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**P.J. O’Rourke to serve as the 2016 RNASA featured speaker**

**HOUSTON, Texas** (February 11, 2016). The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation is pleased to announce that P.J. O’Rourke, journalist and American political satirist, will serve as the featured speaker at the 2016 RNASA awards banquet on April 29, 2016.

Known for his humorous libertarian style, P.J. has authored 17 books including *Don’t Vote – It Just Encourages the Bastards* and [*The Baby Boom: How It Got That Way (And It Wasn't My Fault) (And I’ll Never Do It Again)*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Baby_Boom:_How_It_Got_That_Way_(And_It_Wasn%27t_My_Fault)_(And_I%E2%80%99ll_Never_Do_It_Again)&action=edit&redlink=1). Two of his titles, *Give War a Chance* and *Parliament of Whores* reached #1 on the New York Times Best Sellers list. In addition to his successful books, P.J. is a contributing editor at the *Weekly Standard*, a Cato Institute H.L. Mencken Fellow and a panelist on *National Public Radio’s* game show *Wait, Wait…Don’t Tell Me*!

As a long-time advocate of the space industry, P.J. has served on the Space Foundation Board of Directors since Jan 2012 and has been a returning speaker at the annual Space Symposium. “While P.J. is noted as the most quoted living humorist in the world, his support of space exploration is also a huge part of his passion for the things that make America great,” said Elliot Pulham, Chief Executive Officer of the Space Foundation.  “Through his writing, and his service as a board-level leader at the Space Foundation, P.J. O’Rourke helps the world to better understand why the exploration of space matters."

Regarding speaking at the RNASA Space Awards Gala, P.J. said "I'm a little daunted by the size of the audience. I've never before spoken to *the entire universe*. And I'm deeply honored."

P.J. began publishing freelance articles in magazines such as *Rolling Stone*, *Vanity Fair* and *Car and Driver* in 1981. He was the foreign affairs desk chief for *Rolling Stone* magazine until 2001, reporting on wars and riots, stories that were eventually compiled into the book *Holidays in Hell*.

Early is his career, P.J. served as editor-in-chief for *National Lampoon*. He received a writing credit for *National Lampoon’s Lemmings* which helped Chevy Chase, John Belushi and Christopher Guest begin their successful careers in comedy. He also co-wrote *National Lampoon’s 1964 High School Yearbook*, some of which was used in the 1978 movie *Animal House*.

Spanning more than 40 years, P.J.’s career happened remarkably by accident. He was quoted as saying “I began to write for pay in the spring of 1970. To tell the truth I didn’t even mean to be a writer, I meant to be a race car driver, but I didn’t have a race car.” He was born in Toledo, Ohio where he completed his undergraduate studies at Miami University and earned a M.A. in English from Johns Hopkins University. P.J. and his wife Tina have three children, Elizabeth, Olivia and Clifford. They live in rural New Hampshire.

O’Rourke will be the featured speaker at RNASA’s 30th annual National Space Trophy Banquet on April 29, 2016, at the Houston Hyatt Regency. Dr. Charles Elachi, Director of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, will receive the 2016 National Space Trophy. The award gala will be emceed by Miles O’Brien, science correspondent for PBS NewsHour,

The RNASA Foundation invites members of the public and the aerospace community to attend the black-tie event on April 29, 2016, at the Houston Hyatt Regency. Please visit **http://www.rnasa.org/tables.html** to reserve your table for the RNASA Banquet and find information about sponsorships and tickets. To reserve a room at the Houston Hyatt Regency, please visit **http://www.rnasa.org/houston.html** or call 713-654-1234 and request the RNASA group rate. The RNASA website is **[http://www.rnasa.org/](http://www.rnasa.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank%22%20%5Co%20%22http%3A//www.rnasa.org/).**

*About RNASA: The Rotary National Award for Space Achievement (RNASA) Foundation was founded by the Space Center Rotary Club of Houston, Texas in 1985 to organize and coordinate an annual event to recognize outstanding achievements in space and create greater public awareness of the benefits of space exploration. The nonprofit Foundation presents the National Space Trophy and Stellar Awards each year.*