

the Blastoff

Official Newsletter of
The Rotary Club of Space Center
P O Box 58862, Houston, Texas 77058
Meetings Monday 11:45 at Bay Oaks Country Club
Clear Lake City Ph. 281.488.7888
Chartered 1964

June 15, 2009

www.SpaceCenterRotary.org

Editor: Billy Smith

Photographer: Bob Mitchell

Ass't. Photographer: John Lee



Rotary International
President 2008-2009



Dong Kurn Lee



Rotary District 5890
Governor 2008-2009
Rhonda Kennedy



Chris Schneider
Alvin, Seabrook, Space Center
District Assistant Governor



A message from Pres. Mike:

Lucky for you, I don't have much to say at this time. I am working on a summary, to publish in the Blastoff, of the goals we had for the year and the accomplishments we made. But remember, the year is not over and we still have a few goals to accomplish. Let's give it a last push. See you on the 22nd.

*Yours in Rotary Service,
Mike*

Past District Governors
From SCRC

Dr. Floyd D. Boze
1981-1982



Billy Weseman
1993-1994



Suzi Howe
2006-2007

Service Above Self

Programs —

Kippy Caraway, Chair 2008-2009



**TODAY . . . Rep. John Davis will give us a wrap up
on the past Legislative session**

June 22nd . . . Club Assembly: Review of Year's Accomplishments

June 29th . . . Installation of Officers & Directors for 2009-2010

Bring a Guest!!

Say Happy Birthday to —

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Chuck Jacobson | June 2nd |
| David Hamblin | June 2nd |
| John Lee | June 13th |
| Alissa Sammons | June 16th |
| Dan Weber | June 18th |
| Olive Murphy-Riker | June 20th |
| Gene Tromblee | June 26th |
| Hilmar Zeissig | June 29th |

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL.
WE WISH YOU MANY MORE.**

JUNE IS FELLOWSHIP MONTH

*Can you identify
this beauty?
Where were you
when this one was introduced?*

1958 Cadillac.



Stay focused on your job (left) & practice teamwork (above).



State Representative, John Davis, completed his Red Badge requirements and was presented his permanent badge by Suzi Howe, PDG. Assisting in this recognition are Mary Alys Cherry, John's sponsor, on left & Jon McKinnie, Pres. Elect on right. Congratulations John.

**AMOCO FEDERAL
CREDIT UNION**

**AOVOCO
Art Oswald**

**BASTION
TECHNOLOGIES
Mike Hernandez**

**BELINDA K.
SKLOSS, LLC**

EVENTS CALENDAR

Club Board of Directors 3rd Tuesday @ 7 a.m.
RNASA Committee 3rd Thursday @ 5:30 p.m.
Endowment Foundation Board..... 2nd Tuesday @ 7 a.m.
Rotary Foundation Committee last Wednesday @ 7 a.m.
Membership Committee 2nd Monday @ 1:15 p.m.
100th RI Convention, Birmingham, England June 21 — 24, 2009
2009 Shrimporee Saturday, October 17th

HOW TO CALL THE POLICE WHEN YOU'RE OLD AND DON'T MOVE FAST ANYMORE

(reportedly a true story)

George Phillips , an elderly man, from Meridian, Mississippi, was going up to bed, when his wife told him that he'd left the light on in the garden shed, which she could see from the bedroom window. George opened the back door to go turn off the light, but saw that there were people in the shed stealing things.

He phoned the police, who asked "Is someone in your house?"

He said "No, but some people are breaking into my garden shed and stealing from me."

Then the police dispatcher said "All patrols are busy. You should lock your doors and an officer will be along when one is available."

George said, "Okay."

He hung up the phone and counted to 30.

Then he phoned the police again.

"Hello, I just called you a few seconds ago because there were people stealing things from my shed. Well, you don't have to worry about them now because I just shot them." And he hung up.

Within five minutes, six Police Cars, a SWAT Team, a Helicopter, two Fire Trucks, a Paramedic, and an Ambulance showed up at the Phillips' residence, and caught the burglars red-handed.

One of the Policemen said to George, "I thought you said that you'd shot them!"

George said, "I thought you said there was nobody available!"

Moral: Don't mess with old people!!

