



# Former NASA Leader Stephen G. Jurczyk Passes Away on Thanksgiving Day

December 2023

Obituary reposted from <https://everloved.com/life-of/stephen-jurczyk/obituary>

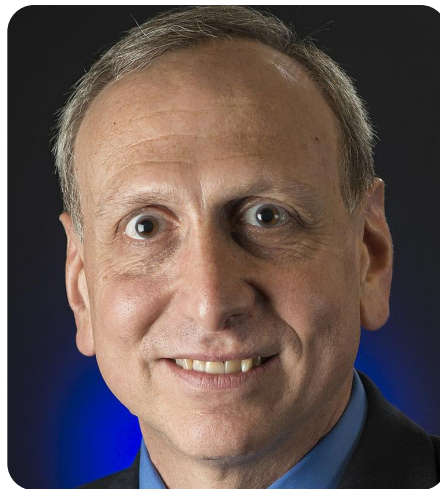
Stephen G. Jurczyk, 61, of Fredericksburg, VA, passed away surrounded by his family on Thursday, November 23 (Thanksgiving Day) from pancreatic cancer.

Stephen was born on February 20, 1962, to Walter and Jean Jurczyk in New York, N.Y. He graduated from the University of Virginia where he received Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Electrical Engineering in 1984 and 1986.

In 1991, Stephen met Ann Strange on a bike ride on the Blue Ridge Parkway and through the Shenandoah Valley. He knew he wanted to marry her after just the third date. Ann and Stephen wed in 1992, and went on to have two beautiful daughters, Kim and Sarah.

Stephen had a long and successful 32-year career at The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and served as Acting Administrator from January 20 to May 3, 2021. Prior to that position, he served as the Associate Administrator, the agency's highest-ranking civil servant. As Associate Administrator, he led NASA throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and oversaw the successful landing of the Perseverance rover on Mars, the launch of NASA's SpaceX Crew-2 to the International Space Station, the return of Crew-1 back to Earth, and many other astounding accomplishments.

Before being named Associate Administrator, Stephen served in a number of leadership roles at the agency,



Stephen G. Jurczyk

including as Associate Administrator of the Space Technology Mission Directorate and Director of NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia.

Stephen was the recipient of the NASA Distinguished Service Medal, two Outstanding Leadership Medals, the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executive in 2006, and the Presidential Rank Award for Distinguished Executive in 2016 – the highest honors attainable for federal government leadership. He was also a 2021 Service to America Medal "Sammies" finalist, one of the highest honors for federal civil servants, in the management excellence category for his leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even after retiring from NASA in May 2021, Stephen continued to contribute to the field of space exploration as the President and CEO at Quantum Space, focusing on lunar space exploration.

Stephen was incredibly well-loved by his colleagues, peers, friends, and family. Known for being a dedicated civil servant, a collaborative leader, a tremendous mentor, and a caring father, Stephen was also a passionate New York sports fan and could often be found on the couch screaming at the Giants for losing yet another game to the Cowboys. He was generous with his jokes, giving with his time, committed beyond belief to his family and work, and strived to live his life with grace, compassion, patience, and understanding.

Stephen was predeceased by Walt Jurczyk (father), Karen Jurczyk (sister), and Jean Jurczyk (mother). Stephen is survived by his loving wife, Ann, and his two daughters, Kim and Sarah. The loss of Stephen G. Jurczyk is deeply felt by his family, friends, and colleagues. ♦

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## President's Report

*By Dan Palumbo, President*

The LAA Board has taken on the significant task of updating our procedure for accepting applications for membership to the LAA. At issue is the LAA By-laws requirements for membership listed in Article III(a)

- a) All former NACA LMAL, NASA LaRC, or U. S. Army civil service, and contractor employees who have either retired or left employment at LaRC in good standing.

It was when I was amending this clause to open LAA membership to any former NASA employee (as decided by the Board), that I first thought we might have to verify the non-Langley applicant's claim of former NASA employment to protect against someone becoming an LAA member and getting access to a six-month badge under false pretenses. Moments later, I realized we needed to do the same verification for those who claim to be former Langley employees.

I conferred with NASA Langley Security who confirmed that their willingness to issue 6-month badges to LAA members is based on the assumption that the LAA was confirming the applicants met the requirements as stated in our By-laws, i.e., that they were former civil servants.

As I was in the position of forwarding members' badge requests to our NASA liaison for submission to Badge and Pass, it was my responsibility make sure the persons requesting a badge were listed in our roster as LAA members. But now, considering what I learned from Security, I felt I could not assert that those listed in our roster met the requirements for membership in the LAA, as defined in our By-laws. To my knowledge, the LAA has never verified an applicant's claim of NASA employment.

