



# Shellegram

Deer Park Manufacturing Complex

Thursday, August 12, 1982

Vol. 47, No. 32

## Near-fatal accident can teach us all a good lesson

Darrell Duhon slowly climbed the ladder to the lower line in the pipe rack, 12 feet above the ground. As he rodded the valve to install a pressure gauge, the plug blew out. A cool sensation swept over him, but there was no smell. He hastily removed the wire from the valve and closed it. As he turned to reach for the rest of his equipment . . . everything went black.

"The next thing I knew," the DPMC operator said, "I was on my back. I was getting mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and somebody was doing CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on me."

Duhon was unconscious only minutes, but he lost all sense of the events surrounding the February accident. Today, it all seems like a bad dream — traction bars, surgery, spinning walls and quaking floors. But the neck brace he still wears is a constant reminder of his long, painful recovery.

Duhon, who has worked at the Complex five years, was overcome by hydrogen sulfide gas while he worked on the plugged-up valve. When he fell, he dislocated two vertebrae in his neck. The gas or the fall could have killed him.

This accident, like most others, could have been avoided. Duhon readily admits

his injury could have been prevented — simply by using the proper safety equipment, in this case an air-line supplied respirator.

"Sometimes you take things for granted," he said, echoing a phrase we can all relate to. "All of us in the area at the time should have been wearing breathing protection. We didn't recognize the potential for high hydrogen sulfide concentration that could develop in the area."

Calculations have shown that toxic hydrogen sulfide concentrations (greater than 1,000 parts per million) can develop from an open bleeder valve in less than one second. This type of sour gas stream is commonly found throughout the Complex. It's not safe to rely on atmospheric conditions to disperse the gas. Furthermore, the sense of smell provides no warning. In high concentrations, hydrogen sulfide "desensitizes" your ability to detect it by scent.

To ensure that another accident like Duhon's wouldn't occur again, the Cat Reforming Safety Committee recommended several actions be taken. Jeff Fornero, plant engineer for East Operations, said tap reamers are now used to unplug any bleeder valve. "They have a threaded plug with a rod through the center

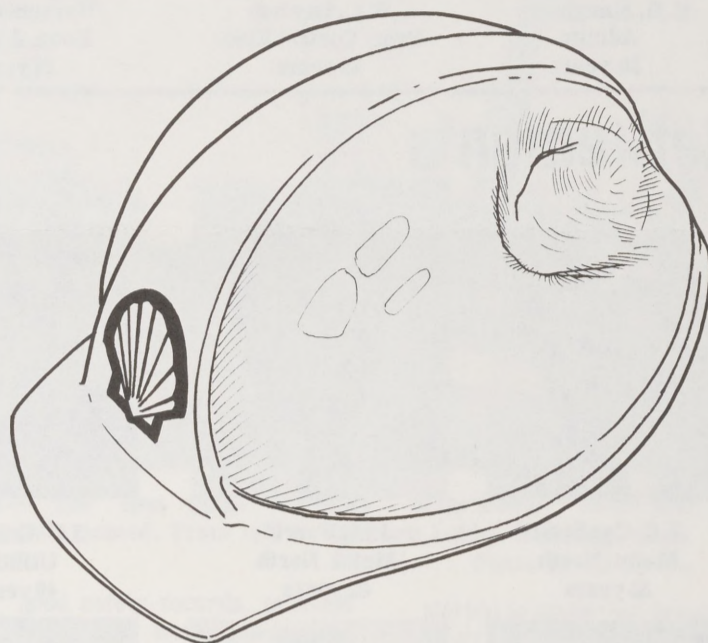
that prevents the valve from blowing out if there's a failure inside," he said.

Scott Air Packs are now used by operators opening any high pressure sour gas lines. "The buddy system" is also used to unplug sour bleeders now; in fact, another person should be on hand whenever you're doing something risky.

The DPMC operator could have been hurt much worse if his friends hadn't been by his side. Frank Saucillo, the shift foreman who accompanied Duhon to the site, could see something was wrong. "I noticed that as soon as he closed the valve, he got real still. Then he started teetering. I ran up and tried to break his fall, but Darrell is a pretty big guy," Saucillo said.

Although he wasn't able to catch him, Saucillo managed to break Duhon's fall, perhaps saving his life. "I couldn't tell if he was breathing," Saucillo said. "John (Smith, an operator on the scene) suggested we do CPR on him. As soon as we started, he came to."

