

# 'Today' host McGee dies

NEW YORK—Frank W. McGee, the host of NBC-TV's *Today Show* and a national broadcast newsman known for his coverage of space shots and political conventions, died Wednesday from complications of bone cancer he had suffered for several months. He was 52.

McGee continued to broadcast until Thursday, although friends described him as having been very weak and in great pain. He entered Columbia Presbyterian Hospital Friday.

The cause of death was attributed to pneumonia, described as a direct complication of multiple myeloma, a rare form of bone cancer. McGee had been

undergoing chemical and radiation therapy for the disease.

McGee, a native of Monroe, La., joined the network in 1957, assigned first as a Washington correspondent specializing in space and politics. Two years later he was transferred to New York.

He hosted the *11th Hour News* and the *Frank McGee Report* before succeeding Hugh Downs on the *Today Show* in 1971.

As a newsman, McGee broadcast some 450 instant news specials and during the 1960 presidential campaign moderated the second "Great Debate" between President John F. Kennedy and then Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

He was the recipient in 1966 of a George Foster Peabody award, one of the highest distinctions in broadcast journalism, and received several other awards and citations for his reporting.

## Simon chosen for Treasury

WASHINGTON—Energy director William E. Simon was nominated by President Nixon Wednesday to replace George P. Shultz as Treasury secretary. Simon's assistant, John C. Sawhill, will succeed to the energy post.

Simon, 46, has been doubling since December as head of the Federal Energy Office and as undersecretary of the Treasury.

The White House made clear he will not face the wide range of economic responsibilities assigned to Shultz.

Simon was making millions on Wall Street as an investment banker when he accepted the Treasury undersecretary job in January, 1973.

Sawhill, 37, joined Simon at the Federal Energy Office last December, and was chief architect of the fuel allocation system and the contingency plans for gasoline rationing.

## Saxbe believes Patricia guilty

SAN FRANCISCO—U.S. Attorney James Browning said Wednesday a grand jury will have to decide whether Patricia Hearst was a willing participant in a Hibernia Bank robbery. Monday, U.S. Attorney General William B. Saxbe said he thought she was and called her a common criminal.

In Washington, Saxbe said he had concluded Patricia "was not a reluctant participant" in the holdup. His opinion, he told newsmen, was based on "the way she behaved, the number of people in the bank who observed her behavior, the testimony of witnesses, and the actions in the bank."

## Now more than ever

KESLEY, Iowa—A Democratic congressional candidate said Wednesday he has invited President Nixon to his district to campaign for Republicans.

Nicholas Johnson of Kesley, who is seeking the Democratic nomination in Iowa's 3rd District, noted that the President campaigned for the Republican candidate in Michigan's special congressional election but a Democrat won in Tuesday's balloting.

Johnson said he was very heartened by the results in Michigan and added: "I already have my request in to the President."

## Loss shakes GOP

SAGINAW, Mich.—The latest Democratic victory in usually safe Republican territory sent shock waves through GOP ranks Wednesday and spurred new Democratic attacks on President Nixon.

The latest in a series of post-Watergate setbacks for Republicans came Tuesday night in Michigan's 8th Congressional District, where J. Bob Traxler scored a solid victory in an area that has elected only one other Democrat to Congress in this century.

Final unofficial figures gave Traxler 59,918 votes in the seven-county district, nearly 3,000 more than the 56,898 collected by James M. Sparling Jr., a respected Republican making his first race.

Traxler called the result a vote of no confidence in Nixon.

The stakes for Nixon were high since he personally and enthusiastically campaigned in the district just six days before the election, his first such political foray since

Watergate.

Nixon did not comment immediately on Traxler's victory, but other GOP leaders through GOP ranks Wednesday and spurred new Democratic attacks on President Nixon.

Ford, whose own vacated safe seat fell earlier this year to a Democrat, said Traxler's election was a bad omen and warned that a continued Democratic sweep could lead to a "legislative dictatorship."

Traxler echoed earlier Democratic winners by calling the result a demonstration that voters are fed up with unemployment, inflation, shortages and, above all, Watergate.

"If I was a Republican," he said, "I would not want the Nixon albatross around my neck in November."

The loss was the fourth for the GOP in five special House elections this year and was especially painful since Nixon took a personal and direct role in hopes of bolstering his own standing within the party.

## Kent State suits reinstated

WASHINGTON—Overturning a lower court decision, the Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that the families of students shot in the 1970 Kent State violence may press damage suits against National Guardsmen and state officials involved.

The 8-0 decision held that an old common law doctrine of executive immunity is only a limited, not an absolute, barrier to personal liability for official actions.

It reinstated for lower court action two damage suits that ask 11 million in damages from former Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes, former Kent State University president Robert I. White and other officials and National Guardsmen involved in the May 4,

1970 campus shooting.

The court Wednesday did not rule on the merits of the two Kent state lawsuits before it. It merely reinstated them in the U.S. District Court in Cleveland.

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