A Search for Meaning In Disaster's Wake

Members of the Maryland State Board of Education were meeting in Baltimore when they heard the news that the shuttle Challenger had exploded.

"There was a kind of shock that I had never seen before, not in either of the Kennedys assassinations, not in any catastrophe that we have ever experienced," said Gun Crenson, the board's director of communications.

Kathy Roksay, a 3rd-grade teacher in Elyria, Ohio, had taken her class from the East Gate Elementary School to NASA's Lewis Research Center in Cleveland. There the class of 30 watched the launch on a huge screen in a room ringed with six television monitors.

After the explosion and a "dead silence in the room," Ms. Roksay said, she asked the children to explain what they saw. "They calmly asked questions: Was Christa hurt? Did the astronauts die in the ocean? Were the astronauts' children watching television, too?"

Robert Grossman, a member of the communications staff of the Los Angeles Board of Education was driving to work when he heard the news on the radio.

"My first thought was that my boss and the board president were sitting in the grandstand at Cape Canaveral," he said, "in the same grandstand as the family and kids of Christa."

"I got a sickening feeling in my stomach, then got a little fuzzy, thinking, 'Can it be real?""

Harriet Arvey, director of support services for the Houston Independent School District, was in her office talking with a county mental-health official about establishing a crisis team when a secretary relayed the news.

National Broadcast Of Lessons Planned

By J. R. Sirkin

WASHINGTON—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is preparing a nationwide television broadcast to schools next week as part of an effort to salvage its imperiled teacher-in-space project.

According to an official of the Public Broadcasting Service, the telecast was expected to receive official sanction from NASA headquarters in Washington this week. It will feature Barbara Morgan, the runner-up to Sharon Christa McAuliffe in the competition to be the first teacher in space, and perhaps several astronauts, the official said.

Ms. McAuliffe perished along with six others in the fiery explosion of the space shuttle Challenger last week.

Sharon Christa McAuliffe

The Joy and Triumph Ended With One Terrible Moment in the Sky

By Blake Rodman

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—It was bitter cold last Tuesday as the sun rose in the clear, ice-blue sky over Central Florida's swamps and citrus groves. Driving up to the Kennedy Space Center's press and VIP viewing area, I could see the space shuttle Challenger poised for the morning's liftoff, some three miles away on the launch pad.

The cold snap, which had forced area citrus growers to fire up smoke pots in their orchards during the night to protect delicate crops, had also worried NASA officials. They had spent Monday trying to reschedule a launch date for Challenger, after a stubborn screw on the orbiter's hatch door forced them to scrub the blastoff once again. The decision was to try for a Tuesday launch, regardless of the cold.

The VIP viewing area was empty when I arrived. Buses bearing state finalists from the teacher-in-space competition and other educators would arrive soon. I had spent the previous week with them, attending a NASA-sponsored conference, sharing brief hello's and conversation in the hotel lobby, waiting for the event that had drawn us here.

Because of the repeated delays, work obligations had forced many of the several hundred educators here for the weekend to return

At 11:39 A.M. Eastern Standard Time last Tuesday, in a flash of fire and smoke seen by millions, the nation's teaching corps gained a long-awaited moment in the public spotlight.

But it was a terrible moment, bought at a price that no one had foreseen.

Sharon Christa McAuliffe, who was to be the first teacher and the first "ordinary person" in space, died with six other crew members of the shuttle Challenger when it exploded 10 miles above the Florida coast and 74 seconds after liftoff.

It was a day of cruel ironies and common grief.

Placard teachers and schoolchildren had cheered Ms. McAuliffe as she entered the spacecraft. On board, she received a symbolic apple from NASA technicians. And farther away, in classrooms throughout America, children awaited the televised start of a space adventure dedicated to them.

The stage was set for America's "Teacher in Space" to fulfill a personal dream and complete the project that had stirred the collective imagination of her profession.

But in the briefest of interludes, the script went awry. Joy turned to sorrow. Technology's bright promise lost its luster. And what was to be a classroom in space became in one awful instant a lesson in mortality.

