LIEUTENANT COLONEL LINDLEY N. JOHNSON, USAF Retired, grew up on the family farm near Wilsey, Kansas, and went to high school at Council Grove, graduating in 1975. He attended the University of Kansas (KU), earning a Bachelor of Arts in Astronomy and a commission from the four-year Air Force ROTC Program in January 1980. He also has a Masters degree in Engineering Management from the University of Southern California, earned in 1990 while assigned to Los Angeles Air Force Base.

Colonel Johnson served 23 years of active duty with the Air Force in a variety of space program related assignments, from the operational space surveillance unit level to service at the Pentagon on the space systems acquisition staff of the Under Secretary of the Air Force. He is an acknowledged Defense Department expert on space control, and in particular space surveillance systems and operations. He either served or led several studies for the Air Force and Office of the Secretary of Defense on capabilities and future requirements for space control systems. While assigned to Air Force Space Command in the mid-'90's, he orchestrated the use of Air Force ground-based optical telescopes to support the discovery of Near Earth Objects (NEOs) by two NASA sponsored search teams. Lindley retired in 2003 in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel with 15 major unit or individual awards, including 5 awards of the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal.

Lindley Johnson joined NASA shortly after military retirement and was assigned to the Solar System Exploration Division as the Program Scientist for NASA's Planetary Astronomy and NEO Observation Programs. He was also the Program Executive for the Deep Impact mission to Comet Tempel 1, which launched in January 2005 and delivered a probe to the comet on July 4, 2005, to learn more about the interior structure and composition of short-period comets.

Lindley is now assigned to NASA's Science Mission Directorate, Planetary Science Division, as the Program Executive for the Discovery Program of Solar System Exploration.. He also serves as the NASA Headquarters Program Executive for NASA's Near Earth Object Program.

Asteroid 5905 (1989 CJ1), a several kilometer sized object which orbits the Sun every 2.6 years, is officially named Johnson by its discoverer, astronomer Eleanor Helin, to recognize Colonel Johnson's efforts in detecting Earth orbit crossing objects in the Solar System. In April 2005, this object was determined by astronomers to be a binary system of two asteroids orbiting each other.

Lindley is married to Colonel Brandy Johnson, USAF, whom he met and married while they were both attending KU and participating in AFROTC. They currently reside in Kingstowne, Virgina. In his spare time, when the weather is good (and Homeland Security Alert levels below Orange), Lindley enjoys piloting his 1977 Cessna Cardinal for "$100 hamburgers" at small airports on Maryland's Eastern Shore.