



NASA/MSFC Retirees Association

NASA/MSFC Retiree Association P. O. Box 4492, Huntsville, Alabama 35815

AUGUST 2021 ISSUE

QUARTERLY MRA LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, SEPT. 14, 2021 THE LEDGES

Social & Registration: 11:00 – 12 noon – Lunch: 12 noon

Menu: Garden Salad, Slow-Cooked Oven Pot Roast with Creamy Mashed Potatoes, and Steamed Carrots, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea Dessert: Chocolate Pie

\$25.00 per person

This will be a hybrid luncheon including “in person” and “Zoom (for those who are not vaccinated or do not feel comfortable in group meetings)”

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on **Thursday, Sept. 9, 2021** at benniejacks@att.net, or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by The Ledges. **If you are joining us by Zoom**, please provide Bennie with your current email and cell phone number. Samantha Hereford, a special friend to MRA, has been assisting us in Zoom meetings, and will be sending you the Link to join us. Be sure that her email is accepted by you and that it doesn't go to Spam. Samantha Hereford email: samanthahereford@yahoo.com.



PROGRAM SPEAKER

*Dr. Jim Green, Chief
Scientist, NASA Headquarters*

TOPIC:

**EXPLORING MARS-
HUMAN AND ROBOTICS**

NASA's Chief Scientist Jim Green serves as principal adviser to the NASA administrator and other senior officials on agency science programs, strategic planning, science policy, and the evaluation of related investments.

Prior to his appointment as the chief scientist, Dr. Green was the director of the Planetary Science Division at NASA Headquarters from August 2006 to April 2018. Under his leadership, he managed the New Horizons spacecraft flyby of Pluto, the Juno spacecraft to Jupiter, and the landing of the Curiosity rover on Mars just to name a few. Jim was also the lead consultant on the movie “The Martian.”

He also has a special interest in Civil War History and has lectured extensively on Civil War Ballooning.

He started his NASA career in 1980 at Marshall Space Flight Center in the Solar Terrestrial Division of the Space Science Laboratory and was also a safety diver in the Neutral Buoyancy Simulator.

Jim always said, “My experience at MSFC was seminal in gaining the foundational science and exploration background that I have used throughout my career.”

Message from MRA President.....

As we approach the beautiful fall time period in North Alabama, we look forward to both the easing of the hotter temperatures and the emerging of color in the trees as nature reminds us of the spectacular vistas of life. The pandemic continues to challenge us to do our part in getting vaccinated to protect ourselves, our families and our friends.

We are planning for our quarterly MRA luncheon on September 14th with Dr. Jim Green, the NASA Chief Scientist, visiting to tell us about the activities related to robotic and human exploration of Mars. As you all know, Dr. von Braun thought and dreamed about this journey from his youth and had a plan for executing the journey as early as 1949, which he updated as technology advanced. When he and the Rocket Team came to Huntsville, this plan became an outline for all of the space explorers who joined the group first at ABMA and then NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center. NASA has been following this plan with amazing robotic missions to prepare the way and new rocket technology to get humans to the moon and then to Mars.

The MRA board is anxious to bring everyone together on September 14th at the Ledges. We will make a judgement closer to the time with regard to the approach, depending on the Covid situation. However, for planning purposes, we are going forward with a hybrid meeting (in-person and Zoom for those that are not comfortable with meeting in large groups). For those attending in person, having a vaccination will be very important. We hope to see everyone there.

The Space Exploration Memorial is continuing its development as described in a separate article in this newsletter. As the pandemic has slowed, we are expanding our outreach to employees, former employees, companies, government organizations and the general public.

Our new MRA Facebook page, **Space Explorers Huntsville**, will be online in the next week or so.

Please stay connected by **adding your biographical data and personal stories of your space exploration adventure to the memorial database on the MRA website:** www.marshallretirees.org and plan to join us for the MRA luncheon in September!

Rick Chappell

Lunar Rover Vehicle 50th Anniversary Celebration

By Ron Creel



Apollo 15 LRV Veterans Ron Creel and Wayne Wagon

Huntsville had its own 50th anniversary celebration of the Apollo 15 landing carrying our first MSFC-developed Lunar Roving Vehicle on July 30, 2021, with a special Planetarium Show at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center.

The Planetarium director, David Weigel, created a great show, which transported the audience on the Apollo 15 trip to the moon, landing, and exploration of the Hadley Mountains and Rille, complete with a Lunar Rover traversing the terrain and collecting samples and using special exploration equipment on this important science mission.

