November 2026

# TRAJECTORIES

*Official Newsletter of the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum*

**Quote of the Month:**

"There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle." – Albert Einstein



Three decades after its dedication, the Schriever Gallery remains a tribute to the ingenuity, determination, and vision that propelled America into the Space Age, preserving an extraordinary legacy for generations of visitors to discover.

## Celebrating 30 Years

Thirty years ago, on 20 September 1996, the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum celebrated a milestone with the opening of its Schriever Gallery, honoring one of America's most influential space and missile pioneers, General Bernard Schriever. The guest of honor? General Schriever himself!

Located within the Exhibit Hall at historic Launch Complex 26, the gallery has spent three decades showcasing the remarkable evolution of American military spaceflight. Exhibits feature Schriever's uniform, ballistic missiles, launch vehicles, military satellites, and ambitious programs like Dyna-Soar and the Manned Orbiting Laboratory.

Among its treasures is Gemini 2, on loan from the Smithsonian Institution. Originally flown by NASA in 1965, the spacecraft flew again in 1966 during an Air Force test, becoming America's first reused spacecraft. Visitors can still see the charred remains of the Air Force insignia on its exterior!

## DID YOU KNOW?




The Douglas Thor intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) was specifically designed to fit inside a C-124 Globemaster II cargo aircraft! Measuring 65 feet long and 8 feet in diameter, Thor's dimensions allowed the U.S. Air Force to rapidly transport missiles overseas. During the Cold War, this capability proved essential for deploying nuclear-armed Thors to Great Britain, positioning them within striking distance of the Soviet Union without relying on slower ocean transportation.

CAPE CANAVERAL SPACE FORCE MUSEUM

# Message from the Director

## James W. Draper




Artificial Intelligence (AI), or Super Intelligence (SI) in the federal sector, has become the latest boogeyman in our seemingly endless, doom-and-gloom news cycle. Depending on whom you ask, AI will either revolutionize civilization or bring about its downfall. The museum profession has been particularly vocal, with many institutions adopting restrictive policies and some prominent voices treating AI as an existential threat to our field.

I see things differently.

Throughout history, technological innovation has been met with skepticism, resistance, and sometimes outright fear. Computers, the internet, and smartphones all generated predictions of societal upheaval. Yet each fundamentally transformed how we work, communicate, and understand our world. AI represents another extraordinary chapter in that continuing technological revolution.

At the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum, we have chosen to embrace its potential responsibly.

We are already using AI to develop creative outreach activities featuring Rupert the Space Armadillo, assist with historical research by organizing information from primary sources, conceptualize exhibit spaces, refine interpretive text, and much more. These applications have saved our small team hundreds, potentially thousands, of hours. That translates into more time devoted to preserving artifacts, developing exhibits, and sharing America's remarkable space and missile heritage.

Of course, the concerns surrounding AI are legitimate. Museums are entrusted with preserving authenticity, accuracy, and historical integrity. Our credibility depends upon that trust, and we will never compromise it for convenience.

We will not use AI to manipulate historic photographs or videos in ways that misrepresent the historical record. Any digitally enhanced imagery will be clearly identified. Historical claims will continue to be verified against original sources. AI may assist our research, but it will never replace professional judgment, scholarly rigor, or the expertise of our staff and volunteers.

There is another important consideration. AI cannot independently access historical materials that remain undigitized. Much of our collection, representing more than seven decades of Cape Canaveral history, exists beyond the digital world. That makes our ongoing digitization efforts more important than ever. By preserving and making these resources accessible, we can help ensure that future generations, and emerging technologies, have a more complete historical record to draw upon.

Our museum exists because generations of Americans refused to accept technological limitations. They experimented, innovated, took calculated risks, and occasionally failed spectacularly. Ultimately, they changed the world.

Shouldn't a museum dedicated to that very spirit approach innovation with the same curiosity?

