

Bruce Briegleb: Walking (and Sometimes Crawling!) to the Mesa Lab

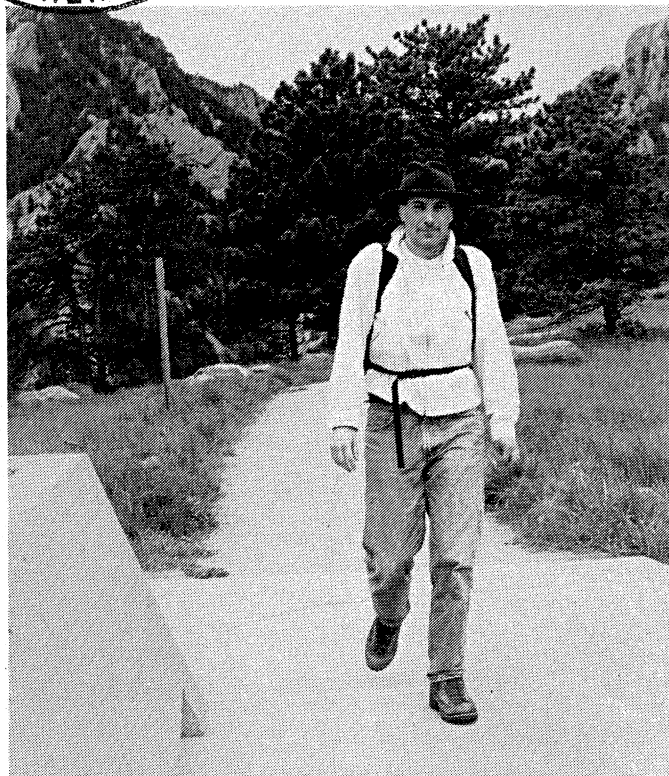
by Chris Ennis

Long before TAP was even a gleam in our committee's eye, Bruce Briegleb (Climate and Global Dynamics Division) was using alternative transportation to get to the Mesa Lab. His mode of choice since 1975 has been perhaps the simplest one of all: foot power. Every day of the week for many years—with only the rarest of exceptions—Bruce has donned walking gear and a backpack and walked the round trip from his Table Mesa home to NCAR. His gear has come to include a new trademark added in recent years: a broad-rimmed hat that his wife encouraged him to wear to ward off the sun's rays (see photo). Not, that's not Indiana Jones you see coming over the ridge early each morning; it's Bruce.

Why walk, you ask? Bruce quickly replies with many reasons. He does it for the exercise, for the quiet time it provides, for the pleasure of soaking

in the peaceful surroundings of his journey. In the morning, he finds that it clears his mind and readies him for the day ahead. On the way home, there can be an added bonus because he often walks home puzzling over a programming problem that has plagued him during the day, only to have the sudden realization of a solution occur to him as he makes his way down the mesa. The walk also leads to some "up close and personal" encounters with wildlife. This has included foxes,

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Bruce Briegleb (Photo by Bob Bumpas)

Taking Two Wheels To Work: How NCAR's Cycling Commuters Do It

by Joanne Dunnebecke

There you are, waiting for the light at (choose all of the following) Valmont, Arapahoe, Colorado and Baseline. It's five o'clock and Foot-hills Parkway looks like a parking lot. Suddenly, a bike zipping along the bike path catches your eye. Hmm . . . no red lights over there and no traffic either. What ARE you doing alone in your car?

I talked to some devoted NCAR cycle commuters to try to figure out how they manage to get themselves onto bicycles instead of into their cars in the morning. Their answers may provide some inspiration for you. I'm pleased to report that the most commonly mentioned reason for riding is that riding your bike feels

good. (And you were probably thinking that this was a bunch of closet masochists!) Ilana Stern of SCD said that most mornings she'd much rather be on her bike than in a car. On a bike you're "smelling the air, feeling the wind, hearing the birds, and seeing the sights." Cheryl Jones of RAP said, "My day starts off so much better if I get up and spend some time outside breathing fresh air and looking at the beauty of the mountains." Jacque Marshall of SCD summed it up by saying, "Spend my mornings and evenings in a car when I could be on my bike? (shudder) Perish the thought!"

Part of the reason people feel better is that they know their commut-

ing habits are good for planet earth. Don Lenschow of MMM noted that he feels good about "doing his little bit to conserve fossil fuels." For people who regularly ride to the mesa, there's no avoiding the ever-increasing Boulder brown cloud. John Clyne of SCD is sickened by the sight but knows that by riding his bike, he's part of the solution rather than part of the problem, and he feels good about himself as a result. Ilana Stern concludes that using non-polluting transportation provides real moral satisfaction.

