



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

## **AUGUST 2022 ISSUE**

**WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF TIME AND WE ARE ON THE FINAL STRETCH.....**



**PLEASE READ ARTICLES ON PAGES 3, 4, AND 5 REGARDING THE SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL AND ITS FUTURE**

**MRA QUARTERLY LUNCHEON – SEPT 13<sup>TH</sup> 11:00 AM**

**MENU AND PROGRAM SPEAKER ON PAGE 2**

# MRA QUARTERLY LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

THE LEDGES

SOCIAL & REGISTRATION 11 – 12 NOON LUNCH 12 NOON

MENU:

GARDEN SALAD,

SLOW-COOKED POT ROAST WITH GRAVY, BUTTERMILK MASHED  
POTATOES AND CARROTS, DINNER ROLLS, COFFEE & TEA

DESSERT: APPLE PIE WITH WHIPPED CREAM

COST: \$28.00 PER PERSON

CASH ONLY BAR

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on **Thursday, September 8, 2022** at [benniejacks@att.net](mailto:benniejacks@att.net), or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by The Ledges

\*\*\*\*\*

PROGRAM SPEAKER: Mary Beth Koelbl

TOPIC: “ENGINEERING DIRECTORATE UPDATE”



Mary Beth Koelbl has served as Director of the Engineering Directorate at the Marshall Space Flight Center since December 2020. Her organization provides matrix engineering support to Human Exploration, Space Technology, and Science Mission Directorates’ programs and projects, technology advancements for future missions, and products and services to external partners. She served as the Deputy Director of this organization prior to her current role. Mary Beth holds a bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of

Iowa. She began her career in 1986 in the Turbomachinery Branch and held various leadership roles in propulsion at MSFC, including Director of the Propulsion Systems Department, immediately prior to her role in the Engineering Directorate.

## *Message from the President.....*

As the summer heat draws to a close and the encore azaleas and oakleaf hydrangeas are in full bloom in anticipation of the fall colors of the leaves, we all are beginning to feel a respite from Covid. That respite will be celebrated with our in-person **MRA luncheon on September 13<sup>th</sup>**! Please plan to join us.

This new feeling of freedom is being amplified by “giant leaps” that are taking place in the space program—James Webb Space Telescope and the first Artemis flight. Those missions in concert with the new foundational Space-X reusable launches are opening up a new chapter in the human exploration of space with a return to the moon and its new moon base just around the corner.

The success of these programs in which our own NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center is playing very important roles, reminds us of the amazing record of accomplishment that has taken place in Huntsville, Alabama over the past 70 years beginning with the arrival of the von Braun team in 1951. These world-changing accomplishments will be captured in the stories and information that will be in the online Space Explorers Honor Roll that is being created as part of the Space Exploration living memorial.

The MRA volunteer committee has spent more than three years finding the 22,000 names of the current and former NASA/MSFC employees. **If you haven't yet done it, please take the time to put your story/CV/Bio information in the Honor Roll database on our MRA website, [marshallretirees.org](http://marshallretirees.org).** This living memorial will capture the amazing things that have happened in Huntsville in space exploration. The world will only know about these things and your individual contributions if you take the time to remember your role and write it down for posterity. Please consider this gift of your story as your commitment to all of the other space explorers with whom you shared the great adventure that we all were so privileged to live!

Enjoy the beauty of our piece of paradise as the temperatures cool and the mountains and rivers call in the upcoming months. We'll see you in September!

*Rick Chappell*

## ROCKET PARK RENOVATIONS AT USSRC

The USSRC Rocket Park renovations are scheduled to begin in November of 2022 and to be completed by September of 2023. The rockets were removed for renovation in October of 2018, due to deterioration. The US Space and Rocket Center has done some master planning for the facility's future, and the decision was made to update Rocket Park with a green space that will house the refurbished historic rockets, the Space Launch System Pathfinder engine section, and an outdoor classroom amphitheater. The current lunar crater will be updated to reflect future lunar missions and new outdoor simulations and play areas.

The restoration will be done in phases over the next few years, and the total project estimate is \$10.2 million. All the rockets have been fully restored and are in the warehouse ready to be installed. The landscaping and civil work will be implemented before the refurbished rockets will be mounted.

MRA member Brooks Moore worked closely with USSRC to ensure the rockets would be reinstalled in proper order to tell the story of the US Space Program from its military phases leading up to NASA, including Army Redstone, Jupiter, Jupiter C, Juno II, Mercury Redstone and Saturn IB. MRA has also partnered with USSRC to build a memorial to the space explorers in Huntsville adjacent to the restored Rocket Park. (Information on the following page.)

Left: New Rocket Park Design

Right: Space Exploration Memorial



# UPDATE ON THE SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL AND THE SPACE EXPLORERS HONOR ROLL

Almost four years ago in the fall of 2018, a group of MRA employees came together to talk about how we might create a living memorial that would capture the stories of the incredible adventure of space exploration that has taken place in Huntsville over the past seven decades.

