

Collins lands in diocese after historic mission

But visit ends due to threat

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Lt. Col. Eileen Collins, the first woman ever to pilot a space shuttle, says the U.S. space program is about to go where it has never gone before.

An Elmira native, Collins envisions more roles for women in space, predicts that the United States will have a working space station in the next few years, and is hoping for continued cooperation with the Russians as attempts continue to set up bases on the moon, land on Mars, and begin exploration outside the solar system.

"We are a curious people," declared Collins, a Catholic, who spoke at St. Mary's Church's Downtown Community Forum on March 24 as part of a visit to the Rochester area to discuss her Feb. 3-11 flight aboard Discovery.

Earlier this week, Collins traveled to Elmira, where her mother Rose Marie lives, but several public appearances were canceled by NASA when an Elmira newspaper received a death threat on her life.

She landed at St. Mary's for a slide presentation, which was followed by a question-and-answer session and a reunion with her father, James, who now attends the parish.

Collins' historic flight included not only the honor of being the first woman shuttle pilot, but also the carrying of a Russian cosmonaut, Vladimir Titov, on board, and approaching to within 30 feet of the Russian space station *Mir*, in preparation for an attempted docking with the space station this summer.

Although the approach was jeopardized by a fuel leak, the U.S. mission was a success thanks to Russian help.

"The Russians wanted to see this flight happen as much as we did," Collins said. Although the United States and Russia used to be Cold War enemies, she added, "Now we are working together and working in the open and we've got common goals."

Becoming an astronaut was in itself the fulfillment of a goal Collins set for



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

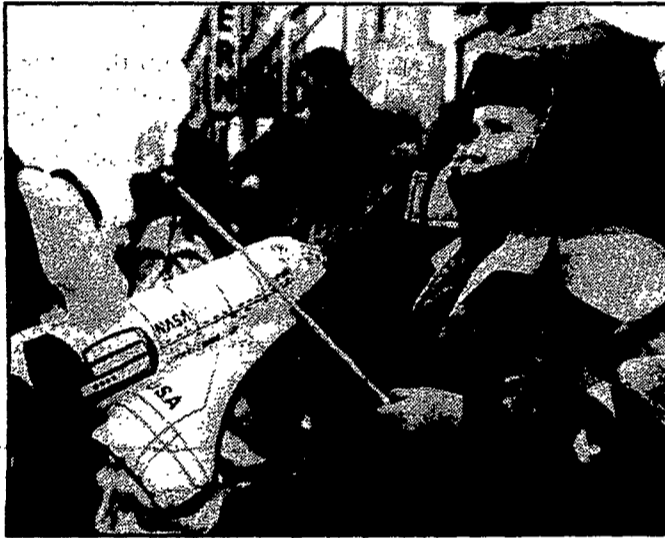
Eleven-year-old Elmira resident Solomon Alvoid expresses the sentiments of many of the 30,000 revelers who gathered in downtown Elmira for a March 27 parade in Eileen Collins' honor. NASA canceled all of Collins' public appearances when a death threat was made on her life.

herself early in life.

"I had been training for four-and-a-half years with NASA in particular for this mission," Collins said. "I like to tell people I've really been training my whole life — from the first day I walked into kindergarten I started training to be an astronaut."

Collins recalled that, as a child, her parents used to take her to an airfield near Elmira to watch the planes take off and land. "I learned to love flying," Collins recalled.

Preparation for her shuttle mission included earning degrees in mathematics, science, economics, operations research and space systems research; learning to fly while in community college after the U.S. Air Force began allowing women pilots in 1976; enlisting in the Air Force and becoming a pilot and trainer; and then ultimately entering the astronaut program, which only began admitting women in 1978.



Ian Christopher waves to parade attractions during Elmira's homecoming parade for Eileen Collins on March 27.

In response to one question, Collins acknowledged that she had faced prejudice along the way because she was one of the few women trying to go where no woman had gone before.

"Yes, I know I've been discriminated against," Collins said. "I think the way you handle that is really what determines your success and how well you deal with it."

Due to a death threat against Eileen Collins received Sunday night by the Elmira *Star-Gazette*, NASA canceled the first-ever female pilot shuttle's Elmira-area events and ordered her back to Houston.

