

## January 28, 1986

"The first signal that anything was wrong was when the rocket booster veered off. At that point, some of the other reporters ran to their cars thinking the mission had been aborted and that they could get to the landing site and talk to the astronauts. Looking up, I couldn't see anything at all. I asked out loud, 'Where are they?' and another reporter answered, 'They're dead.' I had this feeling I wanted to reach out and grab it back. Everything was so completely silent."

**KATHY SAWYER** was The Post's National news reporter assigned to cover the January 28 launch of the space shuttle Challenger. What began as a routine reporting assignment for Sawyer became a test of her professionalism as she witnessed the disaster that rocked the American people.

"I was planning to do a series on NASA. It seemed to be going through an interesting period. After talking with the editors about the series, this launch seemed a natural first foot in the water," Sawyer explains. "I've always been a space buff of sorts. I think I've seen all the launches since I was very young. So I went to the Cape wide-eyed and excited." Sawyer and her counterparts from across the country were seated in the press area she describes as "a white, dome-shaped, quonset-type hut." They sat across from the area reserved for the astronauts' families and VIPs.

"The part of the launch that worked was beautiful—this massive contraption rising majestically into the air. Everyone was excited—even the seasoned NASA officials and other technical personnel. And the presence of an ordinary person (schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe) just added to the excitement." The air was filled with the roar of the engines and the whoops and hollers and cheers of the crowd. "Then in an instant—with no big fanfare—it was gone," Sawyer recalls.

It took only a minute or so for the realization of what happened to sink in. Shock and helplessness replaced jubilation. The families already had been

*This is an account of the space shuttle Challenger explosion and the immediate two or three days after as told to Shop Talk by National news reporter **KATHY SAWYER** who was covering the launch for The Post.*

whisked away, the press seats in the grandstand were filled with shaken journalists allowing themselves time to compose their emotions and thoughts. Sawyer remembers the silence as the worst part of the scene. The huge loudspeakers that earlier had been blaring communications between mission control and the "vehicle" were quiet. "A monumental event had happened and in the midst of this vast, open space there was silence," says Sawyer.

Then there was a flurry of movement. The reporters—animated once again—began pacing their recoveries to their deadlines. Some with late deadlines took longer to regain their composure and others sprang into action almost immediately. "I kept saying to myself, 'just describe what happened, that's my job,'" says Sawyer.

Sobered reporters began looking anywhere for information. They interviewed each other—comparing notes and shar-



**KATHY SAWYER:** "I wanted to reach out and grab it back."

ing thoughts. They asked red-eyed NASA officials what happened but there were no explanations. It was still before noon, and, unknown to anyone at the time, no official statement would be made for four hours.

The first thing Sawyer did was call The Post. One of the editors suggested she watch the launch on television to get an idea of what the rest of the world saw. The TV monitors around the space center had been busy all morning—broadcasting the arrival of all the astronauts, who had been laughing and joking with the ground crews before boarding the shuttle. But after the disaster, Sawyer says the monitors just showed the ocean and falling debris. She went to the CBS News trailer to watch the tape and says she was "stunned by how much more dramatic it was on TV."

With official information not forthcoming  
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# Driving For The Caddy

An invitation to play golf isn't unusual for Advertising's **BUD HUMPHRIES**. So one night after dinner when he was asked to round out a fivesome, Humphries thought nothing of it. Settled into his favorite chair to watch television, he took a phone call at about 11:30 p.m. and from that moment on (although he didn't know it at the time) Humphries was in for one surprise after another.

Humphries' Sales manager **BILL SCHWARTZ** was on the dialing end of the phone and he was in a bind. Schwartz had



**BILL SCHWARTZ** (right) extended the invitation but the hole-in-one was left up to **BUD HUMPHRIES**.

promised to be one of a group of five to play in the Embassy Dairy/National Football League Players Association Celebrity Golf Classic to benefit the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation. At the last minute one of the five had to cancel. "Bill asked if I'd be able to substitute," says Humphries. "It was just a matter of rearranging my morning schedule so I agreed."

