National Aeronautics and Space Administration

LAGNIAPPE

John C. Stennis Space Center

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Gilbrech named Stennis director

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden announced three changes to his senior leadership team Sept. 25, including a change in top leadership at Stennis Space Center.

Robert Lightfoot, acting associate administrator at NASA Headquarters in Washington, was assigned that role on a permanent basis. Patrick Scheuermann, director of Stennis Space Center, was named director of NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala. Scheuermann's successor as Stennis director is Dr. Richard J. Gilbrech, previously the center's deputy director. All three changes were effective immediately.

"Robert, Patrick and Rick are three of NASA's finest public servants who will continue to play key roles in our agency's future," Bolden said. "America is fortunate to have three such talented leaders assuming these important jobs at a pivotal time for NASA and space exploration."

See **LEADERSHIP,** Page 8

New Stennis Director Rick Gilbrech (r) shakes hands with his predecessor, Patrick Scheuermann, following announcement of the leadership change during an all hands session Sept. 25.

Blue Origin completes thrust chamber test

NASA's Commercial Crew Program (CCP) partner Blue Origin has successfully fired the thrust chamber assembly for its new 100,000 pound thrust BE-3 liquid oxygen, liquid hydrogen rocket engine. As part of Blue's Reusable Booster System (RBS), the engines are designed eventually to launch the biconic-shaped space vehicle the company is developing.

The test was part of Blue Origin's work supporting its funded Space Act Agreement with NASA during

See **BLUE ORIGIN,** Page 3

Blue Origin successfully test fires its BE-3 high-performance liquid hydrogen engine thrust chamber at NASA's Stennis Space Center. (Image credit: Blue Origin)

"I have no doubt Stennis will meet, and even excel in meeting, the demands and challenges of the new (fiscal) year."

From the desk of

Monica Allison-Ceruti

Chief Counsel, Office of the Chief Counsel

Greetings and Happy New Fiscal Year from the Stennis Space Center Office of the Chief Counsel!

Some years ago, I had the opportunity to work on a leadership book that compiled the experiences and observations of lawyers. In a chapter titled *Partner to Maximize Results*, the author tells the story of a person who used to say, "If you're going to be a lawyer in Iowa, you'd better know the price of corn." The author points out that this was that person's way of getting across the message that lawyers need to understand their clients' perspectives, needs and concerns. Although I agree with that viewpoint, I also believe lawyers need to demonstrate that they have both the ability and desire to meet those needs.

Our organization believes the most effective means of demonstrating an understanding of our clients' needs, concerns and perspectives is to partner with them. Partnering has many definitions, but the one I like best is "the process of collaborating with internal and external individuals or teams to achieve measurable results through agreements and productive working relationships." Partnering helps overcome gaps in knowledge and skills and helps provide a sense of common purpose that can reduce conflict, and enable a more efficient and effective use of resources. In essence, it establishes a new and better paradigm from which to interact with others to accomplish the mission.

Our office partnered with NASA Headquarters, NASA centers, federal and state agencies, private organizations and companies, and colleges and universities to ensure the mutual accomplishment of goals and, more importantly, the mission of Stennis Space Center. For example, we were in lock-step with our center leadership when they sought authority to acquire permanent right-of-way easements to widen Hwy. 607. We played a key role in keeping the project on track by timely coordination with internal and external stakeholders and partners, both at the state and federal levels. We functioned as an invaluable member of the team and assisted in the effort to bring the project to fruition.

We also successfully teamed with our procurement customers to ensure the award of critical and mission essential contracts, including the Multiple Award Construction Contract – the largest dollar value procurement in the history of Stennis. When litigation threatened to derail a major acquisition, we formulated a winning strategy and resolved the litigation at no cost to Stennis or NASA.

We partnered with the Stennis Center Operations Directorate and Hancock County to create the INFINITY Discovery/Possum Walk Trail on NASA property in the buffer zone. Ultimately, the trail will form the west end of the Mississippi Coastal Heritage Trail, a recreational trail that will run along the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast, providing a benefit to the general Gulf Coast population.

