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WALLOPS FLIGHT CENTER DIRECTOR ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Dr. Robert L. Krieger, long time Director of NASA's Wallops Flight Center, Wallops Island, Virginia, today announced his plans to leave the Government services in early August, after almost 43 years with NACA and NASA. Since 1948 he has headed the Wallops Island facility here on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Krieger actually retired on February 29, 1980, but, at the request of NASA's Administrator, has continued to serve as Wallops Center Director in order to provide continuity through the busy period of the Shuttle launch. More recently the request has been extended "until August of this year to help make the Wallops/Goddard consolidation as smooth as possible."

A native of Kentucky, Krieger began his career with NASA's predecessor agency, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) at the Aeronautical Laboratory in Hampton, Virginia before World War II in 1936. He left Langley to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology and received a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1943.

Returning to Langley, Dr. Krieger was part of the group which established a branch facility, the Pilotless Aircraft Research Station at Wallops Island, Virginia,

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under the leadership of Robert R. Gilruth, foremost in also establishing the U. S.'s manned space flight program. Working at Wallops part time, Krieger participated in the first firing of a U.S. guided missile on July 4, 1945.

In 1948 he assumed leadership of the Wallops facility which became an experimental laboratory from which instrumented aerodynamic test models were rocket propelled at high speeds, providing data used as the basis of design of supersonic airplanes and missiles.

In 1958 the Wallops facility became an independent field center of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) which Dr. Krieger led through a period of rapid growth to make the first successful test flight of the Mercury capsule. He has continued to guide the expansion of NASA Wallops Flight Center's capabilities to accommodate flight systems and component development testing; aerodynamics and heat transfer research; launching small satellites into orbit; sounding rocket probes of the atmosphere; and the training of foreign nationals in space launch, tracking and data acquisition techniques. Thousands of research test vehicles, including nineteen satellites, have been launched from the Wallops range since its beginning in 1945.

During his long career Krieger has initiated and encouraged many important contributions to range, aeronautical and space technologies and is recognized as one of the leaders in that community.

Dr. Krieger has been very active in the educational and civic activities of Maryland's lower shore and Virginia's Eastern Shore. He was Chairman of the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce Steering Committee for the E.S. Community College and has since served as a member of the College Board. He has served as a Director and as President of the E.S. Chamber of Commerce and as Chairman, Virginia District Boy Scouts of America. He was a member of the Accomack Recreation Commission. In 1968 he was honored as being the Outstanding Citizen of the Eastern

Shore of Virginia. He has twice been awarded NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal and in 1974 was awarded NASA's Distinguished Service Medal. He is in Who's Who in America and was elected as a Fellow of the American Astronautical Society. In 1978 he was awarded an honorary Doctorate in Engineering by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Branch.

Dr. Krieger and his wife, Frances, have acquired a home in Hampton, Virginia, as three of their seven children are residing in that area. After retirement, Dr. Krieger, who has an insatiable interest in the history of Virginia's Eastern Shore, hopes to spend a good deal of time photographing the area and studying Shore History.

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