



## ***NASA/MSFC Retirees Association***

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

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## **NOVEMBER 2021 ISSUE**

### **QUARTERLY MRA LUNCHEON**

**TUESDAY, DEC. 14, 2021      THE LEDGES**

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

*Menu: Garden Salad, Slow-Roasted Turkey with  
Cornbread Dressing, Green Beans and Sweet Potato  
Casserole, Dinner Rolls, Coffee & Tea    Dessert: Carrot  
Cake    Cost: \$25.00 per person*

Please RSVP to Bennie Jacks no later than noon on **Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2021** at [benniejacks@att.net](mailto:benniejacks@att.net), or cell phone: 256.603.0894. A 72-hour cancellation notice is required by The Ledges.

# PROGRAM

No structured program is planned. Because of Covid 19, we have been separated for a long period of time. So, this time will be devoted to socializing with our friends and catching up. Some story telling time is planned.

## *MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.....*

As we approach the holiday season, we look forward to opportunities to be with family and friends. The pandemic situation is not gone completely, but it is diminishing in terms of its intensity in our area. The number of new cases has dropped significantly and your MRA board has decided that we can proceed with our Holiday Lunch on **December 14th**. We will take precautions in terms of making distancing possible and individuals can wear masks if you would be more comfortable doing so. We are assuming that everyone in attendance has been vaccinated. If you have not, you may want to consider whether to attend.

By being able to get together, we will take the opportunity of sharing some personal stories related to our times together at Marshall over the decades. Our lunch committee has some individual personal stories in mind and we would like for you to volunteer to share a story with the group. The length of an individual story should be about 5 minutes. Please let me know if you have a NASA story!

We will also have some paintings that have been done by Caroline Wang related to many of our MSFC missions that will be available to view at the event. Caroline will be there to sign a print for you if you would like to have one and the money from the purchase will go to the MRA in order to support the Space Exploration Memorial. Caroline has also donated copies of these prints for sale in the USSRC gift shop with the proceeds going to the USSRC 501c(3) Education Foundation general fund and to the Space Exploration Memorial restricted fund.

All of our traditional MRA activities have been continuing as in the past and the MRA board has been meeting by zoom calls. A focus of our activities has been to encourage everyone to add your career information to the Space Exploration Memorial database. Many of you have done this, and we sincerely hope that everyone will add their information so that the history can be complete.

I look forward to seeing everyone in December! Rick

## MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER

Dues for 2022 are 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, or by paying at the December Social.

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](mailto:md_spaulding@comcast.net) or calling 256-883-2228 so we can keep our records up to date.

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## UPDATE ON MRA WEBSITE AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

The MRA website continues to be updated, as needed. Contributors to the proposed Memorial are added to the lists, with permission. Background information for former and current MSFC personnel in the Memorial Database is added, when submitted by self, family, friends, and colleagues. The database contains approximately 21,700 names, after the addition of the names of new employees in 2020-21.

The website is more user friendly now that all the fields in the database are searched for the search text entered. A user can search for a name by Last Name or First Name/Last Name or one can search for content not related to the names, such as “propulsion,” which will find all database entries with “propulsion” in the biographical or other information. To enrich the database content, we continue to solicit submission of background data. Also, any errors or needed corrections found may be submitted through the edit feature in the database section of the website, by submitting a Question through the website feature, or by direct contact with Gray Settle at [marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com](mailto:marshallspaceexplorers@gmail.com).

## UPDATE ON MRA WEBSITE AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA(Continued)

We are currently investigating an additional website capability to include submitted “stories.” Whenever career NASA/contractors get together, interesting stories are told concerning past events, projects, personal perspectives, etc. This effort is an attempt at capturing these stories and making them available for enjoyment by the website readership. As Rick has stated, ‘The stories are the essence of what a life of exploration with NASA brought to our lives and our families....’

Not only are new ideas being investigated for the website, MRA is now active on social media, and a GoFundMe account has been established for fundraising for the proposed Memorial. Below are the URLs for the website, the Facebook account, and the GoFundMe account.

