



NASA/MSFC Retirees Association

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

FEBRUARY 2023 ISSUE



QUARTERLY MRA LUNCHEON

TUESDAY, March 14, 2023 THE LEDGES
Social & Registration: 11-11:45; Lunch: 11:45 - 12:15; Business & Speaker 12:15 - 1:00 p.m.

*Menu: Grilled Chicken Pasta with Vegetable Medley,
Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea Dessert: Carrot Cake
Cost: \$25.00 per person*

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on **Thursday, March 9, 2023** 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 meal.



PROGRAM SPEAKER:

DAWN STANLEY

**TOPIC:
ARTEMIS I MISSION**

Ms. Stanley presently serves as Deputy Director of the Cross-Program Systems Integration Office in NASA Headquarters' Common Exploration Systems Development Directorate. Her speech will focus on the Artemis I mission. Stanley was involved in the Space Launch Systems programs at Marshall before relocating to NASA Headquarters.

She attended the Executive Development Institute at the University of North Carolina and earned a bachelor's degree in science engineering at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. She is a graduate of 2009 Leadership Alabama, along with Adult Leadership Alabama with the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce.

She has a love for community service and education and has served as President of the Girl Scouts of North Alabama and on the Board of The School Foundation. Her passion is serving as a mentor to young women who are interested in science and math.

SHUTTLE BUDDIES

Deemer Self has put his heart and soul into organizing the Shuttle Buddies breakfast for years. He is recovering from open heart surgery. Prior to Covid, the group met monthly for breakfast at restaurants around town. Post Covid, the group has met at the Sunny Street Café in Madison. Plans are to meet in April. While the group is called Shuttle Buddies, all MSFC retirees are invited. For more information, contact Deemer at: 256.881.7757 or email: dself@bellsouth.net, or Bennie Jacks at: 256.603.0894.

Message from the President:

First, I wanted to take a moment to say that I look forward to leading MRA for the next few years. I am humbled by your faith in me to lead this historic team.

Second, I would like to thank Dr. Rick Chappell for his leadership of this association over the last 3 years. Rick has done an outstanding job leading MRA though one of the hardest times our Nation, NASA and the Marshall Space flight Center have ever experienced with the Covid pandemic. Rick was the glue that kept us together at a time when we could not meet in person. It would have been easy to just shut MRA down during this difficult time, but Rick took the challenge and kept MRA moving forward. Rick and his team not only kept MRA going, but he has made the Space Exploration Memorial a reality raising over 800,000 dollars and working with the Space and Rocket Center to find the right place to build the memorial for all those who helped make Space Flight a reality.

The future of MSFC and NASA looks bright. I was so proud to be at the Banana Creek viewing sight when Artemis 1 lifted off to return America back to the Moon and Beyond. The members of MRA were the team that laid the foundation for the Artemis launch, and I am extremely proud to be a member of your team. Thanks for your support to the nation's space program and what each one of you has done to make NASA and its missions a success.

I look forward to seeing each one of you at the luncheon at the Ledges on March 14th. Please come celebrate the new year with us. Doors open at 11 with lunch being served at 11:45.

Steve Cash

MARK YOUR CALENDARS MRA Meetings for 2023 at The Ledges

March 14, 2023
June 13, 2023
September 12, 2023
December 12, 2023

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE



Marshall employees gathered January 26 to honor the astronaut crews and others who lost their lives while furthering the goals of human spaceflight. Marshall Director Jody Singer (right) was joined by Mike Hopkins, commander of the second crewed flight of NASA’s SpaceX Crew Dragon in 2021, to offer remarks and lead a candle-lighting ceremony in memory of the crews of Apollo 1 and space shuttles Challenger and Columbia. “They were our colleagues, they were our friends, and more – they were part of our family,” Singer said.

She noted the risks always inherent in space exploration, echoing earlier remarks by NASA Administrator Bill Nelson. “But with this risk comes the responsibility not just to learn from what we do, but to honor those we have lost,” Singer told those in attendance in Building 4221. “We remind ourselves what it really means to be in this business, where we do the impossible. We must ask the questions, we must speak up, and we must remain vigilant about our astronauts’ safety and the safety of our workforce.” **(Article courtesy NASA Marshall Star)**

WELCOME NEW MRA BOARD MEMBERS!

Charles Scales and Bobby Watkins

2023 DUES REMINDER

Dues for 2023 were due on January 1. 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

You may also pay at the next quarterly luncheon on March 14th at the Ledges.

