

*The Marshall Retiree Report*  
*February 2017*

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

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## *Quarterly MRA Spring Luncheon*

**Wednesday, March 8, 2017**

**11:00 Registration & Social – Lunch at Noon**

**\$20.00 per person**

*Menu: Romaine Salad, Chicken Alfredo with green onions & snap peas, Dinner rolls, Coffee & Tea, Dessert: Carrot Cake*

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on March 3, 2017, 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:** These are the dates and times of the MRA quarterly meetings for the remainder of 2017. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend:

**Tuesday, June 6** - Dinner

**Wednesday, Sept. 6** - Luncheon

**Tuesday, Dec. 12** - Dinner

Registration & Social 6:00 - 7:00; Dinner @ 7:00

Registration & Social 11:00 - 12:00; Lunch @ Noon

Registration & Social 6:00 - 7:00; Dinner @ 7:00

## *Program:*



### *“State of the Center”*

**Speaker: Todd May, Center  
Director, Marshall Space Flight  
Center**

Todd May was appointed Director of the Marshall Space Flight Center in February 2016. He was appointed deputy director in August 2015 and served as acting director from November 2015 until being appointed director. Prior to that, he was manager of the SLS program, the most powerful rocket ever built to carry astronauts on deep space missions. He was a deputy associate administrator in the Science Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters from 2007-2008. He began his career in 1991 as an engineer in the Materials and Processes Laboratory. His many awards include NASA’s Exceptional Achievement Medal, the Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive, NASA’s Outstanding Leadership Award and the John W. Hager Award for professionalism in materials engineering. He was named a Distinguished Engineer by his alma mater, Auburn University and was inducted into the State of Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame in February 2017.

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### **2017 MEMBERSHIP DUES**

MSFC Retirees Association (MRA) membership dues of \$30 per year are payable by **January 1 each year for that calendar year**, with a grace period until April 1<sup>st</sup>. Dues may be paid at the **March social** or mailed to MSFC Retirees Association, P. O. Box 4492, Huntsville, AL 35815. Checks should be made out to MSFC Retirees Assn.

Membership in the Association shall be open to all former employees and retirees of NASA. Spouses of deceased MRA members may attain membership status with membership dues waived. New MSFC 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. **Point of Contact: Mary Spaulding; e-mail [md\\_spaulding@comcast.net](mailto:md_spaulding@comcast.net), or phone 256-883-2228.**

## *FROM PARKER'S DESK.....*

It is certainly a privilege to serve as your President and I look forward to continuing the traditions established by our past leadership teams. A special thanks to Gerald Smith for his active leadership and support these last three years. Rick Chappell is serving as our Vice President, and Bennie Jacks and Linda Dinges are continuing as Secretary and Treasurer. We are fortunate to have our committee chairpersons Jean Lee, Newsletter; Mary Spaulding, Membership; and Bill Hallisey, Scholarships; continuing for the next term. New Executive Board members are Joann DeGroff, Jean Payne and Chris Crumbly. Mary Harris will be rotating off the board, and we thank her for her contributions. Gary Wicks has done an outstanding job providing excellent speakers for our meetings. He is rotating off and Gene Goldman is our new Committee Chair for Programs. Gene is well on his way to having outstanding speakers for this year.

Our focus for the coming year is to continue recruiting former NASA employees and new retirees from Marshall, other centers and headquarters. We have already added several retirees and former NASA employees to our roles. Adding new members will form the base for future leadership teams to carry on the traditions of the NASA/Marshall Retirees Association.

Our goals are to continue the strong relationships with Marshall and Headquarters Management; support the very active Docent program at the US Space and Rocket Center; provide scholarships to deserving science and engineering students; and to stay actively involved with our retiree groups and local community leaders. Looking forward to seeing all of you at our March meeting. If you have any ideas, suggestions or comments, please feel free to contact me. **Parker Counts, MRA President**



If you are searching for books relating to space, Shaver's Bookstore specializes in history of interest to people in Huntsville, e.g., local history, civil war and space flight. The store is located on the second floor of Railroad Station Antiques Mall on Jefferson Street in downtown Huntsville. Many of the books published in the early days are located there as well as new releases. It's a fun place to walk down memory lane.

## **NASA/MSFC RETIREES ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

**2017-2019**



President: Parker Counts (right); Vice-President: Rick Chappell (left);  
Secretary: Bennie Jacks (center). Not pictured: Treasurer: Linda Dinges

## **NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

**2017-2019**



Chris Crumbly, Jean Payne

Not pictured: Joann DeGroff

# A Tribute to Outgoing MRA President, Gerald Smith



We would like to send a shout out to Gerald Smith, MRA's president for the past three years. He led the organization in an outstanding manner. Under his leadership, MRA increased membership and extended its reach into the community. The UAH scholarship program for students was increased and scholarships for deserving students to Space Camp were added. Gerald was directly involved in obtaining guest speakers who gave informative presentations at our quarterly meetings. He oversaw visits and briefings at NASA facilities and its contractors. Gerald's efforts to organize and lead the Docent program at the USSRC enabled the MRA membership to engage directly with the man-on-the-street. Gerald, himself, is a docent. The Docent program has become the USSRC's most successful outreach program ever, generating impressive complements from thousands of visitors from around the world.