Ms. McAuliffe's role as the first private citizen in space had sharpened the nation's interest in the flight. And her incongruous fate -- to be among NASA's first in-flight casualties -- left a deep national scar.

In what was believed to be an unprecedented gesture, President Reagan postponed that evening's State of the Union address. Flags were lowered to half mast. The Olympic torch in Los Angeles was cut. On Wall Street, the stock exchange went silent for a solemn minute of respect.

Washington's Air and Space Museum drew crowds paying tribute to the shuttle crew's black-draped official portrait.

And in cities and towns across the nation, people sought through memorial services and conversation to relieve the sense of loss. They also sought meaning. Why had the impossible happened?

The wisdom of sending citizen-astronauts into space was questioned. NASA drew heavy criticism for its ambitious schedule of shuttle flights, and for what one congresswoman called its "public-relations hype.

Some critics even suggested that manned space flights were unnecessary; robots and satellites would suffice, they said.

But in a brief and eloquent speech to the nation, President Reagan called the seven who died "pioneers on the last frontier" and pledged that the space program would go on.

"Risk," he said America's children, is the price of achievement. "The future doesn't belong to the faint-hearted," the President said. "It belongs to the brave.

And on an edition of ABC's "Nightline," one child, reading from a class essay she had written on the shuttle accident, expressed in eloquent simplicity the central core of a nation's grief. She had been scared, she said, because Ms. McAuliffe "was a mother and a teacher."
Aftermath of a Tragedy: One Terrible Moment

The Joy and Triumph Ended With One Terrible Moment in the Sky

Continued from Page 3

home. A contingent of cops from the National Education Association, including President Mary Hayward Farrell, had left in the morning, appearing discouraged over having to Cox the triumph of one of their

unescapable ordeal. I found myself

in the midst of a crowd of people, all

wondering what had happened. The
the lights listened to the muffled

sound of the crowd, as if to

confirm the silence of the night.

The Winchester fire was

continued on page 4

The open ambulance began moving

faster—the upper corner of the

bleachers were the first to catch

fire. As the ambulance passed,

people were; the smoke was too

difficult to see.

One of the first things I noticed

was the smell of gas—like

something burning. It was

amazing how quickly the flames

spread. I saw a fire engine

approaching, but it was too

late. The ambulance was

already on fire. I guess it was

just a matter of time before

it started burning.

The crowd was so thick that

nobody noticed the flames,

especially in the dark. It was

like a nightmare. I never

thought it would happen to

me or anyone I knew. It was

just不可思议. I'm still

shaking now. The memory

is fresh in my mind. It was

an event that will stay with

me forever. This is something

that I will never forget. I hope

that the world will never

experience such tragedy again.

Page 4 of 3
Aftermath of a Tragedy: Grief for a Hometown Hero

By Aliya Taper

Covington, N.L. — ‘REDURE in this once-quiet town has been loud and long, as people try to understand what happened.

A 14-year-old girl, Aliya Taper, was found dead in her home last week. Her family and friends are struggling with the loss.

‘I wish I could go back in time and change things,’ said one of her friends. ‘But it’s too late now.’

The girl, who was known as a bright student and an active member of the community, was killed in a hit-and-run accident while walking home from school.

The local community is coming together to support the family and friends of the victim.

‘We are all heartbroken by this loss,’ said a neighbor. ‘But we will carry on with our lives and honor her memory.’

The investigation is ongoing, and the police are asking for anyone with information to come forward.

‘We need your help to find the person responsible for this tragic event,’ said the Chief of Police.

The community is united in its grief and determination to find justice.

‘We will not forget her,’ said another neighbor. ‘And we will always remember her.’

Community Leader, Advocate, for Mother’s of 2

Sharon Christa Cargio was named to a new position on the city’s task force to address issues affecting mothers.

She was also appointed to the board of trustees at a local university.

‘I am honored to serve in these roles,’ said Cargio. ‘And I look forward to making a difference in the lives of mothers and their families.’

The new positions will allow Cargio to work more closely with community leaders and organizations to address the needs of mothers.

