Marshall Star, November 9, 2011 Edition

# MARSHALL STAR

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## J-2X Engine Test Firing Set for Nov. 9 at Stennis

The J-2X rocket engine, a key component of NASA's Space Launch System which will carry the Orion spacecraft, its crew, cargo, equipment and science experiments beyond Earth orbit, will be test fired Nov. 9 at approximately 3 p.m. CST at NASA's Stennis Space Center.

***Image right: The 40-second test of the J-2X rocket engine on Sept. 28, 2011. (NASA/SSC)***

Marshall team members are invited to view the test live on NASA TV at http://www.nasa.gov/ntv.

The SLS rocket engines will use a liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen propulsion system, which will include the J-2X engine for the upper stage and RS-25D/E engines -- space shuttle main engines -- for the core stage. Pratt and Whitney Rocketdyne is developing the J-2X engine for the Marshall Space Flight Center.

To learn more about J-2X testing, visit http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/j2x/. For more information about NASA's Space Launch System, visit http://www.nasa.gov/sls.

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**Astronaut TJ Creamer Becomes Part of Marshall Center Family in Payload Operations Center**

*By Lori Meggs*

He traveled 65,200,000 miles around the planet while living aboard the International Space Station for 161 days, but a new journey has led astronaut TJ Creamer to the Marshall Space Flight Center.

***Image left: Jason Norwood, left, a payload operations director at the Marshall Center, goes over procedures with NASA astronaut TJ Creamer during a training session in the Payload Operations Center. (NASA/MSFC/Emmett Given)***

The former Expedition 22/23 flight engineer and NASA science officer is now learning what things are like from the ground up -- literally. Creamer is training to become a payload operations director in the Payload Operations Center at Marshall. He'll become the first astronaut certified to lead the team that coordinates real-time science operations between crews on orbit, the Johnson Space Center and international partners around the world.

Creamer said the decision to come to Marshall and be part of the payload operations team was easy. "I want to help bring focus onto this team that is driving the boat in terms of research on the station and its significant effort to bring science into the limelight," said Creamer. "It is also important for other parts of Marshall to know that this is the center for International Space Station ops right now."

He said working as a payload operations director is the perfect marriage of his operational background and his time on station. That time on station began when Creamer launched aboard a Russian Soyuz crew capsule on Dec. 21, 2009, from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, docking with the station two days later. He returned with a safe landing in central Kazakhstan on June 2, 2010.

"TJ has a unique background having lived on station and being a certified capcom, or capsule communicator, who talks with astronauts in space," said Jason Norwood, a Marshall Center payload operations director and Creamer's training lead. "While it typically takes a year to become certified, his experience will speed that up by a few months. His time with us will be spent performing plenty of on-the-job training and simulations, and learning Marshall Center processes, procedures and safety."

Long before he lived on the space station, Creamer built a relationship with the Marshall team -- as all crew members do. Various payload team members attend many of the crews' training events at the Johnson Center. "It's that cross-pollination that will make this move for me -- from a crew member to a payload operations director -- seamless."

Creamer plans to train in Huntsville at least two weeks every month until he becomes certified in the next year.

He also has a few goals for himself. "Number one, I want to have people be proud of what I'm doing and believe I am a contributor. I want to share my operational experiences with the folks at Marshall. And I never want a procedure named after me," he said with a smile, "as that could be a bad thing."

When Creamer is not training for his latest assignment, you may catch him playing tennis -- his first love -- or speaking his fluent German and Russian. But he says lots of folks probably know him most recently as a bowler.

"Marshall has a wonderful community of very warm folks who are awesome and delightful," said Creamer. "They are outstanding people who want to do an outstanding job. What more could I ask for?"

Prior to his selection as an astronaut in 1998, Creamer had a full career with the U.S. Army.

"What I'm hoping to do now is augment all of my previous experiences to help tout the Marshall team and to make processes even stronger," added Creamer. "I so firmly believe in what we're doing here at Marshall. It's why I tossed my hat into the ring."

For more on TJ Creamer visit: http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/creamer.html.

*Meggs, an AI Signal Research Inc. employee, supports the Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.*

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**Former Alabama Football Player Siran Stacy Shares Importance of Community During Tragedy**

Siran Stacy, who played football for the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa from 1989-1991, presented the keynote address during the Marshall Space Flight Center's "Thanks For Giving: 50 Years of Combined Federal Campaign" rally Nov. 1. The CFC is an annual initiative by federal and military personnel to raise money for charities. Stacy, at right foreground, and Deputy Director Gene Goldman, left foreground, pay respects to the National Anthem at the rally. In 2007, Stacy lost his wife and four of his five children when a drunk driver collided with their family van. Now he travels as a motivational speaker, sharing the importance of family, community and spirituality as healing forces in the face of tragedy. (NASA/MSFC/Given)


Jim Duffy, executive chairperson for this year's CFC, and an aerospace engineer in Marshall's Engineering Directorate, welcomes a large crowd of Marshall team members to the rally. This year's CFC goal is $700,000. As of Nov. 7, team members have contributed $341,109. (NASA/MSFC/Given)