Although FY 2013 promises to be an interesting and challenging time at NASA and Stennis, I have no doubt Stennis will meet, and even excel in meeting, the demands and challenges of the new year. In the Office of the Chief Counsel, we will meet the demands and challenges placed on us by continuing to partner with our customers to help them maximize results.

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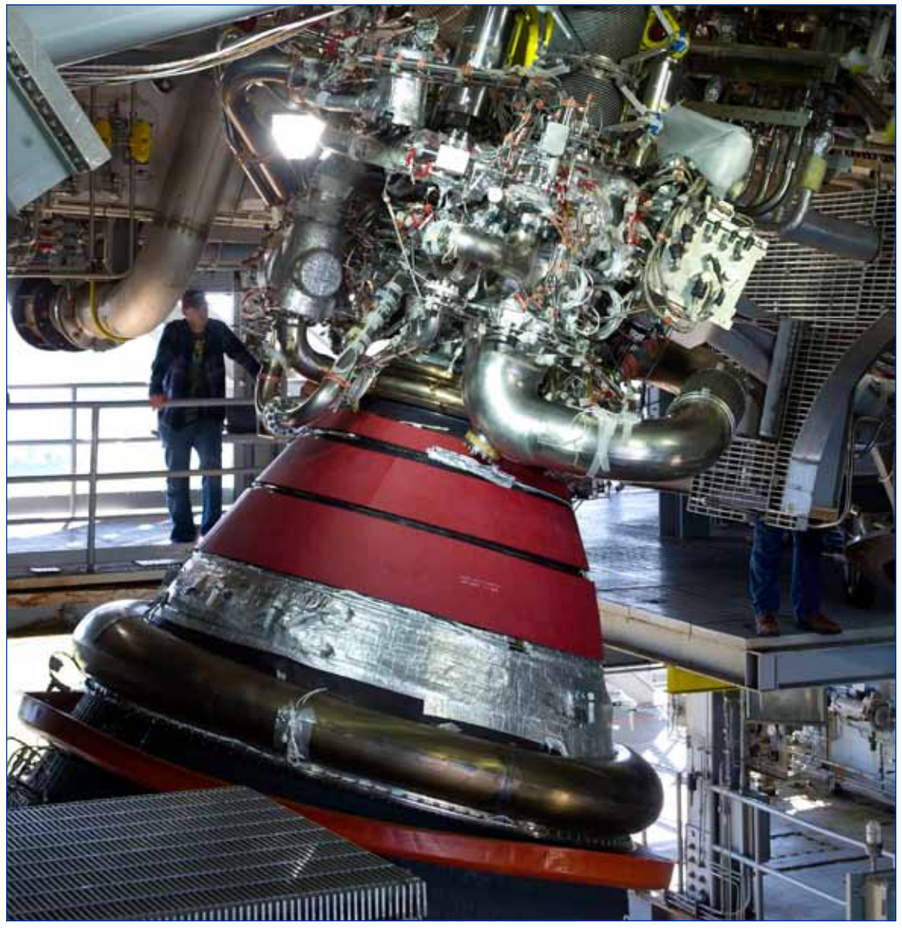
A powerful lineup

Two J-2X engines and a powerpack, developed for NASA by Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne, sit side-by-side at Stennis Space Center in as work continues on the Space Launch System. Engine 10001 (far left) has been removed from the A-2 Test Stand after being hot-fire tested 21 times, for a total of 2,697 seconds. The engine is now undergoing a series of post-test inspections. A J-2X powerpack (center) has been removed from the A-1 Test Stand to receive additional instrumentation. So far, the powerpack been hot-fire tested 10 times, for a total of 4,162 seconds. Once it goes back into the test stand at Stennis, the powerpack will be hot-fire tested three more times, for a total of 6,000 seconds among its 13 planned tests. Meanwhile, assembly on the second J-2X engine, known as Engine 10002 and located to the far right, has begun in earnest, with engine completion scheduled for this November. Engine 10002 is about 15 percent complete. The J-2X is a highly efficient and versatile advanced rocket engine with the ideal thrust and performance characteristics to power the upper stage of NASA's Space Launch System, a new heavy-lift launch vehicle capable of missions beyond low-Earth orbit. Fueled by liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen, the J-2X builds on heritage designs but relies on nearly a half-century of NASA spaceflight experience and technological and manufacturing advances to deliver up to 294,000 pounds of thrust, powering exploration to new destinations in our solar system. The J-2X is the first new liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen rocket engine developed in 40 years that will be rated to carry humans into space.



