1. Johnson was born in 1949 in Mobile, Alabama.

2. At NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Johnson worked on the Galileo (Jupiter), Cassini (Saturn) and Mars Observer projects.

3. As a member of the U.S. Air Force, he held several positions in the Strategic Air Command and the Air Force Weapons Laboratory.

4. While at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Johnson came up with the idea for the Super Soaker after being inspired watching a stream of water from a small nozzle he had made and attached to his bathroom sink during an experiment on an environmentally friendly heat pump he was developing during his spare time. He built the first prototype after rejoining the Air Force in 1982.

5. With the success of the Super Soaker, Johnson established Johnson Research & Development as an inventor/incubator company under which he develops and spins out other companies to commercialize his inventions.

6. He also has a number of patents for compressed air toy projectile launchers, which became popular Nerf toy guns.

7. Over the years, sales of the Super Soaker have totaled well over $1 billion.

8. Two of Johnson’s companies, Johnson Energy Storage and Johnson Air Batteries, are developing revolutionary battery technology.

9. For JTEC Energy’s Johnson Thermo-Electrochemical Converter (JTEC), he received the Breakthrough Award from Popular Mechanics in 2008.

10. Johnson has more than 100 U.S. patents.