

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2024 CONFERENCE



The Coeur d'Alene Resort • Coeur d'Alene, ID • September 12–15, 2024

Mark your calendars for September 12-15, 2024 and plan to attend the 2024 FISA Annual Conference at the Coeur d'Alene Resort & Spa in Coeur d'Alene, ID.

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho is known as the "Playground of the Pacific Northwest." Nestled on the North Shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene, acclaimed by National Geographic as one of the five most beautiful lakes in the world, The Coeur d'Alene Resort is proud to be a part of the Pacific Northwest's iconic history. In the early years since their founding in 1986, The Resort has grown into a world-class destination for visitors near and far and offers unmatched outdoor recreation from lake cruises to hiking.

The Coeur d'Alene Resort's 338 lavishly appointed guestrooms and suites offer views of the lake and the surrounding countryside. The rooms have spacious, well-defined living and work areas and oversized bathrooms. Sink into their custom pillow-top mattresses, luxurious fine linens and duvets, and down pillows, and enjoy 55" HD TVs, wireless charging and alarm clocks, and wireless high-speed internet.

One of the unique aspects of the Resort is that the Coeur d'Alene Resort Golf Course is designed to give the ultimate golf experience. With one of the best-known icons in golf — the world's only floating movable island green, golfers test their swing. The day starts for golfers with arriving at the course in a custom craft mahogany lake shuttle, boasting panoramic lake views, forested ridgelines, and gently rolling woodlands. You'll arrive at the course in time to enjoy breakfast before teeing off in the scramble format tournament.

The Coeur d'Alene Resort is located in the heart of downtown Coeur d'Alene right on the lakeshore. Walk out the front door of the Resort and you have several blocks of restaurants and unique shops to explore. The Resort is located 40 minutes east of the Spokane International Airport (GEG) which has nonstop or one-stop flights from most major US and Canadian cities. The Resort does have shuttle service from the airport which can be arranged in advance. Also, the Coeur d'Alene Air Terminal is 20 minutes north and available for corporate and private aircrafts.

2023 FISA ECONOMIC SURVEY

	DISTRIB.	MANUFACT.
	20 Responses	28 Responses

Now that we are nearing the end of 2023, how does your business compare with 2022?

Profits are up	40.00%	28.57%
Profits are down	20.00%	46.43%
Profits are same	40.00%	25.00%

Including this year, which of the last three years has been your best year?

2023	50.00%	32.14%
2022	30.00%	50.00%
2021	20.00%	17.86%

For 2024, in which market segments do you anticipate the most growth?

Food	30.00%	44.44%
Dairy	5.00%	18.52%
Beverage	20.00%	14.81%
Pharmaceutical	25.00%	18.52%
Personal Care	15.00%	0.00%
Other	5.00%	3.70%

What is the biggest challenge you face going into 2024?

DISTRIBUTORS:

- Hiring competent employees
- Private Equity
- Catch up from sales from a softer 2023
- Surviving the upcoming elections. Why can't we come up with better candidates? Our great nation needs to address that issue. Americans should be the happiest people on earth, but we are not. Anger seems to be the rule of the day.
- Capital spending will shrink, and service techs to maintain existing equipment are difficult to find.
- Project Slowdown
- Hiring and employee Retention
- Keeping up with digital information upgrades and trends.
- Uncertain economy, high interest rates. Rapid industry consolidation

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FISA is an association composed of distributors and manufacturer members who share a commitment to value-added distribution in serving hygienic processing industries. FISA's mission is to help its members improve performance and customer value.

**2023 – 2024
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Stella L. Jones

Executive Director

Email: stella@fisanet.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT



We are thrilled to be going back to picturesque Coeur d' Alene, Idaho for our Annual Conference in the fall of 2024. This marks our return after 18 years, making it a truly special occasion.

Nestled in the heart of

this beautiful destination, the town of Coeur d' Alene offers a myriad of options for recreation, shopping, and dining, and is just outside the front door of the Resort. Given the consistently high occupancy of the Resort, we have decided to open registration earlier than usual next spring, ensuring you have ample time to secure your room for what promises to be an unforgettable event.

