

Biographical Data

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas 77058



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

RICHARD O. COVEY (COLONEL, USAF, RET.)
NASA ASTRONAUT (FORMER)

PERSONAL DATA: Born August 1, 1946, in Fayetteville, Arkansas, but considers Fort Walton Beach, Florida, to be his hometown. Married to the former Kathleen Allbaugh of Emmetsburg, Iowa. They have two grown daughters. Recreational interests include golf, water sports, photography, skiing, and volleyball.

EDUCATION: Graduated from Choctawhatchee High School, Shalimar, Florida, in 1964; received a bachelor of science in engineering sciences with a major in aeronautical engineering from the United States Air Force Academy in 1968, and a master of science in aeronautics and astronautics from Purdue University in 1969.

ORGANIZATIONS: Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, the Air Force Association, the Order of Daedalians, the USAF Academy Association of Graduates, the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, and the Association of Space Explorers.



SPECIAL HONORS: Awarded the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Department of Defense Superior Service Medal, 5 Air Force Distinguished Flying Crosses, 16 Air Medals, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the National Intelligence Medal of Achievement, the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, 4 NASA Space Flight Medals, the Johnson Space Center Certificate of Commendation, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Haley Space Flight Award for 1988, and the American Astronautical Society Flight Achievement Award for 1988. He is a Distinguished Graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, received the Liethen-Tittle Award as the Outstanding Graduate of USAF Test Pilot School Class 74B, and is a Distinguished Astronaut Engineering Alumnus of Purdue University.

EXPERIENCE: Between 1970 and 1974, Covey was an operational fighter pilot, flying the F-100, A-37, and A-7D. He flew 339 combat missions during two tours in Southeast Asia. At Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, between 1975 and 1978, he was an F-4 and A-7D weapons system test pilot and joint test force director for electronic warfare testing of the F-15 Eagle. He has flown over 5,700 hours in more than 30 different types of aircraft.

Selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in January 1978, Covey became an astronaut in August 1979. A veteran of four space flights, STS 51-I in 1985, STS-26 in 1988, STS-38 in 1990, and STS-61 in 1993, Covey has logged over 646 hours in space.

Prior to the first flight of the Space Shuttle, he provided astronaut support in Orbiter engineering development and testing. He was a T-38 chase pilot for the second and third Shuttle flights and support crewman for the first operational Shuttle flight, STS-5. Covey also served as Mission Control spacecraft communicator (CAPCOM) for Shuttle Missions STS-5, 6, 61-B, 61-C, and 51-L. During 1989, he was Chairman of NASA's Space Flight Safety Panel. He has held additional technical assignments within the Astronaut Office, and has also served as Acting Deputy Chief of the Astronaut Office, and Acting Deputy Director of Flight Crew Operations.

Effective August 1, 1994, Covey retired from NASA and the Air Force.

Effective September 28, 2007 Covey was selected as President and Chief Executive Officer for United Space Alliance (USA). He previously served as USA's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. He joined USA in February 2006 after serving as President of Boeing Service Company in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In that role, he was responsible for overseeing system engineering, facility/system maintenance and operations, spacecraft operations support, and logistics support to Department of Defense, other U.S. government, and commercial businesses at over 20 locations worldwide. Before moving to Boeing Service Company, he was vice president of Boeing Houston Operations responsible for business development, program management and support for Boeing programs in Houston. Covey joined The Boeing Company as division director for McDonnell Douglas' Houston Operations in 1996.

From 2003 to 2005, Covey also provided critical leadership during the exhaustive independent assessment of NASA's actions in response to the Columbia Accident Investigation Board recommendations as co-chairman of the Return-to-Flight Task Group.

SPACE FLIGHT EXPERIENCE: On his first mission, Covey was the pilot on the five-man crew of STS 51-I, which launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on August 27, 1985. During this seven-day mission, crew members deployed three communications satellites: the Navy SYNCOM IV-4, the Australian AUSSAT, and American Satellite Company's ASC-1. The crew also performed the successful on-orbit rendezvous and repair of the ailing 15,000-pound SYNCOM IV-3 satellite. This repair activity involved the first manual grapple and manual deployment of a satellite by a spacewalking crew member. Mission duration was 170 hours. Space Shuttle Discovery completed 112 orbits of the Earth before landing at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on September 3, 1985.

He next served as pilot on STS-26, the first flight to be flown after the Challenger accident. The five-man crew launched from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on September 29, 1988, aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery. Mission duration was 97 hours during which crew members successfully deployed the TDRS-C satellite and operated eleven secondary payloads which included two student experiments. Discovery completed 64 orbits of the Earth before landing at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on October 3, 1988.

On STS-38 Covey was the spacecraft commander of a five-man crew which launched at night from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on November 15, 1990. During the five-day mission crew members conducted Department of Defense operations. After 80 orbits of the Earth in 117 hours, Covey piloted the Space Shuttle Atlantis to a landing on the runway at the Kennedy Space Center on November 20, 1990. This was the first Shuttle recovery in Florida since 1985.

On his fourth flight, Covey commanded a crew of seven aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour on the STS-61 Hubble Space Telescope (HST) servicing and repair mission. STS-61 launched at night from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on December 2, 1993. During the 11-day flight, the HST was captured and restored to full capacity through a record five space walks by four astronauts. After having traveled 4,433,772 miles in 163 orbits of the Earth, Covey landed the Endeavour at night on the runway at the Kennedy Space Center on December 13, 1993.

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