

Future in space

Official says U.S. has far fewer space orbiters than people think

By FRANK SMITH
Staff Writer

An official with Houston's Institute of Space Research told a group of about 35 people in Rudder Tower Thursday that the United States has far fewer space shuttle orbiters than some people think it has.

Hubert Davis, director of program development at the institute and a 1951 graduate of Texas A&M, delivered a 50-minute address and slide presentation to the group, which was mostly comprised of students, as part of the E.L. Miller "Future in Space" Lecture Series.

"It's thought that we have a fleet of shuttles," Davis said. "(Some) call it the Space Transportation System as if it were a major airline."

— count them, four — space shuttle orbiters in existence."

He also said that those orbiters will probably be the only ones around for a long time.

"Those of you who choose to go into the space program as your career are going to find yourself in the very onerous position of having to maintain and keep flight-worthy something that's obsolete in my time — because the technology used in this machine is now 15 years old," Davis said.

Davis' presentation also included slides of drawings of several proposed future space programs.

He said plans for the construction of a manned space station currently provide for the station to be built in space.

Such a system might require as

many as eight or nine space shuttle flights extended over a span of two years, he said.

Davis also said the private sector will have an important interactive role with the government in future space programs.

But interaction between the two is often made difficult, he said.

"There is a paper-burdened system of doing anything between government and industry that's got to be streamlined," he said.

"People talk about a screwdriver costing \$850," he said. "The harsh facts of life are that they do — \$5 for the screwdriver and \$845 worth of paper work."

Davis prefaced his address with

comments on Wednesday night's Strategic Defense Initiative Panel, which was also a part of the Miller Lecture Series.

He offered two points of opinion regarding SDI:

- The United States government will not use SDI to launch a first strike.

"The concept that SDI is in some fashion immoral because it would give our leaders a first strike capability to me is patently fraudulent because it's not the way in which this country behaves," he said.

- The guarding of modern technology for economic reasons is both impossible and fruitless.

"Technology is not a precious commodity like gold that you possess for all times and guard carefully for all times," he said.

U.S. space industry growing in private sector

By MARYBETH ROHSNER
Staff Writer

Although the U.S. government continues to launch most satellites into space, two private space-industry experts told a small audience Thursday that private corporations are an expanding part of the satellite-launching industry.

Earl Reese of Trans-Space Industry and Mark Daniels of Space Services, Inc., speakers for the E.L. Miller "Future in Space" Lecture Series, said their companies offer several advantages to clients. Neither company has, however, placed a satellite in space.

Reese said Trans-Space Industry has expanded government-initiated research on the Delta rocket but has not yet gone into production. He said it offers clients reduced insurance rates because the company launches only one project at a time and the rocket is very reliable. He said private companies have the most appeal to clients that don't require manned space flight and that many clients don't need to use a vehicle system as sophisticated as the shuttle.

"Unmanned flights are probably more productive," he said. Space Services' representative Daniels said his corporation hopes to win government con-

tracts if the defense department deploys the Strategic Defense Initiative. He added that the company plans to use their Conestoga II rocket to launch lighter payloads into a low orbit.

Daniels said the launch business has expanded into unexpected areas. For instance, he frequently receives calls from funeral homes that wish to have their client's ashes scattered in the vastness of space.

"We just have to tell them we're in the transportation business," Daniels said. He said the company would, however, consider the requests of entertainers who want to launch their albums into the cosmos.

The speakers agreed that while the outlook for private industry in space is excellent, funding is another matter. Both companies are privately funded, and Trans-Space Carriers plans to begin issuing stock next year.

Although both companies have prospective clients, neither really want to go into production without the security of a contract. And, according to Reese, contracts are difficult to get because the other main competitors — the U.S. shuttle program and the French rocket Ariane — have put an artificially low price tag on their launches and absorbed the rest of the cost through government funding.

Council suggests treatment for sex offenders

COLLEGE STATION — Treatment programs for imprisoned sex offenders could reduce inmates' chances of committing repeat offenses once they are released, according to the chairman of a special state council.