Gerald still finds time to share his time to serve on the Auburn Engineering Alumni Council since 2011, currently serving as Chair of the Research Committee. He recently spearheaded an effort to streamline research proposal approvals in order to bring additional opportunities for high value research to the College of Engineering.

He is also a Board Member of the State of Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame, an organization that honors the outstanding accomplishments of individuals who have brought significant recognition to the state in the areas of engineering and technology. Gerald was inducted into the Hall of Fame in February 2016.

Great job, Gerald, as a member of the Greatest Space Generation.

*By Ed Buckbee & Parker Counts*

# NASA'S Day of Remembrance



Jody Singer, deputy director of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, addresses Marshall team members during NASA's Day of Remembrance, January 31st, honoring the crews of the Apollo 1 lunar mission and space shuttles Challenger and Columbia, who gave their lives in pursuit of the nation's space exploration mission. "Their passion for discovery has inspired us all, and their stories will continue to inspire for generations to come," Singer said during the event in the lobby of Building 4200, which included a commemorative candle-lighting. Also speaking during the Marshall event was former NASA astronaut Robert "Hoot" Gibson, a five-time space shuttle veteran who joined Singer later that morning for a public ceremony at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. NASA held remembrance ceremonies at field centers nationwide and a wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia by NASA Acting Administrator Robert Lightfoot.

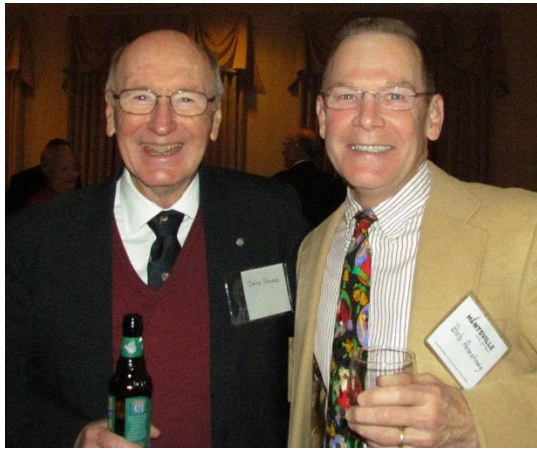
(Article courtesy *Marshall Star* and Photo courtesy NASA/MSFC/Emmett Given).

## **Excerpts from Acting Administrator Robert Lightfoot's Letter to Employees:**

"We have chosen a tough and unforgiving business and our mistakes are displayed in the most visible and often tragic ways, but it is the hard work and aspirations of real people striving every day that make our successes possible and also make it possible for us to learn from and overcome our failures.....On a personal note, I often worry the lessons of the past can be lost. While I am extremely proud of how we safely closed out the shuttle program and continue to fly crews in our aircraft and the ISS today, it has been 14 years since the Columbia tragedy, and roughly 45% of NASA's current workforce wasn't working with the agency then. Further, we are entering a new era with our industry partners taking on the responsibility to bring our crews to low Earth orbit.

How do those of us who experienced these tragedies and subsequent recoveries ensure the lessons are passed on as we continue our exploration journey. The best way I know is for us to share our stories – not in PowerPoint-but personally. I encourage those who are new to listen to these stories. Perhaps then all of our team will begin to understand the reason we strive for a culture of speaking up with concerns, and a culture of leaders who stay curious and hungry as they make the ultimate decisions to send our crews on their journeys....." Robert Lightfoot

# PHOTO GALLERY---DECEMBER 2016 CHRISTMAS SOCIAL



Jack Stokes & Bob Armstrong



J.R. & Sherry Thompson



Jack Lee & Wayne Littles



Ed Buckbee signs book for Gary Wicks



Mickey and Jan Allen

## Your MRA Photographers at Work



Mary Harris



Jean Lee

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The USSRC held a breakfast in the Davidson Center for Space Exploration on January 10<sup>th</sup> to recognize NASA Emeritus and Military Emeritus Docents.



(Left to Right)

**On the Road Again Award: NASA Docent, Sam Ramano(from Birmingham)**

**Military Dedicated Service Award: Nick Van Valkenburgh**

**Exhibit Hopper: NASA Docent, Patricia (Dee) Chapman**

**Rocket Park Ranger: Military Docent, Darrell Elmer**

**All Aboard: Military Docent, Bailey Erickson**

**Charmin' Charlie: NASA Docent, Charlie Johnson**

**NASA Dedicated Service Award: Jim Jenkins**



## *A Special "Thank You"*



*Mary Spaulding, Membership  
Chair*

Mary has served as Membership Chair for 11 years, collecting dues, maintaining a database and an e-mail database to accompany the newsletter to the printing. She handles all the changes we toss at her, and she tracks down members to get updates that we have failed to report. Thank you, Mary, for your dedication to MRA.