The world-class status of our Huntsville icon, the Saturn V, stands beside I-565 for all visitors and residents to see. The size of the rocket combined with the more than 100,000 people who built it over a period of almost a decade dwarfs any other city icon in the world. The iconic Eiffel tower was built by 500 men over a period of 2 years, **and it was never launched into orbit!!** What has been done in Huntsville in space exploration has been an incredible world class accomplishment!

Recognizing this reality and remembering the privilege that we all have had in being part of this journey to space, the MRA set out to create a living space exploration memorial with accompanying honor roll of people and stories—not just the leaders, but all of the people; “the wind beneath our wings!” Now we are approaching the time of the realization of this goal and challenge, the construction of the memorial in the Rocket Park of the United States Space and Rocket Center amidst the machines of space that all of us together have built. This living memorial will be built as it should be, in partnership with the USSRC which has redesigned the Rocket Park and is returning the refurbished original rockets to once again show the technological chronology of the human exploration of space.

The Space Exploration living memorial wall and database will be paid for by the people who built the machines and will stand among them to connect the people with their space vehicles. All of the names of the past and present MSFC employees will be engraved on the memorial wall and their stories will be placed in the honor roll database along with the names and stories of contractor employees who worked with MSFC. In total, the memorial’s goal will be to bring together all of the Space Explorers Huntsville, thereby capturing the stories and recognizing the contributions of everyone.

## UPDATE ON THE SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL (Continued)



We, MRA, are within two months of needing to accumulate the \$750,000 that will be used to do the construction of the memorial in the Rocket Park in partnership with the USSRC.

As of now, we have almost \$300,000 and have a substantial donation in progress that could help get us closer to the total that we need. **Please take this opportunity to do all that you can in your contributions!** As has been the case with all of the things that we have done in NASA, when we all come together, there is NOT ANYTHING THAT WE CANNOT DO!!

**PLEASE DONATE ON LINE OR**  
**COMPLETE THE DONATION FORM**  
**INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

## **MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER**

Dues for 2022 were due beginning January 1, 2022. 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 luncheon on September 13.

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 change, please remember to let Mary Spaulding know by e-mailing her at [md\\_spaulding@comcast.net](mailto:md_spaulding@comcast.net) or calling 256-883-2228 so we can keep our records up to date.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **UNITED STATES SPACE & ROCKET CENTER**

### **Biergarten is Back at the USSRC!**

Biergarten is back at the USSRC each Thursday evening and continuing through October 27<sup>th</sup>. The evening features a festive atmosphere with authentic German cuisine, drinks and live music. The event is from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Davidson Center. Admission is \$5; however, admission is free with your retirement badge and food may be purchased. Visit [www.rocketcenter.com](http://www.rocketcenter.com) for more details.

### **Artwork by Caroline Wang**

Retired MSFC engineer and researcher Caroline Wang is offering her beautiful watercolor paintings and prints for sale at the Gift Shop at the USSRC. A portion of the proceeds goes toward the fundraising for the Space Exploration Memorial. She continues to add more paintings of the many Marshall programs. You may visit her website at: [www.cwanggallery.com](http://www.cwanggallery.com).



**Left to Right: Mary Spaulding, Shirley Ellis, Judy Carr, Jean Payne, Janice Young, Barbara Shannon, and Jean Lee**

These MSFC retirees were on a bus tour of Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky and West Virginia recently. Collectively, this group had 245 years of service at MSFC, with Jean Payne recording 58 years at the Center.



**L-R: Rick Chappell, Heidi Collier, Bennie Jacks and Kenny Mitchell**

MRA had a booth at the recent Space & Missile Defense Symposium held at the VBC. MRA volunteers handed out information about membership in MRA along with Space Exploration Memorial brochures and donation forms. Over 250 exhibitors from government, industry and academia participated with over 20,000 in attendance.



# **MRA WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA (UPDATE)**

## **By Gray Settle**

Please remember that the current MRA newsletter as well as previous newsletters are archived on the MRA website and available for viewing.

If you have a group of colleagues that meet regularly, snap a photo and send to Bennie Jacks, administrator for the Facebook page. If you know of a retiree that has received special recognition, please share that information as well.

The Memorial database portion of the website continues to be updated, as needed. Background information for former and current MSFC personnel in the Memorial database is added, when submitted by self, family, friends, and colleagues.

We now have an additional website capability for “stories.” When career NASA/contractors get together, interesting stories are told about past events, projects, personal perspectives, etc. This effort is an attempt at capturing these stories and making them available for enjoyment by others. Access to the “stories” is on the top menu on the website. A number of great stories have been added, so please check it out. A form for submitting a story is on the right side of the page.

If you prefer, biographical information and stories may be submitted by email to [marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com](mailto:marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com) or to Gray Settle, [gsettle@gmail.com](mailto:gsettle@gmail.com), instead of through the website capabilities.