Duhon was rushed to Bayshore Hospital, then later transferred to Methodist Hospital in Houston. He lay on his back for a week in traction to stabilize him. Four weeks later, a team of orthopedic surgeons performed bone



"My hard hat with the big dent helps remind me about the accident"

fusion surgery on him, grafting a small piece of his hip bone to the first and second cervical vertebrae in his neck.

"The doctors told me I was very lucky to be alive," Duhon said. "But they also said I can expect close to a full recovery, and that my injuries won't hamper me at work."

He still experiences a numbness in his fingers, a condition the doctors say will disappear with time. And he must wear the neck brace at least half a day, and when he drives.

"Personally, I feel very lucky," Duhon said recently. "I still have my hard hat with the big dent where I hit the ground. It helps to remind me about the accident."

We can all stand a good safety reminder now and then, although we hope it isn't as traumatic as Darrell Duhon's incident. We can't leave safety to chance because then it's just a matter of time until an accident occurs. Stay alert — know the hazards of the job you are doing and wear the proper protective equipment.

## Civil War soldier strikes a "haunting" pose in Hale photo

Ghost stories. Most people don't take much stock in them. After all, how many of them are legitimate, unexplainable events, and how many hocus-pocus hanky-panky?

Doyle Hale, a mechanic in Automotive North who is a photographer in his spare time, thinks he's found the real thing. Or maybe, it found him. Does Hale believe in ghosts?

He hesitates for a moment, and then he nods his head. "I think there are ghosts — spirits, or energy, or whatever you want to call them. I believe in them now more than I ever have," he says with quiet conviction.

Here are the eerie circumstances. On the 4th of July, 1978, Hale agreed to photograph his friend's wife and baby. He used a Canon

camera equipped with a standard lens and standard Kodacolor film.

"The father ordered one picture," Hale said, "but the printer printed the wrong frame. I didn't have time to reprint it, so I just gave it to him, without charge. I didn't like the picture anyway."

It might have ended there, but something in the

photograph caught his friend's eye. "About two months later, he called me and told me 'Come over here right this minute. There's a man in the picture with my wife and baby.' I went over and looked at the photograph, then came right home and checked the negative."

Hale had a ghost in his picture — an image of a pre-Civil War soldier posed between mother and daughter. He is in uniform, with a white scarf wrapped around his neck and a sword by his side. He has curly hair and a moustache.

The DPMC mechanic was skeptical, but as he studied the photo, he discovered more and more details about the image. "The eyes are spaced equally apart, the mouth and nose are the correct size, and the hairline is very evident. The photography is poor, but the composition becomes correct by the image balanced in the middle."

"I was primarily concerned that it was something in my negative," Hale said. "When I checked it and couldn't find anything I started to get goosebumps. It was extremely exciting."

He promptly had a local university examine the photo. Hale himself researched Civil War uniforms, as well as the history of ghosts in photography. "This is as good as some you see, and better

than most images that are said to be ghosts," he said. "There is a one-in-a-million chance that a form in the background will be recognized; then the odds are one-in-a-million that the image can be related to something — in this case, that the picture was made on the 4th of July holiday."

Hale, a Pasadena High School graduate, also contacted a psychic. "He wasn't very interested until he saw it, then he ranted and raved about it," Hale said. "He seems to feel the subconscious energy within the people present was the missing link that made the image come together so well."

The copyrighted photograph has been publicly displayed only once — this past spring at San Jacinto College, where Hale is attending classes. "A lot of people want to buy it," he said, "but I don't sell it. I use it as a conversation piece, and to generate interest in the rest of my photography."

Several people have expressed an interest in the picture. In fact, the psychic Hale originally contacted plans to use it in his next book, and already has taken it on tour with him as part of his psychic seminars. Tentative plans have been made to appear on a local television talk show with the photo next fall.

Continued on page 4



PHANTOM PHOTO — Can you see the ghost in this picture? Look carefully, because he's staring right at you. If you still can't find him, check the artist's illustration on page 4 for help.

