

Featured Stories



A tiny piece of JPL is set to bloom

By: Celeste Hoang

It all started with a homeless plant.

In November of last year, a resource analyst at JPL found herself with one too many fruit trees at home, so she asked JPL Facilities if they would consider planting one on-Lab for employees to enjoy. They pointed her to JPL's Green Club—a group that helps JPL become more environmentally conscious—to brainstorm possibilities. While a fruit tree was ultimately not allowed for a variety of reasons, the conversation sparked a different idea: a wellness garden where employees could take a calming, restorative break in nature.

Fast forward six months. The Green Club and JPL Sustainability are planning to break ground on the Wellness Garden on Earth Day, April 22. The space—located on Mariner Road and nestled between T1720 and building 129—will feature a host of native and non-native plants to attract pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hummingbirds; two benches; a small walking path; and a six-foot coyote bush hedge that will provide a border on the east end. The garden's purpose is to be visually attractive and support the health and well-being of employees.

“The point is to get out and be in nature because it can be therapeutic,” said Roger Klemm, who can claim three titles to his name: avionics test engineer for Psyche, native plant enthusiast, and head of JPL’s Green Club for eight years. “I’m of the belief that part of our multitude of problems in society is because of our disconnect to nature. If we can connect people on-Lab to nature, and if we do it the right way, we’ve forged connections among ourselves as well.”

To that end, community is a key component for the garden’s success. Because the club is responsible for the garden, not Facilities, volunteers—even those without a green thumb—will help tend the garden through Wellness Garden classes. The courses will be modeled after HR Wellness programs, with about five to 10 students attending instructor-led, hour-long classes for six weeks.

While the garden will take a few years to fully flourish, JPLers can expect to see about 20 plants in the future, including native species with such colorful names as showy milkweed, scarlet bugler, bladderpod, purple sage and woolly blue curls; a few more familiar plants, such as lavender, rosemary and scented geraniums, will also be in the mix.

The club sought out native plants in particular because they better integrate with the ecosystem, explained Klemm, since they support native insects, which in turn support birds and other creatures.

“When you garden with native plants, you support the rest of the biodiversity that comes with them,” he said. “When you have a space with butterflies and hummingbirds and lizards, it becomes an animated place that’s alive.”

The club designed the garden layout, which measures approximately 30 feet by 50 feet.

For JPL Sustainability, working with the Green Club to create an outdoor space for employee engagement and stress relief is a win for the Lab as a whole.

“Facilities is committed to helping JPL’s workspace transition into a workplace of the future, where employees’ visions are materialized and their voices are heard,” said Kim Luu, JPL’s environmental sustainability administrator. “The Wellness Garden is an environmentally sustainable space that enables collaboration and innovation, and general employee wellness.”

As Klemm oversees the inauguration of the garden in the next few weeks, his ultimate vision is for JPLers to enjoy it as a community for years to come.

“I hope this garden is inspirational and sustainable in the long run,” he said. “Friendships develop when we do things together, and I think only good can come of that.”

For more information, or if you'd like to volunteer, please email Roger Klemm at roger.w.klemm@jpl.nasa.gov. You can also join the #gardening channel on Slack.



Artist's skill puts us in orbit

Image-processing enthusiast Sean Doran stitches together data from Juno, Mars Curiosity, and the International Space Station to create stunning videos and images.

Doran visited JPL on March 25 and met with Juno and Curiosity mission team members, as well as members of the Lab's Communications and Education Directorate. Doran, who lives in London, is one of a handful of "citizen scientist" image processors whose work is shared for public enjoyment.

Some of his Juno images, officially released by NASA, can be found at <https://photojournal.jpl.nasa.gov/feature/doran>.

Watch one of his videos at: <https://vimeo.com/301828475>



Phyllis Morton looks at a moon rock on display in von Karman.

From Apollo to JPL: a pioneering visitor

By: Jane Platt

Ya' never know who you'll see in the hallowed halls of JPL. On a recent Friday, one of the first female technicians on the Apollo program was on-Lab for a tour with her family.

At 84 years old, Phyllis Morton has very fond memories of her years at Johnson Space Center, where she began as a secretary before being trained as a technician on special projects.



Phyllis Morton and family members toured JPL. l-r, granddaughter Kasey Lansdale, Morton, daughter Karen Lansdale, son-in-law Joe Lansdale.

As a secretary, Morton typed up a report after the tragic Apollo 1 launch pad fire in 1967. Years later, when NASA began training female astronauts, she was hired as a technician doing research and development on special projects using fabrics.

The memories Morton carries with her include working on a team that installed troughs of water around the launch pad, and receiving an award for a medical kit she put together. She described how a special plane flew down to pick up high-tech blankets she and others made for the chilly January inauguration day in Washington when Ronald Reagan was sworn in as president.