AI is a tool. Its value depends upon the integrity, imagination, and judgment of those using it. We can fear the future or help shape it.

I know which path our museum will take.

# The Curator's Corner

## with Sabra Gossett



Did you know?!: Brevard County is home to an extraordinary collection of museums, historic homes, and cultural institutions. From the earliest Indigenous history and pioneer settlements to military heritage, environmental conservation, and America's journey into space, the stories of the Space Coast are as diverse as the communities that make up our county. Helping bring those stories together is Museums of Brevard (MOB).

Museums of Brevard is a collaborative network of museums, historic sites, and cultural organizations working together to promote and preserve Brevard County's rich historical and cultural heritage.

The roots of Museums of Brevard stretch back to the early 2000s, when local museums recognized the value of working together to increase public awareness of the county's cultural resources. By October 2005, a countywide coalition included 17 participating organizations, continuing to evolve into 2020 with 23 participating organizations.

On January 9, 2023, Museums of Brevard, Inc. was formally incorporated as a Florida nonprofit corporation, providing a new organizational foundation for the longstanding collaborative effort. Today, MOB represents 21 member institutions and sites throughout Brevard County and operates as a designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Participating organizations interpret everything from local history, historic architecture, and pioneer life to African American heritage, military history, natural science, environmental conservation, and space exploration. Together, these institutions offer residents and visitors opportunities to discover the people, places, and events that shaped the Space Coast.

MOB also provides something equally important: a professional network where museum representatives can exchange ideas, share resources, promote one another's programs, and learn from each other's experiences.

Education is an important part of MOB's mission. Through its collaboration with Brevard Public Schools and the Education & Citizenship Armed Forces Coalition of the Space Coast (ECAC), MOB participates in the Museum Passport Program. The program encourages students to visit participating museums and historic sites, extending classroom learning into the community. Students who visit at least 10 of the 17 participating passport locations can earn a recognition certificate from the Brevard County School Board.

Another educational initiative is the Brevard Historical Scholars Competition, a countywide, museum-mentored academic competition for students in grades 7–12. Students research a topic connected to Brevard County and compete in one of five categories.

MOB also brings the community together through special events, including its annual Holiday Tour of Historic Homes. This popular tradition invites visitors to experience some of Brevard County's historic properties decorated for the holiday season. Beyond providing a memorable holiday experience, the tour raises awareness of local historic properties and supports the preservation work of participating organizations.

Whether you are a lifelong resident, or a recent arrival, there is always something new to discover. Take the time to explore the remarkable history right here in our own county.

*(Continued on next page.)*

So, where are they?! Look closely, one may be in your backyard!

From North to South…

<u>Titusville</u>
American Space Museum & U.S. Space Walk of Fame
Historic Pritchard House
Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
North Brevard Historical Museum
Valiant Air Command: Warbird Museum

<u>Cape Canaveral</u>
Cape Canaveral Lighthouse
Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum (Sands Space History Center)

<u>Cocoa</u>
Brevard Museum of History & Natural Sciences
Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History and Culture

<u>Merritt Island</u>
Brevard Veterans Memorial Center Park & Museum
Field Manor Homestead
Sams House at Pine Island Conservation Area

<u>Cocoa Beach</u>
Florida Surf Museum
Museum of Dinosaurs and Ancient Cultures

<u>Rockledge</u>
Lawndale: Senator H.S. Williams Home

<u>Melbourne</u>
Green Gables at Historic Riverview Village
Historic Rossetter House Museum & Gardens
Liberty Bell Memorial Museum
Vietnam War Exhibit & Education Center

<u>Grant</u>
Bensen House

To learn more, explore MOB's website at www.mobfl.org.

