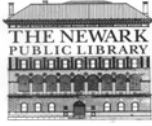


THE NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
5 WASHINGTON STREET, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102



PRESS RELEASE

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**Newark Public Library Government Document Exhibit Marks
the 50th Anniversary of NASA**

The Newark Public Library has filled its second floor exhibit cases with Space. Fifty years of space in the form of books, photos, posters and models documenting the 50th anniversary of NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

“Our government documents librarian Laura Saur has worked with guest curator Kevin Conod, manager and astronomer at the Newark Museum’s Dreyfuss Planetarium, to create a display that follows the history of the American space program through the images and documents issued by its official agency,” said Library Director Wilma J. Grey. “Mr. Conod’s expertise in the subjects of astronomy and the history of space flight has lent a wonderful educational component to this display.”

The all-encompassing exhibit explores the race for space, and its science fiction side, too. “NASA at 50” is free and open to the public and can be seen during regular Library hours at the Main Library, 5 Washington Street, through Aug. 20.

Created in 1958 in response to the Soviet push to dominate space travel; NASA’s mission statement is to “understand and protect our home planet, to explore the Universe and search for life, to inspire the next generation of explorer.”

NASA also has another important mission; to explore the planet on which we live. The agency’s space satellites track weather and climate changes, monitor the ozone layer and help pinpoint droughts, floods, pollution, and sea levels.. “The documents on display were pulled from the Newark Public Library’s Regional Depository of Federal Government Documents, one of only two in New Jersey,” noted Saur.

In exploring NASA and space exploration, the curators have included models and replicas of spacecraft and devices.

The Orbiter Space Shuttle model and International Space Station model are on loan from the Newark Museum's Dreyfuss Planetarium, and were constructed by Mary Hiller. The Star Trek communicator was lent to the Library by David Kuzma, a librarian at Rutgers University's Special Collections.

"In the Star Trek television show and subsequent movies, characters are able to communicate with spaceships in orbit and signal their location," said Conod. "Although modern communication devices are not as powerful or sophisticated, cell phones and Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) devices have similar functions and are made possible by technology derived from the space program."

The Library exhibit also explores the New Jersey connection to space travel: Walter Schirra, of Hackensack, was the state's first astronaut and joined the program in 1959 for Project Mercury. The most famous of New Jersey's astronauts was Buzz Aldrin, a Montclair native who flew on the Apollo 11 mission and became the second man to walk on the moon.

His father, Col. Edwin E. Aldrin, an Army commander was in charge of Newark Liberty International Airport during World War II. On display is a copy of Buzz Aldrin's book: "Reaching for the Moon," and an excerpt that challenges the youth of today to become the third generation of future space explorers.

In total, 12 New Jersey natives have been associated with the space race. The list of New Jersey astronauts include: Kenneth Ham of Plainfield, Mark and Scott Kelly of Orange, Gregory Bristow of Demarest, William Piles of Hackensack, Mark Polansky and Kathryn Sullivan, both of Paterson, Garret Reisman of Morristown, Rusty Schweickart of Neptune and George Zamka of Jersey City.

For more information about the exhibit please call the Library at 973-733-7812 or log on to www.npl.org.