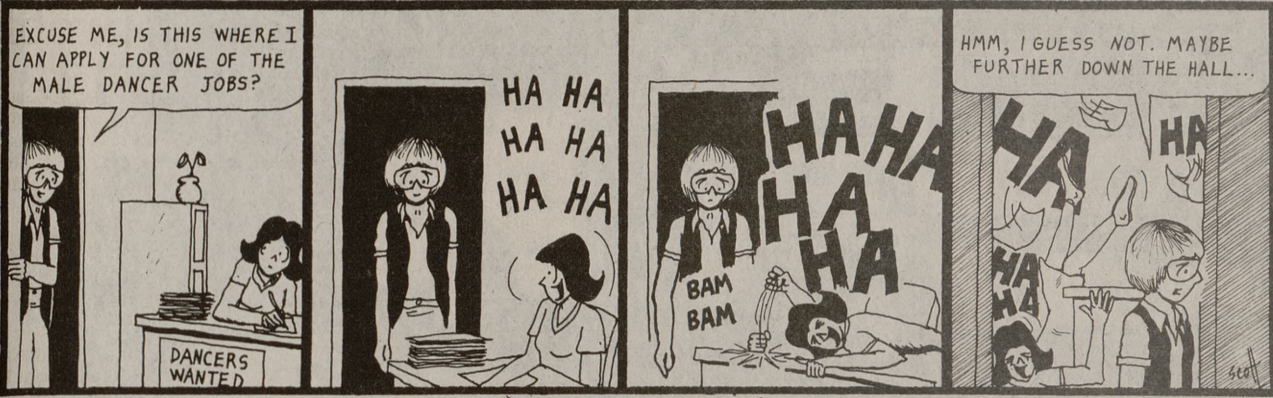


Warped

By Scott McCullar

Columbia's fifth flight will be a host of firsts



United Press International  
SPACE CENTER, Houston — The next scheduled launch of the space shuttle Columbia Nov. 11 will begin a flight of firsts, including the first four-man crew and the initial journey through space for three members of that crew.

Mission Commander Vance Brand said Tuesday he will be joined on the flight by co-pilot Robert Overmyer and mission specialists Joe Allen and Bill Lenoir.

It will be the first space flight for Overmyer, Allen and Lenoir, all of whom have been waiting since the late 1960s. Brand, 51, flew the Russian-American Apollo-Soyuz mission in 1975.

walk from the shuttle by Allen and Lenoir; a cross-wind or automatic pilot landing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.; and a launch with the shuttle's ejection seats disabled.

However, the prime goal of the mission will be launching 10-foot-tall 6,000-pound commercial satellites for Satellite Business Systems and Canadian-based Telesat. The companies have paid \$8 million each for the service, a reduced rate because they are the first.

The two satellites will spring from the payload bay and 45 minutes later, after Overmyer has backed Columbia 8 to 10 miles

away, a new solid rocket called a Payload Assist Module will fire the satellites into geosynchronous orbit 23,000 miles out from Earth.

The mission could last five or six days after launch from Florida's Kennedy Space Center, the astronauts said. If the spacewalk occurs, Allen and Lenoir will test the shuttle suit and its life support backpack in the cargo bay.

The Columbia will accommodate Lenoir, riding in a seat already in place between the commander and co-pilot seats, and Allen riding in a seat installed in the mid-deck.

Convertibles coming out

Chrysler changing image

United Press International  
ST. LOUIS — The rebirth of the convertible is symbolic of Chrysler Corporation's attempts to bury its reputation for building a stodgy, unexciting auto.

"The old image was old people and four-door cars," said Warren Gieselman, a Chrysler-Plymouth dealer in St. Louis. "They've done a lot to change that perception. Now they're attracting young people."

Although American auto sales are at an all-time low, Chrysler is finding a market for its sporty convertibles. The demand is great enough that employees at the company's assembly plant in suburban Fenton are working overtime for the remainder of the 1982 model year.

The plant has been producing about 250 convertibles a day since April, and the cars now account for more than 50 percent of the production output.

