

A word from our editors.....



NASA JSC 2001e39632 Photo by Robert Markowitz

Over the past 15 years, the Roundup has been served by just three editors: Bill Jeffs, who served from August 1998 until March of this year; current editor Melissa Davis and Kelly Humphries, who produced half of all the total Roundups during his 12 years as editor. In this photo, the three hold issues that reflect their era.



NASA JSC 2001e39634 Photo by Robert Markowitz

By Melissa Davis

In honor of the *Roundup's* 40th anniversary issue, I wanted you to meet some of the people who have worked on the publication over the years.

On the previous page, Anne Bray's column provides insight into the early days of the *Roundup*. Her often-humorous words brought to life an era that is legendary in American history.

On the following page, both Kelly Humphries, who served as *Roundup* editor for 12 years, and my predecessor Bill Jeffs share their memories while recognizing those who have worked to help make the *Roundup* a success.

These three provide a snapshot of all the hard work, effort and time that has gone into keeping the *Roundup* a staple in the life of JSC.

I am proud to be the *Roundup's* current editor. Even more than being proud of my position, I am proud to be a part of the JSC family. In fact, it is the greatest honor I have ever known.

Even though I've been at JSC since March, it still doesn't seem real at times. As a lifelong resident of Indiana, I never dreamed this Hoosier would ever be among the incredibly talented people that make up the JSC team.

So many people who work at JSC tell me how they always wanted to work for NASA. For them, landing a position at

JSC was the fulfillment of a lifelong quest. For me, I never dreamed about working at JSC because I never imagined there would be a place here for a journalist.

Astronauts? Yes. Engineers? Yes. Journalists? Nope.

Lucky for me, there is.

Journalism is my passion. I've loved it since my first photojournalism class as a high school freshman. I enjoy how nothing is the same each day in this fast-paced, deadline-driven environment. While it is frequently stressful, it is also invigorating.

However, what I appreciate most about being a journalist is this fact: I can be whoever I want to be, depending on the story I am working on.

In my reporting career, I've gotten to be, sometimes on more than one occasion, a police officer, a firefighter, a 100-year-old man, a doctor, a company president, a teacher, an executive, a singer, a coroner, a pilot and a mayor.

I've experienced the good times in a person's life, and I've experienced the not-so-good times too. In 1999 I spent more than seven months writing a series of columns about a single mother of two dying of cancer. Angie's story alone had the greatest impact on my life than all of my other experiences combined.

Stepping into other people's shoes has allowed me to look at life from a much different perspective than most. Yet, telling someone's story in my own words is an awesome – and sometimes overwhelming – responsibility. In order for me to give each story its proper respect, I must become that person, if only for short time.

So imagine my sense of amazement and gratitude to have the position I have now. In my job I am given the great privilege to share with you one of the greatest unfolding stories ever known – the story of our country's human space flight program. I still get chills thinking about all the people I am allowed to become.

Since taking over the *Roundup* from Bill, I have learned an incredible amount about our space program in a short time. I have learned of our many successes but, more importantly, I have learned of our many struggles. Knowing how hard each

person here works through the difficulties makes our successes that much sweeter.

I firmly believe nobody knows struggles like those who have worked with the *Roundup*. I am so impressed by the work of my predecessors because I know intimately of the difficulties they've faced. Yet, I am confident those who have put their time in on the *Roundup* also have a great deal of satisfaction in their product. I know I do.

There is so much that goes on behind the scenes that readers have no idea about. My current assistant editor, Co-op Aaron Wyatt, and I spend our days balancing the many e-mails, phone calls and submissions we receive as we work to build each issue of the *Roundup*. I am so glad Aaron didn't pack up and head back home to Nebraska after his first month of *Roundup* chaos – it can be a bit overwhelming. This job is like boot camp. I know Aaron will be much stronger from his time spent on the *Roundup*.

While my name and Aaron's name are the two you see in the staff box, there are many people who make each issue happen that never get named. In this column, I wanted to recognize some of them because their work is just as valuable and important to the *Roundup* as mine.

I want to recognize:

- ❖ My supervisor B.J. Tomaro, who works her hardest to move mountains for me. Once they're removed, Beej stands back and let's me do my thing.
- ❖ PAO Director Dan Carpenter, who always challenges my thinking and yet trusts my judgment. That's a priceless combination in this line of work and I am grateful for his support.
- ❖ Mark Sowa and his excellent photography staff, who constantly work to give me the shots I need and want. They are an incredibly talented bunch.
- ❖ Maura White, Stephanie Tomek-Foster and the other friendly folks in digital imaging, who accommodate my whims and are always nice about it in the process.

- ❖ Cheerie Patneau, who is my friendly White Sands correspondent. Cheerie is always there to keep us informed about our friends in New Mexico.
- ❖ Ignacia Ramirez and the mailroom staff, who have the thankless job of maintaining the *Roundup's* distribution list. She is always friendly and ready to help.
- ❖ Beth Nischik, who is my faithful PAO liaison. Beth caught my vision for the *Roundup* in the beginning and has worked to help make my ideas a reality.
- ❖ Nicole Cloutier and Bill Jeffs, who helped make the transition from their leadership to mine.
- ❖ Julie Burt and Eric Raub, who were much more than college student helpers, but lifesavers in the beginning of the *Roundup's* "Melissa Davis era." Julie and Eric both are fine people who made this overwhelming job not just bearable but fun. I miss them greatly.
- ❖ Finally, Betty Conaway, who is the creativity behind the *Roundup's* design. She is often my sanity too. I have experience in graphic design, but it makes all the difference in the world when I have a talented person like Betty that can bring my ideas to life. Betty makes my many trips to Bldg. 227 fun – even as we work under pressure each and every time. While my Co-op staff changes, Betty is my one constant. For that I am grateful.

Believe it or not, there are many more people who play a part in the *Roundup's* creation. This truly is a center-wide effort, and I am honored to work with so many different people from so many directorates.

With such a high-caliber team in place, I am even more excited about the *Roundup's* future. Beginning next year, the next phase of the *Roundup's* long history will be launched. I will wait until that issue to introduce our new product.

Until then, I hope you enjoy this issue's trip back in time. Be proud of your contributions to JSC because I am proud to tell your story. ■