

# The 2002 Chapter Awards

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The 2003 International Space Development Conference was the site of the presentation of Chapter Awards for the year 2002. The presentation of the awards occurred at the Sunday night Awards Banquet. 2002 was a hard year - not just for the NSS and its chapters but also for the economy and society as a whole. In spite of these hardships, the chapters of the National Space Society have been able to call upon a core of dedicated volunteers who have the vision and motivation to work for something grander than mere self-interest. In reading through all of the Chapter Annual Reports, I was struck by just how much our chapters had accomplished in 2002.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote "how do I love thee, let me count the ways." For this article, I write "How do chapters promote space, let me count just a few of the ways." Chapters give the NSS the personal touch. They do this by sponsoring activities and providing public education opportunities in the communities in which they are located. As any good businessman or politician can tell you, the personal touch can make all the

difference in the world. The examples that follow are meant to provide a feel for the diversity of activities that the fifty-plus NSS chapters were engaged in during 2002.

In one novel outreach activity, the Heart of America chapter (Kansas City, Missouri) sponsored the "William Bent Station" over a period of 15 weekends. For 15 weekends local youth were provided with the opportunity to participate in a camp-out that simulated a weekend-long "Space Camp" mission. This was done in conjunction with the local Mars Society chapter — an example of the type of win-win scenario we achieve through cooperation with our fellow pro-space organizations.

Another example of this cooperation occurred in Chicago when NSS chapter volunteers from the area's three chapters helped to staff the Mars Habitat that was on exhibit at the world-renowned Adler Planetarium. What neither group could do on its own was accomplished by their working together.

In addition to the programs and displays they provided for the LOSCON convention, the OASIS chapter (Long Beach, California) had a Mars Rover simulator roaming the convention floor. They also passed out Mars Bars as a part of their "Take A Piece of Mars" promotion.

The Tucson Space Society (Tucson, Arizona) promoted a sense of family amongst chapter members by featuring potluck dinners as their chapter meetings.

The Sheboygan Space Society (Sheboygan, Wisconsin) created a special exhibit for their community's "Rockets for Schools" weekend-long exhibition. Their display was the largest at the exhibition and attracted the attention of Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor who lingered at their display and discussed space policy with chapter members.

The Philadelphia Area Space Alliance (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) had a special exhibit at the New Jersey State Museum in conjunction with NASA's traveling ISS exhibit.



Kirby Ikin, Barry McCool, Marianne Dyson, Brian Chase at the ISDC 2002 Awards Dinner.

The Queensland Space Frontier chapter (Nundah, Queensland, Australia), as a part of their Literacy Project, has been working with the Nundah Library. One of the things they've done is to create educational pro-space bookmarks for the library to distribute. According to library staff, these bookmarks are a hot item with the local schoolboys. Additionally, the chapter has donated its book collection, along with current magazine subscriptions, to a local school library and a special school library so that these materials would be readily available to inspire the next generation of space explorers and scientists.

The San Antonio chapter (San Antonio, Texas) has been working with the Galm Elementary School on a Young Astronauts chapter.

The Wichita chapter (Kansas) judged and presented awards for student projects in the Wichita State University's College of Engineering and National Institute for Aviation Research's Engineering Open House and Banquet. Their chapter also participated in the establishment of Ad Astra Kansas Day with the governor reading a proclamation drafted by the chapter.

The German Space Society chapter was able to get ISS Commander Saletin to carry one of their chapter's logo cards up to the International Space Station.

The Sacramento L5 chapter (Sacramento, California) is working on a prototype H2O2/kerosene rocket engine and has also worked with JP Aerospace on a balloon-assisted launch system. The President of JP Aerospace also happens to be a chapter member.