Nearly everyone mentioned that cycle commuting is a great way to work exercise into your daily schedule. Responses ranged from "This

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Two Wheels (from page 1)

WILL be anonymous, won't it?" reply of "I'd weight three hundred pounds if I didn't do this!" to "It helps me stay in shape," to "If I do this, I don't have to go to the gym."

Several cycle commuters commented on the efficiency of cycle transport. For Rick Katz of ESIG, riding to work is nearly as fast as driving given a shorter route along the bike path and fewer stops. And when you throw in the walk from the ML parking lot to your office, even a bike ride up the big hill can end up being faster than you might think. (At least it is for some!) Don Lenschow adds that with a bike at work, you can make trips to CU, to the Marine Street labs, and Pearl Street in just about the same amount of time that it would take to drive, but with less aggravation. PLUS, as Jacque Marshall puts it, there's the charm of blithely sailing past rush-hour traffic.

One of my favorite responses to the "why do you do it?" question came from Joe Klemp of MMM. About three years ago Joe's car "burned up" while driving from RL-6 to the mesa. While looking for a new car he started biking to work, got comfortable with the idea of biking every day, and decided not to buy a second car. Now that he's part of a one-car family, it's an easy decision every morning: either he bikes to work or he doesn't go to work.

Joe summed up the advice given by virtually all of the cycle commuters: "Don't spend a lot of time thinking about whether to bike or not; just do it!" John Clyne adds, "Don't leave yourself any options in the morning. Wake up with the intent of riding your bike to work. Put your car

raining heavily and for a long time just when you want to leave work. And then pack your raincoat.

How do you make cycling a habit? Cheryl Jones encourages you to take a practice ride on the weekend to experiment with route finding and see how long it will take to get to work; build your confidence in your ability to cycle commute happily. Don Lenschow strongly suggests giving it a fair trial. "Make a promise to yourself that you will continue doing it for at least a couple of weeks. It takes a little effort to develop new habits—then it becomes second nature, and your body and your schedule adjust to it; then you start to feel better when you bicycle than when you don't."

What can you say about a form of transportation that makes you feel good, is non-polluting, burns calories, is an efficient means of transport, and costs nearly nothing? Well, once you've been at it for a while you'll probably agree with Jack Herring of MMM when he concludes that cycling just "provides a more reasonable means of commuting than the automobile." He's been at it for 27 years, so he clearly knows what he's talking about.



TIPS FROM THE PROS

Wear a helmet. Get a good lighting system for the front and rear of your bike. Get good foul weather gear. Make sure you bring enough warm clothes for the ride DOWN from the Mesa Lab. Get a backpack or panniers big enough to carry clothes, your lunch, tools, etc. Carry basic bike repair tools (at the very least a spare tube, tire repair kit, and pump) and know how to use them. Buy only clothes that don't wrinkle much (extra points given for clothes that hide bike grease). Obey traffic laws. Be considerate of others. Just do it. Have fun.

behind all the junk you store in your garage. Do whatever you need to do to make driving a less attractive alternative." Rick Katz urges you to "try to avoid the litany of excuses for not biking." Weather forecasts, in particular he notes, should be taken with a very large grain of salt. Rather than let a morning radio report that there's a 40% chance of an afternoon thunderstorm keep you off your bike, consider the probability that it will be

Fifty Reasons to Take the ML-FL Express Shuttle

by Dean Lindstrom, Chris Ennis, and Bob Henson

To strike up a conversation with someone other than yourself (and see if they answer you).
Because you couldn't get there faster if you hopped in the Electra.
To get to your crosstown meeting on time for a change.
To have an excuse to leave your crosstown meeting on time for a change.

To marvel at the sheer professionalism of the shuttle drivers.
Because it's more comfortable than your Yugo.
To zone out during the ride and practice your mantra.
To talk with Chris, the shuttle driver, about the time his car caught on fire.
To sit back and criticize all those "other" Boulder drivers.

To see if the shuttle drivers can tolerate yet another conversation about the weather.
Because you don't have to pull any cords or push any buttons to request your stop.
Because it's free!
To relax and read the latest name-calling letters to the editor in the *Colorado Daily*.
It's hip! It's hot! It's now! And anybody who's anybody knows it! (It's like Elaine's on wheels, only hipper.)

see Fifty Reasons (page 3)

Fifty Reasons (from page 2)

To talk with Eron, the shuttle driver, about various brands of potato chips.