Fundraising for the Space Exploration Memorial continues and contributions may be submitted on line through the website and a GoFundMe account. Contributions may be made by direct mail (form enclosed in this newsletter for direct mail). Below are the websites:

**[www.marshallretirees.org](http://www.marshallretirees.org)**

**[www.gofundme.com/f/build-the-space-exploration-memorial](http://www.gofundme.com/f/build-the-space-exploration-memorial)**

**[www.facebook.com/marshallretireesassociation](http://www.facebook.com/marshallretireesassociation)**

**[www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershuntsville](http://www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershuntsville)**

## FORMER ASTRONAUT BOB STEWART CELEBRATES 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY



**L-R: Channel 48 News Anchor Liz Hurley, Phil Sandoval, Bob Stewart**

Retired Brigadier General, former NASA astronaut and USSRC docent Bob Stewart was given a surprise 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party at Phil Sandoval's Mexican Restaurant on August 12, 2022, by friends, family and colleagues. Happy Birthday, Bob! He was on the 6 o'clock news.

\*\*\*\*\*

## UAH LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

Do you have boxes of Marshall files, photographs, etc.? Please do not let these end up in the dumpster when you are no longer with us. Many have donated their papers to the Special Collections Department located at the UAH Library.

Reagan Grimsley heads this department and will be glad to pick up any collections that you wish to donate. He also urges you to contact him and visit the archives and vault to see first-hand the great job they are doing to preserve space exploration history.

Also, put this information with your important papers so that you family will know your wishes: Reagan Grimsley, 256.824.5781, email: [Reagan.grimsley@uah.edu](mailto:Reagan.grimsley@uah.edu).



## OBITUARIES

**Ball**, David Jackson, 85, of Harvest, died February 19, 2022  
**Bannister**, Tommy Calvin, 84, of Huntsville, died June 11, 2022  
**Bedsole**, Hurley Hugh, 91, of Owens Cross Roads, died June 26, 2022  
**Blanche**, James Fredrick, 89, of Hazel Green, died July 15, 2022  
**Bond**, William M., 95, of Huntsville, died July 2, 2022  
**Brolliar**, Richard, 86, of Huntsville, died August 2, 2022  
**Cowart**, Walter R., 85, of Huntsville, died June 29, 2022  
**David**, Charles Earl, 91, of Huntsville, died June 1, 2022  
**Davis**, Hilda Gay, 77, of Huntsville, died August 18, 2022  
**DePew**, Bella Donna, of Huntsville, died June 17, 2022  
**Evans**, William Boyd, 94, of Cullman, died July 25, 2022  
**Gillespie**, Walter (Billy) Frederick, 92, died July 2, 2022  
**Glaese**, Dr. John R., 79, of Huntsville, died May 17, 2022  
**Graham**, Jean Reese, 76, of Huntsville, died June 18, 2022  
**Hall**, Sandra Willingham, 71, of Huntsville, died June 4, 2022  
**Hannan**, Joan McGowin, 63, of Huntsville, died July 14, 2022  
**Hilliard**, James (Buddy), 87, of Albertville, died June 26, 2022  
**Hintze**, Geoffrey Crawford, 76, of Huntsville, died May 16, 2022  
**Hood**, Henry Latham, 95, of Huntsville, died June 20, 2022  
**Ise**, Jerry Ann Bailes, 84, of Huntsville, died July 2, 2022  
**Jones**, Clyde Sutton, 93, of Huntsville, died May 26, 2022  
**Lee**, William Edward, 92 of Huntsville died August 15, 2022  
**Mastin**, William Charles, 91, of Huntsville, died June 29, 2022  
**McCurrie**, Catherine Ann, 75, of Huntsville, died May 24, 2022  
**Moak**, Rodney Lynn, 89, of Huntsville, died May 23, 2022  
**Montano**, Joseph William, 90, of Huntsville, died May 20, 2022  
**Moon**, Reedus, 82, of New Market, died July 27, 2022  
**Moon**, Ruth Swinford, 90, of Huntsville, died July 30, 2022  
**Page**, Milton (Milt) A., 94, of Huntsville, died May 28, 2022  
**Posey**, Wilson Roger, 75, of Signal Mountain, TN, died June 22, 2022  
**Snellgrove**, Lauren Mahorter, 57, of Huntsville, died June 15, 2022  
**Stephens**, John C., 82, of New Hope, died on June 29, 2022  
**Strong**, Janet Dowdy, 58, of Huntsville/Monrovia, died July 7, 2022  
**Varnedoe**, William (Bill) Whitfield, 99, of Huntsville, died June 4, 2022  
**von Saurma**, Ruth, 100, of Munich, Germany, died May 16, 2022  
**Young**, Leighton Eugene, 87, of Huntsville, died July 7, 2022