**BEN BRIDGE
JEWELERS
Travis Vermeer**

BILLY R. SMITH
Attorney at Law
Board Certified in
Estate Planning, Probate &
Real Estate Law

**DELIA STEPHENS
Attorney at Law**

**DRDA
Olive Murphy-
Riker, CPA**

GAY & REITZ
Attorneys at Law

GREGG & GREGG,
P.C.
Attorneys at Law

GURRY
MECHANICAL,
L.P.
Ken Gurry

HOPPING EYE
ASSOCIATES
Vissett Sun

EDITOR WANTED

Do you want a voice in Rotary? Is there something you think is not being said? Have you wished the editor would make the *Blastoff* more relevant? Are there too many pages of the weekly newsletter; too few? Too many pictures; not enough? Do you have an opinion? Now is your chance to be heard!

After several years of serving as *Blastoff* editor, Billy Smith is retiring and has given notice to Pres. Mike and PE Jon that his last edition will be June 29th.

So now it is your turn. Step up and do it your way. It is a great job and the pay is unworldly. As long as you are receiving a balance of praise and complaints, you can consider yourself doing a good job. Contact Bill Lowes, Director Club Service, to apply.

JWLowes@swbell.net

HOST FAMILIES NEEDED

Leonardo Briones Andrade, exchange student from Ecuador, will be arriving soon. One host family has been identified, but three more are needed.

Leonardo is 17 years of age, enjoys soccer and tennis, has been involved with his school mates in giving food to the poor children, is in charge of a group of students who help the elderly, loves animals, especially dogs. His father is a civil engineer & his mother teaches English, serves as a translator and was an exchange student 25 years ago. Leonardo's sister, Claudia, was an exchange student to the USA. Home is Portoviejo, Ecuador, a city of 250,000 on the coast. Fishing & agriculture are the primary industries. He aspires to a career as a civil engineer/architect & enjoys going to work with his father. Leonardo is eager to have his mother's & sister's experience as an exchange student.

This is a great opportunity for you and your family, especially if you have teenage children who can bond with Leonardo & share a once in a lifetime cultural experience.

If you are interested, contact Dick Meyer.

richard.j.meyer@nasa.gov

HYDROCARBON
RESOURCE
RECOVERY
Scott Rainey

JSC FEDERAL
CREDIT UNION
Mike Brown

J. PAMELA
PHOTOGRAPHY
Pam Culpepper

KIRCHOFF
PETERSON CO.
Don Kirchoff

**L. D. BOWLES
ASSOCIATES**

Lamar Bowles

**LAS COLINAS
CUSTOM
INTERIORS**

Rae DeCastro

**LEXUS OF
CLEAR LAKE**

Joey Dupuis

**EARL
&
TERRILEE
MAUDLIN**

**Space Center Rotary Club
Excellence in Law Enforcement Awards 2009**



Pictured above are the 2009 Awardees. From left are Michael Scambray, Friendswood PD, Reagan Pena, League City PD, Christy Galyean, League City PD, Dru Greer, Pasadena PD & Wayne Gerrish, Harris County Constable Pct. 8.

Pictured on the left is the Officer of the Year, Christy Galyean with club member, Phil Sandlin, Committee Chair & Chief Deputy of the Harris County Constable's Office, Precinct 8.



