

## Leading history

Black history month person of the day

Charles Richard Drew was born June 3, 1904, in Washington, D.C. He attended Amherst College on a scholarship, earning MVP honors in football and graduating in 1926.

Drew earned a Rockefeller fellowship in 1938 to study at Columbia University and discovered that the plasma in blood could be dried and stored without degrading. He used this discovery to begin "banking blood" for later use.

Drew earned a doctor of science in 1940, becoming the first black to receive the degree. During

World War II, he was named medical supervisor of blood for Britain, and his development of "bloodmobiles" was credited with saving the lives of thousands of soldiers.

The American Red Cross took over Drew's operation in America and named him the director of the first Red Cross blood bank in 1941. At the time, however, blood from blacks and whites was segregated, and Drew resigned in protest of such discrimination.

Drew died in 1950 at age 45, after a car accident.  
—Michael J. Kleckner

## Investigation

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His account suggested that the evidence so far points to a breach in the heat protection system along Columbia's left side, particularly on the left wing, which was hit during liftoff by insulating foam from an external fuel tank.

Speculation is now focusing on the possibility that crucial thermal insulating tiles along that wing were damaged or lost during liftoff, flight or re-entry.

"We're piecing together the puzzle and we are beginning to make progress," Dittmore told a news conference at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Still, he cautioned against a rush to judgment, saying that engineers were looking at many possible causes of the accident and that it was far too early to draw any conclusions.

"I don't have a smoking gun," he said. "I don't have a root cause ... I haven't ruled out anything."

Columbia disintegrated 39 miles over Texas as it streaked toward a landing Saturday morning at Cape Canaveral, Fla.

As NASA began collecting information, a grieving nation struggled to absorb the loss of Columbia and its seven astronauts.

"We grieve because they represented the best in us, because part of us has died," the Rev. Luis Leon told President Bush, his wife, Laura, and other congregants at St. John's Episcopal Church, a block from the White House.

The White House announced that Bush would attend a memorial service Tuesday at the Johnson Space Center near Houston.

Rep. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., who was briefed by NASA late Saturday, said the discovery of body parts on the ground suggested that the crew compartment probably remained relatively intact during the accident, though it apparently was breached by debris and sustained rapid, catastrophic depressurization.

In Washington, NASA announced the appointment of what it called the Space Shuttle Mishap Interagency Investigation Board, naming as chairman retired Navy Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr.

The space agency also has assembled an in-house board of inquiry.

"Our objective is to find out what caused this, fix it and make sure that we support the dream, the vision that those folks gave their lives to," NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe said on CBS' "Face the Nation." "We're securing all the debris and assuring that we look at every possible angle."

He and other NASA officials said it was premature to speculate about the possibility that an errant piece of insulation foam from the shuttle's external fuel tank might have fatally damaged thermal heat tiles on Columbia's left wing.

The budget President Bush will send Congress on Monday will include a \$469 million increase in funding for NASA, lifting the agency's total budget to \$15.5 billion for fiscal 2004, according to a senior administration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

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