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## Prez Prose

### Curt Brown, President

To all USAFA Grads in the Minnesota/Wisconsin area:  
 Well I hope 2024 has been treating you well. Already with over two months into the year, great things are happening at your AOG. The weather has been good to us so far with much warmer temps than normal for the upper Midwest. With no snow on the ground, some of you are happy and I know some of you are disappointed with the lack of snow for winter sports. Well, don't count anything out!! Mother Nature has a tendency to surprise us, so don't put those winter jackets away quite yet. Since our last Newsletter, your AOG has been very busy. We have had a couple of fantastic events with more to come.

In December we restarted our luncheon speaker series. Mr. Jim Johns gave a wonderful and insightful presentation on the surprise Pearl Harbor attack that launched us into World War II. If you missed the event, we are having another luncheon on April 18 and it will cover the preparation and planning of the Doolittle Raid on Japan. Mr. Jim Johns will again be our speaker and he personally has many insights/knowledge that are not in any books. It's truly amazing the amount of help provided by Minnesota for this daring mission. Please plan on joining us and

learning all about it. The info is on the website and you should also have received an email with the signup link. Also, it's FREE. In January, we had our annual Scotch Tasting event. It was a full event and even included a few folks from those other Military Schools. Terry and Margaret opened their beautiful home to us and a wonderful and educational time was had by all. Another big event on the horizon is our annual Heritage Dinner. Where we celebrate the establishment of the Academy and also celebrate our new Cadet appointees from the local area. It will be held at the same location as the last two years, the Sather hangar at the Flying Cloud airport. The speaker will be General Kevin Chilton '76 serving over 34 years ranging from Cadet to Commander of U.S. Strategic Command. The date is May 18 and all the info is on our website. You will be receiving a Cvent email for the signup. This event also has a wonderful silent auction. Items range from wines to aircraft flights. We encourage you to donate items to the auction to help raise money for our future events. You are welcome to contact me and I'll point you to the right person for the donation. Concerning other events coming your way, we will be providing a complete list of our annual events so you'll be able to plan ahead and attend one or all. This list of events will be on the website and also come to you in an email. Look for it, it will be coming very soon and this is just the events we know of. Other events can be added and if you have any ideas on new events, please let us know.

In our quarterly Newsletters, you may recall that I mention this every time. WE NEED MORE PARTICIPATION FROM OUR GRADS. For you younger Grads, I truly understand the activity level in your families from day to day. However, our AOG events can provide a break for you and your spouse from the day-to-day activities. You never know, maybe your kids want a break too! Please consider joining us at a future event and definitely come to the Heritage Dinner. Speaking of more participation, we will be looking to elect new Officers/Board members in the summer months. It is not a big time sink and it will make you feel good giving back to the Long Blue Line. We have a number of spots open, ranging from Committees to actually being on the Board. This is the time to give us your fresh ideas. Our Chapter has been a Distinguished Chapter every year since it was established and we need your help to continue our excellence.

Please contact me if you are interested in becoming more involved. We have a Chapter email at USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com or you can email me at curtbrown11@gmail.com or call me at (651) 295-5834. Finally, as a reminder, our open membership Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Richfield VFW, VFW Post 5555, 6715 Lake Shore Drive South, Richfield MN 55423.

Heads-ups, this is a new location. All Grads are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Curt Brown, '78**



## ALO Update

Hello grads, as we are in the middle of appointment and acceptance season for the Class of 2028. Here is an update I compiled on the incoming class so far in the cycle, as of 18 March. This data will change as time goes on since selections are still happening.

141 total applications in MN

21 appointments offered/15 accepted/ 6 pending acceptance/declination

1 prep-school slot pending acceptance/declination

4 letters of interest (sent out by AFA admissions to highly competitive candidates urging them to finish application)

1 appointment is a Falcon Scholar

Average ACT superscore of appointees and letter of interest recipients 32.04

4 Appointments Female 19%

17 Appointments Male 81%

Ed Zarembo, 07

## MN Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee Curt Brown



Our very own TCA AOG President is being inducted into the MN Aviation Hall of Fame. The inductee dinner is being held at Mystic Lake Casino on 20 April. You can make reservations online, and if you have specific seating requests please make your reservation by 1 April. If you are unfamiliar with the MN Aviation Hall of Fame, check out their website. They not only recognize contributions to the aviation world, but they also offer five different aviation related scholarships. <https://mahof.org/>  
<https://mahof.org/awards-banquet/#details>

## TCA AOG Dependent Scholarship

Fellow Graduates, I am pleased to announce that your local chapter of the Association of Graduates of the United States Air Force Academy will offer a graduate dependent scholarship intended to help support dependents, including not just children and spouses, but grandchildren as well as they seek to engage in higher education. There will be at least one scholarship of a minimum of \$500 offered. Look for an email with the application form. The form is also available on the TCA AOG website.



