National Aeronautics and Space Administration

LAGNIAPPE

John C. Stennis Space Center

Volume 6 Issue 8 www.nasa.gov/centers/stennis August 2011

Journey's end

Space shuttle main engines No. 2047, No. 2060 and No. 2045 are visible as shuttle Atlantis is towed to the orbiter processing facility at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, following the spacecraft's return to Earth on July 21. Atlantis' STS-135 mission was the last for the Space Shuttle Program, which began in April 1981. Shuttles Atlantis, Discovery and Endeavour now will be prepared for permanent display at selected sites. Stennis Space Center began testing space shuttle main engines in 1975 and tested the engines used on every shuttle mission, including the three that powered Atlantis on its final flight. Stennis operators conducted the last space shuttle main engine test on the A-2 Test Stand in July 2009.

New beginning

Stennis operators conduct a successful 7-second test of the J-2X next-generation rocket engine now in development for NASA. Sea-level testing of the new engine began on the A-2 Test Stand last month. The A-1 Test Stand also is being modified to test the power pack component of the new engine. In addition, Stennis employees are completing construction of the A-3 Test Stand. The new structure will allow operators to test next-generation engines at simulated altitutdes up to 100,000 feet and is scheduled for activation in 2013. The J-2X series signals the start of a new era of rocket engine testing for Stennis Space Center. (See page 3 for additional J-2X test photos)

NASA chief scientist visits Stennis facility

NASA Chief Scientist Dr. Waleed Abdalati visited Stennis Space Center on July 19 to learn about the extensive science capabilities onsite. Shown at right are: (seated, l to r), Stennis Center Director Patrick Scheuermann; Dr. Abdalati; U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Jonathan White; NOAA National Data Buoy Center Program Manager Shannon McArthur; (standing, l to r) Stennis Project Directorate Assistant Director Anne Peek; Stennis Applied Science & Technology Project Office Chief Duane Armstrong; and Stennis Project Directorate Director Keith Brock. (See page 5 for additional photos)

From the desk of

Dorsie Jones

Manager

Office of Human Capital

Stennis Space Center

Greetings from the Office of Human Capital! Though the recent completion of the Space Shuttle Program has affected centers differently, Stennis Space Center is busy meeting the demands of unprecedented growth. Reflected by a workforce increase of 31 full-time employees over the past year and a diverse portfolio of work, the center is fully engaged in ongoing construction of the A-3 Test Stand; a host of high-profile propulsion test projects including the J-2X and AJ-26 programs; partnerships supporting important commercial development; additional requirements for Navy oversight; management of the National Center for Critical Information Processing and Storage; and the development of the newly acquired acreage and assets formally known as the Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant.

As this and additional new business evolves, the Stennis workforce is expanding not only in numbers and experience, but also in our ability to be flexible in balancing work-life challenges. Through the 2010 Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS), Stennis employees voiced a collective desire to utilize the telework program beyond occasional, episodic use for medical reasons. With the encouragement and full support of center leadership, the Office of Human Capital (OHC) responded by conducting a telework pilot in June to expand the program. The results of the follow-up surveys are very favorable, and Stennis has adopted a policy that authorizes supervisory approval of basic telework schedules through our WebTADs system. In short, the voice of the workforce was heard loud and clear. We are also happy to report that more than 67 percent of our workforce participated in this year's EVS (one of the highest rates in the agency), and we are anticipating the results in late August. As before, your feedback promises to be especially valuable to the health and ongoing evolution of Stennis.

Other happenings in the OHC – we just recently completed our annual Honor Awards ceremony, recognizing employees for the hard work and dedication they bring to their jobs each and every day. Congratulations on all accomplishments! We're also continuing to develop and grow our most valued asset, our workforce. Employees are participating in many of our various leadership development programs, including the Mid-Level Leadership Program, the NASA First Program, the Mentoring Program, and our local leadership development opportunities – not forgetting that continued development is key to our success.

