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NAA HONORS GENE KRANZ, CHARLES METCALF, ROBERT TAYLOR AND BARRY VALENTINE WITH 2010 ELDER STATESMAN AWARDS

Arlington, Virginia, September 29, 2010 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) announced the recipients of this year’s Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Awards. Gene Kranz, Charles Metcalf, Robert Taylor and Barry Valentine will be honored at the NAA Fall Awards Banquet on Monday, November 8 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia.

Gene Kranz began his aerospace career in the 1950s in the U.S. Air Force. In 1960, he joined NASA and over the years worked on projects from Project Mercury, the Gemini Missions, the Apollo program (where he led the team that successfully returned the Apollo 13 crew). He later directed the Skylab Program, and served as Director of Mission Operations until his retirement in 1994. Since then he is a flight engineer on the B-17 “Thunderbird” and performs at air shows throughout the U.S. He also flies an aerobatic biplane which he built himself. Kranz received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Nixon and is the author of “Failure is Not an Option.”

Major General Charles D. Metcalf, USAF, (Ret.), is Director of the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. His dedication and outstanding leadership during his 14-year tenure as museum director, has resulted in a world class museum. He significantly expanded the museum’s facilities and exhibits and has increased attendance to nearly 1.4 million visitors.

Robert L. Taylor got hooked on aviation in the 1930s when he had his first airplane ride in a Ford Trimotor. He served with the U.S. Air Force in both World War II and the

Korean War, then worked on a long list of civilian aircraft, including Beechcrafts, Aeroncas, Stinsons and Fairchild's as well as military aircraft. In the early 1950s, Taylor founded the Antique Airplane Association (AAA) as a means of preserving and flying older aircraft as well as providing a forum for members to exchange information. In 1994, Taylor was inducted into the Iowa Aviation hall of Fame. He was also honored with the Iowa Department of Transportation Education Award and the Experimental Aircraft Association's Founders Award.

Barry Valentine has more than 40 years of aviation experience, encompassing several senior positions in government and industry, including Acting FAA Administrator. During his career, Valentine has made significant contributions to the aviation industry involving policy decisions and international harmonization. As a former Air Force officer, Valentine served his country as a decorated fighter pilot. As a government employee, his longstanding dedication as a public servant demonstrates his commitment to ensuring a strong future for the aviation/aerospace industry.

The Elder Statesman awards were established in 1954 to honor outstanding Americans, who, by their efforts over a period of years, have made contributions of significant value to aeronautics, and have reflected credit upon America and themselves. Previous winners of this most historic award include Eddie Rickenbacker, James Doolittle, Olive Ann Beech, Scott Crossfield and Chuck Yeager.

The Elder Statesman Selection Committee was chaired by NAA President Jonathan Gaffney; and consisted of NAA Chairman Walter Boyne; Tom Connolly, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University; Bob Stangarone, Cessna; and Dr. Peggy Chabrian, Women In Aviation.

The National Aeronautic Association is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering America's aerospace leadership and promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States.

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