

Shuttle studies its jets

82-foot boom measures pressure, heat

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Discovery's astronauts fired their steering jets Sunday at the longest boom ever extended from a space shuttle, an eight-story-tall arm used to measure damage from engine exhaust.

"It's an awesome sight," astronaut Susan Helms said of the 82-foot boom suspended over the shuttle cargo bay.

Instruments at the end of the boom measured the pressure and heat of the jet exhaust as well as contaminants, any of which could ruin solar panels, radiators and other large structures on a space station.

The first shuttle-station docking is scheduled for next May, when Atlantis flies to Russia's Mir. Shuttles also would have to dock frequently with an international space station that's supposed to be built in orbit beginning in 1997.

Helms attached a 32-foot extension to Discovery's 50-foot jointed, mechanical arm to reach the jets on the shuttle's

nose and tail.

Working from the cockpit, Helms swung the boom so the instruments at the tip were in the direct path of the jets' exhaust. At one point, the end of the boom hung 22 feet in front of Discovery's nose.

The experiment was interrupted when Helms ran into the same trouble she experienced Saturday: She lost computer contact with the boom instruments and had to reset a circuit breaker. The crew had to skip a few tail-jet tests because of the time lost. A video camera on the end of the boom captured rare, tip-to-tip views of the shuttle in orbit.

"I'm a big Michigan fan and I was excited to hear Michigan beating Notre Dame yesterday," in football, said astronaut Jerry Linenger, who's from East-pointe, Mich. "But the biggest cheer here was when we got the (boom) picture looking back at the shuttle. We let out a yell.

"The people at that Michigan

game couldn't have yelled any louder than the six of us," he said.

Earlier Sunday, a laser aboard Discovery flashed green pulses at much of the world. The laser light was reflected off clouds, atmospheric pollutants and Earth's surface and back to Discovery, where it was collected by telescope for analysis by scientists studying global climate.

Discovery is flying as far north as Hudson Bay and as far south as Cape Horn in order to cover as much of the atmosphere as possible with the laser, being operated by remote control from Johnson Space Center in Houston.

As of Sunday, NASA still was unsure whether Discovery's laser-data recorder was working. Most of the laser measurements are sent instantaneously to Johnson; the recorder is needed to save the rest.

The nine-day mission is due to end next Sunday. NASA will add a 10th day for science purposes if power permits.

FDA to change drug labels

Agency plans to simplify packaging

ROCKVILLE, Md. (AP) — The Food and Drug Administration is planning to do for nonprescription drugs what it did for packaged foods — simplify their labels by making them easier to read and understand.

Just as the new nutrition labels are helping people figure out what's in their food, the simpler drug labels would help reduce some of the confusion about choosing medication, the agency said Friday.

"People have changed. People are more interested in their health," said Michael Weintraub, director of the FDA office that evaluates over the counter drugs.

"If the consumer is ready to take more control of their health, to learn more about their ailments and how they can treat them ... it's really going to be helpful."

Consumers aren't likely to notice a difference for several

years; changing labels is a protracted process. The FDA will work with its advisory panel to explore various designs, including using pictures, bolder print and less technical language.

The \$11-billion over-the-counter drug manufacturing industry put up little resistance.

"We are committed to good label readability," said William Soller, senior vice president of the Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association. "We're not sitting there saying this shouldn't be done."

Halcion

Continued from Page 2

omitted roughly 30 percent of the bad reactions suffered by healthy Michigan prison inmates. They had been test subjects in the 1972-73 clinical study known as Protocol 321.

Reactions omitted from the study included nervousness, anxiety, paranoia, depression and amnesia, according to the Chronicle.

Although the FDA earlier affirmed Halcion's safety and effectiveness, the drug has been banned in four other countries. British regulators suspended Halcion's license in 1991, citing an insufficient margin of safety. Norway and Argentina banned Halcion in 1991. Brazil did so in 1992.