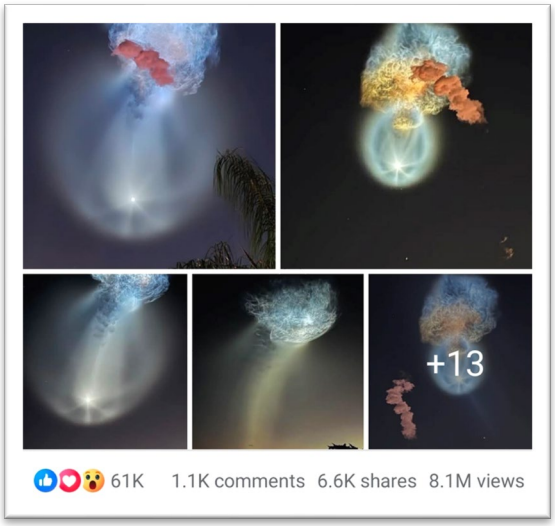
MOB
Museums of Brevard



# Museum Updates and News

## A Space Jellyfish Goes Viral!

SpaceX's October 13 CRS-35 launch created a spectacular "space jellyfish" as its high-altitude exhaust plume caught the rising sun! The Museum shared stunning photos from across the region and beyond, and the internet went wild! With over 8 MILLION views worldwide, the Facebook post became the most successful in Museum history, demonstrating the extraordinary power of social media to share the wonders of spaceflight! *(To the right is a mobile screengrab of the viral post from Facebook.)*







## Mascots on a Mission!

Meet Rupert the Space Armadillo's fascinating friends in our latest temporary exhibit at the Sands Space History Center! Explore the colorful histories of military and space mascots, from boosting morale and building traditions to making history themselves. These characters have stories worth telling! Special thanks to Roger McCormick for curating this fun and informative exhibit. *(To the left is an image of some of the exhibit's mascot highlights.)*

## The Space Race Started Here

Museum Director Jamie Draper joined a distinguished panel at the Orlando Science Center to explore Central Florida's pivotal role in the Space Race. Hosted by the Orlando Sentinel as part of its 150th anniversary celebration, the discussion highlighted Public Law 60 as the foundational legislation behind Florida's Space Coast and the military origins of America's space program. The presentation was enthusiastically received. *(To the right is a view of the panel inside The Dome at the Orlando Science Center.)*



# Museum Updates and News



## Making Headlines

As part of the Orlando Sentinel's 150th anniversary celebration, reporter Richard Tribou visited the Museum for a special tour with Curator Sabra Gossett. The visit inspired a feature article, "How Central Florida Became 'The Gateway to the Moon.'" Sabra's insights and expertise were highlighted throughout, bringing our Museum's remarkable collections and history to readers across Central Florida! *(To the left is a view of Sabra showing off features of the LC-26 Blockhouse.)*

## Tabling Success

Our Museum team and Rupert the Space Armadillo took outreach to new heights at the Space Week Expo, held beneath Space Shuttle Atlantis at Kennedy Space Center! Staff and volunteers connected with hundreds of space enthusiasts of all ages, sharing our Museum's incredible history and mission. Special thanks to our dedicated volunteers for expanding our reach and bringing Cape history to new audiences. *(To the right is a photo of Kevin Kelly and Carl Claunch staffing the table at KSC.)*







## Lights, Camera, Lighthouse

The Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation hosted a special watch party at the Sands Space History Center, debuting WUCF PBS's Florida Road Trip: Florida Lighthouses episode to an enthusiastic crowd! Guests enjoyed food, drinks, activities, and our fascinating exhibits. The successful event celebrated Florida's lighthouse heritage while showcasing the strong partnership between the Museum and the Lighthouse Foundation. *(To the left is a view of the crowd enjoying the episode premier.)*

# Museum Updates and News

## Big Ideas Meet Space History

The Sands Space History Center welcomed another exciting TAAD (Technology, Aerospace, Aviation and Defense) event hosted by the Space Coast Chamber of Commerce in October! Featured speakers Megan Lewis DaSilva, James Hinds, and Derek Gores captivated a large audience. Museum Director Jamie Draper introduced guests to the Museum's mission and operations, along with a fascinating look at the often-overlooked military origins of America's space programs. *(To the right is a view of the "full house" for the exciting event.)*






