

Answer Line

Questions submitted to this column need not be signed and can pertain to any area of concern or interest to you. Send questions to the Lewis News. Mail Stop 3-11.

The following questions were the ones most frequently asked during the Deputy Director's Appraisal last month.

Question: Why is Dr. McCarthy waiting until October to begin his assignment at Lewis? In the interim, how is he informed of developments here?

Dr. Lubarsky: Dr. McCarthy is a professor at MIT, where he has a contractual obligation. He is teaching classes and has graduate students who are completing theses for degrees. For these reasons he is obliged to complete MIT's school year. As to how he will be kept informed, Dr. McCarthy plans to be at Lewis quite often between now and October. In fact, in March Dr. Frosch introduced him to Lewis during a brief visit; on April 19, he attended our Senior Staff meeting; then in mid-May he spent a week here reviewing RTOP's for the next year. I anticipate he will be here at least a couple of days a month until October.

Jogging raises both pro and con issues. Some feel employees are here to be productive, and that jogging should be done on a person's own time and not at the Center. Devotees feel it improves their physical and mental well-being, and that too much disciplinary action is being taken against them.

It is the general policy of the Center to support many kinds of activities in which the staff is interested, provided it is on people's own time. The Center has provided space for orchestras, chess clubs, karate, fencing and the like, and now jogging. The Center requires that all jogging be done on people's own time. The restrictions the Center has placed on jogging during normal working hours are for the joggers' own good. During that period, jogging is restricted to the West area, where there is not much traffic and where it is safe. I feel this is a reasonable and necessary restriction.

What is the status of the Medical Monitoring Program, which was to be administered to all Lewis personnel at least once every three years?

It is still our intention to go forward with that program. The reason for the delay is because of a very tight budget for the fiscal year in which it was originally intended to start. When the Congress reduced that part of the budget which contained the program, a choice had to be made between expenditures for promotions, quality increases and staff training, and expenditure for the medical program. A decision was made to defer the program to a year when no sacrifices would be required. The program is now scheduled to start about the first of October.

Some Clevelanders really do not know about Lewis. Couldn't more be done to familiarize the general public, such as more signs noting the Visitor's Information Center or signs on the freeway?

In an effort to continue the education of the public regarding the beneficial things that NASA does for people, for aeronautics, and for space, we have opened a Visitor Information Center. A large number of people are visiting the VIC, and the number has been growing each year. Recently, we had a three-day official opening for educators at the VIC to make it known to still more people.

If PSL is a major Lewis facility and unique within NASA, why are we phasing out half of our altitude engine testing capability?

When PSL 3 and 4 were built, the original plan was to close down 1 & 2 and just operate 3 & 4. As time passed, it became clear that there were enough good programs to fill all four chambers, so we decided to keep all of them open. Unfortunately, as we went along and the staff reductions continued, we could not continue to find enough people to keep all four chambers running without cutting hard into the ability to run all the smaller rigs. So, we decided that we had to make a choice and, since the original plan had been to run only two, we decided to shift resources to the smaller rigs. I think that change will free up some 20 technicians to strengthen the work in the smaller rigs.