‘I am excited about the opportunities these roles will bring,’ said Cargio. ‘And I am committed to serving the community in the best way possible.’

Lawrenceville: Status of a Town

Lawrenceville, N.J. — The town has been in a state of mourning since the death of Aliya Taper last week.

‘Our hearts go out to her family and friends,’ said the mayor. ‘We are all devastated by this loss.’

The community has come together to support the family and friends of the victim.

‘We are all here to help each other through this difficult time,’ said a neighbor. ‘And we will always remember her.’

The investigation is ongoing, and the police are asking for anyone with information to come forward.

‘We need your help to find the person responsible for this tragic event,’ said the Chief of Police.

The community is united in its grief and determination to find justice.

‘We will not forget her,’ said another neighbor. ‘And we will always remember her.’

Rudolph G. Cooney, N.J. — The mayor of Rudolph G. Cooney has passed away.

‘We are saddened by the loss of Mayor Cooney,’ said the mayor of New Berlin. ‘He was a great leader and a true friend to our community.’

Cooney was known for his dedication to the community and his commitment to improving the quality of life for residents.

‘He was a man of great vision and dedication,’ said a former colleague. ‘And we will miss him dearly.’

Cooney lived for 60 years and was a lifelong resident of Rudolph G. Cooney.

‘He was a man of great passion and commitment,’ said a friend. ‘And we will miss him dearly.’

Cooney is survived by his wife, three children, and eight grandchildren.

‘We will always remember him,’ said a former colleague. ‘And we will always honor his legacy.’

EAST REALTORS: Students at Conard High School had prepared a costume celebration for the school's annual Halloween event. Carole Cooper, president of the student council, was among the hundreds of Conard students who attended the costume celebration in the school's gymnasium.

‘We are honored to have such a large turnout,’ said Cooper. ‘And we are grateful for the support of our students.’

Cooper and the student council had planned the event to raise money for the school's annual charity drive.

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Aftermath of a Tragedy: The Impact on Children

TV Brought the Trauma To Classrooms Million

By Lynn Olsen

It was the day tsunami hit. The school had sent an emer-

cency alert. Across the county, students and teachers who had gathered to share.

the momentary death of their kids experienced the weightlessness of death, turned their faces to the hori-

zontal. Dozens of students, who had experienced the destruction of their homes and belongings, watched the kids on their TVs, unable to believe what had happened.

A tsunami of emotions took over as they watched the news coverage, unable to process what had happened and unable to believe the images. Students at School B sent an emergency alert to their classmates.

The school was in shock. Students and teachers were unable to believe what they were seeing. The devastation was overwhelming.

The next day, the school was quiet. Students and teachers were unable to process what had happened. They were in disbelief.

The impact on students was immediate. Students were unable to focus on their work. They were in disbelief.

The impact on teachers was profound. They were unable to process what had happened. They were in disbelief.

The impact on the community was devastating. Students and teachers were unable to focus on their work. They were in disbelief.

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Aftermath of a Tragedy: Private Truths, Public Evils

Stunned Educators Grieve McAlife's Loss, Search for Meaning

Continued from Page 1

As an educator, professional, and woman, I am heartbroken by the loss of Mr. McAlife. He was a talent, a friend, and a mentor to me and many others. His passing is a profound loss for the entire community. Our hearts go out to his family and friends during this difficult time.

In the hours following Mr. McAlife's death, many educators, parents, and students gathered to pay their respects. The memorial service was a moving tribute to his life and work. Many spoke of his dedication to education and his commitment to helping students reach their full potential.

In addition to the memorial service, there were calls for action to improve school safety and mental health programs. Educators and parents alike acknowledged the need for greater resources and support to address the issues facing today's students.

In the days following Mr. McAlife's death, the community came together to support each other. Students held a rally to call for stronger measures to prevent future tragedies. Parents organized a march to demand better school safety protocols. Educators worked to develop a comprehensive plan to address mental health issues in schools.

Despite the pain and loss, the community was united in its determination to honor Mr. McAlife's legacy. His passing was a reminder of the importance of education and the impact teachers and educators have on the lives of their students.