## Size Matters

Museum Curator Sabra Gossett joined Miranda Helton (Space Center Houston) at the 2026 Southeastern Museums Conference to tackle the unique challenges of caring for massive museum artifacts. Their session, "Size Matters: Caring for Macro Collections," explored the complexities of working with oversized aerospace, military, and maritime collections. Drawing on real-world experience, they shared practical solutions and valuable lessons for museum professionals facing larger-than-life preservation challenges. *(To the left is a photo of Sabra showing some Museum highlights on artifact care.)*

## Where it all Began

NASA astronaut and Artemis II pilot Victor Glover recently visited the Museum alongside SLD 45 Public Affairs! A veteran of Crew-1 and ISS Expeditions 64 and 65, Glover met our Museum team and made a new friend in Rupert the Space Armadillo. His visit to historic Launch Complex 26 brought him to the very site where America entered the Space Age in 1958! *(To the right is a photo of Glover posing with the Museum team at LC-26.)*



# Museum Updates and News



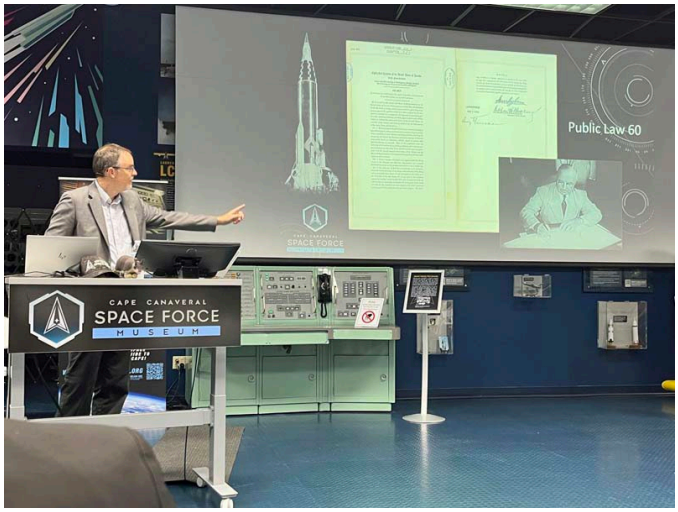

## Big Tours, Big Fun

Our Museum volunteers have been going above and beyond supporting large group tours! Recent highlights include an AFTAC visit on October 16 and Holy Trinity Episcopal Academy on October 29. Both involved multiple buses, numerous visitors, and tours across several historic sites. These complex operations showcase the dedication, teamwork, and expertise of our incredible volunteers, who bring Cape Canaveral's remarkable history to life! *(To the left is a view of Carl D'Alessandro sharing Cape history.)*

## Dressed for the Future

Museum Curator Sabra Gossett and her team completed a new uniform display in the Exhibit Hall's Space Force Gallery! Featuring the service dress uniform introduced in January 2026, the exhibit showcases the distinctive identity and evolving traditions of America's newest military branch. Modeled after Master Sergeant Maria Seybourne, the uniform represents an important milestone in establishing the Space Force's unique culture and heritage. *(To the right is a photo of the new uniform display.)*




## Space Coast Origin Stories

On October 6, Museum Director Jamie Draper took audiences on an epic journey through Cape Canaveral's remarkable transformation during the latest CAPE Series presentation at the Sands Space History Center. From an isolated stretch of Florida coastline to the World's Premier Gateway to Space, the presentation challenged conventional perceptions of how America's space program began and evolved. *(To the left is an image of Jamie offering perspective on Public Law 60 during the presentation.)*

# Museum Updates and News



## One Remarkable Flag

A new display in the Sands Space History Center lobby has truly been out of this world! Presented to the Museum by Brig. Gen. Nick Hague, this U.S. Space Force flag flew aboard Crew-9 to the International Space Station in 2024–2025, traveling an incredible 72 million miles during 2,736 Earth orbits! The framed display bears the signature of Crew-9 Commander Hague himself. *(To the left is a view of the new piece on display in the History Center lobby.)*

