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PACKING POWER

NASA, Lockheed Martin honor EaglePicher for work on batteries for Artemis missions

BY JOHN HACKER
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Leaders of NASA and Lockheed Martin, builder of the capsule that recently sent a crew on a flyby of the moon, were in Joplin on Thursday to recognize the hundreds of EaglePicher Technologies employees for their work on the batteries that powered that mission.

Four EaglePicher batteries powered the Orion crew capsule and service module on each of the first two Artemis missions, and more batteries have been delivered or are being manufactured in Joplin for Artemis missions 3-8 at this time.

Howard Hu, Orion program manager for NASA, and Kirk Shireman, Orion program director at Lockheed Martin, came to EaglePicher's battery manufacturing plant in the Crossroads Industrial Park in Joplin to present the company with the Rigel Award, presented once a year to a small business supplier by Lockheed Martin.

Hu also presented special recognition awards from NASA to EaglePicher and to Don Turner, who just retired from EaglePicher after leading the aerospace battery program for many years.

Turner said the batteries on the Artemis 2 flight were his final project at EaglePicher.

Shireman said the Rigel Award goes to a supplier who has gone out of their way to help Lockheed Martin meet its needs and its deadlines.

Next year's Artemis 3 mission will stay in Earth orbit to practice docking in space with proposed landers for the actual landing of astronauts on the moon on the Artemis 4 mission, planned for 2028 or 2029.

"EaglePicher builds these batteries and to some, you think batteries, well, it's just batteries, right?" Shireman said. "You can go to your Walgreens, your CVS and buy batteries, right? These are not those batteries. The whole spacecraft doesn't work without these batteries. They have



NASA presents EaglePicher a recognition plaque Thursday in front of EaglePicher employees and Joplin city officials that includes a patch that flew around the moon on the Artemis 2 mission. Pictured are Kirk Shireman with Lockheed Martin; Don Turner, recently retired director of EaglePicher's program to manufacture the batteries for the Artemis missions; Mike Burke, the new director of that program with EaglePicher; and Howard Hu, NASA Orion program director

GLOBE | JOHN HACKER



EaglePicher employees Renee Webb, of Joplin, and Susan Perkins, of Fairland, Okla., speak with NASA Orion Project Director Howard Hu after Thursday's ceremony.

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Kirk Shireman, director of the Orion project for Lockheed Martin, shows EaglePicher employees a photo of the Orion moon capsule stacked on top of the service module during a presentation Thursday.

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a ton of energy stored in a very small package which is important, but also means they're somewhat dangerous.

So you have to build them to have that energy but you have to build them safely. And that's really the key. In

fact some of the things that EaglePicher has done have been specifically to address those safety issues, make sure they're absolutely safe to be in this vehicle. These batteries are really something special."

Hu presented a slideshow and talked about the Artemis 2 mission, from creating the rocket to touchdown 192 feet from the calculated landing spot in the Pacific Ocean off San Diego, California.

Hu said the Orion capsule had solar panels to provide power but EaglePicher's batteries were the sole source of power for the four astronauts for part of the 10-day mission.

"We went through four eclipses," Hu said. "We relied on the battery through the eclipses, so 76 minutes total. And I believe we didn't go under 60% state of charge or something like that. We didn't go under that and we held 120 volts, so great performance. And that's exactly what we needed."

Ron Nowlin, vice president of the Aerospace Group at EaglePicher, said the company was honored to receive the Rigel Award.

He said EaglePicher has been building batteries for a variety of space missions including the original Apollo moon landings from 1969-1972, the space shuttle, Hubble Space Telescope, International Space Station and many more.

"It's pretty amazing,"

SEE POWER, 2A

DNR hearing yields info on sports complex site

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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The site for the Prospect Village sports complex does not have heavy contamination from a former wood treatment facility once located there, according to representatives of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

DNR officials were present for a public information session about the site on Tuesday in Joplin.

But not all of the 98 acres of the former site of the International Paper Co., 2609 S. Range Line Road, are without contamination. A section south of the sports complex site could be used for industrial purposes but not for residential properties unless the chemical contamination found in that section is removed.

Wood treatment chemicals used on the property left contamination in the water and soil that International Paper is responsible for monitoring.

There are about 30 wells on the property that pump groundwater for containment and contamination sampling. Regulations say that if sampling has no seen or detectable contamination over three years, as testing there has shown, those chemicals can be removed from reporting, said Abby Sawyer, an environmental engineer with the DNR.

Tests are drawn from both shallow and deep water sources.

Sawyer also said there also is a soil remediation plan included in the property's covenant and that International Paper Co. has an obligation to monitor that. There is a draft hazardous waste permit in place with a modification request pending.

International Paper wants to remove a half-acre access road from the permit and 13 semi-volatile organic compounds from annual monitoring. Those compounds have not been found on the property in recent years, according to information at the hearing.

The public comment period on those requested changes has been extended until June 29.

The half-acre of property sought for removal from the permit involves an access road off Range Line Road next to the permanently closed Red, Hot and Blue restaurant, 2601 Range Line Road.

That south part of the property is not being redeveloped for the sports complex development, Sawyer said.

Joplin City Manager Nick Edwards asked whether the test results show anything that would prevent development of the north part of the property as the city and the developer, Woodsonia Real Estate, plan.

Sawyer said there is nothing like that.

A resident asked what happens to

SEE DNR, 2A

Great Race to treat Joplin to Father's Day stop

Visit the third here for cross-country race

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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Joplin will have a rare way to celebrate both Father's Day and the city's Route 66 heritage Sunday.

The community and car enthusiasts will continue the celebration of the Route 66 centennial when the 2026 Hemmings Great

Race, a nine-day race, makes a stop in Joplin.

The Hemmings Great Race, a classic cross-country vintage car rally, will stop in downtown Joplin on its way through all eight states along the Mother Road, said Patrick Tuttle, Joplin's Convention and Visitors Bureau director.

It's the third visit of the race in the five years, and the race will bring up to 140 antique and vintage vehicles to Main Street to greet event visitors from 5-7 p.m. The vintage vehicles will range

in dates from 1911 to 1974.

In this race, winners are not determined by speed. This is a rally of time, speed and distance in which a course master has driven and mapped the course and provides precise instructions on how fast competitors should drive and what turns to take. The drivers take off one minute apart. In addition to staying on time, the drivers are challenged to get to the day's finish line without a malfunction or with a quick repair if one happens.

Joplin-area residents have

turned out by the hundreds during the race's previous stops in 2021 and 2023.

While area residents like to see the Great Race participants, the Great Race crews in turn like Joplin. During the stop in 2023, a race official who narrated the event said, "We're going to enjoy this little strip of road and this street party Joplin has got going on. We've got lots of sponsors and lots of volunteers, and there is no way, no matter how much money or time we put into it, that we could do it without you.

Joplin is the best, and that's not lip service. Joplin is the best every single time" at hosting a race stop, visitors were told.

"We do our best" for the racers, Tuttle said.

Dinner for the car crews is pre-arranged at a downtown restaurant Sunday. The restaurant will be closed to the public in order to accommodate the racers.

Tuttle said one reason for the return visits is because, "We've lobbied for it. When they were

SEE RACE, 2A

