

A Message from the Associate Director / Program Manager for Space Communications

"The only thing that's constant is change" a very wise but anonymous man once noted. This rings especially true in the Space Communications Program. Exciting things are happening and future opportunity beckons. Let me begin with our name change from Mission Services Program to Space Communications Program. This title was chosen to better reflect our current core focus on space communications and tracking in the post CSOC era. Besides the name change we have also established the MARS Laser Communication Demonstration (MLCD) as an official project in Formulation and added the Satellite Laser Ranging systems as an element of the Ground Network Project. I welcome these new activities and the people who make them happen to our team and ask for your support to make them successful. Also changed is the title of this newsletter from "The Integrator" to "The Space Communicator". Again, this is reflective not only of our new focus, but also of recent staff changes. After twelve outstanding years leading the Integrator team, Lynn Meyers has decided to pass the baton to Rosemary Bruner. Lynn and her outstanding team of Lena Braatz and Sherri Tearman have certainly set a challenging standard for the future by consistently producing a highly informative and professional publication. Please see the article, "Thanks to the Integrator Team" for a more complete summary of their history and accomplishments. I feel compelled, however, to add my personal acknowledgement for their great work. Thank you for a job well done!

By now we've all heard of the new Space Exploration initiatives. With our current and planned capabilities, the Space Communications Program is well positioned to play a significant role enabling these missions. The future is exciting and certain to challenge our professional skills, creativity and imagination. I continue to ask you for your best efforts to make these dreams a reality while continuing to make today's missions successful. This year will continue to be busy with AURA, SWIFT, Shuttle (return to flight), and many other missions preparing for launch, continued increasing workloads on our networks, and many new opportunities there for us to pursue.

In this, the first edition published by Rosemary and her new team, we have many exciting events and numerous accomplishments to report. In March Goddard Space Flight Center and Northrup Grumman Corporation received jointly

the National Space Clubs Nelson P. Jackson Award, which is given in recognition of exceptional teamwork between government and industry in the missile, aircraft and space fields. The award recognizes the challenges and accomplishments associated with establishing and operating the TDRSS. This is a tremendous honor for the hundreds of men and women who have worked on this program over the past 25 years. Congratulations to all of our team members who made it happen! The newsletter also welcomes several new staff members to our program team. I encourage you to take an opportunity to get to know these very talented people and personally welcome them to our team.

As I write this article we continue to be challenged with the transition to full cost accounting and a new suite of rules and tools to help with the transition. I ask for your continued perseverance to make this transition successful. Such a fundamental change is difficult and cannot be expected to be accomplished without some pain. Talking about new tools, NGIN Is Coming! The Next Generation Integrated Network is about to be implemented within the Space Communications Program after excellent experience in other Code 400 projects. This is a Data Management system that was originally developed for use on James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), and has been modified to meet the specific needs of the Space Communications Program. The system will provide significantly enhanced connectivity and information management for both NASA and its contractors in the area of program analysis and control. The system has started initial use in the MLCD project, and orientation training will be provided in the near future.

In closing, I would like to continue to emphasize the critical importance of maintaining and improving our highly skilled workforce. There are numerous technical and management classes available through GSFC and our contractor teams. Take the initiative and develop yourself. Let us arm ourselves with knowledge as we strive to reach our full potential and turn to the challenges of the future.

Phil Liebrecht

Phone: (301) 286-5220

Fax: (301) 286-1724

Email: Philip E. Liebrecht@nasa.gov