

CHAPTER 6 - GETTING AROUND OTHER NASA CENTERS

Your Host Center is a Field Center, rather than NASA Headquarters. It is also likely that during your program year you will have the opportunity to visit one or more of NASA's Field Centers other than either your Host or Home Centers. The information is geared towards people temporarily relocating to or visiting the center. For each center you will find: a brief description of the center, a description of the area, information on temporary housing, popular restaurants, and things to do. When available, input from this year's class has been included to give you a more personal feel.

The NASA Centers covered in this Chapter are listed below. Use this information to help you get more out of your visits around NASA. Over the years, many LDPers have updated these sections and we appreciate their past additions. Previous contributors have been listed at the end of this Chapter.

NASA CENTERS

[Ames Research Center](#)
[Dryden Flight Research Center](#)
[Glenn Research Center](#)
[Goddard Space Flight Center](#)
[Jet Propulsion Laboratory](#)
[Johnson Space Center](#)
[Kennedy Space Center](#)
[Langley Research Center](#)
[Marshall Space Flight Center](#)

AMES RESEARCH CENTER (ARC)

Updated by David Kao and Surendra Sharma

Ames Research Center (www.arc.nasa.gov) is one of NASA's Science Research Centers, and the Agency's Center of Excellence for Information Technology. Ames has a wide variety of experimental, computational, and theoretical capabilities, which are dedicated to the advancement of aeronautical and space sciences. These include a large collection of wind tunnels, shock tunnels, arc jets and ballistic ranges for experimental studies; and the Agency's most advanced supercomputing capability. The aeronautics capabilities at Ames range from Air Traffic Control to miscellaneous other flight related programs.

In addition to aeronautical research, Ames is managing the NASA Astrobiology Institute, which is a national consortium of scientists focused on interdisciplinary research in astrobiology. Ames researchers also work on Space, Earth, and Life Sciences programs. This includes work projects such as high performance computing and communications and the study of various species' adaptation to the zero-G

environment. Also, Ames researchers have developed excellence in fields that are complementary to the aeronautical sciences such as computational chemistry and thermal protection materials design. Space sciences, solar system exploration, and infrared astronomy are also included in the Center's major program responsibilities. Ames is also managing the Robotic Lunar Exploration Program.

Ames Research Center is located in the Santa Clara Valley (also known as Silicon Valley) at the base of the San Francisco Peninsula. Its close proximity to Stanford University, UC Berkeley, and the multitude of local high technology companies allows for many unique opportunities for collaborative research. In the heart of Silicon Valley, NASA is developing a world-class Research and Development campus: the NASA Research Park. This 500-acre area will be located at Moffett Field, but open to the public, as a research and development campus for partners from academia, industry and non-profit corporations with shared goals in support of NASA's mission. Here the space agency and its new partners will pursue research leadership for the next century. For more information visit <http://www.researchpark.arc.nasa.gov/>

About The Area

Santa Clara Valley is known for its moderate climate and ample opportunities for recreation. Cold winter freezes occur very rarely, and low humidity makes the hottest days of summer bearable. The San Francisco Bay is nearby allowing for sailing and wind surfing. The nearby Santa Cruz Mountains are good for mountain biking and hiking. On the other side of the mountains is the Pacific Ocean for beach lovers. The nearby towns of Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale have many good restaurants as well as lively night spots. If the local towns are too tame, one can always spend the evening in San Francisco or San Jose, which are both within an hour's driving time. Weekend vacation spots include Monterey/Carmel, Napa Valley, and Lake Tahoe.

Web Sites:

- Area Info Sites: <http://www.sf-area.com/>
- San Jose Mercury News: <http://www.bayarea.com/>
- Bay Insider: <http://www.bayinsider.com>
- Silicon Valley Gateway: <http://www.siliconvalley-usa.com/>
- Bay Area Back Roads: <http://www.bayareabackroads.com>
- Outdoor Adventure Club: <http://www.sfoac.com/>

Places To Live

General info: Be prepared for sticker shock, but that's what the per diem is for! Check the San Jose Mercury News, for news and classifieds. Also, the San Francisco Chronicle for Northern peninsula information. In addition, the Ames biweekly "Astrogram" will list homes and apartments for rent, and you can submit a rental request as well. (e-mail astrogram@mail.arc.nasa.gov). Suggestion : before you decide, take a drive through the downtown areas of Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Los Altos, and Palo Alto. Sunnyvale and Mountain View, closest to Ames, have restored downtown areas with restaurants, etc. and lots of apartment complexes. Palo Alto and Los Altos: Very nice, but somewhat pricey. Many Ames folks live in San Jose -- 20-miles south of Ames and less costly. Still many others live north in San Mateo County as well as in the City of SF itself. The "CalTrain" is a very convenient (and cheap) rail system, and NASA Ames has a shuttle bus that picks up commuters several times daily during rush hours. There is also an onsite NASA Ames Exchange Lodge, which offers affordable stay for TDY visitors and other Ames visitors. See

<http://exchange.arc.nasa.gov/NOTF/lodge.html>

Restaurants

California, and the Bay Area, are famous for the variety of ethnic restaurants, and the high quality of foods available everywhere around town. Here is just a small sample:

- La Fiesta: Villa St., Mtn.View. GREAT Mexican food. Try Mole, enchiladas verdes.
- Black Forest Inn: downtown Los Altos. Excellent German, restaurant 40 yrs. old.
- Fish Market: Palo Alto or Santa Clara, El Camino Real: Great seafood, reasonable prices. Best New England chowder this side of Boston.
- Flea Street Cafe, Menlo Park, country French, great atmosphere
- Kirin: Castro St., Mtn.View. Excellent Chinese lunches.
- Tony & Alba's: Escuela Dr., M.V. Best pizza in the area, good evening hangout.
- Tied House: Villa St., M.V. Local microbrewery, great Amber beer. Excellent onion rings.
- Stoddard's: Murphy St., Sunnyvale. MircoBrew. A lot like Tied House.
- Printer's Inc. Castro St., M.V. Books, coffee & pastries upstairs
- University Avenue, Palo Alto: Excellent restaurants all along the street.
- Hang Ah Tea Room: Sacramento St., San Francisco. Best dim sum around!
- Burrito place at corner of 17th St.. & Mission, S.F.: Best burritos north of the border. You'll think you're in Mexico.
- Chart House, Hwy. 1 north of Half Moon Bay. Great seafood, even better sunsets.
- The Rice Table, 4th St., San Rafael. If you're in Marin County, well worth a stop for some excellent Indonesian food.
- Frankie, Johnny, and Luigi's: El Camino Real, Mtn. View. Great Italian Food and Pizzas.
- Sweet Tomatoes: Lawrence Expressway, Sunnyvale. Huge salad bar, fresh pasta, soups, and breads; get there early for a great lunch.

- Togo's: Located all over the place; closest one to Ames is on El Camino just east of Highway 85. Good subs.
- Chef Wang's - best Chinese in Mt. View. Down Castro Street from the Center on the right. Everything is excellent.
- Spaghetti Factory - a very fun place to eat in Downtown San Jose that I used to go to before an event at the Center for the Performing Arts. Leave a LOT of time to eat, as there's usually a huge crowd.
- China Station - the best Chinese south of San Francisco. It's a drive in South San Jose; turn onto Senter (only one way to turn) from Monterey Highway and it's just down on the right. Absolutely spectacular food.
- Stuff Pizza on Castro Street in Mountain View. Very good pizza, and quick lunch time service.
- Fresh Choice, in several locations. All the salad, muffins, pasta, soups, desserts, etc., you can eat for one price.
- For those who have a taste for Indian food, Sunnyvale has a collection of very moderately priced (~ \$ 7.00 - \$ 9 all-you-can-eat lunch and slightly higher for dinner) and lightly spiced (and low on cream etc.). The following web_page may help you locate them. <http://www.thingsindian.com/rest.htm>

Things To Do/Visit

There are TONS of things to do in Silicon Valley all year round. Use the Web sites listed above to find current events. Here are a few samples of general activities:

- Exploration Center: Adjacent to the main gate, resident programs for children, gift shop.
- Wine Country: Drive up and down Napa Valley - stop at the smaller wineries too. Sonoma valley is also well worth the look. Calistoga has famous mud baths, glider rides.
- Mt. Tamalpais (Marin Co.): Lots of great hiking trails. Start from Muir Woods and hike all the way up (for the energetic only!)
- Lick Observatory: Mount Hamilton (south of San Jose). Drive up to see observatory. Summer visitor's program (call first) has observing on Friday nights. Visit the Ames planet search telescope, as used by a previous PDP participant.
- Monterey: Aquarium, Cannery Row, 17-mile drive.
- Pt. Reyes: Beautiful scenery, whale watching Jan.-March
- Sausalito: shopping, sailboat watching.
- Stanford University: beautiful campus, nice bicycling
- Bicycling: Los Altos hills, Palo Alto hills are great! Stop at the Bicycle Outfitter or Palo Alto Bicycles for route suggestions. Also Walt's Schwinn in Sunnyvale.
- San Francisco Symphony, Ballet, Opera. Legendary. Check for Beethoven, Mozart series.
- San Juan Bautista Mission: A little CA history. Mission founded by father Junipero Serra.
- Lake Tahoe: Skiing in winter, water sports/ hiking in summer. Gambling.

