

BIKE TO WORK DAY AT JSC



NASA/Blair JSC2005E19547

JSC employees recently participated in National Bike to Work Day by riding their bikes to work. Riders gathered on Bay Area Boulevard at 7 a.m. on May 20 to ride their bikes along designated bikeways through Nassau Bay arriving at Nassau Bay City Hall at 8 a.m. After a short celebratory program, they rode through the front gates of JSC, made a short loop around the Center and finished in front of Bldg. 1.



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Space Center Roundup

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Joanne Hale Editor
 Kendra Phipps Assistant Editor
 Catherine Borsché Staff Writer
 Marshall Mellard Graphic Designer

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'It's all about the zero-g'

Their free-floating experiences in the KC-135 aircraft may have been a highlight, as Mission Specialist Jose Hernandez said, but these astronaut candidates have done much more than that during their first year of training. Read the full story on page 6.

Explore. Discover. Understand.

July
 2005
 Houston, Texas

Beak sends...

A MESSAGE FROM CENTER DIRECTOR LT. GEN. JEFFERSON D. HOWELL JR.



July thoughts

July is definitely an intense period for us all. Closing out the myriad of final work and reviews to get STS-114 launched into space, the turnover of key personnel at NASA Headquarters and continued new guidance toward fulfilling the Vision for Space Exploration will keep the heat up on the NASA pressure-cooker. We are living in interesting times!

Nevertheless, it would do us well to pause and consider what occurred in Philadelphia 229 years ago this month. A group of courageous men signed their names to a declaration that all people should have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In doing so, they put their lives and all they owned at risk and changed the course of humanity on this Earth. The effects of that declaration are still rippling throughout the world like a continuous earthquake whose end is nowhere in sight.

Let us, the beneficiaries of their bold action and the great nation that was derived from it, say a prayer of thanks for those brave souls and all of the others who followed in giving of themselves to assure our freedom and the privilege of citizenship.

Let us also rededicate ourselves to this wonderful endeavor called human space exploration. Let us be a living example of what can be accomplished by free men and women who are allowed to pursue great achievement for the good of humankind.

IT'S GREAT TO BE ALIVE AND IN HOUSTON!

Affectionately dubbed 'space nerd' is welcomed to the JSC family

by Catherine E. Borsché and Amiko Nevills

NASA Administrator Michael Griffin, or "Mike," as he prefers to be called, returned to Johnson Space Center in his new capacity to visit with JSC team members about plans for the future.

The new administrator was flanked by Rep. Tom DeLay of Sugar Land, Texas and Center Director Jefferson D. Howell Jr. during the all-hands meeting.

DeLay praised Griffin in his introduction, citing Griffin's vision, brilliance and leadership, "which the entire space community is relying on for the next few years." But DeLay saved the best for last.

"The thing that instills in me more confidence in Mike Griffin than anything else is that he is an incredible 'space nerd,'" DeLay said. "I've got to tell you, and I do say this affectionately, but we're talking about a geek of the highest order."

After the laughs died down, Griffin settled in to address the full house in the Teague Auditorium. He preferred a more casual mode of communication, sitting in a chair to talk with the employees.

"The space program of the United States needs a lot of friends, a lot of supporters, and that program has no stronger supporter than Majority Leader DeLay," Griffin said of the congressman.

As DeLay indicated in his speech, the JSC family had questions about the future and how the Center would fit into the Vision for Space Exploration. Griffin fielded questions from the audience, one of which centered on privatization and its role in space exploration.

"As capable as private enterprise is, private enterprise is not the proper vehicle to operate on the frontier. That is the role of federal research and development," Griffin said. "There's a word for companies that operate on the frontier, and the word is bankrupt."

Griffin said he believes the Agency should foster an environment where information and new ideas are shared across centers, management teams and team members.

"We exist in an environment where we must figure out how to do reliably things that are very new and very difficult. The appropriate environment that we want to create is one that



NASA Administrator Michael Griffin studies hardware in Bldg. 9 Space Vehicle Mockup Facility while the media document his visit.

not only tolerates but actively encourages dissenting views," Griffin said. "We don't do homework problems here. Sometimes it comes down to making the best guess we can. If the decision comes to me, before I make my best guess, I want to know everything about it that I can know. I would like the people who report to me to have that same view."

Griffin also indicated that the International Space Station would not be ignored amid new space exploration goals.

"Space Station is in the middle of being built. We will assemble it," Griffin said. "I don't believe anyone really plans to end Space Station operations in a particular year. My guess is that if we have an orbiting facility of value to various organizations, efforts will be made to keep it going."

Griffin also emphasized the importance of collaboration with private industry as the Agency works towards the Vision for Space Exploration.

Griffin also mentioned that although NASA has lacked firm plans to execute exploration goals, he wants to show the public where the Agency is headed by the end of the fiscal year.

JSC was the seventh of several NASA centers on Griffin's tour schedule. After the town hall meeting, Griffin met with reporters for a brief press conference, which was followed by a tour of mockup facilities and Shuttle tile repair demonstrations.