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No place like home

Expedition 6 Commander Ken Bowersox embraces his kids – Matt, Tim and Luke – whom he had not seen since before his Nov. 23 launch to the International Space Station. Bowersox and his crewmates, ISS Science Officer Don Pettit and Flight Engineer Nikolai Budarin, were reunited with their families at Ellington Field on May 21.

For more about Expedition 6, see page 4.

Director's Message



We of Good Fortune

Since February 1 it's been a rocky road for NASA and JSC. The tragedy of lost friends and heroes is bad enough in itself. Add the ensuing investigation, accompanying criticism and second-guessing in the press, and one might want to feel sorry for oneself. Even worse, one might be persuaded to quit and do something else.

Let's not do that. I believe this month is a great time for us to hold our heads up, think about the big picture and realize how very fortunate we are to be who we are and what we are a part of. Let's think about the Fourth of July and what it stands for.

There was no such thing as a citizen 227 years ago. There hadn't been any citizens on this Earth for almost 2,000 years. Even if you were considered a free man, you were still subject to the whims of a king, monarch or emperor. That all changed during July of 1776 in Philadelphia when a group of highly educated, prosperous men representing the 13 colonies decided to put their lives and fortunes at risk in order that people in this land could enjoy the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

These were not perfect men. They had the same problems with pride, prejudice, professional jealousies, ambition and political rivalry that abound our society today. The union that they later formed was not perfect either. The injustices of slavery and inequality for large groups of citizens were shelved as a political necessity. Nevertheless, the actions of these incredible men and the women who supported them brought about a turning point in the path of humankind that has shaped world history to this day.

I am convinced that had it not been for the likes of Washington, Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison and their many cohorts who lived by the credo "Give me liberty or give me death!" our world would be a much different place today. We certainly would not be living the healthy, prosperous and technologically advanced lives that we now enjoy. What a wonderful blessing it is to be a citizen of the United States of America!

So let us take a moment to give thanks for these brave souls who put everything on the line to gain the freedom that we enjoy today. Let's also give thanks for all those others who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for the past 227 years to ensure that our democracy would remain secure. Finally, let us also dedicate ourselves to giving our very best to furthering the exploration of space. Let us show the same courage demonstrated by our forefathers and press on with our cause.

We are so fortunate! God Bless America!

Beak sends...

In next month's issue...

The August *Roundup* will include a tribute to Ron Dittmore, the departing Space Shuttle Program Manager, as well as a welcome to his successor, Bill Parsons.

APPEARING THIS MONTH IN OUR

Guest Space

William Gerstenmaier

International Space Station Program Manager



Strong international partnership shares common goal of human spaceflight

Halfway through 2003, the 100th year of humans in flight, we are grateful to report that the legacy continues after navigating some very rough seas. We had a successful crew rotation on the International Space Station, and the seventh Expedition is now onboard – in good health and working productively. The teams have all done a remarkable job staying focused on the people we have in orbit, and they are equally vigilant working the multiple tasks we have in front of us.

This year has been a very tough year for spaceflight, our NASA family, the nation and the world. As we look to the future we rely on the steadfastness of our commitment to be the best we can be, to be adaptable and flexible, and to remain true to the pledges we have made to our countries and people. The ISS Program has been enormously enriched by the contributions each international partner is making in human spaceflight. Despite different cultures, languages, engineering approaches and politics, the ISS partners are finding solid ground – on Earth and in orbit – upon which to build a path to the stars.

Looking back to January, I remember telling the troops to be ready for a "Perfect Storm" – a confluence of major activity from different directions converging into a surge of unimaginable ferocity. We were expecting a convergence of management challenges as we instituted new financial tools and reporting processes. We knew our major contracts were coming up for review. We were preparing for 11 spaceflights and unprecedented space engineering – reconfiguring all major systems on orbit while adding more than 80,000 pounds of hardware. And we expected that operating the Station 24/7 would only continue to challenge us as we responded to issues large and small on a daily basis.

We knew 2003 was going to be tough. We had no idea. We were never prepared for loss of the STS-107 crew and *Columbia*. We will never return to normal, but we are moving on.

Because our teams stayed focused on the people we had in orbit, we managed to bring Ken, Don and Nick home safely and send Yuri and Ed as the seventh Expedition to the ISS. We did this because we have a strong international partnership with common goals. Our Russian partners bear the brunt of the post-*Columbia* burden, having performed two Progress launches and a crew rotation on the Soyuz with their signature professionalism and commitment to human spaceflight. They are taking extraordinary measures to ensure the continuity of humans in space.

We are learning the true meaning of partnership, and the give-and-take it requires to stay fixed on our star. International teamwork and dedication have allowed us to make amazing progress: we have created manifest plans, conquered logistics shortfalls, planned crew rotations, moved international hardware to Cape Kennedy, and stayed engaged in science and productive work on the Station. We did all this while juggling several detailed assembly options; while moving through an exhaustive budget review cycle and extensive contract consolidation; and while surviving tough international management meetings, where partners had to weigh their national priorities against the greater good. The words "awesome," "incredible" and "inspiring" come to my mind when I think of all the individuals across oceans who have performed all these tasks to bring us where we are today. This is an awesome team.

Where are we today? The Station flies 45 percent assembled, 72 percent of the way to U.S. core complete, with 89 percent of all U.S. systems software deployed and operating. At Kennedy Space Center, the Multi-purpose Logistics Module, Raffaello, is waiting to be reloaded. The Truss and Solar Array elements stand ready to fly, after we confirm that the extended storage time has not affected their ability to be deployed. The exciting arrivals of the European-built Node 2 and the Japanese Experiment Module build the clear picture that the partnership is real, expansive and moving forward.