- San Simeon: Hearst Castle, 4-hour drive from Ames.
- Sacramento: visit State Capitol, Old Town (check out the train museum).
- Bay Area: All summer long, there is an Arts and Wine Festival somewhere every weekend.
- Beaches: On the Peninsula -- Ft. Funston (near Daly City) to go with your dog or with your hang glider -- spectacular sand dunes and cliffs overlooking the beach; Half Moon Bay, secluded; Santa Cruz /Capitola has great beaches, and go south or north of there for more.
- Running: NASA Ames hosts 5K runs every month. Get a copy of "The Schedule," free at any running store (and sometimes available at the Ames fitness center). Has all the 5K, 10K, marathon runs etc. in the area. Best runs: Bay to Breakers (May, SF), "Run to The Far Side" (November, SF), "Zoo Run" (January, SF), Valentine's Day Run (Feb., Oakland), San Jose Mercury 10K (March, SJ), Wharf to Wharf (July, Santa Cruz - register EARLY for this one, they limit the runners), Houlihan's to Houlihan's (March, SF, run across the Golden Gate Bridge!).
- Sailing: Check with Spinnaker Sailing in Redwood City. They offer lessons, and their SF branch offers rides on a square-rigger brigantine!
- Shoreline Park: Next to Ames (take Shoreline Dr. all the way down to the Bay). At the lake you can take windsurfing lessons, and there's great paths for rollerblading, running, and biking.
- Shoreline Amphitheater has outdoor concerts all summer from big name acts.
- San Jose: Great local symphony (excellent 'Nutcracker' production at Christmas time). Lots of good nightclubs in downtown area (San Jose Live).
- Big Basin: Nice hiking, lots of enormous redwood trees.
- Ano Nuevo State Park: North of Santa Cruz off Highway 1. Breeding grounds for elephant seals from November to March.
- Natural Bridges State Park: Just north of Santa Cruz off Highway 1. Stopping place for migrating Monarch Butterflies from about October to March. Nice beach also.

Remarks of a Former Program Participant

If you are considering a development tour at ARC, you will really have to hate the outdoors not enjoy life in the Silicon Valley. My limited use of the English language is now apparent as adjectives compiled in a seemingly endless list, fail to convey how beautiful the weather is in central California!

If you have a dog, s/he will think s/he's died and gone to Heaven with the wonderful dog-friendly places you can find in the Bay Area! And most of the dog-friendly places are worth visiting with or without a canine companion! Find the book "The California Dog Lovers Companion," by Maria Goodavage and plan your California adventures straight from the award-winning book -- from spectacular beaches, Redwood Forest hikes, Lake Tahoe x-country skiing to dog-friendly sidewalk cafes.

Dryden Flight Research Center (DFRC)

Updated by Mauricio Rivas

Dryden is located inside Edwards Air Force Base, on the western edge of the Mojave desert. The area is known as the Antelope Valley, and to locals as “the AV.” There are small communities (like Rosamond, North Edwards, California City, and Mojave) near the entrances to the base but the majority of people who work at Dryden live in the towns of Lancaster and Palmdale, located southwest of base on the valley floor. Many people also live in Tehachapi, located in the Tehachapi mountains northwest of base.

Area Descriptions: Lancaster

Lancaster is primarily a residential town of around 125,000 people. It is about 30 miles from Dryden and is probably where most people who work at Dryden live. Lancaster is still in Los Angeles County, and is one of the largest cities in the county, but rent prices are considerably lower than the rest of the L.A. area. Both homes and apartments for rent can be found inexpensively but it would be best to talk to a local person to check on the quality of the neighborhoods and schools. As a general rule, the higher rent neighborhoods are located west of the 14 Freeway.

<http://www.cityoflancasterca.org/>

Area Descriptions: Palmdale

Palmdale, as Lancaster, is a residential town of just over 130,000 people. Palmdale is just south of Lancaster and is about 45 miles from Dryden. Palmdale is closer to the L.A. basin and has even more L.A. commuters residing in it than Lancaster. Rents are a little higher in some of the west side neighborhoods, but as with Lancaster, it is best to talk to a local person regarding neighborhoods or schools. The AV Mall is located in Palmdale and is surrounded by lots of other retail. Lancaster and Palmdale are very close together and it is hard to tell them apart.

<http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/>

Area Descriptions: Tehachapi

Tehachapi is a smaller town, a few tens of thousands of people. It is located at a higher elevation ~5k ft in the mountains. It is about 75 miles from Dryden.

<http://www.tehachapicityhall.com/>

What to Expect

Transportation: Bring a car! Driving is part of the California culture and there are many places where you can't get to by using public transportation, Dryden is an example. Edwards Air Force Base has three entrances, north, south and west. The west entrance is the one used the most, it has two lanes, and is the one with access to the 14 Freeway. Many people chose to car pool and a few keep their eye on the weather and ride their bikes in. Both, bikes and cars have to be registered on base. Military Police enforce the posted speed limit (60 mph on most of the main road, Rosamond Blvd.),

radar detectors are illegal on base. If you use a cell phone while driving on base you have to use a hands free device as well.

Eating on base: Many people bring their lunch, Dryden has a cafeteria with limited selection. The Air Force has better selection. The Base Exchange or BX has several AFEES fast food places, and is a short drive from Dryden (~3 miles over a couple of hills). Near the BX there is a Thai place and a Burger King. You can get food at the Golf Course, the Bowling Alley, the Oasis (a rec. room), or the Officer's Club.

What to wear: In true California stile, Dryden is a very casual place. People who work close to airplanes, however, do have to wear long pants and closed shoes. Leather sole shoes or high heels are a bad idea if you might be walking on airplanes.

Weather: The weather in the high desert varies from very hot in the summers to very cold in the winters, and it is not unheard of for temperatures to change 50°F on the same day. In the summer, temperatures can reach 120°F, and around 20-30° more inside a locked car. The safety office does a very good job of announcing heat stroke warnings when weather conditions require it. The flight lines can get even hotter than the air temperature so precautions are taken when flight operations are taking place in hot weather. Each winter can have some very cold days, temperatures can reach the teens. Snow is rare but possible, however, it never lasts more than a day or two on the ground. The wind is a constant fact of life to live with in the AV. Drive around the area and you'll notice that the trees lean to the east. That's because the wind is that consistent. On dryer than normal years, or when construction is going on west of you, you can get lots of dirt.

GLENN RESEARCH CENTER (GRC)

Updated by Barb Kenny, Bill Taylor and Jim Stegeman

The best resource for GRC information such as history, maps of the Lab etc. is the World Wide Web (<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/>). Two key websites for finding information about the city (places to live, events, restaurants, etc) are <http://www.cleveland.com> and <http://www.coolcleveland.com>. A comprehensive history of Cleveland can be accessed at <http://ech.cwru.edu/>

About The Area

The Glenn Research Center is located adjacent to the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport. It is on the southwest edge of the City of Cleveland proper, yet inside of the ring of suburbs that surround the city. This provides easy access to the downtown activities and also to the quiet suburbs. While the airport is on one side, the lab is bordered by one of the Cleveland Metropolitan Parks better known as the Metroparks on its other side. . The Metroparks are a set of public parks that forms a large ring known as the Emerald Necklace around the city. Much of the park system is in the Cuyahoga River

valley, and is tranquil compared to the city above. The park system has golf courses, hiking trails, horse riding facilities and trails, and a bike path that covers most of its length.

The Cleveland area really is much better than its reputation would lead you to believe. Good weather three seasons of the year (winter can be long and miserable). Very good sailing, fantastic golf, and some night life. A comfortable economical place to live, with access to big city amenities including a theatre district, one of the county's best public library systems, the world renowned Cleveland Symphony and the Cleveland Clinic, one of the foremost medical institutions in the country. Cleveland's professional sports teams are the Indians, the Browns and the Cavaliers.

