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June 3, 1997

Dear Harold:

Well, I'm in a good mood. Dad is feeling better, so we can now argue about politics! He is pro Paula Jones, I'm an anti!

Looks like dad is on his way to recovery, and we are relieved. We are real close, we worked together for years, fishing buddies, arguing buddies, etc. Some of my best friends are 75, or in some cases 84 or 85! Let's try for 100.

I enclose a letter I wrote to the high school in Indiana that studies the JFK case. Will let you know if I get a response. I also sent them Wrone's letter to the OAH, Schlesinger's letter or rather article in the Wall Street Journal, Weisberg profile from Maryland, and of course my article from the local paper.

I sent Dal McGuirk the bound copy of Waketh to New Zealand. Surface snail mail, but only \$6. I shall send him the computer disk later this week. The bound copy should take 6 weeks to get there.

I think the supporting documents in Waketh are good, and I know how much respect you have for Dal. By the way, those were very kind words about me you wrote in that letter to him. I appreciate it.

Hope you and Lil are having a great spring. It is still pretty wet here. They said if it did not rain until September, we would still be ahead of the rain schedule.

I am sort of writing a script for my talk, whenever that is. I am shooting for this summer. One thing that pisses me off is I have an expensive copier, and I can't get repair parts anymore. So my copies are crappy. I never realized what a good job we did at Cat parts, we can get parts for 40 year old tractors.

I include the article about my buddy shot into outer space. I knew this guy all my life. Used to go to the track with me. His daughters are sort of publicity hounds, but they were crazy about their dad. I once suggested to dad we cremate him and spread his ashes at Daytona. He said it sounded good to him! But I hope we can put that off for a while!

Betsy is the subject of her school's newsletter. Copy on the way. Plus, at the prison, she has been moved up front away from all the inmates. Which makes me feel a little better.

Hang in there and kiss Lil for me!

Wishing I were fishing,

bill 

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June 3, 1997
Bruce Hitchcock
Noblesville High School
18111 Cumberland Rd.
Noblesville, Indiana 46060

Dear Mr. Hitchcock:

While in Indy for the 500, I was fortunate to see the fine article about your class in the Star. The murder of President Kennedy is one that few have studied properly, and your class seems to be on the right track.

I have studied the papers of Kentucky's Senator John Sherman Cooper at the University of Kentucky, and have found a number of interesting items. Because of my research, I have been fortunate to befriend the two top researchers of this murder, Harold Weisberg and Prof. David Wrone. Weisberg has published over 10 books on the subject, and Wrone is the coauthor of the only bibliography on this subject. Weisberg is seen on many documentaries, and I have sent him a copy of your article. He has sued the Federal government over a dozen times under the Freedom of Information Act, and is responsible for most of the records that have been disclosed to date.

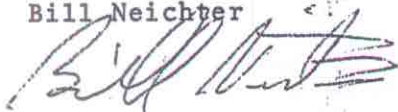
I enclose some articles that cover this area that I hope you find interesting. I am not trying to brag, but many that claim to be experts in this field are charlatans. There are only a dozen or so, including me, that have tried to work in this field with honesty and not make things up. It took me over 10 years to get a copy of Whitewash: The Report on the Warren Report.

I have dozens of formerly secret documents that Weisberg received as a result of his lawsuits. Most are on the JFK murder, but some are involving the Martin Luther King murder. Weisberg's book, "Frame Up", Rereleased as "Martin Luther King, the Assassination," is the only accurate book on Dr. King's murder. Weisberg and famed attorney Jim Lesar conducted a two week hearing for James Earl Ray, in an attempt to get him a trial in the 1970's.

If you and your class would like to have these documents, write me and I will be glad to send them to you, free of charge. I am sure that some of them will be quite interesting. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Bill Neichter



Countdown was long; send-off, celestial

Well, Omer's finally up there. Almost 12 years after his two daughters wanted to give him his final wish — to have his ashes rocketed into space — Omer Lamkin's remains are floating around in the heavens, along with those of 1960s guru Timothy Leary and "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry.



**BOB
HILL**

"He's in fabulous company," said one daughter, Paula Lamkin of San Francisco. "It's been worth every bit of the wait."

THE WAIT for this epic journey is the stuff of "Star Trek." Omer Lamkin was a big, gregarious man who worked

for Whayne Supply Co. in Louisville for 35 years. His passions were clothes, travel and University of Louisville athletics. He died of a heart attack in May 1985, not long after reading a magazine article about a Melbourne, Fla., company called Celestis that had proposed sending cremated ashes into orbit 2,200 miles above earth for \$3,900.

"When you stopped to think about it," said Pamela Karrer of Louisville, the second daughter, "that was Dad all the way."

The daughters sent some of their father's ashes and a check to the Florida company. They never heard back from the company; its phone was eventually disconnected. The daughters gave up on the project and the money.

LAST SEPTEMBER — 11 years later — the sisters saw an Associated Press story saying a Houston company — also named Celestis — was preparing to rocket ashes into space. After a phone call the

sisters learned their father's ashes were still in a safety-deposit box in Florida. The widow of the owner of the defunct Florida company agreed to forward the ashes — and their \$3,900 — to the Houston company. Omer was getting back on board.

It was last February before Lamkin's ashes — along with those of 25 other people, including Leary, Roddenberry, space physicist Gerald O'Neill and a 4-year-old Japanese boy — made the first leg of their journey into space.

Paula Lamkin said she went to Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, where she saw a Pegasus rocket containing the ashes in lipstick-sized containers attached to the belly of an L-1011. The plane then took off for Madrid, Spain, the second stop in the journey.

"IT WAS JUST pitch black on a beautiful clear night when the L-1011 took off," she said. "It banked around to the right, its lights blinking like a spaceship or something. We all had tears in our eyes."

The L-1011 flew to Madrid because the ashes were actually going to hitchhike into orbit on the Pegasus rocket carrying Spain's first satellite. The L-1011 would fly from Madrid to the Canary Islands, climb to 38,000 feet, then release the rocket.

In mid-April Paula Lamkin flew to Madrid, then to a Canary Islands tracking station to watch her father's ashes go up in space. It was April 21 when it finally occurred. And she almost missed it: Her taxi driver got lost trying to find the tracking station. After a 12-year wait, she arrived with only two minutes to spare and watched the L-1011 take off.

"There was an on-board camera on the airplane so we got to watch the launch live on a big screen," she said. "The airplane flew southwest of the Canary Islands for about an hour before it dropped the Pegasus."

LAMKIN WAS almost numb with anticipation, excitement; if anything went wrong the Pegasus was to be dumped into the ocean. As she watched the screen, the L-1011 dropped the rocket and lurched upward. Five seconds later the Pegasus rocket kicked in.

"It was fabulous," Lamkin said. "We had to wait for 15 minutes until the third-stage separation, but then we knew he was going to be in orbit."

Omer Lamkin's ashes — now several hundred miles overhead — will stay up from 18 months to 10 years, then burn as the chunk of launch vehicle to which they are attached falls back to Earth. Meanwhile, Paula Lamkin wears shooting-star pins on her collar and thinks often of her father.

"He knows we did a good job of getting him up there," she said.