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Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, Oklahoma

NASA Spacemobile 1975-1983 by George Allison. Written 2001.

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by George Allison

What can one say about this program that truly describes what it meant and means to those of us who were/are Spacemobilers and the educators we supported/support. I had the good fortune for eight years to be a member of the most dedicated group of truly master teachers I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Some people might say that our success was due to the subject matter, materials, and equipment we had to support the program. However each man and woman in this program had his or her own unique delivery and way of working with the customer. I think we all can truly say that we won more friends for NASA than any other program this agency has had or ever will have. When I first joined the program, the focus was on high school programs. Fortunately the focus changed to elementary and middle school programs, reaching students before they made a decision the future educational or career interest. Additionally, every elementary teacher I met state that this program provided them the help they needed in teaching science that their college degree program did not provide.

As far as the on the road stories, one could write a best seller about them. I think for me they center on those times I was involved in community involvement programs. When two or more Spacemobilers got together the fun would start. I remember the programs in Kansas City, Fort Lauderdale, Charlottesville, Richmond, and Charleston. I spent a month in Charleston, South Carolina without a day off; a month in Fort Lauderdale, Florida doing only one hour long programs during the day and being entertained every night; two weeks in Richmond, Virginia and never did a program at all due to school closures because of snow. I remember Steve Dutczak having to buy a wool sport coat from a thrift store for a dollar to keep from freezing. I also remember posing for pictures on the Charlottesville Holiday Inn outdoor restroom facility due to a remodeling of the hotel. I think Spacemobiles have been photographed in front of every distillery in the country and heaven knows where else. We worked hard and played hard! The one word that comes to mind for me that best describes this program and the people involved with it is "outstanding." There isn't a day that goes by that I am not thankful that I was one of the few who had the pleasure of being called a Spacemobiler. I hope the program lasts another 40 years.