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, as this is our main source of communication with members.

New Members (Since January 1, 2023)

Steven Pavelitz (1/1/23)
Bobby J. Watkins (1/18/23)
Foy S. (Stan) Fuller (1/26/23)
Mark W. Henley (1/31/23)

SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL UPDATE

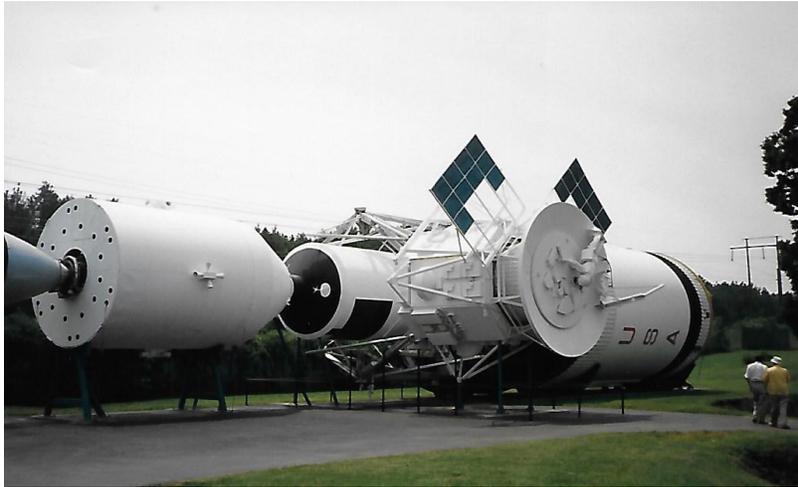


The Space Exploration memorial team of MRA has made great progress toward realizing the creation of the memorial. At this point, we have raised \$824,000 (including pledges) which is a little more than the target we set for ourselves based on the estimated cost that was designed by Matheny Goldman Architects. The Space and Rocket Center has chosen a contractor, Miller and Miller, to carry out the transformation and upgrading of the Rocket Park, including the Memorial.

This transformation will include building the Space Exploration Memorial with its accompanying Space Explorers Honor Roll (database) which is online and accessible from a kiosk at the memorial location. That kiosk will also contain information about the location of the different space explorers' names on the memorial wall. MRA is partnering with the USSRC and is participating in the discussions of the details of the bid, looking at trade-off's and options to bring the construction goals together with the available funds.

The MRA portion of the discussions is proceeding well, and we are addressing the approach and costs. This stage of the process should be completed in the next several weeks with a goal of having the contractor in place in March. We will continue to seek additional funding and to continue adding information to the Space Explorers Honor Roll. We ask all of the MRA members as well as other retired and active MSFC employees to put their information into the Honor Roll database and to make a donation to the memorial if you have not done so. We are proud to report that MRA donations have totaled more than \$200,000 with individual gifts ranging from \$50 to \$25,000. The past Center Directors and their families have given more than \$75,000 including \$5,150 from Dr. von Braun's family in honor of their father and the entire Apollo team. Please make your donations to remember and honor your family members and colleagues who have shared the space exploration journey with you. (Donation Form enclosed)

50th ANNIVERSARY OF SKYLAB



It has been half a century since the Skylab missions, and the Space & Rocket Center is planning a 50th Anniversary Celebration to be held in the Fall of 2023. As many of our MRA members were involved in the MSFC-managed Skylab program, we have an opportunity to participate in the celebration event.

An effort has begun to locate and refurbish all the Skylab artifacts housed at the USSRC. There are plans to once again outfit the Skylab Orbital Workshop (OWS) mockup, the original flight item being a MSFC/McDonnell-Douglas-provided Saturn V third stage rocket segment. Additionally, the Skylab neutral buoyancy mockup, the only complete item representing the flown Skylab vehicle, will be refurbished. Further, there are plans to retrieve the one-G mockups of the Multiple Docking Adapter (MDA), the Airlock Module (AL), and the Apollo Telescope Mount (ATM) from the USSRC “boneyard” to also be refurbished and displayed.

If you have Skylab information you would like to share with the exhibit planners; have Skylab hardware which you might wish to donate; or are willing to do hands-on refurbishment of Skylab mockups, please contact Jack Stokes at 256-468-2743.

NASA SPINOFFS BROCHURE FOR 2022

NASA SPINOFFS, NASA’s annual publication highlighting inventions and patents gained from space exploration is now available online at: <https://spinoff.nasa.gov> for your review.

