

Rusty Schweickart

Chair Emeritus and Co-Founder - [B612 Foundation](#)

Co-Founder - [Asteroid Day](#)

Russell L. (Rusty) Schweickart is a retired business and government executive and from 2002-2015 served as CEO, Chair of the Board and Chair Emeritus of B612 Foundation. He co-founded B612 with [Ed Lu](#) in 2002. In 2014 Schweickart co-founded Asteroid Day with Dr Brian May (QUEEN), Danica Remy (Current President B612) and filmmaker Grigorij Richters. Schweickart retired from ALOHA Networks, Inc. in 1998 where he served as President and CEO from 1996 through 1998. ALOHA was a data communications company specializing in high performance, satellite internet access equipment. Schweickart was formerly the Executive Vice President of CTA Commercial Systems, Inc. and Director of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Systems. Prior to his CTA work Schweickart founded and was president of Courier Satellite Services, Inc., a global satellite communications company which developed LEO satellites to provide worldwide affordable data services. Schweickart's satellite and telecommunications work involved him in the development of international communications regulations and policies, including participation in the 1992 and 1995 World Radiocommunications Conferences (WRC) of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).

Schweickart is the founder and past president of the Association of Space Explorers (ASE), the international professional society of astronauts and cosmonauts. The organization promotes the cooperative exploration and development of space and the use of space technology for human benefit. The ASE has a current membership of over 400 astronauts and cosmonauts from 33 nations.

In 1977 Schweickart joined the staff of Governor Jerry Brown of California, and served in the Governor's office for two years as his assistant for science and technology. In 1979 Schweickart was appointed to the post of Commissioner of Energy for the State of California and served on the Commission for five and a half years. The Commission, which was chaired by Schweickart for three and a half years, was responsible for all aspects of energy regulation in the state other than rate setting, including energy demand forecasting, alternative energy development, powerplant siting and energy performance regulation for appliances and buildings.

Schweickart joined NASA as one of 14 astronauts named in October 1963, the third group of astronauts selected. He served as lunar module pilot for Apollo 9, March 3-13, 1969, logging 241 hours in space. This was the third manned flight of the Apollo series and the first manned flight of the lunar module. During a 46 minute EVA Schweickart tested the portable life support backpack which was subsequently used on the lunar surface explorations.

Prior to joining NASA, Schweickart was a research scientist at the Experimental Astronomy Laboratory of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His work at MIT involved research in upper atmospheric physics, star tracking and the stabilization of stellar images. His thesis for a master's degree at MIT was an experimental validation of theoretical models of stratospheric radiance. Schweickart served as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force, and as an Apollo 9 astronaut, was the first Lunar Module Pilot on the mission.

NASA Service

- Chosen in NASA's third astronaut group, is best known as the Lunar Module pilot on the Apollo 9 mission, the first manned flight test of the LM.
- Backup commander of the first Skylab mission, responsible for developing the hardware and procedures used by the first crew to perform critical in-flight repairs of the Skylab station.
- Performed the first in-space test of the Portable Life Support System used by the Apollo astronauts who walked on the Moon.
- Served for a time as Director of User Affairs in NASA's Office of Applications.