J-2X engine removed from A-2 Test Stand

NASA removed J-2X engine No. 10001 from the A-2 Test Stand in early October. Opening of the test stand clamshell flooring allowed a clear view of the next-generation engine and stub nozzle, which is being built to help power future deep-space missions. The engine is an upgrade from the heritage J-2 rocket engine, which helped power Apollo missions to the moon during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

BLUE ORIGIN

Continued from Page 1

Commercial Crew Development Round 2 (CCDev2). CCDev2 continues to bring spacecraft and launch vehicle designs forward to develop a U.S. commercial crew space transportation capability that ultimately could become available for the government and other customers.

"Blue Origin continues to be extremely innovative as it develops a crew-capable vehicle for suborbital and orbital flights," said Ed Mango, CCP manager. "We're thrilled the company's engine test fire was met with success."

The test took place early this month on the E-1 Test Stand at NASA's Stennis Space Center. Blue Origin engineers successfully completed the test by powering the thrust chamber to its full power level.

"We are very excited to have demonstrated a new class of high-performance hydrogen engines," said Rob Meyerson, president and program manager of Blue Origin. "Access to the Stennis test facility and its talented operations team was instrumental in conducting full-power testing of this new thrust chamber."

As part of CCDev2, Blue Origin also completed a system requirements review of its spacecraft. During the review, engineers and technical experts representing NASA, the Federal Aviation Administration and the company assessed the spacecraft's ability to meet safety and mission requirements to low-Earth orbit. That review also included results from more than 100 wind tunnel tests of the vehicle's aerodynamic design, stability during flight and cross-range maneuverability.

All of NASA's industry partners, including Blue Origin, continue to meet their established milestones in developing commercial crew transportation capabilities.

While NASA works with U.S. industry partners to develop commercial spaceflight capabilities, the agency also is developing the Orion spacecraft and the Space Launch System (SLS), a crew capsule and heavy-lift rocket to provide an entirely new capability for human exploration. Designed to be flexible for launching spacecraft for crew and cargo missions, SLS and Orion will expand human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and enable new missions of exploration into the solar system.

A historic panorama

Stennis conducts simultaneous tests of large rocket engines

Two large-engine tests were conducted simultaneously for the first time at Stennis Space Center on Aug. 16. A plume on the left indicates a test on the facility's E-1 Test Stand. On the right, a finger of fire indicates a test under way on the A-1 Test Stand. In another first, both tests were conducted by female engineers. The image was taken from atop the facility's A-2 Test Stand, offering a panoramic view that includes the new A-3 Test Stand under construction to the left. The A-3 stand is the first large test structure built at Stennis since the 1960s. Once completed, it will allow testing of rocket engines at simulated altitudes up to 100,000 feet.