Because you can leave the driving to NCAR (along with the insurance, oil change, etc.).

To see if anyone else on board has made up an excuse to ride the shuttle simply to get a punch toward their free mug.

To avoid that tiresome walk from the ML parking lot.

Because Elvis would have used the shuttle (you know, if he were here, and it was around . . . and he didn't have a limo . . . and we offered peanut butter and bananas . . . and Priscilla asked nicely . . . well, it's possible!)

If Dean's on the shuttle: to request some change to the shuttle schedule that you know will be impossible for him to make.

To talk with Jean, the shuttle driver, about how it is that

folks will spend over two bucks for a dressed-up cup of coffee.

To experience chauffeured, door-to-door service without all the embarrassment of a limo.

To enjoy your tasty sack lunch while seeing the sights of Boulder.

To place bets on which month the Rockies will win their next game.

To place bets on which millennium the Rockies will have their first winning season.

For Democrats: To see if anyone else on board knows any good Rush Limbaugh jokes.

For Republicans: To see if anyone else on board knows any good Hillary or Tipper jokes.

(Okay, so we only came up with twenty-seven reasons. We're just volunteers, after all. You fill in the rest!)

*Energy (from page 1)*

coyotes, deer, and even a box turtle. He's not certain that the deer have become any more numerous in recent years, but "they may be getting more friendly now." He sees about two snakes per year. Bruce notes that no bears, mountain lions, or rattlesnakes have made it onto his list of sighting—"yet!"

This is not to say that it's just a bed (trail?) of roses out there. Winter weather makes the walk quite tricky and, at times, arduous. Cutting a trail through knee-deep snow is no easy task, and often must be repeated on the next journey because winds have erased the initial effort. Drifts at the ridge of the mesa have gotten so high on occasions that the walk became more of a crawl. A patch of ice, disguised by a thin coating of fresh snow, made for a surprise fall one time and pointed out the cushioning advantage of carrying a backpack full of extra clothes. In winter, Bruce advises walkers to "be prepared" with proper clothing. This can include thermal underwear, good gloves and hat, neck warmer, and even goggles on the roughest of days. In the warmer weather, there are two main kinds of pests to contend with: ticks and afternoon thunderstorms. Bruce always does a complete change of

clothes when he arrives from his walk, a preventive measure that very effective foils the eight-legged critters' plans. He also recommends thoroughly combing your hair after a walk on the mesa, to brush out any of these unwanted hitchhikers. Stick to wider, established trails and avoid brushing up against bushes and tall grass to minimize your chances of picking up ticks.

One of Bruce's biggest adventures over the years was the time he raced home ahead of a summer storm. The storm was moving much faster than he expected, with Bruce timing the thunder from the lightning bolts and suddenly realizing that his walk had better become a jog. The next bolt convinced him that the job must become a run, because the lightning had struck just behind him! Almost down the mesa now, Bruce saw a

bolt strike ahead of him—and just in time, he was able to duck under an awning of the first house he encountered. A passing motorist had seen his predicament and offered a ride home. Shivering, Bruce made a rare exception to policy and accepted the lift.

Though not always so hair-raising, there have been lots of other memorable events on Bruce's walks, and he says he has "so many more stories he could tell." When you see him next, perhaps he can share another one with you: "Oh yeah, and then there was the time that. . ."



Muskrat Love (or, the Ballad of the Self-Sacrificing Shuttler)

by Robert "Frost" Henson

Ciuffini's her name, Mary Ann to you.
She's an SCD person, but to one
cause, she's true:
Animals—all sizes, all stripes—are
her thing,
And a certain scared muskrat made
her heart go "ping."

It happened on Wednesday, the 10th
of May,
The Day of the Muskrat, as we're now
wont to say.
On the FL-ML run of NCAR's TAP
van,
At TM and Broadway, the action
began.

At ten minutes to eight, with the van
en route
To the mesa, the shuttlers heard
Mary Ann shout
"Look out! There's a muskrat here,
trying to cross
Table Mesa in traffic! Our haste is its
loss!"

The poor little creature just couldn't
find its way
Between cars and buses going every
which way
Mary Ann knew the rodent was
hopelessly lost
And she vowed to protect its life at all
costs.