Siran Stacy shares with the Marshall team the events of the night of Nov. 19, 2007, when he lost his wife, Ellen, and children, Lequisa, Bronson, Sidney and Ellie, in a tragic car accident. He encouraged everyone to donate to local charities because, just as they helped him, these are the groups that help people through their toughest times, he said. (NASA/MSFC/Given)


Numerous charitable organizations participated in a CFC expo during the rally Nov. 1, their representatives talking with Marshall team members about the services their organizations offer. Sherresa Lockett, left, with Deltha-Critique supporting the Science and Technology Department, learns more about the Downtown Rescue Mission in Huntsville from Corey Buckner, development coordinator for the nonprofit organization. Civil service and contractor employees can visit ExplorNet for information about making a donation or to volunteer for Community Service Days at many local and area charities. To view more photos from the rally, visit http://imagingservices.msfc.nasa.gov/gallery/Thanks_for_Giving_2011/content/index.html. (NASA/MSFC/Given)

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**Marshall Center's Dr. Frank Six Honored for Contributions to Aerospace Education**

Dr. Frank Six, right, university affairs officer and assistant manager of the Marshall Space Flight Center's Academic Affairs Office, receives the Dr. Wernher von Braun Aerospace Educator Award from author and former NASA aerospace engineer Homer Hickam at the 23rd Annual Dr. Wernher von Braun Memorial Dinner on Oct. 26. The award, established in 1996 by the National Space Club, is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to Alabama aerospace education. The event was held at the Davidson Center for Space Exploration in Huntsville. Six has been assistant manager of Marshall's Academic Affairs Office since 2008. He manages Marshall's NASA Academy, Robotics Academy and Propulsion Academy projects, which provide hands-on research internships at Marshall for students across the United States. He has served as Marshall's university affairs officer since 2006, responsible for university internships, graduate fellowships, minority university research and other education initiatives. Six also heads two of Marshall's student competitions – the NASA Student Launch Initiative and the NASA Great Moonbuggy Race. He joined the Marshall Center in 1986 as a visiting scientist. (NASA/MSFC/Emmett Given)

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**NASA Telescopes Capture Oldest Recorded Supernova**

This colorful image combines data from four different space telescopes to create a multi-wavelength view of all that remains of the oldest documented example of a supernova, called RCW 86. X-ray images from NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory and the European Space Agency's XMM-Newton Observatory are combined to form the blue and green colors in the image. The X-rays show the interstellar gas that has been heated to millions of degrees by the passage of the shock wave from the supernova. Infrared data from NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, as well as NASA's Wide-Field Infrared Survey Explorer, are shown in yellow and red, and reveal dust radiating at a temperature of several hundred degrees below zero, warm by comparison to normal dust in our Milky Way galaxy. The Chinese witnessed the event in 185 A.D., documenting a mysterious "guest star" that remained in the sky for eight months. This is the first time that this type of cavity has been seen around a white dwarf system prior to explosion. RCW 86 is approximately 8,000 light-years away. At about 85 light-years in diameter, it occupies a region of the sky in the southern constellation of Circinus that is slightly larger than the full moon. For more information, visit here. (X-ray: NASA/CXC/SAO & ESA; Infared: NASA/JPL-Caltech/B. Williams (NCSU))

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**Former Astronaut Leland Melvin Paints a Picture in Space Campers' Minds**

Leland Melvin, associate administrator for the Office of Education at NASA Headquarters, and a former astronaut, visited the Marshall Space Flight Center on Nov. 1-2. He spoke to U.S. Space Camp participants at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center -- Marshall's official visitor center. On the floor on his back, Melvin painted a word picture in the children's minds about what it's like to be an astronaut and launch aboard a space shuttle. The Space Campers also got the opportunity to ask him questions. During his Marshall visit, the veteran of two space flights -- STS-122 and STS-129 -- met with Gene Goldman, deputy center director; Robin Henderson, associate center director; Audrey Robinson, director of the Office of Diversity & Equal Opportunity; Digna Carballosa, deputy director of the Office of Human Capital; Tammy Rowan, manager of the Academic Affairs Office; and members of the executive council for the Office of Human Capital. Melvin is responsible for development and implementation of NASA's education programs that strengthen student involvement and public awareness about its scientific goals and missions. He was named to his position in October 2010. To read more about Melvin, visit here. (NASA/MSFC/Emmett Given)

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**Obituaries**

George Richard Cason Jr., 76, of Huntsville died Oct. 27. He retired from the Marshall Center in 1995 as a program analysis officer. He is survived by his wife, Charlene Cason.

Thomas Edward Stephens, 85, of Madison died Oct. 28. He retired from the Marshall Center in 1984 as an electronics technician. He is survived by his wife, Janie Lou Stephens.

Earl Palmer Herndon Jr., 83, of Huntsville died Oct. 29. He retired from the Marshall Center in 1990 as an aerospace engineering technician. He is survived by his wife, Anna Laura Herndon.

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