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NASA's beloved seven



U.S. Navy PN2 Stephen Escalante looks at a group photograph at a memorial service for the crew of the space shuttle Columbia on Tuesday in Houston. Erich Schlegel Dallas Morning News (KRT)

A heroic memorial

At a memorial for the seven Columbia astronauts, Bush offered support to the families, fellow workers and NASA

Ron Hutcheson and Shawn Windsor
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

HOUSTON — Standing before the weeping relatives of the lost shuttle astronauts, President Bush on Tuesday invoked their memory with a vow that "America's space program will go on."

Bush made the commitment to an emotional audience of more than 10,000 NASA workers and contractors who gathered at the space agency's headquarters for a tearful farewell to the seven astronauts of the space shuttle Columbia. Despite the size of the crowd, the memorial felt more like a private chapel service, as NASA workers shared anecdotes about their co-workers who died Saturday morning when the shuttle broke up over Texas.

Bush said the seven astronauts fulfilled "an ancient dream of humanity" by leaving behind "Earth and air and gravity" in a quest for knowledge.

"This cause of exploration and discovery is not an option we choose; it is a desire written in the human heart," he said.

His reaffirmation of support for the space program was a comforting message to a crowd with an intensely personal interest in Saturday's disaster. Bush and his wife, Laura, sat among more than two dozen relatives of the fallen astronauts.

Other audience members laughed knowingly when Navy Capt. Kent Rominger, the chief of the astronaut corps, offered a series of anecdotes about all seven astronauts. He recalled the shuttle crew's high-spirited antics at the last NASA holiday party, when they slapped temporary tattoos with the mission's identifying designation — STS-107 — on anyone who came near their table.

"The world lost seven heroes. We lost seven family members," Rominger said. Addressing his departed colleagues by name, he added: "I know you're listening. Please know you're in our hearts. We will always smile when we think of you."

Seventeen years ago, NASA hosted a similar remembrance for the crew of the space shuttle Challenger, which exploded over Florida shortly after take-off. NASA administrator Sean O'Keefe promised a thorough investigation of the most recent accident "to make sure it never happens again."

Outside the gates of NASA's headquarters, hundreds of other people held their own makeshift memorial service.

"We love our astronauts here just as they love their firemen in New York," said Kathryn Lott, a Clear Lake resident who came on her lunch break. While some mourners placed flowers or read poems, others simply milled about.

"Every person coming out here has some type of hurt," said Gene Grounds, the director of Victim Chaplain, a Dallas-based Baptist disaster-relief organization.

John Cobarruvias brought his 8-year-old son, David, who was dressed in a blue astronaut flight suit. Cobarruvias couldn't explain why he had come.

"Hard to explain," said the NASA computer analyst.

Bush, who paid tribute to each of the seven astronauts individually, said they faced the risks of their work with joy.

"Yet, some explorers do not return. And the loss settles unfairly on a few," Bush said. "To the children who miss your Mom or Dad so much today, you need to know, they love you, and that love will always be with you."

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EPD issues citations at fraternity

Five University students received alcohol-related citations Saturday at Sigma Nu fraternity, a chapter not endorsed by the University or Greek Life Office

Caron Alarab
Crime/Safety/Transportation Reporter

Eugene Police Department officers issued alcohol-related citations to five University students Feb. 1 at a party held at Sigma Nu fraternity. Sigma Nu is one of two fraternities not recognized by the University's Greek Life Office because of disagreements with current endorsement standards. As a result, it will not face disciplinary sanctions.

Junior Spencer Miles, house president, received citations for an unlabeled keg and for furnishing to minors, while four other individuals received minor in possession citations.

As of Dec. 15, 2002, Sigma Nu became disaffiliated with the Greek system after refusing to abide by University requirements — including substance- and alcohol-free housing.

"They should be anticipating hard times after this incident," Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Anne Leavitt said, "even if they're not in the Greek system."

According to EPD reports, freshman Ashley Blodgett was stopped late Friday night while walking east-bound on East 11th Avenue because she appeared to be intoxicated. The officers issued the 18-year-old an MIP, and Blodgett eventually directed them to Sigma Nu, located at 763 East 11th Ave.

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Officials avoid additional cuts, affix surcharge

With the failure of Measure 28 and a \$6.1 million shortfall, the University is implementing a \$10 charge per credit and more 'belt tightening'

Jan Montry
City/State Politics Reporter

University officials will begin implementing their plan to balance the budget this year, using a combination of surcharges and budget reductions to avoid cuts to classes or faculty after the failure of Measure 28.

The plan, which was developed in collaboration with student leaders, will impose a \$10 per credit surcharge for winter and spring terms to deal with a majority of the \$6.1-million shortfall. The remaining \$2.1-million void will be filled by "belt tightening"

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WEATHER

Today: High 47, Low 25,
Mostly cloudy, areas of fog

Thursday: High 48, Low 23,
Partly cloudy, then sunny

LOOKING AHEAD

Thursday
Mecca members turn common trash into works of artistic wonder

Friday
The Oregon cheerleading squad heads to national competition

Students to observe black history month

The Black Student Union will be hosting various events, such as a fashion show and ball to commemorate black culture

Ayisha Yahya
Freelance Editor

Two hundred years ago, some students, such as senior Erica Tucker, may have been breaking their backs working in cotton fields. Seventy years ago, they may have been in school, but in separate classrooms, segregated from their white neighbors. Forty years ago, they may have joined the civil rights marches, demanding equal rights for all American citizens.

Today, they walk through the hallways of universities around the nation, actively taking part in academic and social spheres of institutions

and communities, a sign of how much has changed for black people in America.

February is Black History Month. It is a time to celebrate these changes and to recognize black people — from the well-known likes of Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois and Rosa Parks to the simple men and women whose names never graced the history books — and their contributions to American society.

Tucker, a psychology major and co-director of the University's Black Student Union, said it is imperative to acknowledge what black people have done for America, not just in February, but every day.

"We are everywhere," Tucker said. "Teachers, doctors, civil rights activists — we can do anything other people do."

Black Women of Achievement co-Director Mary Kuto has similar sentiments.

"I think it's important, because being on a campus where we're minorities, we want to show there are positive African Americans," Kuto said. She added that it is vital to appreciate history and the advancements that have been made.

Tucker said BSU tries to create awareness about black culture through its programs and outreach activities. To celebrate the month, the group will post the names of black leaders and innovators, whose contributions may or may not be well-known, in its office in the EMU.

The club also will host a black heritage ball and a black achievement night to honor

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