

Residents Have a Blast at SpaceX Tour

Recently, Vista del Monte residents were excited to go on an exclusive tour of one of Southern California's leading aerospace companies and manufacturers, Space Exploration Technologies Corp, more commonly known as SpaceX.

A Southern California company that began as a start-up, SpaceX is a leading name in reusable rockets and manufacturing. So it was no surprise that when Vista del Monte Executive Director Doug Tucker accompanied residents and others to the Hawthorne headquarters, the launch rockets were the main attraction.



Residents and staff enjoy the SpaceX tour.

"The first thing we saw as we walked in was the very first space craft they launched hanging from the ceiling," Doug recounted upon his first impressions of the facility. However, Doug was not the only one immediately impressed.

Vista residents, who consider themselves lifelong learners, marveled at the sheer scale of the rockets and how much work went into making them. Doug, and the others were shown the command center and the entire process of assembly, as well as parts used in previous rocket launches. The tour also included a look at other various aspects of the rocket building and launching process, such as cargo bays, fuel pods, and heat shields.

Throughout the year, Life Enrichment Director Helene Hellstern organizes local and regional trips

that residents enjoy. Past excursions have included Solvang, the Santa Barbara Mission, the Labyrinth Walk at UC Santa Barbara, museums, wineries, the Harbor Seal Reserve and Rookery, Morro Rock, and to the spectacular “super bloom” of wild flowers at Figueroa Mountain and now SpaceX.

“We are aware that residents have a wide range of interests, so we strive to develop a well-rounded itinerary to provide many choices,” Helene said. “If residents want to go to a particular location, if at all possible, I will make it happen. Traveling as a group is always fun. It gives us all a chance to get to know each other better and share our interests.”