**MAUI WOWI
Shelley Smith**

MERRILL LYNCH

**Jerry & Bill
Smith**

**MRI
TECHNOLOGIES**

Tim Kropp

**PROSPERITY
BANK**

Mark Humphrey

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>SPACE CENTER AUTOMOTIVE Jerrold Dewease</p> | <p>STATE FARM INSURANCE Johnny R. White Agent</p> | <p>TEXAS CITIZENS BANK Mike Cornett</p> | <p>TEXAS WEALTH MANAGEMENT Mike Hesse</p> |
| <p>Words to live by:</p> <p>The Four-Way Test of the things we think, say or do —</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it the TRUTH? 2. Is it FAIR to all concerned? 3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? 4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned? | | <p>SCRC ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION UPDATE</p> <p>Asset Value 06/08/09 = \$150,276.83</p> <p>New Trustees for 2009 — 2011:</p> <p>Jack Lister Billy Smith</p> <p>Dennis Paul accepted an appointment as Chair of the newly formed Vocational Scholarships Committee. The organizational meeting was held on Thursday June 11th at Dos Mass Restaurant in Webster. Attending the June 9th Board Meeting were Bob Wren, Bob Taggart, Billy Smith, Bill Lowes, Gene Tromblee, Debbie McBride, Vic Maria, Al Ligrani, Jon McKennie, Art Oswald & Ted Cummings.</p> | |
| <p>A Prayer for my Computer</p> <p>Every single evening As I'm lying here in bed, This tiny little Prayer Keeps running through my head:</p> <p>God bless all my family Wherever they may be, Keep them warm And safe from harm For they're so close to me.</p> <p>And. God, there is one more thing I wish that you could do; Hope you don't mind me asking, Please bless my computer too.</p> <p>Now I know that it's unusual To Bless a motherboard, But listen just a second While I explain it to you, L</p> | <p>I know so much about them By the kindness that they give, And this little scrap of metal Takes me in to where they live.</p> <p>By faith is how I know them Much the same as you. We share in what life brings us And from that our friendships grew.</p> <p>Please take an extra minute From your duties up above, To bless those in my address book That's filled with so much love.</p> <p>Wherever else this prayer may reach To each and every friend, Bless each e-mail inbox And each person who hits 'send'.</p> <p>When you update your Heavenly list On your own Great CD-ROM, Sent up to GOD.Com</p> | <p>SHRIMPOREE PLANNING MEETING</p> <p>We will have a Shrimporee committee meeting Tuesday June 16th at the JSCCU conference room. Use rear door adjacent to the drive in banking area.</p> <p>This is an important meeting because Earl will be presenting the team concept. We need all of your thoughts and comments on it.</p> | |
| <p>GENE & DONNA TROMBLEE</p> | <p>UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON CLEAR LAKE CAMPUS</p> | <p>WALDRON & SCHNEIDER Attorneys at Law</p> | <p>WalMart SuperCenter Baytown Al Stock, Mrg.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| THE CITIZEN Mary Alys Cherry | TEXAS ROADHOUSE Tony & Sharon Bloomfield | UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON CLEAR LAKE CAMPUS | Your name could appear here. |
|---|---|--|---|

LEGALLY SPEAKING — *Remember: stand, engage mind, then speak.*

These are excerpts from a book by a woman who's been a court reporter for over 25 years. She's written two books of quips, anecdotes and general bloopers from her many years of experience.

Q. What is your brother-in-law's name?
A. Borofkin.
Q. What's his first name?
A. I can't remember.
Q. He's been your brother-in-law for years, and you can't remember his first name?
A. No. I tell you I'm too excited. (Rising from the witness chair and pointing to Mr. Borofkin.) Nathan, for God's sake, tell them your first name!

Q. Did you ever stay all night with this man in New York?
A. I refuse to answer that question.
Q. Did you ever stay all night with this man in Chicago?
A. I refuse to answer that question.
Q. Did you ever stay all night with this man in Miami?
A. No.

Q. Now, Mrs. Johnson, how was your first marriage terminated?
A. By death.
Q. And by whose death was it terminated?

Q. Doctor, did you say he was shot in the woods?
A. No, I said he was shot in the lumbar region.

Q. What is your name?
A. Ernestine McDowell.
Q. And what is your marital status?
A. Fair.

Q. Are you married?
A. No, I'm divorced.
Q. And what did your husband do before you divorced him?
A. A lot of things I didn't know about.

Continued on next page

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| THIS SPACE | IS RESERVED | FOR MORE | SPONSORS |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|

Q. And who is this person you are speaking of?

A. My ex-widow said it.

Q. How did you happen to go to Dr. Cherney?

A. Well, a gal down the road had had several of her children by Dr. Cherney, and said he was really good.

Q. Do you know how far pregnant you are right now?

A. I will be three months November 8th.

Q. Apparently then, the date of conception was August 8th?

A. Yes.

Q. What were you and your husband doing at that time?

Q. Mrs. Smith, do you believe that you are emotionally unstable?

A. I should be.

Q. How many times have you committed suicide?

A. Four times.

Q. Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A. All my autopsies have been performed on dead people.

Q. Were you acquainted with the deceased?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Before or after he died?

Q. Officer, what led you to believe the defendant was under the influence?

A. Because he was argumentary and he couldn't pronounce his words.

Q. What happened then?

A. He told me, he says, "I have to kill you because you can identify me."

Q. Did he kill you?

A. No.

Q. Mrs. Jones, is your appearance this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

A. No. This is how I dress when I go to work.

THE COURT: Now, as we begin, I must ask you to banish all present information and prejudice from your minds, if you have any.