[www.marshallretirees.org](http://www.marshallretirees.org)

[www.facebook.com/marshallretirees](https://www.facebook.com/marshallretirees)

[www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershsv](https://www.facebook.com/spaceexplorershsv)

[www.gofundme.com/f/build-the-space-exploration-memorial](https://www.gofundme.com/f/build-the-space-exploration-memorial)

If you prefer to **write a check**, make the check payable to: U. S. Space and Rocket Center Education Foundation. **In the “Memo” or “For” line, designate that it is for the Space Exploration Memorial.** Mail the check to:

U. S. Space and Rocket Center Education Foundation  
Attn: Space Exploration Memorial Fund  
One Tranquility Base  
Huntsville, AL 35805

Please enclose a list of the names of those you are honoring and remembering with this gift. Your name and gift will be acknowledged on the MRA website, unless you prefer to remain anonymous. If you have questions, contact: Gray Settle at: 256.682.0334, or [gsettle@gmail.com](mailto:gsettle@gmail.com), or Bennie Jacks at: 256.603.0894, or [benniejacks@att.net](mailto:benniejacks@att.net).

## ARTEMIS ON THE SQUARE IN DOWNTOWN HUNTSVILLE

MSFC partnered with Downtown Huntsville Inc. to bring Artemis on the Square on Nov. 6. Visitors enjoyed space exhibits, live music, and activities focusing on the Artemis story and the community's contributions to the mission, as well as the technologies that will take humanity back to the Moon and beyond.

Displays were located around the courthouse square at the heart of downtown and attendees **wore their best astronaut/NASA attire**. MRA leaders and docents supported this event. Rick Chappell spoke about MRA and the Memorial and MSFC leaders spoke about the upcoming missions to the moon and beyond.



Bennie Jacks & Rick Chappell





# SPACE EXPLORATION MEMORIAL (UPDATE)

By Rick Chappell

The Space Exploration Memorial activities are continuing on several fronts. An important one of those is the work on the database which Gray Settle and Annette Tingle are leading with support from the Memorial committee. As the biographical information is added, the database is being optimized to capture the history.

Gray's article in this newsletter goes into more detail on this approach in addition to the new social media website, Facebook pages, and GoFundMe online links. With the social media, we are working to expand the community outreach of the MRA to include the broader group of space explorers who have worked in the Huntsville area and encourage their involvement and support for the memorial activities. As an example of this outreach, I wrote about space exploration over the decades in Huntsville, which will be published in the Old Huntsville Magazine. A short version will be on the back of the magazine and will be used for a flyer that, in conjunction with our brochure, will give more insights into our goals.

Funding for the memorial is increasing steadily with the majority coming from individuals both connected with NASA and with contractors, **together with a significant agreement of support (\$50,000) from the Madison County Commission.**



Conceptual Drawing of Space Exploration Memorial

## **Bennie Jacks Receives Jack Lee Community Service Award at the Annual Wernher von Braun Dinner**



**Left to Right: Patrick Jacks, Bennie Jacks, Jean Lee, and Patrick Manning with Award**

Our own Bennie Jacks was the recipient of the Jack Lee Community Service Award given by the National Space Club at the Von Braun Memorial Dinner on Oct. 13, 2021.

Bennie had a long career with MSFC from 1966 – 2011 serving in various administrative and managerial roles. Following her retirement, she became integrally involved with the Huntsville space community. She has been employed with USSRC since 2014, as Volunteer & Community Outreach Coordinator. While others had tried, Bennie is credited with getting the NASA Emeritus Docent Program up and running. She continues to recruit and train docents to support MRA, USSRC and Community events. Her role with MRA can be described as a “jack of all trades.” She is anxious to get involved in any activity that promotes MRA, NASA/MSFC and the space program. She has been Secretary to the MRA Board for a number of years and keeps the members informed of activities/events. Bennie was a main player on the 50<sup>th</sup> Moon Landing Anniversary Celebration Committee and oversaw the production of the 38 lectures and panel discussions associated with the celebration. Space does not allow us to name the many local organizations that benefit from her volunteerism.