As we enter 2024, watch for our member survey scheduled for an early January release. This survey will focus on gathering additional comments from you for conference content and activities you would like to experience in Coeur d' Alene. Your insights are important to us, and the Board will thoroughly consider all responses during our planning meeting later in January. Your input makes a difference in shaping the final details of the conference. The FISA Board listens and tries to make adjustments to ensure the conference aligns with your expectations.

In addition to the Annual Conference, we are pleased to highlight FISA's ongoing focus on providing continuous learning opportunities. As a long-standing sponsor of UID, FISA annually offers two scholarships with one scholarship designated for a member under 40 years of age. This year, there were five excellent applications submitted and it was difficult to select the two winners. I want to personally congratulate Mike Wilke and Jason Gudenkauf who were selected as the UID scholarship recipients for 2024. For anyone planning to attend UID registration will open soon, and be sure to designate FISA as your association to get special pricing.

In addition to sponsoring UID, we are excited to introduce the FISA Business Academy, a 10-week fully virtual education program. This

innovative continuing education program brings a unique opportunity for professional growth with no travel required. Experience the flexibility of self-paced learning while you enjoy bi-weekly virtual sessions, fostering camaraderie among FISA members. You will benefit from expert facilitation and coaching by industry leaders throughout the program. Read more about the Academy in this issue and take advantage of registering before December 31st to save \$200.

The FISA Business Academy is appropriate for any age group but our NexGen members (under 40 years of age) are especially enthusiastic. Building on the success of the NextGen panel presentation at the Conference in Colorado Springs, the FISA membership wants to encourage more engagement and participation with our younger members. There's also a rising interest in initiatives to enhance the involvement of women in FISA, reflecting our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive community.

Amidst evolving market dynamics, the FISA channel is undergoing consolidation which is impacting multiple lines of trade. The hallmark of FISA members; however, lies in their resilience and adaptability.

As our individual companies navigate change, FISA as an Association is poised to adapt, seizing new opportunities to deliver enhanced value to our members. Embracing new companies with innovative products and capabilities is integral to sustaining our collective success.

At FISA, we prioritize relationship-building, extending care to our employees, customers, families, and ourselves. As the season unfolds, let's embrace the spirit of gratitude, taking a moment to appreciate our blessings and foster meaningful connections.

Linda joins me in wishing you all a joyous holiday season.

Barry Dobbins, *Dobbins Company*

TWO UID SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS SELECTED

This year we had a competitive field of applicants for the two scholarships FISA sponsors to attend the University of Innovation (UID) in March of 2024. The two winners, both of whom are FISA NextGen members, are Mike Wilke, Director of Finance at Nelson-Jameson, Inc. and Jason Gudenkauf of Triplex Sales.



Mike Wilke has been with Nelson-Jameson, Inc. for 11 years and in his letter endorsing Mike for the scholarship, Mike Rindy, President of the company,

wrote, "Mike's journey at Nelson-Jameson Inc. is a testament to his remarkable work ethic and drive. He began his career with our company as a warehouse worker over a decade ago. He has since risen through the ranks, holding positions as an accounting assistant, controller, and, currently, the Director of Finance. This remarkable ascent is a clear reflection of his diligence, ambition, and ability to adapt to new challenges."

In his application, Mike Wilke said, "I will benefit personally from the program by gaining valuable knowledge and skills related to distribution management, information technology, and supply chain operations. This education will enhance my professional expertise and contribute to my personal growth and development. The program will inform me of the latest industry insights and best practices, enabling me to stay competitive in the dynamic world of distribution. My organization, Nelson-Jameson Inc., will benefit from my participation in the program as I apply the knowledge



and skills acquired, leading to increased productivity and profitability. I will bring new ideas to our executive team and be better equipped to optimize our distribution processes, enhance financial strategies, and streamline supply chain operations. This, in turn, can result in cost savings and improved efficiency, which are crucial for our company's success."



Jason Gudenkauf is a Sales Engineer with Triplex Sales. Jason said, "I have been working in the food and beverage process equipment industry for

nearly 14 years. I recently started working with Triplex Sales in an outside sales role. I am excited to learn new strategies and tactics to help me succeed in my role here at Triplex Sales and within the industry by better serving my customers. This opportunity with the University of Innovative Distribution and FISA will provide me with new knowledge to succeed. After receiving a bachelor's degree in business management, I started my career working for another distributor who was an SPX Flow distributor that sold and installed food and beverage process

equipment. My role with that company was inside sales focusing on replacement equipment and aftermarket sales. After coming to Triplex Sales, I have been given the opportunity and challenge to transition to an outside sales position."