Collins claimed that, because she is a woman, she was prevented from landing four jobs she had wanted.

"I tried to keep a sense of humor about it," Collins said. "I had to realize I can't fight these attitudes now because these people are not ready to change. The way I dealt with it, I said I'm going to continue to do a really good job, and it's going to take some patience, and it's going to take some time, and I think eventually, people will change. And it worked."

Indeed, she noted with satisfaction, all of those jobs she was denied because of her gender eventually became open to and were filled by women.

Collins also emphasized that the feelings of mistrust between Americans and Russians are gradually being overcome.

"What I felt in space is they're our friends now," Collins said. After her talk, she briefly elaborated.

"Years and years of mistrust will not change overnight," Collins said.

But, she said, despite their current domestic problems, "the Russians love their space program. They are very proud of their space program. It's one of the things that sets them apart from the rest of the world and makes them a great country."

Collins envisions the two countries' further cooperation simply because of the expense of funding space programs, noting, "We can share costs by working together."

And despite the cost of the U.S. program — and government cutbacks — Collins had some predictions.

"Someday we will put people back on the moon, not just to visit, but to live there and work there," Collins said. "I know we will have people on Mars some day. We will have colonies of people living on Mars."

"I really believe people will leave the planet not just to go to Mars, but after that we will go beyond. We will leave the

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Carballada receives 1995 Catholic Family Center Award

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Carl Carballada likes to keep awards in perspective.

During a recent interview in his office at the First National Bank of Rochester, Carballada pointed to a wall covered with plaques and certificates.

"Each of those plaques with a dollar would buy a cup of coffee," he said with a smile.

Nevertheless, Carballada keeps receiving awards and honors for his civic activities and his work since 1978 as a member of New York state's Board of Regents, which oversees the state's educational policies and governs The University of the State of New York. He also served as chancellor of the board from 1991 to March of this year.

The latest honor bestowed on Carballada was the 1995 Catholic Family Center Award, presented to him at the Catholic Family Center's Spring Gala, held March 24 at Rochester's Hyatt Regency Hotel.

After joking about the awards, Carballada became serious and said he appreciates them. And he noted that the



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

The Catholic Family Center honored Carl Carballada for his many years of civic service when the agency presented him with a special award at its Spring Gala March 24.

CFC honor has special meaning.

"The Catholic Family Center is such a unique organization," Carballada said. CFC, he explained, helps people in need

of assistance move toward independence, rather than keep them dependent on aid.

"There are few organizations like that," he said.

Meanwhile, in bestowing the award, CFC is showing its appreciation for what Carballada has contributed to the Rochester community.

"Mr. Carballada epitomizes the business leader who is involved in the financial, social, educational and religious needs of the community," observed Judith Azoff, CFC's associate director of administrative services.

Carballada, a parishioner at Pittsford's St. Louis Church, is actively involved with a wide range of groups and organizations beyond his banking work and the Regents. Among numerous activities, he serves as a member of the Diocese of Rochester's Stewardship Council; as a member of the IBERO American Action League, Inc. Hispanic Scholarship Endowment Fund Campaign; as a former associate of St. Joseph's Villa; on the Board of Trustees of St. Bernard's Institute; and as a longtime supporter of the United Way's annual campaign.

"If you're old enough and you do one

or two things a year, you have a nice big resume," he noted modestly. "There are certainly many who do as much as I do, and many people who do more."

Carballada is perhaps best known to the community for his amusing television ads, and for his activities with the Board of Regents. Although it seems that his activities — business, banking and education — do not necessarily weave together, Carballada sees a link.

The son of two immigrants, his mother came from Peru, his father from Spain, Carballada said a good education was emphasized early on by his parents.

"Their focus was to make sure their children got an education because that would give them an opportunity to do more (in their lives)," Carballada said.

His parents also emphasized values.

"They were constantly discussing about individual responsibility to yourself, to others, to the people you work for," Carballada said.

Even as he was getting his business career off the ground — first in the oil industry, then in banking — Carballada became involved in education through the alumni association of his alma mater,

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