Jordan Evans shows Phyllis Morton some Apollo history at the Moon display in von Karman.

During the tour, hosted by Engineering and Science Deputy Director Jordan Evans, Morton met up with a bit of Apollo history in the von Karman museum when she saw the moon rock on display.

Events



Third Coast Percussion performance at Caltech

Third Coast Percussion will perform "Lyrical Geometry" on Saturday, April 13 at 8 p.m. in Caltech's Beckman Auditorium.

Third Coast Percussion is a Grammy Award-winning, artist-run quartet of classically-trained percussionists. They have forged a unique path in the musical landscape with virtuosic, energetic performances that celebrate the extraordinary depth and breadth of music possibilities in the world of percussion. Included on the program is Philip Glass' "Amazon River" from *Aguas da Amazonia*.

Tickets to this performance are priced at \$43.00, \$38.00, and \$33.00; youth (high school age and younger): \$10.00. Senior rush tickets will go on sale for \$25.00, beginning 30 minutes before the performance (subject to availability). Tickets can be purchased at the Caltech Ticket Office: 1200 E. California Blvd., Pasadena.

Beckman Auditorium is located at 332 South Michigan Avenue, Pasadena (south of Del Mar Boulevard). For information, call (626) 395-4652 or visit www.events.caltech.edu.



What's ahead for the budget in Congress?

Patty Rhee, manager of JPL's Office of Legislative and Governmental Affairs, will talk about the federal budget at two sessions on Wednesday, April 17.

Talk 1, from noon to 1 p.m., is at the Beckman Institute Auditorium at Caltech. You must R.S.V.P. by April 15 to receive lunch at this event. To R.S.V.P, click on <https://goo.gl/forms/7OVllyvLq8SkHKu2>.

Talk 2, from 4:45 to 6 p.m., is in JPL's von Kármán Auditorium.

A storm of issues and challenges lies ahead for a divided Congress. Can they pass a budget amid the challenges? What are the prospects for NASA's funding? Rhee will discuss the federal legislative process and provide insights about what priorities are driving and dividing the 116th Congress.

As the manager of the JPL Office of Legislative and Governmental Affairs, Rhee informs all levels of government about JPL's mission, serving as the point of contact for federal, state and local elected officials, their staff, and other government agencies.

A JPL employee since 2000, Rhee began her career as a State of California Jesse Unruh Fellow, then worked for the California Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials committee. In addition, she has worked on oversight of the California prison system, focusing on juvenile justice.

These events are free. All members of the campus and JPL communities and retirees are welcome. For the JPL event, Caltech personnel and guests can access von Kármán Auditorium via the external gate; no visitor badging or escort is needed.

For Caltech event information, Athena Castro at athena@caltech.edu.

For JPL event information, Randii Wessen at Randii.R.Wessen@jpl.nasa.gov.

These events are presented by the Caltech Management Association (CMA). Membership in CMA helps bring speakers and events to Caltech campus and JPL and is open to all active and retired employees of Caltech, and to contract employees as affiliate members. See <https://cma.caltech.edu> for more information about the organization.



The Future is Cloudy: NASA's look at clouds and climate

Thursday, April 18

7 p.m.: von Kármán Auditorium

Friday, April 19

7 p.m.: Caltech's Ramo Auditorium

About the lecture:

Earth is the most-observed planet in our system. Learn more about the fleet of satellites looking down at our skies, giving scientists a deeper understanding of our ever-changing clouds and their relationship to our climate.

Host: Brian White

Speakers:

Kate Marvel – scientist, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Columbia University

Graeme Stephens – co-director of Center for Climate Sciences, PI for Cloudsat Mission

Brian Kahn – Atmospheric Infrared Sounder Cloud algorithm lead, JPL

JPL Classifieds

Ads submitted Month #-#

Submit an ad to: universe@jpl.nasa.gov

For Sale

1996 Toyota Camry Sedan 4DR, great conditions, kept up with the car maintenance and it runs great, and it only have 120,000 miles. \$3,500 obo. Contact Sirena at 818-359-5679.

2014 Yamaha Zuma 50. 221 original miles. Perfect condition and usually on lab. \$1500 markk60@ca.rr.com 818-653-6702

Wedding Dress For Sale - Satin winter white dress with clean silhouette. Sweet heart neck line. Natural waist with attached jeweled belt. Outstanding quality. Brand new, never worn. Wife decided she wanted to wear a different dress. Size 12. Asking \$550. Please call or text 315-420-9620 if interested.