NASA honored for shuttle program

Ronnie Rigney (r), chief of the Propulsion Test Office in the Project Directorate at Stennis Space Center, stands with agency colleagues to receive the prestigious American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics George M. Low Space Transportation Award on Sept. 12. Rigney accepted the award on behalf of the NASA and contractor team at Stennis for their support of the Space Shuttle Program that ended last summer. From 1975 to 2009, Stennis Space Center tested every main engine used to power 135 space shuttle missions. The final space shuttle main engine test at Stennis was conducted July 29, 2009, on the A-2 Test Stand. Stennis continued to provide flight support services through the end of the Space Shuttle Program in July 2011. The center also supported transition and retirement of shuttle hardware and assets through September 2012. "The employees who served the Space Shuttle Program at Stennis Space Center for 35 years have set an example of sustained excellence that will not soon be forgotten," Rigney said. "They began the task with immeasurable challenges in front of them, and finished strong. Their accomplishments will yield benefits to the future of human space flight for generations to come." Established in 1988, the AIAA award is presented every two years in recognition of a timely, outstanding contribution to the field of space transportation. It is named for Dr. George M. Low, who played a leading role in planning and executing NASA's Apollo missions and who originated the plans for the nation's first manned lunar orbital flight, Apollo 8, in December 1968. The 2012 award was presented to the space shuttle team "for excellence in the conception, development, test, operation and retirement of the world's first and only reusable space transportation system." Joining Rigney for the award ceremony at the 2012 AIAA Conference in Pasadena, Calif., were: (l to r) Allison Zuniga, NASA Headquarters; Michael Griffin, former NASA administrator; Don Noah, Johnson Space Center in Houston; Steve Cash, Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.; and Pete Nickolenko, Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

NASA awards additional construction contracts at Stennis

NASA has selected four more companies for indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity multiple-award construction contracts at Stennis Space Center. These are in addition to six companies selected in August.

The fixed-price contracts consist of a performance period of five years, with a total value not to exceed $700 million.

The companies selected are:

- American Contractor & Technology Inc. in Scott, La.
- D.N.P. Inc. in Biloxi.
- Healtheon Inc. in New Orleans.
- Southeast Cherokee Construction Inc. in Montgomery, Ala.

Work under the contracts include, but will not be limited to, building and facility maintenance, repair and alteration; mechanical, civil and electrical engineering; heating and air conditioning maintenance; demolition; painting; earthwork; fencing; steel fabrication and welding. Additional work also may include design-and-build projects for new construction of buildings or facilities.

LEADERSHIP

Continued from Page 1

Scheuermann became director at Stennis in 2010, the same year Gilbrech assumed duties as Stennis' deputy director. Gilbrech began his NASA career in 1991 at Stennis in the area of propulsion test technology. From 1998 to 2000, he served as chief of the Propulsion Test Engineering Division at Stennis. In 2003, he was named manager of the Propulsion Integration Office, responsible for managing NASA's rocket propulsion test facilities.

Gilbrech served in roles away from Stennis from 2003 to 2006, when he returned to the facility as director. He served in that role until assuming leadership of NASA's Exploration Systems Mission Directorate at Headquarters in Washington, in 2007.

"I am honored to once again be asked to lead the incredible team at Stennis Space Center during such a historic and pivotal time for the agency," Gilbrech said. "I look forward to continuing the strong legacy of previous leaders at this great center. Stennis has a solid future and a clear mission in component, engine and stage testing for development of NASA's Space Launch System and a continued role in testing commercial rocket engine hardware."

Reflecting on his tenure at Stennis, Scheuermann said: "It has been a privilege to have served NASA at Stennis, where I was close to home, working alongside some of the best NASA has to offer. Stennis has a solid future and continues to be on the front end of the critical path of our nation's space program. The center has achieved much and, with its strong leadership team, is well-prepared to continue its forward posture in proudly executing the NASA mission and managing the federal city.

"Now, I look forward to the move to Marshall Space Flight Center and building on the already strong foundation and the center's key role in development of NASA's Space Launch System," Scheuermann continued. "This new position offers an opportunity to grow and strengthen the already great partnership between Marshall and other space flight centers."

