

I am tickled pink to be here today in such great company and to have the honor of sharing a little bit about Rotary. I was born less than 10 minutes from the Johnson Space Center and grew up with a computer programmer father who's favorite work experiences were in the Gemini/Apollo era of the Space Program. As many of you, he worked long hours and was even known to show up at a splash down party or two celebrating a successful mission. Last week at Rotary, we had John Lee, a member of our club recount the early days of the space program. He worked for NACA before NASA began and had some great stories about the early days of the Space Program. I can't believe they were planning to go to space and using slide rules to do the calculations.

I have a true admiration for the work that you do each and every day, and know that you are on the cutting edge of engineering, science, and technology. I guess what I am trying to say is that I respect you and thank you for your hard work. I believe it not only helps us reach new heights today, but will inspire the next generation to pick up where you leave off and continue to explore space!

Let me tell you a little about Rotary. Rotary is a Service Club with the motto "Service Above Self". There are currently 1.2 million Rotarians around the globe with over 33,000 Rotary Clubs. Rotarians are made up of business leaders in the community and we meet weekly for fellowship and service. We work to combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, provide education and job training, promote peace, and eradicate polio. I am honored to be the president of the Space Center Rotary Club which was formed in 1964. Over the years, we have had many local projects to help our schools, provide scholarships, recognize vocational excellence, and support those in our community that need a helping hand. We also support international projects like water wells, schools, immunization programs, educational programs etc. The RNASA foundation was formed by members of my Rotary Club and I am so proud of the work they do every year to recognize the very dedicated and deserving people in the Space Business.

Thank you for giving me a few minutes of your time, and let me speak for all 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide when I say, we would welcome you with open arms if you would ever like to come to a Rotary meeting and learn more about what we do.

David Coney, President, the Rotary Club of Space Center
RNASA Luncheon
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