I encourage NASA employees to visit the HR portal page at: https://hr.nasa.gov/portal/server.pt/community/ssc_human_capital, and tell us how we're doing. We're excited about the work ahead of us and encourage employees to stay focused, work safely and continue to make Stennis Space Center "the" best place to work in the federal government and south Mississippi!

Dorsie Jones

Japanese space leaders visit Stennis

Representatives of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) visited Stennis Space Center on Aug. 3 to discuss space exploration efforts with leaders of the south Mississippi facility and tour the rocket engine test complex. Visitors and hosts for the daylong event included: (l to r) Stennis Project Integration Deputy Robert Bruce; Koichi Kikuchi, JAXA; Nantel Suzuki, NASA Headquarters; Teiu Kobayashi, JAXA; Stennis Project Directorate Director Keith Brock; Stennis Director Patrick Scheuermann; Stennis Engineering & Test Directorate Director Randy Galloway; JAXA Executive Director for Space Transportation Mamoru Endo; Stennis Associate Director Ken Human; Keiichiro Noda, JAXA; Roger Simpson, NASA Headquarters; and Koichi Okita, JAXA.

FULFILLING NASA'S EXPLORATION MISSION

Stennis begins J-2X engine testing

A plume of steam (above) signals a successful engine start of the J-2X rocket engine on the A-2 Test Stand at Stennis Space Center on July 26. The 3.7-second test was one in a series of scheduled tests on the next-generation engine, which is being developed for NASA by Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne. Stennis operators (right) conducted an initial ignition test on the new engine July 14. The J-2X is being developed as an engine that could return humans beyond low-Earth orbit to deep space once more. Testing of the engine marks the third major test series for the A-2 Test Stand. The stand was built in the 1960s to test the Saturn V engines and rocket stages that carried humans to the moon. Following completion of the Apollo Program, it was modified and commissioned to test space shuttle main engines. The final space shuttle main engine test was conducted on the stand in July 2009. The structure then was modified once again to perform sea-level testing on the J-2X.

Congratulations, Atlantis, on a historic final mission. Thanks for 26 years of space exploration and adventure.

STS-134 crew visits Stennis

Stennis Space Center Deputy Director Richard Gilbrech (center) presents commemorative plaques to STS-134 crew members Michael Fincke (l) and Gregory Chamitoff during their July 20 visit to the south Mississippi facility. During the visit, Fincke and Chamitoff spoke to Stennis employees about their STS-134 mission aboard shuttle Endeavour, the final flight to space for the NASA orbiter. The astronauts thanked Stennis employees for testing the three main engines that powered the historic flight. The astronauts also spoke to Astro Camp participants and answered questions they posed regarding space travel.

NASA honors employees for flight safety

Employees of Stennis Space Center, Dryden Flight Research Center, and the Defense Contract Management Agency were honored July 7 by NASA's Space Flight Awareness program for contributions to flight safety. Awards were presented by Stennis Space Center Director Patrick Scheuermann and astronaut Ricky Arnold in conjunction with the launch of shuttle Atlantis on the STS-135 mission. The mission marked Atlantis' final flight to space and the final flight for the 30-year-old Space Shuttle Program. Space Flight Awareness honorees pictured are (seated, l to r): Laurence de Quay (Stennis, NASA), Terrence Burrel (Stennis, Lockheed Martin), Gregory Carmouche (Stennis, NASA), Art Ortiz (DCMA); (standing, l to r) Karen Vander (Stennis, NASA), David Brannon (Stennis, NASA), Scheuermann, Dewey Howard (Stennis, A^{2}Research), Kathleen Kirk (Dryden, STG International) and Paul Miller (Stennis, Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne).

Goddard science leaders visit Stennis

A trio of representatives from Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., visited Stennis Space Center July 21-22 to explore opportunities for collaboration. Visitors and hosts included: (seated, l to r) Shahid Habib, chief of the Goddard Office of Applied Sciences; Stennis Director Patrick Scheuermann; Piers Sellers, deputy director of the Goddard Sciences and Exploration Directorate; (standing, l to r) Duane Armstrong, chief of the Stennis Applied Science & Technology Project Office; Fritz Policelli, representative of the Goddard Office of Applied Sciences; Anne Peek, assistant director of the Stennis Project Directorate; and Keith Brock, director of the Stennis Project Directorate.

