



# Czech Astronomical Society

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Maj. Gen. Charles Frank Bolden, Jr.  
NASA Administrator  
NASA Headquarters  
Washington DC 20546-0001  
U.S.A.

Prague, 19 January, 2017

Dear Mr. Administrator,

on behalf of the Czech Astronomical Society (founded in 1917) we wish to express our deep sympathy to NASA and to the family of Capt. Eugene Cernan.

His ancestors came to the United States from Bohemia and Slovakia and Capt. Cernan was very well aware of this heritage. He took with him the national flag of our country to the Moon and donated it to Czechoslovak astronomers during his first private visit in 1974. During this trip we have showed to him the places where his grandparents were born and got married.

Eugene was invited officially to our country several times after our Velvet Revolution and became the most popular NASA astronaut in the Czech Republic. Minor planet (12790) discovered by Czech astronomers was named Cernan in 2000. During his visit in 2001 Eugene met our president Václav Havel - incidentally in the Prague Military Hospital because Mr. Havel was sick and Eugene was examined there after the crash of the presidential helicopter near the place where one of his grandfathers was born.

In the same year he was elected a Honorary Member of the Czech Astronomical Society and he accepted the diploma of that honor. During the next visit in 2004 he received the highest distinction of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The Medal "De scientia et humanitate optime meritis" was bestowed to him by the President of our Academy. During his last visit in 2008 he has been received by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic. During his public appearances he stimulated the public and mostly the youth for making careers in science and technology.

Our Society members regret very much that the great American hero passed away but we are sure that his legacy will be lasting.

Sincerely yours,

Jan Vondrák  
chairman, CAS

Jiří Grygar  
honorary chairman, CAS