

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S**Ribbon cut on Longhorn Project and Western Heritage Pavilion**

It has been an unlikely pairing but for the past several months six trophy longhorn steer have grazed in the shadows of JSC's Rocket Park. Now, in a ceremony making their unorthodox pasture their permanent residence, JSC Center Director George Abbey, Clear Creek Independent School District Superintendent Dr. John Wilson, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo President H. Mike Wells, and Don Limb of the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association officially christened the Western Heritage Pavilion and Longhorn Project.

"This is a unique achievement for not only NASA and the folks in this area, but also for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo," said Wells. "This is for the benefit of youth and education and that's what we're about so we're very pleased to be involved in the project and we think it's a great idea."

Wells was joined by other HLSR representatives at the dedication ceremony including Hal Hillman, former president of HLSR and member of the Executive Committee; Constable Bill Bailey, lifetime vice president, HLSR; John C. Cook III, lifetime vice president, HLSR; Keith Steffek, vice president, HLSR; Dick Hudgins, director, HLSR, and chairman of the Speakers Committee; and Gene Hollier, vice chairman, HLSR Speakers Committee.

More than 1.2 million visitors annually are expected to peruse the pavilion site as



NASA JSC Photo 2000-04494 by James Blair

Left to right, Don Limb, president, Gulf Coast Chapter, Texas Longhorn Breeders Association; Hal Hillman, chairman, Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Education Committee; Mike Wells, president, Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo; JSC Director George Abbey; and Dr. John H. Wilson, superintendent, Clear Creek Independent School District.

JSC is a unique facility and we are very fortunate to be located in the state of Texas which has a great heritage that goes back to the early pioneers who came to this land, very tough land, and made it the great state it is. They, in their time, were explorers and pioneers much like the people that are working in the space program today.

—George Abbey

part of Space Center Houston and JSC tour routes, but the Longhorn Project is actually designed to be a first-of-its-kind educational interface between area high schools and NASA.

Organizers hope to foster student education in animal care and breeding, fruit and vegetable cultivation, recycling, and soil research.

"We are responsible for providing food for astronauts on orbit and solving the problem of growing food in space and on other planets, so the Longhorn Project, the aqua-farming, and the raising of fruit

trees and vegetables, relates right back to what goes on at JSC in our own life science research," said Abbey. "It's a very natural partnership and a good partnership and we feel very fortunate to be a part of it."

The Longhorn Project is part of the CCISD Agricultural Science Center Learning Laboratory, developed in partnership with CCISD, the Texas Longhorn Breeders Association, which provides the cattle as well as livestock for the students to raise and show in livestock competitions, and the HLSR.

Site design, which was led by JSC Architect Don Holick, also includes land for vegetable crops, an orchard, a greenhouse,

and two aquaculture ponds where bass and other freshwater species will be raised. Texas A&M University and its Agricultural Extension Service provide technical consulting for the agriculture and aquaculture projects. EARTH College of Costa Rica provides technical expertise for the recycling and soil conservation initiatives.

The cornerstone of the site is a 26-foot by 50-foot open-air pavilion providing viewing of the longhorn pasture to visitors. Inside, a display wall narrates the story of the HLSR and its contributions to youth education. There also are two buildings to provide administrative offices for teachers and the Dow Chemical Company Learning Center.

"That provides a classroom for on-site science laboratory lessons," said Hollier. "Other facilities include a barn, storage building, windmill, and water storage tank. Long-term plans call for closed-circuit video capability that will bring the experiments performed at the project to classrooms worldwide."

The Longhorn Project was created without using taxpayer dollars. Volunteers, like Melba Eveler and Hollier from the HLSR, secured donations from local companies, individuals, or corporate sponsors.

"We now have a great link to a heritage that we need to maintain, understand and continue as we go into the future and explore the stars," said Abbey. "We are very fortunate that we are located here and that we have the partners and a community that supports us. This is a great facility for the youth of our state and all the visitors that are going to have the opportunity to come here to learn." ■

**Volunteers needed for Open House 2000**

JSC is making final preparations as Open House 2000 approaches. This year's event will be held on August 26.

C.C. de la Garza, volunteer coordinator for the JSC Open House, says that about 150 volunteers are still needed to prepare for the anticipated 120,000 Open House guests who will visit JSC for this year's event. "Although the response to our call for volunteers has been tremendous, support for the peak hours in the afternoon is still critical to the success of the day."

Civil service and contractor employees can volunteer to staff information booths, act as rovers, assist visitors with directions, staff the lost child care center, help keep the cafeterias clean during peak times, and oversee children's activities at the Teague Auditorium. NASA and contractor retirees are also encouraged to volunteer in this effort.

The easiest way to sign up is by pointing your browser to <http://www4.jsc.nasa.gov/openhouse/Databases/> and selecting the time and position you would like to work.

Volunteers who have already signed up should attend one of four training sessions to receive vital information needed for Open House 2000. These sessions will be held in the Teague Auditorium. Please



Guests tour Bldg. 9 during last year's Open House.

attend one of the following sessions:

- 10 a.m. Monday, August 7
- 1 p.m. Wednesday, August 9
- 9 a.m. Friday, August 11
- 2 p.m. Tuesday, August 15

For more information, contact de la Garza (281) 483-1033 or Wendy Starr (281) 336-5373, who is representing TEAM NASA on the committee.

Open House, which begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m., is free to the public. Visitors may enter the center through three gates not normally open to the public – on NASA Road 1 just east of Saturn Boulevard, on Space Center Boulevard near Bay Area Boulevard, and on Space Center Boulevard near NASA Road 1. Parking in JSC lots is available at no charge.

JSC's annual Open House coincides with the annual Ballunar Liftoff Festival, a three-day event sponsored by local communities and held on the NASA grounds. The festival includes more than 100 hot air balloons, midway rides, games, skydiving exhibitions and other displays. Festival admission is \$3 for adults. Children under 12 are admitted free.

For more information on this year's Open House event, visit the JSC Web site at <http://openhouse.jsc.nasa.gov/> or call the information hotline at (281) 244-5312. ■