U.S. congressman visits Stennis, tours test stand facilities

U.S. Rep. Alan Nunnelee, R-Miss., visited Stennis Space Center on Oct. 5, meeting with leaders and touring facilities to learn about ongoing work at the south Mississippi site. During the afternoon visit, Nunnelee met with Stennis Director Rick Gilbrech and with Applied Science & Technology Project Office personnel to learn about forestry and agricultural initiatives under way. He also toured the B-1/B-2 Test Stand. Joining Nunnelee at the B-1/B-2 Test Stand were: (l to r) Ken Human, Stennis associate director; Randy Galloway, director of the Stennis Engineering & Test Directorate; Ted Maness, chief of staff for Nunnelee; Nunnelee's wife, Toni; Nunnelee; Myron Webb, Stennis legislative affairs officer; Gilbrech; and Meyer Seligman, legislative director for Nunnelee. A Tupelo native, Nunnelee serves Mississipi's 1st Congressional District.

DRIFTER monitoring devices prove their worth during Hurricane Isaac

Scientists at Stennis Space Center have a good picture of the impact of storm surges on area waters as Hurricane Isaac lumbered ashore in late August, thanks to a pair of prototype environmental monitoring buoys designed as easy-to-build school projects.

A monitoring buoy – or DRIFTER – anchored to a pole just offshore in Mississippi's Heron Bay, almost due south of Stennis, transmitted information about water temperature and conductivity throughout the storm, except when it was completely submerged. Once waters receded, the DRIFTER resumed transmission of data that enabled scientists to calculate how Isaac's storm surge affected levels of fresh and salt water in the area.

A second DRIFTER anchored just off of Half Moon Island, about four miles south-southeast of Heron Bay in Louisiana waters, transmitted information until the storm disrupted

As shown in accompanying photos, DRIFTERs are small sensor devices, which can be placed in locations to transmit information about water temperature and conductivity. The Applied Science and Technology Project Office at Stennis Space Center designed the DRIFTER as an inexpensive device that can be used for science projects in local schools. The DRIFTER project began as an effort to help Gulf Coast oyster fishermen dealing with the effects of fresh water intrusion. Two of the devices, deployed in coastal waters, survived Hurricane Isaac, continuing to transmit valuable data regarding the storm.

service from its cell tower. Once the skies cleared, the DRIFTER began sending data once more.

"The DRIFTERs are inexpensive, but obviously rugged," said Duane Armstrong, chief of the Stennis Applied Science & Technology Project Office (ASTPO), which designed and built the two DRIFTER prototypes. "It's amazing how well they endured days of hurricane and tropical storm conditions, even being submerged for hours by the storm surge, and were still able to collect and transmit valuable information about the storm."

This project began as an effort to help Gulf Coast oyster fishermen who were dealing with the effects of fresh water intrusion resulting from the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the 2011 flooding of the Mississippi River.

ASTPO reached out to Mississippi oyster fishermen to see if NASA's Earth science expertise could help. The fishermen asked for help monitoring the temperature and salinity of leased waters. If that could be accomplished, oyster fishermen could gauge when they needed to harvest their beds or take other actions, such as moving the beds to avoid contamination.

"It's difficult to accurately measure salinity of coastal waters using satellites, and there simply are not enough sensors in the water to monitor local conditions," Armstrong explained.

Each DRIFTER is about 18 inches high and constructed of PVC pipe and simple electronics. It includes a GPS receiver to monitor the position of the DRIFTER, a cell phone modem to transmit data to a website, a solar panel and battery to supply power over extended periods, and a simple computer to configure and control the device. Sensors collect data on water temperature and conductivity, which is used to calculate salinity.

"We tried to design something for the hobbyist," Armstrong said. "No special skills are required. You can build one with about $500 of parts. NASA provides instructions and even the software needed. The DRIFTER provides a lot of opportunities for students and teachers to explore aspects of science and engineering, and even participate in NASA scientific research. Simply register your DRIFTER on our web site and provide its Twitter handle and NASA will retrieve and analyze your data, map the location of your DRIFTER, and make the data available to the public."

Armstrong is hopeful funding can be established so local schools can build DRIFTER devices and deploy them as real-time, real-life science projects.

