



NASA/MSFC Retirees Association

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



FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE

QUARTERLY MRA LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, March 8, 2022 THE LEDGES

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

Menu: Garden Salad, Slow-Cooked Pot Roast with Gravy, Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes, and Carrots, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea Dessert: Chocolate Pie

Cost: \$25.00 per person

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on **Thursday, March 3, 2022** at benniejacks@att.net, or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by The Ledges.

PROGRAM



**Marcia Lindstrom,
Director of Strategic
Communications, NASA's
Space Launch System,
Marshall Space Flight
Center**

**Topic: Update on the SLS
Program**

Marcia Lindstrom leads the Strategic Communications Team for NASA's Space Launch System, the SLS – America's rocket being designed to carry humans to the Moon and on to Mars. Marcia came to NASA after more than a decade of work at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. Her tenure at the Center involved development efforts such as the Saturn V Restoration and included a 6-year stint as the Director of Operations for the Center's world-renowned Space Camp programs. Marcia is a veteran of the USAF.



Dr. Phil Stahl is a Senior Optical Physicist at MSFC currently leading a study to mature mirror technologies for a new large aperture UV/Optical/IR telescope to replace Hubble. Previously, he was

responsible for developing candidate primary mirror technologies for the James Webb Space Telescope.

Many of the world's largest telescopes have been made with the aid of high-speed and infrared phase-measuring Interferometers developed by him.

Dr. Stahl is scheduled to be the speaker for our June meeting, but will fill in, in case Ms. Lindstrom cannot attend because of SLS Launch events.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.....

MRA activities have continued despite the pandemic. We celebrated an in- person luncheon in December and look forward to our next luncheon on March 8th. We continue to identify all past and present MSFC employees for the Space Exploration Memorial. The 22,000 MSFC employees together with their families represent more than 50,000 of Huntsville's 200,000 population, an incredible change from Huntsville's modest 18,000 people in 1950!

As we continue to work with USSRC to create the memorial, we are reminded of the significance of the role that these space explorers in Huntsville have played in our area, from the creation of the USSRC and Space Camp with its influence on visitors to Rocket City, as well as Dr. Von Braun's influence on the creation of the University of Alabama-Huntsville, and the multitudes of high tech companies that have a presence here or have been created here.

As an important element of this activity, MRA is working to broaden its partnership with the USSRC with programs like the docents' tours and the Space Exploration Memorial, which will be a focal point for the families to honor and remember their family members who made space exploration possible, including building the rockets and spacecraft on display at USSRC. We are continuing to raise our visibility in the community with multiple Facebook sites and MRA's **marshallretirees.org** website.

MRA members are creating artwork and logos that are reminders of our programs and community contributions and that keep us together through our experiences in the space exploration journey. "Building Alabama's Rocket City" and "We Built This City on Rocket's Roar" are examples on the Space Explorers Huntsville logo, along with "We Rise With Our Dreams" and "The Wind Beneath Our Wings."

Thanks to all of you for making Huntsville what it is today!

Rick Chappell

DR. LUCAS WILL CELEBRATE 100 YEARS

On March 1, 2022, Dr. Lucas will celebrate his 100th birthday! While he prefers a low-key celebration, you may send cards, notes, or letters to him. His address is:

Dr. William R. Lucas
6805 Criner Road
Huntsville, AL 35802

Congratulations on becoming a centenarian!

2022 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 to MSFC Retirees Association to:

MSFC Retirees Association
P. O. Box 4492
Huntsville, AL 35815

Payment may also be made at the March 8, 2022 luncheon.

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 or calling 256-883-2228. It's very important to keep your information up to date so that you will receive all communications from MRA.

Caroline Wang Captures MSFC Programs with Paintbrush

Caroline Wang continues to create beautiful paintings of the many Marshall Programs. Below are photographs of some of the paintings she has presented to program leaders and spouses of leaders:



Caroline with Gene Olivier and his daughter with painting of Hubble



Rick Chappell presents Caroline's painting of Spacelab to Jean Lee, spouse of Jack Lee



Caroline presents Jo Wojtalik, spouse of Fred Wojtalik, with painting of Hubble

Space Exploration Memorial Update

The Space Exploration Memorial project has continued to take shape and to gather support. The cornerstone of the memorial has been the creation of the database of names of all past and present NASA/MSFC employees, now at about 22,000. The volunteer committee of a dozen MRA members led by Sandra Turner and Gray Settle has created this list, and we are now asking MSFC employees past and present and their families to go online to marshallretirees.org and verify that their names are there; add or edit their biographical data; and, if you choose to do so, make a contribution to support the creation of the memorial through the links to the USSRC Education Foundation or GoFundMe. Also, background data may be added by direct contact with Gray Settle at marshallexplorers@gmail.com or gsettle@gmail.com. We will be working with the partnering companies to add their employee names as well and to make contributions if they so choose. The creation of the database has always been step one and it has been completed.

