



NASA/MSFC Retirees Association

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

FEBRUARY 2025 ISSUE



QUARTERLY MRA LUNCHEON

*Tuesday, March 11, 2025 The Ledges
Social & Registration 11- 11:45; Lunch. 11:45 - 12:15; Business &
Speaker 12:15 - 1:00 p.m.*

Menu:

*Chicken Marsala with Creamy Mashed Potatoes, Spring
Vegetable Medley, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea.*

Dessert: Lemon Meringue Pie

Cost: \$35.00 per person

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than **Noon, Thursday, March 6, 2025**, at benniejacks@att.net, or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by The Ledges. No shows will be expected to pay for meals.

PROGRAM SPEAKER



Marshall Space Flight Center is celebrating its 65th anniversary in 2025. Center Deputy Director Rae Ann Meyer will share events and activities planned for a year of celebrating 65 years. Meyer was named deputy director of MSFC in May 2024, where she assists in leading Marshall's nearly 7,000 onsite and near-site civil service and contractor employees and an annual budget of approximately \$5 billion. Prior to this assignment, Meyer served as Marshall's associate director, where she led the execution and integration of the center's business operations, mission support enterprise functions, and budget management.

Meyer was previously deputy manager of Marshall's Science and Technology Office. She assisted in leading the planning, developing, and executing a broad range of science and technology investigations, programs, projects, and activities. Meyer was tasked in 2017 with establishing the charter for and managing Marshall's Science and Technology Partnerships and Formulation Office, which oversees Marshall's Space Act Agreement process and enacts NASA strategies for new partnerships and joint opportunities. She was the chief of the Marshall Engineering Directorate's Structural Design and Analysis Division from 2010-2017 and deputy manager of its Flight Mechanics and Analysis Division from 2007-2010.

Meyer earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 1989.

Message from the President:

My, how time flies. I really enjoyed seeing so many of you at the December luncheon. I pray you had a great Christmas with your family and friends. The year started off a little cold for me but as I write this, it is over 70 degrees outside, and I am hoping for an early spring even though Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow and says we have six more weeks of winter. I hope he is wrong.

We have an exciting Spring coming. The Memorial Wall of Honor is just about complete, so mark your calendars for April when a grand opening celebration at the Space and Rocket Center will be held. Your team led by Rick Chappell has made all of us proud.

MSFC turns 65 this year and events are planned each month to celebrate with a city-wide event at the Orion planned in June. I hope you all can come out and attend. We have Rea Ann Meyers, the Deputy Center Director at MSFC, as our March luncheon speaker. Please join us for lunch and learn what MSFC has planned for the year of celebration.

The doors will open at 11:00 with lunch around 11:45. If you have not paid your dues, you can pay them at the door. See you there. *Steve Cash*

OPM IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND ON-LINE CONTACTS:

Taxes: Annuitant Express, change in tax withholding (1-800-409-6738)

Federal Long-Term Care: 1-800-582-3337; www.LTCFEDS.COM

Thrift Savings Plan: 1-877-968-3778; www.tsp.gov

Social Security: 1-800-772-1213; www.ssa.gov

Report Death of Employee/Spouse: 1-888-767-6738; retire@opm.gov

Point of Contact for MSFC Retirees: Debbie Allen: 256.544.7536;

Deborah.a.allen@nasa.gov; allenda0927@gmail.com

2025 MEMBERSHIP DUES

It's time to pay dues for 2025. As you recall, dues increased to \$50 in 2024. Dues may be paid by mailing a check, made to MSFC Retirees Association, to: MSFC Retirees Association, P. O. Box 4492, Huntsville, AL 35815, or by paying at the next lunch on March 11, 2025 at the Ledges. To check your membership status, check the address label on this newsletter that you receive in the mail.