In his recommendation letter for Jason, Andy Soukup, Vice President of Triplex Sales wrote: "In my time working with Jason, I have had the opportunity to observe his many exceptional qualities, both in his professional and extracurricular pursuits. Jason is an outstanding individual who excels in every aspect of his life. He possesses a keen intellect, strong work ethic, and unwavering commitment to his goals. I have always been impressed by his ability to grasp complex concepts and use them to help solve real world customer problems. His passion for industrial distribution is evident through his long tenure in the industry and growing participation in industry events. Furthermore, I am confident that Jason's strong moral character, integrity, and professionalism will make him an excellent representative of FISA at UID. He is not only an excellent student but also a respectful and responsible individual who interacts well with colleagues, customers, and vendors alike."

Wishing you a Wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

WELLNESS AT WORK: THE NEW COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



By Lisa Ryan

LISA RYAN, CSP, was a popular speaker at the 2022 FISA Annual Conference. She is Chief Appreciation Strategist at Grategy and is a Certified Speaking Professional, best-selling author of eleven books including “Thank You Very Much: Gratitude Strategies to Create a Workplace Culture that ROCKS!” and co-star in two inspirational films with other experts including Jack Canfield of “Chicken Soup for the Soul.” She is the Past-President of the National Speakers Association, Ohio Chapter and holds an MBA from Cleveland State University.

Lisa is known for her high energy and enthusiastic delivery in presenting ideas attendees can implement immediately to make positive workplace culture changes.

In today's fast-paced business environment, it's easy for leaders to become hyper-focused on the financial metrics that traditionally define #organizational success. Profit margins, #revenue streams, and market share often take center stage, sometimes overshadowing the well-being of the employees who contribute to these numbers. However, the modern #workforce is evolving, and employees are no longer satisfied with just a paycheck at the end of the month. They are actively seeking workplaces that offer holistic physical and mental health and wellness opportunities. Ignoring this shift in employee priorities can be costly, as organizations that don't adapt risk losing valuable talent to competitors who do.

The wellness industry is a testament to this growing trend, boasting a staggering valuation of \$4.2 trillion and showing no signs of slowing down. This isn't just a fad; it's a fundamental shift in societal values spilling over into the workplace. Forward-thinking companies recognize that prioritizing #employee wellness is not just an ethical obligation but a strategic advantage. By offering comprehensive #wellness programs, organizations attract top talent and foster a more engaged and productive workforce. In this way, wellness is becoming the new competitive advantage in business, one that promises not just happier employees but also healthier bottom lines.

Three Pillars for a Wellness – Centric Workplace

1. Conduct Employee Surveys

Before launching any wellness initiative, it's crucial to understand what your employees want. Don't assume a one-size-fits-all approach will work. Instead, survey your employees to gather their ideas, suggestions, and recommendations. This ensures that your wellness programs are tailored to their needs and helps secure their buy-in. When employees feel heard and included, participation rates in these programs will likely soar.

2. Offer Incentives to Motivate

Incentives can be a powerful motivator for employee participation in wellness programs. Consider offering a range of prizes that appeal to different interests—a Fitbit for the fitness enthusiast, a smartwatch for the tech-savvy, PTO for those seeking a break, or gift cards for a wide array of preferences. The key is to make the rewards enticing enough to kickstart participation. Over time, as more employees engage, a culture of wellness will naturally build momentum.

3. Foster a Culture of Health

Promoting health within the organization goes beyond just offering gym memberships. Stock the breakroom with healthy snacks like fruits and nuts instead of chips and soda. Advocate for stand-up meetings or walking meetings, preferably in an outdoor setting to connect with nature. Normalize conversations around mental health and consider offering in-house yoga and meditation classes. Consistency in your wellness message will not only encourage participation but also make wellness an integral part of your organizational culture.

The Bottom Line

Prioritizing the health and wellness of your employees is not just an ethical choice but a smart business decision. When employees are physically and mentally healthy, they are more engaged, productive, and less likely to leave the organization. By investing in your employees' well-being, you're also investing in your business's long-term health and prosperity.