-- Rena M. Green, Superintendent

More Space Flight for Teachers, President Says in Brief Address

By James Bosley

Washington—Only hours after last week's shuttle disaster, President Clinton addressed an audience of educators and scientists at the National Academy of Sciences, including teachers into space.

"We must continue to push the boundaries of what is possible," Clinton said. "We cannot let this setback hold us back." The President's speech was a call to action, urging educators and scientists to work together to explore new frontiers in science and education.

"Our goal is to ensure that every American has access to the best education possible," Clinton continued. "We must invest in our schools, our teachers, and our students, so that they can compete in the global economy." The President announced plans to invest $50 billion over the next five years in education and science programs, with a focus on improving math and science education at all levels.

The President also announced a new initiative to send teachers and students into space. "This will be a historic moment," Clinton said. "We are ready to embark on a new chapter in space exploration, with the help of our teachers and students." The initiative will launch in 2024, with plans to send 100 teachers and 50 students into space over the next five years.

The President's speech was met with a standing ovation from the audience of educators and scientists. "Thank you, Mr. President," someone in the crowd shouted. "Thank you for your leadership." The President responded with a smile, "Thank you, thank you." The applause lasted for several minutes, as the audience expressed their gratitude for the President's commitment to education and science.

The President's speech was a powerful reminder of the importance of education and the impact that leaders can have on shaping the future of our nation. As we look ahead to the new chapter in space exploration, we can be confident that we have the leaders we need to ensure that every American has access to the best education possible.
Teacher in Space: NASA’s Bid for Broader Support

Continued from Previous Page

It was never going to be easy to attract such a specialized audience. But NASA, the space agency, has been working hard to make sure that space education is made available to all students regardless of their background or location.

The agency has taken several steps to make space education accessible to more students, including making space shuttle architecture available for students to build and experiment with. NASA has also been working to develop partnerships with schools and educators to provide access to space resources and technology.

In addition to these efforts, NASA has also been working to increase diversity in the space workforce by offering scholarships and opportunities for underrepresented groups to pursue careers in space.

In recent years, NASA has also been working to make space education more accessible to students with disabilities. The agency has developed a number of tools and resources to help students with disabilities learn about space, including virtual reality experiences and accessible textbooks.

NASA’s efforts to increase space education and opportunities for all students have been widely recognized and praised. The agency has been hailed for its commitment to making space accessible to all, and its efforts have been seen as a model for other organizations and institutions.

Although there is still much work to be done, NASA’s efforts have been a positive step forward in making space education more accessible to all. With continued support and investment, it is possible that space education will become even more widely available to students in the future.
Aftermath of a Tragedy: A Space 'Pioneer'

I watched the Space Age being born. I would like to participate.

Applications for the "Young Pioneers in Space" program were sent out as an experiment to determine how exactly the first few students might be trained for space when the first satellite was launched in 1957. But the first few students were not the only ones interested. Many were.

Why do you want to be the first U.S. citizen to go to space?" is a question I had to answer. And I was told it was not enough to be interested in space, but I had to be able to prove it. I knew the first opportunity to do this would be in the spring of 1960 when the early selection process would begin.

The challenge had already been set. The President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, had set the challenge of putting a man on the moon by the end of the decade. The first step was to send a man into space.

I was fortunate enough to be one of the first to apply. And I was good enough to be selected. The training that followed was intense and demanding, but it was worth it.

The Space Age was born.

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Special Telecasts for Children Read

President Reagan concluded his televised message on the death of the space shuttle Challenger with words of comfort and reassurance, reminding young viewers that she was the sister ship of Space Shuttle Challenger, the second shuttle to orbit Earth.

"I'll remember her as a sister ship," Reagan said. "And I'll always remember her as having a sister ship with a crew of seven.

"This shuttle was a sister ship to the Challenger, and she accomplished many of the same missions as her sister ship.

"She was named after the first American astronaut to orbit Earth.

"She was named after a city in Georgia that is known for its beauty and charm.

"She was named after a river that flows through the southern United States.

--Sally Ride, Commander of Space Shuttle Challenger"