We continue to work with the USSRC leadership to find the optimal location for the memorial in the Rocket Park, which is being redesigned to accommodate the refurbished older rockets. and then to broaden and evolve the character of the remaining part to the west toward the Davidson Center.

The third and very important step is raising the funding to build the memorial. This is progressing steadily with a total funding raised of \$157,000. The donations from individuals range from \$50 to \$25,000. We have also received \$50,000 of support from the Madison County Commission, thanks to the leadership of Chairman Dale Strong. We have also had encouraging discussions with the City of Huntsville. We are developing linkages to the local aerospace contractors through working with the National Space Club in Huntsville, which recently donated \$10,000 to support the memorial project and its encouragement to future space explorers. We anticipate many more significant contributions from industry, government and other organizations and foundations in the near future.

Please add your family's information to the database and make your donations. Contact Rick Chappell if you have questions.

Chairman Dale Strong of the Madison County Commission Presents Grant to the Space Exploration Memorial Fund



MRA President Rick Chappell Accepts \$50,000 Grant from Dale Strong

The Space Exploration Memorial Fund received a huge boost when Madison County Commission Chairman Dale Strong presented a check for \$50,000 to MRA President Rick Chappell at the MRA 2021 Christmas luncheon.

“There is no better fitting tribute to recognize and honor the thousands of workers from NASA and their contractors whose dedicated teamwork made America’s space exploration possible from Huntsville and Madison County as well as all of North Alabama,” Chairman Strong said. “This memorial will forever recognize these space explorers and serve as an inspiration for generations to follow in their footsteps and take us back to the Moon, Mars and points beyond.”

UAH Library Special Collections and 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. Also, put this information with your important papers so that your family will know your wishes: Reagan Grimsley, 256.824.5781, email: Reagan.grimsley@uah.edu

PHOTO GALLERY FROM 2021 CHRISTMAS SOCIAL



Parker Counts, Bob Noblitt & Rein Ise



Teddy & Tim Jernigan, Lowell Zoller, and Kenny Mitchell



Sharal and Vince Huegele



Mary Harris and Mickey Allen

PHOTO GALLERY FROM 2021 CHRISTMAS SOCIAL



Warren & Sue Ellen Adams and Harry & Nell Craft



Bob and Barbara Stevens



John Haussler & John Reaves entertained us with their "storytelling" time



Richard and Annette Tingle

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE MRA FAMILY

Charles M. Lewis (11/1/21); David Scott (12/1/21)

Denise W. Lewis (1/1/22); Bryan Walls (1/1/22)

Jeff Wesley (1/15/22); John P. Butas (2/1/22)

MRA Website and Social Media Update

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 are investigating an additional website capability to include “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 via the website.

We had “storytelling” on the program at the December Social, and John Haussler and John Reaves did a great job sharing their stories. Let’s keep that going.

Fundraising for the Memorial continues and contributions may be submitted through the website, a GoFundMe account, or direct mail (form enclosed in this newsletter for direct mail). Contributors of funds are added to the website, with permission. Below are the websites:

www.marshallretirees.org

www.gofundme.com/f/build-the-space-exploration-memorial

www.facebook.com/marshallretirees

www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershsv

Question: “What is the format for submitting my information into the database”?

Answer: Detailed instructions for on-line submission of background data are:

- Go to marshallretirees.org
- Scroll down to the Memorial Database
- Click "Search Now"
- In the search area, enter the name (last name, first name/last name, etc., e. g. Gray Settle)
- The search results will be either the entered name or a list of names that meet the search criteria. For the name of interest, click "View Details."
- The results will be the current background information for that person. To submit additional information or to edit existing information, click "Click here to suggest an edit or add more information to this entry." at the bottom of the page.
- Enter new information or edit existing information. If you wish, attach a photo.
- Click "Save."
- Click Home at the top to return to the main website page.

The database fields (types) for background information are:

Photo - 1MB or less

First Name, Middle Name 1, Middle Name 2, Last Name - We have this information but you may wish to submit some edits.

Biography - Textual information that may be as long or as short as you wish.

Starting Year - The year that the employee started his or her career with NASA or NASA contractors

Last Year Served - The year that the employee retired or left NASA or NASA contractors

Honors - Textual information

Projects Worked - Textual information

Employer - NASA (we have that) or a NASA contractor

Except for First Name/Last Name, none of this information is required and may be left blank. The submission will be reviewed for authenticity and approved for accessibility by the public.

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE



On January 27, 2022, NASA employees, retirees, and contractors paused to honor members of the NASA family who lost their lives while furthering the cause of exploration and discovery, including the crews of Apollo 1 and Space Shuttles Challenger and Columbia. This year marks 55 years since the Apollo 1 tragedy. We shall never forget.

Dr. Richard Hoover Receives Prestigious Degree from Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS)



Dr. Hoover with President of RAS Alexander M. Sergeev

On October 23, 2021, MRA member Prof. Richard Hoover was awarded the prestigious Academic Degree and Title *Doctor of Sciences, Honoris Causa* of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) in Moscow. RAS is the second oldest scientific institution in the world.