By implementing these strategies, you're not just ticking off a corporate responsibility box but building a foundation for a happier, healthier, and more engaged workforce. And remember, a healthy employee is often a happy employee and a happy employee is invariably more productive.

How are you incorporating wellness into your workplace?

FISA IS COMMITTED TO ONGOING EMPLOYEE EDUCATION

Register today for the FISA Business Academy
The FISA Business Academy starts on March 20, 2024.

The **FISA Business Academy** is a 10-week fully digital program for both current and aspiring leaders within the hygienic processing industry to learn the fundamentals of people management and business finance to grow their businesses and advance their careers.

FISA Business Academy is a 10-week program that blends self-paced learning with live virtual sessions every two weeks to learn and discuss with your peers. By the end of this program, you will have the knowledge, skills, and resources you need to be more successful.

After the 10 weeks, you will continue to have access to the eLearning to continue your learning journey!

FISA Business Academy is based on a streamlined executive-MBA curriculum, with relevant and actionable knowledge every business leader needs. In just 10 weeks you will learn how to build organizational alignment, create more agile planning processes, empower your team, serve your right customers better, and learn the financial fundamentals of building a more profitable organization.

The program cost is \$995 per person, but if you register before January 1, 2024, you can save \$200 with early-bird pricing! Additionally, for teams that sign up together there is bulk pricing for groups of 3 or more.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER TODAY!](#)

A FEW FAQs

Who will be our instructor?

John Cioff is the program creator, he has spent the last 30 years coaching hundreds of clients to success. He previously ran a subsidiary of Amoco Oil and held executive positions at several other companies in a wide variety of industries. John received his MBA from The Wharton School and holds a Master's from Dartmouth.

Jeremy Wall is our lead facilitator, having built companies from scratch through exit, Wall is now focused on helping other leaders create the success they want to see. As our lead facilitator he will be guiding you throughout the 10-week program and our live sessions.

Who is the program for?

This information is beneficial for everyone, from the CEO to the aspiring manager, the more of your team that understands these fundamentals, the better off your business will be. However, if you want to start slow, we suggest that owners, managers, future leaders, supervisors, and high-potential employees go through this program together as a unit for the most impactful outcomes.

How long will I have access to the program?

Great question, while the program runs in a synchronous timing with your peers after the 10-weeks you will retain access to the eLearning for a full calendar year after we wrap up.



2023 FISA Economic Survey

...continued from pg 1

- People
 - Staffing
 - Generating new business with a shrinking customer base.
 - Economy
 - Supply Chain/Delivery
 - Completing current projects
- MANUFACTURERS:**
- Economy concerns
 - Unknowns. Markets are slowing down heading into 2024
 - Lead times
 - Maintaining sales growth
 - Economic uncertainty, recession
 - The cost of money, employees
 - Maintaining the same level of sales as the last 2 years
 - Personnel – Filling key sales and technical positions
 - Labor
 - Labor
 - Interest rates, banking failure concerns, Presidential election
 - Hiring
 - Uncertainty in the marketplace
 - The potential that large groups of people parroting recession fears actually causes a recession. Stop pretending to all be economists. Even the economists don't know.
 - Uncertain economic conditions
 - People
 - Foreign competition
 - Talent Acquisition
 - Overstock/overcapacity in the market, hindering purchases
 - Capital spending seems to be slowing as we move into 2024. With it being an election year, it will be interesting if this continues through the entire year.
 - Obtaining qualified labor.
 - Getting quality people
 - Will customers be moving ahead with quoted projects? A lot of pause and push out in 2023 especially in Pharmaceutical.
 - Pricing. The market has gone cut-throat in the wake of this downturn. It's hard to be competitive and make money these days.
 - Labor

Member News & Views

The who, what, where, when and whys of the FISA membership.

How to Submit News

The Distributor News is published quarterly and the deadline for the next issue is February 20, 2024. Due to space limitations, we cannot print specific product information, but personnel changes, changes of address, expansions or other industry news is always of interest.