MRA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Over the years, MRA has established an endowed scholarship at the University of Alabama – Huntsville from membership dues. This year's recipient is Ms. Tetiana Tymoshevska, a sophomore working towards a BS in Aerospace Engineering. She is part of the UAH space hardware club, and is also performing undergraduate research work in plasma propulsion. She wishes to thank MRA for helping her to achieve her dream of building a career in the aerospace industry and making an impact. She has received a previous scholarship from MRA for her studies. UAH will hold their annual scholarship breakfast on March 9, 2023, on the UAH campus where MRA and Ms. Tymoshevska will be recognized. She will also be recognized at the March 14th MRA luncheon. Jim Turner leads MRA's Scholarship Committee.

MRA WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA (UPDATE)

Please remember that the current MRA newsletter as well as previous newsletters are archived at www.marshallretirees.org 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 and the “Stories” page of the website continue to be updated. Biographical information for former and current MSFC personnel and stories are added regularly. Submissions may be made through the website. Alternatively, biographical information and stories may be submitted by email to marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com or to gsettle@gmail.com. This is the preferred alternative for submitting stories with pictures.

Fundraising for the Memorial continues and contributions may be submitted through the website (www.marshallretirees.org) or direct mail (donation form included in this newsletter). Donors are added to MRA website, with permission.

Below are the MRA websites addresses:

www.marshallretirees.org

www.facebook.com/marshallreirees

www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershsv

COMING SOON....Book Release of “Air Born”, by Jan Davis



Jan’s post on Facebook:

Exciting news! I have a book deal for my book "Air Born", which will hopefully be published this summer. It is about my father, who was a B-17 pilot and POW in WWII, and about me. The intersection of our lives in aviation is an interesting story!

BOB STEWART Inducted into Wall of Heroes



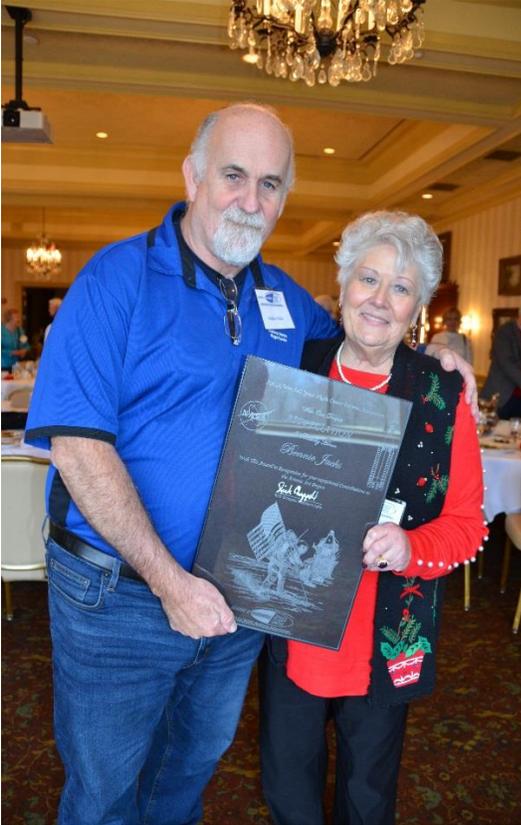
During Veterans Week in November 2022, Retired Brig. Gen. Robert Stewart was inducted into the

Madison County Hall of Heroes. His resume includes, Army aviator, Instructor Pilot, Test Pilot, and he was the first active Army Officer to be selected as a NASA astronaut. He received three combat awards, including the Distinguished Flying Cross and two purple Hearts for wounds received from enemy action. Bob became an astronaut in 1979 and was a mission specialist on STS-41-B in 1984 and STS-51-J in 1985, logging 289 hours in space and 12 hours of EVA operations. In retirement, he is a docent at USSRC and a member of MRA.

Congratulations and thank you for your service to our country and to the space program!

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL DECEMBER 2022

MRA HONORS BENNIE JACKS FOR HER SERVICE TO MRA



(Shown with Bennie is Weldon Welles, a Friend to MRA and Bennie and the designer of the plaque with etchings of MSFC Programs on glass.)