Tom McAlear of Chrysler's sales division in St. Louis says the rebirth of the convertible came about after a series of studies showed there was a demand for them.

"The combination of front-wheel drive and the gas mileage made them marketable," he said. "We have been able to project enough volume to make it profitable."

Convertibles had been a

mainstay of the auto industry until they gradually disappeared in the early 1970s. Chrysler had not offered a rag-top since 1971.

The decline was blamed on several factors — the cars were said to be noisy, leaky, unsafe rattletraps.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208, which came out in 1972 and set criteria for occupant safety during crashes, played a major role in the disappearance. The negative publicity that accompanied the legislation affected sales enough to eventually halt production.

McAlear said the convertible market also had been "oversaturated," and agreed that the wind noise played a role because of the emergence of the car stereo.

He conceded that past convertibles rattled and leaked because the auto manufacturers literally cut the tops off regular models to make them. He said Chrysler now is using a different design and structure to produce the convertibles.

"We're not just taking a LeBaron and Dodge 400 and cutting the tops off," he said. "We've restructured the windshield, put a strength beam down the middle of the car and reinforced the body with extra metal."

"We feel like we have conquered the problem," he said. "We've had no complaints or recalls."

Auto safety experts agree the new design has helped eliminate some of the danger problems.

Wayne Young, manager of the Auto Club of Missouri's diagnostic center, says the reinforced windshield has made it possible for the convertibles to pass safety tests.

"They have finally overcome the barrier with the main windshield structure built to withstand the roll-overs," said Young.

A spokesman for the Vehicle Safety Standards Division of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in Washington said convertibles have to meet the same safety standards as other cars.

"A belted occupant is not that bad off," he said.

If safety is no longer a problem, price might be for some potential buyers. The LeBaron Mark Cross edition, which features a leather interior, lists at \$14,900. The LeBaron highline convertible, which has a standard interior, has a suggested retail price of \$12,500.

McAlear said the LeBaron Mark Cross editions are the best sellers.

"Sales are going great," he said. "Families with two wage earners are buying them for second cars."

"A lot of people who are usually GM and Ford buyers are coming in because those dealers don't have anything comparable to offer."

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Mom not bitter at kidnapper

United Press International  
GALVESTON — The mother of a week-old infant kidnapped within hours of her birth said she holds no bitterness toward the suspect whose uncle returned the child to authorities, and who has disappeared.

Carolyn Haynes, 17, of Beaumont, was reunited Tuesday with her child, Christina Lynn Lewis Haynes, after a Houston minister delivered the infant to the Galveston police station.

The Rev. Elmer Ray Smith said his niece, Jacklin Smith, 23, admitted to posing as a nurse in order to abduct the infant July 13.

Authorities traveled to Hous-

ton before dawn Tuesday and confiscated baby bottles and diapers from a residence where the suspect, 23, lived with a cousin for three days after the abduction.

The cousin, Albert Johnson III of Houston, said the woman stayed at his house for three days and he at first believed the child was hers.

Elmer Smith said a sketch of the abductor looked like his niece, and the getaway car being described sounded like his station wagon, so he confronted his niece.

"She explained to me she had two girls," he said. "She said one of them had been sold for between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to the black market."

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No need to avoid meat: profs

United Press International  
LUBBOCK — A National Academy of Science report that linked meat to cancer risks was unfair, and Americans need not reduce the amount of meat in their diets, say researchers at Texas Tech University.

Animal science professors Robert A. Long, C. Boyd Ramsey and Leland F. Tribble said they disagreed with the recent NAS report, which criticized the quantity of meat in the human diet.

"According to the National Center for Health Statistics, stomach and rectal cancers are down since 1900," Long said. "At the same time, the U.S. Department of Agriculture finds that meat consumption, particularly beef, veal and poultry, is up."

Long, Ramsey and Boyd said the NAS report, which linked meat consumption to the risk of cancer, failed to offer conclusive evidence that supported recommendations that Americans cut down on meat.

Ramsey maintains the increase in animal fat is up just 9 percent, with vegetable fat consumption up 50 percent and vegetable shortening and margarine fats up 41 percent.

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