*Secretary and Assistant  
Secretary*

Bennie and Deledia are responsible for the huge task of handling reservations for our quarterly events. They always have a smile, even when members show up with no reservations, or fail to show with reservations, or call to make a reservation at the last minute. Thank you for your dedication to MRA.

*Bennie Jacks and Deledia  
Perry,*

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## WELCOME NEW MRA MEMBERS!!

Fred Davey, Robin Henderson, Melissa McGrath, Joann DeGroff,  
Mike & Teresa Vanhooser, Deborah Underwood, Mike Stallcup, Donna  
Mahieux, and Rex D. Geveden

## Nine (9) Technologies from NASA That Are Part of Your Everyday Life

(Courtesy USSRC)

Insulation

Memory Foam

Eye Glasses

Water Filters

Solar Power

Smoke Detectors

LED's

Insulin Pumps

Cochlear Implants

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## Newly Launched Exhibit Highlights Connections Between Rocketry and Art



Arts and rocketry are not things that people immediately think of as being associated. The two, however, have been intimately connected since the beginning of NASA and the Marshall Space Flight Center. Now that relationship is on display in the Arts Huntsville gallery at the Von Braun Center in Huntsville.

The exhibit, "Between Imagination & Invention: The Art of NASA in the Space Age," uses 40 pieces from Marshall -- created by or for Marshall from 1959-1990 -- to help tell the NASA story through the eyes of artists. Additional pieces from the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville complete the display. The exhibit is the result of a year-long partnership between Arts Huntsville and Marshall as part of Alabama's upcoming bicentennial.

**The Exhibit opened January 18th and will run through the end of March. The gallery is located between the Concert Hall and the Playhouse Theatre. It is viewable seven days a week. (Article Courtesy *Marshall Star*)**



## Obituaries of *Marshall* Retirees

(Courtesy of the *Marshall Star*)

**Hill, Wildes J.**, 89, of Lacey's Spring, died Dec. 21. Retired in 1981 as an electrical engineer.

**Johnstone, Harry M.**, 92 of Carriere, MS died Dec. 30. Retired in 1979 as aerospace engineer.

**Milner, Robert W., Jr.** 88, of Huntsville, died Oct. 26. Retired in 1981 as electrical engineer.

**Moffitt, James D.**, 79, of Huntsville, died Jan. 2. Retired in 1997 as an aerospace engineer.

**Powell, Luther E.**, 86, of Birmingham, died Nov. 23. Retired in 1988 as an aerospace engineer.

**Scott, Martha F.**, 79 of Huntsville, died Nov. 4. Retired in 1994 as an employee relations assistant.

**Sisson, James M.**, 81 of Huntsville, died Jan. 14. Retired in 1990 as an aerospace engineer.

**Smith, Leland R.**, 83, of Huntsville, died Jan. 6. Retired in 1988 as a contract specialist.

**Stewart, Sanders (Sid) R.**, 91, of Huntsville, died Dec. 23. Retired in 1980 as a facility utilization specialist.

**Strandemo, Herbert D.**, 88, of Decatur, died Dec. 27. Retired in 1981 as an aerospace engineer.

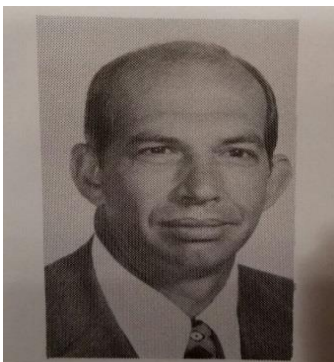
**Styles, Marcella S.**, 94, of Huntsville, died Oct. 30. Retired in 1975 as a program analyst.

**Teague, Everett R.**, 87, of Huntsville, died Dec. 17. Retired in 1995 as an aerospace engineer.

**Wallace, Gabriel R.**, 80, of Huntsville, died Nov. 14. Retired in 1999 as an engineering manager.

**Walter, Wanda M.**, 73, of Huntsville, died Nov. 27. Retired in 2004 as a program analyst.

**Wood, Charles H.**, 88, of Huntsville, died Oct. 3. Retired in 1981 as an aerospace engineer.



John S. Potato, 82, passed away on December 29, 2016. John served as Associate Director (Management) at MSFC. At his request, his body was given to the Genesis Program at the Medical Education & Research Institute in Memphis, TN. No services were held.

**NASA/MSFC Retiree 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, linda.l.dinges@gmail.com

**BOARD MEMBERS: 2017-2019**

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**Membership**: Mary Spaulding, md\_spaulding@comcast.net

**Program**: Gene Goldman, arthur.goldman@leidos.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**