Humphries describes himself as a "once-or-twice-a-week golfer with an 11 handicap." But it didn't matter what kind of a golfer he was because it turned out to be a beautiful day and Humphries was looking forward to a morning of golf—glad Schwartz had called him.

"The sixth hole at the Tantallon Country Club is a 131-yard par 3 with an elevated tee, trapped on the right with water on the left," recalls Humphries. "I pulled out my wedge. I lined up the shot and then I let it go. I knew it was a good shot because it felt right." Witnesses agree, saying the ball had a perfect arc and soared along the fairway, landing on the green—just about five feet in front of the cup.

"We saw it hit the green and then start to roll. I started chanting 'be enough' because I was looking for a birdie out of the shot. Suddenly we didn't see the ball anymore—that's when I really started yelling," says Schwartz. "We all knew it was a hole-in-one."

Humphries just threw his hands up in the air—still holding the wedge—and found himself as stunned as the rest of the group, with the exception of Schwartz. "All of a sudden Schwartz started jumping around and hollering, 'You won the car.' At first I had no idea what he was talking about. He was so much more excited about it than I was. Then I remembered that United Leasing, Inc. (an auto leasing company), had advertised that the first hole-in-one would win a luxury car. We ran back to the clubhouse to tell the tournament officials that I was the big winner. We told everyone we ran into on the course that I won the car. The funniest part was that we didn't even take the ball out of the cup."

After taking care of seemingly endless legalities and paper work, he's sitting pretty behind the wheel of a brand new Cadillac. But Humphries says that what still has him walking on air is that his winning hole-in-one was his first. "The closest I've ever come before is about one foot," says Humphries with a laugh. Evidently, it was worth the wait.



Humphries couldn't be happier with his 1986 DeVille Cadillac—complete with a Fleetwood package.

ing, Sawyer interviewed the editor of the Concord, New Hampshire, paper. He had been with Christa McAuliffe since the beginning of her adventure, and had become a friend of the family. Sawyer says she admired his composure and determination to do his job. She also interviewed a Concord High School student who was visibly shaken by the event and confessed to Sawyer and other reporters that he had gotten sick after the explosion.

Between 4 and 4:30 p.m., the press personnel were directed back to the grandstands for a briefing by NASA spokespersons. Frustration had been mounting all day because of the lack of information and Sawyer said the briefing told them nothing more than the astronauts were dead and all the data analyzed, so far, showed no problems had existed.

Reporters were becoming irritated at the lack of information. With information still scarce the next day, and news people barred from seeing or photograph-

ing recovered debris, the irritation turned to anger. The following day, hope for information was dashed again after a news pool of three reporters—one wire service, one radio and one TV—was allowed to observe the salvage process. The three returned at day's end complaining they saw only a blank ocean.

The Post sent **KEVIN KLOSE**, **ERIC PIANIN** and **BILL PETERSON** to the Cape to take over writing the daily stories. Sawyer was due to go home. Inconclusive and slow-in-coming information had kept her and the other reporters in almost suspended animation—afraid they'd miss important new findings while scrambling for news to tell.

It wasn't until she got home that Sawyer felt the strain of those five days. "To get the story, you turn off fear or pain as soon as you can. But later, when you have time to think about it, you let go of all that control." Sawyer describes herself as a "hard-bit-

ten, professional reporter who has seen bodies and disasters and other horrible things." She says she's comfortable in difficult situations and taking chances don't bother her. "But I was shocked that I reacted so drastically—I didn't take it in stride," Sawyer says.

Sawyer is one of many Post reporters who applied to be the first journalist in space. She says she wouldn't turn down a chance to be on a shuttle flight, "but I'd be more tense now." Sawyer attends the hearings on the disaster and continues to collect material for her series which she says will "still come off."

Looking back at the event, Sawyer says she's not sure her personal feelings are any different from someone who saw it on television. However, she admits to having "flashes" of the event. "I'll be typing a story or washing dishes and I'll get this little shock. It's a physical reaction—almost a revulsion—and then I think 'Oh my God, this thing really happened.'"

