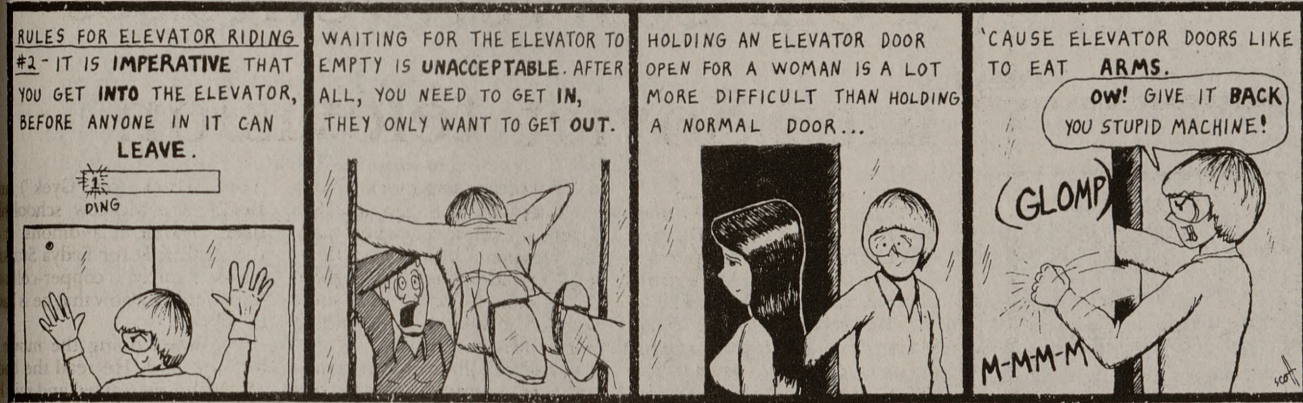


Warped

By Scott McCullar



Giraffe donated to LA Zoo in memory of dead son

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — When Michael and Marsha Fuerst's son died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, they buried him with the stuffed giraffe that was his first toy. They saved for five years to donate a real giraffe to the Los Angeles zoo as a memorial.

Finally, the family promised to pay what money it had immediately if the price could be set at \$10,000, Fuerst said.

"We wanted a living memorial and something that could be enjoyed by children everywhere," Mrs. Fuerst at the weekend dedication ceremony said.

She said she hoped the gift would draw attention to the illness that killed their 5-month-old son, Matthew Ray, and make the work of the National Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Foundation better known.

The Covina, Calif., couple paid \$10,000 for the 10-foot-tall Masai giraffe. About 175 friends and relatives, including Matthew's two brothers and two sisters, gathered at the zoo Saturday for the dedication.

Marcia Hobbs, president of the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association, presented the Fuersts with a certificate. "We're thrilled he's (the giraffe) here," Michael Fuerst told the gathering.

When the family first decided to get the giraffe, they found out it would cost \$4,000. It took them two years to save the money and when they called the zoo, they were told the price of a giraffe had escalated to \$7,000.

Three years later, with \$7,000 in the bank, the family called the zoo again, and the price had gone up to \$10,000.

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Mobil Oil Canada rig collapses

Search finds no survivors

United Press International
ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland — Search officials reported Monday there were no apparent survivors among an 84-man drilling crew that challenged the storm-tossed Atlantic in a desperate attempt to escape a teetering offshore oil rig.

Seven hours after the collapse of the \$50 million, 10-story-high Mobil Oil Canada rig in the oil-rich Hibernia field, Coast Guard vessels radioed they had found two fiberglass lifeboats bobbing in the churning seas.

"There were also bodies seen in the water, but there is no indication at this time that there are any survivors," Mobil official Susan Sherk said. She acknowledged the Ocean Ranger rig had experienced a 5 degree list last week when one of 16 supporting pontoons went slightly out of balance, letting water in or out. She did not know when it had last undergone a safety check.

A fleet of planes, coast guard vessels and the bulk carrier Cadus Atlantica battled the angry sea to reach the area, on the promising Hibernia oil field 170 miles east of St. John's, but conditions are still very "bad," coast guard officer Capt. Robert Alford said.

"My personal opinion is that it would be a miracle if there are any survivors."

It was one of the worst oil rig disasters in history. On March 27, 1980, 123 workers died when an oil platform collapsed in the North Sea. Seventy crewmen were killed when a rig toppled into China's Bo Hai Gulf Nov. 25, 1979.

Mobil said the drilling crew was ordered to abandon the Ocean Ranger at 12:15 a.m. when the steel rig began to list dangerously under pounding by 50 foot waves whipped by 70 mph winds.

The steel rig was equipped with three fiberglass lifeboats and a dozen life rafts, but the coast guard said there was no

indication the lifeboats carried emergency locator devices.

Radio contact was lost immediately after the rig broadcast a Mayday. Search planes that battled the fierce ocean storm in a hunt for survivors reported all that was visible of the rig was an anchor and wave-riding marker buoys.

Seven hours after the evacuation, searchers reported they had spotted a partially inflated liferaft and two of the 40-foot fiberglass lifeboats, each of

which can carry up to 50 people.

Mobil said one of the sausage-shaped lifeboats was in a cap-sized position and the other stern down, indicating both had taken on water. Bodies were seen near the lifeboats, but Sherk said no one has been able to get close to them because the swell is very high.

Coast guard officer Lt. Cmdr. Douglas Caie said the Atlantic snow storm had reduced visibility to 300 feet and winds were gusting up to 70 mph. Under

such conditions, even the specially-designed northern rescue helicopters cannot drop life-support equipment.

Coast guard spokesman Malcolm McLaughlin estimated a man wearing regular clothing and a lifejacket could survive only 30 to 90 minutes in the icy water. Water temperatures were a few degrees above freezing.

There were two other oil rigs in the same area of the Grand Banks, McLaughlin said, but neither reported problems. Mobil said all three rigs had stopped drilling, and there was no danger of an oil leak into the ocean. The rigs were still conducting exploratory drilling and production had not begun.

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