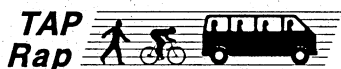
So Chris hit the brakes, and to
everyone's wonder,
Mary Ann leapt out, her stride filled
with thunder.
She ran to the critter, umbrella in
hand,
And tried to maneuver it toward safe
land.

But, reports Chris, "It'd have none of
that!"
The creature charged Mary Ann,
barking, "Take that!"
Instead of returning to its creekside
abode—
it dashed for the parked cars in
double-time mode.

With a schedule to keep, Chris had to
get moving
Though the muskrat's luck was hardly
improving.
Mary Ann waved Chris on with "I'll fix
things! I will!"
As incredulous shuttlers made their
way up the hill.

As for the muskrat, it dashed to some
shops
Where, inside a laundry, it caused
jaws to drop.
Doors quickly slammed shut on the
wandering soul,
While M.A. had the laundry call
Animal Control.

The ending is happy, Mary Ann's glad
to say:
"The city folks took the 'lil muskrat
away.
It's now at a safe place near Greeley,
we hear,
And I *did* make it in on that day—
never fear!"



Thanks for Everything, Chris!

We're saddened to announce the departure from the Transportation Alternatives Group of Chris Ennis, one of TAG's founders and an integral force in the success of the program. Chris has put in an enormous amount of extra hours, energy, and enthusiasm on TAG and TAP over the past three years. She recently moved to a different position in the Atmospheric Chemistry Division; her new responsibilities—and a child she's expecting near the end of the year—made it time to bid TAG adieu. We'll miss you greatly, Chris!

Transpo- Nugget

According to a theoretical model created by the Rand Corporation, each additional mile walked or run by a sedentary person would give him or her an extra 21 minutes of life and save society an average of 24 cents in medical and other costs.

EASY RIDER

Is published approximately twice yearly as part of the TAP program.

This edition of the newsletter was produced by a subcommittee of the Transportation Alternatives Group: Bob Henson (Editor), Lee Fortier (Production/Layout), Steve Massie, Chuck Carlentine, and Dean Lindstrom.

Other members of TAG:

Wayne Adams, Linda Croom, Joanne Dunnebecke, John Owen, Chris Snyder.

"Cofounder Emeritus": Chris Ennis.

Check Out New ML Bike Lockers

The east end of the Mesa Lab now boasts a set of reinforced bicycle lockers for your to protect your trusty two-wheeler from the elements. They work in the same way as the ones at Foothills: insert a quarter and remove the key when storing your bike, and you'll get your quarter back when you retrieve your bike. The lockers are meant for day use only. Contact Harry Hiebert (ext. 1121) if you have any questions about the new lockers.



Jim Robinson: Ditching his Car and Living to Tell about It

by Chuck Carlentine and Bob Henson

Jim Robinson, SCD personal-computer consultant, has taken RTD buses and the shuttle to the Mesa Lab nearly every day since 1988. That winter, he decided he had had enough of driving to work. "Every time a storm was coming in, I spent the day uptight wondering how the drive home was going to be. By the end of the winter, I decided that commuting by public transit was so much better for my mental health, I would stick with it." Jim parked his car, which he says never seemed to get repaired properly, and he hasn't used it since.

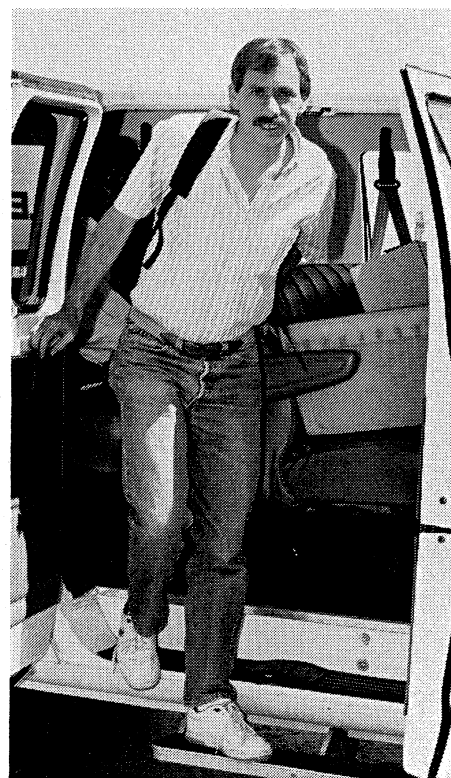
Of course, 1988 was long before UCAR and NCAR provided free bus passes. "At the beginning, I was buying \$18-a-month bus passes and taking cabs once or twice a month when I needed to. I soon realized that giving up the car was saving me a lot of money." By the time he added the cost of buying a car to the expense of insurance and maintenance, Jim was amazed at how much money is invested in automobiles. "I rent cars when I absolutely need to get away from Boulder. I use a cab if it's a small need for some business in town either after the buses stop running on weekends or when a bus won't do." For instance, he'll use a cab to take his cat to the vet or to bring home a large purchase from the store.