He was nominated for this title based on his development of multilayer X-ray/EUV and neutron optical systems and his long collaboration with Russian scientists for expedition to Siberia and Antarctica to investigate microbial extremophiles in ancient ice/permafrost; neutron activation analysis of element abundances in rocks and astromaterials; and scanning electron microscopy/energy dispersive x-ray spectroscopy of microfossils in carbonaceous meteorites.

Hoover's MSFC career in astrophysics and astrobiology extended from 1966 – 2011, but his commitment to scientific research, exploration and lecturing has continued beyond his retirement. He has written 420 scientific papers, 52 books and conference volumes, and has 13 U.S. and international patents. Congratulations on this prestigious recognition.

NASA Retirees, Volunteers Refurbish Groundbreaking Astro Spacelab Flight Hardware to Display at USSRC (Excerpt Article and Photo from Marshall Star)



NASA and space enthusiasts who fondly remember the era of the Spacelab Program are getting ready to welcome back an old friend.

When NASA launched Astro-1 and Astro-2 Spacelab missions in 1990 and 1995, the complex array of synchronized telescopic imagers observed quasars, supernovas, and other astronomical objects. More than a quarter-century later, NASA volunteers and their industry partners are refurbishing the landmark hardware for display at the USSRC and ultimately the Smithsonian.

A dedicated group of NASA retirees and contractors have set out on a mission to recover parts from surplus scrap yards and NASA's bone yards. Aiding their efforts was a mission procedures log, meticulously maintained by former Astro engineer Sharolee Huet.

Within the next few weeks, parts are being transported from around the country and will be assembled at the USSRC.

If you would like to know more about this project, contact MRA member Mickey Allen, 256.656.7107.



OBITUARIES

- Allen**, William R., 93, of Huntsville, died December 9, 2021.
Anderson, Edna M., 89, of Graceville, FL, died November 30, 2021.
Blair, James C., 86, of Huntsville, died January 15, 2022.
Blevins, Harold R., 86, of Huntsville, died January 24, 2022.
Cozelos, Charles L., 93, of Huntsville, died November 30, 2021.
Dawkins, Donald D., 95, of Huntsville, died December 13, 2021.
Doty, Patricia M., 79, of Madison, died December 14, 2021.
Haley, Aubrey (Sam), 87, of Huntsville, died January 16, 2022.
Heaman, John P., 89, of Huntsville, died December 5, 2021.
Hight, Hermon, 86, of Madison, died January 14, 2022.
Hodge, M. Winston, 87, of Huntsville, died December 25, 2021
Hudgins, Mellina R., 76, of Huntsville, died December 9, 2021.
Lewter, Billy Joe, 86, of Huntsville, died November 12, 2021.
Marrero, Peter John, 86, of Tuscaloosa, died November 18, 2021.
Moeller, Peggy, 78, of Huntsville, died December 27, 2021.
Needham, Doris B., 86, of Huntsville, died December 26, 2021.
Nettles, Gary, 106, of Columbia TN, died November 19, 2021
Pirtle, Ruthie M., 72, of Decatur, died November 28, 2021
Potter, Martha S., 78, of Huntsville, died November 4, 2021.
Swafford, Judith S., 78, of Huntsville, died November 23, 2021.
Wegrich, Richard D., 86, of Huntsville, died January 6, 2022.
Williams, Wiley E., 93, Lake Charles, LA, died November 17, 2021.

We wish to remember two special spouses who were always at our meetings with brilliant smiles: **Betty Foster**, spouse of Jay Foster, who died on January 17, 2022, and **Sara Thomas**, spouse of John Thomas, who died on January 30, 2022. They will be sorely missed.

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:

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

Vice-President: Steve Cash, scash4@bellsouth.net

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

Treasurer: Gray Settle, gsettle@gmail.com

BOARD MEMBERS:

Jim Turner, n2250x@gmail.com Jean Payne, clovis.payne@yahoo.com

Chris Crumbly, chris@spaceroc.com Jerry Cook, jrcook62@gmail.com

Lybrease Woodard, lrfwoodard@gmail.com Mark King, MisterMaracus62@gmail.com

Melissa McGrath, mmcgrath1915@gmail.com Annette Tingle, tinga10@comcast.net

Jack Stokes, jackstokes1962@gmail.com

PAST PRESIDENTS/STANDING BOARD MEMBERS:

Ed Buckbee, edbuckbee@gmail.com Brooks Moore, brooks.mo@comcast.net

Jim Splawn, jjsplawn@comcast.net Parker Counts, parker@countsconsultants.com

Gerald Smith, gerald.smith6@comcast.net Linda Posey, lbposey@comcast.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Membership: Mary Spaulding, md_spaulding@comcast.net

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

Memorial History Committee: Gray Settle, gsettle@gmail.com

Scholarship Committee: Jim Turner, n2250x@gmail.com