



March 2019

TWIN CITIES AREA ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES

The Northern Zoomie



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Prez Prose

I am not looking for sympathy here, but just thought I would begin this epistle with a reminder that it was almost 62 years ago on 5 July 1957, that the Class of 1961 began our journey through the United States Air Force Academy and into our respective careers. It is actually scary at how fast the time seems to go now, when it seemed a "lifetime" to get through those four years... Some of you know this and others are just beginning to understand this phenomenon.

As our Chapter begins our seventh year of operation, we will continue our efforts to encourage more of our local Grads to participate in the opportunities we offer and to get to know more of your fellow Zoomies. Each graduating class has a volunteer "Class Rep" that has agreed to try and arrange a get-together in order to foster more camaraderie among its members. Do try to honor that request, knowing the common background we all share. We can all gain by knowing each other better.

Many of you have attended one or more of our annual Founders Day Dinners in the past. Note that the name of the event is now "The Heritage Dinner," but it's still the same event essentially. The last two events have been co-sponsored with the Minnesota Parents Club and have been most enjoyable. We are pleased that the Academy Superintendent, Lt/Gen Jay Silveria,'85, has agreed to be our guest speaker at the 27 April 2019 Dinner. We aim to please!!! Please sign up now and join us. See our website for details and registration. Hope to see you there.

Since we are on the subject of the Academy, I thought you might like to know that in the Class of 2022, there were 1,170 admissions – 295 women (25%) and 875 men (75%), including 397 minorities (34%.) There were 29 offers to Minnesota appointees with an acceptance rate of 89.65% (26 accepted,) including 2 for the Prep School. That breakdown is

7 women (27%) and 19 men (73%.) (I have no information on Minnesota minorities.) As of 30 September 2107, the Air Force Officer Corp was 21% female so both the Academy and Minnesota are exceeding that percentage.

Those of you who follow our Chapter more closely will note four changes in our leadership. These have occurred due to increased family, business and personal commitments and responsibilities of each individual involved. In alphabetical order, I want to thank each of these four and ASSURE all of you that they are planning to stay involved, but simply have to take a step back and accept the priorities they have set for themselves.

Tom Arata, '80, has been our key fund-raiser for the past two years and has put AND kept us in the "black." Our chapter raises funds to enable us to accomplish our primary mission – support of the Minnesota ALO program and support of the local graduate community. Most of the fund raising takes place as part of securing sponsors and supporters for the Founders Day Dinner, our chapter's signature event. Tom will continue his role as a Director and assist his replacement in any way he can but is unable to devote the time necessary to continue as the primary fundraiser because of his leadership role on another nonprofit board. **Therefore, if any other Grad would be willing, now would be a great time to step up and take over those fundraising responsibilities... Simply please contact me and we will go from there."**

Next comes Ben Schoenbauer, '04: For the past several years, Ben Schoenbauer, '04, and his wife, Jennie, have graciously published our Chapter Quarterly Newsletter. Unfortunately, due to their "busy" (Understatement) three young sons and increased business responsibilities added to "everyday" life, they find themselves in need of a replacement. They simply are overwhelmed at this stage of their lives. **Surely, there is a grad – or two – out there in our membership that would be willing to undertake this mission and give Ben and Jennie a break.**

PLEASE consider this dire need and contact me if you have an interest in assisting our Chapter in this capacity. FYI, Ben has also asked to be relieved of his Director duties and will not be a candidate for reelection in May. If any of you are thinking about getting more involved, please consider becoming a Director. To better balance our Board, we would love to get an additional female grad...

The same conflicts can be said of Tim Hess, '93, in his capacity as Program Committee Chair and Director. Although he has done a terrific job for us, Tim, too, has come to the realization that he is unable to devote the time necessary to fulfill these duties. We are fortunate, however, that Jason VanOverbeke, '03, has agreed to assume these duties and responsibilities and with Tim's assistance, has started to do so. (THANK YOU, Jason!) Special thanks to Tim for his contributions and we look forward to his return to a more active role with us.

And the final individual involved is our Founding Director and past Vice President, Charlie Nelson, '96. Charlie finds himself in a similar situation and needs more time at home and in the office. He has graciously agreed to continue as our Chapter Legal Counsel, and will continue to attend as many events as he can. I am not sure we would still have an operational Chapter without Charlie's efforts over the past seven years!!!

