

LOCAL NEWS

From Charlotte And The Carolinas (Carolina Living, Page 6B)

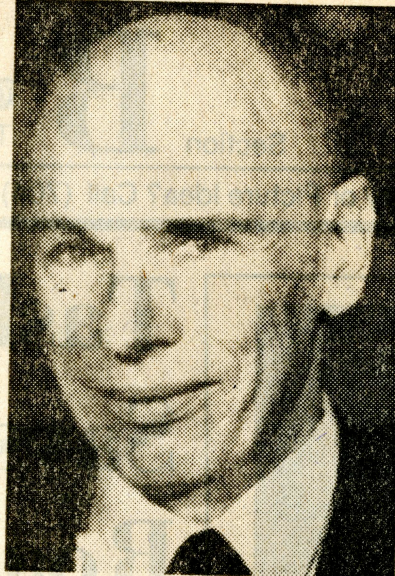
Section

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The Charlotte Observer

Thursday, January 9, 1986

Story or Picture Idea? Call (704) 379-6459 8 a.m.-Midnight



Dr. William Thornton

Thornton Tells Physicians Of Spaceflights

Dr. William Thornton was a physician speaking to physicians and their spouses Wednesday night in Charlotte, but he also was a veteran scientist-astronaut bringing an unearthly perspective on the human cardiovascular system.

Thornton, 56, a N.C. native and UNC graduate who flew space shuttle missions in 1983 and 1985, is a pioneer in space medicine with NASA and holds more than 35 patents.

His after-dinner comments, accompanying a NASA film of the Spacelab 3 mission and slides explaining some cardiovascular conditions during and after spaceflight, were applauded by about 150 guests from Mecklenburg and surrounding counties.

Many physicians participated in afternoon seminars focusing on "Management of Coronary Artery Disease Today," sponsored by Presbyterian Hospital and the Belk Heart Center.

Thornton showed that weightlessness strikingly alters the heart and blood system. Some of the most undesirable effects are now being brought under control by better exercise methods and by orally taking saline.

The application of this new knowledge will become even more important as humans venture into space for much longer periods, especially when NASA completes a permanent space station during the 1990s, Thornton said.

— Harold Warren