

In a 50-year career at Marshall Center, Marion Walker has 'Done it all'

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Marlon Walker. (NASA/MSFC)

On Nov. 28, 1960, 20-year-old Marlon Walker started his first day on the job at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala. Getting to work early every morning, Walker, then a contractor shop attendant, maintained and repaired Marshall's vehicles, and made a good living to help support his mother and five young brothers and sisters.

"My father died when I was 17, so being the oldest, I became the man of the house," Walker recalled. "Before he passed away, I promised him I would take care of our family. So when a friend told me about some job openings with a contracting company at Marshall, I took a chance."

That "chance" has turned into a golden [career](#) for Walker, who will celebrate 50 years of service at Marshall next week. And he says he has

no plans of slowing down.

"I really enjoy my job. It keeps me going every day. So as long as I physically can, I'll keep working," said Walker, now a parts clerk with EG&G Logistics Services supporting Marshall's Transportation & Logistics Engineering Office.

Just as he did in his beginning days at Marshall, Walker, 70, arrives at work early every morning at the motor pool building. He opens the shop, gets the coffee brewing and begins a day filled with ordering parts, picking up orders and other tasks that keep the center's vehicles and machinery -- such as cranes and bulldozers -- in running order.

"The eight years I've worked with Marlon has been great. I admire and have a lot of respect for him," said Larry Dumont, EG&G logistics and quality control manager. "He is a conscientious individual -- always on time and seldom takes time off from work. He and I joke around with each other a great deal -- we've had some great laughs together."

"I told Marlon the day he decides to retire, I'd like to retire with him," said Walker's supervisor, Steve Walters. "That's how much we value him here. He is a highly motivated and very dedicated employee."

“I’ve Done Everything”

Walker has held many positions and has done "everything" at the shop over his 50-year career, he said, including mechanic work, keeping generators fueled around the clock during bad weather, driving a fuel truck, helping to build test stands and supervising a second-shift crew. He also has helped escort and fuel [NASA's](#) Super Guppy aircraft, which transports large components and equipment.

Walker also was part of a volunteer crew that traveled to Gulfport, Miss.,

to fuel emergency vehicles and generators after Hurricane Camille devastated that area in 1969. "I drove the fuel truck down there and stayed about a week," he said. "I was glad I could help in some way because it was horrible -- a lot of people died in that hurricane."

Though he's seen and done a lot throughout his career, Walker said one of his favorite memories was meeting Marshall's first director, renowned rocket scientist Dr. Wernher von Braun.

"I helped work on von Braun's vehicles when I first started working at Marshall," he said. "He would come by and talk to us, and was a really nice guy. He was very humble -- never wanted us to do too much or make a fuss over him. I'm glad I can say I met him."

Family Man

When he's not busy at work, Walker is running after his two grandsons, Aaron and Caleb, and spending time with his wife of 45 years, Lynn, and their daughter, Kellie Strange. "We are so proud of him," Strange said. "Not many people can say they have stayed in the same job or worked at one place for 50 years. It's an amazing accomplishment."

So what could someone with a 50-year career, who's seen and done it all, and met Wernher von Braun still want to do?

"See a space shuttle launch," Walker said with a smile.

Provided by JPL/NASA

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