Stennis hosts NASA chief scientist

NASA Chief Scientist Dr. Waleed Abdalati spoke to early career employees and interns during his visit to Stennis Space Center on July 19, emphasizing the importance of science for the future of the agency and the nation's space program. "What NASA does is give us a license to dream," he said. "With some dreams, we really do reach for the stars. You're part of something special, something vast. It's big." Dr. Abdalati challenged the students and Stennis employees to be part of moving NASA's work forward. "If you can take that spirit with you and elevate the consciousness about what we do here, you'll go far in helping our nation fulfill its dreams." Dr. Abdalati also toured NASA, Navy and NOAA facilities. He was hosted on his visit by the Stennis Applied Science & Technology Project Office.

Panel selects Pearl River area for test site

Note: For 50 years, NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center has played a pivotal role in the success of the nation's space program. This month, Lagniappe looks back on an important moment in the south Mississippi rocket engine test center's history.

The decision to locate a "National Test Site" for large launch vehicle stages on the Pearl River in Hancock County, Miss., was made 50 years ago this month by a special committee at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.

The NASA decision to build a national rocket engine test facility and the selection of the Pearl River area was driven by the Apollo Manned Lunar Landing Program that was dramatically accelerated by President John F. Kennedy's proposal May 25, 1961, that the nation land humans on the moon and return them safely to Earth by the end of the decade.

Two items were critical to the success of NASA's manned lunar program – development of a powerful booster stage for the lunar rocket and construction of separate engine test and rocket launch facilities.

It was in this atmosphere that an ad hoc site selection committee convened Aug. 7 in Huntsville to formulate test site criteria. It decided the site must meet the following requirements: isolation from populated communities (because of the noise associated with tests); accessibility by water and highway; availability of utilities (power and water); supporting communities within 50 miles; and a climate permitting year-round operation.

The committee screened all existing government facilities that might be suitable, cutting the list to 33 potential sites that best met water transportation and isolation criteria.

Further review cut the list to six for the final evaluation phase: New Orleans area (location 34 miles southeast on Bayou LaLoutre peninsula); Brownsville, Texas; Corpus Christi, Texas; Cumberland Island, Ga.; Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.; and Hancock County.

The committee used an elaborate "point" system to compare the final sites and conducted a "site review trip" to the areas Aug. 9-17. The evaluation report was forwarded to the NASA administrator Aug. 26, 1961. It declared the Pearl River area as "the most favorable national test site."

NASA Administrator James Webb gave his verbal approval of the Pearl River site. The selection was announced to the public on Oct. 25, 1961.

Other historical events and milestones in August during Stennis' 50-year history include:

21 years ago

Aug. 20, 1990 – Space shuttle main engine tests are conducted on all three Stennis test stands on the same day.

18 years ago

Aug. 11, 1993 – The High Heat Flux Facility is dedicated to test materials for hypersonic spacecraft of the future.

13 years ago

Aug. 8, 1998 – All four test stand positions occupied for the first time in center's history.

Six years ago

Aug. 11, 2005 – A space shuttle main engine test marks the 30th anniversary of testing the engines at Stennis.

Four years ago

Aug. 23, 2007 – NASA officials and government leaders participate in the official groundbreaking for construction of the A-3 Test Stand at Stennis.

Stennis hosts Legends session

Marina Benigno (far right) of Stennis Space Center welcomes former administrative assistants and secretaries to the third Legends Lecture Series session. Lecture participants spoke to Stennis employees about their work experiences with Stennis directors and deputy directors. Participants included: (l to r) Janet Austill, Mary Lou Matthews, Helen Paul, Wanda Howard, Ann Westendorf and Mary Gene Dick. Austill, Howard and Westendorf all worked with center directors during their Stennis careers. Dick, Matthews and Paul served with deputy directors at Stennis. The Legends Lecture Series was launched last November as part of a yearlong celebration of the 50th anniversary of Stennis Space Center.