The industrial base of the city has changed over the years and the city is now without much of the pollution causing industry that it was known for in the past. Many of the steel mills have closed, and Lake Erie and the Cuyahoga River are now both used for recreational activities. (Yes, they actually use canoes and fish in the Cuyahoga River now!) The downtown area that was once deserted after working hours now has turned into an exciting area of a variety of cultural, social, and sports activities.

One prime feature of the Cleveland area is the Cleveland Metroparks system. The Metroparks is a series of reservations that connect to form a "circle" through the suburbs of Cleveland of Cleveland (called the Emerald Necklace). Over 100 miles of walking, biking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing trails run through the Metroparks. The parks also contain golf courses, picnic areas, fishing areas, and a boat dock. Nature Centers in the park provide organized events such as night hikes, hay rides, workshops, to name only a few. Most of these activities are aimed at providing insight and education to children as well as adults. The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is an excellent facility and boasts an impressive Rainforest exhibit. Museums in Cleveland include the Museum of Art and the Museum of Natural History, both located in University Circle adjacent to Case Western Reserve University. Although the winters in Cleveland are long and cold, there are many activities that are available to those who do not wish to remain in their own homes. Concert events, Broadway musicals, the famous Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, and various indoor shows such as the Home and Garden Show (usually held the end of February) are examples of these. Cleveland also has many major sports teams; the area fans are loyal, no matter what the team records may be.

Places To Live

Many NASA people have lived in an apartment called The Islander, located at I-71 at Pearl Road in Middleburg Heights. The Islander is convenient to work (~12 miles, 20 minutes), to downtown Cleveland (~20 minutes), and to all major freeways in the area. It is also 1 mile from the Metroparks.

Convenient areas to live: Middleburg Heights, Strongsville (a few apartment complexes on Royalton Road (Rt. 82)), North Olmstead, Berea, Fairview Park, Westlake and Lakewood.

If you must live in a hip urban environment, check out: Tremont, Coventry, Shaker Heights, or University Heights. Note these involve longer commutes.

There are many nice outlying semi-rural areas, but don't know about the availability of rental properties there.

Restaurants

The Cleveland restaurant scene is constantly changing, so your best bet is to consult the Cleveland.com website. If you want to take advantage of the city's ethnic heritage and neighborhoods, a copy of Cleveland Ethnic Eats by Laura Taxel provides a good set of recommendations of restaurants and bakeries.

That said, here's a short list of some restaurants to get you started:

Joe's – Corner of Wooster Rd & Hilliard Blvd, Rocky River. Homestyle cooking. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Order a Corned Beef sandwich and you'll be full for days. Awesome dessert selection also.

Great Lakes Brewing Company – W. 25th St., Close to downtown. Every town has one, but this place makes award winning beer right on the premises. Ask for a tour.

Herb's Tavern – a couple of spots around town. Check the phone book for an exact location. Herb Burgers are their specialty.

Things To Do/Visit

- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Cleveland Inner Harbor
- Great Lakes Science Center (including BIG IMAX theater), Cleveland Inner Harbor
- Ship William G. Mather - An old Great Lakes ore carrier turned into a museum (very cool), Cleveland Inner Harbor
- Cleveland Air Show (Labor Day Weekend)- Burke Lakefront Airport
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Cleveland Metropark Golf Courses
- Cleveland Metroparks Zoo - be sure to visit the Rainforest exhibit; you might want to call for tickets in advance.
- Cleveland Museums of Art and Natural History
- Cuyahoga Valley National Park -- great hiking trails; great biking on the Towpath Trail, also good for cross-country skiing (Bikes can be rented at Century Cycles in Peninsula)
- Gateway, Downtown - The Gateway complex includes Jacobs Field (Indians Baseball, the Gund Arena (Cavaliers Basketball), and the Cleveland Browns Stadium (Dawg Pound).

- Buzzard Sunday in Hinckley -- don't miss the "official" return of the buzzards (turkey vultures) to Hinkley, Ohio; complete with pancake breakfast and art show; held right around March 15.
- Tower City - in the Terminal Tower
- Lake Erie Islands - road trip to Sandusky (~50 miles west of Cleveland) and take a Ferry ride to the Islands
- Metroparks Hinckley Reservation - areas for rock climbing enthusiasts
- Cleveland Symphony Orchestra - plays on University Circle during the regular season; during the summer, they play at Blossom Music Center, and outdoor arena, take a picnic and make a night of it.
- Riverfest - outdoor festival held down at the Flats in August
- The best place to go swimming in the summer is Mentor Headlands State Park in Mentor, Ohio. The best beach is on the north coast.

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER (GSFC)

Updated by Margaret Caulfield

The main campus of Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) is located ten miles northeast of Washington, DC, in Greenbelt, Maryland. Along with its facilities at Wallops Island, Virginia and the Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New York City, GSFC has the largest scientific staff of all the NASA Centers. The Center was founded in 1959 as the first NASA Field Center devoted exclusively to space flight. It was named in honor of the legendary American rocket pioneer Robert H. Goddard, who built the first successful liquid fueled rocket in 1926. Some of the initial cadre for GSFC came from America's first space project (Vanguard) conducted by the Naval Research Lab in Washington, DC. GSFC is laid out like a college campus with numerous brick buildings surrounded by lawns and treed areas. At its Wallops Flight Facility near Chincoteague, VA, GSFC is involved in the implementation of sub-orbital programs using aircraft, balloons, and sounding rockets. The NASA Independent Verification and Validation Facility in West Virginia also reports administratively through GSFC.

Located just outside the Washington, DC Beltway, GSFC is roughly midway between Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD along the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (Maryland 295). There is an employee-only exit off the Parkway. The main entrance is off Greenbelt Road (Maryland 193). There is a third entrance to the main campus and an entrance to the East campus on Soil Conservation Road, which currently bisects the Center. GSFC was built on federal land ceded to NASA by the USDA and adjoins the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), which includes acres of farmlands and forest.

Find out more at the GSFC Public web site

<http://www.nasa.gov/centers/goddard/home/index.html> and the Internal web site

<http://internal.gsfc.nasa.gov>. Most of the Internal web site is accessible from NASA domain IP addresses.

The official address of GSFC is:

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
8800 Greenbelt Road
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771

Getting Around

Most employees drive to work and use their cars to get around. The commuting area is very large, from Northern Virginia to the South to Pennsylvania to the North, and from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore (across the Chesapeake Bay). Public Transportation to Goddard is nearby via the Washington Metro System at Greenbelt (origination of the Green line) and New Carrollton (origination of the Orange line). A 25 minute Metrobus ride from either station will bring you to the front gate. Find out more at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority web site <http://www.wmata.com>.

Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Airport is located off I-195 about 15 miles North of GSFC off the Parkway. Besides by car, BWI can be reached via the Amtrak station in New Carrollton, and downtown Baltimore via either the Amtrak or MARC trains at New Carrollton or Greenbelt Metro stations. Find out more at the Maryland Transit Administration web site <http://www.mta Maryland.com>

If you have your own car, Maryland will issue Non-Resident Permits instead of permanent registration for out of state workers on extended TDY to the state. Find out more at the Maryland Motor Vehicle Authority (MVA) Web site <http://mva.state.md.us>.

On Campus Services

There is an on campus Branch of the NASA Federal Credit Union. See more at the Credit Union web site <http://www.nasafcu.com>.

The Goddard Employee Welfare Association (GEWA) runs two cafeterias, a U.S. Post Office, two stores, a child care center, and dozens of clubs and other activities. It has a recreation center and sells discounted tickets for area attractions and theme parks. Find out more at the GEWA web site <http://gewa.gsfc.nasa.gov>.

There a health center and fitness center on campus as well.

Maryland

One of the original 13 states to join the Union (in 1788), Maryland is in the middle of the Eastern Seaboard. It's believed that Lord Baltimore, who received a charter for the land in 1632, named the state after Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I. The

Mason and Dixon line was drawn in the 1760s to settle a dispute between the Penn and Calvert families. In addition to marking the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland, it is the traditional boundary between the North and the South. Maryland is known as the "Free State;" its flower is the black-eyed susan; and its capital is Annapolis, home of the U.S. Naval Academy.

There is a very wide variety of things to do and places to visit in Maryland, something surely to suit everybody. Places to start are the Maryland Office of Tourism <http://www.visitmaryland.org> and Citi-Data.com's Maryland site <http://www.city-data.com/states/Maryland.html>.