At first, recalls Jim, "Everybody I talked to thought I was more than a little bit weird for using public transit. Gradually, I noticed that people started changing their attitudes. Maybe three years ago, people would say, 'Well, that's really great that you are doing this, Jim, but I don't think I can.' Now, there are a fair number of people who do this every day."

Jim doesn't find buying a car a justifiable cost unless "you are wedded to the idea of using a car to get around. Boulder is supposedly this environmentally aware town, yet everyone seems to drive everywhere. When you have weaned yourself off your car, you find out there are a lot of inconveniences associated with it: keeping the car maintained, arranging your schedule around a repair shop visit, dealing with traffic, and dealing with the suburban sprawl that could only have happened because of private cars."

Being carless has its inconveniences, Jim admits. "You have to schedule your trips with a little more time and a little more advance notice. But that keeps me more sane, because otherwise I can easily become completely unstructured." Another drawback, Jim notes, is that you must live in an area that provides "decent" public transportation. As far as he is concerned, Lafayette and Louisville don't really qualify, so he prefers to live in Boulder. "It also helps that I chose to live within convenient access to the Broadway line, which has the best bus service in Boulder."

Jim estimates that it would take about 25 minutes to drive from his North Boulder home to his Mesa Lab office, counting the five-minute walk from the parking lot. Using the bus and shuttle takes from 35 to 45 minutes. He uses the extra time to "read study, think, sleep, and especially to unwind at the end of the day. When I used to drive, I would get so angry at Boulder drivers that by the time I got to work I was in a bad mood." Looking at the big picture, Jim says, "All these issues require some tradeoffs and some changes to



Jim Robinson (Photo by Bob Bumpas)

one's lifestyle, but if we really believe in protecting the environment then we will always have to forgo a few apparent conveniences. What it's all about, for me, is living according to your values."

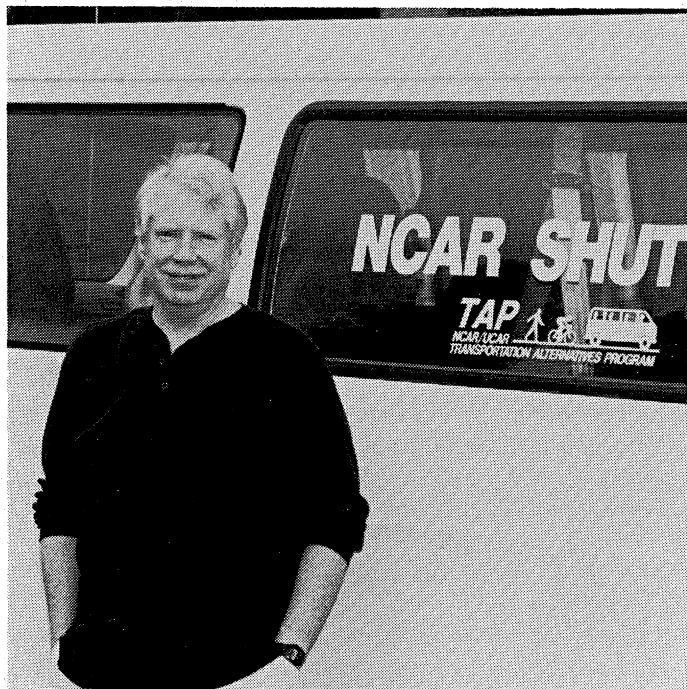
Just one day after I (Chuck) interviewed Jim, I paid nearly \$200 to repair my car. The stress from guessing if I was going the speed limit (from a broken speedometer) and the smell of burning oil got the best of me. Now the red oil light is on and the engine sounds like a fast-ticking time bomb. "You need a new engine," the mechanic says. My car now has "For Sale" signs on it. All I need to do is review what Jim told me, and I'll know how to cope without a car.

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Shuttle Onto Broadway . . .

