

KSC MEMORIAL PRESS CONFERENCE

June 27, 2015

Thank you all very much.

We're here to honor our friends and colleagues; moms and dads; sons and daughters; uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters.

Francis R. Scobee

Michael J. Smith

Ellison S. Onizuka

Judith A. Resnick

Ronald E. McNair

Gregory Jarvis

Sharon Christa McAuliffe

Rick D. Husband

William C. McCool

Michael P. Anderson

Kalpana Chawla

David M. Brown

Laurel B. Clark

Ilan Ramon

Every single one of them is with us. Every single with one of them is watching us as we come here to celebrate. Every single one of them is incredibly happy as they look down on what they were a part of and what they made possible.

The poet, Hannah Senesh writes, quote *“There are stars whose radiance is visible on Earth though they have long been extinct. There are people whose brilliance continues to light the world even though they are no longer among the living. These lights are particularly bright when the night is dark. They light the way for humankind.”*

The crews of STS-51L (*Challenger*) and STS-107 (*Columbia*) are forever a part of a story that is ongoing. It is the story of humankind's evolving journey into space, the unknown, and the outer-reaches of knowledge, discovery and possibility. It is a story of hope.

"Forever Remembered" will tell this story.

On that terrible February day in 2003 when we lost *Columbia*, President Bush reminded our nation that quote: *"These astronauts knew the dangers, and they faced them willingly, knowing they had a high and noble purpose in life. Because of their courage and daring and idealism, we will miss them all the more."*

NASA established this memorial so that as humankind's journey of discovery endures. We will never forget the sacrifice that made it possible.

It was put together in cooperation with some of the most wonderful, courageous and resilient people anyone could ever hope to meet – the families of the astronauts who we've lost.

The artifacts here on display are not easy to look at.

Many of them are on display for the very first time. It is our hope that by making them available for the public to view, we will help remind the world that every launch, every discovery, every measure of progress, is possible only because of the sacrifice of those we have lost.

I want to leave you today with a few of the words that President Reagan offered the nation on January 28, 1986. He was speaking about the crew of *Challenger* – whom he referred to as pioneers – and his words are every bit as appropriate as we remember our friends and family who were lost on *Columbia*.

Quote: *“They had that special grace, that special spirit that says, ‘Give me a challenge and I’ll meet it with joy.’ They had a hunger to explore the universe and discover its truths. They wished to serve and they did. They served all of us ... the future doesn’t belong to the fainthearted; it belongs to the brave. The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future, and we’ll continue to follow them.”* End quote.

Follow them we will, as they continue to light the way for humankind in this memorial exhibit.

Thank you and thanks again to the families who have given so much. God Bless.