MSFC retirees, Lunar Rover veterans, and public space enthusiasts attended the event and had a great night “roving on the moon.”

Unfortunately, LRV Program Director Sonny Morea and his wife Ann, were involved in a serious car accident and were unable to attend. They are recuperating and we wish them a speedy recovery.

MRA DUES REMINDER

By Mary Spaulding

Dues for 2021 were due beginning January 1, 2021. Dues are \$30 per year and may be paid by mailing a check, made payable to MSFC Retirees Association, to: MSFC Retirees Association, P. O. Box 4492, Huntsville, AL 35815, or by paying at the next Quarterly Meeting/Luncheon.

With the pandemic causing cancellation of several meetings in 2020 and 2021, dues are lagging. If you have questions regarding your dues status, please contact Mary.

Membership in the Association is open to former MSFC or other NASA Center employees. New retirees are automatically offered a free membership for the remainder of the year in which they retire. If retirement occurs after the first day of September, membership will be free for the remainder of the current year and for the entire upcoming year. Spouses of deceased MRA members may attain membership status with membership dues waived.

If your mailing address or e-mail address has changed, please remember to let Mary Spaulding know by e-mailing her at md_spaulding@comcast.net or calling 256-883-2228 so we can keep our records up to date.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Roy W. Malone, Jr.
Sheila H. Fogle
Ron Creel
Rebecca Selvage

Ruth von Saurma will celebrate her 100th birthday on August 29, 2021. Ruth is a long-time member of MRA. She returned to Germany several years ago to be near her daughter and she misses her MSFC family. We encourage you to send her a birthday card to the following address:

Ruth von Saurma
Felix-Dahn-Strabe 2 a
81925 Munchen, Germany

Updates on Website, Memorial Database, and Facebook Page

By Gray Settle

MRA Website:

The Marshall Retirees Association (MRA) website: www.marshallretirees.org, continues to be updated, as necessary. Contributors to the proposed Space Exploration Memorial are added to the lists, with their permission.

Memorial Database:

Background information for the former and current MSFC personnel in the Memorial Database is added to the website, when submitted by self, family, friends, and colleagues. Following a verification activity, primarily aimed at eliminating duplicates, the database contains approximately 21,400 names. Further errors and duplicates are being corrected, as they are found.

A significant change was made for the user searching for names in the database, in that the search is no longer for Last Name only; instead, all the fields in the database are searched for the text entered. A user can continue to search for Last Name, as before, or, if desired, one can enter both First Name and Last Name. In addition, one can search for content not related to the names, such as “propulsion,” which will find all database entries with “propulsion” in the biographical or other information.

To enrich the database content, we continue to solicit submission of background data. Also, any errors or needed corrections found may be submitted through the edit feature in the database section of the website, by submitting a question through the website feature, or by direct contact with Gray Settle at marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com.

Facebook Page:

A new MRA Facebook page, **Space Explorers Huntsville**, will be online in the next week or so. Bennie Jacks will serve as administrator for this page. This will be a valuable source to disseminate information regarding the Space Exploration Memorial and other MRA activities/events. Please visit and “like” this page.

WHERE SCIENCE AND ART CONNECT.....



Caroline Wang, Retiree & Artist



"We Rise with our Dreams"

Caroline Wang worked at MSFC as an engineer and researcher for more than three decades. She discovered her passion for art at an early age. After retiring in 2016, she became a full-time artist. Her signature style interfuses Asian heritage and Western techniques.

Caroline's art is based on interesting stories and inspirations. She also uses her art images to make clothing. Today's technology allows artists to download art images to fashion design patterns and create custom-made clothing. (More info to come on this.)

At the June luncheon, Rick encouraged her to create a unique painting to tell NASA's story for the Memorial, "We Rise with our Dreams." Through Rick's storytelling and Caroline's imagination, she created a painting from cotton fields to space exploration and beyond. Most of MSFC programs are in the shadow of the moon in the painting, as well as a conceptual drawing of the Memorial.

Caroline has donated prints to the gift shop at the USSRC with a portion of the proceeds going to fund the Memorial.

She will be at the September 14th luncheon and will sign prints of her painting in exchange for a donation to the Memorial.

SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL (UPDATE)

By Rick Chappell



Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic, the process to create the Space Exploration Memorial is continuing on a number of fronts. The overall overview of the memorial has been adjusted for the pandemic impact. Our period of planning, fundraising and construction has been extended to cover 2019-2023, the 50th anniversary of the period of Apollo flights to the moon and the inclusion of the upcoming initial flights of the Artemis program that will return humans to the moon. This is a very significant period in America's space exploration. The most recent brochure can be seen on the MRA website: www.marshallretirees.org.