Membership in the Association is open to **former MSFC and other NASA Center civil service 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 or calling 256-682-0441 so we can keep our records up to date. Your membership is important to help fund scholarships to deserving students in the engineering field through local and state colleges and trade schools.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MRA Luncheons

March 11, 2025

June 10, 2025

September 9, 2025

December 2025

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

(Since November 2024 Newsletter)

Donald B. Ford (12/9/24) Beth Fogle (12/10/24)
Frank R. Fogle (12/10/24) William Glen Jones 12/27/24
Wilda B. Davis (1/15/25)

SPACE EXPLORATION WALL OF HONOR

Progress toward completion of the Space Exploration Wall of Honor at USSRC continues. The concrete wall, the stone pavers of the plaza, and steps into the center part of the Rocket Park have been completed.

Kiosk: The kiosk is in place in front of the Wall of Honor. Using the kiosk touchscreen, visitors may search for names of Space Explorers. For each name found, the kiosk displays the location on the Wall of the engraved name by Panel # and Line #. Additionally, the kiosk displays biographical information for the name, including the photo. A QR code is displayed which directly links the user to the name in the online database, allowing the user to access existing biographical information on their personal devices.

Wall: The NASA Logo and “Wall of Honor” signage are now in place on the Wall. Currently, three stainless steel/aluminum engraved panels are on the wall, with more panels in various stages of completion. All should be in place by the week of March 3rd.

Database: Previous newsletters encouraged you to provide biographical information to the online database which is located on the MRA website: www.marshallretirees.org. Select: Space Explorers Database.

**Now is the time to have your information in the database prior to the
Dedication of the Wall of Honor planned the week of April 14th.
Don't be left out!**

Instructions for submission of biographical information are available on the website. If you need help, Gray Settle would be happy to assist: gsettle@gmail.com or 256.682.0334.

In addition to the Dedication of the Wall of Honor in April, there will be an annual Explorers Celebration in October, when new permanent employees' names will be added to the Wall. This October event for the space explorers and families at the USSRC will recognize that the month of October has been designated as Space Exploration Month by the City of Huntsville and Madison County Commission.

MRA BOARD WELCOMES THREE NEW MEMBERS IN 2025

Amy Epps: Amy retired in 2019 with over 35 years of service at MSFC. She spent a great portion of her career in Mission Operations in the Huntsville Operations Support Center working ground systems requirements for numerous programs, including Ares, Heavy Lift Launch Systems and SLS. She is very active in Huntsville community programs. Amy is married with two children.

Charlie Finnegan: Charlie began his career with United Space Booster at KSC. He came to MSFC during the Challenger accident stand down. He worked many programs, including Shuttle, ISS, Ares, and SLS. He retired as the Spacecraft and Vehicle Systems Department Manager in the Engineering Directorate in 2020. In his retirement, Charlie enjoys teaching at Alabama A&M University. Charlie is married with two children.

Bruce Tiller: Bruce began his career at MSFC supporting thermal analysis of many engine and propulsion projects, Space Shuttle Main Engine, Fastrac, X-33, Ares, and SLS. He was named the SLS Booster Office Manager and ultimately retired in this role in 2024 with over 30 years of service. In his retirement, Bruce is committed as a docent at the U. S. Space and Rocket Center. He is originally from Columbus, GA and is married with two kids.

FORMER ASTRONAUT AND MRA MEMBER JAN DAVIS RELEASES BOOK 2

Former astronaut and MRA member Jan Davis has released her second book about her father, a WWII B-17 pilot and POW. Her father's experiences and artistic renderings are masterfully captured through pencil drawings, paintings and his wartime log in this book: *Air Born: Artistic Musings of a WWII Pilot and POW*. He also created a comic strip shared by prisoners that gave them hope.

The book is available in book stores and may be ordered from the publisher: www.ballastbooks.com. If ordered from the publisher, she has the ability to sign and personalize the book. If you already have the first book and order the second, a sleeve is free. Local book signings will be scheduled later this year.



The Spacelab Retirees held their semi-annual luncheon on November 20, 2024 at Valley Hill Country Club.

Back row (l to r): Randy Bonds, Mickey Allen, Mickey White, Gary Hitt, Volker Roth, Gray Settle and Bill Patterson. **Middle Row** (l to r): Jack Stokes, Harry Craft, Tom Lynch, John Thomas, Lanny Upton, and Bill Lokken. **Seated** (l to r): Mary Harris, Jan Allen, Bill Johnson and C. H. Oliver. If you are interested in joining this group, contact Bill Johnson, 256.756.8017, or guesscreek@gmail.com.

