

SPACE SHUTTLE COLUMBIA DISASTER: SIX FULL PAGES OF COVERAGE

The Idaho Statesman

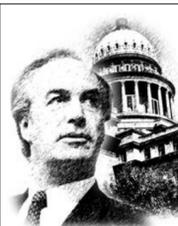
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TAX PLAN

What does Gov. Dirk Kempthorne have in mind for this session? How will his plan to raise taxes play with voters? Questions and answers from the governor.
IN LOCAL

High-tech firms hope for reprieve

Many tech firms in the Treasure Valley are treading water and waiting for an economic rebound.
Business, page 1

Thousands turn out for McCall carnival

Candy and carnival beads filled the air in McCall Saturday at the annual Mardi Gras Grand Parade.
Local, page 1

Neighbors support Highlands project

Unlike many developments, a mixed-use project proposed for Bogus Basin Road has won support from neighbors — some of whom say the process the developer followed could be a model for projects in the future.
Local, page 1

'Madame Butterfly' comes to Idaho

On Friday, Opera Idaho will present one of the world's best-known and most emotionally cathartic operas.
Life, page 1

Car possibly used in shooting is found

Caldwell police now have the car believed to be connected to a shooting Friday night, but their suspect in the shooting was still at large late Saturday.
Local, page 1

Night skiing is over at Bogus, for now

Saturday marked the last hurrah for night skiers at Bogus Basin until the resort gets significantly more snow, spokeswoman Gretchen Anderson said Saturday.
Local, page 1

Leaders draft road project wish list

Treasure Valley leaders created a wish list earlier this week for Idaho's congressional delegation as they and other lawmakers embark upon doling out federal funds for projects.
Local, page 7

National, international news

- Bush budget would add funds for IRS to pursue tax offenders, **Main 16**
- Oregon's budget shortfall forces layoffs of troopers, **Main 10**
- Poll: U.S. support for war with Iraq rose after Bush's speech, **Main 17**

WEATHER
Partly sunny

High 42
Low 26

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"Our journey into space will go on."

President Bush
Feb. 1, 2003

Crew of the Columbia



Space Shuttle Columbia crew, left to right, front row, Rick Husband, Kalpana Chawla and William McCool; back row, David Brown, Laurel Clark, Michael Anderson and Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon are shown in this undated crew photo.
The Associated Press

Silence in space: No data, no voices foretell the loss of Columbia

By Paul Recer
The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Again and again and again Mission Control called, first on one radio channel and then on another. But from space there was only a silence that stretched on until there was no hope.

Their voices remained calm, professional, despite growing evidence that space shuttle Columbia and its seven astronauts were in great trouble in their long fall from orbit toward a landing at the Kennedy Space Center.

Observers in California, Texas and Arkansas reported seeing flashes of light, perhaps from burning debris, as the winged spacecraft streaked overhead. But the experts in Mission Control at first were seeing only routine data, streaming to Earth as millions of electronic bits.

Suddenly, there was a dramatic change in temperature readings. And then silence. No data. No radio voices. No radar tracking. And, soon, no hope.

Columbia was traveling at more than 16,400 miles an hour as it approached the California coast in a high-speed descent shortly before 9 a.m. EST.

There was no communication from the astronauts at the time. Typically for

a return from space, the spacecraft commander Rick Husband and pilot William McCool would sit in the control seat, surrounded by elaborate controls including computer screens.

Just behind, at McCool's right shoulder, would be Laurel Blair Salton Clark, a physician. And behind both the pilot and commander would be astronaut Kalpana Chawla. In a tight compartment below the cockpit would be the other three astronauts — Michael P. Anderson, David M. Brown and Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut.

Public affairs announcer James Hartsfield, speaking to the outside world from a microphone inside Mission Control, calmly ticked through the landing routine, calling off speed and altitude and distance to the runway.

Hartsfield told how the spacecraft, flying on autopilot, started the first of a series of banked maneuvers, designed to slow the craft as it entered the increasingly thick atmosphere.

At 8:53 a.m., engineers in Mission Control noticed a sudden loss of temperature readings in the hydraulic system in the left wing. Somehow, the temperature sensors were no longer sending data.

Three minutes later, signals dropped from the temperature sensors in the left

main landing gear. Mission Control sent a notice to a cockpit electronic screen about the temperature readings.

Milt Heflin, chief flight director, said the crew acknowledged the signal, but it was thought "there was no problem at that time." Such temperature reading losses have been seen before.

Hartsfield continued with routine landing reports, noting that the speeding craft was streaking across the New Mexico-Texas border at an altitude of 40 miles and a speed of 13,200 mph.

Columbia, he said, was only 1,400 miles and less than 20 minutes from landing.

There was a muffled blurt on the radio from the crew. Capsule communicator Charlie Hobaugh broke a long silence by calling to the crew.

"Columbia, Houston," he said, "We see your tire pressure message, and we did not copy your last."

"Roger," Husband said. "Uh, huh—" The communication was cut abruptly, the final word never finished. It was followed by static.

See Silence on page 2

At IdahoStatesman.com
Check for continuous updates throughout the day



Idaho teacher in chase plane as Columbia explodes

It was Barbara Morgan's worst nightmare repeating itself — reminiscent of when she was Christa McAuliffe's teacher-in-space backup for the fatal Challenger flight Jan. 28, 1986. "I'm sure her mind went back to 17 years ago," her husband, Clay Morgan, said from their home in Houston.
Main 6

INVESTIGATION



It's too soon to say why the space shuttle Columbia exploded, but early signs suggest a heat problem enveloped the left wing and side of the spacecraft before it disintegrated. **Main 2**

HISTORY OF NASA



Milestones and other notable events in the U.S. history of human space exploration, since the first American astronaut and President Kennedy's declaration. **Main 3**

THE FUTURE



NASA is extremely unlikely to build a new space shuttle to replace Columbia, according to experts, leaving the three remaining orbiters as its fleet for the foreseeable future. **Main 3**

BIOGRAPHIES



The seven people who died came from diverse backgrounds, with families on three continents and experiences on submarines, in the Air Force and in the circus. **Main 4-5**

REACTION



The explosion stunned people waiting to watch the space shuttle's landing at Cape Canaveral, and it revived sorrowful memories of the loss of the shuttle Challenger 17 years ago. **Main 6**