



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

MRA Newsletter – February 2020 Issue



Quarterly MRA Luncheon

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 The Ledges

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

\$20.00 per person

*Menu: Garden Salad, Slow Cooked Pot Roast with Buttermilk
Mashed Potatoes, Mixed Steamed Vegetables, Dinner Rolls,
Coffee & Tea Dessert: Lemon Ice Box Pie*

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than **noon on Thursday, March 5, 2020**, at benniejacks@att.net or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by the Ledges.

PROGRAM



“Update on Marshall Programs”

Speaker:

Jody Singer

Director, Marshall Space Flight Center

Prior to being named to the position of Director, Singer had served as Marshall acting director since July 2018 and was deputy director from February 2016 to July 2018.

During her 34-year NASA career, Singer has held leadership roles of increasing responsibility in human spaceflight, technology and science flight mission programs and projects. She began her NASA engineering career in 1985, in the mission planning and development office.

In 1986, she joined the Space Shuttle Program office, where she was an engineer in the Space Shuttle Main Engine office and involved with Return to Flight activities after the Challenger accident. From 1990 to 2002, she was the business manager, technical assistant and deputy manager in the External Tank Project Office. From 2002 to 2007, she served as the first female project manager for the Reusable Solid Rocket Booster Project and led the team during the Columbia Return to Flight activities. In 2008 until the shuttle’s successful retirement in 2011, she served as the deputy manager in the Space Shuttle Propulsion Office. From 2010 through 2012, she held deputy positions for three concurrent major programs: Space Shuttle, ARES, and the start-up of the Space Launch System (SLS).

Singer, a native of Hartselle, Alabama, earned a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering from the University of Alabama in 1983.

Message from the President:

I feel very honored to have the privilege of serving as the President of our NASA/Marshall Retirees Association. The Association members are an incredible group of individuals who came together as a team decades ago and made possible the exploration of space and the movement of humans off the planet of our birth to another heavenly body. No exploration before or since this era has been more significant. We have all had the privilege of being part of that amazing journey. Thank you for all that you have accomplished in your careers and for your families that have supported and encouraged you through this challenging and successful giant leap for mankind.

Our association enables us to continue this journey together, to enjoy all of the special friendships that we have made, to remember the creative opportunities that we experienced, and to recognize the significance of this journey for our country. Together we all get to enjoy remembering the past and to share our knowledge, experiences and support with the young people who are choosing to join the space exploration adventure that lies ahead.

I want to thank the MRA board and all of those who have played important roles in establishing the MRA and in leading it over the years. The association has served the retirees well and has enabled us to stay connected with NASA and especially Marshall and its employees.

I look forward to working with the membership and with the board to address future opportunities that we will have together. We want to reach out to the current employees so that they will be aware of our activities and will plan to transition to the association when they retire. The workforce now represents a new generation of team members whose interests and involvement we will want to connect with. At the same time, we will want to evolve our plans and programs to address the needs of our membership.

The MRA board and membership has decided, over the past year, to work toward creating a space exploration memorial that will be located at the US Space and Rocket Center and which will recognize and remember the names of all MSFC employees over the history of the Center. I am already feeling the team spirit and fellowship that has come to those who have been involved in the early stages of this exciting project. Please plan to become part of bringing this memorial to reality.

Please thank all of the officers, committee chairs, board members and past presidents for their leadership over the past three years, with a special thank you to Parker and Debbie Counts for their guidance of the MRA team.

Please contact me with any thoughts and ideas that you have related to our MRA goals and activities for the future. It will certainly be a pleasure to continue our journey together!

Rick Chappell

Docents Gather to Say Farewell to Dr. Barnhart, Retiring CEO of USSRC



The USSRC Emeritus (NASA/Military) Program currently has over 160 NASA retirees, contractors, and military personnel on board. Of that number, 125 are NASA retirees and contractors, each wearing the NASA lab coat. If you are interested in becoming a part of this exciting team, information is available at: www.rocketcenter.com/Volunteer, or contact Bennie Jacks at: benniejacks@att.net.

