

Shuttle astronauts successfully receive Air Force signals

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — After four days of trying, Discovery's astronauts received laser signals Sunday that were beamed up at them from Florida by the Defense Department.

The lime-colored light signals, which contained navigation data, were sent from an Air Force facility in Palm Bay.

"The green laser was clearly visible, visually and through the camera," said shuttle commander David Walker. "Whatever they've done to change the laser on the ground has fixed our problem."

Operators of the Palm Bay station had replaced the laser transmitter before firing Sunday's test beams. The old transmitter had been operating at just 20 percent of normal power, said Dave Hess, a spokesman for the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center.

The next two laser tests failed, however, one because of bad weather and the other for unknown reasons.

Until Sunday, bad weather at laser stations scattered throughout the United States had thwarted the Army experiment. Fourteen laser tests had been scheduled through Sunday, four of which were scrapped because of clouds, rain or snow and two that were attempted but spoiled by clouds.

The Army wanted to see if lasers could relay navigation data from the ground to space. Such information currently is transmitted via radio, which is more susceptible to enemy detection.

"The concept has been proved" as a result of Sunday's success, Hess said.



Patches of life

Julia Mikolajcik/DN

The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt visited Omaha this weekend. Only about 5 percent of the quilt's 22,128 panels were displayed in the Omaha Civic Auditorium. An estimated 4,200 people visited the exhibit Saturday and many more were expected for Sunday.

Whittier houses band, business, brine shrimp

By Ted Taylor
Staff Reporter

One year ago, the Whittier Building was the home for three small businesses that needed affordable space to help them get started.

The former junior high school, located at 22nd and W streets, still provides space for those businesses — plus a home for brine shrimp, a stage for a local band and a gymnasium for the UNL Fencing Team, among other things.

The building was built during the 1920s and was the first facility in the United States that was specifically designed for junior high students. In 1980, the Lincoln Public School District proclaimed the school obsolete, and it remained vacant until the University of Nebraska-Lincoln purchased it in 1983.

Henry Baumgarten, interim associate vice chancellor for research at UNL, said the original goal was to have a place where a small business in Nebraska could get started.

But since UNL bought the building, the users have been diverse, he said.

The Nebraska Technological Development Corporation runs the building and, in a joint program with UNL and the University Foundation, rents the building out to anyone in need of space for an activity.

"Any sort of activity that will not cost us anything and provides a good social purpose will be considered," Baumgarten said. "We wouldn't allow anything we thought to be dangerous or something that would make the university community feel uncomfortable."

At one point, the College of Journalism considered moving into the building. But Will Norton, dean of the college, said those plans were abandoned because of the building's distance from campus and the extensive renovation costs needed to make it suitable for the college's needs.

But for many other university departments and private businesses, Whittier is ideal.

The university's Agriculture Research Service has taken out a five-year lease and will be paying \$250,000 in renovations for its entomology lab, which should be finished in November, Baumgarten said.

The university animal care service labs and offices also call Whittier home, as well as the Sirge snow and ice research group, which analyzes

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— Baumgarten
interim associate vice chancellor for research at UNL

snow and ice from Greenland. A statewide organization called Epscor, which distributes grants from several agencies to the faculty, has its main office in Whittier.

Private businesses also are filtering into the old classrooms of Whittier.

Aquatic Productions International, a business that produces brine shrimp, which are fed to tropical fish, has used the Whittier Building for the past four and a half years, said Jim Rosowski, a biology professor at UNL. Rosowski is one of five faculty members who started the business.

"It's been an ideal place for us," Rosowski said. "We had to do some rewiring and insulating, but we would have had to do that to any building," he said.

Baumgarten said businesses renting space in the building had to pay for their own renovations.

"When we bought it, we had a set amount set aside to pay for some basic safety requirements like smoke alarms and a sprinkler system," Baumgarten said.

However, not all of the building is heated. The unheated portion is used mainly for storage, he said.

Other Whittier renters include the Lincoln Fencing Club, which uses the gymnasium for its meetings, a local band, which uses the band room, a small accounting firm and a business called Eidos, which makes aircraft equipment that allows people to work on the underside of airplanes.

"We want the building to become a true incubator facility where businesses can start up and eventually stay here in Nebraska," Baumgarten said.

But university programs probably will continue to use Whittier as well, because there is no other place for some of them.

"It would be ideal for the state to take care of the university functions with a university building, but they don't have the money right now," Baumgarten said.

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