It seems a bit trite, to just say "**THANK YOU**" to each of these four grads for what they have contributed to the success of our Chapter. However, the plus is that that each is still with us and will continue to participate in and support the Chapter, albeit in a different way. Please do offer your personal thanks to each when given the opportunity. That's all folks! Except to say that I hope to see more of you at our coming events!!!

GO FALCONS and God Bless!

Tom Wilson, '61 - TCA AOG President

2018 AOG Chapter Presidents' Conference

The 2018 AOG Chapter Presidents' Conference was held 29-31 Aug at Doolittle Hall at the US Air Force Academy. Much like the 2017 conference, the weather was outstanding and it was an excellent opportunity to meet with representatives from other regional AOG chapters and learn and improve our graduate community.

In attendance were 23 Chapter/ Affinity group representatives. The conference was a mix of joint AOG chapter and Parents' Club events and AOG-only meetings.

Bill Preston and Karina Ross were again in charge of the overall event and repeated their stellar performances from last year. The conference opened with welcome and administrative remarks from Steve Simon, the AOG Executive Vice President. Steve shared that there are approximately 50 local AOG chapters and 25 are what is considered "very active."

After the opening remarks, Cathy McClain, AOG Board Chair addressed the conference. She provided an update on the vision and mission of the AOG and highlighted examples of grads and the grad community giving back to local communities. This is also tied to carrying on USAFA heritage including the Forged in Blue program linking current USAFA classes with the classes from 50 years before. This included donating grads' class rings to be worked into new class rings to further link the Long Blue Line.

There was also a long discussion regarding the AOG's current goal to convert the AOG and USAFA Endowment into a single-CEO model. The general thrust of the argument is that now

is a good time for the AOG and endowment to have a single-CEO. The idea would be to reduce repetition and eliminate silos between these organizations. Ultimately, the desire is to have grads simply vote on the issue regardless of their position on the merits. The last time there was a vote, only 19% of eligible graduates voted; 25% is required for quorum on a vote.

Rick's summary of the debate *last year* accurately summarizes the discussion from this year:

A spirited discussion of the concept of a single CEO resulted. The majority of the attendees were upset with the way the vote was handled both before and especially after the vote was taken and did not receive a quorum. The real problem seemed to be on the Endowment side which has as many as 7 organizations gathering money for the academy with little or no coordination among them. There was no indication of the AOG and the Endowment having trouble working together.

After the single-CEO discussion, additional time for questions was allotted. Many of the questions focused on how AOG chapters can better reach out and get better involvement from their local grad communities. There weren't many success stories, but it was reassuring to learn that all chapters struggle with engagement and there is not one-size fits all. Suggestions included offer a wide variety of activities for different interest groups and consider community involvement opportunities as well.

The next speaker was Devin Bertelsen who spoke on Young Alumni Outreach. The young alumni are defined as graduates from 2003 (Strong and Mighty!) and beyond. Young alumni generally overlap with the millennial generation and share many of the same interests. Ms. Bertelsen spoke of using social media and again having a variety of activities. The AOG supports a number of social media platforms and to reach young alumni, those platforms are useful. The AOG is also initiating a Young Alumni Excellence Award to recognize active members involved from that group.

We were then invited to attend lunch at Mitchell Hall. Eating with the cadets brought back some memories, but the experience certainly has changed. The focus of lunch is now on eating and training is significantly limited. Underclassmen eat first to emphasize servant leadership; upperclassmen take care of their people first and eat last. There was an ongoing discussion for the rest of the conference among the AOG representatives as to if this was an improvement, detriment or simply "now how we did it in *OUR* day!"

Following lunch there was a USAFA/AOG/Endowment Leaders Panel. The key speaker was the Superintendent, Lt Gen Silveria, he was joined by Mike Gould, USAFA Endowment President and Marty Marcolongo, USAFA AOG President and CEO. The sup spoke about some USAFA statistics; 50% of the class of 2019 will go to UPT and 60% (total) will go to a rated AFSC. The class 2022 had the highest retention throughout BCT and inprocessing was moved to the field house to accommodate the more than 2600 visitors who dropped off 1180 cadets.

After the sup finished speaking, the remainder of the panel answered questions, with the focus again on the common CEO issue. Many of the AOG members requested information on the

value of the change and better communication on the topic.

That evening and AOG representatives and the presidents of the attending Parents' Clubs were welcomed by a reception at the residence of the superintendent. Gen Silveria had invited most of his senior staff, several members of the cadet wing staff and the falcon handlers along with some falcons.