I decided to suspend badging and bring the matter before the Board. There was initially quite the kerfuffle, but I am pleased to report that the Board came together to support the formation of an ad hoc committee to (1) identify acceptable methods of verification, and (2) propose methods by which those methods might be implemented.


As of this writing, badge requests are now open to only those seeking to renew their existing badges. We expect to open badging to everyone by mid-December.

Fortunately, you don't need a badge to attend the Holiday Luncheon which will be held at Harpoon Larry's on J. Clyde Morris Blvd. on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The Luncheon will start at 11:30. We will order from Larry's menu and pay individually. I do need to provide a headcount, though. If you plan to attend, use the link below to register.

<https://forms.office.com/r/uN-RQ6RQuGu>.

Hope to see you there,

Dan ♦



The LAA Newsletter is published quarterly. Please submit articles for publication to [rick.ross@verizon.net](mailto:rick.ross@verizon.net) no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of February, May, August, or November for publication the following month. Please contact [mhueschen@gmail.com](mailto:mhueschen@gmail.com) to subscribe or unsubscribe.

## Recent Trip to Africa

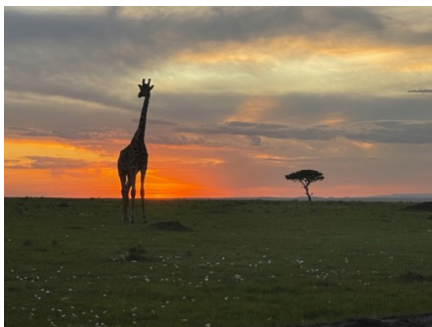
By Ray Rhew

My wife and I recently traveled to two countries in Africa, Kenya and Egypt. Africa was on our bucket list and we finally made it! Each country was very different, one for scenery and wildlife and the other filled with history of the ancient civilizations.

We enjoyed learning about some Kenyan culture through their tribal history museums and demonstrations as well as their safari animals (not in a zoo!). We went on game drives, in a jeep, on lands that are part of the great migration, Maasai Mara National Reserve, with a few pictures below. We were able to see four of the big five (lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo, and rhino (no rhino spotted)) and five of the five uglies (hyena, stork, vulture, wildebeest and warthog). We went on our first balloon ride, which was probably my favorite, given how quiet and smooth the flight experience was in combination with the scenery below us.



Maasai Mara balloon view



Giraffe posing at sunset

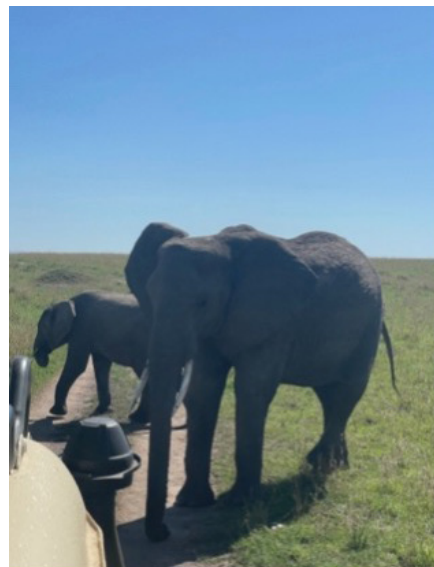
## Treasurer's Report

By Ray Rhew, Treasurer

A quick update from your Treasurer begins with a thank you to Dan, Geoff, Dick, Kathy, and Rick for their help and patience bringing me up to speed on the Treasurer's responsibilities. I have a process for keeping up with our finances but am always open to new ideas if you have any to share. Below are a few additional items.

A big thanks to Geoff Tennille as well for the smooth execution of the Alumni picnic this summer. I was unfortunately unable to attend but my understanding is that a good time was had by all.

In Egypt, we were overwhelmed with the ancient temples and tombs dedicated to the past pharaohs, kings, and queens. The sheer scale and engineering required to build these still amazes all who see them. Additionally, during a bus ride to the southern part of the country, we were able to see their commitment to claiming some of the desert for farm land through methodically bringing in water that takes approximately six to eight years to develop productive crops. ♦



Elephant crossing check

A reminder that we are getting ready to start a new calendar year, and with that a request for members to begin thinking about paying their dues for 2024.

We will look at developing a detailed budget plan to help guide our decisions for utilizing our funds for the greatest impact based on our By-laws.

