SIRTF launch approaching

The JPL-managed Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF) is undergoing final preparations for its launch later this month from Kennedy Space Center aboard a Boeing Delta II rocket.

The second stage of the SIRTF expendable launch vehicle has been hoisted and installed atop the Delta-II first stage on Launch Pad 17B at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. SIRTF is seen here connected to its payload attach fitting (the gray and white ring at the bottom of the picture that the observatory is sitting on). This fitting connects the satellite to the Delta-II rocket.

The launch will be webcast live at http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/webcast/sirtf. For mission information, visit http://sirtf.caltech.edu.

Galex continues countdown to launch

Workers make adjustments on the Galaxy Evolution Explorer while connecting the spacecraft with the Pegasus XL launch vehicle at Kennedy Space Center. The mission is scheduled for launch no earlier than April 26.

With no small amount of help from JPL staff, local students and their homemade robots battled it out April 3-5 in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Southern California Regional at the Los Angeles Sports Arena. The robotics competition aims to inspire students, provide hands-on activities and foster teamwork.

The program provides students with opportunities to work side-by-side with professional engineers to build a robot. Teams are assigned a complex task their robots must perform in competition. They receive a kit filled with motors, control computers, raw materials and many other parts they need to get started.

About 20 JPL engineers worked as student mentors. In addition, more than 50 JPL employees volunteered at the event as judges, scorekeepers and in other capacities.

This year’s game required robots to gather plastic storage containers from a central platform, return them to their side of the playing field and stack them. Teams received points based on the number of containers collected and stacked in the 2-minute match. Robots had 15 seconds to function autonomously, without driver control, to collect container stacks or knock down their opponent’s containers. Robots were under control from their drivers for the remainder of the match.

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Thousands of Mars Global Surveyor photos released

By Guy Webster

The winds of Mars leave their marks on many of the 11,664 new pictures posted on the Internet last week by the camera team for JPL’s Mars Global Surveyor mission.

In one image, the pattern of sand dunes on a patch of southern-hemisphere desert resembles scales on a fish. On a larger scale, full-globe Mars images show wispy water ice clouds shaped by winds as the seasons change. Other new images reveal details of features such as gullies, sand slides and seasonal frost.

The new batch, taken between February and July 2002, brings the total number of images in the online gallery to more than 123,800. The images are available online at http://www.msss.com/moc_gallery.

Mars Global Surveyor has been orbiting the Red Planet since Sept. 12, 1997. The mission has examined the entire Mars surface and provided a wealth of information about the planet’s atmosphere and interior. Evaluation of landing sites for two Mars Exploration Rover missions, due to launch in the next three months, has relied heavily on mineral mapping, detailed imagery and topographic measurements by Global Surveyor.

“The extraordinary wealth of information contained in this unprecedented release of new views of Mars attests to the ongoing scientific value of the reconnaissance of Mars that has been provided by Mars Global Surveyor for the past five years,” said Dr. James Garvin, NASA’s lead scientist for Mars exploration at NASA Headquarters.

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JPLers host engineering students

Nichols to manage Division 36

JPL engineer, manager named division chief

Dr. Eddie Tunstel, manager of the Environmental Systems Research Institute in Redlands and the Tektronix Corp. in Wilsonville, Ore., prior to coming to JPL in 1983, has been named chief of the Environmental Systems Research Institute Division at JPL to replace Paul Seaver, who retired from JPL in March.

Seaver directed the division for 13 years, overseeing a staff of approximately 300 and a budget of approximately $60 million. As chief, Seaver was responsible for the Environmentally Responsible Engineering Center, the Environmental Systems Research Institute, the Mars Exploration Program, the Mars Climate Dynamics Laboratory, the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emissions and Reflection Radiometer Laboratory, the Planetary and Atmospheric Atmospheric Emissions Element and several other laboratories.

Tunstel will manage the division, which employs approximately 300 engineers, scientists and technicians. He has managed projects for a number of federal and commercial customers, including NASA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Environmental Protection Agency.

A number of JPL "rocket scientists" have done their part to inspire the next generation of engineers. For example, at the California Institute of Technology, Dr. James Breckinridge, Origins Program landing site scientist, admitted with 60 other cities around the world to the annual training in person, register for the online course at the Education & Training section of the NASA-JPL team.

"I am particularly proud of the excellent team spirit between HQ and JPL in both long-term and day-to-day issues," said Dr. Segal. "This illustrates how we can excel at achieving our goals when we work as One NASA. I take this opportunity to congratulate JPL, which is the management center for this program within our NASA family."

