



NASA/Marshall Retirees Association, P. O. Box 4492, Huntsville, AL 35815

*MRA Newsletter – August 2019 Issue*



## *Quarterly MRA Luncheon*

**Wednesday, September 11, 2019      The Ledges**

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

**\$20.00 per person**

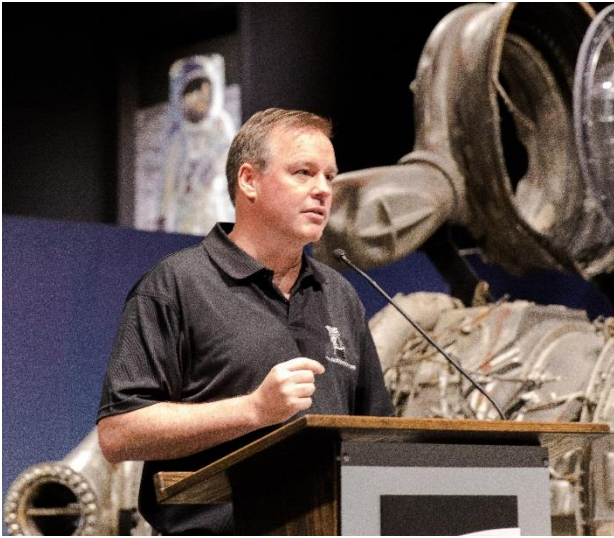
*Menu: Garden Salad, Pan Seared Chicken with Beurre Blanc,  
Creamy Grits, Vegetable Medley, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea  
Dessert: Lemon Ice Box Pie*

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than **noon on Thursday, September 5, 2019**, at [benniejacks@att.net](mailto:benniejacks@att.net) or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by the Ledges.

NOTE: This is the date and time for the last MRA quarterly meeting for 2019:

Tuesday, **December 10, 2019** - Dinner

# PROGRAM



## **“F-1 Engine Recovery”**

**Speaker:**

**David L. Concannon,**

**Team Leader of the Bezos  
Expeditions’ Apollo F-1 Engine  
Search and Recovery Project**

Few people in the world have more experience in “the business of exploration” than David Concannon. An attorney by trade, David is also an international explorer, photographer, author, diver and specialist in deep water search and recovery. David has sailed the Beagle Channel, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, dived to 16,000 feet deep in the Bermuda Triangle, recovered artifacts from the *Titanic*, and led the expeditions that found and recovered the F-1 engines that launched men to the moon.

He has been an advisor to ten *Titanic* expeditions, a participant in three *Titanic* expeditions, and he led the last expedition to explore the *Titanic* using submersibles.

In 2010, David was asked by Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos to find and recover the Apollo F-1 rocket engines that launched men to the moon. David organized all aspects of the project, from analyzing legal issues to identifying and leasing ships, sidescan sonar arrays and ROVs; developing the search and recovery plans; arranging for artifact conservation; producing the filmmaking aspect of the project; and leading two expeditions that found the S-IC first stages from eight Apollo missions in 14,000 feet of water, 400 miles off the coast of the United States, and recovered several F-1 engines, including the center F-1 engine from Apollo 11.

He has served as General Counsel to The Explorers Club, X-Prize Foundation, Professional Shipwreck Explorers Association, Anglo-Danish Maritime Archaeology Team, and the Academy of Underwater Arts & Sciences, among others.

## *Message from Parker...*

First, thank you so much to all the MRA members who worked on committees, served on panel discussions, and volunteered at special events in support of the very successful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Moon Landing Celebrations. A special thank you to Bennie Jacks and Jack Stokes who chaired the Legacy Committee and to Heidi Collier, who chaired the German-American Heritage Committee.

**Great news! MRA has a new Web site.** MRA entered into an agreement with Champion Inspirations, LLC to establish and maintain a Web site for our organization. Beth Champion has done an outstanding job with the initial setup and will serve as our Web master for maintenance and any future changes. As of last month, the Web site is up and running and I invite you to go to the Web site [www.marshallretirees.org](http://www.marshallretirees.org) and check it out. The Web site will provide useful information about the association, contain the archives of our newsletters, information on how to join the MRA, and a database of the names of all Marshall employees since the von Braun era. The database will also be available for contractors that have worked with Marshall over the years to include the names of their employees as they are available. Please contact Gray Settle [gsettle@gmail.com](mailto:gsettle@gmail.com) with comments or questions about the Web site or the database.

*Parker Counts*

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### **DUES REMINDER**

If not already paid, 2019 dues are now delinquent. Also, 2020 dues will be due beginning January 1, 2020. Dues are \$30 per year and 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 September Social.