NASA in the News

Commercial resupply mission reaches ISS

The Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) Dragon spacecraft was berthed to the International Space Station on Oct. 10, a key milestone in a new era of commercial spaceflight. The delivery flight is the first contracted resupply mission by the company under NASA's Commercial Resupply Services contract. "This marks the start of a new era of exploration for the United States, one where we will reduce the cost of missions to low-Earth orbit so we can focus our resources on deep space human missions back around the moon, to an asteroid and eventually to Mars," NASA Administrator Charles Bolden said. Dragon was launched Oct. 7 to deliver 882 pounds of supplies to the orbiting laboratory. Dragon will return a total of 1,673 pounds from the space station. For more information about the International Space Station, visit: www.nasa.gov/station

NASA plans 1-year mission to ISS

NASA and its international partners have announced an agreement to send two crew members to the International Space Station on a one-year mission designed to collect valuable scientific data needed to send humans to new destinations in the solar system. The crew members, one American astronaut and one Russian cosmonaut, will launch and land in a Russian Soyuz spacecraft and are scheduled to begin their voyage in spring 2015. Data from a yearlong expedition also will help inform assumptions about crew performance and health, and will help reduce the risks associated with future exploration. For more information about the International Space Station and its crew, visit: www.nasa.gov/station.

NASA releases new mobile application

NASA has released a new mobile application that challenges gamers to take on the role of a space communications network manager and puts them in charge of building a communications network to support scientific missions. The educational application, "Space Communications and Navigation: NetworKing," was developed for the iPad and iPhone. NetworKing provides an interactive, 3-D experience with an insider's perspective into how mission controllers and scientists communicate with spacecraft and satellites using space, deep-space and near-Earth networks. In addition to the mobile application, NetworKing is available free on the NASA 3-D Resources website. Players can access the game on web browsers or download it to run on PC or Macintosh operating systems. For links to download the app, to download the game or to play in a web browser, visit: http://go.nasa.gov/OFkcot.

For the latest NASA news, visit online: www.nasa.gov/news/releases/latest/index.html.

Stennis construction transforms south Mississippi area

Note: For more than 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's Lagniappe highlights a moment in the history of the south Mississippi rocket engine test center.

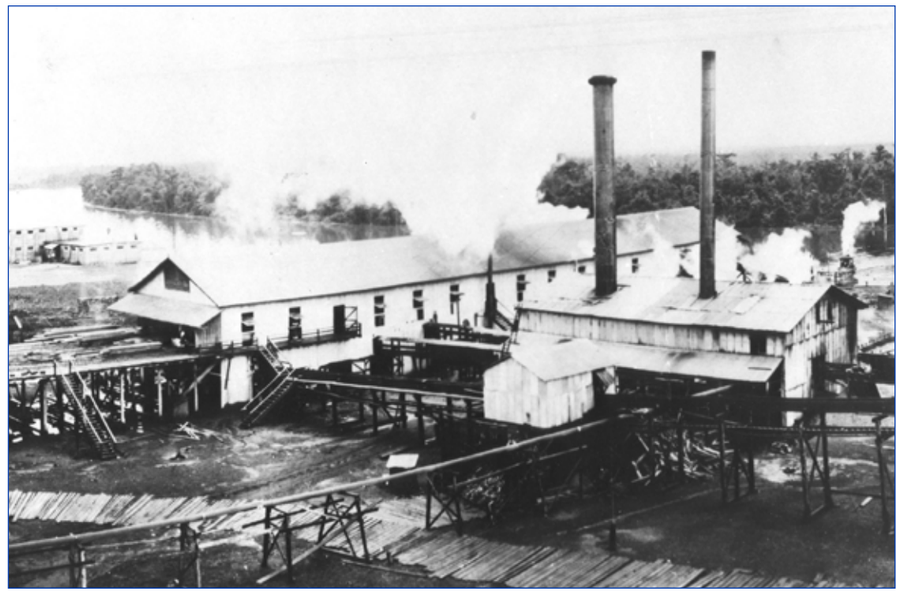
NASA announced formation of the Mississippi Test Facility (now known as Stennis Space Center) on Oct. 25, 1961, for testing engines for the Apollo Program. A high-terrace area bordering the East Pearl River in Hancock County, Miss., was selected for its location. NASA entrusted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the difficult task to procure each land parcel either by directly purchasing the land or through acquisition of a perpetual easement.