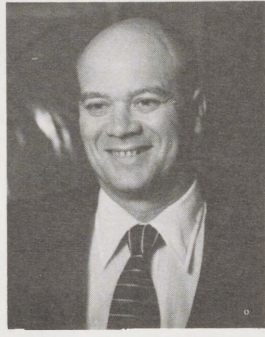
## Anniversaries



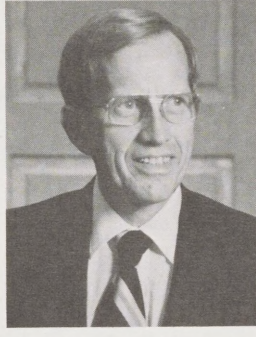
**R.H. Slaughter**  
Admin.  
30 years



**W.C. Lawhon**  
Proc. Control Elec.  
25 years

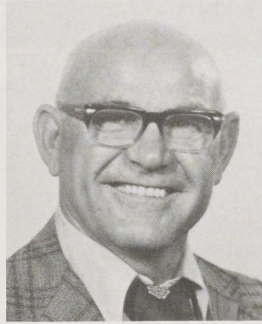


**Hurschel Mann**  
Econ. & Sched.  
25 years



**Dean Zurkammer**  
West Operations  
25 years

## Retirements



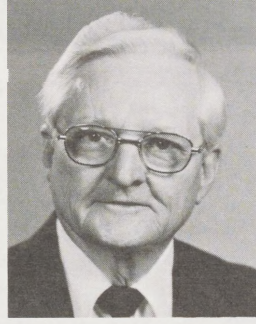
**T.C. Cardwell**  
Maint. North  
33 years



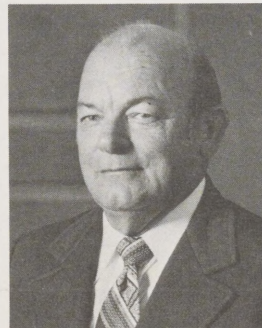
**L.A. Farris**  
Maint. North  
32 years



**J.C. Grissom**  
Utilities  
40 years



**J.R. Hughes**  
G Department  
28 years



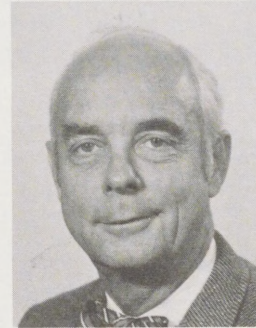
**L.B. Mills**  
Lube C  
33 years



**B.C. Roper**  
Environmental  
33 years



**G.L. Smith**  
Distilling  
32 years



**Charlie Stebbins**  
Maint. South  
38 years

## First-half earnings down slightly in oil, chemical segments

Shell Oil Company recently reported it earned \$380 million in the second quarter, \$30 million less than in the same period last year. First-half earnings for 1982 were \$724 million, a decrease of \$47 million from a year ago.

"Most of the decline in both periods occurred in the oil and gas exploration and production segment," said President John Bookout. He added that exploration and production costs increased this year primarily due to the rising price of supplemental recovery operations and higher repair and maintenance costs.

Lower crude prices continued to be a major reason for reduced earnings, he said, averaging \$3.94 less per barrel than in the first half last year. Crude oil production increased three percent for the quarter and one percent for the six months, mainly due to the higher production from the Kernridge properties and the Gulf of Mexico.

The oil products segment — which includes refining, transportation and marketing — earned \$100 million for the quarter and \$134 million for the first half, improvements of \$9 million and \$16 million respectively.

Chemical products earnings were \$6 million for the quarter and \$16 million for the first half, down \$9 million and \$5 million respectively.

"Reflecting weak demand, chemical earnings were adversely affected by lower average selling prices and reduced sales volumes," Bookout said. "Although chemical raw material costs were lower than last year, generally poor economic conditions have caused underutilization of manufacturing facilities and soft prices."

Overall corporate earnings decreased seven percent for the quarter and six percent for the first half, compared to the respective periods in 1981.

Looking at the rest of the year, Bookout said, "With each of our principal segments tied closely to increased economic growth and crude oil prices, we remain concerned that improvements will not come soon enough to allow 1982 net income to equal that of 1981."

"We are encouraged that our generation of funds from operations is about the same as last year. Our investment activity program is anticipated to be about the same as that first announced for 1982, with some reduction in the chemical sector," Bookout added.

## Medical Department Safety Dinner



Helen Hicks, Medical secretary, and her husband, Travis, celebrated with a number of other folks at the annual safety dinner.