JET PROPULSION LABORATORY (JPL)

A developmental work assignment at JPL can be an extremely rewarding experience. The Lab is located at the foot of the San Gabriel mountains near Pasadena, California. Try to get a place close to the Lab to avoid long commutes. This is your year, you don't want to spend it in traffic jams.

JPL is run by the California Institute of Technology (CalTech) for NASA. This can lead to a few problems for participants since JPL is really a contractor and not a conventional NASA Field Center. There are only a few NASA employees on site and they perform oversight functions and auditing. Secondary travel while on a developmental work assignment at JPL will not be possible unless you bring your own travel money along with you (either from your Home Center or from your sponsor's Headquarters office). Since JPL is a contractor, you are not allowed to accept travel money from them. All JPL funds come from program funds, so they pay for salaries, travel, hardware, etc., with the same color of money.

The program office at Headquarters will provide you with travel money for program related courses, such as the excellent Congressional Operations seminar. Make sure your orders have suitable travel arrangements to Washington, DC for the courses. Most participants are in Washington already and don't have to worry about it. As a participant at another Center, you will miss out on the monthly AA meetings and other get-togethers. You may want to try to video conference in on some of the HQ meetings.

When you arrive at JPL, your NASA badge will get you in the front gate and allow you to park. However, parking is the most important commodity here after salary. You need to arrive by 7:15 to obtain a spot reasonably close to the office. In addition, a JPL badge with a magnetic code is needed to operate the gates to the regular parking lots, to avoid walking all the way around to the staffed entrance. Apparently, the NASA Resident Office can obtain an on-Lab parking permit for NASA personnel. Stop at the Resident Office as soon as possible to get help in obtaining the right badge and to let them know where you can be found.

There are three main types of work at JPL: project office, research, and operations. Work in the project offices, such as Cassini, can be very hectic and high pressure, but is rewarding. The research groups are more laid back. One of the biggest parts of JPL is the Telecommunications and Data Acquisition (TDA) Office that operates the Deep Space Network (DSN).

When working at JPL, you are identified by your section number. JPL uses a matrix organization, so people like to pigeonhole you by section. A section at JPL is equivalent to a large division at other Centers. Each section is made up of groups that correspond to branches. Your primary section job will define you in some ways, so find a good home. The JPL phone book can give you a feel for the organization and the types of work available. Since manpower is a direct charge to the program funds, most groups are eager to have your help once you explain that it is free. In fact, JPL employees must have valid charge numbers to for their time in order to get paid, similar to some companies. Office space is at a premium, so make sure your section is planning for your arrival ahead of time and has a place for you to sit. There have been layoffs here in the past with cancellations of programs like SETI or the loss of the Mars Observer. The library here is limited and it can be hard to check out books with a visitor badge, so bring your own resources. You may want to ship your computer out for the year, although my Host section was able to provide me with a PC. Negotiate up front while the idea of free help is fresh in their minds.

Being a NASA employee amid CalTech employees need not be a problem. Although there is an air of superiority regarding all things JPL, most people will accept you once you prove your worth. NASA here tends to mean Headquarters, with all the attendant connotations. JPL can be a contractor when it wants to and a NASA Center when it is advantageous. If you don't try to stick out as a NASA employee, you won't have any trouble fitting in. JPL has support contractors and also makes use of local university professors, so outsiders are not uncommon.

There is no checking at the JPL credit union, and I'm not even sure NASA employees can use it. Get a bank account at one of the major banks when you are out here on your pre-trip, but be careful, some savings banks are still in financial trouble. Writing a check in LA is difficult with local checks, and nearly impossible with out-of-state checks. Get a copy of your credit rating before you come; the credit rating companies will give you one free copy per year.

During your assignment at JPL, if you plan to go home, you can get to the airport either via the Super Shuttle (Blue Van) or drive to the airport and park. I found it cheaper to drive and park. JPL has coupons for airport parking that brings it down to about \$7.00/day.

Places To Live

For housing, there are several different options depending on your situation. If you have children, you will want to find a place in La Canada, San Marino, or South Pasadena; otherwise you can send your kids to a private school. If you do not have kids or are planning to send them to a private school anyway, you can look in Pasadena and Glendale for more reasonably priced housing and apartments. The best schools in the area are in La Canada. It is also by far the best place to live, but you will pay a healthy premium. For example, a three bedroom house in La Canada will run around \$1800/month while in Glendale you might find something similar for \$1200. Per diem in LA is usually less than DC (I guess since the rates are based on hotel costs), but the housing costs are higher. Certain areas in La Canada are within walking distance of JPL.

Temporary housing is difficult to find. For a three month assignment, it is nearly impossible to find. Definitely check out the local apartment guides. For temporary housing, your options include: (1) Residence hotel (e.g. Homestead Village). There are several in Arcadia and Monrovia, but traffic is heavy to and from work, and (2) Corporate housing (furnished apartments). Oakwood is well-known but too expensive (exceeds per diem). Glendale had a few to choose from and that is where I lived for 2 months. I spent the other month at a Residence Hotel.

The JPL paper, the Universe, has some house listings as does the ERC bulletin board and roladex, but the best bet is to get a real estate agent, such as MacGregor Realty at (818) 790-8300, to help. To find your way around town, a Thomas Guide map book is essential and can be purchased for around \$20 at a local bookstore.

Restaurants

So much good food, so little time. The LA area has some of the most diverse and best restaurants in the world, so I won't even try to list them here. Search on www.zagat.com, and have fun.

For lunch, the Glendale Beeline and La Canada - Flintridge Shuttle buses offer free service between JPL and down Foothill Blvd, where there are several good places (remember what was said earlier about parking).

Things To Do/Visit

Pasadena offers many diversions:

- Norton Simon Museum of Art, the Gamble House, the Rose Bowl, the Rose Parade, Huntington Gardens, Descanso Gardens, and the night life of Old Pasadena.
- The nearby mountains include the Angeles National Forest.
- The beaches are about 45 minutes away.

- San Diego is a nice place to go for the weekend and is only a couple hours away by car.
- If you're into roller-blading or biking there are some great trails near the ocean in Santa Monica which are a lot of fun.
- Great museums, including The Getty Museum (<http://www.getty.edu/museum/>). I encourage you to check it out.

By the time the '03 class starts, a light rail line will go from Pasadena to Downtown LA (<http://www.mta.net/>), from where you can easily connect to many areas of Los Angeles and Southern California (<http://www.metroinktrains.com/> <http://www.amtrak.com/trains/pacificsurfliner.html>), and bypass the infamous traffic.

The JPL Employee Recreation Club (ERC) has discount tickets to all the major attractions in the area. The ERC is open to everyone working at JPL at no cost. There are many employee clubs associated with the ERC, from hiking and skiing to astronomy.

LA and California are full of things to do. There is more to do and see than you can get to in a year. Rather than arbitrarily pick a few to list here, check out these resources:

- Los Angeles Times CalendarLive section <http://www.calendarlive.com/>
- LA Weekly (<http://www.laweekly.com/>)
- California Tourism official site (<http://gocalif.ca.gov/>)

JOHNSON SPACE CENTER (JSC)

Updated by Sharyl Butler and Kathy Lueders

Johnson Space Center's primary mission is Human Exploration and Astro Materials. This entails work on the country's two manned space flight programs: Space Shuttle and Space Station. Work on the Shuttle program includes engineering support for the Shuttle Orbiter; flight crew selection, training and operations; mission operations; and medical research related to space flight.

Johnson Space Center has many unique facilities that are in use to help it fulfill its mission. These include the WETF (Weightless Environment Training Facility), the SMS (Shuttle Mission Simulator), the SESL (Space Environment Simulation Laboratory), the ARMSEF (Atmospheric Reentry Materials and Structures Evaluation Facility), and, of course, the well known (MCC) Mission Control Center. The WETF is basically a very large swimming pool where astronauts practice procedures that are planned for upcoming space walks. The SMS is full fidelity flight simulator that can interface with MCC for very realistic mission training. The SESL is a complex of vacuum chambers including the enormous Chamber A, which is 120 feet high and 65 feet in diameter. The ARMSEF is a 10 megawatt arc-jet that is used to test TPS materials such as the Shuttle

tiles. The MCC is probably the best known NASA facility. Since 1965, it has served as the nerve center for America's manned space programs. This includes every manned flight since Gemini 4.

JSC also has unique aircraft nearby at Ellington Field. These include KC-135s, T-38s, B-57s, and Shuttle Training Aircraft (STA). The KC-135 or "vomit comet" is used to conduct experiments during the about 40 short (~20 seconds) periods of weightlessness per flight it produces by continuously flying parabolas. The T-38 is a twin seat training fighter jet flown by the astronaut pilots to maintain their skills. The B-57's wings have been extended so it can be used for high altitude atmospheric studies. Through the use of a control computer the STA can be made to handle like the Shuttle when it is gliding towards landing in order to train the astronaut pilots.

