



DAC - MDC - Boeing Retirees
of California

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Roundup

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Bill's Corner

As I write this, I can see out my office window a bright sunny but cold winter day in SoCal. Wait a minute – right now most of the country would consider a low of 45 and a high of 65 a warm winter day. Tomorrow I will watch my granddaughter play a few water polo games in an outdoor pool in Costa Mesa. Maybe I am taking for granted the wonderful weather we are blessed with.

Boeing is in the news again and not in a good way. This time, a plug door (or is it a door plug?) blew out on a 737-9 Max. Fortunately, the airplane and passengers survived with the most severe injury to Boeing's reputation which had already suffered a few blows. I still have a bit of Boeing stock, which took another hit just as it was recovering. This is obviously much less important than the lives of people who have entrusted them to our products. And, even though long retired, I care about the ability of Boeing products to carry people safely on their trips. For my whole career, I reminded myself that my family is among the traveling public so safety was the number one consideration. I expect you all felt the same.

Returning to the theme of season, at this time of year we are recovering from the holiday celebrations and looking forward to the arrival of spring. For most of us this starts our vacation season, perhaps after a winter

trip to escape the cold. There is so much to see and do in our state, our country and our world that even with the most strenuous efforts we will not see and experience it all. I for one will keep trying until the limitations of aging force me to stop 😊 I hope you all feel the same way.

Our March luncheon should be a great one. I won't go into detail here as there is another article in this Roundup that does.

I'll end here with wishes for a very Happy New Year, perhaps with a few resolutions, and a focus on making it a better year for yourself and your loved ones!

Boeing Awarded \$2.3B for Additional USAF KC-46A Tankers as KC-10 Tanker Fleet Retirement Program Continues



Boeing will build an additional 15 KC-46A Pegasus tankers under a Lot 10 contract awarded recently by the U.S. Air Force

valued at \$2.3 billion. The new order brings to 153 the total number of KC-46A multi-mission aerial refuelers now on contract globally, providing advanced capability advantages for the joint force and allies. USAF plans a total buy of 179 Pegasus tankers. To date, Boeing has delivered at least 76 KC-46As to the U.S. Air Force and two to the Japan Air Self-Defense Force.

“We appreciate our partnership with the U.S. Air Force, which allows for the expansion of the capacity and capability of the KC-46A fleet,” said Lynn Fox, Boeing vice president and KC-46 program manager. “We understand the advantages that KC-46 capabilities give the warfighters, and in the current global environment, we continue to focus our investments on evolving the aircraft for the changing needs of the mission.” With a supplier network of about 37,000 American workers employed by more than 650 businesses throughout more than 40 U.S. states, the combat-proven KC-46A is transforming the role of the tanker for the 21st century.

From aerial refueling, cargo and passenger transportation, aeromedical evacuation support, and data connectivity at the tactical edge, the KC-46A Pegasus has already been called a “game changer” for its ability to transmit and exchange data, enabling rapid air mobility, global reach and Agile Combat Employment.

In September 2022 the Pegasus was approved for combat operations worldwide after completing a deployment concept exercise in the U.S. Central Command area of operations, where it completed 206 flight hours offloading 1.46 million pounds of fuel to 66 aircraft. It refueled two F-15E Strike Eagles assigned to the 335th Expeditionary

Fighter Squadron.

It was evaluated while filling real-world tasks in support of combat operations, supplementing other tanker aircraft in theater. As part of that same mission, the aircraft conducted the first successful combat use of the Military Data Network, an onboard communications system that allows the KC-46 to serve as a secure interface between the on-ground Air Operations Center and airborne aircraft operating in its vicinity, thereby providing increased battlespace situational awareness.

Brig. Gen. Ryan Samuelson, AMC’s KC-46A Cross Functional Team lead, said, “the KC-46A is a game changer in its ability to transmit and exchange data between networks, arming warfighters with real-time battlefield awareness -- extending the joint force’s reach, flexibility, and endurance capabilities.”

Earlier this year, the Air Force also awarded Boeing a \$184 million Block I upgrade contract that adds more advanced communications capabilities to enhance the aircraft’s data connectivity and situational awareness to joint and allied forces.

Upgrades include line-of-sight and beyond-line-of-sight communications technologies with antijamming and encryption features.

KC-10 Fleet Now Being Retired

Meanwhile, the Air Force Times reported that a KC-10 Extender tanker jet departed Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia Oct. 5, 2023 after conducting the airframe's final combat deployment.

The departure marked the end of the airframe's 30+ years of service in the Middle East and southwest Asia. By September 2024, the Air Force's fleet of KC-10s will be

decommissioned, to be gradually replaced by the KC-46 aircraft.

In June, 2023 the last of 32 KC-10s previously based at Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst (JB MDL) departed New Jersey for retirement in the Arizona desert.



