grander object than it was as seen from earth.

Venus at 9,000 miles will be considerably more impressive than the earth was at the same distance. Venus' dense clouds reflect twice as much sunlight as does the earth. They make the earth's moon seem pale by comparison. The moon is about 240,000 miles from the earth.

At a distance of 9,000 miles, Venus would appear to be more than 100 times the size of the moon and brighter by far than any moon.

30 Delegates Are Expected at Unity Conference Here

About 30 delegates from throughout the northwest are expected in Medford today for the three-day Northwest Unity Conference.

Registration started this morning at the Unity Church of Medford, Haven and Holly sts. Events open to the public include the prayer meditation today and Wednesday at 11:45 a.m. and several other activities.

At 8 o'clock tonight, the Rev. L. E. Meyer, Kansas City, Mo., will speak on "Creative Word" at McLoughlin Junior High school. A reception at the church will follow the public talk for the guest speaker and conference members.

The Rev. Dorothy O'Connor, minister and lecturer of the Unity Church of Truth, Seattle, will speak at a luncheon Wednesday, Sept. 19, at 12:30 p.m. at the Rogue Valley Country club. Her subject will be "Words of Truth." The Rev. David McClure, Vancouver, B.C., minister, will give the invocation.

Panel Discussion
At 8 p.m. Wednesday, a panel discussion will be held at McLoughlin Junior High school.

The Rev. Phillip M. Stovien, Spokane, Wash., will be moderator. The topic will be "The Living Word" and each will give Unity's interpretation of various aspects of the "Word."

Other panel members will be the Rev. Ross Goodman, Portland; the Rev. Leslie D. Saunders, Yakima, Wash.; the Rev. Joseph K. Stiegler, Tacoma, Wash.; the Rev. Mr. McClure; the Rev. Daniel J. Perin, Bellevue, Wash.; the Rev. Donald O'Connor, Seattle; and the Rev. Joel Boehr, Seattle.

The Rev. Helen Stiegler will give the invocation and Mrs. O'Connor the meditation. Mrs. Genevieve McCorkle will be at the piano and Mrs. Richard A. Schuchard will sing.

HEADS BALLOONERS
Portland (UPI)—Fred Myers of Portland has been elected president of the American Balloon Corps Veterans Association, who served during World War I.

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Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

(Register and Tribune Syndicate 1962)

These Gulls Nearly Paid With Lives While Helping

The foursome, loaded down with bags and clubs approached the fifth green. The green was already occupied with several sea gulls walking sedately over the close-cropped grass. They flew away at the players' approach. The men putted, replaced the flag and moved on.

Other observers had noticed the presence of the birds, and without attempting to find out the reason, complained at the office. "Something should be done about it," they said.

Gulls Convicted
A closer examination of the greens revealed dozens of tiny

holes in the ground. That did it. The gulls were making holes in the expensive greens, condemned by circumstantial evidence. The wrong conclusion was that the gulls must be destroyed. Shooting the birds was out of the question, too many people around and human habitations much too close.

As is usual on such momentous occasions, when matters of such tremendous importance are under consideration, there are many suggestions as to the proper course to follow. The overwhelming majority, however, of those consulted or listened to, claimed poison was the only efficient way, poison grain and scatter it widely all over the fairways and the greens.

In the meantime, as too infrequently happens, one man used his head. He wondered just why the gulls suddenly gathered on the golf course. He figured there must be a very good reason. He examined every green, and searched every fairway.

Found Reason
With binoculars he watched the gulls gathered on the greens, watched them as they patrolled back and forth on the soft green carpets. He noted that the birds picked something from the grass every few feet.

The birds flew away as he hurried to the nearest green. He sat down on the soft grass, leaned over, his eyes but a few inches from the earth he saw them, dozens of mole-crickets, punching holes in the green, nibbling at the tender grass blades.

By some wild reasoning the gulls knew the crickets were present in goodly numbers or otherwise. Had he discovered them and they had moved in for what, to them was a welcome change from a fish diet.

There have been many times that gulls, as well as other species of birds, have come to the rescue. Once, they had a monument erected in their honor because they had saved a crop. Had it not been that this one man, somewhat brighter than the other fellows, had sense enough to recognize friends when he saw them, the seagulls would have paid with their lives, for their unselfish help.

British Columbia Resident Injured

Nancy Kimbasket, 23, of the Okanogan Indian agency, Vernon, B.C., was seriously injured yesterday when she was thrown from a car in a one-car accident near Crater Lake National park, state police reported.

Mrs. Kimbasket was reported in fair condition at Sacred Heart hospital this morning. She is being treated for head and back injuries.

A car driven by Gilbert Charles Kimbasket, 36, also of the Okanogan Indian agency, was traveling east on the highway near the west boundary of Crater Lake National park, police said. It entered a curve, Kimbasket applied the brakes, the car struck a bank, and swerved back on the roadway.

Hoover Released From Hospital
New York (UPI)—Former President Herbert Hoover, 88, who underwent surgery last month, was discharged from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center today.

Hoover, who entered the hospital Aug. 28, had a cancerous tumor removed from his intestine. Doctors at the hospital said they did not believe the malignancy would reoccur.

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Fiction: Brokers aren't interested unless you've got lots of money.

Fact: A great number of investors, especially beginners, are small investors. So don't let that bother you.

Fiction: Brokers want you to plunge for all you've got.

Fact: Not so. A good broker does not want you to get in over your head. The best way he can keep you as a customer is to put your interest first. Before you invest, allow for living expenses and emergencies, then tell him how much you can consider to start your program.

Perhaps you'll prefer to invest systematically on a budget. The Monthly Investment Plan of Member Firms of the New York Stock Exchange permits you to invest with as little as \$40 every three months.

Fiction: Brokers have a few pet stocks they want you to buy.

Fact: A good broker will be glad to suggest stocks he thinks will fit your personal goals.

Some people seek extra income through dividends. Others set a goal of long-range growth in the value of their stock.

Still others aim for some combination of the two. And some prefer the greater safety of principal and stability of income which some bonds offer.

Fiction: Brokers just play their hunches.

Fact: Facts, not hunches, should be the basis of a sensible recommendation.

Nobody can know all the facts, and no one can tell how a company will fare. There are always risks in investment. Prices go up and down. But your broker expects you to want to know about a company's past performance—sales, profits, dividend record. And, after considering many factors, you can decide what the company's prospects appear to be.

Fiction: All brokers are alike.

Fact: Far from it. Registered Representatives in Member Firms, for instance, have had to meet the requirements of the New York Stock Exchange for knowledge of investing.

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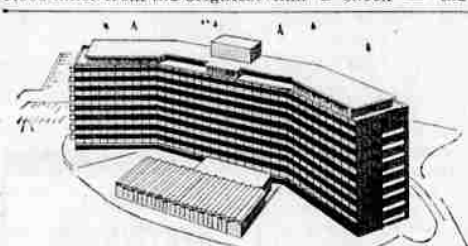
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