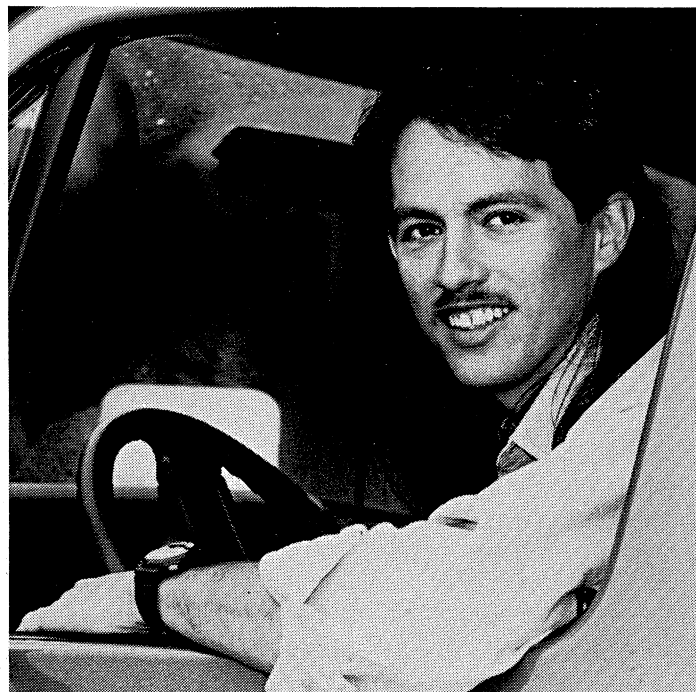
When it comes to alternative transportation, the stars on Broadway are the NCAR shuttle drivers.

Three of them are pictured here. The fourth, Jean Hancock, prefers to go incognito, but you can find her navigating the morning runs. Jean also has just been named transportation lead within Traffic Services. Congrats, Jean!



(Photo by Bob Bumpas)

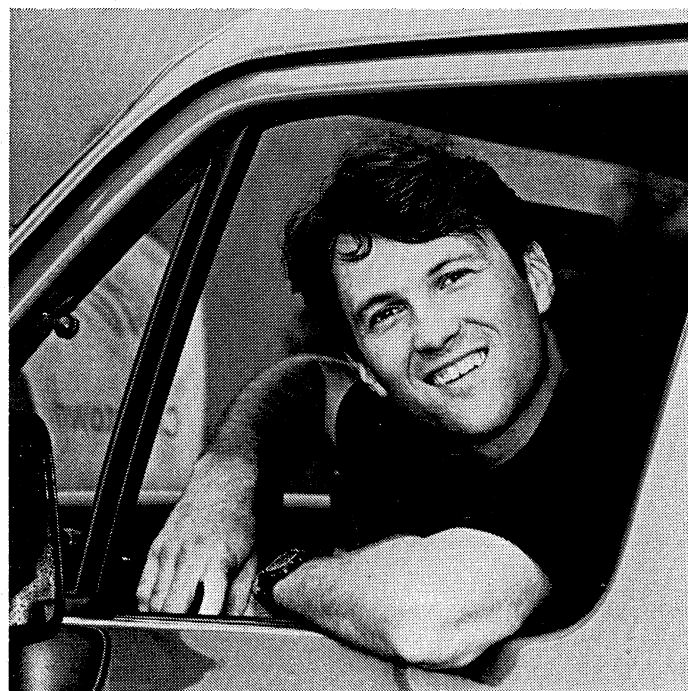
Michael "Eron" Brennan is a "Roads Scholar" who is liable to challenge you with intriguing questions such as "How about those Rockies?" "What do you think of this weather?" or "Which stop would you like?" Once you get past the easy questions be prepared to embark on a short course in maientics. What is maientics? Why not ask Eron next time you ride with him!



(Photo by Carlye Calvin)

Commander Steven Conrad is a veteran NCAR shuttle pilot who has flown many missions daily since being called into active duty on 19 May 1993. "**Maverick**" as his crew call him, cross-trains for duty by skiing, cycling and mountaineering, (snow, ice, indoor & outdoor rock climbing). He also enjoys shooting action photos and video.

Chris Cooke, the affable veteran of the four shuttle drivers, didn't supply us with his biography. So . . . if you want to know about those sultry nights in Lisbon, or that trip to Arizona, you'll have to catch up with Chris on the morning shuttle. But do it quickly—he's leaving NCAR in August to begin teaching in Boulder Valley Schools.



(Photo by Carlye Calvin)