## 50 And Loansome

The Washington Post Employees Federal Credit Union will be celebrating its 50th birthday—complete with refreshments and door prizes—at the annual meeting to be held in the 9th floor Community Room at the Northwest plant on March 12, from 5:30 until 7 p.m.

Since 1936, the Credit Union has been helping members to buy cars and Christmas gifts as well as to finance household repairs. And if manager **MARY UNDERWOOD** has her way, the next 50 years will be even better. "Our goal is to establish a strong base of operations with financial services tailored to the needs of our members," says Underwood. "I'm mostly interested in improving our basic services and in increasing memberships in 1986."

To many members of the Credit Union, the biggest attraction is the payroll deduction. Savings or Christmas Club accounts have a tendency to grow when deposits aren't left up to the member. But the Credit Union has a list of other advantages that includes: interest-paying checking accounts with no monthly charge; personal loans for as little as \$200 (Underwood says most lending institutions don't lend less than \$2,500 for personal loans); Certificates of Deposit; and IRA accounts. The Credit Union is also federally insured with all accounts protected to \$100,000.

In addition to these familiar services, Underwood will be adding new com-



The Credit Union staff: **MARY UNDERWOOD**, **ANDREW GILLIAM**, **SAYED METWALLY**, **KELLY THOMAS** and **NORMAN MILLER**. Not pictured are: **MECHELE BRADLEY** and **PATRICIA THOMPSON**.

puter equipment to the office to speed up service and help keep personal transactions more confidential. Her greatest undertaking will be private auto sales. In cooperation with area car dealers, who will sell new and used cars at a reduced rate (a small cost above the invoice price), the Credit Union will offer special financing. This April the special financing will be an interest rate of 11 percent and 100-percent financing. "In other words, you don't need a down payment," Underwood says.

Everyone is invited to attend the

March 12 annual meeting although voting privileges are reserved for Credit Union members. "It will be a chance for everyone to see the workings of the Credit Union," says Underwood. The agenda includes the election of the Board of Directors and a summary of the state of the Credit Union. The meeting will also be used as a platform for members to voice opinions and suggestions. But before the meeting ends, all the attendees will have to put on party hats and blow out the 50 candles on the birthday cake.

# Promotions and Transitions



MICHAEL CRAIG



MARCIA FREEMAN



MATTHEW HART



FRASER JONES



NELL LENNON



LEROY McCONICO



CINDY McMICKENS



CHRISTOS PAPAVALIIOU



PETER SCOTT



SARAH TROTT



FREIDA WARE

**MICHAEL CRAIG** has been promoted to business manager for The National Weekly.

**MARCIA FREEMAN** has been promoted to inside sales representative in Advertising. Freeman joined The Post in 1984 as an accounting assistant/secretary in Corporate. In 1984 she became confidential secretary to the editorial page editor and then moved to Advertising in 1985 as a sales aide.

**MATTHEW HART** has been promoted to assistant supervisor/weekend supervisor—administrative clerk in Advertising Services. Hart joined The Post in 1981 as a part-time junior clerk in Circulation. In 1984 he became a temporary supervisor/general clerk and in 1985 he was made temporary supervisor/administrative clerk.

**FRASER JONES** has transferred to Communications/Public Relations as a public relations aide and tour guide. Jones joined The Post in 1984 as a copy aide in Financial news.

**NELL LENNON** has been promoted to The Washington Post Magazine sales manager in Advertising. Lennon joined The Post in 1983 as a sales training manager in Advertising.

**LEROY McCONICO** has been promoted to composing room assistant in Composing. He joined The Post in 1972 as a janitor in Building Services.

**CINDY McMICKENS** has transferred to Advertising as a sales aide. McMickens joined The Post in 1985 as a tour guide in Communications/Public Relations.

**CHRISTOS PAPAVALIIOU** has been promoted to zone manager in Circulation. Papavasiliou has been an independent Post distributor since 1982.