## Global Innovation

The Sands Space History Center welcomed a Saudi Arabian delegation hosted by the World Innovation Network and U.S. State Department. The visitors met with local aerospace and academic organizations to explore international collaboration and sustainable space economies. Museum Director Jamie Draper shared the origins of America's space and missile programs through a guided introduction to historic exhibits and artifacts, connecting the Cape's pioneering past with space exploration's global future. *(To the right is a photo of Robert Kats from WIN addressing the group.)*






## First of the Season

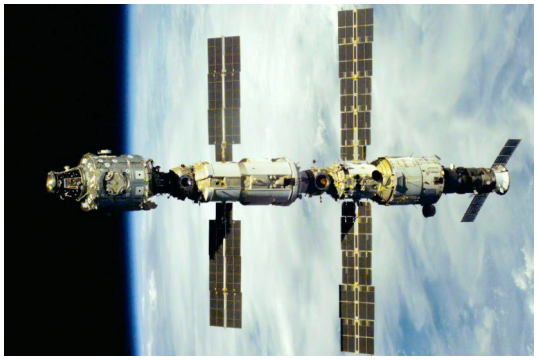
Our Museum volunteers reunited on September 14 for their first meeting following the summer hiatus! The gathering combined an indoor picnic, courtesy of Diane Manahan, with important Museum updates and plenty of camaraderie. Volunteer Tricia Booher capped off the meeting with an engaging presentation on the Mercury Program astronauts. A great start to another busy season of preserving and sharing Cape Canaveral's incredible history! *(To the left is Tricia sharing some Mercury history with the audience.)*

# Rupert's Launch Pad

10...
9...
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LIFT OFF!

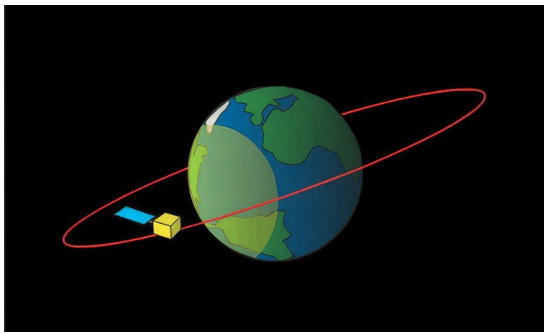
## Still Flying High

As long as I have been alive, and maybe you too, people have worked and lived on the International Space Station. Nov. 2, 2000 was when the first crew arrived and the ISS has been occupied ever since then. It was much smaller (see picture) than compared to when I was there earlier this year.



## Word of the Month

*"orbit"*
[OR-bit]
The curved path that a planet, satellite, or spacecraft moves as it circles around another object, such as a star, planet, or moon.



## Rupert Remembers

Nothing prepared my armadillo grandparent ancestors for the flames and sound of the first-ever Apollo Saturn V launch. It was on Nov. 9, 1967, and was the first launch from Kennedy Space Center. All previous Florida launches were from what is now Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. Many were impressive, but the launch of Apollo 4 was something special. Buildings shook. You could feel the launch, not just see it. The Saturn 5 is the rocket that flew our astronauts to the Moon.



