

## General John R. “Zorro” Dailey, USMC (Ret)



General J.R. "Jack" Dailey was born February 17, 1934 in Quantico, Virginia and commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon graduation from the University of California at Los Angeles in June 1956. He completed The Basic School prior to flight training and was designated a Naval Aviator in July 1958. His operational experience includes over 7,000 flying hours in fighters, light attack, reconnaissance and electronic warfare aircraft, transports and helicopters.

In 1972 General Dailey served as Commanding Officer, Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron-1, and also commanded a Carrier Task Unit supporting combat operations in North Vietnam. During two tours in Vietnam, he flew 450 combat missions. Returning from overseas in May 1973, He was assigned to the Aviation Weapons Requirements Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.

In 1978 he took command of Marine Aircraft Group-11, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, California. After promotion to Brigadier General in May 1982, General Dailey assumed the position of Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation. In May 1985 he took command of the 1st Marine Amphibious Brigade, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

General Dailey was promoted to Major General on June 12, 1986, and took command of 2d Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina. He then assumed command of the Armed Forces Staff College, National Defense University Norfolk, Va followed by Command of the Marine Corps Research, Development and Acquisition Command, Washington, D.C., on August 21, 1989, and was appointed to the grade of Lieutenant General on Nov. 24, 1989. He was appointed to the grade of General and assumed his post as Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps on August 1, 1990 where he remained until his retirement in 1992.

General Dailey's personal military decorations include: the Navy Distinguished Service Cross; Army Distinguished Service Medal; the Defense Superior Service Medal; Distinguished Flying Cross; the Bronze Star Medal; Meritorious Service Medal; Air Medal with Numeral 1 and bronze Numeral 22; the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V": and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Upon retirement from the Marine Corps, General Dailey assumed the duties of Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) from November 3, 1992 to December 31, 1999.

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While at NASA, General Dailey led the Agency reinvention activities. He guided the development of the strategic management process to focus the NASA mission and boost productivity in a reduced budget environment. Under his leadership, the NASA Senior Management Council developed the NASA Strategic Plan. He served on the President's Management Council, co-chaired the Aeronautics and Astronautics Coordinating Board and was a national delegate to the Research and Technology Organization supporting NATO.

In January 2000, General Dailey assumed the duties of director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum (NASM), a position he held until his retirement in January 2018.

After assuming his position at NASM, Dailey led efforts to expand the size and scope of the museum and increase public outreach. In 2003, in conjunction with the Centennial of Flight, the museum opened a second building, the [Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center](#) in Chantilly, Va. More than 300 aircraft and space artifacts are housed in its two hangars, including the last EA-6B Prowler to ever fly.

While at the Smithsonian, General Dailey received the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award from the University of California at Los Angeles, the Statesman of Aviation Award from the National Aeronautic Association and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wings Club. He served as national commander of the Marine Corps Aviation Association (MCAA), on the Board of the Medal of Honor Foundation and is a member of the Early and Pioneer Naval Aviators Association ("Golden Eagles"). In 2014, he was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame at the San Diego Air & Space Museum. In 2017, the National Aeronautic Association presented Gen Dailey with the 2017 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy for “his courageous and dedicated service to the country and his commitment to sharing the history and technology of aviation and space flight with present and future generations.” In 2018 he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

General Dailey and his wife, the former Mimi Rodian of Copenhagen, Denmark, live in Fairfax, Va. They have two children and four grandchildren.

