



National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Goddard Space Flight Center

Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Virginia

Inside Wallops

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Space Shuttle Atlantis Glass Cockpit

The Space Shuttle Atlantis is now easier and safer to fly thanks to "glass cockpit" technology pioneered at the NASA Langley Research Center (LRC).



Glass Cockpit

This week's flight, (currently scheduled for May 18) is the first for Atlantis since it underwent more than 100 modifications and improvements, "making it the most up-to-date Shuttle ever," according to Space Shuttle Program Manager Ron Dittmore. Eleven full-color flat panel screens in the "glass cockpit" have replaced dozens of outdated electromechanical cockpit dials, instruments and gauges.

NASA astronaut Fred Gregory advised managers in the Shuttle Program to contact LRC when he learned Atlantis would be the first orbiter to get a total technology makeover. Gregory, originally from LRC and now NASA Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance, knew researchers at Langley had developed the "glass

cockpit" concept in simulators and on demonstration flights in a NASA 737 research aircraft to NASA Wallops Flight Facility.

"Glass cockpit" technology allows pilots to better understand and integrate vital aviation information. Liquid crystal displays can show maps and obstacles, such as terrain, and also provide easy-to-read, graphical status updates of key flight indicators and systems. Shuttle officials also say the new system reduces the high cost of maintaining obsolete instruments, provides greater backup capability, weighs less and uses less power than the original cockpit design.

STS-101 Atlantis will dock with the International Space Station, and the seven-member crew will unload more than a ton of cargo. They will perform several maintenance tasks on board to keep the station in good condition as its orbital assembly continues later this year. The crew also will conduct one space walk to do work on the station's exterior.

When STS-101, Space Shuttle Atlantis visits the International Space Station it will be carrying two small payloads managed by the Shuttle Small Payloads Projects office (Code 870): a Space Experiment Module (SEM) and a Complex Autonomous Payload (CAP).

Virginia Lt. Governor Visits Wallops



Photo by Rick Huey.

Virginia Lt. Governor John Hager (seated) paid a visit to Wallops on Wednesday, May 3. Joining him in the Wallops Range Control Center were (left to right) Mirga Pakstys, DynCorp; Ivan Somers, CIT; Lt. Governor Hager's wife, Maggie; Arnold Torres, Suborbital and Special Orbital Projects; Chuck Hendershot, DynCorp; and Billie Reed, Virginia Space Flight Center. The group also toured Wallops Island.

Wallops Shorts.....

Sounding Rocket Launch

A NASA Terrier-Black Brant sounding rocket was launched from the White Sands Missile Range, NM on May 6. The Galactic Astronomy experiment was to obtain information of the structure and dynamics of the local bubble as well as constraints on the details of gas mixing in the local interstellar medium. Dr. Erik Wilkinson of the University of Colorado was the principal investigator.

This mission was the second flight of the new vehicle DS-19 boost control system. The flight was nominal until 28 seconds when the vehicle began drifting to the east and over corrected to the west. WSMR flight safety terminated the flight at approximately 40 seconds. The second stage motor and the payload impacted approximately 20 miles west of the nominal impact point. The payload and second stage were recovered.

Wallops Partners Picnic to be Held May 19

Wallops employees (civil service, military and contractors) are invited to the first Partners Picnic on May 19, 2000 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wallops Main Base ball field.

The Wallops Partners (NASA, Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA and Virginia Space Flight Center) Senior Management will be serving hamburgers, chips and sodas for a nominal fee.

To celebrate the Wallops Partnership, the NASA Federal Credit Union is providing a very large cake. A cake cutting will be at 11:45 a.m. and employees are invited to have a slice.

During the picnic, a winner for the Open House logo contest will be selected and the bottle rocket contest will be held. Employees will vote on entries for the logo from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The winning logo will be announced at 12:30 p.m. and will be placed on all Open House publications.

Entries in the bottle rocket contest will be judged for overall looks and aesthetics from 11 a.m. to noon. The action begins at noon when Arnold Torres, NASA senior management, launches the first bottle rocket.

Come out and have a burger, a slice of cake and enjoy a casual time with our partners, friends and co-workers.

Political Activity by Federal Employees

The following are some of the most frequently asked questions with answers received by the Office of Special Council about the political activity of federal employees.

Q: Can I make a contribution to the campaign of a partisan candidate or to a political party or organization?

A: Yes. A federal employee may contribute to the campaign of a partisan candidate or to a political party.

Q: If I have a bumper sticker on my personal car, am I allowed to park that car in a government lot or garage, or in a private lot/garage if the government subsidizes my parking fees?

A: Yes. An employee is allowed to park his or her privately owned vehicle with bumper sticker in a government lot or garage or in a private lot or garage for which the employee receives a subsidy from his or her agency.

Q: Can my name appear on invitations to a political fund-raiser as a sponsor or point of contact?

A: No. An employee's name may not be shown on an invitation to such a fund-raiser as a sponsor or point of contact.

Q: Can I speak at a political fund-raiser?

A: An employee is allowed to give a speech or keynote address at a political fund-raiser, as long as he or she is not on duty and does not solicit political contributions.