#### THE AWARDS

Chapter Awards are broken out into two major categories: Special Merit Awards and Chapter Excellence Awards. Special Merit Awards are presented to those chapters whose programs and/or projects were of outstanding quality. The Chapter Excellence Awards are the highest awards a chapter can receive and is given based on overall excellence and commitment to the NSS vision. Within these two categories, subcategories for which awards were presented are:

- Chapter of the Year
- Community Service
- Education
- Explorer
- Public Outreach
- Publicity and Media
- Service to the Society



All Photos: Jim Spellman NSS/Western Spaceport Chapter

**Kirby Ikin presents Barry McCool with the Space Pioneer Award for the crew of STS-107.**

#### SPECIAL MERIT – PUBLICITY AND MEDIA AWARD

The Publicity and Media Award is given to that chapter which best uses the mass media to deliver its message to the general public. The 2002 Special Merit - Publicity and Media Award was presented to the DC-L5 chapter (Arlington, Virginia) who continue to produce the very successful "Around Space" series for public access television.

During 2002, the DC-L5 chapter produced nine new episodes for broadcast on the Fairfax Public Access TV station. The show is broadcast three times per month with a potential audience of 250,000 per episode. The "Around Space" series also received coverage in a December 2002 issue of the Washington Post.

Earlier this year the chapter also created a Public Service Announcement as a tribute to the crew of the Columbia.

#### SPECIAL MERIT – EXPLORER AWARD

The Explorer Award goes to a chapter that is working on an engineering project that furthers the goals of our society. This year the award was given to a chapter whose project combines cleanliness with education and a journey into space. The 2002 Special Merit - Explorer Award was presented to the Clear Lake Area NSS Chapter (Clear Lake, Texas) for their "Washing Machine for Space Get Away Special" project. The project is being done in conjunction with students at the Hildebrant Intermediate School. The Project Manager is Francis Govers.



**Jim Plaxco presents DC-L5 with the Special Merit – Publicity and Media Award.**



**Jim Plaxco presents Norman Wille, NYC-NSS with the Special Merit – Service to the Society Award.**

#### **SPECIAL MERIT — SERVICE TO THE SOCIETY AWARD**

The Service to the Society Award is presented to that chapter whose project represents a special benefit to the NSS organization as a whole.

The 2002 Special Merit - Service to the Society Award goes to the New York City NSS chapter (New York, New York) for their “Winter Space Ball” fundraiser, which generated a profit for the chapter of \$1,000, half of which was donated to our national organization.

In addition, the New York chapter is the sponsor of an excellent lecture series and has an excellent web site located at <http://www.nssnyc.org/>

#### **SPECIAL MERIT — COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**

The Community Service Award is presented to the chapter whose mix of educational, outreach, and other activities are of particular benefit to their community. The 2002 Special Merit - Community Service Award was presented to the Middle Tennessee Space Society (Burns, Tennessee).

During 2002 the chapter made numerous presentations to local school children and to children at their university’s day care program. They also participated in the “Girl Scout Jamboree Astronomy Night” and made monthly presentations at the local observatory. They provided presentations and displays for the local science museum’s “World Space Week” activities. Monthly meetings at the local arts center, the Renaissance Center, featured educational displays in the center’s public areas, attracting the attention of anywhere from 20 to 200 visitors per meeting. The chapter also produces an hour-long weekly public access television program “Space TV.”

Uniquely, as a part of a fundraising silent auction to benefit the local science museum, the chapter successfully auctioned their president Chuck Schlemm, along with a space exploration presentation to the highest bidder.

#### **SPECIAL MERIT — EDUCATION AWARD**

The Education Award is presented to the chapter whose education project is of special significance. The 2002 Special Merit - Education Award was presented to the NSS of North Texas chapter (Arlington, Texas) for a special project with the potential to reach one million of this country’s young men and future leaders. One million is approximately the number of boys in the Boy Scouts of America. A key element of the scouting program is the earning of merit badges. The NSS of North Texas chapter accepted the challenge of



**Jim Plaxco presents NSS of North Texas with the Special Merit – Space Education award.**

rewriting the Boy Scouts Space Exploration Merit Badge Handbook. They have produced a handbook over 100 pages long. However their toughest challenge remains - editing it down to 75 pages.

#### **CHAPTER EXCELLENCE — PUBLIC OUTREACH AWARD**

The Public Outreach Award is presented to the chapter whose activities reached the broadest possible audience. The award for 2002 was unique in that it was presented to a chapter based on their Internet activities.