Warren Davis, senior nurse, and his wife, Cindy, relaxed before dinner. The party was held at the Monument Inn in June, and more than 30 people attended.



Sharon Guidry, a senior clerk in Medical, and her husband, Earl, smiled for the photographer as they began dinner.

## Olefins Maintenance Safety Dinner



A number of folks attended the annual safety dinner, including Nanell and R.M. Treadway (with their backs to the camera), David and Karen Cornelius (center), and O.J. and Bettye Pomykal (standing).



Enjoying dinner are, from left to right, Martha and Gordon Speer, Lester and Doris Turlington, and Robie and Leroy Vaughn. The dinner was at Louie's on the Lake.



Norm Newton, manager, Olefins Maintenance, proposed a toast to continued safety as the dinner began.

## Three inducted onto Resins Safety Honor Roll

Unfortunately, safety records usually focus on the negative aspect of the business; the number of accidents, the correcting of unsafe conditions, even the analysis of near misses. Those statistics are important, but the positive side of safety is often overlooked.

A new program in the Resins Department is trying to change that. The Safety Honor Roll, initiated in April, was designed to recognize individuals in resins who have significantly contributed to the department's safety record.

What marks "a significant contribution to safety"?

For Steve Oliphant, an operator in resins for six years, it was his response during an emergency. "There was a man who was ill during our shift," Oliphant said. "He broke out in a cold sweat and said he felt faint. I helped him until the ambulance arrived." Oliphant was praised for his "calm and effective action."

Lubby Worsham, on the other hand, was honored for his personal safety record. During his 36-year Shell career, Worsham has never experienced a lost-time accident or an OSHA recordable injury; there's not even a

record of a first-aid case involving him. "I'm very proud. I always take safety first," said Worsham, who drives a forklift in the Liquid Resins Distribution Facility.

Larry Stanford, former Solid Resins process manager, was honored for his outstanding safety contributions and activities. Stanford, who recently left DPMC for Woodbury, was a member of the Health and Safety Committee and was instrumental in developing many of the department's safety programs.

Oliphant, Worsham and Stanford comprised the first three members of the department to be named to the Resins Honor Roll.

Induction onto the Honor Roll is by nomination only. Axel Muzerie, chairman of the Resins Distribution Safety Committee, said the nomination can come from anyone and anyone can be nominated. "But since the Honor Roll is an exclusive organization," he said, "each nomination will be carefully judged before a decision is made."

The new members all have their names listed on a large plaque in the Resins Building lobby. Each member also



**HONOR ROLL INDUCTEES** — The first three members of the Safety Honor Roll in the Resins Department were recently named. From left to right are Lubby Worsham, Steve Oliphant and Larry Stanford.  
Photo by Ed Olivier

received a small plaque with his name engraved on it.

In Resins Superintendent Leonard Alpert's view, the positive side of safety "includes everyone who has truly contributed to our safety efforts. These individuals have

good safety records, practice good, safe work habits, and support all our safety programs."

The Honor Roll program is the brainchild of the Resins Distribution Safety Committee, a one-year-old team composed of representatives from all levels of the resins organization.

Muzerie explained that the Resins Safety Team was

started to make "an organized effort inside resins to improve safety performance — in addition to the Complex safety organization."

Safety Committee members include: W.M. Boaze, H.B. Butler, L.L. Duke, G.E. Gutierrez, E.V. Hambrick, W.D. Haygood, R.P. Hernandez, C.A. Hodge, V.T. Little, T.L. Thomas, W.B. Weeks, A. Wood and Muzerie.

## Howard admitted to Wise Owl Club

Although Wayne Howard is tall, he stretched to reach the overhead valve. It was the middle of graveyards; Howard was in the Phenol unit to open a two-inch block valve on a start-up line. As he cracked the valve, 99 percent pure phenol sprayed his chin, neck, upper arms and torso.

"I didn't even have the valve open when it blew," said Howard, an operator in Phenol-Acetone. "A white cloud came out that looked like steam. I told myself there was no sense taking chances, so I'd better have a safety shower. But before I could move, the pain hit me."

Howard rushed to a safety shower on the unit, then with the help of others sped to the DPMC Hospital. His burns were serious enough for him to be taken to Bayshore Hospital, where he was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. But he could have been hurt worse if he hadn't been wearing safety



**SIGHT SAVER** — LPA Superintendent Bob Awe, right, recently presented the Wise Owl award to operator Wayne Howard for his conscientious use of eye protection.

goggles.

