

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S

120,000 attend Open House

Event provides fun, education

As balloons drifted across the sky, the sun rising on the horizon, volunteers prepared JSC for its fourth annual Open House. By the time the last balloon had landed, the first of a record-setting 120,000 visitors streamed into the center.

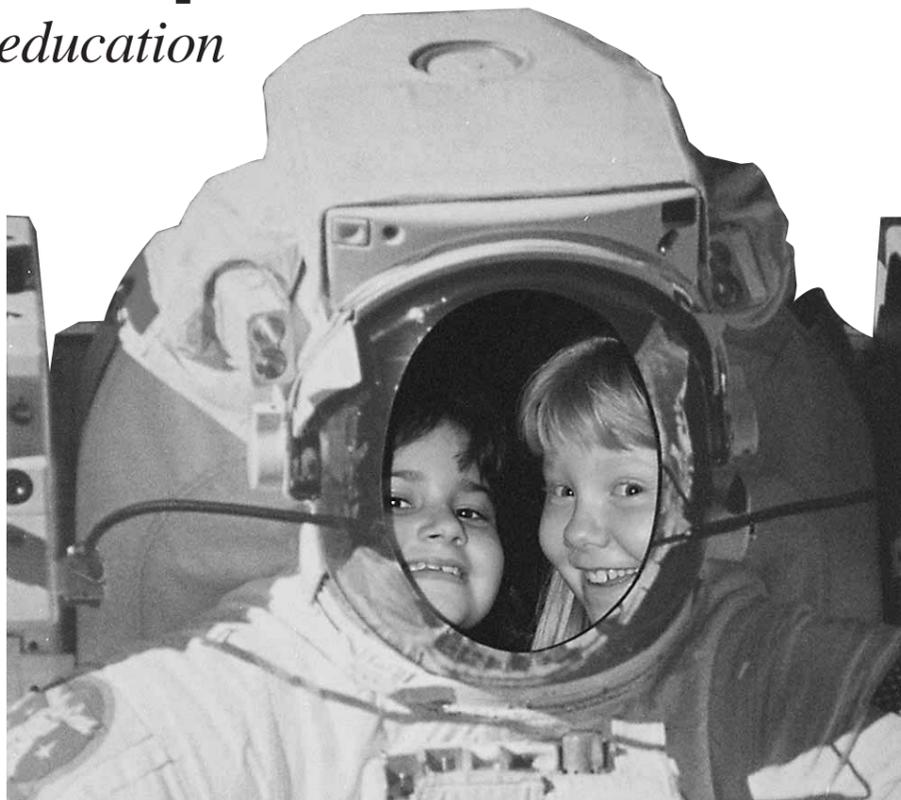
With a theme of "Johnson Space Center: Houston, Texas: Space City USA," JSC opened its doors to the public for a behind-the-scenes look at the center. The event was held in conjunction with the sixth annual Ballunar Liftoff Festival.

Twenty buildings and facilities featuring more than 150 exhibits and displays were open to help visitors experience human space flight and associated technology. NASA employees were on hand to explain their duties, describe how equipment functions and answer space-related questions.

Nearly every facet of space flight was featured in the array of displays and demonstrations. Mission operations, shuttle and space station training and simulations, robotics and virtual reality, manufacturing and fabrication, spacecraft propulsion and energy systems, space communications, life support and space suits, and a wealth of scientific investigations were included.

Visitors were able to tour the historic Apollo Mission Control Room and view the new Mission Control Center. Guests were able to fly the shuttle from final approach to touchdown using a laptop landing simulator and try out tools astronauts use in space.

"The space program itself seems to have improved my life," wrote a visitor from Texas on comment cards. "I plan to make NASA my life, so this Open House is like a dream come true."



JSC Photo S98-12116 by Steve Candler

Children peer out of a space suit on display during JSC's fourth annual Open House.

"I love coming every year," wrote another visitor from Texas. "We, as a family, enjoy coming to see the modern technology."

A new feature this year was the exhibit in Bldg. 29, open for the first time. Here visitors could view the life support chambers that are being equipped for ground-based testing of future life support systems and learn about concepts for growing plants in space.

Visitors to the medical and life sciences laboratory in Bldg. 37 learned how experiments conducted in space may

lead to new treatments for cancer, AIDS and osteoporosis. Here guests caught a glimpse of the bioreactor, used to grow 3-D human tissue in a zero-g environment.

Mars and the Moon were featured in Bldg. 31 where visitors were able to catch a close-up look at a lunar sample, a meteorite from Mars and cosmic dust. Children were able to sample "edible rocks" and explore simulated Mars sandboxes.

Teague Auditorium offered presentations on the shuttle-Mir program, the effects of weightlessness on the

nervous system and the future of human space exploration. Guests were able to view photos and a video taken aboard a shuttle flight.

Visitors were able to bring a little piece of the space program home because some demonstrations yielded souvenirs such as shuttle models and IMAX camera miniatures etched with a laser.

Other activities available outside the center's gates included tours of the Sonny Carter Training Facility, home of the 6.2-million-gallon tank used to perfect spacewalking techniques, and Ellington Field, the base for NASA's aircraft fleet including the KC-135A. This year buses were available to take guests out to these two facilities, and visitors were able to view the Super Guppy aircraft. As a result, attendance at these venues doubled over last year, increasing to 4,000 visitors.

