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2011 ELDER STATESMAN OF AVIATION NAMED BY NAA

Arlington, Virginia, September 14, 2011 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) announced the recipients of this year’s Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Awards. General Jack Dailey, Leon Potts, The Honorable James Coyne, and John Cashman will be honored at the NAA Fall Awards Banquet on Monday, November 7 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia.

General Jack Dailey, a retired U.S. Marine Corps general and pilot, began his aviation career in the Marines. During his 36-year career, he flew over 7,000 hours in a variety of aircraft and flew 450 missions. In 1990, he was promoted to the rank of general and named Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. From there, he joined NASA as associate deputy administrator where he led the agency’s internal operations. In January 2000, General Dailey became Director of the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum. During Dailey’s tenure, the museum has expanded to include the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles International Airport.

From his first parachute jump in 1952 to his current service on the National Skydiving Museum’s Board of Trustees, Leon “Lenny” Potts has dedicated himself to the skydiving and aviation communities for more than 50 years and continues to make a lasting impact today. He was instrumental in promoting the sport of parachuting by forming local clubs and associations, always stressing safety. He served with the U.S. Parachute Teams as team pilot when they competed in the World Parachuting Championships in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Great Britain. He has served on the NAA Sport Aviation Council. He has been awarded the U.S. Parachute Association’s highest honor – the Lifetime Achievement Award and this fall will be inducted into the National Skydiving Hall of Fame.

President of the National Air Transportation Association since 1994, The Honorable Jim Coyne is a lifelong advocate of aviation safety. He serves on the Board of Governors of the Flight Safety Foundation and was founder and president of the Air Charter Safety Foundation. He began his career as CEO of a family business in Philadelphia, and in 1980 was elected to the

United States House of Representatives. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan asked Coyne to join his staff as director of the White House Office of Private Sector Initiatives. A pilot with over 6,000 hours, he has also served as president of the American Consulting Engineers Council, the American Tort Reform Association, and Americans to Limit Congressional Terms.

John Cashman joined Boeing in 1966 and retired as its Director of Flight Crew Operations and Chief Pilot in 2007. During his career he was involved with numerous major Boeing aircraft projects including the 707, 727, 767, and 777 and many of these aircraft derivatives. With over 9,000 hours, he has set a number of World Records including the longest flight in a commercial aircraft. Today, Mr. Cashman continues with Boeing, working on the 787 program, shaping the future of flight at Boeing and around the world.

“As the Elder Statesman Award is synonymous with lifetime achievement, these four individuals together have contributed immensely to the advancement of our industry, the defense of our nation, and the fabric of sport aviation in the United States,” said Jonathan Gaffney, chairman of the Selection Committee and president of NAA. “It is such a great honor to put their names on this most cherished award.”

Members of the Selection Committee included Phillip C. Umphres, Past Chairman of The Soaring Society of America, Inc.: Colonel Christopher Needels, USA(Ret.); Barry Valentine, Senior Advisor, The Wicks Group (Elder Statesman Recipient, 2010); Jim Wilding, former President and CEO of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (Elder Statesman Recipient, 2006); Bob Blouin, VP Government and Industry Relations, Hawker Beechcraft Corporation.

The Wesley L. McDonald Elder Statesman of Aviation Award was 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 have included Eddie Rickenbacker, Jimmy Doolittle, Olive Ann Beech, Scott Crossfield, Carol Hallett, and Chuck Yeager.

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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