

2026 1st Quarter Meeting Guest Speaker

Col. Charles B. "Chuck" DeBellevue, USAF (Ret.)

Colonel (ret.) Charles B. "Chuck" DeBellevue is America's top ace of the Vietnam War and the last ace to serve on active duty in the United States Air Force. In 1969, he was selected to be in the first all navigator class to train as Weapons Systems Officers (WSO) in the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. In 1971, he was sent to the renowned 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, nicknamed "Triple Nickel", at Udorn Royal Thai Air Base.

It was there that Colonel DeBellevue would make history scoring six aerial victories against North Vietnamese MiGs, garnering him the distinction of becoming the first WSO to earn the title of "ace." For his outstanding airmanship, DeBellevue was awarded the Mackay Trophy in 1972. Following the Vietnam War, DeBellevue entered pilot training and returned to the Phantom II as a pilot and held various flying and staff positions including commanding both the 432d Combat Support Group at Misawa Air Base, Japan, and the 95th Air Base Wing at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

Colonel DeBellevue's final assignment was commanding Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps Detachment 440 at the University of Missouri. He retired in 1998 after 30 years of distinguished service.