Because his eyesight was protected by using the right safety equipment, Howard was admitted to the Wise Owl Club of America, a nationally-known organization which

recognizes the conscientious use of eye protection in industry. Membership in the Wise Owls is open to any employee whose sight is saved from the use of protective eye equipment.

## Shell Merit Scholarship applications now accepted

Entry forms are now being accepted for the 16th annual Shell Companies Merit Scholarship Competition. Sponsored by the Shell Companies Foundation, Inc., the contest will award 50 college scholarships to students who will complete high school in 1984 and enter college the same year.

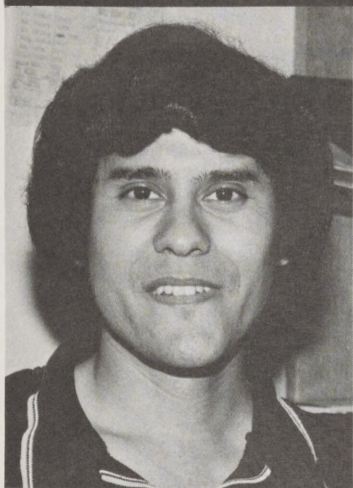
Merit scholarships offer a minimum of \$1,000 a year and a maximum of \$4,000 a year for up to four years. That's one way of beating the rising costs of higher education.

Students who wish to compete must submit a completed 1984 entry form by November 1, 1982, to Scholarship Competition, Shell Companies Foundation, Inc., Two Shell Plaza, P.O. Box 2099, Houston, Texas, 77001. Students must take the PSAT-NMSQT test which will be given in high schools in October.

Winners will be chosen on the basis of test scores, academic records, leadership ability and extracurricular activities. The competition is administered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation; Shell plays no part in the selection of winners or determining their financial need.

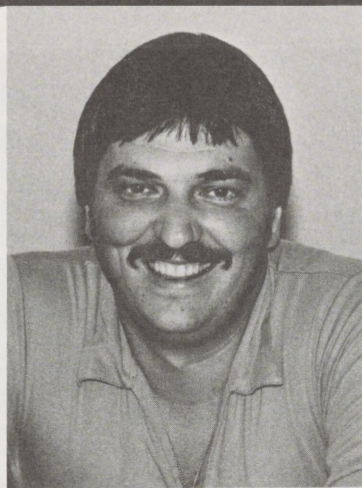
Sons and daughters of regular full-time employees and retired or deceased employees of Shell companies are eligible. Booklets covering the program and 1984 entry forms may be obtained from your local Personnel office.

## SOUND OFF: what's your secret ambition?



**ROBERT PENA**  
Chemical Lab

I'd like to run my very own restaurant that would serve Mexican food. I'd call it Roberto's Heavenly Mexican Food. That would attract people!



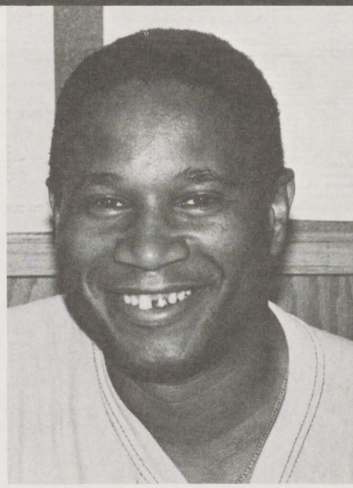
**ROD MAYBEE**  
Purchasing

I'd like to be a singer or a guitar player in a band. My wife sings, and I'd like to perform with her sometime. I'd like to go on tour, too, even in Europe.



**LISA PALMER**  
Information Services

I would like to have my own boutique or clothes shop. I've always been interested in fashion, but I never pursued it. I still enjoy keeping up with it, though.



**MARTY BEAN**  
Alkyltion

I would love to be an airline pilot. I've always been fascinated by flying and the peace it gives you. You soar above men and are responsible for people's lives.



**ROBERT FIGLEY**  
Maintenance South

I'd like to go up to Lake Livingston and spend the rest of my life there. It's so relaxing. You can fish and swim and ski — that would be just right for me.