Membership in the Association is open to former or retired MSFC and 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 changes, 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.**

# Space Exploration Memorial

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Apollo missions, we are reminded of the thousands of talented and dedicated people whose work has made space exploration possible. While they are recognized implicitly by the amazing rockets and spacecraft that they have built and operated, there is no memorial in the world which explicitly honors their work.

MRA is planning a space exploration memorial that will recognize and honor all MSFC employees and the companies that worked with Marshall to make space exploration possible. The memorial will be located at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center (USSRC) and will contain the individual names of MSFC federal employees from Marshall's founding in 1960 to the present time, as well as the names of the supporting companies. MRA is cooperating with NASA/MSFC and the USSRC to design and establish the memorial.

A key element of the space exploration memorial is to create an online database of names of MSFC employees. MRA, working with MSFC and UAH, has identified more than 15,000 employees who worked at Marshall. These names are available online at the new MRA website: [www.marshallretirees.org](http://www.marshallretirees.org). MRA is requesting each retiree or employee to visit the MRA website and verify their name is on the list. Retirees or employees are then encouraged to provide background information about their career, add a photograph and supply contact information so they may receive project updates. We are also asking the companies to add information to the database about their projects with MSFC and their employees where possible.

The goal of the memorial and the database is to be inclusive and to capture the names of those who have enabled space exploration. It will reflect the thrilling work and team spirit we have all felt in our space exploration journey.

We anticipate the online database will also be accessible on a kiosk located beside the memorial. Families and friends who visit the Rocket Center may then read about the individual's career and find the location of the engraved name of the individual or company. Please check your name and information, as well as the names of colleagues who worked at MSFC so all who were involved may be honored.

The space exploration memorial will be funded through contributions from individuals and companies. These tax-deductible contributions can be made online through the MRA website, [www.marshallretirees.org](http://www.marshallretirees.org) and will be held in a restricted fund to support the design, build and perpetual maintenance of the memorial.

Parker Counts, President, MRA and Rick Chappell, Vice President, MRA and  
Chairman of the Space Exploration Memorial Committee

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Dominic A. Amatore

Danny R. Hightower

Linda P. Rawlins

James E. Turner

Lorna G. Jackson

Kurt V. Jackson

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### SCHOLARSHIPS

#### (University of Alabama Huntsville & USSRC Space Camp)

**University of Alabama Huntsville:** This school year (2019-2020), MRA is sponsoring, through scholarships with the University of Alabama Huntsville, **Taylor Herring** and **Shelby Bloodworth**, as our student recipients again this year. They have been selected by the University based on criteria established by MRA in conjunction with the University. The criteria specified that the recipient be enrolled in the Engineering School and be a descendant of a Marshall retiree. The scholarship funds are derived from the current University of Alabama Huntsville endowment program set up by MRA and currently has a value of \$29,784. The endowment funds are invested by the University and the investment income funds the scholarships. As of this fiscal year, MRA has invested approximately \$20,000 in the endowment. Additional contributions are made each year by MRA based on budget allocations.

**USSRC Space Camp:** MRA has entered into an agreement with the USSRC to sponsor two (2) deserving space campers per year, each at the \$600 level. USSRC determines the recipients, based on their criteria. This year's recipients are **Guinevere Lipe**, age 14, from Herrin, Illinois and **Jacob Keller**, age 10 from Ferdinand, Indiana. Guinevere attended Aviation Challenge. She is a cadet master sargent in the Illinois wing of the Civil Air Patrol. Jacob attended Space Camp. He is a boy scout, excels in math and loves science and chemistry. He aspires to be an astronaut.

Bill Hallisey, Chair, Scholarship Committee

## PHOTO GALLERY - JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup> DINNER



Dr. Margrit von Braun with Debbie and Parker Counts



Jack Stokes, Richard Hoover, Kenny Mitchell



Dr. Lucas and Gene Goldman



Bebe Littles, Delores & Harvey Shelton



Betty & Jay Foster, Dr. Lucas, Deemer Self



## ALAGAMA STATE GAMES

USSRC docents participated in the Opening Ceremonies of the Alabama State Games, held in Huntsville, June 7. The Games are Alabama's largest, Olympic-style event, offering competition in basketball, bowling, archery, etc., for all ages and skill levels. The opening ceremony showcased the rich history of Huntsville, the State's Bicentennial Celebration.

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**Biergarten** (Each Thursday through October 2019): Visit the USSRC Saturn V Hall in the Davidson Center each Thursday from 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. for Biergarten activities including authentic German food and beer, live music and dancing. Each week a portion of the proceeds is donated to selected local charities. A number of the Pass the Torch series are held in connection with Biergarten.