Q. Did he pick the dog up by the ears?

A. No.

Q. What was he doing with the dog's ears?

A. Picking them up in the air.

Q. Where was the dog at this time?

A. Attached to the ears.

Continued on next page

Q. When he went, had you gone and had she, if she wanted to and were able, for the time being excluding all the restraints on her not to go, gone also, would he have brought you, meaning you and she, with him to the station?

MR. BROOKS: Objection. That question should be taken out and shot.

Q. And lastly, Gary, all your responses must be oral.

O.K.? What school do you go to?

A. Oral.

Q. How old are you?

A. Oral.

Q. What is your relationship with the plaintiff?

A. She is my daughter.

Q. Was she your daughter on February 13, 1979?

Q. Now, you have investigated other murders, have you not, where there was a victim?

Q. ...and what did he do then?

A. He came home, and next morning he was dead.

Q. So when he woke up the next morning he was dead?

Q. Did you tell your lawyer that your husband had offered you indignities?

A. He didn't offer me nothing; he just said I could have the furniture.

Q. So, after the anesthesia, when you came out of it, what did you observe with respect to your scalp?

A. I didn't see my scalp the whole time I was in the hospital.

Q. It was covered?

A. Yes, bandaged.

Q. Then, later on.. what did you see?

A. I had a skin graft. My whole buttocks and leg were removed and put on top of my head.

Q. Could you see him from where you were standing?

A. I could see his head.

Q. And where was his head?

A. Just above his shoulders.

Q. What can you tell us about the truthfulness and veracity of this defendant?

A. Oh, she will tell the truth. She said she'd kill that sonofa-bitch--and she did!

Q. Do you drink when you're on duty?

A. I don't drink when I'm on duty, unless I come on duty drunk.

Q. ...any suggestions as to what prevented this from being a murder trial instead of an attempted murder trial?

A. The victim lived.

Continued on next page

Q. Are you sexually active?

A. No, I just lie there.

Q. Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

A. Yes, I have been since early childhood.

Q. The truth of the matter is that you were not an unbiased, objective witness, isn't it. You too were shot in the fracas?

A. No, sir. I was shot midway between the fracas and the naval.

Q. What is the meaning of sperm being present?

A. It indicates intercourse.

Q. Male sperm?

A. That is the only kind I know.

Q. (Showing man picture.) That's you?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you were present when the picture was taken, right?

Q. Was that the same nose you broke as a child?

CASE DISMISSED!



Space Center Rotary Club Summary of April 21st Board Meeting

The Board meeting of the Space Center Rotary Club was called to order on May 18, 2009 by President Mike Hernandez after confirming quorum.

Minutes of the April Board meeting were approved with some modifications. Membership report and attendance status were reviewed. During the month of April we had one new proposed member approved by the Board. As of the end of April we had 119 active members which represent an increase by 8 members. The average Club meeting member attendance for March was 63.74%.

The Treasurer's report showed all members having paid their dues. Summary of Financials are included. Status of Club Reserve Funds is as follows:

Reserve Service Money from Previous Fund Raisers as of end of March.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Checking Account..... | \$ 2,010 |
| Money Market Account..... | \$ 30,004 |

Service and Admin Reserve money.

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Janus Funds..... | \$ 29,337 |
|------------------|-----------|

Open Items:

Amendments of the by-laws are still being reviewed.

New Items:

The Board agreed to subsidize attendants to the Save a Life CPR training and to suggest other clubs to do the same.

Leave of Absence for one year was approved for Becky Reitz. Resignation of Keith Huff was approved with recommendation to refer him to a club in the Lake Travis area. Roger Donnelly was approved for Rule 85.

A discussion about the responsibility of filing tax returns took place with the recommendation to stress that the out going President and Treasurer have the responsibility to prepare and approve the last set of financial statements for the year (normally during the month of July) and provide the timely information to the CPA to present the tax returns.

A contribution to the local YMCA was approved for \$1,000 to sponsor swimming lessons to children during the summer.