## My Favorite Things

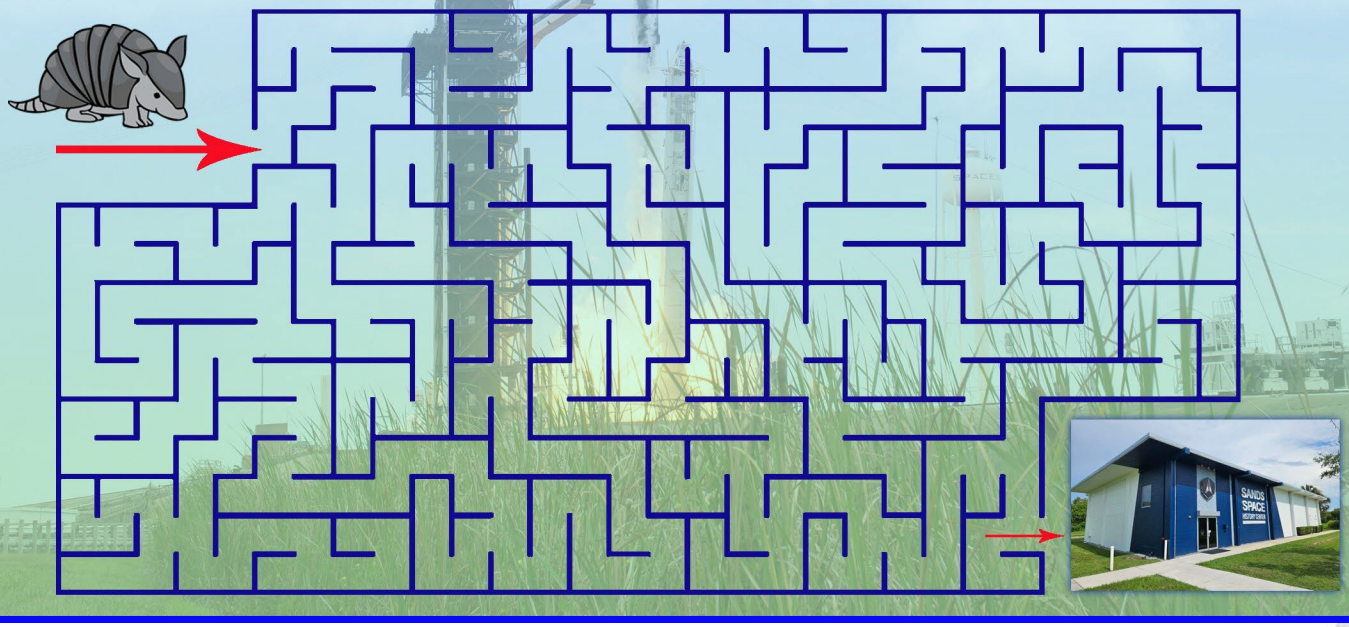




It doesn't look very impressive, just a beat-up old tank that looks out of place compared to the colorful missiles sitting nearby inside Hangar C at the Cape. But its story is one of the more impressive ones in space program history. That metal cylinder is the only recovered piece of a rocket used to launch astronauts into space until the Space Shuttle began flying in 1981. It was part of the first stage of the Titan II rocket (see part circled at right) that launched Gordon Cooper and Pete Conrad aboard Gemini 5 on Aug. 21, 1965. To read the full story of this unique museum display go online and visit the webpage here – https://ccspacemuseum.org/artifacts/gemini-v-booster-segment/.

## Rupert's amazing mission

Rupert became the world's first space armadillo after flying to the International Space Station in 2025 and returning to Earth last January. Rupert is continuing his mission to inspire others to reach for the stars. Help him find his way home to the Sands Space History Center at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.



# Our Museum Family

**Museum Staff:**

James Draper, Museum Director
Sabra Gossett, Museum Curator
Rupert the Space Armadillo, Mascot

**Museum Volunteer Association:**

Bill Jelen, Chairperson
Susan Dabrowski, Vice Chairperson
Jack Kennedy, Secretary

**Executive Committee Members:**

Raymond Sands, Chairman
Stephen Houser, Vice Chairman
Rob Quigg, Treasurer
Roger McCormick, Secretary

**Board Members:**

Christopher Wirth
Victor Latavish
Tim Oliver
Joey Genovesi
Jim Banke *(Honorary Member)*

**Foundation Employees:**

Deborah Allison, Foundation Services Manager
Sharon Rodriguez, Executive Assistant



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