

Oklahoma City, OK,

Jan. 3, 1985

©Oklahoma Publishing Co. 1985

**Ferdie J. Deering**

# Would You Visit Another Planet?

**L**ONG before men walked on the moon scientists and fiction writers imagined that some day humans might reach other planets, or at least live in satellite colonies in space.

Not everybody believes this will happen, while others seem to be convinced that life has existed in other solar systems all along. Lack of proven facts lets imaginations roll.

My generation won't go to find out until we have to, so I decided to get opinions from a sample of the generation that is young enough to make such a trip if and when it is feasible.

I asked my six grandsons. All of them were born into the space age. "Fairy tales" they were exposed to were not so much "Goldilock and the Three Bears" types as they were Superman, Batman, "Star Wars" and related extra-stellar tall tales.

Steven Wilson, Ponca City, the oldest, was born the year before the first man was carried into orbit by a rocket. When I asked him whether he would like to visit another planet he replied: "Not really. I've seen

about all I need to see about space on TV."

Douglas Wilson, a junior at Oklahoma State University, said: "No, I think if God had wanted me on another planet he would have put me there. If I had a chance to do space research as an astronaut I'd do it but I wouldn't want to live there."

Clayton Wilson, almost 12, who aspires to become a history teacher, responded with: "No, but I think Kyle should go, because then he could be with his own kind of people."

Kyle is his 15-year old brother, a serious-minded hurdler and football quarterback. Kyle was ready to go. He said: "Yes, I'd like to go just to see what's out there."

David Deering, nearly 13, Bedford, Texas, wasn't so anxious. He said: "No, I like it here, and I haven't seen all of the earth yet." He has a start. He has been to Mexico, toured a dozen states and made a trip to Japan as a member of the Texas Boys Choir of Fort Worth.

Duane, his 8-year old brother and

youngest of the group, was most enthusiastic of all. He said: "Yes, I've never been on another planet and I want to go see what it's like."

The boys were interviewed separately and not a one gave any indication he thought visits to other planets are impossible.

Tales of world explorers centuries ago relate how, as boys, they dreamed of adventures they might encounter while searching for new trade routes and unknown lands. Probably others had similar fantasies but only a few made them realities.

Most of us older folks never really expected to see man-made spacecraft blasting off to report on far parts of the universe, but we've all been to places we never expected to visit.

Chances are that when travel agencies can guarantee accommodations they will quickly have a load of tourists signed up, with cameras and all the luggage they're allowed.

I wrote this type of  
editorial page comment  
from 1972 until 1985