

## NASA Briefs

### Bring Our Children to Work Day set

Recognizing the importance of children experiencing their parents' work environment, JSC has designated June 12 as Bring Our Children to Work Day and encourages all parents/sponsors to bring their children on that day. The Clear Creek Independent School District Board of Trustees voted to not participate in the official event. The Board determined that students lost a day of instruction, and it was in the students' best interests to cancel this event for their school district. JSC opted to sponsor the program during the summer because of the large number of students who would be unable to attend on the officially designated BOCTW Day. Parents, sponsors, and students are encouraged to attend either a morning or afternoon session at the Gilruth Center, and students will be able to purchase lunch for half-price at both JSC cafeterias. Additional details will be provided as they become available.

### NASA opens contest to name observatory

NASA is searching for a new name for the Advanced X-ray Astrophysics Facility, currently scheduled for launch Dec. 3, from the Space Shuttle *Columbia*. AXAF is the third of NASA's Great Observatories, after the Hubble Space Telescope and the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory.

Entries should contain the name of a person (not living), place, or thing from history, mythology, or fiction and should describe in a few sentences why this choice would be a good name for AXAF. The name must not have been used before on space missions by NASA or other organizations or countries. Contest rules, electronic entry forms, and additional information can be found on the Internet at: <http://asc.harvard.edu/con-test.html>.

### Deep Space 1 launch reset to October

The planned July launch of NASA's Deep Space 1 technology validation mission from Cape Canaveral, Fla., has been rescheduled for October.

The delay is due to a combination of late delivery of the spacecraft's power electronics system and an ambitious flight software development schedule, which together leave insufficient time to test the spacecraft thoroughly.

Deep Space 1 is the first launch in NASA's New Millennium program, a series of missions designed to test new technologies so that they can be confidently used on science missions of the 21st century.

## Domain password security to be increased at JSC

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users will be prompted to change their passwords. Procedures to help users through the process can be found on the JSC Home Page at URL: <http://www4.jsc.nasa.gov/infosys/NTPass/>.

Sometime between May 5 and the end of August every user's JSC NT Domain password will expire (maybe more than once) and they will need to know how to change it," said Jennifer Rasnic of the Information Systems Directorate. "Then, their password will expire every time it gets older than 90 days. This is not a short term project—it will continue to affect them on a regular, recurring basis. We have done our best to provide training sessions for points-of-contact in the organizations, created a web site with step-by-step instructions,

and are trying to get the word out to everyone through as many avenues as possible."

Passwords provide authentication of computer users logging on to JSC systems; they help ensure that you really are who your ID says you are and protect the government's data. In today's world, however, the number of computer security threats is increasing and the JSC user environment is changing rapidly. By changing passwords regularly at JSC, it will improve the security of our authentication process.

"Our best advice to anyone is to follow the instructions and change your password now," Rasnic said. "Then, set yourself a reminder to change it every 89 days from now on. That is the easiest, simplest method to follow and causes the least amount of work to synchro-

nize your passwords with other systems like Novell and the Windows password."

The oldest accounts where the password has not been changed in years (990 days old or greater) will expire first then the process will work its way down until the 90 day mark is reached, said John Gillman, manager of the Information Systems Contract Operations Center, which is responsible for local area network operations.

The minimum password length is six characters, and the maximum is 14 characters. Users who also work on Novell NetWare servers should keep in mind for synchronization purposes that most of those systems have a maximum password length of eight characters. Passwords are case sensitive, make sure your CAPS LOCK is turned off. Users

should choose unique passwords. Once password expiration is implemented, the system will remember your previous 24 passwords. Therefore you will not be able to reuse a password until the 25th password change. Combinations of letters and numbers are recommended.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your organization's IRM Steering Council representative or Computer Security Official. A list of IRM Steering Council representatives can be found from the CIO page at URL: [http://jsc-cio-01.jsc.nasa.gov/irmc/irmc\\_members.htm](http://jsc-cio-01.jsc.nasa.gov/irmc/irmc_members.htm), and a list of CSO's can be found from the Computer Security page: <http://www4.jsc.nasa.gov/org/ga/itsecurity/>.

The Information Technology Operations Center "Help Desk" also will be available at x34800.



Over 40 volunteers from JSC turned out to do their part in cleaning up the environment at the fifth annual Rivers, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash. Volunteers from the area joined together to clean up a section of Clear Lake near the Kemah Bridge.

## Control tower simulator studies airport safety, traffic problems

NASA has begun construction of a full-scale air traffic control tower simulator that will provide—under realistic airport conditions and configurations—a facility that will test ways to combat potential air and runway traffic problems at commercial airports.

Researchers will look primarily at the feasibility, safety, reliability and cost benefits of technologies prior to incorporating them into airports. Testing also will provide information that may assist in developing proposed changes to airport ground procedures and on construction of new airport facilities.

"This will be the only one of its kind in the world," said Stan Harke, project manager at Ames Research Center. "It will allow the commercial aviation industry to study and correct potential problems in a safe setting before they become actual problems. This will be as real as it can get," he added.

Jointly funded by NASA's Advanced Air Transportation Technologies Office and the Federal Aviation Administration, the \$9.3 million, two-story building, called the Surface Development and Test Facility, is being built at Ames.

"We will be able to simulate any

airport in the world," said Nancy Dorigi, deputy project manager at Ames. "The three-dimensional visual database of the airport will be viewed through the 360-degree window of the simulator. The visual scene, along with specific airport traffic patterns and operating procedures, will give us a very credible simulation capability."