Victims

Continued from Page 2

Goodwin settled her Halcion lawsuit with its maker, the Upjohn Co., in March for an undisclosed amount of money.

Ms. Goodwin, 56, filed suit in U.S. District Court in June 1993, contending she became psychotic in 1988 after taking Halcion for more than two years.

Papers filed in the lawsuit stated that she had become "paranoid, aggressive, suicidal and totally irrational."

Ms. Goodwin's attorney, Tom Alexander, described the lawsuit's outcome as a "moderate settlement."

He is bound by the same confidentiality agreement Upjohn has used in many of its

Halcion settlements.

A spokesman for the Michigan-based pharmaceutical company said Saturday that it is trying to protect corporate information through such agreements, not deny consumers information.

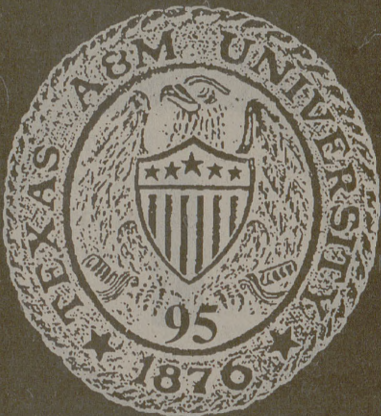
"We feel it is important to protect many of the things that are proprietary information," said Philip Sheldon, the spokesman.

Alexander's client was placed in solitary confinement at Ben Taub Hospital for two days, then transferred to the Harris County Psychiatric Center for two weeks, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit alleged that many of her "irrational and aggressive acts were directed toward her family members, causing them severe mental pain and suffering."

Class of 1995

Committee Positions Available



Pick up applications in the Class of '95 cube in the Student Programs Office located in the MSC

Computing Toolbox

A weekly column dedicated to computing at Texas A&M

The Dorm Wiring Project

During the summer of 1993, Computing and Information Services (CIS), in conjunction with the Student Housing Office, started a pilot project for wiring dormitory rooms with Ethernet connections. This allowed students to use the campus network from their dormitory rooms to access both the campus network and the Internet via Gopher, FTP, Mosaic, etc. The initial project involved Lechner Hall and Clements Hall and consisted of twelve connections in each dormitory. The response was very positive and demand for more connections quickly rose.

The response was so popular during the Spring of 1994 that the project was expanded to include eight dormitories with two Ethernet connections in every room. The eight dormitories that were selected include Spence, Moore, Harrington, Lechner, McFadden, Leggett, Dunn and Keathley Halls. Because asbestos was discovered in the "crawl space" of Hart Hall, thereby precluding the wiring crew of running wires in this area, Spence Hall has recently replaced Hart Hall as a Dorm Wiring Project site. The Student Housing Office chose these dormitories as a sampling of each of the different kinds of dormitories on campus.

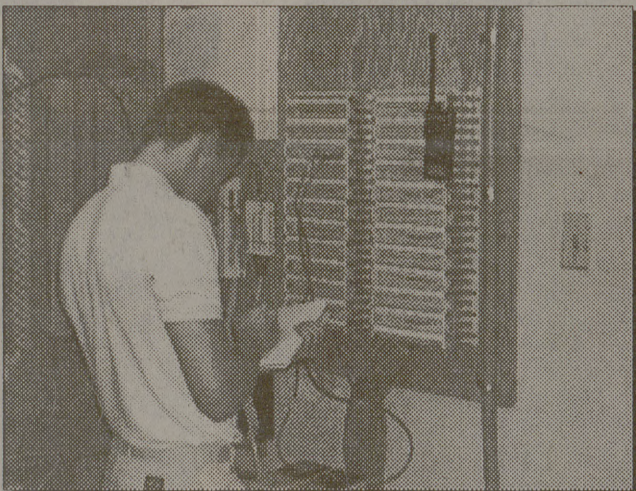
The wiring of these dorms was completed in late August, moments before the arrival of the resident students. All of the connections are twisted-pair Ethernet (10BaseT). The CIS Network Group is building a separate FDDI backbone to accommodate the dormitories. This separate ring will be routed to the main campus FDDI backbone using a dedicated router.