The MSFC current and former employee database is in place and accessible through the MRA website and is being populated with biographical and career information. Names of companies and their employees will be added to the database as they become known. **Please do your part and add your bio/career stories to the database and contribute to the memorial project!**

Contributions are continuing to come in. The total is now approaching \$80,000. We are beginning our discussions with companies who have partnered with MSFC over the years. We have also met with the Huntsville City Administrator seeking the support of the City. Discussions are also continuing with the USSRC regarding the location and approach to the Space Exploration Memorial. With respect to location, the Full Spectrum company in Atlanta has given us the first draft of an animation showing possible locations for the memorial at the USSRC.

SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL (UPDATE) (Cont'd) **By Rick Chappell**

As the pandemic subsides, we plan to dramatically expand our public outreach, both with respect to the memorial database and fundraising. A new MRA Facebook page, **Space Explorers Huntsville**, will be activated in the coming weeks and will merge with the MRA website and brochure. Bennie Jacks will be the administrator of the Facebook page. A special painting by Caroline Wang, “We Rise with Our Dreams” will be part of our outreach. (See separate article)

NOTE: If you are not comfortable with making donations to the Memorial on line, you may send a check to the following address. You will receive a letter of acknowledgement for tax purposes: U. S. Space & Rocket Center Education Foundation: Attention: Brenda Carr, Executive Director, One Tranquility Base, Huntsville, AL 35805. **Designate donation to go to the Space Exploration Memorial.**

BADGE CHANGES TO ENTER REDSTONE ARSENAL Information provided by Hollie Smith, Security Office, MSFC

Effective **July 1, 2021**, Redstone Arsenal will no longer accept NASA MSFC Temporary and Center Specific (NASA Retiree Badges) for entry through Redstone Arsenal Gates.

Individuals with a NASA MSFC Temporary or Center Specific (local badge) badge will be required to visit the Visitor Control Center (VCC) at Gate 9 **prior to July 1, 2021**, to register their driver license for entry to the Redstone Arsenal Automated Installation Entry System (AIE).

Starting **July 1, 2021**, individuals with a Temporary or Center Specific (local badge) will be required to scan their driver license when coming through the Redstone Arsenal gates. Failure to register your driver license with the VCC could result in your access to Redstone Arsenal gates being denied. The Visitor Control Center is located on Rideout Road just prior to entering Gate 9.

Your Temporary or Center Specific (local badge) is still required for access to NASA MSFC once through the Redstone Arsenal gates. Please do not destroy or turn in your Temporary or Center Specific badge.

NASA MSFC PIV and ASB badges, with the gold chip, will continue to be accepted at Redstone Arsenal gates.

For questions, contact Martha Adams at: martha.j.adams@nasa.gov, 256.544.4758 at Gate 9.

PHOTO GALLERY FROM MAY 2021 LUNCHEON



Brenda & Rick Chappell, Kimberly Robinson, Guest Speaker & CEO USSRC, & Brenda Carr, USSRC

Parker Counts, Bebe & Wayne Littles



Pete Allen and Jan Davis



Brenda Carr, USSRC, Jack & Becky Stokes

PHOTO GALLERY FROM MAY 2021 LUNCHEON



Registration Desk: Mary Spaulding,
Gray Settle and Brenda Chappell



Lowell Zoller & Richard Hoover



Joanne & Jim Splawn & Helga von
Pragenau



Bennie Jacks & Jean Lee

BROOKS MOORE RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM AUBURN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Brooks Moore wearing his Lifetime Achievement Medal and holding a slice of the Auburn oak trees from Toomer's Corner. With Brooks are Grethen Van Valkenburg, V- P of the Office of Alumni Affairs & Exec. Dir. of the Auburn Alumni Assn. and Regenia Sanders, President of the Auburn Alumni Assn. The presentation was held in Auburn on June 12, 2021.

Brooks graduated in 1948 with a degree in electrical engineering.

He spent more than 50 years working in the space industry, beginning at the Naval Research Laboratory in Panama City, Florida, and later with the U.S. Army's Rocket Development Team under Wernher von Braun. He directed the design of control systems for the Redstone, Jupiter and Pershing missile systems, a development effort that led to the 1958 launch of the first U.S. satellite, Explorer.

