

Challenger explodes after liftoff

Back Mountain mourns tragedy

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

Residents of the Back Mountain area joined an entire nation in shock and dismay over the tragic explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger yesterday morning at Cape Canaveral.

and the reactions were no different in the Back Mountain.

"It was absolutely horrifying, absolutely terrible," Henry Doran of Shavertown said. "I was shocked when I heard it."

"I felt so bad about it, especially those school children who were watching their teacher go up into space," Pam Walsh of Lake Silkworth stated.

Added Lois Ide of Dallas, "I'm just so devastated. I felt so sorry for those children. But it's just a setback, although I can't see anyone volunteering for another mission. I think we should continue with the program, but I think we're trying to do too much in too short a time. We should space them out a little more and be

extremely careful."

John Cawley of the Back Mountain also agreed that the program may be proceeding at too brisk a pace and feels officials should be more responsible in regard to each mission.

"I think it was carelessness," Cawley said. "So many things were going wrong, they were having so much trouble with it. They should just be more careful. I'm no technician, but if something's not going right, you should check it out thoroughly. There are so many lives at stake."

Still, there were other opinions. "I don't know if God is giving us a message or what," Margot Stage of Centermoreland said. "I think

he might be telling us to stay on the ground. I never thought much about the program. I think we are wasting a lot of money. Instead of spending it on trying to send people into space, we should give it to the needy people of the world."

Still, most people felt the programs should continue despite the setback.

"I think we should definitely continue with the program," Doran said. "We had a tragedy like this before — in 1967 — I believe. But, overall it is good for the world. Airlines have tragedies with 300 or 600 people getting killed. It is an awful way to say it, but these things do happen."

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Killing being probed

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

Authorities investigating last week's shooting death of a 19-year-old Dallas Township youth say it may be another two weeks before they can proceed any further to determine the manner of death.

Henry C. Tuck IV, Box 65 A, Country Club Road, RD 5, died last Friday as a result of a shotgun blast to the back at close range. The gun was allegedly fired by his 15-year-old brother, Andrew, who was the only other person in the house at the time. Police are still trying to establish whether the incident was accidental or not and have not yet released any details of the mishap.

"We know how he was killed, but now we're trying to determine the manner," Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers said. "We talked to his (Tuck's) father and brother (Andrew), and we also want to talk to another individual who appeared at the scene later." Miers did not say who the third individual is.

Luzerne County Coroner Dr. George E. Hudock Jr. had planned to meet yesterday with investigating authorities, but the case has been forwarded to ballistics. Now, Hudock says it will probably be about two weeks before anything further will develop as to whether the shooting was accidental or not.

The incident first came to light Friday morning when authorities said they received a phone call at 9:53 a.m. from Andrew Tuck who informed them of the shooting.

When they arrived, police said they found Tuck's body lying on its side in the hallway of the one-story home.

Tuck's father, Henry Tuck Jr., of 59 East 42nd St., Dallas, said Andrew told him he accidentally shot his brother with a gun he borrowed from a friend. "He said, 'the gun just slipped,'" the elder Tuck stated.

According to investigators, Tuck was killed with a Savage over-under 20-gauge shotgun.

Luzerne County District Attorney Bernard Podcasy stated no charges would be filed against the youth at this time and, as is the procedure of the DA's office with all shootings, it will be listed as suspicious.

Tuck was pronounced dead at his home late Friday morning by Chief Deputy Coroner Joseph M. Shaver who ruled that he had died of a close-range shotgun blast to the left back.

Tuck was born in Wilkes-Barre, the son of Henry C. Tuck Jr. of Dallas and the former Janet L. Shaver of Dallas.

He was a 1985 graduate of Dalas High School where he was a writer for the school newspaper. Tuck was also a drummer for the local rock band "Ragged Edge," and was employed by the Mercy Center at College Misericordia.

Memorial services were held Monday from the Shavertown United Methodist Church.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Slow moving traffic

Traffic was moving rather throughout the Back Mountain Sunday and Monday as the second major snowstorm of the season dumped anywhere from six to 10 inches of snow on the region. Here, traffic makes its way through the intersection at Dallas Corners.

Plans made for special school week

Gate of Heaven School, Dallas, is currently making final preparations for its celebration of Catholic Schools Week. This year the theme is "Rainbow of Excellence." On Monday, Senator Charles Lemmond will officially open the week of festivities. His address to students, faculty, and staff will be accompanied by a release of balloons. Parents are invited to visit the school on Tuesday. That evening, the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade will exhibit projects at the Science Fair. The following day has been declared "Teacher Appreciation Day." To show appreciation of faculty members, students from grades 1 to 8 will perform in a talent show. Thursday is "Student Appreciation Day" with students dressing in vibrant colors of the rainbow. A delicious lunch will be served, and a movie will be shown to entertain the children. Sports Night will also be held in the gym to commemorate the special day. Catholic Schools Week Mass will be offered on Friday at 9 a.m. Shortly thereafter, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students will participate in a Summit meeting. Highlight of the afternoon will be a Reading Assembly. Sr. Davida, principal, will also announce the winner of the girls' free throw contest that was conducted throughout the week. Culminating the week of activities is a dance from 7 to 10 p.m. in the school gym featuring disc jockey Ron Reino.

The Gate of Heaven PTG is sponsoring a "Mardi Gras" dance, Saturday, Feb. 8 (9 p.m. to 1 a.m.) with music and fun by Terry McNulty.



Campaign started

College Misericordia recently launched its annual fund drive with a kick-off luncheon at the Sheraton-Crossgates in Wilkes-Barre. Principals attending the kick-off are shown here. From left, seated, Mary Beth Garey Brady, Attorney Murray Ufberg, Dr. Joseph Fink, college president. Standing, Dr. Bruce Wilson, dean of institutional advancement; Glenn Forney, Richard Galloway, and Father John Bendik, master of ceremonies. The campaign continues throughout February.

