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# GARA News

Volume 37, Issue 1

February 2023

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## From the President

Junaid Razvi



Dear Colleagues –

As GARA's president for 2023, let me start by sending everyone our wishes for a Healthy, Safe and Prosperous New Year! I trust all of you have gotten off to a good start in 2023

I'll start with a sincere vote of thanks to all my colleagues on last year's GARA board: **Jim Zgliczynski** (Vice Chair), **Nancy Hitchcox** (Social Chair), **Pat Simmons** (Secretary), **Niles Johanson** (Treasurer), **Liz Drees** (Membership Chair), **Maria Koploy** (Newsletter Editor), **Tom Tasker** (Webmaster), and members at large **Carmelo Rodriguez**, **Al Zimmer** and **Meera Venkatesh**. We successfully returned to our usual in-person speaker luncheons and the Board resumed our quarterly meetings in-person to plan and conduct the business of the organization.

Many of us are continuing to support GARA by staying on the board, and new members have chosen to step up and help us keep GARA going. Some of us are continuing in their roles or assuming new roles, in particular **Meera Venkatesh** taking over as Newsletter Editor. Joining the BoD as new Members-at-Large are **Karen Schultz** and **Venky Venkatesh**. Thank you for your continued support to keep supporting GARA to hopefully return to normalcy after the lengthy Covid restrictions.

We have made some minor administrative changes in 2022 to improve how we communicate with you, and will continue to try and further improve on this in

2023. To improve the security of our website, we have purchased a new domain name [generalatomicsretirees.org](http://generalatomicsretirees.org) that we will keep current and allows you to contact us via e-mails directly from the website. Second, we plan to create GARA pages on social media to try and communicate with a wider audience. Third, we plan to set up electronic payment features using one of the payment platforms (e.g., Venmo or Zelle) to allow you to pay your dues and luncheon costs directly into the GARA account. The team is working to get the bio's of all the board members on the new website and we will notify you when it is ready.

*Continued on page 2*

### GA Retirees Association, Inc.

[www.generalatomicsretirees.org](http://www.generalatomicsretirees.org)

email: [contact@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org](mailto:contact@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org)

**President: Junaid Razvi**

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**Vice President: Jim Zgliczynski**

619 237 9812

**Treasurer: Niles Johanson**

858 752 4327

**Secretary: Pat Simmons**

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**Membership Chair: Liz Drees**

858 945 2942

**Social Chair: Nancy Hitchcox**

858 335 4839

**Newsletter Editor: Meera Venkatesh**

858 283 9612

**Webmaster: Tom Tasker**

858 369 0671

**Members at Large:**

Al Zimmer

760 436 2342

Karen Schultz

760 436 2342

Carmelo Rodriguez

619 475 0153

Venky Venkatesh

858 283 9610

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### *March 15<sup>th</sup> Happy New Year Luncheon*

*See attached notice!*

Continues “From the President” article in page 1.

We have a full slate of events planned for the year. Our first luncheon event has been scheduled for Wednesday March 15, with a topic of community interest and details on the event and our speaker are provided in this newsletter. In addition, we will send an e-mail blast with reminders. Meanwhile, I encourage those that are not current with their dues, to do so and encourage other retired and current employees to join. In spite of inflationary pressures, we are going to hold our dues at \$15/year.

### **December 2022 Luncheon was a Success**

The 2022 Annual GARA Luncheon was held December 7 at the beautiful San Diego Yacht club (thanks to Frank Warner). Weather was perfect and views were awesome. It was great to see so many attend in person and it was a fitting end to a year with a tapering of the pandemic hopefully.

Here are some of the pictures of your colleagues and friends:



John & Kathy Murray



Nancy Hitchcox and Junaid Razvi



Venky and Meera Venkatesh, Alec Gordon, Jim and Sue Zgliczynski



Sue Zimmer, Toula and Niles Johanson



Cyril and Janie Tammadge, Al and Betty Haboush



Pat and Doug Simmons



Al and Sue Zimmer, Toula Johanson



Dave Hansen and Robin Luby



Dick Harrington, Karen Schultz, Jean Moss



Junaid Razvi, Liz Drees and Lindsey Bierer

## December 7<sup>th</sup> - Luncheon Speaker Kevin McGuire

by Jim Zgliczinski

The 2022 Annual GARA Luncheon was held December 7 at the beautiful San Diego Yacht club. After GARA annual business meeting to elect the 2023 GARA board of directors, approve the 2023 GARA budget and approve a few changes to bring the GARA constitution up to date, we had our main speaker, Kevin McGuire, Senior Director, Strategic Advanced Technologies and Commercial Systems at GA Electromagnetic Systems Group (EMS).