Dr. Michael Cox, head of the Texas Interagency Council on Sex Offender Treatment, has recommended that inmates be treated while they are in prison and after their release in an attempt to reduce the number of sex crimes in Texas.

About 70 percent of those sex offenders incarcerated and not treated will commit sex crimes following their releases, compared to 10 to 30 percent of those who receive psychological treatment, Cox said.

Cox, a psychologist at the Baylor College of Medicine, said Wednesday he is convinced treatment programs can be implemented at a minimal cost to the state.

Group psychotherapy is the most effective form of treatment, but patients must be treated for an extended period, he said.

The council also recommended that some of the state's estimated 20,000 sex offenders could be helped by taking Depo-Provera, a medication that decreases the sex drive, Cox said.

But Jane Rand, a staff psychologist with the Texas Department of Corrections, said she did not know if the administration of Depo-Provera would be feasible in the prison system because of possible violations of prisoners' rights.

"TDC's position is not to do intrusive things," Rand said. "Depo-Provera is still experimental. It's the kind of situation that we're not ready to embrace yet."

Cox has had about an 85 percent success rate treating sex offenders at his private clinic, but he admits there are some who cannot be treated.

"Sex offenders cannot be completely cured," Cox said. "The tendency might not go away but the criminal activity can be suppressed."

GTE service center built to replace local Phone Marts

By JEAN MANSAVAGE
Reporter

General Telephone is touting its new Customer Service Center as an improvement over the GTE Phone Marts.

The center opens Monday and will offer a wide range of services to its Bryan-College Station customers.

"The facility is one in which customers can take care of their full range of telecommunications needs," says John Wallace, division public affairs manager.

"The customer can establish service, pay bills, buy or lease a phone and inquire about a billing question or problem. He also can have his GTE phones checked or repaired and even check telephone numbers in our directory library at the Customer Service Center."

The biggest improvement of the Customer Service Center over the GTE Phone Marts is the extended business hours, Wallace says.

"The center will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, a half-hour longer than the Phone Marts," Wallace says. "On Saturday it will be open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., a half-day longer than before."

In addition to longer hours, the center offers other improvements over the Phone Marts.

"Customers will be very pleased with the layout which will allow them to utilize the facility in a lot quicker fashion," he says. "It's geared toward getting customers in and out of the center quickly."

The direct-line access to appropriate departments for customers who need assistance in a billing or a re-

pair also helps speed things along, he says.

The private consultation areas in the Customer Service Center are now more personalized than the open-air type of the Phone Mart Wallace says. They make the customer feel more important, he adds.

"We also have conference room and displays targeted for small business customers," Wallace says. One feature of the Customer Service Center that the Phone Mart did not have is the telephone directory library, he says. It contains directories from throughout Texas and the Southwest and is available for customers to research numbers.

The Customer Service Center, located in the Village Shopping Center, combines the services of two GTE Phone Marts in Bryan and College Station.

"We saw Bryan-College Station as one and as growing together," Wallace says. "When we were looking combine and serve both communities at a single location, we could have chosen a better place."

The location has access to the 29th Street corridor, University Drive and is only a short distance from the Highway 6, he says.

The Customer Service Center concept was initiated in Bryan-College Station to improve services, not because there was a specific problem with the Phone Marts, he says.

One minor problem does exist with the Customer Service Center, Wallace says, "People wonder if on service location can be as effective as two locations. We believe the Customer Service Center will be more effective than were the two Phone Marts."

Movie to open in Mexico

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — The smash-hit movie "Back to the Future" will open Tuesday in Mexico with a benefit for the Volunteers of the National Cancer Institute.

The News, the English-language daily, reported that the annual event, which traditionally features the Mexican premiere of

a hit movie, is more important this year because the institute's cancer ward was destroyed in the September earthquakes.

It said makeshift shelters are being used in the interim.

Funds from the benefit at the Polanco Theater will be used for the construction of a new cancer ward.

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