Tens of thousands of tourists visit the MCC every year along with movie crews. For example, the KC-135 was used to film Apollo 13 and the WETF was used to film Armageddon. To handle the many tourists that visit JSC each year, NASA and a non-profit organization in 1993, opened Space Center Houston. Space Center Houston is located on land donated by NASA and contains many interesting exhibits from the space program.

In addition, the Space Center conducts guided tours of some of the more interesting facilities at JSC. The Space Center is operated by the non-profit organization, and a small fee of \$12 is charged for visitors. However, your NASA badge will get you in free, including parking, and get a \$2 discount for your guests. The Space Center offers many wonderful exhibits and allows you to experience the feeling of landing the shuttle, docking with MIR, or retrieving a satellite. Plan on spending a half day at the minimum.

About The Area

Johnson Space Center is located in the Clear Lake City, Texas district of Houston, TX. Although JSC is inside Houston's city limits, it is about 30 miles southeast of downtown. Clear Lake is a small lake connected by a channel to Galveston Bay; thus Clear Lake has many marinas for boats which sail on the Bay and on out to the Gulf of Mexico. For those interesting in taking college courses as part of your PDP training, the University of Houston is located approximately 15 miles north of JSC, and the University of Houston, Clear Lake (a completely different system from U of H) is just around the corner from JSC. Remember, if you start your PDP tour in August, you'll want to make inquiries about what courses they offer and get your transcripts transferred to the Office of Admissions.

Places To Live

It's great to apartment hunt in the Clear Lake area. The best way to find the kind of place you want is to "link up" with one of the apartment locator places. There is no charge and they know all the office staff at the different complexes, so setting up times to view the property goes much smoother. Besides in many cases the complexes have

security gates so that hunting on your own without an appointment gets tiresome as you try to find a way in to see some of these places. Usually the deposit requirements are minimal (like \$50 - \$100). I recommend getting a place with a pool and possibly a hot tub on the premises. I know the hot tub requirement sounds crazy for a place that has summer for about five months out of the year, but it sure is nice to have one in say December! Also, since the Clear Lake area has the most marinas, other than maybe Florida, you might consider living by the water. Two great apartment facilities are Hidden Lake and the Waterfront. Both are clean and offer great amenities in addition to being within 5 miles of JSC. But remember Clear Lake isn't too clear! Hot Tip: If you want to save about 20% to 30% on your car insurance, live in Galveston County. Harris County, which is the Clear Lake area, has one of the highest rates in the country!

Restaurants

While in Clear Lake, you'll be eating seafood, seafood, seafood! Oysters on the half shell are big here and cheap (on the right day at Joe Lee's, they're \$1.00 a dozen!). And don't forget to suck the head and pinch the tail of all those crawfish you'll be eating! Hamburgers are served with mustard and mayo only and you'll get your fill of grits, hush puppies and brisket!

Three "out of the way" places I really like are:

- What's Cooking (off of FM 528 in League City),
- Gilhooley's (a great beer joint overlooking Galveston Bay) and
- Bill & Marie's (off Kirby - great Bar-B-Q!).

There are many good restaurants near JSC including:

- The Flying Dutchman
- Landry's
- Joe Lee's
- Oasis
- Pappadeaux
- The Brass Parrot (Seafood)
- Tortilla's
- Mamacita's
- Tortuga's, and Laredo's (Mexican)
- Caesar's Café (South American)
- Walnut St. Café (Puerto Rican)
- the Jalapeno Tree (Texan).
- Also visits to the Turtle Club and Molly's Pub are a must.
- The outpost, a NASA watering hole is also required. The outpost is a hole in the wall but it has a lot of character and NASA history. STS crews often host free beer and hotdog happy hours to thank the JSC personnel for their support.

Things To Do/Visit

- If you enjoy two stepping, Borrowed Money, down El Camino is close and fun. They offer free lessons every Thursday and Sunday night at 7:00.
- Molleys and the Piggy are right across the street. Darts, pool, and other fun activities are available at both places.
- The beach town of Galveston is about a 45 minute drive from JSC. Sights to see there include the beach, the Strand, and the new Moody tropical gardens.
- The San Jacinto Monument and the Battleship Texas are other nearby tourist attractions.
- The city of Houston has many good shops, dance clubs, bars, museums and parks that are worth a visit.
- Galleria is a beautiful two million square feet mall with three stories surrounding a covered atrium with a skating rink in the center. Crystal plays Latin music in one of its two rooms and popular American music in the other one.
- The Ginger Man near Rice University has 165 different beers from all over the world.
- The Museum of Natural History, the Six Flags' Astroworld amusement park, the Waterworld Waterpark, and the Zoo in Houston are fun day trips.
- The Museum of Natural History, Moody Gardens, and Space Center all offer IMAX films that are spectacular.

If you want to see other Texas attractions and don't mind the drive:

- Dallas/Ft. Worth is approximately 260-300 miles north (5 to 6 hours);
- Austin (great music scene), is approximately 150 miles west (3 hours); and
- San Antonio (River Walk and the Alamo) is approximately 180 miles southwest (4 1/2 hours);
- Padre Island (great beach), and of course,
- Make a run" to the border - Mexico!

Professional sports abound in Houston and make for great evenings out for the sports enthusiast.

- The "Rockets" (men's basketball),
- Comets" (women's basketball),
- "Astros" (baseball), and
- "Aeros" (hockey)

One more thing that is fun to do is an airplane ride. It costs about \$50/hour but you can split that 3 ways and it is a blast. Houston has a great skyline..

Annual Events

- "Dickens on the Strand" at Galveston (usually held in early or mid-December).

- To get a real feel of Texas, go see the comedy called "A Tuna Christmas" (a hilarious account of the people in the third smallest town in Texas).
- Mardi Gras in Galveston (held ten days before Ash Wednesday, same as New Orleans).
- Houston Livestock & Rodeo (held the last half of February).
- "Go Texas Day" is held during this time and people can be spotted everywhere wearing their favorite western attire.
- Drive in the "hill country" near Austin during the end of March beginning of April to see the Bluebonnets (these wildflowers just cover the landscape along the highways).
- Ellington Field usually has an annual air show in September-October
- JSC Open House, usually in August, have hot air balloon festivals. And don't mind the longhorns that graze in the pasture right next to the Rocket Park at JSC.

Remarks of Former Program Participants

Watch your driving while in Texas! Everyone drives fast and likes to tailgate. Oh, and forget about using your turn signals. To make it worse, I think there are more patrols per mile here than anywhere.

Be careful of sudden down pours. The weather can change quickly and it is best to be prepared with an emergency car kit, raincoat, flashlight, etc.

This is a company town. Always let people know you work for NASA. You'll get treated right and you may even get a discount at local stores.

For more information about the Houston area, try the following Internet Web site: http://city.net/countries/united_states/texas/houston/info.

And remember - Don't Mess With Texas!

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER (KSC)

Updated by David Kruhm

KSC, along with Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, is America's gateway to space launching the Space Shuttle, Atlas V and Delta IV vehicles. There is nothing like experiencing a Shuttle launch in person. You will feel the ground shake and thunder in your chest. NASA's fleet of Space Shuttles is housed in the three Orbiter Processing Facilities on base. It takes about 3 months to prepare a Shuttle, payload and facilities for launch. You will be exposed to Space Shuttle, International Space Station and payload ground operations. There are just fewer than 1900 NASA civil servant employees and about 12,000 contractors (as of the end of 2001). The major contractors are: United Space Alliance which processes the Space Shuttles for flight;

Boeing which performs Checkout, Assembly, and Payload Processing Services (CAPPS contract); and SGS which is the Joint-Base Operations Support Contractor (J-BOSC).

Thousands and thousands of spectators come to witness the Shuttle launches on base. (Car passes are issued on a first come first serve basis when a requestor writes in for a specific launch to: PA-PASS, KSC, FL 32899.) Astronauts routinely come back to KSC following their mission to thank the employees for their work in preparing the Shuttle for their mission. They will answer questions and give autographs.