A charter member of NASA/Marshall, he oversaw the design of guidance, control, electrical and computer systems for the Saturn I, IB and V rockets. He later worked on the development of technology for Skylab, the first U.S. space station, and later the Hubble Telescope, and served as President of Control Dynamics until his retirement.

For his work with NASA, the Army Missile Command and private industry, Brooks received many special honors, including induction in the Distinguished Auburn Engineer award from the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering in 2020 and induction into the Georgia Tech Hall of Fame and the State of Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame in 1997. Brooks and his late wife, Marian, have two sons, Larry and Ronald. He is a life member of the Auburn Alumni Association, and a long-time member of MRA and has served as a docent at the Space and Rocket Center for many years.

Congratulations to Brooks!

BUILDING 4200 TO BE DEMOLISHED



Construction of 4200 (Photo & Article courtesy The Marshall Star)

Since it opened in 1963, Building 4200 has been home to Marshall's executive staff, plus civil servants and contract personnel supporting many organizations. It housed the offices of 14 Marshall directors, from Dr. von Braun – who led rocket development in the 1960s and 1970s – to Singer, the first woman to serve as Marshall's director.

Marshall facilities engineers had a plan in place to decommission the building in 2030. That plan was accelerated in early 2020 when an exterior wall panel came loose from the structure and fell eight stories to the ground. Because the center was closed, with personnel teleworking in keeping with COVID-19 safety protocols, almost no one was on-site at the time. No injuries occurred.

Determining that the falling panel was caused by deterioration of rubber mounting brackets on the exterior panel, Marshall facilities managers reassessed the building's aging structure and decided to move the structure forward on the demolition list. At the time of its closure, over 400 people worked in 4200. Marshall leadership moved to the top floor of Building 4221 on the north side of the 4200 complex.

The legacy of invention and ingenuity in Building 4200 will endure. The Facilities team is working closely with NASA's History Office and the Alabama State Historic Preservation Office to preserve its history. Many of the high-fidelity Apollo-era, space shuttle, and Space Launch System models and artworks, including those previously displayed in the 4200 lobby, are on display in the Building 4221 lobby. Thousands of photos, videos, documents, drawings, blueprints, artworks, and artifacts, collected from the time of facility construction to its closure, are being archived and will be available for public access and use.

RIP 4200.



OBITUARIES

- Adams**, Robert L., 86, of Huntsville, died May 12, 2021.
Arnett, Gary M., 80, of Huntsville, died June 18, 2021.
Austin, Robert Gene, 82, of Huntsville, died July 25, 2021.
Biggerstaff, Charles R., 91, of Huntsville, died June 5, 2021.
Brandon, Walter Wiley, 91, of Huntsville, died July 14, 2021.
Carr, Billy Joe, 84 of Laurel, MD, died May 28, 2021.
Conley, David W., 95, of Huntsville, died Jun 21, 2021.
Covington, Lorenzo R., 90, of Huntsville, died June 3, 2021.
Farr, Wallace B., 88, of Huntsville, died July 31, 2021.
Few, Albert G. Few, Jr., 100, of Bradenton, FL died June 29, 2021
Fountain, Walter F., 84, of Huntsville, died July 27, 2021.
Godfrey, Roy E., 98, of Huntsville, died July 14, 2021.
Hammer, Morris W., 82, of Huntsville, died June 7, 2021.
Hubbard, Joanne, 86, of New Market, died June 25, 2021.
Lanier, Roy, 85, of Huntsville, died April 2, 2021.
Lewis, James L., 90, of Huntsville, died July 25, 2021.
Lovingood, Judson A., 84, of Huntsville, died April 29, 2021.
Lucas, Jack H., 96, of Huntsville, died June 18, 2021.
McMillan, Harold F., 96, of Englewood FL died March 2, 2021.
Mooney, Peggy Joyce, 83, of Huntsville, died May 21, 2021.
Onken, Jay Frederick, 54, of Toney died June 2, 2021.
Reynolds, John Maurice, 87, of Madison, died May 25, 2021.
Saidla, Robert L., 90, of Huntsville, died June 10, 2021.
Sellers, Robert M., 91, of Decatur, died January 6, 2021.
Sharpe, James Everett, 91, of Grassy, AL, died May 26, 2021.
Simmons, William K., Jr., 90, of Huntsville, died July 15, 2021.
Talbot, James W., 88, of Huntsville, died July 18, 2021.
Thompson, Louis D., 99, of Atlanta, died May 4, 2021.
Wojtalik, Fred S., 90, of Huntsville, died June 10, 2021.