The tower cab will have reconfigurable site-specific displays, such as terminal area radar, surface radar and weather, installed based on FAA specifications. Twelve rear-projection video screens will provide a seamless 360-degree high-resolution view of the airport or other scenes being depicted.

These image generators will provide a realistic view of weather conditions, environmental and seasonal effects and the movement of 200 or more active aircraft in the air or on the ground.

The imaging system will be powered by supercomputers and the remainder of the simulation by approximately 100 Pentium processors. Video cameras will record air traffic controllers' activities for human factors research.

The facility is scheduled to begin testing operations in 1999.

## Clinton voices strong support for NASA

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left our footprints on the Moon, explored the surface of Mars, completed 89 space shuttle missions, orbited Earth for 755 days, 12 hours, and 44 minutes. When the 90th mission lifts off into space this Thursday, 238 Americans will have had the chance to see the stars up close and to work with dedicated people from other nations who share the same goals and dreams of a peaceful cooperative future."

During the visit, Clinton also met with NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin, JSC Director George Abbey and Houston Mayor Lee Brown, and toured space shuttle and International Space Station mockups in Bldg. 9. Clinton credited Goldin's leadership with allowing the agency to accomplish its objectives in the face of financial austerity.

"Since 1993, productivity at NASA has increased by 40 percent, new spacecraft are being built in half the time at much less cost," Clinton said. "That is something you can be proud of. In the 1980s we launched just two solar system exploration missions. This year we're on schedule to launch a spacecraft every 10 weeks. I am committed to maintaining a strong, stable, balanced space program. Our balanced budget will support 28 new space missions, missions that will help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes and ancient stars, and of Earth and, indeed, life itself."

Clinton discussed mission activities with the crew of STS-95, including Sen. John Glenn, and David Wolf, who returned to Earth recently after four months aboard the Russian Mir Space Station. The president said he supports Goldin's decision to allow Glenn to fly on STS-95 with Commander Curt Brown and his crew.

"We thought it would be good for the space program, good for science, good for the American people, good for our future. We are living longer than ever before, as Americans. It is imperative that we live healthier than ever before," he said, "it is imperative

that we learn as much as we can about the aging process."

Clinton said the world's spacefaring nations are leaving behind their national differences and seeking scientific knowledge for the benefit of humanity and called U.S.-Russian cooperation in space an important example.

"Soon the International Space Station will be launched, the size of a football field, so large it will actually be visible to the naked eye here on Earth. Yes, as Mr. Goldin alluded, it was a fight for a while and there were those who thought we should abandon it, but we did not abandon it, and 10 or 20 years from now people will wonder that we ever even considered such a thing because we will all, before long, be thanking our lucky stars that we had the vision to work with people from around the world to setup the International Space Station in the sky. From it we will explore vast new frontiers, chart unexplored seas, reach a little deeper in to the vast final frontier," Clinton said.

During his call to the STS-90 crew in Florida, the President joked that as he gets older he is beginning to experience the same routine health difficulties faced by many Americans, such as dizziness, and told the Neurolab astronauts he expects them "to come back with all the answers."

"The space program has enormous potential to change life here on Earth for the better in a health way, in the way that you're exploring, in environmental ways, and in other ways as well, so this is a particularly exciting mission to me because I believe it will help to strengthen the support of the rank and file Americans for our NASA operations generally, and I'm very grateful to you," he told Commander Rick Searfoss and company. "Good luck and have a great time out there."

Clinton applauded JSC employees' unwavering commitment to the space program and urged them to keep the faith as the new millennium begins.

## Neurolab focuses on adaptation

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The crew was accompanied by 42 rats, 18 pregnant mice, 8 fish, 60 snails and 624 crickets, which are being used to study how developing nervous systems are affected by the absence of gravity.

In interviews with reporters on the ground, Searfoss and his crew reported that the experiments were going well.

Early in the flight, crew members did have to perform maintenance work on two experiments. A pump supplying air to four oyster toadfish failed in the Vestibular Function Experiment Unit, but Hire and Altman were able to route air from another of the unit's four chambers. Linnehan and Pawelczyk replaced a hard drive on the computer controlling a ball-drop experiment

designed to follow their nerve impulses and the ball launcher performed normally.

The crew members will work with a total of 26 experiments in eight different areas of research into how the brain and nervous system—the most complex and least well-known parts of the human body—function. Some of the tests were designed to study well-documented sleep difficulties experienced by astronauts on orbit.

The international team of researchers is interested in solving these puzzles so that they can develop strategies for helping humans live and work in space for longer periods, and because much of the research has applications that could help human patients with nervous disorders on Earth.

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## NASA finds problem with satellite software

NASA has found problems with software required to control, monitor and schedule science activities on the Earth Observing System series of spacecraft.

Officials believe these problems will delay the launch date for the Earth Observing Spacecraft AM-1. The launch, originally planned for late June from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., will be delayed at least until the end of the year.

The problem is with the control center system software that supports the command and control of spacecraft and instruments, the monitoring of spacecraft and instrument health and safety and the analysis of spacecraft trends and

anomalies.

What was supposed to have been the final version of the software was delivered to NASA by Lockheed Martin on March 31, to support integrated simulations with the EOS AM-1 spacecraft.

Testing of this software revealed significant performance problems. Program managers expect it to take several weeks to clearly understand whether correcting the current software or taking other measures is the best approach.

Government/contractor teams have been formed to evaluate options for correcting these problems to minimize impact on the AM-1 launch.