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Letter from Ruth G. von Saurma: We received a handwritten letter from Ruth. Text to follow: "Dear Friends, Congratulations on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Apollo-Saturn Lunar Landing. I wish I could celebrate with all of you on this spectacular event!! Too bad, old age has much limited my personal activities. Special greetings to Brooks Moore. I was delighted to read his excellent interview with Christian Rowekamp, which appeared in one of the local newspapers. With fond memories and best wishes to all of you, Sincerely, Ruth von Saurma." This is her address if you wish to write her: Ruth G. von Saurma, Felix-Dahn, Str. 2a, 81924, Munchen, Germany.

## **Moon Landing 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Continues**

While many of the celebration activities are now in the history books, the celebration continues. The Legacy Committee (chaired by Bennie Jacks/Jack Stokes) and the German-American Heritage Committee (chaired by Heidi Collier) wish to thank MRA for their support of the community celebration of our landing on the Moon 50 years ago.

After a half year of lectures, panel discussions, and presentations on celebration subject matter, the Big Week began with the MRA-sponsored Celebration Car Show. Though shortened by rain, the Celebration Car Show received rave reviews from its participants and the general public. Rare and exclusive vehicles of the rocket-pioneer period were joined by the remarkable Polaris Lunar Rover replica, which appears and operates very much like those on the Moon. Beautifully hand-engraved trophies by Weldon Walles and Brian Miller, along with very special space-and-car related “goody bags” were greatly appreciated by all the car entrants.

The celebration continued with Lunar Communion Services in several area Churches; a UAH Archives open house & reception; an informal mixer at Campus 805; the “The Continuing Paperclip Legacy: 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation” with Margrit von Braun, Klaus Dannenberg, and Heidi Collier; an Al Worden (Apollo 15) interview; a “Concert in the Park: A Tribute to Space” event; a Guinness World Record launch of ~5000 rockets; the US Space & Rocket Center “Apollo 11 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Homecoming Celebration Dinner” with an accompanying dinner next door at the Marriott for national and international visitors; a lecture on “Onboard Control System for the German A4/V2 Rocket;” a panel by MRA members on “Saturn Family of Space Vehicles;” a book signing by local space writers and authors; a lecture on “How We *Really* Got to the Moon; Leadership Secrets of the Apollo Program;” a parade led by the Lunar Rover replica to the Courthouse with Dancing in the Streets; and a “Rocket City Summerfest and Moon Landing Concert” and Singer Songwriter Competition Award Presentation.

Additional lectures, presentations, and panel discussions are planned for the remainder of 2019. Contact Bennie Jacks (256.603.0894) for details.

**Thanks to all the MRA members who worked on committees, served on panel discussions and volunteered at special events in support of the very successful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Moon Landing Celebration.**



## MEMORIES FROM 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MOON LANDING CELEBRATION



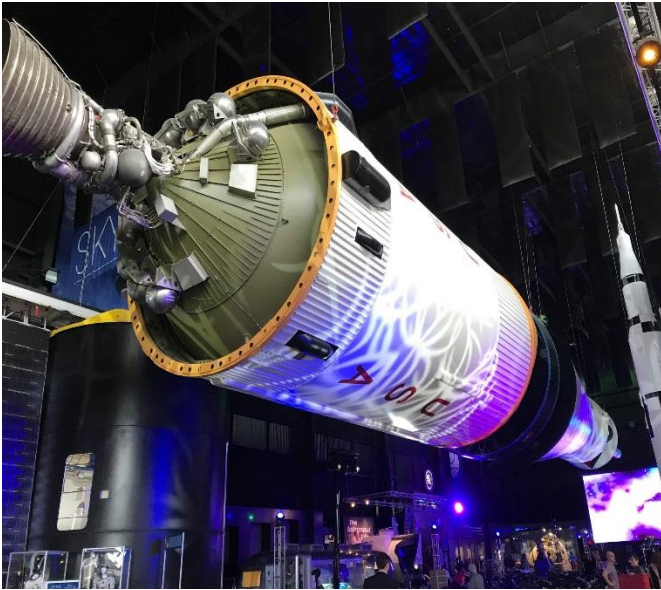
Apollo 14 Astronaut Scott Roosa, took tree seedings with him and upon return the seeds were planted at NASA field centers, universities, cities, etc. Most have been lost to diseases. Two years ago, when Hurricane Irma took down the moon tree at KSC, Scott (Shuttleman) Phillips, a retired contractor and USSRC docent, was able to acquire some of the wood. He made contact with EF Martin Guitar Company in Pennsylvania and they agreed to construct a memorial guitar for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, with MRA as a sponsor. The winner of the singer/songwriter competition, played the guitar at the celebration. Local musicians will play the guitar at upcoming events and it will subsequently be on display at USSRC.