CTC employees accept new three-year labor agreement

Commonwealth Telephone Company union employees voted recently to accept a new three year labor agreement. The union employees, represented by the Communications Workers of America, have been working under an extension of the old agreement since its expiration on November 30, 1985.

"We are very pleased with the contract ratification," said Jack H. Thomas, executive vice president of Commonwealth Telephone Enterprises Telephone Group. "This new agreement will provide Commonwealth with the flexibility to meet the demands of a changing communications environment. The economic settlement is well within the negotiation patterns occurring in our industry today."

The contract, which was ratified by a 215 or 68 vote, overcomes many of the stumbling blocks preventing acceptance of a contract offer presented December 6. The terms of the new agreement

include:

- A 4 percent increase each year of the three year contract retroactive to December 1, 1985;
- Cross training for cross-utilization of certain craft positions;
- Several upgraded job positions;
- An improved early retirement plan which allows for retirement at age 55 with 15 years of service;
- An increase in the evening and night shift differential payment from \$.35 per hour to \$.70 per hour;
- An increase in the major medical lifetime coverage maximum for \$500,000 - \$600,000;
- Orthodontia coverage has been added to the group dental plan;
- Elimination of the \$5 deductible for in-patient hospital care, as well as other improvements to the health insurance plans;
- Employee cost sharing of health care expenses by contributing 3, 4 and 5 percent in each of the next three years, respectively, toward the insurance premium each year of the contract;

- A modification to the contracting provision which allows Commonwealth to contract work for short term pole and cable maintenance projects within its franchised area;

- The ability of the company to make promotions, demotions and transfers by seniority and relative qualifications and or skills.

The company and the union resolved the issue related to the utilization of craft employees from Commonwealth Communications within the telephone company's franchised territories. Commonwealth Communications provides business communications systems and services throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

Due to significantly increasing medical insurance costs, the company and the union agreed to form a health care cost containment committee comprised of management and labor representatives. This committee will explore ways to combat this cost which is currently rising at twice the rate of inflation.

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

Auto salesman is spared by gunman

Chuck Davis is a proudly professed born-again Christian who has found new life in Jesus Christ. And last week he nearly got a chance to meet Him.

Davis, a Dallas resident, was the on-duty salesman who was recently held up by an armed gunman at the Dallas Auto Sales building on the Luzerne/Dallas Memorial Highway.

Indeed, the experience was such a harrowing ordeal that it left him quoting scripture that would have made his maker proud.

"The Lord is the rock of my salvation," Davis said. "And last night, He was with me. That's when you find out if you're saved or you ain't saved. It just wasn't my time. But when he pulled that gun on me I thought, 'Wow! Lord, Jesus, I'm coming home!'"

The incident occurred last Wednesday night between 6:15 and 6:45 when Davis was sitting in the office.

"I was inside watching TV when this guy walked in and said he wanted to see the Chevette that was on the lot," Davis explained. "So we

walked down to the car. I got in and started it up and the next thing I knew he was holding a gun over me. It looked like a .38 or a .357, but I'm not sure.

"Then he said, 'Give me all your -- money.' I said, 'I don't have any money,' and he said, 'All you guys have money. Give me it.'"

The robber then looked through Davis' wallet and eventually made off with \$550 the auto salesman did have in his money clip from a sale he had made earlier. The usual procedure is to deposit the money, but since the bank was closed, Davis planned to take it there the next morning.

"After he took the money he said, 'I ought to blow your -- head off,'" Davis continued. "But then he just took off. I knew this wasn't any time to play hero. Then I called the owner (of the automobile dealership) and the Dallas police."

Police said the suspect is anywhere from 5'8" to 6'0" tall. He has sandy hair and was wearing blue jeans, a gray sweater and a ski cap. He reportedly fled on foot through a cemetery and wooded area.

Another AIDS case at SCID

For the second time in the past three months a prisoner at the State Correctional Institute at Dallas has been tested positive for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

The inmate, who has not been identified, is currently being treated at the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital where he has been upgraded from serious to fair condition. He has been a patient there since Jan. 17.

It marks the second time in the last three months that a confirmed case of AIDS has been diagnosed at the Chase facility. The first reported illness occurred in November. That inmate later died in December.

The disease, for which there is no known cure, attacks the body's immune system, leaving it vulnerable to a number of infections. It is usually associated with people who engage in homosexual activities or who are intravenous drug users.

According to Thomas Figmick, administrative assistant to the superintendent at the prison, the inmate had been incarcerated at Dallas since October, 1985. It is believed he caught the disease before he came to Chase.

Prior to his transfer to the hospital, he had been isolated in the prison's infirmary for about a week.

A while back it was believed that the institution would house patients from all over the state with AIDS or ARC (Aids related Complex). But Chase officials said inmates with the disease will continue to be treated at prison's throughout the state rather than at one institution.

— JOHN HOINSKI

Pro-Lifers march in D.C.

A group of Pro-Life activists from the Back Mountain area joined forces with thousands of other anti-abortion demonstrators in Washington last week in an attempt to overturn a landmark decision to legalize abortion.

The law, which was passed by the Supreme Court in 1973, has since been so vigorously opposed by Pro-Life advocates that marchers from all over the country converge

annually on January 22 at the nation's capitol in an effort to have the bill rescinded.

Last Wednesday, 36 members from the Back Mountain joined in that effort as they left from the Gate of Heaven elementary school and College Misericordia early that morning. The group departed at 6 a.m. and arrived in Washington at noon on the ellipse of the White

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