MRA MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

MRA has published its first ever membership handbook. The handbook contains information about the history of MRA, listing of leadership team, membership directory, and important contact numbers including OPM. The handbooks will be available at the March luncheon. If you are unable to attend, please contact Jean Lee, 256.508.4203, Bjeanlee@aol.com, or Mary Spaulding, 256.682.0441, md_spaulding@comcast.net, and a copy will be mailed to you. The handbook is for **MRA Internal Use Only**, and should not be shared with outside organizations.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS RESUME AT UAH

An effort to conduct oral interviews and recordings of Marshall retirees began in 2006 and had a break in this project. The effort between MRA and UAH Special Collections Division has resumed. This fits in with the MRA effort to establish a database of former Marshall employees.

If you would like more information or be willing to participate, please contact Jack Stokes at 256-468-2743 or email: jackstokes1962@gmail.com.

HR 82 SIGNED INTO LAW BY PRESIDENT BIDEN

House Resolution 82 titled “Social Security Fairness Act of 2023,” was signed by President Biden on January 5, 2025, repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), effective for benefits payable after December 2023. This is a momentous win. The bill has been stuck in committees for many years with little hope for federal annuitants to receive their full Social Security benefits.

The Social Security Administration is in the process of implementing the laws. If you are affected by the law, you are encouraged to visit the SSA website for updates. <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/social-security-fairness-act.html>

Volunteer Opportunities:

MRA needs the support of its members to achieve its goals and mission. Please share our skills and talents and enjoy working with fellow retirees. Listed here are some of the opportunities that need support:

-Newsletter: Contributing writers to prepare articles for inclusion in the newsletter.

Contact: Jean Lee, 256.508.4203, Bjeanlee@aol.com .

-Outreach: Volunteers needs to staff booths and tables at special events in the community. Contact: Bennie Jacks, 256.603.0894, benniejacks@att.net.

-Database: Help with maintaining the Space Explorers Database. Contact: Gray Settle, 256.682.0334, gsettle@gmail.com.



OBITUARIES

- Butler**, John Marion, Jr., 88, of Huntsville, died November 19, 2024.
Camper, Jack Lee, 90 of Guntersville, died December 25, 2024.
Edwards, Patricia, 76, of Huntsville, died October 15, 2024.
Dodson, Gayle Welborn, 84, of Moulton, died January 4, 2025.
Ferguson, William Ashford, Jr., 95, of Huntsville, died November 26, 2024.
Haley, Betty Jean, 82, of Huntsville, died January 8, 2025.
Harbison, John Ellis, Sr., 84, of Scant City, died December 7, 2024
Hutson, Edgar Dale, 92, of Huntsville, died January 10, 2025.
Horne, J. D., 92, of Huntsville, died December 21, 2024.
Laurine, Don, 85, of Huntsville, died February 4, 2025
Laurine, Jerry Miller, 84, of Huntsville, died February 3, 2025.
Malmede, Clovis, B, Jr., 87, of Huntsville, died January 3, 2025.
McGlathery, LaVerta Moore, 84, of Huntsville, died December 4, 2024.
Renfroe, Murrell Byington, 81, of Gurley, died November 16, 2024.
Pizzano, Frank, 87, of Huntsville, died December 7, 2024.
Reed, William Jackson, 98, of Huntsville, died December 3, 2024.
Stone, Richard Norbin, 89 of Huntsville, died January 19, 2025.
Swann, Allie Cavett, 91, of Huntsville, died December 11, 2024.
Swint, Marion Shayne, 68, of Madison County, died December 5, 2024.
Thomas, Charles Edward, 87, of Arab, died August 15, 2024.
Tomlinson, Virginia Lee, of Rogersville, died December 30, 2024.
Wolfsberger, John William, 95, died November 23, 2024.

We are saddened to learn of the passing of **Dr. von Braun's widow, Maria von Braun** on January 20, 2025, at her home in Alexandria, VA, where she had resided for 55 years. A private service is planned by the family this summer.