This is a good time for all of us to think about how we can communicate even better, not just among ourselves but with the greater public. The ISS doesn't belong to us; it belongs to the whole world. We have an obligation to prove and explain how spaceflight can lead us to better relationships, better technology and better ways of using the knowledge we gain to make a better world.

I also believe we need to focus on the next generation and truly entice them to become part of this plan so they can improve upon what we do today. I have great faith this will happen and am very thankful to be a part of this incredible experience.

Despite different cultures, languages, engineering approaches and politics, the ISS partners are finding solid ground – on Earth and in orbit – upon which to build a path to the stars.

Joe Fries retires as WSTF Manager

by Cheerie R. Patneau
NASA White Sands Test Facility

Career at a Glance

- 1963** began career with NASA at the then-named Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston as a Cooperative Education Student
- 1966** graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics
- 1966** continued career with NASA in the Propulsion and Power Division, contributing to the development of the Apollo Spacecraft Propulsion systems. After the successful development of the Apollo systems, Fries was instrumental in the definition and development of the Space Shuttle orbiter propulsion systems
- 1978** transferred to the White Sands Test Facility as Operations Director responsible for the development and qualification testing of the Space Shuttle orbital maneuvering and reaction control propulsion systems
- 1990** appointed as Deputy Manager, WSTF
- 1997** selected as Deputy Director, Center Operations, JSC
- 1998** selected as Manager, WSTF

Awards

JSC Certificate of Commendation
NASA Exceptional Service Medal
NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal
Meritorious Executive Presidential Rank Award

Service

New Mexico Governor's Technical Excellence Committee
Southwest Regional Space Task Force
State of New Mexico Space Commission



Photo taken at Dale Long's retirement party.
wstf0601-1245 Photo by Lou Rosales

It is no surprise that Joseph Fries, NASA Manager of Johnson Space Center's White Sands Test Facility, has been the recipient of numerous performance, achievement and management awards during his career. It is also no secret that during his administration, the test facility received the Star for Safety from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and that the site continues to collect awards for Star of Excellence and Star Among Stars from OSHA.

But readers might be surprised to learn that he credits his wife, Sue, as the most influential person in his life, and that he cares about employees' safety at work just as he cares about his family's safety at home.

Fries, Manager of WSTF since 1998, is retiring from the Agency on July 3.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without my wife, my peers, subordinates and supervisors who have helped me a lot," said Fries. "They have made my life easier, and I've been fortunate to get a lot of recognition for what they've done."

Fries has made workplace safety a top priority during his career. The OSHA Star flag that now flies above WSTF is there largely because of his commitment to workplace safety, and to creating what he calls a "true safety culture" at the test facility. "It's a no-brainer," he said, "to think highly of the people you need to work with and treat them as family, especially when it comes to their safety."

He credits the employees with earning OSHA's Star rating, and is proud of the fact that WSTF was the first site where both civil servant and contractor teams earned Star flags from the same safety audit.

As Manager of WSTF, Fries worked long-distance to fulfill JSC goals – the facility lies near Las Cruces, N.M., nearly 800 miles from Houston. "I have enjoyed the freedom that JSC management has given me to run this facility," he said. "They basically left the decision-making up to me, to do the job that needed to be done without interference. The confidence they afforded me certainly made this an awesome assignment."

"I have worked with a super group of people who have been a pleasure to manage," he said of his employees. "They are professional and entirely focused on performing the mission we need to accomplish."

But Fries is also quick to credit his wife for her support throughout his career. "Sue created stability in my life," he said. "She brought to our marriage an understanding of the demands my career would make on our time. There were big demands, too," he said, citing the two moves between New Mexico and Houston that the couple made in 1997.

In addition to her encouragement, Sue also gave Fries "a better understanding of the education world," he said. "She is a teacher, and I have greater appreciation and have given my support to NASA education outreach because of her focus."

"I'm going to be doing a lot more fishing this summer," Fries said when asked about his retirement plans. He said he also looks forward to hunting and "spending much more time with my grandkids."

"Well, I will be doing some work," he amended. "I've been reappointed to the New Mexico Space Commission, and with the energy I have left, I will be spending time with a lot of clubs and volunteer organizations that I belong to and will continue to support."

Fries said that he expects WSTF to continue to thrive after he leaves. "We'll be growing," he said. "I hope we grow at a rate that is slow enough so we don't overextend our product quality, responsiveness and flexibility. I don't want us to grow too fast to sacrifice what we are."

Fries will be replaced by Steve Nunez, who previously served as Deputy Manager, Management Integration Office in the International Space Station Program. Nunez joined JSC in 2001 as Special Assistant to the Manager, ISS Program, and began his NASA career at Stennis Space Center in 1989.

"I'm leaving WSTF in the good hands of Steve Nunez, the NASA workforce and our contractor team," said Fries. "I believe that the site will continue to do well in the future."



Joe Fries and Bob Baker at the White Sands Space Harbor 25th Anniversary Celebration.

wstf0801-1958 Photo by Randy Page



Joe Fries at the Mars Settlement Design Competition.

wstf1002-2785 Photo by Lou Rosales



In 1999, JSC Center Director George Abbey presents the 35-year service award to Joe Fries.

wstf0499-0769 Photo by Randy Page



Mark Leifeste and Joe Fries present NASA fire truck to New Mexico State University's DABCC Fire Science Program.

wstf0802-1977 Photo by Randy Page