

# News Digest

By The Associated Press

## 'Cargo of promise' Shuttle lands carrying videos, film

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The space shuttle Atlantis landed safely Tuesday with a cargo of promise: video tapes to help design a U.S. space station, a purified hormone for tests of a new medical treatment, and film that may locate hidden water in drought-ridden Africa.

With mission commander Brewster Shaw at the controls, the shuttle dropped through wispy clouds and landed smoothly on a concrete runway at this desert air base at 3:33 p.m. CST in front of about 6,700 spectators.

It rolled smoothly down the runway before stopping on the center line.

The shuttle's plunge from orbit started when Shaw fired rockets at 3:27 p.m. to slow the craft and drop it from its 218-mile-high orbit in a long blazing glide over the Pacific Ocean.

The seven-member crew's 2.8 million-mile voyage started Nov. 26 with a night launch from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Others on the crew were astronauts Bryan O'Connor, Mary Cleave, Sherwood Spring and Jerry Ross, McDonnell Douglas engineer Charles Walker,

and Mexican astronaut Rodolfo Neri, the first of his nation to fly in space.

Stored aboard Atlantis were miles of video tapes of Ross and Spring as they built large structures of spindly metal struts in the shuttle's open cargo bay during two spacewalks. Scientists believe the construction demonstration will make a major contribution in the design of an American space station planned for the 1990s.

Atlantis also carried samples of a purified hormone that can be used to treat red-blood cell deficiencies, such as anemia. The samples, purified in an electrical process that is more efficient in zero gravity, will be used in animal tests, the first step in winning Food and Drug Administration approval for clinical use.

Walker, on his third spaceflight for McDonnell Douglas, operated the hormone purification device, which he helped design, and said at a news conference from orbit Monday that he achieved "good results."

Shaw said at Monday's news conference that the astronauts took "a whole string" of photographs with a variety of cameras of Africa's drought-stricken Ethiopia and Somalia. Experts plan to examine the photos for surface evidence of water that may be hidden beneath those desert lands, where famine continues to kill.

The astronauts also launched three communications satellites, conducted a variety of crystal-growth experiments, and tested a new auto-pilot system that will enable shuttles to automatically hold position in orbit next to a space station or satellite.

Neri was on board to witness the launch of his country's second communications satellite, the Morelos B, and to conduct several experiments of Mexican design.

The other satellites were launched for RCA and for the Australian government. NASA was paid \$30 million for the launch services.

## In Brief

### City Council approves bond issue

LINCOLN — The Lincoln City Council voted 6-0 to issue \$12 million in bonds before the end of the year for a proposed downtown redevelopment project.

The bonds will be issued as soon as possible, without a bond rating, to ensure they are placed on the market before Dec. 31, an aide to Mayor Roland Luedtke said Monday.

Luedtke had urged the council to issue the bonds quickly because Congress is considering tax changes that could end tax-exempt status for the bonds.

If the tax change is approved, the city would save \$3 million in interest over 20 years by issuing the bonds immediately rather than waiting, said Lincoln Finance Director Jack Vavra.

Developers have presented plans to redevelop a six-block area of downtown at a cost that could exceed \$100 million.

### Rulo defendants file insanity motions

FALLS CITY — Three men charged in the murders of two people at a survivalist farm near Rulo will rely on the defense of insanity or diminished capacity, according to court motions filed in Richardson County District Court.

Because of the motions, the court may order up to three psychiatric examinations of each defendant. Results will be submitted to prosecution and defense attorneys.

One of the defendants, Michael Ryan, 37, is charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of James Thimm, 26, and 5-year-old Luke Stice. Ryan's son, Dennis, 16, and Timothy Haverkamp, 23, are charged with one count each of first-degree murder in Thimm's death.

The defendants have pleaded innocent. All three are undergoing psychiatric examinations, defense attorney Rodney Rehm of Lincoln said Tuesday.

The bodies of Thimm and young Stice were found in unmarked graves on the farm Aug. 18. Authorities said Thimm was killed April 30 and the boy on March 25. Michael Ryan is the reputed leader of a survivalist group that lived on the farm.

### Suspension looms for Gen. Dynamics

WASHINGTON — The General Dynamics Corp., the nation's third largest defense contractor indicted Monday on fraud charges tied to the ill-fated Sgt. York anti-aircraft gun, will likely be suspended from receiving new defense contracts, a ranking Navy official disclosed Tuesday.

The official, who asked not to be named, said Pentagon attorneys began working on a suspension order early Tuesday morning. The official said decisions were required on a number of points before the order could be released, including the length of the suspension and its precise scope.

At the White House, meanwhile, spokesman Larry Speakes said President Reagan believes NASA administrator James M. Beggs, indicted along with the company, his former employer, "will do the right and proper thing as far as his government service."

The 39-page indictment said \$7.5 million was mischarged, resulting in a \$3.2 million net loss to the government.

The indictment was the latest in more than a year of government accusations of improper billings and bribery by the nation's third-largest defense contractor.

### Senators continue Commonwealth lobby

OMAHA — Sen. Don Wesely said Tuesday that he and other Lincoln legislators will push ahead with a proposal to give Commonwealth Savings Co. depositors an extra \$12 million.

Wesely said he and his colleagues would continue to lobby for the \$12 million plan because they believe the state has a moral obligation to pay it.

However, Wesely and Sen. Rex Haberman of Imperial said there was virtually no chance that the Legislature would approve spending that amount because of depressed state revenues.

Wesely, Haberman and Sen. Vard Johnson of Omaha said they considered a proposal to merge Commonwealth into Occidental Nebraska Federal Savings Co. the best deal for the depositors.

Commonwealth, a Lincoln industrial savings company, was closed on Nov. 1, 1983.

Wesely supported a bill in the 1985 Legislature that would have paid Commonwealth depositors the \$12 million as a settlement for a claim against the state. That plan failed, but senators approved a separate \$8.5 million payment for depositors.

Haberman said the Occidental proposal filed Monday "stops" the \$12 million proposal backed by Wesely.

### Strike, protests paralyze Bhopal

BHOPAL, India — A general strike paralyzed this central Indian city Tuesday and thousands of angry protesters filled the streets on the second day of demonstrations marking the first anniversary of the Union Carbide gas leak that killed more than 2,000 people.

Hundreds of effigies of the American chemical company's chairman were set ablaze Tuesday night.

Marches and rallies were conducted in at least five other Indian cities, including New Delhi and Calcutta, commemorating the leak of methyl isocyanate gas that killed more than 2,000 people in Bhopal — most of them slum dwellers — and injured 300,000 others.

About 4,000 demonstrators swarmed outside the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, demanding that the plant be permanently closed before another disaster occurs. More than 1,000 riot police guarded the plant.

"Our struggle will be alive as long as we have life in our bodies and sensation in our toes," Abid Rizvi, a textile union leader, told protesters outside the plant. Many in the crowd were crying.

Security was tightened at all Union Carbide plants in India.

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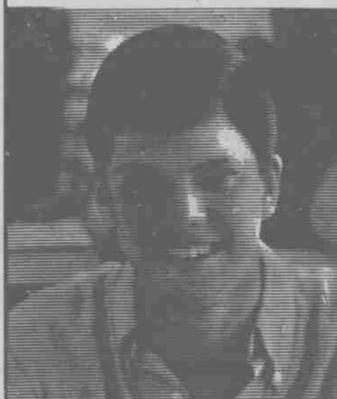
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