Kevin McGuire – Speaker

It has been a while since we had an update on the EMS business and Kevin gave a great, comprehensive, overview of the many diverse existing and new programs and research underway at EMS, such as the first at sea

deployment of CVN 78 Gerald Ford with the GA developed and manufactured electromagnetic aircraft launch and recovery systems (over 10,000 successful sorties), new space reactor systems development, satellite development and launches, and new laser weapons systems development and many more areas of success. For the details of Kevin's excellent presentation please go to the new and improved GARA website:

[www.generalatomicstirees.org](http://www.generalatomicstirees.org) where all luncheon presentations (and all GARA documents) are stored for viewing or download. Make sure to bookmark this new website since the old website will expire in August.

## **Next GARA Luncheon Wednesday, March 15 2023 at Elijah's in Kearney Mesa**

by Jim Zgliczinski

The featured speaker will be Manuel Camargo Jr., Principal Manager, Strategic Planning for Southern California Edison, who will update GARA on the status of the San Onofre (SONGS) decommissioning including SONGS history, High-level decommissioning timeline, reduction in risk of decommissioning nuclear sites, environmental stewardship, on-site spent fuel management, efforts to relocate SONGS spent fuel offsite. SONGS decommissioning has been in the local news lately considering increased cost and schedule and plans for ultimate disposal of the spent fuel, so this is a timely subject.

Also please bring your checkbook to pay your 2023 GARA dues (\$15) if you have not paid already – thank you.

## **Some Possible Future GARA Luncheon Speaker Topics**

The following is a list of some of the possible topics that are being explored:

- General Atomics new concept for a fusion pilot plant (FPP) to deliver clean,

safe, and economically viable fusion energy

- A Navy SEAL telling war stories of their important missions
- A speaker on the history of San Diego neighborhoods.

If GARA members have ideas for future speakers, please let us know

## GA HAPPENINGS

The following are synopses of recent GA press releases. The complete releases can be found at [Press Releases | General Atomics \(ga.com\)](#) or by clicking on the title.

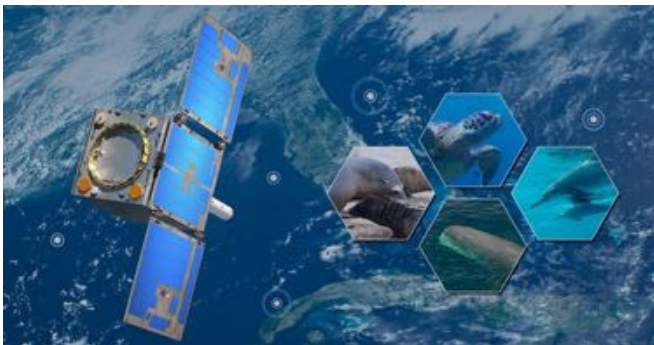
### GA-ASI Selected by DARPA to Support Liberty Lifter Program



General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) was awarded a contract from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) for the development of an aircraft capable of sustained seaborne strategic and tactical lift. The U.S. Defense Department announced on Nov. 25, 2022, that the \$8 million cost-plus-fixed-fee contract award is in support of DARPA’s Liberty Lifter program.

The program’s focus is on designing, building, and testing a seaplane that can operate efficiently at less than 100 feet above the ground, hold flight altitudes of up to 10,000 feet mean sea level and transport huge payloads at speeds faster than current sea lift platforms, while shifting the paradigm of strategic lift to a cost per ton instead of cost per pound approach.