As reported by Howard German in *The Aviationist*, this aircraft, tail number 84-0188, had a distinguished history for the USAF, displaying incredible versatility and utility.

At first it was planned that KC-10s would remain U.S.-based only. However, shortly after the initial KC-10s entered service in 1981 that strategy was abandoned and KC-10s were deployed around the globe. Their elegant original white livery was quickly replaced with the now-familiar charcoal paint after a ground photo from the Chad desert proved them too dangerously conspicuous in bright white.



The final McGuire Extender had flown a total of 33,017 flight hours supporting combat and worldwide missions in six out of seven

continents in an amazing career. The aircraft refueled over 125,000 U.S. and coalition receivers from twenty-five different countries. During its service life nearly 11,000 aircrew members have flown this aircraft and over 12,000 maintainers have kept this aircraft airborne.

The list of military operations that KC-10 had served is equally impressive. It has been involved in conflicts since Operation Eldorado Canyon against Libya in 1986. It was instrumental in supporting the Global War on Terror, Operation Allies Refuge and the Kabul evacuation in August 2021. It supported NATO efforts in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, as well as to secure lasting defeat of ISIS with Operation Inherent Resolve, and Operation Noble Eagle, military operations related to homeland security of the U.S, and Canada.

At the departure ceremony Lt. Col. Adam Waite, a 15-year veteran of the KC-10 with 3500 hours in the jet, currently with the 78th Air Refueling Squadron at the Joint Base, said, "It will take the work of several aircraft in order to equal the capabilities of one single KC-10. It can carry more than 356,000 pounds of fuel, (almost twice as much as the KC-135), and nearly 170,000 pounds of cargo, which nearly equals the C-17."

The closing notes on the two day "KC-10 Departure Ceremony" event booklet summed it up perfectly, "There is no corner of the globe left untouched by the legacy of America's Global Extender".

Staying Connected Videos **KC-10 Double Feature is Our Video Highlight for this Roundup.**

With so much of this issue dedicated to the KC-10, it's appropriate to offer two videos in honor of one of the most beloved aircraft ever

built in Long Beach. Both are available for viewing free on YouTube. If you have a smart TV with Internet access or a device such as a Roku to receive streaming content you can view these productions on your television. If not, you can access them on your computer screen. Over its eventful 43-year service history, the KC-10 has earned an honored place in USAF history. Some 60 Extenders in all were built. During 2023 and concluding in 2024 all 59 of the remaining aircraft are scheduled to be retired as new KC-46 Pegasus tankers enter the USAF fleet. On a personal note, I would hope one of these retired KC-10s someday makes it back home to Long Beach for permanent display.

For a nostalgic stroll down memory lane don't miss the video entitled, *U.S. Air Force KC-10A Extender Refueling Tanker Aircraft Promo Film*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQ4kKcuuno0>

It is a 24:19 minute Douglas-produced film that takes the aircraft through its development, manufacture, flight test and delivery. There are scenes inside the fabrication and assembly buildings as the aircraft comes together. You will see it being put through its paces during refueling and cargo loading and at delivery with DAC executives John Brizendine and Lou Harrington featured. Numerous videos were produced starring the KC-10 during its long operational service. One of the best is *Full tour onboard the KC-10A Extender!*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luq_S5zTcl4

This one runs for 6:58 minutes and is hosted by USAF Capt. Jeff Schaeffer. You'll get an overview of the Extender and experience both interior and exterior features. Even after four decades it is still a marvel. Enjoy!

March luncheon

Our speaker for March is a name most of you will recognize and perhaps know from his time at Douglas. Aviation artist, author, and historian **Mike Machat** currently serves as Curator for the Museum of Flying in Santa Monica, CA. Originally from Long Island, New York, Machat served in the U.S. Air Force before relocating to Los Angeles and earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from California State University, Long Beach. Hired by McDonnell Douglas as a technical illustrator, he rapidly advanced through the ranks to become a Staff Artist and Corporate Representative.

Machat was elected first president of the American Society of Aviation Artists and was a flight-rated member of the Air Force Documentary Art Program. He painted murals at the Bob Hope Airport in Burbank, CA, the Museum of Flying in Santa Monica, and the Edwards Air Force Base Museum. Machat has four paintings in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum and is the only artist to have won the Combs Gates Award for Aviation History from the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

As an aviator, Mike holds an FAA Commercial Pilot Certificate and has logged more than 2,000 flights in sailplanes. He has flown in nearly 250 different types of aircraft and was the first Air Force artist to fly in the Grumman F-14 Tomcat and the B-1B Lancer. Mike has also written four best-selling books on aviation history, we encourage you all to attend, spend time with friends not often seen, and enjoy.