In closing, I look forward to meeting more members and working with everyone in the coming years to make our experience within the LAA a great one. ♦



The pyramids at Giza



King Tut—Valley of the Kings



The Great Temple of Abu Simbel



# Supercomputing: NASA Langley to ORNL × 2

By Olaf Storaasli

Remember Langley’s [CDC 6600](#), your [first supercomputer](#) with a record clock speed of 100 nanoseconds? Its speed to perform my finite element structural analysis of our first Viking Mars Lander and advanced aerospace vehicles amazed me as I began my Langley career in 1970. On joining ORNL in 2005, I visited [Bob Ward](#), LaRC ACD expert (1966–1974) who preceded me to ORNL (1974–1995), now a University of Tennessee Computer Science professor. A [massively parallel computing pioneer](#), Bob founded ORNL’s [Computer Science and Mathematics Division](#), now my new home. Having similar Langley careers and professional goals, Bob shared with me his vision to make ORNL #1 in supercomputing—which it [still is today](#).



Professor Robert Ward, LaRC→ORNL→UT

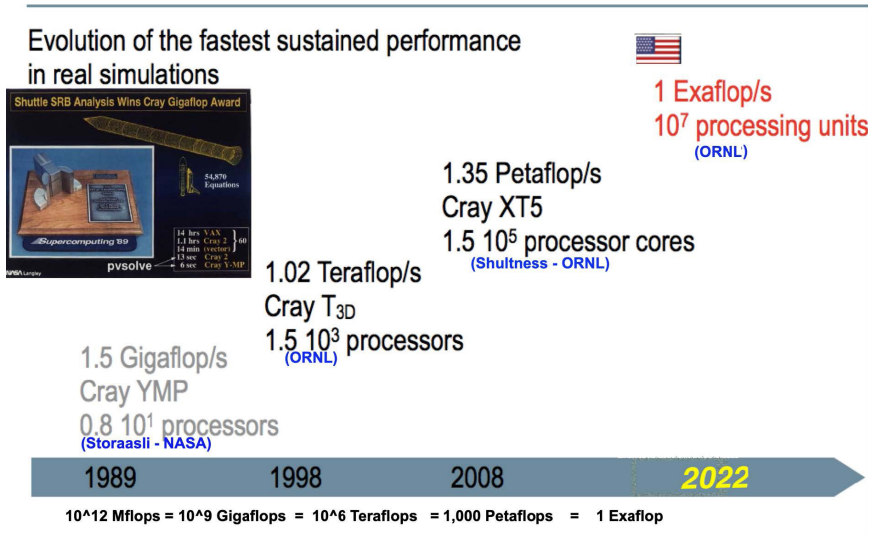
I asked: *How did you do it?* Humbly, like [Keith Glennan](#), the first NASA Administrator, Bob said his key was hiring experts like Al Geist (MPI) and Jack Dongarra who shared his vision. Bob said that Langley taught him to avoid the complexity and cost of “big iron” (such as CDCs and Crays) via massively parallel computers, a vision I shared building NASA’s [Finite](#)

[Element Machine](#) at Langley in 1982.

As we talked, I became more impressed with Bob’s vision and accomplishments and asked: *Have you shared this supercomputer history in a paper or book?* He said he has not as he prefers pursuing current and future challenges to the past.

Bob’s energy, ideas, love of teaching, and collaborating with peers is what I hope we all share. Few Langley (or 14,000+ recent Denver [Supercomputing 23 Conference](#) attendees) realize the key role our fellow LaRC alum had leading our supercomputing world. Now you know! I’m happy to share that Bob is joining LAA. ♦

## HPC Speedup: 1000X per Decade



TOP10 System - November 2023

**R<sub>max</sub>** and **R<sub>peak</sub>** values are in PFlop/s. For more details about other fields, check the TOP500 description.

**R<sub>peak</sub>** values are calculated using the advertised clock rate of the CPU. For the efficiency of the systems you should take into account the Turbo CPU clock rate where it applies.

Rank	System	Cores	R <sub>max</sub> (PFlop/s)	R <sub>peak</sub> (PFlop/s)	Power (kW)
1	<b>Frontier</b> - HPE Cray EX235a, AMD Optimized 3rd Generation EPYC 64C 2GHz, AMD Instinct MI250X, Slingshot-11, HPE DOE/SC/Oak Ridge National Laboratory United States	8,699,904	1,194.00	1,679.82	22,703
2	<b>Aurora</b> - HPE Cray EX - Intel Exascale Compute Blade, Xeon CPU Max 9470 52C 2.4GHz, Intel Data Center GPU Max, Slingshot-11, Intel DOE/SC/Argonne National Laboratory United States	4,742,808	585.34	1,059.33	24,687
3	<b>Eagle</b> - Microsoft NDv5, Xeon Platinum 8480C 48C 2GHz, NVIDIA H100, NVIDIA	1,123,200	561.20	846.84	

## VASBA 2023 Gala

By Jack Schlank; Photos: Paul Harrison Photography



*VASBA Gala reception*

The Virginia AeroSpace Business Association held its annual Gala on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. Aligned once again with the AUVSI Air Mobility Exposition, the Gala is VASBA's main fundraiser, with proceeds used for both STEM related K-12 activities and college scholarships. The evening started with a reception in the City Center Marriott Rotunda, with music provided by NASA LaRC alumni Nick Kepics and his jazz band.