## Classifieds

### FOR SALE

1981 Toyota Sedan. Five-speed with tape deck, custom stereo, air conditioning and cloth interior. 30 miles per gallon. \$8,000. Call 333-1058.

1980 Ford Fairmont station wagon. Low mileage, AM-FM cassette stereo, six cylinder. \$4,500. Call 481-1128.

1980 Monte Carlo Sports Edition. Excellent condition. \$5,495. Call 333-4053

1979 Buick Regal. Two-door with air conditioning, power steering and brakes, tilt, AM-FM eight-track. \$4,995. Call 476-5797.

1974 Cutlass Supreme. Vinyl top, AM-FM cassette, air conditioning, automatic, new transmission, good tires, \$1,000 cash. Call 424-4160.

1974 Monte Carlo. 350 V-8 with air conditioning, power steering and brakes. Good condition. \$1,395. Call 383-3053.

1971 Volkswagen. Rebuilt engine and clutch, new wiring harness. Needs paint and upholstery. Call 334-1861 after 6 p.m.

1979 Honda 750K. Excellent condition. \$2,175. Call 482-4769.

Honda MR-250 dirt bike. Runs great — knobby rear tire. \$365. Call 334-6403.

1980 Sentry Mobile Home. Two bedroom-two bathroom split level with fireplace, sunken tub, washer & dryer, utility shed. \$4,500 equity, \$312 per month. Nine years left on 13 percent loan. Call 937-4055 or 466-3352 or 463-7390.

444 International Diesel tractor. 320 hours. Includes bush hog, tandem disc, box blade, double mold board, turning plow. All good condition. \$10,000. Call 479-2539.

California Sandrail dune buggy. If you have a VW engine, let's talk. Call 339-1951.

Camper shell for LWB pickup. Aluminum, insulated and paneled, wired for 12 volt. \$155. Call 339-1951.

Jacobsen self-propelled mower with rear bagger. \$125. Solid oak desk with chair. \$400. King-size headboard, chest,

triple dresser with two night stands. \$450. Call 479-0188.

3-1-1 home in Pasadena. \$10,000 equity, assume notes at \$308 per month. Call 477-3373.

Unfurnished mobile home. Three bedroom-two bathroom with central heat and air. Refinance — \$500 down 84 payments of \$181, equity negotiable. Call 470-1292.

Kelvinator gas dryer. Full capacity like new. \$200. Call 573-1142 or extension 6050.

30-inch caloric gas range. Continuous-cleaning, automatic oven, two years old. \$200. Call 479-3894.

Two old TV consoles. Reasonable price. Call 479-2703.

Early American maple coffee table drop leaf ends. \$50. Call 383-3053.

Pool table. Custom brushed chrome, 1-inch slate, 4 x 8 feet. Includes lights and accessories. Two years old. \$1,500. Call 480-8260 after 5 p.m.

AKC Doberman puppies. Shots, wormed, tails and dew claws. \$125. Call 328-3302.

### FOR RENT

3-2-2 house in Heritage Park for lease. 1,700 sq. ft., landscaped, fenced, on cul-de-sac. Dining room, utility room, fireplace with glass screen, ceiling fan. Pets OK. Call 332-4650 evenings.

Condo for rent. Two bedrooms, two-story with fireplace, pool, two-car covered parking. \$625 per month. Call 480-8260 after 5 p.m.

### FOR TRADE

One new auto tire: Bridgestone 165 SR-13 whitewall. Call extension 6367.

### FREE

Kittens. Call 487-2522.

Male white kitten with shots. Two-year-old female cat spayed with shots. Two-year-old male cat neutered, declawed with shots. Call 466-3352.

## SCORA sponsors photography class

There's an old cliché that says "a picture is worth a thousand words." That, of course, depends on the painter, or in this case, the photographer. No matter how hard we try, sometimes our photographs fail to capture the magic moment we see through the camera eye. We often find ourselves speechless — not with wonder, but dismay.

This fall, SCORA will sponsor a 35 millimeter photography class, designed for beginners as well as seasoned veterans. The classes will be taught by professional photographer and instructor Vern Burnett, a computer operator in Data Processing. The class will be held on



Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. from September 9 to October 14. It will meet in the

North Cafeteria. The class costs \$20 per person or \$30 per couple.

The class is open to all Shell employees and their families; there is no age limit. However, the class size is limited to 30 students, so sign up early to guarantee a spot. Contact Burnett at extension 6465 before 12 noon to register. If enough interest is generated, other classes may be scheduled later.