Schedule of MRA Meetings for the Remainder of 2020:

Tuesday, **June 9, 2020** - Dinner

Tuesday, **September 8, 2020** – Luncheon

Tuesday, **December 8, 2020** – Dinner

Space Exploration Memorial Status

Space exploration is the most significant exploration in the history of humankind. For the first time, humans have been able to leave the Earth, travel to another heavenly body and live in space for more than 20 years. The rockets and spacecraft that have made this possible have been built in Huntsville by employees of the Marshall Space Flight Center in partnership with a large array of companies.

The Marshall Retirees Association has set about to create a memorial which would recognize and remember all of the people and companies who have made this possible. The space exploration memorial would be located at the US Space & Rocket Center where the rockets and spacecraft are on display. The memorial would contain the engraved names of all employees of the Marshall Space Flight Center from its founding to the present time. It would also contain the names of the companies which have worked with MSFC. The memorial would include an online database which would list the names and biographical information of the MSFC employees as well as employees of the companies which are able to make the names of their employees available.

The MRA has been developing the concept for the memorial over a period of 18 months working with a well-known company in Atlanta, which has designed memorial fountains for the Smithsonian, World War II and Korean War memorials, and many more. Working with Hobbs, Fountains, the MRA has developed a concept, done a project plan, created a phased approach to the memorial and, involving MRA volunteers, has found the names of most all of the MSFC employees, more than 21,000!

We are now ready for the next steps. First, we need all employees or families of employees to go to the MRA website, verify the name and information about the employee, add biographical information and photograph and make a contribution to the space exploration memorial. The contribution will go into a restricted fund for the memorial in the USSRC Education Foundation which is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible foundation. Contributions are already coming in and currently exceed \$10,000.

Our goal will be to create a beautiful memorial containing the names which will be experiential in that it will be designed to illustrate the power of the rockets which have been created in Huntsville. It will be a place of special remembrance and a unique attraction to the public in Rocket City!

The kickoff for the public fundraising phase will be done at the MRA luncheon on March 11, 2020 when Center Director Jody Singer will speak. This year is the 60th anniversary of the NASA/Marshall Space Flight Center. Please plan to attend.

Please go online to: www.marshallretirees.org, add your biographical information and make a contribution to the memorial.

2020 DUES REMINDER

2020 dues were 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 March 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 or calling 256-883-2228 so we can keep our records up to date.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER



In 2020, Marshall Space Flight Center will celebrate its 60th birthday. Celebrations are in the works with two dates already set:

June 18, 2020 – MSFC Bldg. 4316 (Employee Event)

June 19, 2020 – Dancing in the Streets in downtown Huntsville (Workforce, families, K-12 students, general public, and important stakeholders).