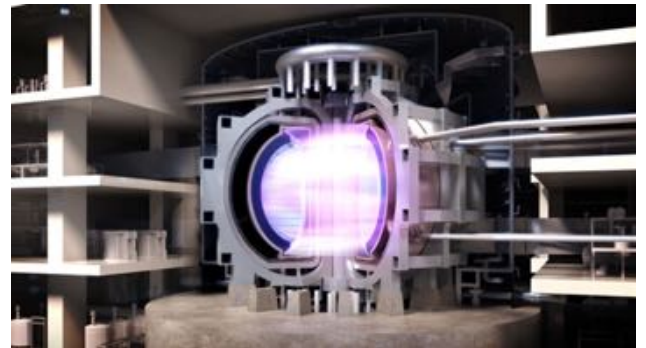
### General Atomics Gazelle Satellite with Argos-4 Payload Completes Post Launch Acceptance Review



General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) announced today that the recently launched GAZelle satellite hosting the Argos-4 and RadMon payloads has successfully completed its on-orbit Post Launch Acceptance Review (PLAR). All components are confirmed in good health and satellite operations are functioning nominally. The RadMon payload commissioning phase has been completed and can begin mission operations. The Argos-4 Payload has completed its initial on-orbit checkout and has begun its commissioning process which will occur over the next three months.

GA-EMS designed and manufactured the GAZelle satellite, performed all payload integration and testing, and coordinated the launch. GA-EMS owns GAZelle and is managing the satellite on orbit operations from its Spacecraft Mission Operations Center in Colorado.

### GA and LLNL Announce Partnership to Advance Power and Exhaust Handling in Fusion Pilot Plants



General Atomics (GA) and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) have been awarded funding to advance power and particle exhaust capabilities in commercial-scale fusion energy pilot plants (FPPs) using machine learning. A public-private partnership funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Innovation Network for Fusion Energy (INFUSE) program promotes collaboration between private-sector fusion energy companies, universities, and the DOE’s national laboratories to accelerate research and develop cost-effective, innovative fusion energy technology.

## GA-ASI Flies Multiple Missions Using Artificially Intelligent Pilots



General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) further advanced its Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) ecosystem by flying three unique missions with artificially intelligent (AI) pilots on an operationally relevant Open Mission System (OMS) software stack.

A company-owned Avenger® Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) was paired with “digital twin” aircraft to autonomously conduct Live, Virtual, and Constructive (LVC) multi-objective collaborative combat missions. The flights, which took place on Dec. 14, 2022, from GA-ASI’s Desert Horizons flight operations facility in El Mirage, Calif., demonstrate the company’s commitment to maturing its CCA ecosystem for Autonomous Collaborative Platform (ACP) UAS using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). This provides a new and innovative tool for next-generation military platforms to make decisions under dynamic and uncertain real-world conditions.

The flight used GA-ASI’s novel Reinforcement Learning (RL) architecture and RL algorithms in an operationally relevant environment.

## GA-ASI Flight Tests LEO SATCOM on MQ-9A



On Dec. 22, 2022, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) and the Air National Guard (ANG), with joint support from the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) and U.S. Air Force (USAF), flight tested an MQ-9A remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) equipped with a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite communications (SATCOM) Command and Control system. This groundbreaking capability provides global coverage and connectivity that will enable pole-to-pole operations for GA-ASI’s family of RPA – including models such as the MQ-9B SkyGuardian®/SeaGuardian®, MQ-9A Reaper, and Gray Eagle 25M.

“This is truly game-changing for our platforms,” said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. “Using LEO SATCOM not only keeps GA-ASI aircraft connected from the North Pole to the South Pole to allow operations in the most austere environments, but it will also provide resilient connectivity that allows operators to pass much more data to and from the aircraft.”

## GARA Luncheon March 15, 2023

Join us Wednesday March 15, 2023 for our next meeting and luncheon at Elijah's Restaurant Delicatessen. The cost will be \$35 for members and their spouse or guest. Nonmembers and additional guests are \$40.

Our speaker will be Manuel Camargo of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

**Title of Presentation: San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station - SONGS**

March 15, 2023, 11:30 Meet and Greet, 12:00 Lunch, followed by speaker.



**Elijah's Restaurant Delicatessen  
7061 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Suite 212  
San Diego, CA 92111  
(858) 455-1461**

Please send in the following reservation form by March 6.

Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Beef Brisket \_\_\_ Salmon \_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_

Spouse/Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Beef Brisket \_\_\_ Salmon \_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_

Send this form and your check made out to GA Retirees Association to:

Nancy Hitchcox  
12302 Old Stone Road  
Poway, CA 92064

**RESERVATION DEADLINE MARCH 6**