Approximately 200 internal and center-wide volunteers made the event successful. The internal volunteers, from almost all areas of JSC, staffed the exhibits. The center-wide volunteers performed numerous duties including staffing 12 information booths, which also served as water stations to provide relief from the heat.

"What left the greatest impression on me personally were the volunteers," wrote one visitor in a letter to the Public Affairs Office. "How wonderful it must be to love your work so much and to be so dedicated to educating us, the public."

Not only does Open House provide visitors with a better understanding of the space program, but it also gives JSC a chance to strengthen its ties with the community, said Donn Sickorez, deputy for this year's Open House activities.

"Open House is an attempt by JSC to look outward to the community to provide recreation and education," he added. ■

JSC Safety Alert

Caution on Saturn Lane

What Happened

Heading north on Saturn Lane, a multiple-car pileup almost occurred as people stopped unexpectedly in both lanes. Shortly after stopping, a fire engine pulled out of the new station on Saturn and headed to an accident scene at Bay Area and Saturn. Only then did a motorist notice that the flashing yellow light had turned red at the fire station driveway. The truck had no sirens going as it pulled out into traffic, nor were there any other audible alerts.

Outcome of the Investigation

The speed limit on Saturn Lane leaving JSC (northbound) is 50 mph. There are yellow flashing traffic lights as motorists approach the entrance of the new Houston Fire Department Station 72. These lights automatically turn from flashing to solid yellow, to red when the Fire Department responds to an emergency. Fire trucks leave the station with engine lights flashing and sound the sirens only once en route.

What You Can Do

A yellow light means caution. It is the driver's responsibility to be aware of flashing yellow lights and to anticipate that the lights could change to red at any time. Drivers should always be prepared to reduce their speed in this event.

GILRUTH CENTER NEWS

Hours: The Gilruth Center is open from 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday, and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday.

Gilruth badges: Required for use of the Gilruth Center. Employees, spouses, eligible dependents, NASA retirees and spouses may apply for photo identification badges from 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday and from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays. Cost is \$10. Dependents must be between 16 and 23 years old.

Nutrition intervention program: Six-week program includes lectures, a private consultation with the dietitian and blood analysis to chart your progress. For details call Tammie Shaw at x32980.

Defensive driving: One-day course is offered once a month at the Gilruth Center. Pre-registration required. Cost is \$25. Call for next available class.

Stamp club: Meets every second and fourth Monday at 7 p.m. in Rm. 216.

Weight safety: Required course for employees wishing to use the Gilruth weight room. The next classes are scheduled for 8 p.m. Oct. 8 and Oct. 29. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$5. Annual weight room use fee is \$90. The cost for additional family members is \$50.

Exercise: Low-impact class meets from 5:15-6:15 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Cost is \$24 for eight weeks.

Step/bench aerobics: Low-impact cardiovascular workout. Classes meet from 5:15-6:15 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Cost is \$32 for eight weeks. Call Kristen Taragzewski, instructor, at x36891.

Yoga: Stretching class of low-impact exercises designed for people of all ages and abilities in a Westernized format. Meets Thursdays 5-6 p.m. Cost is \$32 for eight weeks. Call Darrell Matula, instructor, at x38520 for more information.

Ballroom dancing: Classes meet from 7-8:15 p.m. Thursdays for beginner advanced classes and from 8:15-9:30 p.m. for beginner-intermediate and intermediate students. Cost is \$60 per couple.

Country and western dancing: Beginner class meets 7-8:30 p.m. Monday. Advanced class (must know basic steps to all dances) meets 8:30-10 p.m. Monday. Cost is \$20 per couple.

Fitness program: Health-related fitness program includes a medical screening examination and a 12-week individually prescribed exercise program. For more information call Larry Wier at x30301.

Gilruth Home Page: Check out all activities at the Gilruth online at: <http://www4.jsc.nasa.gov/ah/exceaa/Gilruth/Gilruth.htm>.

TICKET WINDOW

Bldg. 3 Exchange Store hours are 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Bldg. 11 Exchange Store hours are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday.

For more information, please call x35350.

The following discount tickets are available at the Exchange Stores:

General Cinema Theaters \$ 5.50

Sony Loew's Theaters \$ 5.00

AMC Theaters \$ 4.75

Astroworld Summer Saver (on sale until Oct. 15 /

valid until Nov. 1) \$21.00

(valid at all Texas Six Flags Theme Parks)

Moody Gardens (2 of 6 events) \$ 9.75

Space Center Houston adult \$10.25 child (4-11) \$ 7.00

(JSC civil service employees free.)

Metro Tokens and value cards available.

Renaissance Festival Tickets adult \$14.00 child \$6.00

All tickets are non-refundable.

Photo processing: 3-inch single prints, \$2.99; 3-inch double or 4-inch single prints, \$3.99; 4-inch double prints, \$5.99.

Coming soon:

Halloween Kids' Party at Space Center Houston

Halloween Dance at the Gilruth Center

Renaissance Festival Bus Tour

Anastasia on Ice