MRA's Role in the Moon Landing 50th Anniversary Celebration

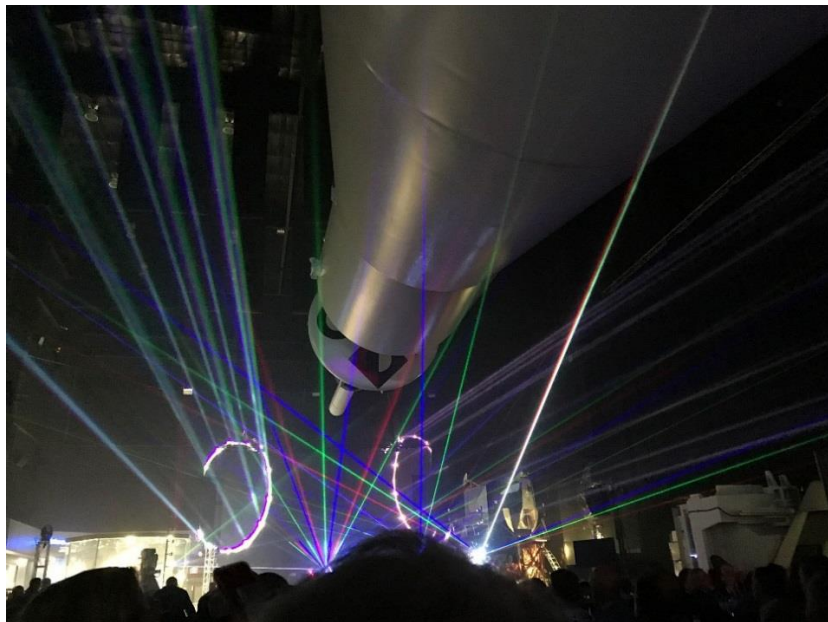
By Jack Stokes

The local community offered the general public a memorable year-long celebration as we remembered our astronauts who landed on the Moon surface on July 20, 1969, and all those who made it happen. A key participant in the celebration activities was our own Marshall Retirees Association (MRA), as many members offered their personal history to share with those who lived the events as well as those who wanted to hear the story for the first time.

Under the leadership of Bennie Jacks for the engineering functions and Heidi Collier for the personal perspectives of our German pioneers, 38 panel discussions and lectures were conducted both at the USSRC and the Huntsville Main Library. After an initial slow start in attendance, the audiences grew from 50 to 150 people as each program grew from the previous one. Discussions included 1) Huntsville prior to the Army arrival, 2) the Army arrival and its accomplishments in rocketry; 3) the early rockets; 4) the Saturn Family rockets; 5) the MSFC-responsible space stations and science; and 6) where the nation seems to be going in the future of space flight.

MRA was heavily involved with the Gala Week July 13 – 20, 2019. Our members were recognized for their accomplishments and had opportunities to revisit with astronauts, managers, and engineering personnel during the celebration. MRA assisted in the first Celebration Car Show, where vehicles connected to the pioneers and to the City were displayed for the public to see.

In summary, the entire celebration received national acclaim, and MRA and its membership were a large part of the success of an incredible celebration event.



Day of Remembrance



Steve Miley, Associate Director of Marshall Space Flight Center, lights a memorial candle on January 30, honoring the brave explorers who lost their lives in pursuit of humanity's destiny in space. "It's important that we celebrate their drive to discover and their passion for space exploration," Miley told Marshall team members assembled for the ceremony in Building 4200. "It's up to those who remain to learn and grow from those who have gone before us ... as we push on to new heights." Marshall, along with NASA centers and partner facilities around the country, hold Day of Remembrance ceremonies early each year to recognize its fallen heroes -- among them the crews of Apollo 1, lost on Jan. 27, 1967, and space shuttles Challenger STS-51L and Columbia STS-107 on Jan. 28, 1986, and Feb. 1, 2003, respectively. NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine also held an observance at Arlington National Cemetery. (Photo and article courtesy of NASA Marshall Star.)

Happy 50th Birthday to the US Space and Rocket Center

The concept of a space and rocket center was the vision of Dr. Wernher von Braun. Through his efforts, the US Space and Rocket Center had its Grand Opening on March 17, 1970.

MRA member Ed Buckbee was the first Executive Director of the Center.





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.

Austin, Robert W., 78, of Huntsville, died November 11, 2019.

Bombara, Elwood (Woody), 88, died December 23, 2019.

Brumley, James Milton, 86, died December 18, 2019.

Carter, James, 74, of Huntsville, died December 2, 2019.

Clay, Richard (Dick), 78, of Madison, died December 26, 2019.

Dorries, Alice Montgomery, 76, of Huntsville, died December 22, 2019.

Galey, Joe T., 88, of Huntsville, died January 21, 2020.

Johnson, Lorena C., of Huntsville, died November 18, 2019.

Loy, Carl A., 92, of Huntsville, died November 18, 2019.

Mooney, Charles F., 88, of Huntsville, died November 18, 2019.

Neighbors, Dr. Joyce, 89, of Huntsville, died February 7, 2020.

Ross, Gadson Shelton, 88, of Owens Cross Roads, died November 15, 2019.

Parker, Walt H., of Huntsville, died December 31, 2019.

Stroud, Mildred L., 99, of Huntsville, died January 12, 2020

NASA/Marshall Retirees Association

P. O. Box 4492

Huntsville, AL 35815

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

OFFICERS: 2020-2022

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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 Jean Lee, Newsletter Editor