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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AIR SHOW INDUSTRY HONORS KEVIN WALSH WITH HIGHEST AWARD

LAS VEGAS, NV – DECEMBER 9, 2021: The International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) held its 54th annual industry convention this past week and awarded Kevin Walsh the ICAS Sword of Excellence, its highest honor. Announced at the event’s capstone, the chairman’s banquet, earlier this evening, the award recognizes outstanding service and personal contributions to the air show industry.

Walsh is the President and CEO of the Yankee Air Museum in Belleville, Michigan, and longtime director of one of the most successful shows in North America, the Thunder Over Michigan Air Show. Serving nine years on the ICAS board as a member and ultimately the chairman, he has spent many years supporting the air show business.

With a family history in air shows, Walsh started early in elementary school, where he could often be found stuffing envelopes and parking cars for the London Air Show in Ontario, Canada, where his father was the show’s director for many years. Later, he left an unrelated career in physical therapy to come back to the air show industry that he knew well.

Often lobbying other industry members to take unique and significant steps toward change, Walsh has led by example through advocacy and modeling. Repeatedly being the first to attempt a new idea, his optimism toward convincing and proving a needed change cannot be understated. His ability to continually evolve has created a standard of excellence throughout all his industry work.

“For his entire career thus far in the air show industry, Kevin has shown consideration of both his events and the air show industry as a whole in nearly every decision and action he makes,” said John Cudahy, president of ICAS. “His willingness to serve the greater good provides a marker and a high bar for all in the business to follow. More so, we owe him a debt of gratitude for the work he has done and are excited to see where he helps to lead the industry in his bright future.”

Walsh has continually demonstrated his commitment to professionalism, sustainability, and improved entertainment in the larger North American air show community. A frequent speaker at the ICAS Convention, Walsh was nominated in part for his commitment to safeguarding, promoting, and improving the entire air show business as a leader, mentor, and occasional constructive critic.

Since 1981, ICAS has awarded the Sword of Excellence to recognize outstanding service and personal contributions to the air show industry. Over the last four decades, ICAS has honored over 40 Sword recipients for their leadership, service, innovation, vision, commitment, and selfless contributions to the air show business. The single common characteristic of these air show performers, event organizers, military representatives, government officials, and air show industry activists is their selfless commitment to improving and contributing not just to their own air show businesses but to the entire air show industry. Selection for the Sword of Excellence recipient is made by the unanimous decision of a committee comprised of a member of the board of directors, two past award recipients, and two at-large members, each of whom has at least ten years of air show industry experience.

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