If the class sounds good to you, don't delay your registration; call now, and take advantage of the reduced rates for couples. You should bring your camera and accessories to the first class meeting.

## Volunteers needed for Special Days Picnic

Volunteers are still needed for Saturday's Special Days for Special People Picnic in Deer Park. Sponsored by DPMC's United Way Committee, the day-long festivities kick off the 1982 fund-raising drive for the Complex.

How can you get involved? Let me count the ways....

You can volunteer to help with the S.O.B. Aquatics, the Special Olympics, the registration and information booth or in the cafeteria area. If you really want to participate, there's always the dunking booth.

Involvement is the name of the game. Your time and effort give you the chance to help the many agencies that serve the people of the Houston area through the United Way. The Special Days Picnic

will benefit three groups in particular — the Houston Lighthouse for the Blind, the Pasadena Center for the Retarded and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Baytown.

Admission is free. The barbecue dinner costs \$1.50 if you buy tickets in advance, \$2 at the picnic. The fun starts at 10 a.m. and continues until 6 p.m. at the south campus of Deer Park High School.

Last year, the Complex raised nearly \$180,000. This money was used to support many different agencies in the Gulf Coast area.

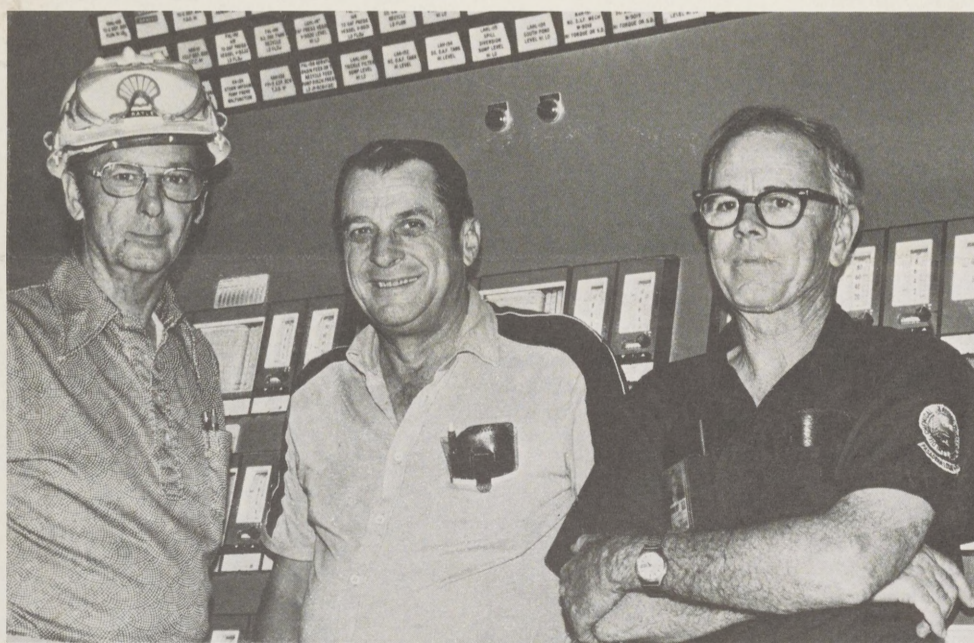
The DPMC South chairpeople are Chuck Briggs and Octavio Romero; you can call them on extension 7598. The DPMC North chairpeople are Paula Littles and Clark Callihan; they're on extension 7119.

## Mystery surrounds ghostly image

Continued from page 1

Perhaps this isn't a ghost story as much as an examination of our own perceptions. "Some people swear up and down there's nothing there," Hale said. "The best method is to let people study the photograph, then point the image out to them if they can't find it. People react — either they like it, or they dislike it."

Hale remains convinced. "I was very close to the mother and the baby, and the background was 50 yards away. There must be some reason for such a distinct image, rather than accident," he said. "The picture is full of images — once you see the ghost, all the rest become evident."



Ed Ratley, Jack Goodnight and Robert McCafferty

The Shellegram is published each week for the purpose of informing and recognizing pensioners and employees like Ed Ratley, Jack Goodnight and Robert McCafferty. Ed is an instrument foreman in Maintenance North, and Jack and Robert are both operators at the North Treaters.

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