To achieve this goal, five small towns – Logtown, Gainesville, Santa Rosa, Napoleon and Westonia – would need to be removed from the area. The process of land acquisition and town relocation was documented in more than 3,200 folders, one for each parcel of land.

Before NASA selected the area for its test program, the French, British and Spanish colonial governments ruled the region. Settlers came from many parts of the U.S. to participate in the lumber business, which was a prosperous industry due to the vast timber resources located both in Honey Island Swamp to the west and Devil's Swamp to the east of the area. At least twice in the past, the East Pearl River served as an international boundary between European colonial powers and the newly established government of the United States.

By 1961, less than 1,000 people lived or owned property in the five former towns. NASA and the Corps of Engineers would need to acquire more than 3,200 parcels of privately owned land – 786 residences, 16 churches, 19 stores, three schools and a wide assortment of commercial buildings, including nightclubs and community centers. Personnel from the Mobile District, under the leadership of Colonel D.A. Raymond, were assigned the task to negotiate and acquire the rights to each land parcel. The Corps began negotiating with the myriad of corporations and private individuals on April 12, 1962. Many owners sold readily while others were reluctant and forced numerous lawsuits and civil actions against NASA and the Corps of Engineers. The last case was decided in 1974, although most other transactions were completed before testing began on the Saturn engines in 1967.

On Nov. 1, 1961, just days after the announcement, Sen. John C. Stennis met at the Logtown School with nearly 1,500 residents and sympathizers from the area and promised full compensation for their land and homes. Stennis then appealed to citizens, using a phrase that has now become legendary in Stennis Space Center history: "There is always the thorn before the rose; you have got to make some sacrifices, but you will be taking part in greatness."



The Weston Lumber Co. was once a thriving business in Logtown, Miss., where Stennis Space Center is situated today. The lumber mill was one of the largest lumber centers in the U.S. The mill employed 1,200. At its peak, Logtown had about 3,000 residents, but had declined to 250 by 1961 when NASA selected the area for development of the rocket engine test facility.

As a result, all Stennis facilities are located within a 13,800-acre "fee" area owned by the federal government. The Stennis fee area is surrounded by a 125,000-acre noise buffer zone designated a national asset.

Each house and building in the buffer zone and fee area had to be moved or destroyed. Interred bodies from at least four cemeteries had to be exhumed and relocated. Twenty-five to 30 Corps employees, including Orrell Moore, land acquisition program manager, and William Matkin, land acquisition agent, had to negotiate the real estate deals. Land prices were frozen on the day of NASA's announcement, but this did not prevent land speculators from purchasing land outside the area selected by NASA, greatly complicating the search for new homes and residences to house the displaced population of the five towns.

In addition, many of the residents of the towns were descendants from original settlers dating from as early as 1767. They had lived there all their lives and expected to retire and die on their ancestral lands. Negotiations were often contentious, and appraisals were often disputed. The Corps' task was further complicated by a constant stream of congressional inquiries, including some from very powerful elected officials such as Stennis, Earl Bennett in Mississippi and Hale Boggs in Louisiana.

Each negotiation session, land appraisal and court decision was painstakingly recorded in individual files – one for each numbered parcel – including a photograph of every standing structure located in the buffer zone and fee area. These documents contain a wealth of historical and sociological information.

It is the history of these families and their notable ancestors that is recorded in the Corps files. The files also include letters from historic figures – like then-U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy and others relevant to NASA history such as Dr. Werhner von Braun; Bernard Tessman, von Braun's German colleague at Peenemunde and deputy director of Marshall Space Flight Center Test Laboratory; and James Webb, NASA administrator. Most importantly, the land records minutely record the history of the five towns' original residents, many of whom still live in nearby communities, and whose children and grandchildren have worked in numerous capacities for the space program.