An email requesting support to Interfaith Caring Ministry to stripe the parking area was sent by Pat Doughty. After discussion the Board approved it providing Pat provides Mike Hernandez with the needed amount of money and it is a reasonable quantity. Mike would then identify the account where the money will be charged.

The meeting was adjourned about 8:20 a.m.

SPACE CENTER ROTARY SUMMARY OF CLUB'S OPERATING FINANCIALS

As of April 30th, 2009

Administration

Members Dues paid: \$27,837

Meetings and meals:

Payments received \$29,755

Payments to Bay Oaks \$31,086

Meals paid by the club \$ 1,331

Expenditures:

District Dues \$ 2,775

2015 RI Convention Support 1,665

District Activities 150

District Conference 1,095

District Activities 250

Recognitions and Awards 30

General Administrative 814

Insurance (D&O Liability) 450

First Half of RI Dues 3,889

Second Half RI Dues 3,511

President's Contingency 310

PETS Conference 751

Capital Equipment 585

Bank Charges 79

Membership Recruitment & Retention 509

Public Information 612

Programs 882

Directorate and Web page 599

Club History and Memorial 50

Total Expenditures \$19,006

Pending payment:

Recruitment expenses

Deceased club member names inscription in Memorial slab

Service

Budgeted Amount: \$75,000

Project Expenditures:

Clinic in Guerrero, Mexico \$1,000

Water Project Carbonara, MX 1,000

Engineers Without Borders 1,000

Children Literacy Center 7,000

CCISD Hurricane Ike 1,000*

Boy Scouts 1,000

Youth Exchange 4,497

RI Foundation 2,530

High Schools Booster Clubs 400*

Guerrero, Mex. Orphanage 2,000**

Guerrero Washer/Dryer 750**

Group Study Exchange 330*

Bank Charges 230*

MD Anderson Children Cancer Hosp 7,057

Others 155*

Youth Activities 250

Defibrillator for Boys and Girls Harbor 1,524

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| | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| YMCA sponsor swimming lessons | 800 |
| Drug Awareness Essay Scholarship | 1,090 |
| Scholastic Scholarships | 6,345 |
| Nursing home Valentine's Day | <u>600</u> |
| Total Expenditures | \$40,559 |

* From unassigned budget account

** From World Health budget account

Pending Payment:

Donation to SCR Endowment Foundation

Project Graduation

Armand Bayou trails

Your right there in the cockpit.....SOME VERY EXCITING reading.....enjoy the ride!!!

Read the detailed experience of the NASA pilot who flew the 747 carrying the space shuttle ATLANTIS back to the KENNEDY SPACE CENTER. A bit lengthy.....worth every second reading! You will feel that you were there!!!