# **The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wernher von Braun Memorial Dinner October 13, 2021**



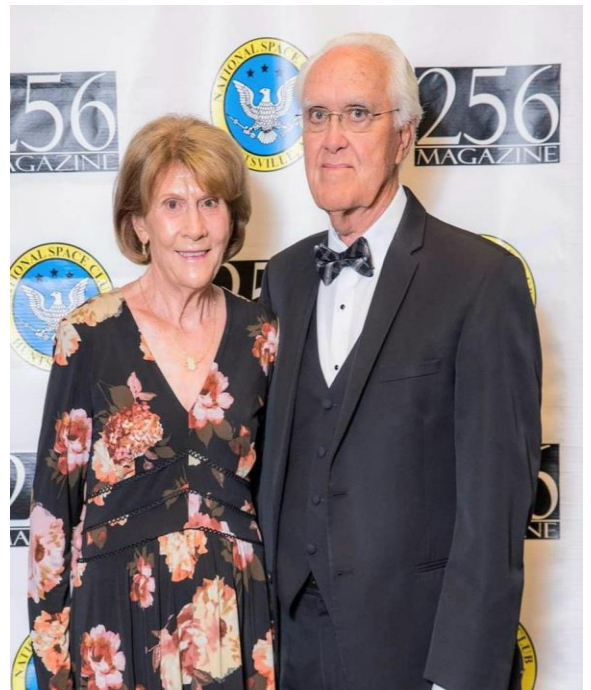
**Jan Davis & Dick Richardson**



**Parker and Debbie Counts**



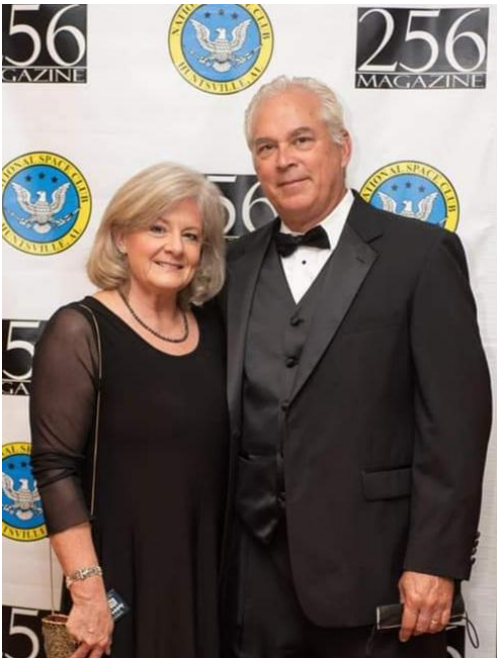
**Rick and Brenda Chappell**



**Gray and Juletta Settle**



## **The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wernher von Braun Memorial Dinner October 13, 2021 (Cont'd)**



**Jody and Chris Singer**



**Brooks Moore & Samantha Hereford**



**Bunnie and Charles Scales**



**Docents John Reaves & Linda Dinges**

WELCOME!!!!!!

## NEW MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR 2021

Melvin L. Scruggs (1/21)  
John O. Lassiter (1/21)  
Dennon Clardy (1/21)  
Rebecca B. Hopson (2/21)  
Bruce K. Wallace (3/21)  
Amy Epps (5/21)  
Lou Ann Fikes (5/21)  
Pete Allen (5/21)  
Charles Finnegan (5/21)  
K. Stuart Clifton (5/21)  
Harry L. Atkins (5/21)  
Roy W. Malone, Jr. (6/21)  
Sheila H. Fogle (6/21)  
Ron Creel (6/21)  
Rebecca Selvage (6/21)  
Timothy L. Miller (8/21)  
John W. (Bill) Kilpatrick (9/21)  
Vinson and Sharal Huegele (9/21)  
Kaye Inman (9/21)  
Kimberly Robinson (9/21)  
Anthony T. (Tony) Lyons (11/21)

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Ruth von Saurma:

MRA received a handwritten note from Ruth thanking everyone for the birthday cards and kind words. She celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in August and enjoys receiving the MRA newsletters and states that she is enjoying time with her family, but she misses her NASA family in Huntsville. Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