*Nick Kepics jazz band*

The festivities then moved into the dining hall, where the rest of the evening was emceed by Ms. Nicole Livas from the Channel 13News Now team. Nicole kicked off the dinner with the introduction of VASBA President, Jonathan Kelly, who welcomed all the members of industry, NASA, local and state government, and the military who were all in attendance. Then he invited NASA LaRC Associate Center Director Lisa Ziehmman to say a few words. She acknowledged VASBA celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and some of the many achievements it has realized throughout the past decade.

During the dinner, we enjoyed the Strolling Silver Strings as they performed many diverse songs. This



*The Strolling Silver Strings*

group is made up of students from several Southside high schools and are always a favorite of our attendees.

We capped off the evening with our keynote speaker, Virginia Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears. VASBA is the Virginia State Chapter of the Aerospace States Association, (ASA), and Lt. Governor Sears is the Virginia state representative for the ASA. ASA is an



*Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears*

organization of state lieutenant governors, governor appointed delegates, state legislators, and representatives from aerospace businesses, organizations, and academia. ASA brings together aviation and aerospace interests across each state to educate legislators on issues specific to their state and provide networking opportunities to grow jobs and expand economic development. We are particularly excited about the future possibilities here in Virginia as for the first time in our ten years we have a governor's

office that is taking a sincere interest in supporting the ASA. In fact, Lt. Governor Sears not only attended the national meeting this year but volunteered to serve on the executive board as treasurer. We are looking forward to working with her to continue to enhance advocacy of the aerospace community in the Commonwealth.



*Lisa Ziehmman, LaRC Assoc. Center Director*

Next on the VASBA agenda is our annual members meeting in mid- to late-November. More information is coming soon on the exact time and location. Further, we are planning for our first luncheon in 2024 sometime in mid-January with guest speakers from the Hampton Roads Alliance and from NASA Langley. Finally, VASBA will begin planning our support of the annual Aerospace Day in Richmond, which will occur the first week of February. ♦



*Nicole Livas, 13News Now*



## National Air and Space Museum's Journey Toward 2025

By Steven A. E. Miller, Ph.D., Associate Professor, [saem@ufl.edu](mailto:saem@ufl.edu)  
University of Florida Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Walking on the Washington, D.C. Mall is an inspiring experience for all citizens. One might be inspired by the many memories and great institutions of our American people. Nestled as one of the most visited museums of the world is the National Air and Space Museum, just southwest of our Nation's Capital. The museum had a partial reopening on October 14, 2022, with the west wing of its building unveiling eight new and renovated galleries. However, the east wing remains closed for renovation. The next phase of the renovation, which includes the east wing, is scheduled to be completed in 2025.



View of the new west gallery from the second floor (Photo: Miller)



Armstrong's lunar suit (Photo: Miller)

I have traveled to D.C. and have seen the entirety of the previous exhibits on display. Like many in the aerospace profession, every time I go to D.C. I visit the museum. I love seeing the new exhibits. The best part of the museum is not the exhibits themselves, but watching people from all over the world who are amazed. Here, people say, "we did that?" often expressing surprise at what was accomplished in the approximately last 120 years of flight.

What is new in the western third of the museum includes:

- 1) Destination Moon: This exhibition features numerous icons of space history, such as the Apollo 11 command module Columbia and Neil Armstrong's Apollo 11 spacesuit, both of which have undergone extensive conservation in recent years.
- 2) Jackie Cochran's T-38: On display is a Northrop T-38A Talon flown by aviator Jacqueline "Jackie" Cochran, who set eight world records for speed, altitude, and distance flying in 1961 with this T-38.
- 3) Walking on Other Worlds: An interactive experience that provides a seven-minute "tour" of seven different celestial bodies, offering an immersive media exhibit with a nearly 360-degree screen.

4) Nation of Speed: A collection of vehicles built for speed.

5) Diverse Stories: A broader story of aviation and space, like Neal Loving's red Loving WR-3 air racer, a parachute used by Georgia "Tiny" Broadwick, and airline uniforms worn by pioneering women pilots like Emily Howell Warner, Cynthia Berkeley, and Bonnie Tiburzi.

I encourage everyone to plan a visit to Washington D.C. to see the grand opening of the entire renovated museum in 2025. It is important to make advance entry reservations before you go. A limited number of same-day entry reservations can be made on their website. It is entirely free, but the 10 AM opening reservation will often be entirely booked in advance with well over a few thousand people in line. Entry time slots occur every hour on the hour from 10 AM to 4 PM. ♦