We will announce the winner and present a check at the Heritage Dinner in May. I hope to see you and your family there. Please mail your completed application to

Terry Flower  
12880 Lock Blvd  
Hastings, MN 55033

Applications must be received NLT 1 May 2024. Allow time for delivery.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Tom Wilson, '61



FOOD FOR THOUGHT – Spring 2024

I bet that y'all can hardly wait to read what I have to share!!! Wish that was only true, but here we go anyway...

Not long ago I read an article in the "St. Paul Pioneer Press" about the experience that Rosalyn and Jimmy Carter had about hospice care. I want to share my experience with Hospice during my wife Judy's last months and days. I had always "assumed" that Hospice was a physical location that people went to in their final days, basically to die relatively painlessly. That could not be farther from the truth. Hospice is "healthcare," and is a philosophy of care that celebrates life. It is a commitment to the needs of the patient and their loved ones.

It is offered at little or no cost through Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance. In the case of those of us that are also covered by Tricare - for - Life, there is virtually no cost.

<https://www.twincities.com/2023/12/28/heath-bartness-the-experience-of-rosalynn-and-jimmy-carter-helps-widen-the-perception-of-hospice/>

Please do read the article and remember it when the time comes in your life if Hospice is appropriate for your family's circumstances.

Did you know that if you donate a minimum of \$50 to the AmVets organization, that you qualify for a 3' x 5' American Flag? However, I have learned by experience that you have to call the corporate office (301-459-9600) and actually ask for the flag. The offer is not available on their website. Just FYI.

### **Academy Heritage**

Someone suggested that we include an article on heritage. Some AFA stories and characters like Waldo Dumbsquat are known by everyone. Some characters or legends, you may have heard of in passing, but not known the whole story. For those that haven't heard our own Rick Knoll tell the story, here is the story of Nino Baldachi, sometimes spelled Baldacci, or Balducci (as a first generation immigrant, Nino's name was often misspelled!) as recounted by Class of '61 historian, Hector Negroni. This article was written years ago, so current references are not accurate.

"Here is my recollection of Nino Baldachi. The legendary cadet. Many of the graduates of USAFA remember Baldachi as a mythical cadet. I was one of those doubting Thomases until I read in the 1975 issue of the Air Force magazine a letter from 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Nino Baldachi, 57 Fighter Intercept Squadron, Keflavik complaining that his Squadron, "The Black Knights" had been Air Defense Commands finest since June 1973. There it was, Nino was a pilot. I knew he would go far! And there he was...in Iceland. But let us go back in time. Nino entered the aerospace panorama with the arrival of the first cadets at the AFA in 1955. When I arrived at USAFA in 1957 (as a member of the third graduating class) Nino was everywhere, but was very hard to locate. The closest I came to seeing Nino at the Academy was when he was listed as a member of my Thermodynamics

class in the Spring of 1960. Our instructor for that very difficult class was Maj Donald Lopez (who today is a deputy director of the Air and Space Museum). We were shocked when Don Lopez presented us a paper written by Nino in which Nino explained the intricacies of the esoteric principles of “entropy” and “enthalpy” (if you don’t know what they are look them up in a dictionary...I still don’t know what they are and I fault Don Lopez for that!) Nino became an instant class hero but his stay with our class was short lived. As a result of his many brushes with the military department, due to his proclivity to accrue demerits, Nino washed back to the class of 1962 (the infamous Red Tags).



After his letter to the editor, I tried to track him down but my efforts were fruitless. My letters went unanswered and every time I called his squadron he was either DNIF (with Bronchitis) or else flying over the frigid waters around Iceland. From his Squadron mates in Iceland I learned that Nino was an outstanding pilot who was always scheduled for the toughest missions and in his quiet competent and unassuming manner, completed them flawlessly. I am sure someone out there can add to the Nino Baldachi story.”  
Hector Negroni, '61

Want to do your own research, check out the following links, or search the web.

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/usafach/m/documents/archiveFirst Duty Assignments Class of 1963.pdf>

Verifies that alphabetically between Cadets Baker and Ball, there is no Baldachi listed for assignments, confirming he still had not managed to graduate with Class of '63!

<http://www.usafaclasshistories.org/1963/1963-heritage-bc.html?y=1963>

Not as well-known as the Doolittle Raiders Goblets, Nino created his own commemorative goblet cabinet stored in Doolittle Hall

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/usafach/m/documents/archiveNino Baldachi Falcon News 060563.jpg>

Article on '63 graduation, including the fact that once again Nino didn't quite make it

That's enough for this issue. Please consider sharing your thoughts in future “Food For Thought” articles for our newsletters...

