

Press Release

Contact:

Chuck Dougherty
Stafford Air & Space Museum
Phone: 580-772-5871
chuck.dougherty@cityofweatherford.com

For Immediate Release:

New Benchmark at the Stafford Air & Space Museum

The new, unique Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford Astronaut Commemorative Bench was recently unveiled at the Stafford Air & Space Museum. Created by award-winning Houston designer and Weatherford, Oklahoma native Kelly Gale Amen, the bench features laser-cut spacecraft images drawn by General Stafford specifically for this project. Also incorporated into the design of the bench is General Stafford's laser-cut signature.

The Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford Astronaut Commemorative Bench is the newest addition to the museum's Stafford Public Bench Program. Stafford Air & Space Museum supporters have previously been able to purchase an "orbital blue" Kelly Gale Amen Design bench to honor someone special and have that bench permanently placed in the museum. Now, in addition to the blue bench, the new, brushed aluminum Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford Astronaut Commemorative Bench may be purchased and displayed at the Stafford Air & Space Museum, or taken for home or business display. The proceeds from the sale of the benches will be used to improve the Stafford Air & Space Museum's educational programs and interactive exhibits.

Astronaut Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford stated, "Kelly has again come to the front in support of the Stafford Air & Space Museum with this limited edition Stafford Commemorative Bench. It's an exceptional way for supporters to be involved in the growth of the museum, and own a truly exclusive piece of functional art."

Each Kelly Gale Amen Design Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford Astronaut Commemorative Bench will be individually serial-numbered and come with a certificate of authenticity signed by General Stafford. More information on the bench is available by calling the Stafford Air & Space Museum at 580-772-5871.

Kelly Gale Amen (www.kellygaleamen.com), a University of Oklahoma graduate, is a well-known designer in Houston, Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Oklahoma City, as well as Paris, France. His work has been featured in all media, from HGTV to nationally distributed books and magazines. His "1898 Weatherford, Oklahoma" bench is permanently displayed in the first floor, West Wing, of the Oklahoma State Capitol building as a part of the Oklahoma Arts Council's Permanent State Art Collection gallery. This project honors the homesteading families of May and Caesar Folks and

Emma and Casper Amen, and was presented as a gift from the City of Weatherford as a part of the Oklahoma Centennial Celebration.

Amen also designed The *Susan G. Komen for the Cure Honoring the Promise Collection* which allows donors to dedicate a functional KGA art piece to those who have been touched by breast cancer. This special collection includes Kelly Gale Amen Design benches, planters, chairs and tables.

The Stafford Air & Space Museum is named in honor of Lt. General Thomas P. Stafford, who was born and raised in Weatherford, Oklahoma and graduated with honors from the United States Naval Academy. He piloted Gemini VI, and commanded Gemini IX, Apollo 10, and the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project Mission. Stafford was the eighth recipient of the Congressional Space Medal of Honor.

The Stafford Air & Space Museum boasts one of the few Titan II rockets displayed full scale. Also on display is the flight pressure suit General Stafford wore on Apollo 10, a mission that included the first flight of the lunar module near the moon. There are displays featuring numerous space-flown artifacts as well as several full-size aircraft, including a Russian MiG21R. Full-size replicas on display include the Wright Flyer, *Spirit of St. Louis*, Apollo Command Module, and Gemini space craft.

For more information visit www.staffordmuseum.com.

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