If you have a question, please call 336-274-6311 or email stella@fisanaet.org

Anderson Dahlen



Kris Rarden

Kris Rarden has been named the Business Development Manager for Anderson Dahlen's distribution segment, AD Distribution. With over 15 years of experience in the sanitary and industrial markets, Kris has a wealth of knowledge about various product lines to best support customers. Kris will oversee the daily operations of the Distribution team, including



Bo Couch

quoting, processing orders, inventory, and distributor partnerships. We are excited to announce that **Bo Couch**, technical sales for AD Distribution, will be relocating to Naperville, IL to support a new hub for Distribution. Bo has been with the company for two years and proved to be a valuable resource for customers. We look



Mike Brandt

forward to Bo's growth in the Midwest region! AD Process Equipment, a sister company of Anderson Dahlen, is excited to welcome **Mike Brandt** in the Sr. Technical Sales role. With 20+ years of experience in the industry, Mike will be assisting customers with quoting dry material and liquid process systems and equipment integration projects.

M.G. Newell Corporation



Julia Burchell

M.G. Newell is pleased to announce that **Julia Burchell** has joined the company as a Project Engineer in their Greensboro, NC office. In this position, Julia will report to **Tony Saenz**, Director of Engineering, Greensboro Division. Julia brings over five years of engineering and processing experience to M.G. Newell. Previously, she spent two years at Syngenta where she was a process engineer. Prior to that, she worked for four years working as a Corporate Process Engineer for ConAgra. In 2015, Julia received a B.S. in Biosystems Engineering from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 2017, she earned her master's degree in Ag and Bio-Engineering from Purdue University.

SPX Flow

Jeffrey Sporer, VP of Sales for SPX FLOW recently announced the following organizational changes and said, "**Jim Brink** will be returning to the role of District Sales Manager for the Southeast covering



Jim Brink

Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. He is looking forward to spending more time with his channel partners and their customers, as well as developing relationships with key accounts and engineering firms in the region. I want to thank Jim for all his hard work and dedication leading the East



Vince Rufo

Region for the last eight years and wish him much success in his new role. I am happy to announce that **Vince Rufo** has been promoted to East Region Leader replacing Jim. In this role, **Jim Brink**, **Tom Donovan**, **Luke Jaax**, **Jeff Pato** and **Jeremy Steingraeber** will all directly report to Vince. He will also continue to cover his current Northeastern Territory working directly with the channel partners located there. Vince has 10 years of experience with SPX FLOW and has been in his District Sales Manager role for eight years. I want to congratulate Vince and wish him the best of luck on his new role. Jim and Vince are working together to ensure a smooth transition into their new positions."

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Enerquip Thermal Solutions



Sue Rhyner

On December 8, after an incredible 12 years, **Sue Rhyner** is bidding farewell to #Enerquip as she steps into the exciting world of #RETIREMENT! She's eagerly anticipating new adventures with her husband, children, and grandchildren. Enerquip extends their heartfelt gratitude to Sue for her unwavering commitment to Enerquip over the past decade, and we wish her nothing but the best in retirement!

Nuvonic

Aaibah Bhatti has been hired as the Digital Marketing Specialist for Nuvonic. In her role, she brings a passion for leveraging innovative digital strategies to enhance brand visibility, engagement, and ultimately, drive business growth. With a proven track record in creating impactful campaigns and optimizing online presence, she is eager to contribute her skills and expertise to elevate Nuvonic's digital footprint!

About Nuvonic

Nuvonic is the only global company innovating UV technology for chemical-free purification. They aim to grow a safer, cleaner, healthier future for everyone, everyday. As an environmentally conscious organization, they strive to discover new sectors and applications

for their technology. The company's rich pioneering heritage spanning to almost a century allows them to develop solutions that solve industry specific solutions.

LJ Star Inc.



LJ Star Incorporated has hired **Oscar Flores** as its new International Sales Manager to drive the company's growth in Central and South America. With a track record of developing international sales and financial strategies, Flores has a strong background in growing market share in competitive Latin American market sectors. He brings a focus on customer service and the ability to work closely with internal teams—including quality, engineering and manufacturing. "Oscar's approach to building strong client relationships aligns with LJ Star's commitment to forging lasting partnerships and tailor-

made solutions," said company President Ted Mielnik. "His leadership experience will serve as a strong complement to our company's culture of shared progress and ongoing innovation." Previously, Flores supervised technical sales programs for engineering applications in many of the same process industry sectors targeted by LJ Star. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Instituto Tecnológico in Mexico City.