The next morning found us at Doolittle Hall having briefings from the staff of the academy. Again we were joined by the Parents' Club presidents attending Parents' Weekend at the academy. The short briefings were good. The sup spoke about 60% of the class of 2022 were the first in their family with any military experience. He reiterated how the AOG and Parents Clubs can be effective outreach for the new challenges the academy and the military present to families.

He also spoke about needing a sense of cultural innovation, stating "what got us here will not get us there." Technological challenges and advancements have changed how the cadet wing (and the US Air Force) does business. The sup further shared how many cadets in-process already knowing their classmates and that he views the technological interconnectedness of the cadets as a benefit to the future of the Air Force.

The sup was joined by a panel of the rest of the USAFA leadership. The Commandant spoke about establishing a warrior ethos in USAFA cadets and developing a 47 month cadet development plan. The Dean talked about lifting academic performance for all cadets and mentoring and tutoring opportunities. The Athletic director shared goairforcefalcons.com as a single-point site for all Air Force sports calendars. The 10 ABW/CC talked about

ongoing construction and renovations to the 60+ year old facilities on the Academy grounds.

During the question and answer session, Academy leadership spoke about the need to help new parents or families without military experience understand the new process. They also shared the possibility of adding a “Space Operations” major to the curriculum.

Col Art Primus, Director of Admissions spoke both to the joint group and to the AOG delegates. He spoke to the diversity goals set by the AF and how that is achieved through data driven marketing. He stressed the need to present the academy to under-reached “opportunity districts.” One of the regions was western Minnesota.

Rick then gave his presentation on joint AOG-Parent’s Club activities. The presentation was very well received and many people asked a lot of questions and took notes on how to work with and integrate with the Parent’s Club. Additionally, I recently had one of the other Chapter Presidents reach out to me looking for insight and information to emulate what the TCA USAFA AOG has accomplished.

The Distinguished Chapter Banquet was held at the Eisenhower Golf Club that evening and the Twin Cities Chapter as again a Distinguished Chapter. We had received the second most points on our Distinguished Chapter submission; only the Washington DC chapter had more points.

Michele Bergman provided information on Alumni Services and the national AOG can provide to chapters. This included “email blasts,” rosters and other grad data and the use of CVENT for event registration.

Finally, Karina Ross presented on more Young Alumni Outreach opportunities. These activities tended to be focused on active duty

alumni and their families. While there was limited applicability for the TCA-AOG, it further reinforced the need to consider a wide variety of activities that appeal to both grads and their families across a wide spectrum of interests.

The conference was an excellent opportunity to network with other AOG Chapters. It provided a great deal of quality information and opportunities to improve how the TCA AOG operates. I am very appreciative that our board gave me the opportunity to attend this conference.

Jason VanOverbeke
USAFA '03





Celebrating Founders Day and honoring Class of 2023 Appointees

All graduates, cadets, appointees, friends and families of the United States Air Force Academy, please join us on Saturday, 27 April 2019 at the Best Western Premier Nicollet Inn to celebrate USAFA Founders Day!

Guest Speaker: Lt Gen Jay B. Silveria '85, USAFA Superintendent

Cost: \$55.00 per person

Dress: Business Suit/Cocktail Attire

Silent Auction/ Raffle/ Wine Pull: 6:00 pm start. We will be able to accept both cash and credit cards. Dinner and Program follow at 7:15 p.m.

Dinner choices:

- Chicken Saltimbocca (sautéed chicken breast topped with prosciutto ham, fontina cheese and finished with a brandy white wine sage butter sauce) with harvest salad, garlic buttermilk mashed potatoes, vegetable blend and dessert. Gluten Free.
- Parmesan Crusted Pan-Fried Walleye with harvest salad, garlic buttermilk mashed potatoes, vegetable blend and dessert
- Herb Grilled 8 oz Sirloin Steak with Cabernet peppercorn demi-glace with harvest salad, garlic buttermilk mashed potatoes, vegetable blend and dessert. Gluten Free.
- Vegetable Risotto Rustica (Carnaroli rice with grilled vegetables, grated parmesan and heavy cream) with harvest salad and dessert

Registration will close Friday, April 19th at 5:00 PM. [Click Here to Register and Pay.](#)

Point of Contact: Sandy Carlson, Class of '80, 952-926-0545, sandrew12@aol.com

Announcement of Joseph Eugene Rodwell, '64, as Recipient of the 2019 Twin Cities Chapter USAFA AOG Distinguished Graduate Award



Joe Rodwell distinguished himself as a co-founder of our chapter. He was instrumental in the writing of our original Chapter By-laws and providing vital assistance leading to the organizational meeting of our chapter in May of 2011.