Center Directors Panel held on June 20, 2019 (L-R) Gene Goldman, Moderator, Patrick Scheuermann, Todd May, Bill Lucas, and Jody Singer



# MEMORIES FROM 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MOON LANDING CELEBRATION (Continued)

## July 16 Homecoming Dinner and Reception



Magnificent Light Show



Bennie Jacks, Legacy Committee Chair, Dr. Margarit von Braun, Heidi Collier, German-American Committee Chair



Rick Chappell, Kenny Mitchell, Richard Hoover and Joyce Neighbors

# MEMORIES FROM 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MOON LANDING CELEBRATION (Continued)

## Celebration Car Show

A replica of the Lunar Rover Vehicle was designed and manufactured by the local Polaris Plant and was adapted to drive on the earth's surface. The replica was on display at the car show and was the leader of the Celebration Parade through downtown Huntsville.



# MEMORIES FROM 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MOON LANDING CELEBRATION (Continued)

## Rocket Launches

As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, the USSRC attempted to break the Guinness World Record by launching 5,000 rockets simultaneously at 8:32 a.m. the exact time of the launch of Apollo 11 on July 16. MRA member Brooks Moore helped push the button to “Launch”.



## Parade through Downtown Huntsville

MRA member & Project Manager of the Lunar Rover Vehicle Program, **Sonny Morea**, rides on the replica of the LRV that led the Moon Landing Celebration Parade through downtown Huntsville.





## Obituaries

**Note: One of the sources of obtaining a list of obituaries has been the Marshall Star. We have learned that obituaries will no longer be published in the Marshall Star. Opal Meeks, a MSFC retiree, searches the obituaries each day to find MSFC retirees and she will be our main resource in the future. Also, we would appreciate your letting us know of fellow retirees' death.**

**Dunn**, Charles L., 94 of Harvest, died August 1, 2019.

**Garrett**, Pete W. 84, of Huntsville, died July 3, 2019. Retired as Test Engineer.

**Gomez**, Linda Gibbons, 57, of Huntsville, died May 25, 2019.

**Gray**, Olga Joyce, 85, of New Market, died July 15, 2019.

**Green**, Judy Mydona, 72, of Madison, died May 25, 2019.

**Jones**, David V., 92, of Huntsville, died June 24, 2019. Retired as Personnel Specialist.

**Kissel**, Ralph R., 78, of Huntsville, died July 10, 2019.

**Ladner**, Gerald C., 78, of Waynesville, NC., died July 4, 2019.

**Little**, Cecil Scott, 97, of Huntsville, died February 22, 2019. Retired as Supervisory Budget Analyst.

**McBride**, James Eugene, 79, of Huntsville, died December 8, 2018.

**Schauer**, Reyman C., 85, of Huntsville, died June 5, 2019. Retired as aerospace engineer.

**Sutton**, Carl Brooks, 91, of Harvest, died August 1, 2019.

**Thornton**, Gerald (Mickey), 76, of Scottsboro, died June 16, 2019.

**Young**, Archie C., 85, of Madison, died June 25, 2019.

## **NASA/MSFC Retirees Association**

**P. O. Box 4492**

**Huntsville, AL 35815**

### **MRA OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS, PAST PRESIDENTS, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS (with e-mail addresses)**

#### **OFFICERS: 2017-2019**

President: Parker Counts, parkercounts@knology.net

Vice-President: Rick Chappell, rick.chappell@vanderbilt.edu

Secretary: Bennie Jacks, benniejacks@att.net    Assistant Secretary: Deledia Perry, deeperry99@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Linda Dinges, lindaldinges@gmail.com

#### **BOARD MEMBERS: 2017-2019**

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Steve Cash, scash4@bellsouth.net

#### **PAST PRESIDENTS/STANDING BOARD MEMBERS:**

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Jay Foster, jayfoster@knology.net    Bill Hallisey, hwhala@aol.com (Scholarships)

Jim Splawn, jjsplawn@comcast.net    Gerald Smith, gerald.smith6@comcast.net

Linda Posey, lbposey@comcast.net

#### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

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**Program**: Gene Goldman, gagoldman@bwxt.com    **Newsletter**: Jean Lee, Bjeanlee@aol.com

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**Editor's note: If you have articles of interest, photographs or suggestions for this newsletter, please contact me at 256-852-7336, or e-mail: [Bjeanlee@aol.com](mailto:Bjeanlee@aol.com) Jean Lee, Newsletter Editor**