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Law requires access to NASA information

The following information provides details regarding access for individuals with disabilities to NASA information and electronic technology.

What does the law require? Section 508 (Comparable Access for Individuals with Disabilities to NASA Information and Electronic Technology) requires all federal agencies to make electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained or used by the agencies accessible to federal employees and members of the public with disabilities, unless doing so would impose an undue burden. Section 508 covers all types of electronic and information technology in the federal sector. It allows for some exceptions, such as for national security systems. Federal agencies also must be in compliance with standards issued by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board on Dec. 21, 2000. These became effective on June 21, 2001, the date for agency compliance.

To whom do the law's requirements apply? Section 508 applies to all federal departments and agencies. It does not apply directly to the private sector nor impose requirements on recipients of federal financial assistance.

Who is covered under the law? Section 508 covers individuals with disabilities who are federal employees or applicants for federal employment. The law also covers members of the public seeking information or services from any federal department or agency.

How will NASA process Section 508 complaints from NASA employees or applicants for employment? Section 508 complaints from NASA employees or from applicants for employment with NASA will be processed pursuant to U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations at 29 CFR Part 1614.

How will NASA process Section 508 complaints from members of the public? Members of the public who contact NASA directly to file a complaint related to section 508 must provide the following information:

- Complainant's name, address and contact information.
- The basis of the complaint.
- A detailed description of the alleged conduct, including dates, identification of the allegedly injured party and the person or institution alleged to have discriminated.
- The complainant's signature or the signature of someone authorized to sign on the complainant's behalf.

Section 508 complaints from members of the public shall have the date documented on the complaint and shall be forwarded to Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity for processing within five days of complaint receipt. Complaints shall be subsequently forwarded to NASA Headquarters.

For information on rights and responsibilities, call Brian Hey at 228-688-1249 or visit the web site at: http://odeo.hq.nasa.gov/documents/nondiscrimination.pdf.

Hail & Farewell

NASA bids farewell to the following:

Shamim Rahman	Deputy Director Engineering & Test Directorate

And welcomes the following:

Meredith Blasingame	Law Clerk Office of the Chief Counsel
Jeffrey Askew	AST Experimental Facilities Techniques Center Operations Directorate

Feds Feed Families food drive continues

Lockheed Martin Outsourcing Desktop Initiative for NASA employees at Stennis Space Center display some of the items collected in their area for the 2011 Feds Feed Families Food Drive under way at the facility. Federal agencies are working together this summer to reach a nationwide goal of collecting at least 2 million pounds of nonperishable food for local food banks. NASA centers are working together to collect at least 110,000 pounds of food donations by the end of August. Pictured are: (l to r) Jeanne Hoffman, Gwen Barrettt, Cindy Milligan, Tav Hicks, Ann Andrews, Nancy Drummond and Noemi Rico.

LAGNIAPPE
is published monthly by the
Office of External Affairs - Public Affairs
at NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center

NASA PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
Attn: LAGNIAPPE
Mail code IA10
Building 1100, Room 304
Stennis Space Center, MS 39529

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John C. Stennis Space Center
Stennis Space Center, MS 39529

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

Children enjoy annual Stennis visit

Some 230 children of Stennis Space Center employees visited the facility July 26 to participate in annual Take Our Children to Work Day activities. Participants enjoyed various presentations and demonstrations on topics such as cryogenics, underwater robotics and geocaching. They also engaged in hands-on activities, including viewing the sun through a solar telescope (right photo). In addition, children visited the StenniSphere museum and had an opportunity to take photos at the astronaut suit exhibit.

StenniSphere audience views historic launch

Several hundred people gathered in the StenniSphere auditorium July 8 to view the launch of space shuttle Atlantis on the historic STS-135 mission. The mission marked the final flight for Atlantis and the final mission for the Space Shuttle Program. Viewers applauded and cheered as shuttlle Atlantis headed to space, powered by a trio of main engines tested at Stennis Space Center. At right, NASA engineer Don Beckmeyer speaks to visitors gathered to watch the launch.