

# Chinese GAS Delegation Visits Goddard

by Dolores Beasley

**D**ebris, paramecia and paraffin were on the minds of the four Chinese students visiting Goddard July 23. All are elements of experiments that the students will fly on space shuttles as part of the Get Away Special (GAS) program.

The visit allowed the students to see for themselves how their experiments will be placed aboard the shuttle and to meet with Goddard personnel responsible for their payloads.

As well as the students, the Chinese delegation included Fu Bingchen, Deputy Secretary General of the Chinese Society of Astronautics, Chen Xueming, project manager of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Aero-space Industry, interpreters and several members of the Chinese press.

After a welcome by Thomas Huber, Director of the Engineering Directorate, the GAS program was explained to the delegation by Clarke Prouty, project manager. The group was given an overview at the Visitor Center GAS display by Larry Thomas, technical liaison officer.

Most of the students' questions focused on the logistics of their particular experiments, said Joanne Lee, Code 743, the technical manager for two of the experiments. The students were told that they should return to the U.S. about two months before the launch for the integration of their payload. "We won't work on your payload unless you're here," Prouty assured them.

Goddard's Chinese-American Club

treated the delegation to lunch, after which the group was given a tour of the center.

## Selected Students

The control of debris in space is the subject of an experiment designed by Chinese student Wang Nian-Qing. His experiment and that of fellow student Tian Chun-Liang are scheduled to be aboard STS-42, a Department of Defense mission. The experiments represent the first time a payload from China will be carried aboard a space shuttle.

The students were selected in 1986 from among 7,000 who sent in proposals of experiments to be carried out as part of NASA's GAS program.

The other two Chinese students, Chi Yusong, and Yu Wei, were chosen from among 29 finalists after the second call for proposals in 1988 which attracted 11,000 entries.

A student from Hong Kong, Li Li-Wei was also at Goddard July 23. His experiment and those of the other two students will be on a later shuttle flight.

After visiting Goddard the students are scheduled to go to Kennedy Space Center, FL, to view the assembly and integration areas their payloads are most likely to use.

The GAS program provides individuals and organizations an opportunity to send scientific research and development experiments aboard a space shuttle orbiter for a modest fee on a space-available basis. Since 1982, Get Away Specials have carried experiments by such disparate organi-

zations as a large aerospace firm and a public school district.

## Chinese Experiments

The Chinese experiments scheduled for STS-42 are currently in the process of being assembled and tested in China. They involve 1) control of debris in the shuttle cabin under microgravity (nearly weightless) conditions and 2) the solidification of Wood's metal and paraffin in space.

For the first experiment, 25 small lumps of different materials to be used as "space debris" or "particulate" will be stored in a container, which has a side wall covered with a sheet of adhesive paper. A movie camera will be mounted in the container to photograph the motion of debris upon release in the microgravity environment and to record the moment when they make contact with the side wall and are captured.

In the second experiment, two low melt-point materials (Wood's metal and paraffin) will be premixed in various ratios in solid form on Earth and remelted in space, then left to cool and resolidify. Tom Dixon, Code 743.2, is the technical manager for both experiments, which are scheduled for a shuttle flight in 1991.

The students' month-long U.S. visit was organized by the American Association for Promotion of Science in China (AAPSC) and the Chinese Aeronautical Society. In China, the co-sponsors are the Chinese Society of Astronautics, and the Chinese Association for Science and Technology.

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the Montgomery County Road Runners Club.

Fifteen members of GROC, Goddard employees and contractors, took the time to carry the torch: Mark Baugh, Code 727.3; Claude Bell, Integral Systems, Inc., Code 511; Peter Hui, Advanced Technology and Research Corporation, Code 720; Emil Kirwan, Code 542; Jack Koslosky, Code 511.1; Grace Lee, Code 711.3; Franz Lengenfelder, Code 541.1; Loren Linstrom, Code 720.1; Tom Page, Code 440; Bob Phillips, Delta OLS, Code 284.9; Valary Quimby, Daughter of Pat Quimby, Code 530.3; Jim Wall, Code 313.2; Richie Weiss, Code 410; Lani Williams, Advanced Technology and Research Corporation, Code 705; Lo Yin, Code 682.



**RETIREMENT MAKES A NEW MAN**—Retired Center Director Dr. John W. Townsend, Jr., wears flowing tresses as a picture of his former self looks on. Dr. Townsend's retirement party, on July 12 at the GEWA Recreation Center drew several hundred employees. Along with the stylish jurist's wig, thoughtfully provided by Chief Counsel Larry Watson, Dr. Townsend was honored with many gifts, including the wit of GSFC Staff who got up to speak.

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