Check out the home page at <http://www.ksc.nasa.gov/>

About The Area

KSC is composed of 140,000 acres and is on the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge. There are thousands of species of animals on base including the bald eagle, a base population of about 7000 alligators (Do Not feed them!), manatees, wild boars, raccoons, etc. With the Banana River on the east side of the property and the Indian River on the west, you can plan on a lengthy but beautiful commute into work. Most aerospace contractors have some offices in Brevard County to support KSC and the Shuttle, International Space Station and Launch Services Program and the activities sponsored by the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station (CCAFS), which is adjacent to KSC. The Atlas, Delta and smaller launch vehicles are launched from CCAFS on a regular basis. There are lots of historical launch sites to visit on the CCAFS and space buffs would find that it is worthwhile to take the tour offered at KSC Visitors Center, which includes the Air Force Space and Missile Museum on CCAFS.

A few comments: Florida is very seasonal. Almost everywhere you go is casual. The population of Brevard County doubles from Christmas until about Easter, especially on the beaches. Popular restaurants can be very busy (read - long waits) during the winter. If you don't have the patience for waiting in line to spend your money on overpriced food, you'll have to adopt the "retiree style". (Eat before 6 pm) This can also be cheaper since many restaurants offer "early bird specials".

Restaurants

Cape Canaveral

- Rusty's - At the Port, Seafood, casual and inexpensive
- Frankie's - Wings at the port
- Grill's – At the Port, good for breakfast, lunch , happy hour (watch the cruise ships go out), & dinner. After-work hangout
- The Smokehouse – At the Port, smoked seafood & meats, informal, sandwiches at lunch plus retail sales (smoked alligator, anyone?)
- Kelsey's - Pizza and Greek salads (best pizza in Brevard)
- Gin Seng – good Chinese, associated with Yen Yen in Cocoa Beach
- Zachary's Greek/American

- Azteca II – Mexican
- Moon Hut - great breakfast!
- Manatee's – next to Blossom Natural Foods
- Durango's – steak

Cocoa Beach

- Sonny's BBQ - BBQ (good baby back ribs!)
- Taco City - Tex Mex (no credit cards)
- Atlantic Grille - On Cocoa Beach pier!
- Coconuts on the Beach - lively bar scene
- Bamboo Panda – Chinese
- Yen Yen – upscale Chinese
- Bernard's Surf – upscale, an old astronaut hangout
- Rusty's – Sibling to the one at the Port, Seafood, casual and inexpensive
- Heidelberg – German
- Roberto's Little Havana - Cuban
- Jack Baker's Lobster Shanty – seafood
- Mango Tree - expensive, best food in the area
- Italian Courtyard - (one block west of A1A on 520) inexpensive, good
- Gregory's – steak
- Thai Dixie – inexpensive Thai

Cocoa/Rockledge

- Grandpa's Steak House - A dive, but really great steaks.
- Lone Cabbage Fish Camp - great gator tail (out on the St. John's)
- Ashley's - great ghost stories (in Rockledge)
- Kaye's Bar-B-Que - Formerly Fat Boy Dixie Restaurant - Greek, great breakfast
- Kelsey's - Pizza and Greek salads (best pizza in Brevard)
- The Fairways - in Turtle Creek Community (in Rockledge), good specials

Cocoa Village

- The Black Tulip - trendy, gourmet, good value for the money
- Cafe Margeaux - across street from Black Tulip in courtyard, nice.
- Paradise Alley - sandwiches, and dinner specialties, trendy, casual and inexpensive

Indialantic

- Dos Amigo's – Mexican
- Blueberry Muffin - Breakfast and lunch
- Indian Harbor Beach
- Amigo's – Mexican
- Double's - Subs (really good)

- Mama's – Italian
- Hubb's Pub - Deli sandwiches, baked fries and tons of imported beer!
- Italian Oven - Gourmet pizza
- Miami Sub's - For fast food, it's the greatest!
- Fat Boy's BBQ - good local BBQ chain
- Charlie and Jake's - BBQ, w/ a drive thru window
- The Dove - great Italian, but a little pricey

Melbourne

- Conchy Joe's - Seafood (on river and really neat!)
- Fresh sha sha! - really good Italian food, a real sleeper!
- San Remo's - Real Italian and Pizza
- Shooter's - Variety (on river, has pool, volleyball and boats)
- Chart House - Steak and Seafood chain (on river at Melbourne Marina)
- Miyako - Japanese w/karaoke in the late evening
- Gen Nai - Japanese (all you can eat Sushi \$14.00/person)
- Name Unknown - Thai place next to Food Lion on Sarno Rd.
- Cracker Barrel - Great home cookin'
- Olive Garden - Italian chain
- TGI Friday's - Variety chain
- Bennigan's - Variety chain
- Cooker - Variety chain
- Fins - neat seafood place
- Islamorada - Cuban food, excellent
- Melbourne Beach
- Nick's Steak House - Steaks and seafood
- Jimmy Joe's - Best BBQ on south beaches

Merritt Island

- Olive Garden - Italian chain
- Red Lobster - Seafood chain
- Outback Steak House - Steak House chain
- Shuttle's - KSC employee hangout
- El Toucan - Mexican
- China Garden - the best Chinese in town
- Tai Ho - great Japanese, cooked in front of you
- Chili's - Southwestern Sportsbar Chain
- Applebee's - cheap draft beer anytime (not just happy hour) for \$.99 for 12 oz. drafts and \$1.99 for 24 oz. Drafts
- Carrabba's – Italian
- Longhorn Steakhouse - best steak ever

- Courtyard on the Grove - Converted house - Nice lunch/dinner place, patio dining optional.

Orlando (only a 45 minute drive)

- Orlando is the tourist capital of the world. If you can't find a restaurant here, you didn't look.

Satellite Beach

- Gyro's, Gyro's, Gyro's - Greek (inexpensive)
- Glenn's Ice Cream Machine - Ice cream and frozen yogurt
- Phoenix – Expensive
- Kyoto - good Japanese

Titusville

- Dixie Crossroads Seafood (shrimp), unfortunately it's become a tourist attraction.
- Steamers- Seafood (river view)
- Ping On - Chinese, cheap, fast, lunch specials
- Peking Wok - Really good Chinese Paul's Smokehouse - BBQ, Steaks, Seafood (nice river view)
- Kelsey's - Pizza and Greek salads (best pizza in Brevard)
- Azteca – Mexican
- Fat Boys - Bar-B-Que
- Pumpnickels - great German and deli
- Kloiber's Cobbler - sandwiches, cobbler, soups
- S&S Middle Eastern Bakery & Deli
- Dogs R Us (sports bar, specialty buffalo wings)
- El Leoncito's - Mexican (good lunch spot)

Things To Do/Visit

Beaches

- Beach access is via any side street with available parking up and down the entire East Coast of the state. Paid parking is available at 520 and A1A on beach. Pets are not allowed on beaches. Beaches do get crowded on weekends.
- Rent a beach bike and go for a ride at sunrise or sunset! (Beach "renourishment" may make riding more difficult than natural hard packed sand, check the sand first)
- Also great to walk, run on beach at those times which are surprisingly not very crowded
- Sign up for a night tour to watch sea turtles nesting (see newspaper for opportunities and seasons).
- They say surfing is best at the beach access near Patrick Air Force Base. Many parks and Streets in Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral offer soft, fun waves ideal

for learning and safety. Novices should avoid the crowds and harder breaking waves at Patrick and Sebastian Inlet. There are several surf schools in the area.

Sports

- This is baseball training camp mecca. The Cleveland Indians, Los Angeles Dodgers, Detroit Tigers, Cincinnati Reds, Minnesota Twins, plus many more come to Viera to play pre-season games in March.

Scuba Diving

- West Palm/Boynton Beach/Lantana has the best scuba diving on the east coast.
- Key Largo has great shallow dives. Lots of marine life where ever you go.
- Pelican Flats is directly east of the port, if you like hunting fish and lobster, but it's not a scenic dive site.
- I would suggest Ron Jonís for lessons with the instructor Bear. You can even dive with the Manatee's in Crystal River or Indian River Lagoon. Ask Bear for information on dive sites and boats.
- American Divers on Merritt Island is also a good choice for lessons.

Windsurfing

- Kelly Park on Merritt Island and 528.
- Also on 520 and Merritt Island.

Golf

Tons of places in the area and throughout the state. Usually have discounted fees after 2 p.m. Fees are higher in winter.