Students will be responsible for providing Ethernet cards for their machines, as well as a connecting cable to connect from their computer to the wall connector. CIS will provide a list of recommended cards for the student to buy. CIS will also provide—free of charge—the necessary software for the more popular platforms. CIS will maintain a support staff to answer student's questions about the installation of software, as well as how to use it. There will be users group meetings scheduled in the dorms for students that use the Ethernet connections.

In conjunction with this project, there will be an increase in the number of high-speed modems that allow greater connectivity to the campus network for students living off-campus or in non-networked dormitories. The CIS Network Group is currently working on a plan for implementing SLIP and PPP on these modems that will provide network level access to the campus network.

If you have any questions about this project you can contact Computing and Information Services Problem and Change Management (PCM) at 845-9254. The Dorm Wiring Project will also have a resource table at the Computing Expo '94, which will be held on Sept. 13, 14, and 15 in the Rudder Tower Exhibit Hall, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. If you have general networking questions there is also a Network Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document available via Gopher: TAMU.EDU and also by anonymous FTP from NET.TAMU.EDU as pub/network/FAQ.

The authors, Chris Trost and David Hess, work in the Network Group of Computing and Information Services.



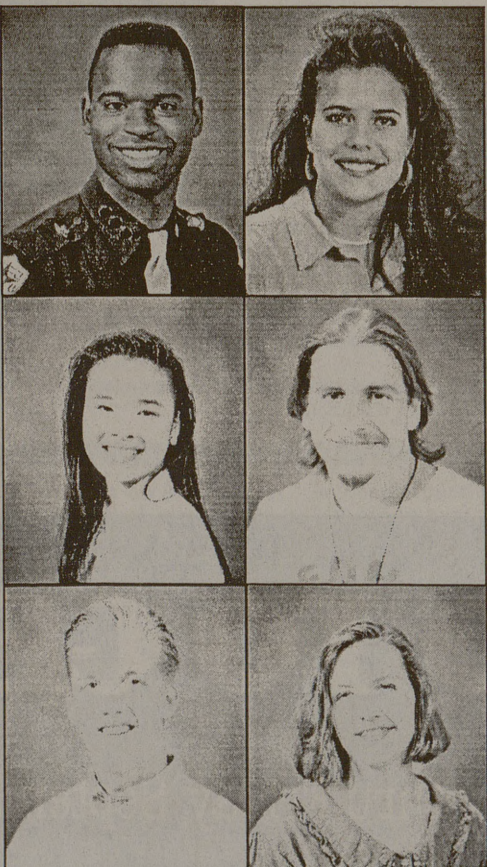
A technician from Teknon, Inc. working on the McFadden Hall dormitory.

Computing Toolbox is published by Computing and Information Services (CIS) at Texas A&M University. Please send comments, topic suggestions, and questions for the Computing Wizard to SUGGEST@TAMU.EDU or call 845-9325. We want your input!

GET A MUG!

AGGIELAND AGGIELAND AGGIELAND AGGIELAND

It's that time again, Ags! So hurry on out and get your picture in the 1995 Aggieland! For only \$1.00, you can beat the rush and be a part of the nation's largest yearbook. From September 5-16, students from EVERY CLASS will be able to get their picture taken at AR Photography, Monday-Friday, 9 to 5. If you didn't pay during registration, bring \$1.00 to 230 Reed McDonald. Don't miss out on your chance to be like these glamorous Aggies. Come on down and get a mug for the 1995 Aggieland!



AR PHOTOGRAPHY is located next to Taco Cabana across from TAMU 707 TEXAS AVE. 693.8183

MAKING A DIFFERENCE... TOGETHER