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Celebrate Stennis Diversity Day

Nothing in life is to be feared; it is only to be understood.
Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.
Marie Curie

Diversity does not pertain only to the differences in our cultures. It also includes the varied backgrounds, perspectives and experiences that make us who we are. This unique individuality contributes to the rich diversity that is Stennis Space Center. Join us Oct. 31 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for the sitewide Stennis Diversity Day, celebrating what makes us uniquely Stennis.

The Stennis Diversity Council, comprised of agencies and companies residing within Stennis Space Center, is sponsoring this celebration. In addition to a variety of cultural displays, employees will be sharing their talents and hobbies.

There are also many other exciting events taking place: performances by the Voices of Stennis and the Stennis Child Development Center; a "Gong" show; local community exhibits; Stennis Family Feud game show; and a classic car and motorcycle show, to name a few. These events will take place at the StenniSphere (Building 1200).

Oh, and did I mention food? We will be offering an International Food Court. There will be several food vendors selling delicious ethnic creations that will tempt any palate. So come join in on great food and festivities.

The goal of this event is not merely to experience our different cultures for one day, but to make diversity a part of everyday life and to understand that differences are gifts to be shared. Join us in celebrating the amazing diversity and talents of the Stennis workforce!

For more, visit http://ssccommunity.ssc.nasa.gov/stennis_diversity_council.

Hail & Farewell

NASA bids farewell to the following:

Patrick Scheuermann	Center Director Office of the Director

And welcomes the following:

Paula Hensarling	AST, Flight Systems Test Engineering & Test Directorate
Darrel Varner	AST, Mechanical Experimental Equipment Engineering and Test Directorate
Nyla Trumbach	AST, Mechanical Experimental Equipment Engineering and Test Directorate
Karen Miller	Program Analyst Center Operations Directorate
Kenneth Kimbrough	Contract Specialist Office of Procurement

Stennis kicks off 2012 FIRST LEGO® season

Stennis kicked off the 2012 FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) LEGO® League (FLL) season with a Sept. 13 virtual event viewed by student particpants across Mississippi.

FLL is an annual high-energy robotics competition for children ages 9-14. The focus is on celebrating science and technology through hands-on participation and learning. In partnership with the LEGO® Group, students use the MINDSTORMS™ NXT system to build robots designed to complete particular tasks related to the competition theme.

The virtual kickoff webinar hosted by the Stennis Digital Learning Network attracted 200 unique IP address hits to review this year's "Senior Solutions" challenge. In addition to preparing robots to compete, participants are asked to partner with senior adults, learn about problems they face and create innovative solutions to help the seniors.

The 2012 FLL Mississippi Championship Tournament is scheduled for Dec. 1 in Hattiesburg. As many as 50 teams are expected to compete, being judged in such areas as robot performance, robot design, project presentation and FLL Core Values.

Stennis Space Center supports FIRST by providing mentors and training, as well as competition judges and personnel. They are seeking volunteers to staff key roles at the 2012 tournament, including judges, referees, scorekeepers and logistics personnel. Volunteers should call Randall Hicks at 228-688-3653 or email randall.t.hicks@nasa.gov.

The 2012 FLL season is expected to involve more than 20,000 teams and 200,000 students in at least 50 countries. For information about FLL, visit: www.firstlegoleague.org. For information about the Robotics Alliance of Missisippi, visit: www.ramrobots.org.

Two students watch closely as their robot competes in the 2011 FLL Mississippi Championship event.

Stennis sponsors Energy Awareness Day

Troy Frisbie (l) of NASA and Lowell Webb of the Naval Oceanographic Office talk with Brent Bailey of 25x'25 about the organization's campaign for renewable energy usage in the United States. The group was one of several to visit Stennis for the center's annual Energy Awareness Day. Stennis employees were able to visit exhibits and learn about steps they can take to help conserve energy in their daily lives.