Q: If I'm going to speak at a political fund-raiser, what information about me can be printed on the invitations?

A: An employee's name can be shown as a guest speaker. The reference should not in any way suggest that the employee solicits or encourages contributions. Invitations to the fund-raiser may not include the employee's official title; although an employee who is ordinarily addressed with a general term of address such as "The Honorable" may use, or permit the use of, that term of address on the invitation.

Q: Can I attend a state or national party convention? If so, in what capacity?

A: Yes. A federal employee may serve as a delegate, alternate or proxy to a state or national party convention.

Q: If I run as a candidate for public office in a nonpartisan election, does the Hatch Act allow me to ask for and accept political contributions?

A: An employee who is a candidate for public office in a nonpartisan election is not barred by the Hatch act from soliciting, accepting or receiving political contributions for his or her own campaign.

Q: May I distribute brochures for a political party to people arriving at a polling place on Election Day?

A: Yes. An employee may stand outside a polling place on Election Day and hand out brochures on behalf of a partisan political candidate or political party.

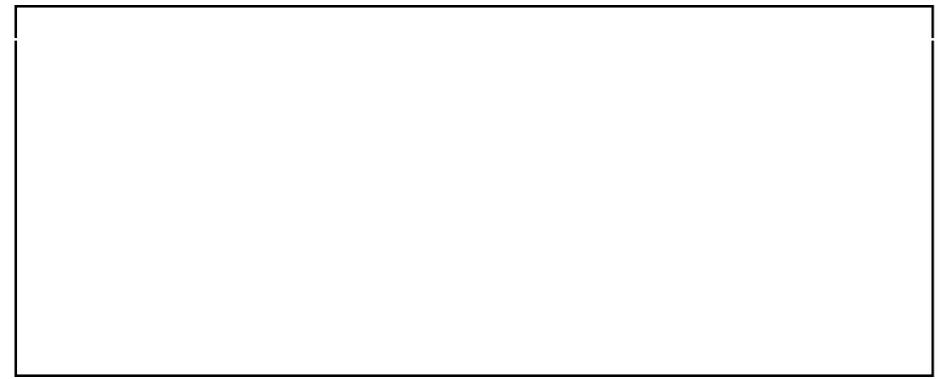


Photo by Berit Bland.

Recently a pair of geese (above) arrived at the NASA Visitor Center. Like most tourists that stop by, they wondered around for a day or so and left. Visitor Center staff are accustomed to an occasional turtle nesting on the grounds, a snake or two and the resident deer, but this was the first visit by a pair of mating geese.

WEMA Notes

Effective May 30, 2000 reservations for the Rocket Club, Building F-3 will be handled through WEMA's Exchange. Call Pam, x2020 for verification of availability and scheduling.

The Exchange is having a sale on select items, including NASA Wallops sweat shirts, sweat pants and sweat suits. Stop by the Exchange located in the front of the cafeteria, Bldg. E-2, or call Pam on x2020 for details.

Lunch and Learn

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will be sponsoring a Lunch and Learn from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on May 18, in the Williamsburg Room of the Cafeteria.

Join us in a viewing of Ben Bissell's "Managing Change and Transition" with a discussion following the presentation. This is a humorous but practical guide for managing change in the workplace. Bring your lunch.

For more information call the EAP Office, x66-4600.

Wallops Fire Department Responses May 4 - May 11

Aircraft Stand-Bys — 53

Ambulance Calls — 3

Fire Alarm On Base — 1

Mutual Aid Assistance — 2

A Vehicle Fire In Atlantic
A Fire Alarm Activation on
Chincoteague Road

Human Factors in Accident Investigation Course

Where: Wallops Flight Facility

When: June 27 - 29, 2000

Time: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This course is offered at no cost to NASA civil service and contractor employees. Personnel wishing to attend this course need to respond before May 26, 2000. Additional information and a course registration form can be found at: http://www.wff.nasa.gov/~code803/pdf/human_factors.pdf

From FedWeek News

May 10 Issue

C Fund Drops Again in April

The TSP's common stock (C) fund suffered another down month in April—its seventh of the last 12—losing 2.98 percent for a 12-month return on the fund of 9.99 percent. The fund would be virtually flat for the period if not for a 9.74 percent gain it posted in March. The bond (F) fund also had a losing month in April, down 0.29 percent for a 12-month return of 1.27 percent while the government securities (G) fund returned 0.52 percent for a 6.43 percent 12-month return. Meanwhile, money in the G fund is being invested at a 6.375 percent annual rate in May.

Starting in October two new funds will be available - an international (I) fund and a small-capitalization U.S. stock (S) fund. Investors can prepare by watching the performance of the indexes those funds will track - the Barclays EAFE Index and the Wilshire 4500, respectively.

Those funds historically have been even more volatile than the most variable of the TSP's current three funds, the common stock (C) fund. However, they will give investors the opportunity to further diversify their TSP portfolios. Also, investors planning to apply for a loan or withdrawal in the next few months should be aware that the processing of such requests might be delayed in September during the transition to the new system.

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