most part, we don't push it. That hasn't worked," Kimball says.

Why has there been no general clamor for safer, albeit more expensive automobiles? Claybrook says the reason is that consumers commonly lack information about comparative auto safety, a circumstance she has tried to amend by publishing the results of government-sponsored crash tests.

Perhaps the best test of public interest in safe autos will occur when Minicars, Inc., begins to manufacture the NHTSA-prototype cars for general sale. Friedman says that production at a plant in Puerto Rico will begin in 1984 if requisite financing can be obtained. He anticipates eventual sales of 30,000 cars a year, each priced at $10,000—roughly 20 percent more than comparable cars lacking the NHTSA-developed safety features. Friedman predicts that many of the buyers will be previous auto accident victims or their relatives. Kimball is skeptical. "I don't believe it. Let's let them try it."

A partner in the firm responsible for the Chevette ad claims that it has resulted in higher sales. But the safety ad's future is troubled. A spokesman for General Motors, maker of the Chevette, is reported to have said the company was "not terribly proud" of it. *Automotive Age*, the industry trade journal, said the ad "demonstrates execrable bad taste" and called it shocking, foolish, and stupid.

—R. JEFFREY SMITH

Citizens for Space

Space enthusiasts hope grass roots political action will help boost NASA's budget

Public support of the space program has waxed and waned over the years and some advisers in the incoming Reagan Administration have singled it out for cuts. Yet the recent photographs of Saturn returned by the Voyager spacecraft found a wide and receptive audience. Over the past 5 years, in fact, the number of space enthusiasts has steadily grown, to the point that citizen space groups of one sort or another now command a total membership of some 40,000.

This embryonic space movement has begun to turn to political activism. Buoyed by the Voyager encounters with Jupiter and now Saturn, discouraged by the seemingly endless delays on the space shuttle, dismayed by what many see as a timid, go-slow approach to the future of space exploration on the part of NASA and the last three administrations, and frightened by the prospects under Reagan, more and more space enthusiasts have resolved to raise their voices in Washington.

"We've been dreaming," says David C. Webb, who last spring founded Campaign for Space, the first political action committee (PAC) devoted to funding candidates who favor a strong space program. "Political action will have to become *the* big thing in the space movement if space exploration is to happen at all."

Webb is the first to admit that his committee had no discernable effect on the 1980 elections. Like the similar Citizens' for Space PAC, also founded last spring, he is organizing for 1982 and beyond.

Already, however, space advocates have proved to be effective lobbyists. Last year the L-5 Society of Tucson, Arizona, successfully fought the United Nation's "Moon Treaty" (*Science*, 23 November 1979, p. 915) by hiring Washington lobbyist Leigh S. Ratiner, who had worked for Kennecott Copper Corp. on the Law of the Sea negotiations, to persuade Congress that the treaty would chill any commercial interest in space.

One outgrowth of the Moon Treaty fight was a nationwide telephone network reaching some 6000 people; that network is now a permanent, formal organization. Last summer, for example, it was used to trigger a letter-writing campaign that helped stave off budgetary threats to the space telescope and the Galileo Jupiter mission.

To maintain political momentum, Ratiner has incorporated the "Space Coalition." The idea is that tax-exempt organizations like L-5, limited to spending no more than 20 percent of their funds on legislative action, will pool their money with aerospace companies for a permanent lobbying effort.

Most of the citizens' groups seem receptive enough says Ratiner. But thus far only 3 out of the top 20 aerospace firms have signed up. He and the coalition's new director, Robert Salisbury, chairman of an independent oil and gas company in New York, will seek more corporate support in coming months.

NASA has been targeted by Reagan budget director David Stockman as a prime recipient for cuts, and the coalition's first task may be to persuade Congress to maintain NASA's budget at present levels.

Other space groups, meanwhile, eschew lobbying in favor of public education. One of the most vigorous of these is the Planetary Society, founded in 1979 by Cornell University astronomer Carl Sagan and Jet Propulsion Laboratory director Bruce Murray. In September 1980 the society began its first direct-mail membership drive, using a brochure lavishly illustrated with Voyager and Viking imagery. Some 12,000 people signed up in the first 3 months, at $20 apiece.

A survey by writer Trudy E. Bell in the September issue of *Star & Sky* lists as many as 32 citizen-supported space interest groups, almost all of them founded in the past 5 years. The total membership as of May 1980 was 39,900, although many people belong to several groups.

Bell also quotes the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, which finds in its annual General Social Survey that public support for the space program, while hardly overwhelming, is on the rise from its all-time low in 1975. In that year, some 60 percent of the respondents thought that too much was being spent on space versus 7.4 percent who felt that too little was being spent. The most recent figures available, from 1978, are, respectively, 47.2 and 11.6 percent.

In their headier moments some space enthusiasts have compared themselves with the environmental movement. Perhaps a more realistic comparison is to the solar energy movement, which likewise has shown that even a small group of people, passionately dedicated to a cause, can have a significant impact on public policy.—M. MITCHELL WALDROP

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