At that meeting, Joe was elected as the Vice President and served in that capacity until his untimely death in March 2014. He was a consummate leader and follower and insisted on attending as many chapter events as humanly possible. In addition, Joe was a supremely successful fund-raiser and as a result, he enabled our chapter to eliminate member dues and to rely on his fund-raising efforts to financially support our chapter goals and mission.

Joe set the tone of our Founders Day Dinners by not only assisting in the planning and organizing, but in the raising of sufficient funds to make the dinner a resounding success. The guest speaker at the original dinner was the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Norton (Nurdy) Schwartz, '73. Subsequent speakers have been equally successful in their respective careers, including the following CSAF, General Mark Welsh, '76.



When the National Association of Graduates decided to hold annual Chapter Presidents Conferences, Joe represented our chapter at the first meeting. Through the efforts of our members, Joe proudly

accepted our Chapter’s very first banner as a Distinguished Chapter, one of only five chapters to be so recognized that year. At that time (2011) there were sixty-five chapters established world-wide. (For the record, Joe was instrumental in our Chapter being recognized each succeeding year as a Distinguished Chapter, including the year of his death.)

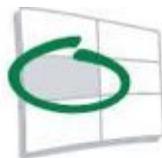
Joe was a firm believer in presenting as many events as possible to attract as many graduates as we could to join in the development of our chapter and to experience the associated camaraderie. He advocated the establishment of summer “Happy Hours” that were spread around the Twin Cities to facilitate the attendance at each and did not miss one of them.

In order to establish a more efficient organization, Joe was instrumental in establishing an annual Strategic Plan to better identify the Chapters goals for each year. He personally developed the plan and made sure that it was in line with the By-laws and brought it to the attention of the Board of Directors for the necessary revisions and approvals. We still follow his basic ideas to this day.

For these reasons and for Joe’s persistent efforts to insure the viability and continued success of our Chapter, I proudly announce Joseph Eugene Rodwell, Class of 1964, as the recipient of the 2019 Twin Cities Chapter Distinguished Chapter Award.

Thomas W.C. Wilson, ‘61
TCA AOG President

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Challenger Center Update

Some events are so horrific that we will never forget them or where we were when they happened – the assassination of President Kennedy, the 9 – 11 attacks on America or the catastrophic destruction of the Space Shuttle *Challenger* on January 28, 1986. There certainly were other events, but these stand out because they were part of each and every one of us. The attacks on America were in effect attacks on all of us. We all rode with *Challenger* when it lifted off and when it exploded, so did a part of us die along with those brave astronauts.

But the dream of *Challenger*, the Teacher in Space Mission, did not die with that tragic event. The families of the crew members wanted to keep the dream alive. I am told by my classmate, Fred Gregory, shuttle commander, class of 1964, how the family planned and developed the Challenger Learning Centers to inspire students to excel and live part of the dream the space pioneers died to make come true. Today there are forty five Challenger Centers around the world, designed to excite students about school and learning, particularly in the STEM disciplines. The goal is ultimately, not to teach these disciplines but to prepare students for readiness so their teachers can do their job more effectively.

You might say that our real clients are teachers and that the main focus is on the middle school student. You could call these kids the “Mars generation” because when explorers eventually do go to Mars, those astronauts are today, sitting and learning in middle school classrooms. This is a revolutionary education model. And it works!

In NASA type high tech simulators student

fly one of several of space-related missions. We prepare teachers beforehand to place students on teams of mission control or space ship adventurers. They'll find out how teamwork, collaboration and problem solving are essential to completing the mission. Missions rendezvous with comets, go to Mars, and the like. They actually will plot intercept courses for the comet approach, build data gathering probes and react to problems encountered that real astronauts might face. Certified teachers will be part of the crews to help students.

It doesn't end here. We will train teachers before and afterwards, and provide graduate credit coursework for them in the area of space science education. They will have about 60 hours of curriculum to take back to the classrooms to help them teach STEM aligned with national standards. But we will not only serve middle school students. The fun and excitement as well as the learning starts with learners even pre-school and continues through high school and beyond. We plan to even work with certain corporate groups of adults who can benefit from team building and other collaborative training. That's not all folks.

In addition to the mission simulators we will have more to make the experience even more memorable. Our goal is to install two mission simulators and to make available, a planetarium and a hands-on “Exploratorium” where students can be engaged in trying out different pieces of science equipment and models. Currently we are engaged in discussions that may result in bringing the last space shuttle – *Inspiration*, to our center. We are looking for some exciting things to help us move onward. 3M has just announced some financial support and others

are stepping up to help us bring a Challenger Center to Minnesota. It will be the only one in the upper midwest. Watch for some exciting news in the coming months.

