

Battalion Classifieds

World and Nation

Discovery crew honors Challenger with eulogy

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Discovery's astronauts delivered a poignant salute Sunday to their fallen Challenger comrades, eulogizing them as fellow sojourners and friends, and saying "At this moment, our place in the heavens makes us feel closer to them than ever before."

"It's good to be back to where they wanted to go so badly," astronaut John M. Lounge said. As they beamed down spectacular views of the mottled blue and white Earth miles below, the Discovery astronauts spoke about the Challenger — America's last manned space venture — which exploded on liftoff 32 months ago.

"Those on the Challenger who had flown before and seen these sights, they would know the meaning of our thoughts," said astronaut George D. Nelson. "Those who had gone to view them for the first time, they would know why we set forth."

Discovery is to return home from its four-day, one-hour, 65-orbit flight Monday, landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California at 12:37 p.m. EDT.

The astronauts may be a bit warm on their 10,000-mile glide home; a cooling system problem that has plagued most of the flight may still not be working.

Gathered in the Discovery's mid-deck in front of a photograph of the Challenger crew, the crew took turns reading portions of the statement they had written.

"Today, up here where the blue sky turns to black," commander Frederick H. Hauck said, "we can say at long last to Dick, Mike, Judy, to Ron and El, and to Christa and Greg:

"Dear friends, we have resumed the journey that we promised to continue for you. Dear friends, your loss has meant that we could confidently begin anew. Dear friends, your spirit

and your dreams are still alive in our hearts."

The seven who died aboard Challenger were Richard Scobee, Michael Smith, Judith Resnik, Ronald McNair, Ellison S. Onizuka, Gregory B. Jarvis and Ellison S. Onizuka.

In a 20-minute news conference, Hauck praised Discovery's performance. "I'm not sure that we've had a mission that has been this trouble-free with an orbiter before," he said. Lounge was asked what he would say to the two presidential candidates to convince them to support the space program.

"This is a very important flight simply because it's the first step," he said. "I would hope that all of these enthusiasms that we've seen throughout the country for this flight is maintained for the dozens and dozens of flights we have ahead of us if we're going to make this program grow to the point that it needs to grow to get us on the path to the future."

Bentsen campaign serves as reminder to '75 presidency

AUSTIN (AP) — A Democratic U.S. senator from Texas decides to seek national office and re-election at the same time.

The national campaign stresses the economy and jobs. In Texas, a Republican congressman running for the Senate complains about the Democratic senator seeking two offices at once.

Yes, it's Lloyd Bentsen. No, it's not 1976 but the election of 1976, when Bentsen was running for president.

On Feb. 17, 1975, armed with a campaign bank account full of contributions from fellow Texans, first-term Sen. Bentsen announced he was going to be a candidate for the White House.

On July 12, 1988, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis decided on three-term Sen. Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate.

The parallels between Bentsen's 1975 double race and his 1988 dual campaign are striking.

For starters, Republican Rep. Alan Steelman, the 1976 GOP Senate candidate, sounded much like Republican Rep. Beau Boulter does this year.

"He's trying to dance to both 'The Yellow Rose of Texas' and 'Hail to the Chief' at the same time," Steelman said then.

"Any Texan can tell you: a man who tries to ride two horses usually ends up flat on his backside," Boulter said. "Bentsen's two-horse candidacy for two offices on the same ballot raises some serious legal, financial and ethical issues." Bentsen's 1976 response — "I don't think the people of Texas are going to see anything sinister in that" — is virtually the same today as he seeks re-election to a fourth Senate term and election as vice president under the state's "Lyndon Law" allowing such dual candidacies.

Bentsen's main campaign theme in 1976 would sound equally at home shouted on the stump today:

"We can't restore optimism, put people back on payrolls, stop inflation, provide for health care, education, housing and the other concerns of Americans without a reasonable growth in our economy. This must be our No. 1 priority."

And on another familiar-sounding issue, the Texan said that as president he would cut the budget.

"We have to get a handle on government spending," he said.

There is one parallel, however, that Democrats don't want drawn between the two campaigns.

In 1976, Bentsen lost.

He dropped out 51 weeks after starting his presidential bid, settling for re-election to the Senate.

Unlike most candidates who quit a White House race early, money wasn't the problem.

Bentsen spent almost \$2 million during the race and had cash on hand when he gave it up.

Saying he didn't "believe in post-mortems," Bentsen made few public comments about the race.

He said there had been too much polarization in the early caucuses. "I tried to represent the moderates," Bentsen said. "The caucuses attracted the activists."

"I suppose I had some problem establishing identification. I really didn't expect 10 people to be in the race."

John C. White — his friend, 1976 Texas campaign chairman and former Democratic national chairman — says Bentsen was and remains presidential timber.

A big problem, White said, was a strategic decision to skip the early 1976 primaries and caucuses in Iowa, New Hampshire and elsewhere.

"He made a fundamental decision, based on the advice of his campaign people, that he would bypass the early primary and caucus states. His theory was that somebody had to beat (Alabama Gov.) George Wallace and that he could beat him in Florida," White said.

Re-entry of shuttle needs work

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AP) — The Challenger tragedy highlighted the danger of space shuttle launches but astronauts also face risk when their orbiters rip through Earth's atmosphere and plunge toward landing like a streamlining brick, experts say.

"The landing is not as dramatic and exciting as the launch and doesn't involve extremely powerful rockets, but there's no question landing is a very critical operation and requires a great deal of attention," said B. John Garrick, president of a Newport Beach engineering consulting firm.

Discovery is to conclude its four-day mission with a landing Monday morning at 9:33 a.m. PDT. It will swoop across California's coast at 4.37 times the speed of sound, slow to subsonic speeds then drop at a steep angle before leveling out without any power and glide toward touchdown on the unpaved surface of Rogers Dry Lake.

"It comes down like a streamlined brick," said Milt Thompson, chief engineer for NASA's Dryden Flight Research Facility at this Mojave Desert military base, where 18 of 24 previous shuttle missions landed. Five flights landed at Cape Canaveral, Fla., and one at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

Thompson said that while shuttle landings are less dangerous than launches, "there is still an element of risk on whether or not you make this landing properly because a lot of it does rely on the pilot's judgment and you are approaching the ground at an extremely high rate of descent."

The Jan. 28, 1986, explosion that destroyed Challenger and killed seven crew members 73 seconds after liftoff from Florida prompted redesign of faulty shuttle booster rockets and many other changes, including installation of an emergency escape system so astronauts can bail out while approaching the landing site.

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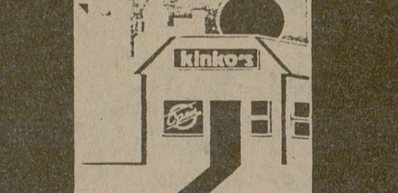
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