From: Triple Nickel

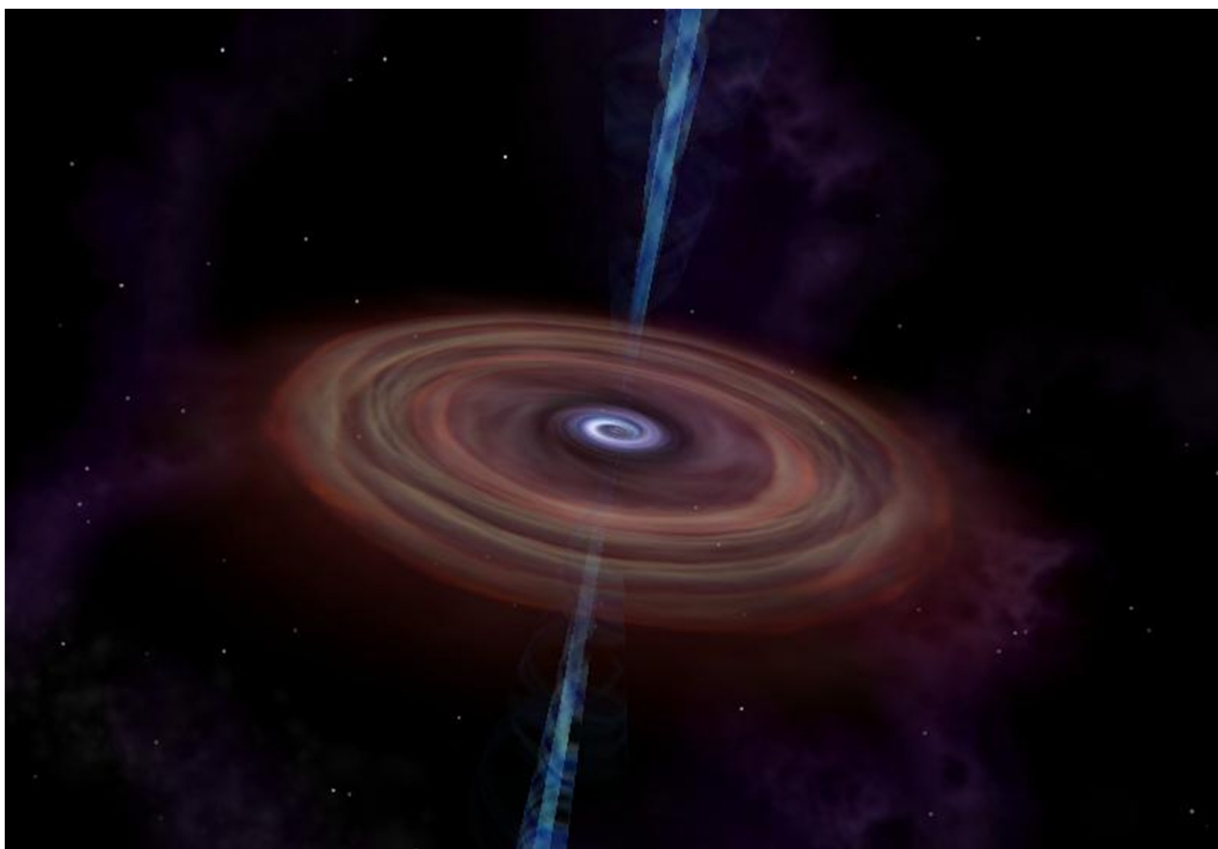
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2009 9:34 PM

Subject: (JSCAS) Shuttle Carry

Well, it's been 48 hours since I landed the 747 with the shuttle Atlantis on top and I am still buzzing from the experience. I have to say that my whole mind, body and soul went into the professional mode just before engine start in Mississippi, and stayed there, where it all needed to be, until well after the flight...in fact, I am not sure if it is all back to normal as I type this email. The experience was surreal. Seeing that "thing" on top of an already overly huge aircraft boggles my mind. The whole mission from takeoff to engine shutdown was unlike anything I had ever done. It was like a dream...someone else's dream. We took off from Columbus AFB on their 12,000 foot runway, of which I used 11,999 1/2 feet to get the wheels off the ground. We were at 3,500 feet left to go of the runway, throttles full power, nose wheels still hugging the ground, copilot calling out decision speeds, the weight of Atlantis now screaming through my fingers clinched tightly on the controls, tires heating up to their near maximum temperature from the speed and the weight, and not yet at rotation speed, the speed at which I would be pulling on the controls to get the nose to rise. I just could not wait, and I mean I COULD NOT WAIT, and started pulling early. If I had waited until rotation speed, we would not have rotated enough to get airborne by the end of the runway. So I pulled on the controls early and started our rotation to the takeoff attitude. The wheels finally lifted off as we passed over the stripe marking the end of the runway and my next hurdle (physically) was a line of trees 1,000 feet off the departure end of Runway 16. All I knew was we were flying and so I directed the gear to be retracted and the flaps to be moved from Flaps 20 to Flaps 10 as I pulled even harder on the controls. I must say, those trees were beginning to look a lot like those brushes in the drive through car washes so I pulled even harder yet! I think I saw a bird just fold its wings and fall out of a tree as if to say "Oh just take me". Okay, we cleared the trees, duh, but it was way too close for my laundry. As we started to actually climb, at only 100 feet per minute, I smelled something that reminded me of touring the Heineken Brewery in Europe...I said "is that a skunk I smell?" and the veterans of shuttle carrying looked at me and smiled and said "Tires"! I said "TIRES??? OURS???" They smiled and shook their heads as if to call their Captain an amateur...okay, at that point I was. The tires were so hot you could smell them in the cockpit. My mind could not get over, from this point on, that this was something I had never experienced. Where's your mom when you REALLY need her? The flight down to Florida was an eternity. We cruised at 250 knots indicated, giving us about 315 knots of ground speed at 15,000'. The miles didn't click by like I am use to them clicking by in a fighter jet at MACH .94. We were burning fuel at a rate of 40,000 pounds per hour or 130 pounds per mile, or one gallon every length of the fuselage. The vibration in the cockpit was mild, compared to down below and to the rear of the fuselage where it reminded me of that football game I had as a child where you turned it on and the players vibrated around the board. I felt like if I had plastic clips on my boots I could have vibrated to any spot in the fuselage I wanted to go without moving my legs...and the noise was deafening. The 747 flies with its nose 5 degrees up in the air to stay level, and when you bank, it feels like the shuttle is trying to say "hey, let's roll completely over on our back"...not a good thing I kept telling myself. SO I limited my bank angle to 15 degrees and even though a 180 degree course change took a full zip code to complete, it was the safe way to turn this monster. Airliners and even a flight of two F-16s deviated from their flight plans to catch a glimpse of us along the way. We dodged what was in reality very few clouds and storms, despite what everyone thought, and arrived in Florida with 51,000 pounds of fuel too much to land with. We can't land heavier than 600,000 pounds total weight and so we had to do something with that fuel. I had an idea...let's fly low and slow and show this beast off to all the taxpayers in Florida lucky enough to be outside on that Tuesday afternoon. So at