**PETER SCOTT** has been promoted to general clerk in subscriber/non-subscriber Circulation. Scott joined The Post in 1985 as a representative in Circulation Services.

**SARAH TROTT** has been promoted to circulation manager for The National Weekly.

**FREIDA WARE** has transferred to Classified Advertising as a secretary. Previously Ware worked in Advertising Art.

# New faces



THOMAS BAUGHMAN



STEPH BEAUJON



AMY BOWKER



KEVIN COUGHLIN



KATHLEEN DAY



DENISE DOBBINS



MICHAEL DREW



GLEN FORTINBERRY



LYNDA HOUSER



TRICIA KENNEDY



TOM KONISIEWICZ



JOHN MATHIS



MARY McCARTHY



ANDREW PALSHA



BOB PFEIFFER



SARAH PHU



JOHN TERPAY



DON WHITE

**THOMAS BAUGHMAN** has joined The Post as a representative in Circulation. Before coming to The Post Baughman taught at the University of Jordan. He has a degree in sociology and enjoys swimming.

**STEPH BEAUJON** has joined The Post as a copy aide in News Administration. Beaujon was a driver for an Alexandria public relations firm and also worked in a cannery in Kenai, Alaska. Beaujon has a bachelor's degree in English from Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, and enjoys running, skiing and rock climbing.

**AMY BOWKER** has joined The Post as a copy aide in News Administration. Bowker has a bachelor's degree in mass communications from Towson State University.

**KEVIN COUGHLIN** has joined The Post as a copy aide in News Administration. Before coming to The Post he worked in retail sales at Britches Great Outdoors. He has a bachelor's degree in English from William and Mary.

**KATHLEEN DAY** has joined The Post as a reporter in Financial news. Day was a reporter for the Los Angeles Times before coming to The Post. She has a bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr, a master's from Columbia University and an MBA from New York University.

**DENISE DOBBINS** has joined The Post as a secretary in Public Relations. Before coming to The Post Dobbins was a secretary in the Training Department at WMATA (Metro). Dobbins attended the University of Maryland and enjoys reading, roller skating, and sports.

**MICHAEL DREW** has joined The Post as a cartographer in News Art. Drew was a cartographer for the Defense Mapping Agency before coming to The Post. Drew has a bachelor's degree from the University of Vermont and also attended Clark University.

**GLEN FORTINBERRY** has joined The Post as an outside sales representative for Corporate and Finance Advertising. Before coming to The Post Fortinberry was associate producer for WDIV-TV in Detroit. He also was an account executive for NBC-TV. Fortinberry has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Eastern Michigan University and a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University.

**LYNDA HOUSER** has joined The Post as a prepaid billing clerk in Accounting. Houser enjoys music, spectator sports and reading.

**TRICIA KENNEDY** has joined The Post as a sales aide in Classified Advertising. Before coming to The Post Kennedy was a secretary for CH2M Hill, Southeast, Inc. and was a model in Houston, Texas. Kennedy enjoys ice skating, reading and sports.

**TOM KONISIEWICZ** has joined The Post as a sales representative in Advertising. Before coming to The Post Konisiewicz was a sales representative for The Washingtonian magazine and worked in advertising for the Cleveland Press. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism/advertising from Kent State University and enjoys skiing, playing racquetball and photography.

**JOHN MATHIS** has joined The Post as a representative in Customer Service. Before coming to The Post Mathis worked for the International Brotherhood of Painters. He is currently attending Benjamin Franklin University.

**MARY McCARTHY** has joined The Post as a national sales representative in Advertising. Before coming to The Post McCarthy was an account executive at Times Mirror National Marketing. She worked for Sawyer-Ferguson-Walker in Chicago and has a bachelor's degree in communications/advertising from the University of Illinois.

**ANDREW PALSHA** has joined The Post as a prepaid clerk in Accounting. Palsha was a general clerk at the T.A. Beach Corporation before coming to The Post. Palsha attends Benjamin Franklin University and enjoys basketball and fishing.

