

Poage exhibit honors anniversary of JFK moon speech

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By Mallory Hisler, Reporter

The [W.R. Poage Legislative Library](#) will honor the 50th anniversary of President [John F. Kennedy](#)'s famous speech challenging the nation to become an active part of the space race with [an exhibit scheduled to open next week](#).

The exhibit will open 2 April, and there will be a welcome reception from 3 to 4:30 p.m. April 12 to honor the speech given on Sept. 12, 1962.

"For this exhibit, it is celebrating that it was 50 years ago that JFK gave his speech at Rice about going to the moon, not because it's easy, but because it's hard," said [Mary Goolsby](#), library services and project manager.

Goolsby said she believes it is important to preserve the memory of the brave people who explored the final frontier and honor the significant impact they made on history.

"I remember being in my third grade class hearing about them walking on the moon — it's not like that anymore. This exhibit is for us to be able to tell that story to the new generation," Goolsby said. "It was a whole different breed of people. They were horribly courageous, and they gave us a lot of what we have today."

The exhibit, which displays comics signed by astronauts, space gear, a scale-sized shuttle, fact boards, photographs and other memorabilia, has been in the works for more than three months, said [Ben Rogers](#), director of Poage

Library.

"We got some things from NASA, some things we had in the collections and some things were loaned by donors," Rogers said.

The bulk of the exhibit focuses on the political cartoons collected by Helen Newton. After taking a job at the [Johnson Space Center](#), she focused her collection on cartoons dealing with space. Because Newton worked in close proximity to many astronauts, she was able to get them to sign the original cartoons in which the astronauts appeared. Her son, Bob Newton, shared the collection with the library.



Goolsby also worked with NASA to secure items for the exhibit, such as the scale model of the shuttle, two large educational display boards and items for exhibit attendees to take home, including NASA informational books and pencils.

"That [working with NASA] was a really unique experience," she said. "Being an educational institution, they worked with us and gave us a lot of stuff."

The organization of the exhibit took much planning, both Goolsby and Rogers said.

Goolsby said Rogers comes up with ideas for exhibits sometimes years in advance, looking to highlight particular historical anniversaries.

"It takes months to prepare. Ben usually has ideas, and sometimes has them like three years out," she said. "We've been working on this particular exhibit since December as far as pulling things [from the library's own collection] goes. I ordered the things from NASA in late November or early December."

Rogers and Goolsby encouraged Baylor students to stop by the exhibit.

"For older folks like me, it will bring up a lot of memories. There were things that we had forgotten, even though we had lived during that time," Goolsby said. "And for the students, it's important to know your roots and your history, and to know what brave men and women these people were to do this."