- Baytree in Melbourne is probably the nicest public course but a little pricey.
- Savannahs is closest to KSC and is very reasonable

Cape Canaveral

- Jungle Fun Center - mini-golf, go-karts, video games
- Mountasia - mini-golf
- Fishing contests on weekends at the Port
- Cruise Ships, fishing ships for charter (If you have never been on a cruise, now is your chance, take a 3-day cruise to the Bahamas!)
- Tiki bar at Port (Grills)
- Great for watching launches if you are not on base (Delta, Atlas Centaur, etc. Look in Florida Today front page, left column for schedules.)
- Jetty Park - good place to go to beach, facilities available, also great for launch viewing

Cocoa Beach

- Live music at the pier
- Surfside Playhouse - plays
- Ron Jon's Surfshop - world's largest surfshop open 24 hours, now called a "surf complex"
- Surfside - open air deck on second floor
- Dino's - jazz
- Heidi's - jazz
- Coconuts - live music, great place to hang out on the beach, surfing, volleyball
- The Pier - live music, one of few beachy hang outs, great place to hang out on the beach, surfing, volleyball
- Jonathan's Pub - local hangout - pool tables, dart boards, bands

Cocoa Village

- Jazz at Thorpe Square - Saturday nights
- Cocoa Village Playhouse - plays, etc.
- Grumpy's - cigar bar
- Antique shops, gourmet store, misc. shopping, etc

Cocoa

- BCC Planetarium
- Lone Cabbage Fish Camp - air boat tours
- Viera Stadium - Marlins Spring training games (March and April) - great fun!!

Daytona

- NASCAR racing - Speedweek is in February, NASCAR museum
- Bike week is in March, Biketoberfest in October

Keys

- Fishing
- Snorkeling
- Scuba Diving
- Key West - Duval Street - Hemingway's house featuring 6-toed cats, Truman's summer home, Treasure hunter Mel Fisher's museum, shops, bars, bands (lots of Jimmy Buffett types), restaurants including Margaritaville, Sloppy Joes, Mallory Square side shows (See the Frenchman who trains cats to jump through hoops!)

KSC

- Spaceport
- Apollo/Saturn V Exhibit
- Open House for employees usually in the fall when its cooler - chance to bring family to see the Space Shuttles, launch pads, etc. (Hasn't happened since 9/11/01)
- KARS Park - available for employee use. Site of annual KSC picnic in spring.
- KSC Exercise Facilities at OSB in Complex 39 and at O&C in Industrial Area on base.

Melbourne

- King Center for the Performing Arts
- Turkey Creek Wildlife Sanctuary - canoe rental nearby
- Brevard Zoo

Merritt Island

- Spaceport - IMAX, KSC Visitor Center, astronaut Center, Apollo/Saturn V exhibit
- National Wildlife Refuge

Mount Dora

- Shops, annual art show

Ocala

- National Park, camping, hiking, hunting, canoeing (I recommend Juniper Springs)

Orlando

- Check the Orlando Sentinel Friday weekend magazine for events, ideas. KSC Sundry stores frequently have discounts for major attractions.
- Disney, Epcot, MGM studios, Pleasure Island, Planet Hollywood, etc.
- Disney Village and Boardwalk - mainly shops and restaurants, special events, great place for large family- no entry or parking fees
- Wet & Wild
- Universal Studios
- Sea World
- Cypress Gardens
- Lakeridge Winery
- Park Avenue - chic place to shop and eat
- International Drive - very touristy area but good restaurants, outlet malls
- Arena - pro-Sports basketball, hockey, arena football, music performances, etc.
- Church Street Station - Rosie O'Gradies, restaurants, shops, bars, very popular at night.
- Orange Ave. - Antique district

- Malls: Altamonte, Florida Mall, Belz Factory Outlet Mall

St Augustine

- Old Downtown area, great around Christmas

Tampa

- Busch Gardens - one of the best roller coasters in the country

Titusville

- Gator Jungle - gator show and Indian village (five miles out of town)
- Emma Parish Theater - plays
- Antique strip - antiques
- Canaveral National Seashore Wildlife Refuge self-guided tour
- Playalinda Beach (be advised there are nude sunbathers at the north end)

For an Attraction Guide look in Florida Today's Friday "Weekend" section.

Colleges/Universities

- Brevard Community College - BCC -campuses in Titusville, Cocoa and Palm Bay
- University of Central Florida - UCF - Orlando, Cocoa, and at KSC
- Florida Institute of Technology - FIT - Melbourne and at KSC
- Rollins College - Rockledge (the main campus is at Winter Park)

LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER (LARC)

Updated by Dave Jones, Mike Marcolini and Manjula Ambur

Guide to Hampton Roads

These inputs are from three of Langley's members of the 2005 – 2006 LDP Class, and are in no particular order. We have tried to avoid listing national chain restaurants and stores as much as possible, but sometimes you just like what you like. If you do all of these things at least once you will have a good year at LaRC.

1. Favorite special occasion restaurant (e.g., anniversary, spouse's birthday): Bonefish Grill (Newport News); Alexander's On The Bay (Va. Beach); Christiana Campbell's Tavern (Colonial Williamsburg); 99 Main Street (Newport News).

2. Favorite moderately priced restaurant: 2nd Street Café (Williamsburg); Surf Rider (Hampton); Spring Garden (Tabb – York Co.); County Grill (Tabb – York Co.)
3. Favorite inexpensive casual dining restaurant – Anna’s (Poquoson and Hampton); Andrea’s (Hampton); El Mariachi (Newport News); Red Robin (Newport News); Plaza Azteca (Newport News); Peking (Williamsburg).
4. Favorite lunch place within 15 minutes of LaRC: Mr. C’s (Poquoson); Poquoson Deli; Schlotzsky’s (Hampton); Szechuan Inn (Hampton).
5. Favorite cultural attraction: Civil War Battlefields in VA; Historic Triangle (Colonial Williamsburg/Jamestown/Yorktown); Virginia Symphony (based in Norfolk, but they also perform often in Newport News and Williamsburg); Pierce’s Pit-Cooked Barbeque (Lightfoot) – definitely a cultural landmark!
6. Favorite family fun attraction: Busch Gardens (Williamsburg); Water Country USA (Williamsburg); Newport News Park; Norfolk Tides – AAA baseball (at Harbor Park in downtown Norfolk).
7. Favorite shopping center/mall: MacArthur Center (Norfolk); Patrick Henry Mall (Newport News); Prime Outlet Mall (Williamsburg); Williamsburg Outlet Mall (Lightfoot).
8. Favorite individual store: Trader Joe’s (Newport News); Dicks (sporting goods – Patrick Henry Mall); Patrick’s Hardware (Hampton); Bose Outlet Store (Williamsburg Outlet Mall – Lightfoot).
9. Favorite local event: Virginia Beach Blues Festival; Greek Festival (at Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church, Newport News); East Coast Surfing Championship (Va. Beach).
10. Favorite get-away within 300 miles of LaRC: **North Carolina Outer Banks** (a.k.a. OBX or Nags Head) – this was a unanimous choice. A few can’t miss places include -
 - Northern OBX beaches like Duck or Corolla (try Red Sky Café in Duck or the Duck Deli for lunch!).
 - John’s Drive-In in Kitty Hawk (get a milk shake and a fried dolphin sandwich or basket – don’t worry, it’s not Flipper, it is fish; you land lubbers call it Mahi Mahi).
 - The Wright Brothers Memorial in Kill Devil Hills and Jockey’s Ridge, the largest sand dune on the east coast, in Nags Head. After Jockey’s Ridge swing by the Dune Burger in Nags Head.
 - Cape Hatteras – go see the lighthouse; also, take a 4-wheel drive vehicle if possible and go for a drive down nearly-deserted beaches. Stop at one of the Bubba’s BBQ locations on Hatteras Island for lunch.
 - Brew-Thru – it’s not an OBX vacation if you don’t bring home a Brew-Thru t-shirt (multiple locations from Kitty Hawk southward on US 158 bypass)
 - Breakfast at Sam and Omie’s in Nags Head – good omelets, better Bloody Marys; also a good dinner place for seafood

- Deep sea fishing out of the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center (expensive, but worth it for a one-shot deal to catch dolphin (sorry, “mahi mahi”), big tuna and maybe even a marlin
- Doug Saul’s BBQ in Manteo – good eats done cheap (don’t let the name fool you; they have a great **seafood buffet!**)
- You like golf? They have golf!

Other Get-Aways:

Summer visits to ski resorts like Wintergreen (rent a condo, hike the hills, and enjoy the quiet)

Virginia Tech football games (if you can get a ticket!)

Washington, DC (take Amtrak from Newport News or Williamsburg and enjoy the ride instead of fighting I-64/I-95 traffic, and stay at a hotel that is within walking distance of a Metro station)

MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER (MSFC)

Updated by Steve Noneman

The Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., is one of NASA's largest and most diversified installations. The Marshall Center has been a key contributor to numerous significant NASA programs during the Agency's 45-plus-year history -- from the 1961 flight of the first U.S. astronaut into space, to the Apollo missions exploring the Moon, to development and operation of America's Space Shuttle fleet, and construction of and scientific discovery aboard the International Space Station.