2016 Toyota Prius – 3 Touring. Gray. 25,500 miles. Great condition. Maintenance plan until 75,000 miles included. \$19,500. 914-610-0579

Wanted

Commuter Room for Tuesday Nights. JPL Affiliate (Bastion) looking for a commuter room once a week. I live in Oxnard and come to Pasadena once a week and stay overnight. My regularly scheduled night is Tuesday, though that could occasionally vary. Just need a place to sleep and maybe eat dinner (but no kitchen needed) and shower the next morning. Looking for something around \$50 a week for one night. Please email Mike Beda at michael.g.beda@jpl.nasa.gov.

SPACE INFORMATION/memorabilia from U.S. & other countries, past & present, for personal use

(see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7PvjGp7mCU>). mrayman@alumni.princeton.edu, 818-790-8523, Marc Rayman

Vacation Rentals

MAMMOTH, Snowcreek, 2 bd., 2 ba. + loft, sleeps 6-8, fully equip'd kitchen incl. microwave, D/W, cable TV, VCR, phone, balcony w/mtn. vw., Jacz., sauna, streams, fishponds, close to Mammoth Creek, JPL discount, no pets. 626-798-9222, 626-840-3749 or valeriee@caltech.edu.

MAMMOTH, Snowcreek, beautiful updated condo, 2 bd., 2 ba. + loft (sleeps 6-8), great location by pond/meadow, new appliances, TVs, DVD players, free wireless Internet and washer/dryer, no pets. 818-952-2696 or BigMtnPrettySky@gmail.com.

MAMMOTH, remodeled 2 bed/2 bath + loft, short walk to Canyon Lodge; Courchevel 6 features full kitchen, cable/Internet TV, DVD, Blu-Ray, wireless hi-speed Internet, 2-car garage, Jacuzzis, grill, pool; no pets. <http://Courchevel6.com>.

JPL Family News

Awards



Small Business Programs Office team members (l to r): Matthew Christian, Felicia Bell, Mary Helen Ruiz, Tara Every

Big award for JPL's Small Business Programs Office

JPL's Small Business Programs Office team is the proud recipient of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence in the R&D category. The United States Small Business Administration presents the award to large businesses for excellence in the implementation of small business programs.

The letter informing the office of the award noted that their "hard work, innovative ideas, and dedication to your employees and community have helped you build an outstanding business that has strengthened your state's economy."

JPL team representatives will pick up the award at a ceremony in Washington during National Small Business Week, May 5-6.

Felicia Bell, who heads the JPL office, said whether the organization is small, veteran-owned, women-owned, HUBZone, or a Historically Black College or University/Minority Institution, "We want to support small business growth and build lasting relationships here at JPL. This award is a validation of our continued commitment to small businesses and their importance in helping deliver value to our projects and missions."

This is the fourth time JPL has won this award. Previous dates were 1996, 2003, and 2008.



Sarath Gunapala accepts military sensing award

JPL Engineering Fellow Sarath Gunapala has accepted the Levinstein Award from the Military Sensing Symposia for "outstanding technical and management contributions in the development of infrared focal plane arrays for the military sensing community and national defense under the Vital Infrared Sensor Technology Acceleration (VISTA) program."

Gunapala has also been a senior research scientist since 1999, and he leads the infrared detector and focal plane array development effort at JPL. He has authored over 300 publications, including 13 book chapters on III-V quantum structure based infrared detectors and imaging arrays, and he holds 26 patents.

The Military Sensing Symposia presents the Leinstein Award every year to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding management of infrared device technology.

Gunapala accepted the award at a recent presentation held at the MSS Detector Conference in Orlando, Florida.



Chattopadhyay receiving the award from IEEE R6 Director Keith Moore.

JPLer earns IEEE Outstanding Engineer of the Year award

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Region 6 has awarded Goutam Chattopadhyay—a senior research scientist at JPL—with its Outstanding Engineer of the Year (2018) award for his contributions to advanced instruments at terahertz frequencies for space applications.

IEEE is the world's largest technical and professional organization for the advancement of technology. IEEE R6 Director Keith Moore presented the award to Chattopadhyay on Saturday, March 23 at the R6 Southern Area Meeting in Long Beach.

Chattopadhyay received his PhD in electrical engineering from Caltech in 1999. He is also a visiting associate at the division of Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy at Caltech. Chattopadhyay is a fellow of IEEE and the Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers.

Retirees

The following JPL employees recently announced their retirements:

Julian C Breidenthal, 40 years, Section 332H; Sheila B Chatterjee, 33 years, Section 319B; John T Davis, 40 years, Section 2671; Randall C Hein, 27 years, Section 383G; Jeffrey E Hilland, 38 years, Section 3300; Jakob J Van Zyl, 36 years, Section 4000