About LJ Star

LJ Star Incorporated (www.ljstar.com) provides an extensive line of process observation equipment – sight glasses, lights, sanitary fittings, and level gage instrumentation. Product lines include METAGLAS® Safety Windows, Lumiglas® Explosion Proof Lights and Cameras, the MetaClamp® Sanitary Sight Window, Visual Flow Indicators, Sight Ports, Sanitary Clamps, Magnetic Level Gages and Gage Glass.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JANUARY 1, 2024

Early bird discount expires for FISA Business Academy

MARCH 11- 14, 2024

UID – Indianapolis, IN

MARCH 20, 2024

FISA Business Academy
Virtual 10-week Program

JULY 1, 2024

Renew FISA Membership

SEPTEMBER 12- 15, 2024

2024 FISA Annual Conference

NOTE: *If you have a Marketing Manager, email his/her contact information to stella@fisanet.org so that person can be added to database*

VETERANS DAY: Be The Type of American Worth Fighting For

Veterans Day is a special holiday for our country, especially for those who have served. I want to share some thoughts on what this day means to me, as it can be summed up with how I felt after every one of my 65 combat missions.

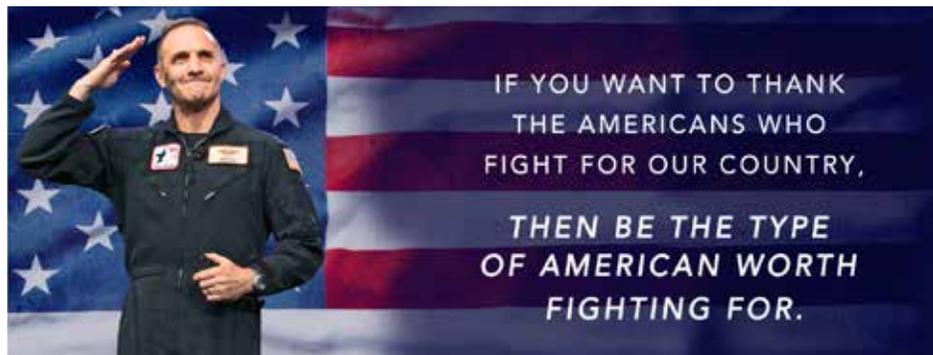
Before I took off in combat, there was an awful lot of fear, anxiety and doubt. But afterwards, there was excitement, joy, pride, and most of all, *gratitude*.

Gratitude for:

- Making it through another mission alive.
- Not getting shot down and captured.
- My wingmen who had my back on those long, stressful missions.
- The opportunity to fly the coolest jet in the world, the F-16!

And gratitude, most of all, for the opportunity to live in the most amazing country in the world, the United States of America. A country where we can plant our flag with pride and not sell out to our enemies. A place where we can raise our children under a democracy – where freedom, excellence, work ethic, meritocracy and high standards are rewarded.

Today, many of you are going to go out of your way to say thank you to our veterans. And you'll do it with appreciation, humility, and grace. While this is so



important, I would kindly ask you to go beyond just thanking our troops. I want you show your thanks by emulating what our soldiers fight for.

I believe if we truly want to say thank you to the Americans who fight for our country, then we need to be the type of Americans worth fighting for.

Wake up every day with honor and realize that you *don't need to wear a uniform, carry an M-16, or fly an F-16 to serve*. You can do it every day in your communities, behind the scenes.

Give to your church or charity. Help out the needy. Mentor a wingman in need. Coach a struggling peer at work. Be a good parent, friend, and neighbor. Spread positivity, courage, and kindness.

That's how you can make a guy like me,

and all our troops, proud to serve and wear the US flag with honor, despite those who seek to break down and degrade its values.

That's how you can make this Veterans Day, and every day, a great day.

**Never Fly Solo,
Lt Col (ret.) Waldo Waldman**

LT. COL WALDO WALDMAN is a graduate of the Air Force Academy and the founder of The Wingman Foundation, a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to build funds and awareness for veterans in need. He was the closing speaker for the recent 2023 FISA Annual Conference in Colorado Springs, CO. He is an inductee into the Professional Speakers Hall of Fame, a prestigious award that honors speakers who have reached the top echelon of platform excellence and has been bestowed on less than 200 speakers worldwide.