



Moments before the race

staff photo by Eric Mitchell

David Petitpas, a senior chemical engineering major from Lewisville, awaits his turn to race and be timed in an event run by the A&M Sports Car Club in the Zachry parking lot.

Impending cosmic 'doom' creating varying reactions

United Press International
The solar system's nine planets will cluster in a rare formation Wednesday, and the occasion is being taken quite seriously in India — much more seriously than by the New York Center for the Strange, or by scientists who dispell fears that the event spells disaster.

For the first time since 1803, and the last time until 2357, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto will be within a 96-degree area on the same side of the sun. The event has given birth to all sorts of theories, fears and merry-making.

The planetary arrangement was described in 1976 in a book by astrophysicists John Gribbin and Stephen H. Plagemann entitled "The Jupiter Effect," which predicted the gravitational pull of such a lineup would suck cosmic winds from the sun and activate earthquake zones around Earth, particularly along California's San Andreas fault.

But Gribbin backed off his prediction in a letter to the New York Times last month.

"Our forecast was tied to changes in the sun's activity,

which we believed to be driven by planetary alignments," he said.

"The sun's activity peaked in 1979, not 1982, proving that the planets do not dominate the sun's behavior and removing the basis of our original forecast."

That may be no consolation to the readers of the Sunday Herald in New Delhi. The newspaper said the positioning of the planets will cause disease, riots, labor unrest and possibly an earthquake.

"A strange epidemic affecting the abdomen will stalk India," and "a southern state will create problems," the newspaper said in a reference to political conflicts.

The New York Center for the Strange sees it differently. The group, which issues the Halloween predictions of witches, held a poll that revealed there will be problems, but nothing as serious as what is being predicted in India.

The poll said the planetary lineup will cause "nationwide shortages of sparkling wine, hockey pucks, gerbil cages and soy sauce."

The center also said: "French scientists will warn that massive quantities of chicken soup can

cause erotic dreams."

Doomsday won't be a somber occasion at the Arizona State University planetarium, where coordinator Dan Matlaga plans an "End of the World" show and party Monday.

"Some people seem to thrive on predictions of calamity and mayhem," he said. "The one accompanying 'The Jupiter Effect' seems to have a lot of followers. We have been getting

frequent calls about it."

The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland also plans a party to celebrate the continuation of life on Earth.

"Definitely not on the evening's schedule are killer earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or the arrival of war parties from distant solar systems," museum representative Beverly Swaren said.

Society of Petroleum Engineers Meeting
President of Halliburton - Leonard Leon

to speak on:

"The Role of the Service Company in the Petroleum Industry"

Tuesday March 9 Room 100 Heldenfels 7:00 P.M.

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Banks lower prime rates

United Press International
NEW YORK — Several major banks cut their prime interest rate to 16 percent from 16.5 percent and one smaller Midwestern bank has slashed its prime to 15.75 percent.

The moves came Monday af-

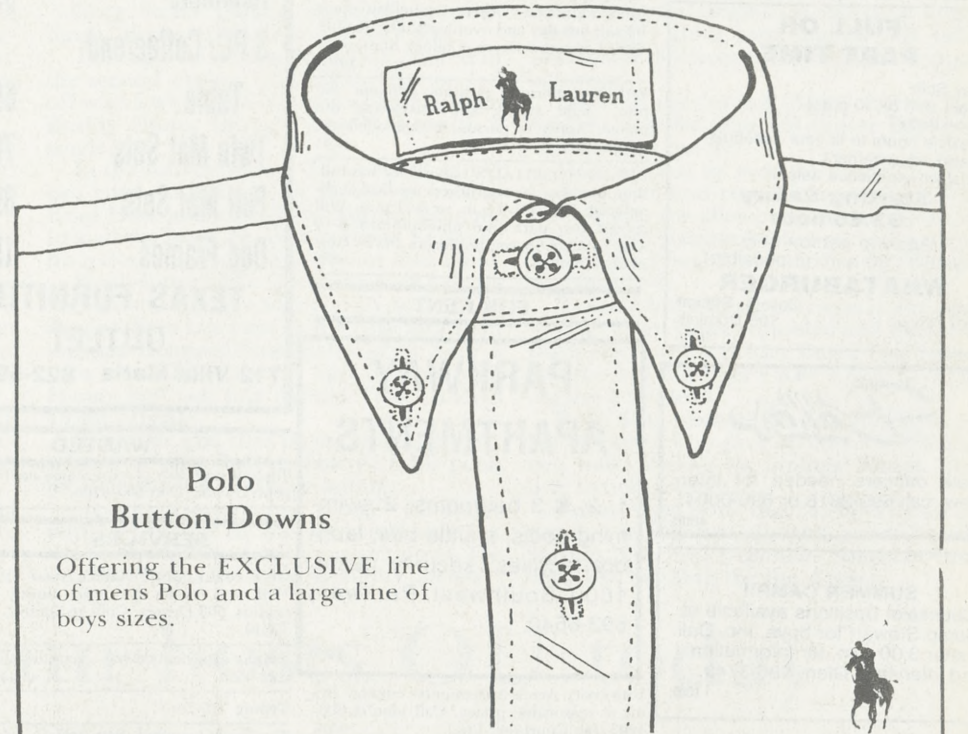
ter the Federal Reserve reported Friday that the basic measure of the nation's money supply plunged \$3 billion in the latest week.

UMB Bank & Trust Co. of New York led the move, followed by Chase Manhattan,

Morgan Guaranty and First National Bank of Chicago.

United Missouri Bancshares cut its prime to 15.75 percent.

Economists speculated that with the sharp decline in the money supply, the Fed might loosen tight credit reins slightly.



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Today's Almanac

United Press International
Today is Tuesday, March 9, the 68th day of 1982, with 297 to follow.

On this date in history:
In 1822, the first patent for artificial teeth was awarded to

Charles Graham of New York. In 1977, 12 gunmen belonging to the Hanafi Moslem sect invaded three Washington buildings, killed a black newsman and held 100 people hostage.



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