Export training available on Web

The Office of International Affairs is now offering Export Regulations Web training in response to the Export Regulations education mandate, required annually for all JPL employees. The training module, available online at http://eitc-web-training, includes fundamental concepts related to export regulations, and is followed by a 20-question, interactive test.

For those who prefer to complete the annual training in person, register for the on-site "Export Regulations" course at the Education & Training website at http://eitc. JPL must be received in writing within a week of the due date.

In addition to general guidelines, the International Affairs Office also offers in-depth, project-specific training on export regulations and restrictions. For additional information, visit the International Affairs site at http://eitc.jpl.nasa.gov/international.htm or contact one of the following export coordinators: BRENLA BALCOM (ext. 40434), CARMEN LAM (ext. 42120), STEPHANE LEAR (ext. 4036), ED MOHRJAN (ext. 44487) or RACHEL SKINNER (ext. 45658).

Ongoing Support Groups

A number of groups are available.

1. Caregivers Support Group—Meets the first Thursday of the month at noon in Building 167-117. For more information, call the Employee Assistance Program. Weekly.

2. Independent Contractors—Meets the second Thursday of the month at noon in Building 167-111. For more information, call the Employee Assistance Program. Weekly.

3. One NASA—One NASA is being recognized for its cumulative contributions to the excellence of the National Society of Black Engineers, which hosted more than 10,000 pre-college and college engineering students and technical professionals. A committee comprising of a diverse group from throughout the Lab and beyond was formed to develop the program. For more information, visit www.1on1night.net.

4. Vincar Farms—Vincar Farms is offering MacHomer, "The Simpsons" poetry review, with special emphasis on Homer Simpson's poetry-related work in the "Simpsons." To be held at 8 p.m. at the California Lutheran University's Rathskeller.

5. Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group—Meet during the last half of the month at noon in Building 205-217. For more information, call (626) 395-4652.


7. Multicultural Ambassadors—Meeting at one of the multicultural ambassadors who represents the diverse range of cultures found at JPL. The Multicultural Ambassadors provide outreach and educational opportunities to principal investigators and other members of the scientific community. For more information, call Dr. Theresa Bailey at ext. 4-4922.

8. Women's Club—The Women's Club presents this free service, open to the public. The women's club meets the first Saturday of the month at noon in Building 205-217. For more information, call (626) 395-6273.

9. TIAA/CREF Enrollment—This workshop will be offered from 3 to 6 p.m. in Dabney Gar- 

10. Foster Parent Support Group—This workshop will be offered from 4 to 7 p.m. in Dabney Gar- 

11. Workforce Development—This workshop will be offered from 3 to 6 p.m. in Dabney Gar-

12. Caltech Jazz Bands—An afternoon of classic jazz music will be offered from 3 to 5 p.m. in Dabney Gar- 

13. Folk Music—

14. Archaeology Night—The Social Security representative will be available to help employees with any questions about the Social Security retirement program. For more information, call (626) 395-7768.

15. JPL Trademakers Club—Meeting at noon in the 167 conference room. For more information, call (626) 395-2395.

16. Myths vs. Realities—This one-man show will present “Mars Global Surveyor: Misconceptions vs. Realities” at 8 p.m. in the Spacey Hall. Free admission. For more infor-

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Jennifer Cummings-Martin is the manager of JPL’s Diversity Programs Office. On the job since December, she leads a team responsible for administering JPL’s affirmative action plan, and provides consulting and guidance on equal opportunity and diversity issues. University spoke to her about how the office operates.

What is your experience in the diversity field prior to coming here?

I am glad you asked the question the way you did. It provides the opportunity to distinguish the difference between affirmative action, equal employment opportunity and diversity, as well as the relatedness.

What are the distinctions?

Affirmative action is legislated. It is a mandated program designed to facilitate and ensure hiring of underutilized groups of the workforce population, ultimately ensuring that numerical representation is achieved. Affirmative action is about counting heads.

Equal Employment Opportunity is the law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, status as a disabled veteran, or veteran of the Vietnam era, or other eligible veterans, and for otherwise qualified individuals with a disability. Equal employment is about enabling access to all opportunities.

As a government contractor, we are compelled to uphold the law.

Diversity is proactive and is derived from the assumption that high-performing, effective organizations are not possible without modeling, integrating and leveraging multi-ethnic/multicultural human capital. It is focused on the realization that equity of opportunity is good for business, and achieves broad-based representation of cultural and human diversity.

Workforce diversity includes everyone. It’s about acknowledging our differences and supporting ways to utilize everyone’s unique perspectives and talents to accomplish business objectives and create competitive advantages.

Diversity is about making heads count. Now that you have all of these different people in your organization, how do you make them more effective while achieving your business goals?