Ormond Beach we let down to 1,000 feet above the ground/water and flew just east of the beach out over the water. Then, once we reached the NASA airspace of the Kennedy Space Center, we cut over to the Banana/Indian Rivers and flew down the middle of them to show the people of Titusville, Port St. Johns and Melbourne just what a 747 with a shuttle on it looked like. We stayed at 1,000 feet and since we were dragging our flaps at "Flaps 5", our speed was down to around 190 to 210 knots. We could see traffic stopping in the middle of roads to take a look. We heard later that a Little League Baseball game stop to look and everyone cheered as we became their 7th inning stretch. Oh say can you see... After reaching Vero Beach, we turned north to follow the coast line back up to the Shuttle Landing Facility (SLF). There was not one person laying on the beach...they were all standing and waving! "What a sight" I thought...and figured they were thinking the same thing. All this time I was bugging the engineers, all three of them, to re-compute our fuel and tell me when it was time to land. They kept saying "Not yet Triple, keep showing this thing off" which was not a bad thing to be doing. However, all this time the thought that the landing, the muscling of this 600,000 pound beast, was getting closer and closer to my reality. I was pumped up! We got back to the SLF and were still 10,000 pounds too heavy to land so I said I was going to do a low approach over the SLF going the opposite direction of landing traffic that day. So at 300 feet, we flew down the runway, rocking our wings like a whale rolling on its side to say "hello" to the people looking on! One turn out of traffic and back to the runway to land...still 3,000 pounds over gross weight limit. But the engineers agreed that if the landing were smooth, there would be no problem. "Oh thanks guys, a little extra pressure is just what I needed!" So we landed at 603,000 pounds and very smoothly if I have to say so myself. The landing was so totally controlled and on speed, that it was fun. There were a few surprises that I dealt with, like the 747 falls like a rock with the orbiter on it if you pull the throttles off at the "normal" point in alanding and secondly, if you thought you could hold the nose off the ground after the mains touch down, think again...IT IS COMING DOWN!!!So I "flew it down" to the ground and saved what I have seen in videos of a nose slap after landing. Bob's video supports this! :8-)Then I turned on my phone after coming to a full stop only to find 50 bazillion emails and phone messages from all of you who were so super to be watching and cheering us on! What a treat, I can't thank y'all enough. For those who watched, you wondered why we sat there so long. Well, the shuttle had very hazardous chemicals on board and we had to be "sniffed" to determine if any had leaked or were leaking. They checked for Monomethylhydrazine (N2H4 for Charlie Hudson) and nitrogen tetroxide (N2O4). Even though we were "clean", it took way too long for them to tow us in to the mate-demate area. Sorry for those who stuck it out and even waited until we exited the jet. I am sure I will wake up in the middle of the night here soon, screaming and standing straight up dripping wet with sweat from the realization of what had happened. It was a thrill of a lifetime. Again I want to thank everyone for your interest and support. It felt good to bring Atlantis home in one piece after she had worked so hard getting to the Hubble Space Telescope and back.

Triple Nickel
NASA Pilot



**A black
hole
taken by
Hubble.**