

FEATURE AT - 6

NCHS freshman Dunn attends space camp

By Josh Shepherd
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

Fred Dunn, a freshman at Nicholas County High School, boarded a model of a new international space station, Skylab Freedom, during his stay in the United States Space Academy in Huntsville, Alabama.

This is Dunn's second trip to the space and rocket center. He said Phyllis Gahres, through the Nicholas County School DATE program, gave him a brochure on the space camp and academy at the space center.

The space camp is the first part of a three level introduction to the space program. Dunn completed the first level, the space camp, last year, and attended the second level, Space Academy Level I, in early August.

Dunn said the space camp consisted mostly of tours through the Marshall Flight Center as well as tours of mock space shuttles showing the instrumentation and the introduction to the NASA space shuttle program.

"The best part of the camp was using some of the astronaut training facilities they had on the base. This one machine the First Degree of Freedom Trainer is an hydraulic lift that sits about an inch off the ground. They sit you down in such a way that, they explained, if you throw a basketball forward, it would go behind you. It simulated some of the physical laws of

space.

"Then there was the moon-walker which operated under a spring system that gave an idea of what it would be like to walk on the moon. On the moon, people weigh about a sixth less than they usually do and the chair is designed to simulate the movement. I couldn't walk because each step I took sent me about five feet in the air before I would come back down," Dunn said.

The Space Academy is much more intense, Dunn said. The students were required to attend roughly five lectures dealing with the history of rockets, a more in-depth study of the shuttle program, the Apollo missions, and an introduction to the upcoming Skylab Freedom program.

"The Skylab Freedom is an international program involving the United States, Canada, Japan, and several European countries," he said. "Basically, the program is similar to the original Skylab that fell from orbit in the late 1970's. It will be a space laboratory orbiting the earth. The last requirement trainees were expected to complete was the construction of space station structures under duress." Dunn said the students were decided into groups and assigned several missions they were to complete aboard space-orbiting simulators.

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training, Space Academy level II, which I assume is a much more intensive training program," Dunn said. "I can't wait for next summer to participate."

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"We had two missions, one two-hour mission aboard the Discovery mock shuttle and another hour long mission aboard the Endeavor, which was a mock of the Skylab Freedom. While I was aboard the Endeavor, we measured radiation levels of sample material and recorded that level."

"One of the most exciting things we did was training aboard a multi-axis trainer made to simulate a shuttle approaching re-entry and landing control. The machine was built in a way you would spin in every direction and never the same spin twice. My first thought after it was over was I wanted to do the flip again," Dunn said.

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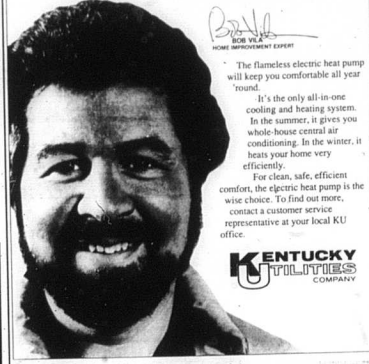
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