For example, in terms of the implementation of the NASA strategy, we need to understand our workforce, their skills and abilities, the type of things that they do and how they can get in the way, and minimize/eliminate the obstacles so that we deliver on time and on budget.

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By the way, diversity is a business practice. It is not a program. It is the way you do business: set objectives, measure, educate, recognize and reward.

Why does JPL need a diversity manager?

Diversity is an organizational issue, not simply a matter of staff development. As JPL continues the transition from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous workforce it is essential to have this role—someone focused on initiating the systemic changes necessary to enable an environment in which differences are valued and accessed.

My job is to help the organization understand that we’ve done great work over the years; however, we have a tremendous opportunity to do even greater work as we focus more on business objectives and less on personality or uniqueness.

As an objective manager should measure based on results, not on whether you went to the right school, you live in the right neighborhood, drive the right car, or that you look like me.

Until we get to that place where we are primarily focused on measuring objectively, then there is a need for my job. That is my personal opinion.

Do you work with Human Resources on recruitment?

Absolutely. The affirmative action plan drives head count in terms of who we enroll in the organization. And NASA measures us based on the achievement of our affirmative action placement goals, as does the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. It is a partnership and collaboration with Staffing and those who do the hiring.

We share the hiring constituents when there are job opportunities in areas of underutilization, the need to access a broad candidate pool and the application of objectivity relative to the essential functions of the job.

We should measure people by the work objectives and by their accomplishments. Are you achieving the results? If not, why not? Is it a skills challenge? Is it a lack of communication?

It’s an education process—a partnership and collaboration that occurs at all levels of the organization.

We also partner and collaborate with other business functions in outreach to underutilized groups.

Besides working with the Staffing group, how are you working with supervisors in general on Lab?

Since I am new to the position, I am engaging in discovery conversations, delivering general education, and building relationships. In the months ahead I want to focus on understanding the environment, what might be absent, what is needed and how we communicate the message and actions to the workforce. I need to understand the levels of awareness, commitment and execution, and deliver the education to address those gaps.

Diversity is an institutional business practice. Therefore, it’s not just supervisors and managers, all employees are accountable. It’s a top-down, bottom-up approach that gets us to systemic accomplishment of continuous transformation.

Ultimately, when this work is done and executed by everyone, we get to a place where we can address tough issues in a very candid and respectful manner.

We want to make sure we get to a place where we are rewarding the appropriate behaviors.

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We want to make sure we get to a place where we are rewarding the appropriate behavior and correcting the gaps.

Do you keep track of things like women and/or minorities taking new management positions?

We measure all aspects of the employment function to ensure achievement of business objectives, identify and correct gaps, and manage inconsistencies. This enables us to evaluate, promote, reward, recognize and terminate.

How would you enroll employees in JPL’s diversity business strategies?

Understanding that, in general, people are hungry for knowledge and once that knowledge is transferred, they are more likely to self enroll so it becomes a pull rather than a push.

To that end, we will take the time to continuously communicate the vision, mission and strategic initiatives around this business objective.

by Mark Whalen
P. GARY PARKER, 64, former integration
Universe
Classified ads will be available the
be submitted via e-mail to
Items may be combined within
and Caltech employees, con-

I would like to thank my friends and

191 springs, 550-white, sold.

COFFEE MAKER, Braun, 10-cups, white/black,

3-5 years old, prices

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AUTO RACE TICKET, with parking, 3 days, April

PARKER worked for JPL for 39 years

PARKER was survived by his wife, Cyn-

DRESSER refinished, multiple, 1675, (2)

626/850-4378.

Boots, men’s, used one time, size 11 1/2, orig.

$170, sell $100. 626/798-6248.

BOOTS, men’s, used one time, size 11 1/2, orig.

626/379-3503.

CHRYSLER Gem, electric car, brand new,

$10,500/obo. 626/296-9073.

'91 TOYOTA Tercel LE, 4 cyl., white, 4 dr., 5 spd.

626/335-7345.

'91 HONDA Accord LX, 139,000 mi., a/c, 4 dr.,

$2,600/obo. 562/926-7949.

'89 ITASCA Windcruiser, 32’ class A motorhome,

2 cafe-style, black metal w/off-white cushions,

MAMMOTH, Snowcreek, 2 bd., 2 ba., +loft, slps

$15/nite/add’l person. 949/348-8047, or

MAMMOTH Creek, JPL discount. 626/798-9222,

GARAGE DOOR OPENER, Stanley, new replace-

DOG KENNEL, large, 24” W x 36” D x 26” H,

as little or as much as you like, near Los

Free