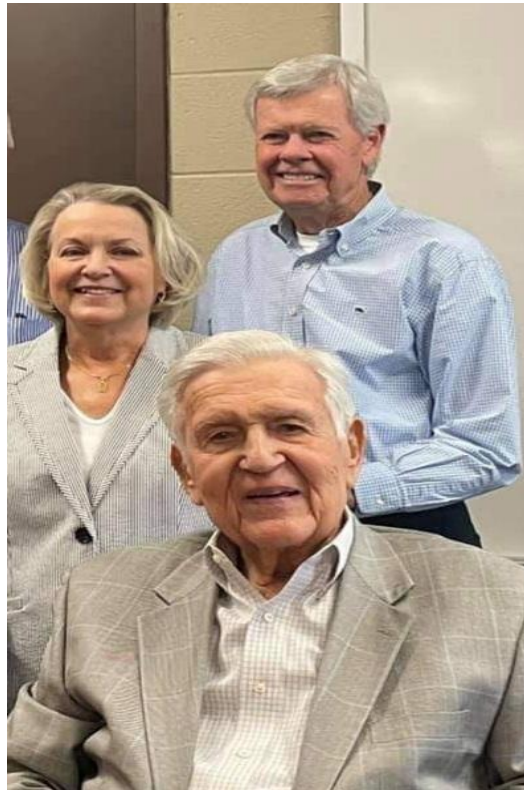
## MRA DOCENTS SUPPORT MANY COMMUNITY EVENTS

STEAMfest 2021 was a science fest held at VBC on October 30<sup>th</sup>, with guest speakers, plus information booths and science activities extending out into Big Spring Park where Huntsville's most innovative companies demonstrated the importance of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) in the real world.



Jack Stokes talked with kids visiting the MRA booth

Olli (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) at UAH, hosted a group of speakers to talk about “The German/American Rocket Team”. Speakers included docents Rick Chappell, Brooks Moore, and Heidi Collier.



## Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Docents Kenny Mitchell and Jack Stokes!!!



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## A STEP BACK IN TIME.....



A “Farewell S&E Party” in 1999. Back Row: (LtoR) Bob Schwinghamer, George Hopson, Bill Taylor. Front Row: (LtoR) Jim Kingsbury, Jim Odom and George McDonough.



## Marshall Early Career Organization (MECO)

The Marshall Early Career Organization (MECO) was formed to establish a mentoring program for new MSFC employees whereby they can interact with Marshall retirees and other experienced members of the space community. Parker Counts and Gray Settle have been meeting with the MECO Board to get the program up and running.

The MECO Board has requested that members of MRA be available for speaking engagements at future monthly meeting. The first request is to have MRA members form a Skylab Panel to discuss the role Marshall engineers, scientists and associates played in the successful Skylab program. Parker Counts, Jim Splawn and Jack Stokes, will serve on that panel at their November 16, 2021 meeting.

If you are interested in participating in this important endeavor, please contact Parker at: [parker@countsconsultants.com](mailto:parker@countsconsultants.com).

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## Obituaries

**Anderson**, William Lee, 85, of Taft, TN, died October 6, 2021  
**Batte**, James O., 97, of Huntsville, died September 5, 2021  
**Bell**, Richard “Dick”, 88, of Huntsville, died August 29, 2021  
**Bush**, Herbert Turner, 82, of Huntsville, died July 9, 2021  
**Bynum**, Thomas Hampton, 79, of Huntsville, died August 19, 2021  
**Carlen**, Henry Frank, 83, of Huntsville, died August 31, 2021  
**Cook**, Donald Brett, 86, of Hazel Green, died September 2, 2021  
**Freeman**, Wyn, 96, of Huntsville, died November 6, 2021  
**Lawson**, Bobby Eugene, 84, of Huntsville, died August 10, 2021  
**Longhi**, Allen C., 73, of Hazel Green, died September 22, 2021  
**Lyle**, Johnie Franklin, 92, of Huntsville, died October 1, 2021  
**Potter**, Martha Short, 78, of Huntsville, died November 4, 2021  
**Riggs**, Jerry Leonard, 93, of Brownsboro, died August 13, 2021  
**Russell**, Willa Dean, 74, of Winchester, TN, died October 17, 2021  
**Stiles**, Laura Wilson, 95, of Hot Springs, AR, died October 7, 2021  
**Story**, Katie Johnson, 75, of Huntsville, died October 1, 2021  
**Terrell**, Norma Oliver, 82, of Huntsville, died October 9, 2021  
**Winstead**, Thomas Watson, 88, of Huntsville, August 15, 2021