Today, the Marshall Center is again contributing its collective expertise, ingenuity and energy as NASA and the nation begin carrying out the Vision for Space Exploration, which seeks to extend human presence across the Solar System.

Engineers and scientists at the Marshall Center use state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to accomplish NASA's mission. Marshall manages the key propulsion hardware and technologies of the Space Shuttle, develops the next generation of space transportation and propulsion systems, oversees science and hardware development for the International Space Station, and handles a variety of associated scientific endeavors to benefit space exploration and improve life here on Earth.

Web References:

<http://www.nasa.gov/centers/marshall/about/index.html>

<http://insideout.msfc.nasa.gov/>

About The Area

The Alabama Mountain Lakes region is a natural selection for fun! Enjoy some of America's finest sports fishing and camping. Experience the breathtaking natural beauty of the hills, rivers, and lakes. For the sightseer, there's history and inspiration at every turn. Imagine your hand on the pump at the famous Helen Keller home or strolling through the amazing Ave Maria Grotto.

Here are web sites where you can find lots of up-to-date information on Huntsville and the surrounding area:

<http://www.huntsville.org/>
<http://www.al.com/huntsville/>
<http://www.northalabama.org/>

Places to Live

Here are some web sites to help find a place to live:

<http://www.huntsvilleapartmentguide.com/>
http://www.apartmentguide.com/states/Alabama/Huntsville_Alabama.asp?wsv_qsGeoKey=1,3,193
<http://huntsville.rentclicks.com/>

Numerous apartments are within an easy commute to MSFC, shopping, etc. Rental homes are also plentiful. The preferred locations are Madison and Southeast Huntsville.

Schools

Huntsville City Schools: <http://www.hsv.k12.al.us/>
Madison City Schools: <http://www.madisoncity.k12.al.us/>
Madison County Schools: <http://www.madison.k12.al.us/default.htm>

Note: School calendars vary slightly . There are also numerous private schools.

Important Phone Numbers:

Telephone: BellSouth (256) 557-6500

Utilities: Huntsville Utilities (256) 535-1200

(Electricity, natural gas, and water)

Cable TV: Knology at 256-533-5353 or Comcast 256-288-0027

You may want to check on offers of bundled phone, internet, and cable TV.

Restaurants

The Huntsville area has many good restaurants. Like most metropolitan areas of our country, Huntsville is blessed with the usual selection of chain restaurants such as Friday's, Applebee's, Chili's, etc. Fortunately, a number of local eateries provide great food, unique dining experiences, and local flavor. Your dining experiences can range from really nice expensive places like *901 Franklin* or *Pauli's* to chain burgers at *Burger King*. Ask around or check the web for the latest information:

http://www.hellohuntsville.com/YP/sc_Huntsville_FoodDining.cfm

<http://www.huntsville.org/view.php?page=34>

North Alabama, like other place, has its own unique special foods and here is what you will hear about Bar-B-Que and Catfish.

If any two foods are representative of North Alabama, it is Bar-B-Que and Catfish. Shredded pork Bar-B-Que, ribs, and deep fried whole catfish (fillets are for sissies) are required as part of your Huntsville experience. If you don't raise your cholesterol level by at least 25 points during your stay, you ain't eatin' right. The following are just a few of the Bar-B-Que and Catfish places you should try.

- Beauregard's, 511B Jordan Lane, 837-2433 or 1851 University Drive, 512-0074
Wings, ribs, burgers
- Dreamland BBQ, 3855 University Drive, 539-RIBS
- Gibson Barbecue, 2 Huntsville locations, local atmosphere
- Greenbrier Bar-B-Que, Highway 20, Madison, original restaurant, great catfish
- Greenbrier Restaurant, 27028 Old Highway 20, original location of Greenbrier Bar-B-Que, lots of local atmosphere, great food, try both Greenbrier's and you can join in on the local debate over which is the best
- Thomas Pit Barbecue, Highway 72, Madison, slow but well worth the wait, local atmosphere
- Big Bob Gibson's, 6th Avenue, Decatur, THE BEST Bar-B-Que in North Alabama, make the drive

Local Flavor

The following are Huntsville eateries that will provide you a real local experience. Some are long time establishments, some are newer, and all have a unique flavor. Your stay will not be complete without trying a few of these.

- Duffy's Delicatessen, 2324 Whitesburg Drive, Huntsville, try the white chili
- Stanlieo's Sub Villas, 2 Huntsville locations, most unique subs in town
- Tenders, 2 locations, chicken tenders & fries, part of a small chain started in Auburn, Alabama
- Tim's Cajun Kitchen, 114 Jordan Lane, Huntsville, good, good, hot, hot, hot
- Terry's Pizza, 3 Huntsville locations, bikers, booze, best greasy pizza ever, extreme local experience

Things To Do/Visit

- U.S. Space & Rocket Center, I565, just East of Gate 9. World's largest space attraction, features U.S. Space Camp Training Center and Spacedome Omnimax theater (<http://www.ussrc.com/>)
- Monte Sano State Park, on top of Monte Sano mountain. Take University Drive east, it becomes Pratt Ave., which then becomes Bankhead Parkway. Includes Mansion/Museum, picnicking and hiking trails.
- Huntsville *Stars* AA minor league baseball
- Tennessee Valley *Vipers* arena football
- Huntsville *Havoc* pro hockey
- Big Spring Park, downtown Huntsville.
- Alabama Constitution Village Park
- Twickenham Historical District
- Huntsville/Madison County Botanical Garden - 112 acre garden
- Burritt Museum and Pioneer Village
- Huntsville Museum of Art
- Historic Huntsville Depot Museum
- Huntsville Depot Trolley
- Von Braun Astronomical Society Planetarium
- Panoply - Huntsville's Fantastic Festival of the Performing and Visual Arts (<http://www.panoply.org/>)
- Spirit of Alabama - Memorial Day weekend in Decatur, AL with festivities including fireworks and hot air balloon races
- Big Spring Jam - festival of music usually held in September
- Ocoee River with whitewater rafting 1 1/2 hours away in Tennessee
- Tennessee Aquarium 2 hours away in Chattanooga, TN
- Nashville, TN and the Grand Old Opry, 2 hours away
- Birmingham Zoo, 1 1/2 hours away
- Atlanta, GA is less than 4 hours away with professional sports, Six Flags over GA, Zoo, Stone Mountain Park and much, much more.
- Gulf coast beaches are approximately 6 hours away.
- Redstone Arsenal has many activities and facilities that can be used by NASA employees. The base has a 27 Hole golf course, flying club, several exercise facilities, hobby shops (auto, woodworking, crafts, etc.) and restaurants/clubs. Club information can be obtained via the Redstone Web site.

Colleges/Universities

- University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) (256) 824-3000
- Alabama A&M University (256) 851-5000
- Calhoun Community College, some classes taught in Huntsville (256) 890-4700
- Athens State College, some classes taught in Huntsville
- Florida Institute of Technology, classes taught on Redstone Arsenal

Past contributors to this chapter:

*Andrew J. Eckel
Karen Smith
Megan McCluer
Tim Castellano
Don Shick
Valerie A. Mahaffey
Forrest E. Lumpkin
Gregory K. Schmidt
Shari-Beth Nadell
Masashi Mizukami
Bob Curry
Walter Feitshans
Greg Shell
Thomas D. Tokmenko
Sharon M. Wong
Pam Bookman
Patricia M. Doty*

*Chan Kim
Alexander D. Pline
Juan C. Rivera
Jeffrey G. Schreiber
Gail Wade
T. Harold Robertson
Janette C. Gervin
Meg Tuma
Daniel R. Glover
Carlos A. Liceaga
John P. Lynch
Leif L. Grotos
Vincent Johnson
Patricia L. Pahlavani
Andy Prince
Mark Collard
Nancy J. Gibson*

*Betsy Carter
Carolyn Mariano
Al Mariano
Xuan Nguyen
Bill Pannell
Debbie Morris
Tricia L. Romanowski
Kelli F. Willshire
Faith Vilas
Jim O'Donnell
Steven J. Lambing
Merri Anne Stowe
Richard Kuhns
Lisa Malone
Linda T. Hannett
Kenneth S. Monroe*

Back to [Chapter 5](#) | Back to [Table of Contents](#) | Forward to [Chapter 7](#)