Several TCA AOG members are actively part of this adventure. Terry Flower, six time shuttle pilot and Hall of Fame astronaut Curt Brown and Charlie Nelson, legal adviser are board members of the Challenger Center of Minnesota. If you are interested in helping to make this dream come true, you can become a member or donate to the Challenger Center of Minnesota. <https://www.challengermn.org/membership.html> The Challenger Center of Minnesota is a 501c3 non-profit organization that you can count on to make a difference. Watch for the excitement coming!

This summer we will partner with the Mall of America to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo moon landing. It will be called the summer of Inspiration because as we celebrate the past we will inspire the future. Already we are arranging t level STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) oriented entertainment and informative activities for the public. We are expecting perhaps a million people to show up for this event. It will be held for the four days preceding the 20th of July. Big name speakers will be here as well. Bloomington Police will provide security to make this a safe and enjoyable event. See you there.

Minnesota Night

The 2nd Annual Minnesota Night hosted by the Minnesota Parent's Club was held in the Arnold Hall Ballroom. They hosted around 300 guests (there are 88 MN Cadets and each was allowed 2 guests), also invited were the international Cadets as well as Academy staff and permanent party.



This event was held as a way to bring a little bit of Minnesota State Fair to their Cadets who miss the State Fair (held in August when the Cadets are back at USAFA), as well as bringing gifts from home. They purposely held the event in February because it's winter and warmer in Colorado than in Minnesota. They served up Minnesota's favorite foods brought from home: Fresh Minnesota Walleye (state fish caught all year), tater tot hotdish, State Fair cheese curds, lefse with butter and sugar, honeycrisp apples (invented at the University of Minnesota) with caramel dip, wild rice soup and, of course, Sweet Martha's cookies. Our chapter donated \$1000 for the event.



TCA AOG Key Personnel Roster

Twin Cities Area Chapter - USAFA Association of Graduates 2019

Chapter Officers

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--|
| President | Tom Wilson '64 (Judy) | 651-430-2269 | twil906k@aol.com |
| Vice President & Treasurer | Rick Knoll '65 (Kathe) | 952-518-3737 | rickknoll@msn.com |
| Secretary | Bob Youngquist '72 (Jo) | 651-731-0363 | bobyoungq@aol.com |
| Legal Advisor | Charlie Nelson '96 (Vanessa) | 952-240-2784 | mustabusa@gmail.com |

Board Members

| | | |
|--|--------------|--|
| Tom Wilson '61 (2021) (Judy) | 651-430-2269 | twil906k@aol.com |
| Sandra Carlson '80 (2021) (John) | 952-926-0545 | sandrew12@aol.com |
| Terry Flower '64 (2019) (Margaret) | 651-437-2005 | tflower@stkate.edu |
| Zach Turcotte '00 (2021) (Jessica) | 701-610-1736 | myzteriously@hotmail.com |
| Rick Knoll '65 (2019) (Kathe) | 952-518-3737 | rickknoll@msn.com |
| Bob Youngquist '72 (2019) (Jo) | 651-731-0363 | bobyoungq@aol.com |
| Benjamin Schoenbauer '04 (2020) (Jennie) | 952-854-7874 | brschoenbauer@gmail.com |
| Bob Hickcox '75 (2020) | 952-738-2318 | robert@hickcox.org |
| Tom Arata '80 (2021) | 651-681-9686 | tom.arata@ecolab.com |
| Jason VanOberbeke '03 (2020) Holli | 612-382-2602 | jasonvanoverbeke@mac.com |

Committee Chairpersons

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Advanced Education | Terry Flower '64 | tflower@stkate.edu |
| ALO Programs | Bill Fields '99 | bfields701@gmail.com |
| Congressional Liaison | Terry Flower '64/Charlie Nelson '96 | tflower@stkate.edu , mustabusa@gmail.com |
| Financial and Budget | Rick Knoll '65/Terry Flower '64 | rickknoll@msn.com , tflower@stkate.edu |
| Fundraising | Rick Knoll '65/Bob Hickcox '75 | rickknoll@msn.com , robert@hickcox.org |
| Membership | Zach Turcotte '00 | myzteriously@hotmail.com |
| MN Parents' Club Coord | Sandy Carlson '80 | sandrew12@aol.com |