**BOB PFEIFFER** has joined The Post as a copy aide in News Administration. Before coming to The Post he worked as a caterer and a bagel chef. Pfeiffer has a bachelor's degree in English Literature from Kenyon College and enjoys the guitar.

**SARAH PHU** has joined The Post as a clerk in Accounting. Phu is working toward an associate's degree and enjoys traveling, playing board games and cooking.

**JOHN TERPAY** has joined The Post as an artist in Advertising Art. Before coming to The Post he was art director for Red Pepper Advertising. Terpay has a bachelor's degree in advertising design from Syracuse University and enjoys skiing, sailing, photography and spectator sports.

**DON WHITE** has joined The Post as assistant sports editor/layout. White was assistant sports editor for The Miami Herald and was Sunday sports editor for the Dallas Times Herald. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism and history from Western Kentucky University and a master's degree from the University of Missouri. White's favorite hobby is being a dad.

## Post Scripts

**READ ALL ABOUT IT**—The Employee Assistance Program and Health/Fitness Library is open to all Post employees in all three Health Centers. Please call **BARBARA FOX**, x6423 or one of the Health Centers (Northwest x7192, Southeast x7577 or Springfield x6511) for more information. If you'd also like more information on the EAP you can call the Health Centers or the HELPLINE (301) 596-4690.

**THERE'S NO ACCOUNTING FOR FAREWELLS**—Accounting's **RANDY SEJEN** was the guest of honor at a two-part party that began with lunch at the Sichuan Garden and ended at The Post with a cake and coffee dessert. The back-to-back farewell parties were held to wish Sejen well in his new position as assistant controller for The Post-Newsweek Cable Division. Sejen will be in Bloomfield Hills in the Detroit, Michigan, area until the company permanently bases the division headquarters.



**RANDY SEJEN** was first in line to get a slice of his farewell cake from **RITA LEWIS**.

**AT YOUR SERVICE**—Those smooth-talking elevators on the east side of the Northwest Plant, servicing the L Street entrance by the Security office, are both in working order these days. Director of Operating Services **ED AMES** says the only trick to summoning these elevators is to push one button—up or down. Ames also asks that anyone having problems with either elevator please report them to him, x7102, or Northwest's chief engineer **GEORGE WATHEN**, x7143.

## Rec Association

**IF YOU'RE SHOPPING FOR A BARGAIN**—A membership in The Post's Recreation Association is a steal at \$2 for one year. The discounts and privileges are practically limitless, so don't be caught paying full price for movies, the theatre or sporting events. With each membership of only \$2, you will receive a packet of discounts for everything from area dry cleaners and auto repair shops to discounts on vacation travel. Contact **CHARLIE WEST**, x6560; **BOB SURKOSKY**, x7162; or **JEANNEANE JOYNER**, x7524.

**GET YOUR TICKETS**—Discount tickets for Caps and Bullets games will only be available until March 14. So take a few minutes out to look over the schedules. Then plan which games you'd like to attend so you can take full advantage of the Recreation Association's discounts. Call **PATTI GARNER**, x7107, Mondays - Fridays, 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

## Marketplace

**FOUND**—Gold bracelet on 6th floor, approximately February 14. Call Laura to identify, x6943.

**BRIDESMAID GOWN**—With matching hat. Size 9/10. Lovely lilac color, worn once. Paid \$135 but will sell for \$45. Call 464-2652, after noon, or x7790.

**FOR SALE**—'85 Mercury Cougar. Fully loaded with all options. Top condition, only 13,000 miles. Already has power-guard warranty. \$10,500. payments are \$280/month. Call Jerome Mortman, x7200 or 474-7966.

**DACHSHUND PUPPIES**—Red, long-haired, standard. German bloodline, 7 weeks old. Call x7666 or 971-8871.

**'79 BUICK PARK AVE**—AM/FM radio, all power equipment, maroon, 77,000 miles. \$3500. Call Dick Warner, x7774 or 354-4910.

**IBM-XT CLONE**—640K, 2 DS/DD Drives. Clock/calendar, keyboard, mono monitor, \$985, other configurations available. Call TransSystems Unlimited, (703) 451-6804.

