

From the desk of Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell Jr.

Director's Message



The Best of Times...

To paraphrase Charles Dickens, it is the worst of times, it is the best of times. We've gone through a tough year. The loss of *Columbia* and its valiant crew still weighs heavy on our hearts and minds. Return To Flight requirements and fulfilling the CAIB Report's recommendations have proven to be an enormous challenge. The resetting of the next launch date is evidence of that fact.

However it is also evident that "we get it" and will not let schedule pressure drive us to a premature launch. Our NASA leadership has demonstrated great courage in its RTF decisions to ensure that we will return to flight only when we are absolutely ready. Nevertheless, there is a lot of hard work going on with many hurdles and little outward progress to show for it. By itself, this situation can tend to dampen individual as well as team spirit.

However, our President has given us an incredible gift! With his new vision for space exploration he has provided us with the motivation to carry us through this

very difficult time. He has challenged us, as well as promised us the necessary resources to go to the Moon, to Mars and beyond.

Of course, imperative to making this new journey is safe return to flight of Shuttle and completion of ISS. That means you and I hold the key to our nation's and our world's exploration of outer space. If this doesn't motivate us to get the job done, I don't know what will. We will prevail at our immediate tasks and then join in the quest to explore our solar system!

This won't be easy, but if it was, anyone could do it. How fortunate we are to be on this team at this place during this juncture of human space exploration! Let us take pleasure in our work throughout this best of times.

IT'S GREAT TO BE ALIVE AND IN HOUSTON!

Beak sends...

Guest Space

Charlene Gilbert

Director of Technology Transfer and Commercialization



NASA's high scoring technology featured at the Super Bowl

The familiar Monday night rhetorical question "Are you ready for some football?" resonated louder as we approached the biggest football event of the year. Most football enthusiasts, marked by the time-honored face paint and oversized number-one foam fingers,

responded with a resounding, guttural, "Yes!" And why wouldn't they? Today we are more ready than ever, thanks to the hard work of NASA people – you.

Thousands of products that improve our lives here on Earth were kicked off from space. Last month, fans geared up to touch down at Reliant Stadium, featuring the NFL's first retractable roof that scored its high technology from spacesuit fabric. Players on the field benefited from space-age materials in their protective shock-absorbent gear and helmets.

Sharing technology developed to tackle space exploration with private industry not only provides these valuable products to the public but also stimulates the economy, creating jobs and motivating U.S. competition by offering a technological edge. Partnering with businesses outside NASA helps leverage resources to unearth hidden discoveries that support NASA Enterprises.

As in the game of football, success relies on teamwork. Without a team-based environment, the Technology Transfer and Commercialization Office at Johnson Space Center could not be successful. The team, however, is not limited to its on-field players – all JSC contractor and civil servant employees, including scientists, engineers, researchers and innovators are critical to achieving a game win.

Sharing successful and valuable discoveries will help gain support and funding for current and future projects, allowing us to continue our search for life beyond. Kicking around ideas? Let us know about them. Disclosing new knowledge and advances is a part of our responsibility as NASA employees and helps us to maintain a robust technology inventory.

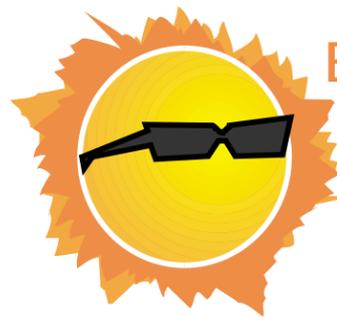
For football buffs, it all boils down to passion – passion for the challenge, the spirit and the win. As devotees to future space exploration, we can all draw on this passion. As we forge ahead on a new year of exciting advancements, I encourage positive change and progress in the world of technology that will continue to impact lives everywhere.



Astronauts at the Super Bowl

The Super Bowl, held at Houston's Reliant Stadium, featured a NASA-themed pregame ceremony. The STS-114 crew stood by on the field, symbolizing NASA's resolve to return to flight and keep exploring.

Photos by Bert Berr



**Beak's Beach Bash...
Coming Soon.**

Get your act together!