

# JOHN L. PETERSEN

PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, THE ARLINGTON INSTITUTE

CHAIRMAN, THE CHARLES A. AND ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH  
FOUNDATION

John Petersen is an aviator and a professional futurist. He is best-known for writing and thinking about high impact surprises—wild cards—and the process of surprise anticipation and for having conceived of and developed the first national surprise anticipation system in the world for the government of Singapore.

In 1989, Petersen founded The Arlington Institute (TAI), a non-profit, future-oriented research institute where he now edits and publishes *FUTUREdition*, an internationally acclaimed newsletter that tracks early indicators of potentially significant futures. Before that, he led national non-profit organizations, worked in sales, manufacturing, real estate development and marketing and advertising, mostly for companies he founded. A graduate electrical engineer, he has also promoted rock concerts, produced conventions, and worked as a disc jockey – among other things.

As Chairman of the Lindbergh Foundation, John conceived of, launched and developed international support for the Air Shepherd program, which, working with partner UAV and Drone Solutions of South Africa, operates infrared-equipped drone aircraft beyond line of sight at night in southern Africa to spot poachers before they kill elephants and rhinos.

John's aviation career began with flying attack aircraft off of aircraft carriers for the Navy during the Viet Nam war and evolved into ultimately building his own Lancair IVP aircraft and flying aerobatic airplanes. He has combined his interest in aviation and thinking about the future to write and speak about the future of aviation. He has been a regular contributor to *Professional Pilot* magazine and wrote the most read *Opinion Leaders* blog for AOPA. His presentations on emerging futures in aviation have drawn appreciative crowds at conventions for NBAA, Sun 'n Fun, AOPA and EAA AirVenture. John is chairman of the board of directors of the Charles E. and Ann Morrow Lindbergh Foundation.

Mr. Petersen's government and political experience include stints at the National War College, Naval War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces (adjunct professor), the Institute for National Security Studies, the Office of Net Assessment for the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council staff at the White House. He was a naval flight officer in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve and is a decorated veteran of both the Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars. He has served in senior advisory, fundraising and policy positions for a number of presidential political campaigns and was an elected delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1984. He was twice runner-up to be nominated as the Secretary of the Navy.

An award-winning writer, Petersen's first book, *The Road to 2015: Profiles of the Future* was awarded Outstanding Academic Book of 1995 by CHOICE Academic Review, and remained on The World Future Society's best-seller list for more than a year. His second book, *Out of the Blue: How to Anticipate Wild Cards and Big Future Surprises*, was also a WFS best-seller. His coauthored article, "The Year 2000: Social Chaos or Social Transformation?" was one of the most highly acclaimed writings on Y2K. His 1988 book-length report "The Diffusion of Power: An Era of Realignment" was used at the highest levels of American government as a basis for strategic planning. He has also written many scores of articles and papers on different aspects of the future including national security and the military, the future of energy, the future of aviation, and the future of the media. He was twice a featured contributor to widely broadcast HISTORY CHANNEL television specials including *NOSTRADAMUS 2012*. John's most recent book, *A Vision for 2012: Planning for Extraordinary Change*, presents a systems approach for preparing for big change whether from the perspective of a government, organization, or individual.

Petersen is a past board member of the World Future Society and was a network member of the Global Business Network, a fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science, and is a past member of the Global Agenda Council of the Geography of Innovation for the World Economic Forum. A provocative public speaker, he has addressed more than 350 audiences around the world on a variety of future subjects. He lives in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia.

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