MRA President Rick Chappell presented an Exceptional Service Award to Bennie Jacks at the Social. Rick's words were: "I have never known anyone like Bennie in my

entire life; she is absolutely amazing!! Since my mom was an English professor, she always would bring what she called "five-dollar words" into our conversations at home. One of those "five-dollar words" is INDEFATIGABLE which has the dictionary meaning of "extremely persistent and untiring". Its synonyms are "inexhaustible, tireless, unflagging, unsinkable." All of those describe Bennie's life and her approach to doing the right things for NASA, MRA, Space Explorers Huntsville, the Space Exploration Memorial and the Space Explorers Honor Roll. And she does all of this with an "Elvis flavor" of energy, larger than life individualism! Bennie does not have on and off time periods in her life; she is ON all of the time. A search of her texts and emails would show that her day is 24 hours of ON!! USSRC, MRA, NASA, AMERICA could not have done their thing without Bennie. The corollary word to INDEFATIGABLE for Bennie is UNBELIEVABLE!"



OBITUARIES

- Allison**, Paul R., 83, of Huntsville, died December 14, 2022.
Beaman, Robert Earl, 89, of Huntsville, died December 14, 2022
Clark, Beryl Middlehurst, 97, of Huntsville, died January 17, 2023.
Courtenay, St. John, 95, of Murfreesboro, TN, died January 8, 2023.
Dailey, Carroll Clifton, 92, of Huntsville, died January 27, 2023.
Durham, Shirley Hovis, 80, of Harvest died December 14, 2022.
Franklin, Douglas Barton, 93, of Huntsville, died January 20, 2023.
Harp, James Albert, 86, of Grant, died December 24, 2022.
Linton, Roger, 79, of Huntsville, died November 22, 2022.
Williams, Jimmy Ray, 85, of Huntsville, died November 21, 2022.
White, John King, 87, of Slidell, LA, died February 15, 2022.
Redmon, John Wiley, Sr., 87, of Huntsville, died December 4, 2022.
Wilde, Billa “Bubbles”, 92, of Huntsville, died November 14, 2022.
Rhods, Alvin Lee, 87, of Madison, died December 5, 2022.
May, Chester B., 90, of Huntsville, died December 13, 2022.
Hyter, Delano Roosevelt, 87, of Huntsville, died January 15, 2023.
Jobe, Grady Sherman, 89, of Huntsville, died December 16, 2022.
Kastanakis, John H., 98, of Huntsville, died January 12, 2023.
Lynch, Thomas Morgan, 91, of Huntsville, died December 10, 2022.
Lynn, John Clinton, 89, of Athens, died December 30, 2022.
Miller, Edgar Ray, 89, of Huntsville, died February 4, 2023.
Miller, Shelvie Jean, 79, of Huntsville, died December 17, 2022.
Olivier, Jean R., 88, of Madison died January 11, 2023.
Parker, Joe Reavis, 91, of Huntsville, died January 4, 2023.
Powell, Joseph Harrell, 96, of Huntsville, died January 14, 2023.
Sharp, James Michael, 70, of New Market, died January 11, 2023.
Stafford, Jerry Mack, 83, of Huntsville, died January 15, 2023.
Taylor, James L., 85, of Picayune, MS, died January 16, 2023.
Weaver, Orville Wright, 92, of Huntsville, died January 4, 2023.
Zwiener, James Milton, 80, of Huntsville, died January 10, 2023.

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P. O. Box 4492

Huntsville, AL 35815

MRA OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS, PAST PRESIDENTS, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

OFFICERS:

President: Steve Cash, scash4@bellsouth.net

Vice-President: Gene Goldman, gagoldman@bwxt.com

Recording Secretary: Melissa McGrath, mccgrath1915@gmail.com

Treasurer: Gray Settle, gsettle@gmail.com

Community Outreach & Events Coordinator: Bennie Jacks, benniejacks@att.net

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

Charles Scales, chscales@aol.com Bobby Watkins, bobby.watkins@barrios.com

Lybrease Woodard, lrfwoodard@gmail.com Mark King, MisterMarcus62@gmail.com

Jack Stokes, jackstokes1962@gmail.com Annette Tingle, tinga102022@outlook.com

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

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

Rick Chappell, rick.chappell@vanderbilt.edu Melissa McGrath, mccgrath1915@gmail.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Membership: Mary Spaulding, md_spaulding@comcast.net Program: Bobby Watkins, bobby.watkins@barrios.com

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

Memorial Project Manager: Rick Chappell, rick.chappell@vanderbilt.edu

Memorial History: Gray Settle, gsettle@gmail.com

Scholarship Committee: Jim Turner, n2250x@gmail.com