**COMMERCIAL FREEZER**—Upright and heavy duty. Energy efficient, 19.3 cubic feet, less than 2 years old. \$500/best offer. Call Rich, x6560 or 670-3320.

**FOR SALE**—'71 rebuilt VW engine. Papers available. \$350. Call Ray, x6560, 7 a.m. until 2:45 p.m., or (703) 670-0953.

**ELEGANT**—Black leather boots, like new. Only worn a few times. Size 7-7½, \$15. Come try them on in Advertising Art. Call Gloria, x7677, x6127 or 296-0791.

**PIANO PLAYER**—Small mission in need of a dependable piano player for the church choir. Salary is negotiable. Call Ann, x6011, weekdays 10 p.m. until 5:30 a.m. or evenings after 6 p.m. 396-4522.

**GUITAR**—Martin D-18. Fifteen years old, immaculate condition, airline-roof, hardshell case. \$700. Call Eve, x4402, x7373 or 869-9554.

**DRIVE/CAR POOL**—Looking for shared driving/riding from the Manassas, Virginia, area to and from The Post. I work night shifts (roughly 3 p.m. to midnight). Please call Don, x7350 or (703) 361-2140.

**BAND AVAILABLE**—D.C.'s own Crimestoppers are available to perform at your next social function. See them at one of the area's rock clubs or call Eric Nelson, x7618 or 537-1215.

**FOUND**—Bracelet in the 7th-floor ladies' room. Please call to claim. Tori Wilson, x6215.

**FOR SALE**—'78 Subaru, 5 speed with 57,000 miles. AM/FM stereo radio. Good running condition. \$1095. Call x7307 or 291-6970.

**CAR POOL**—Looking for shared driving/riding from the Stafford, Virginia, area to and from The Post weekdays. Please call Linda, x7806 or (703) 659-4625.

**DRIVE/CAR POOL**—One day a week, work 9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. in the Fairfax/North Springfield/Burke area. Call Mary Hunter, x7663 or 978-9067.

**HOUSE FOR RENT**—Short walk to Huntington Metro. Three-level townhouse with 2 bedrooms, 1 bath. Combined living/dining rooms, rec room. W/w carpet. Economical gas heat. Available February 20. \$560. Call x6426 or 768-7216.

**POSTCARDS**—Trade postcards, old, new, foreign and USA. Call Newton James, x7798 or 354-5044.

**DINING TABLE**—Chrome and glass, with 4 cane-back chairs. Very good condition. \$250. Call x6439 or 773-6852, after 7 p.m.

**SUBARU '84 BRAT**—Four-wheel drive. Comes with cap, carpeted bed, sunroof, custom wheels and exterior. Warranty. Excellent condition. \$6800. Call x7330 or 667-7341, after 6 p.m.

**HONDA 125S XL MOTORCYCLE**—Street legal and off-road. One year old, brand new tires-1680 miles. Paid \$1396 plus tax and tags. Includes helmet (paid \$70). Kept indoors at all times, super clean. \$600 and will deliver. Call Mike, x7677, x6127 or 451-4893.

**'81 TOYOTA TERCEL SR5**—Hatchback, metallic beige, 5-speed, rear defogger, AM/FM, Ariva radials, 57,000 miles. \$3500 or best offer. Call x6196 or 683-6830.

**KAYPRO II COMPUTER**—\$3000 of software, plus complete documentation. Excellent condition. \$700 or best offer. Call Bill Smart, x7541 or (703) 684-8908.

**ARE YOU INTERESTED?**—Confidential Alcoholics Anonymous meetings at The Post. Also, a women's only meeting program. Please contact Ken Deckman, x7798, 7 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Mondays - Thursdays, for place and time in each plant.

**MARKETPLACE DEADLINE:** Noon on Wednesday one week prior to publication date. Please include your name, extension and home phone number. Send ads to Shop Talk, 7th floor, or call x6803. Ads will run two weeks unless otherwise requested. One ad per employee, please.