With respect to the Internet: today, chapters have a problem and an opportunity. Many people attending chapter meetings years ago did so because it was about the only way to get information on the latest space projects and to discuss with kindred spirits the latest goings-on in space exploration. Today, there is the Internet. People now have a world of web sites at their disposal where they can get the latest news and images. They have the Usenet where they can argue with others about what’s right and wrong with the state of space exploration today. In one respect, the Internet has hurt chapters - space junkies no longer need to attend a chapter meeting to find out what’s going on in space.

On the other hand, the Internet provides chapters with new opportunities to expand our base and reach a much wider audience. As the world turns to the web for more and more of the information it uses to decide upon a course of action, NSS chapters must rise to the occasion and make the best use of this new media so as to reach as many people as possible. Use of the Internet brings our ability to do public outreach to a whole new level. Our audience is no longer limited to those people from our community who show up at a local meeting or event — our audience is now anyone who is connected. In terms of sheer volume of useful and persuasive information, there is one chapter that stands out. Based on their Public Outreach via the Internet, the 2002 Chapter Excellence - Public Outreach Award was presented to the Lunar Reclamation Society chapter (Milwaukee, Wisconsin). Their web site can be found at <http://www.lunar-reclamation.org>.

#### **CHAPTER EXCELLENCE — SERVICE TO THE SOCIETY AWARD**

The award for Chapter Excellence - Service to the Society goes to the chapter without whose critical assistance the several NSS events associated with the World Space Congress would not have been the successes that they were. The World Space Congress is a once every 10-year event and is the premier



All Photos: Jim spellman NSS/Western Spaceport Chapter

**Jim Plaxco presents the Service to the Society Award to Marianne Dyson of the Clear Lake Area NSS Chapter.**

space conference. The 2002 World Space Congress in Houston Texas last October saw the National Space Society as one of its exhibitors. In addition there was the NSS Leadership Symposium with one of that event's speakers being Rep. Nick Lampson (D-TX), the principal sponsor of the Space Exploration Act of 2002. That same evening, there was a very successful fundraising dinner hosted by NSS Board of Governors Chairman Hugh Downs. The dinner also featured an auction of a wide variety of space collectibles.

Because of their activities in support of the NSS at the World Space Congress, the 2002 Chapter Excellence - Service to the Society Award was presented to the Clear Lake Area NSS Chapter (Clear Lake, Texas).

**CHAPTER EXCELLENCE — CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

The Chapter of the Year Award is presented to the one chapter whose activities on all fronts serve as a model to be emulated by other chapters.

To individually identify here all the activities that the winning chapter participated in during 2002 would take an inordinate amount of space so only a brief overview of their year's activities will be presented.

During 2002, this chapter held 10 membership meetings, staffed 14 public displays, conducted 19 programs, and was even able to work in 2 parties and picnics for its members.

One of this chapter's displays ran for 4 weeks at an IMAX theater. They also:

- participated in a Yuri's Night event at a flight museum
- participated in the "Space Tourism Pioneer Awards" with displays and programs in conjunction with the Space Tourism Society
- conducted numerous programs at local

- schools and at the Discovery Science Center
- conducted a 6 week long "After School Academy" for middle school students from 3 schools using their Traveling Space Museum
- received multiple press exposures, both print and radio
- are currently working to get Space Camp California reopened at the site of the Queen Mary in Long Beach

Because of the scope of their projects, the frequency of major programs, and the number of people reached via these activities, the 2002 Chapter Excellence - Chapter of the Year Award was presented to the Orange County Space Society (Irvine California).

As you can see, the chapters of the National Space Society accomplished much during 2002. Whether it was judging science fairs, providing speakers for local youth or community groups, or sponsoring letter writing campaigns to draw attention to the plight of our country's space program: chapters play a key role in implementing the vision of the National Space Society. If you are not currently a member of a chapter, then by all means become a member. Use the NSS Chapter Listing either from Ad Astra magazine or online at <http://www.nss.org> to locate the chapter nearest you. If your community is without a chapter, then consider starting one. For information on how to do this, contact NSS headquarters in Washington D.C. today. ☺



**Jim Plaxco presents NSS Chapter of the Year Award to Larry Evans, President of the Orange County Space Society.**

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**National Space Society**

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