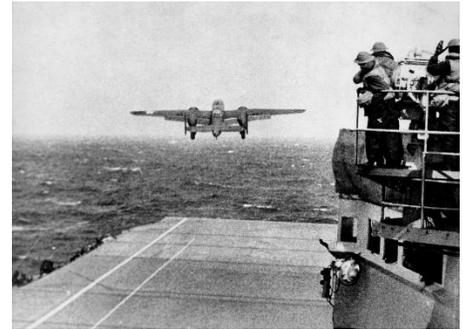
Cheers, Tom

## Chapter Events: Past And Future

### Upcoming Events

#### 18 April-Quarterly Speaker Series

Join us for a lecture from Jim Johns on the Doolittle Raid. For those that don't know Jim, he has an amazing background in aviation and military history. He was our speaker at our last event as well. Terry Flowers submitted the following on Jim;



The Twin Cities USAFA AOG announces our April speaker is James Johns, Capt USA Retired. Capt Johns is an avid aviator who worked for the FAA as an air traffic controller. In his personal life he owned, restored, and flew many different airplanes, mostly those of WWII vintage. Jim Johns grew up in Minnesota where he still resides. He spent a number of careers in the military with the Marines and the Army, with the FAA as an air traffic controller, as a concert pianist and as an aviator. He and his partner started in 1965 rebuilding mostly WWII aircraft. Their first purchase was five skeleton rebuildable BT-13 airplanes, a ferriable B-25 for \$2500 and two T-6 rebuilders. In 1978 he purchased a Japanese "Kate" torpedo bomber from 20th Century Fox. Jim was "shot down" in "Tora Tora" and "Midway" and other movie reenactments. More recently he

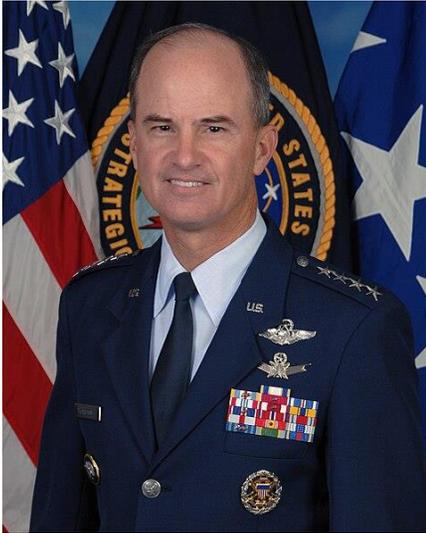


completed the reconstruction of a WWII CG-4 troop carrier glider. I got to personally walk through it during that rebuilding. Over-all he supervised the rebuilding of twenty one WWII airplanes. One TBM is in the Marine Corps Museum at Quantico, a BT-13 is in the WASP museum at Sweetwater, TX, that B-25 is currently flying with the Commemorative Air Force at Fleming Field in So. St. Paul, MN and the CG-4 Glider is at Fagen Fighters Museum in Granite Falls, MN. It was on the air show circuit with that B-25 that he met many of the Doolittle Raiders. He was a personal friend with many and he will tell us the facts about the Minnesota connection to the raid, the altering of the airplanes here in MSP before sixteen B-25s took off on that mission we'll never forget. Details on our website, or use this link for sign-up. - Terry Flowers, '64

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4BACAB2CA2FB6-47943585-tcaaog/>

## Heritage Dinner 18 May

Join us from 5 to 9 p.m. on Saturday 18 May for a celebratory night to recognize the United States Air Force Academy's Founders Day, soon-to-be graduates from the Class of 2024, and the incoming Class of 2028 appointees.



It is an honor to have (Ret.) Gen. Kevin P. "Chilli" Chilton, a 1976 USAFA graduate, astronaut and a former Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, as the evening's featured speaker.

This event is sponsored by the Minnesota Parent's Club and the Twin Cities Area chapter of the Association of Graduates. We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating a great evening!

Please see the attached flyer for more information! Registration deadline is May 8, 2024 using the following link:

<https://cvent.me/mNEeR1>



NASA 1987



With wife MGen Kathy Chilton (Ret.)  
Edwards AFB, 1987



## 2024 Minnesota USAFA Heritage Dinner

Join us from 5 to 9 p.m. on Saturday 18 May for a celebratory night to recognize the United States Air Force Academy's Founders Day, soon-to-be graduates from the Class of 2024, and the incoming Class of 2028 appointees.

It is an honor to have (Ret.) Gen. Kevin P. "Chilli" Chilton, a 1976 USAFA graduate and a former Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, as the evening's featured speaker. It's sure to be a special night you won't want to miss.

As part of evening festivities, a silent auction will be offered to support fundraising efforts. (Some incredible auction items will be up for bidding!) In light of this, we kindly ask that you attend with cash or check for an easy payment process. Credit cards will not be turned away, however we would appreciate the efficiency of a cash or check payment

The cost of the event is \$60 per individual. The Twin Cities Area Association of Graduates (TCA AOG) is providing a special event price of \$40 per individual for USAFA grads from the Classes of 2014-2023 as an incentive to attend this wonderful event! The location will be at the Sather Hangar #15129 at 10100 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie (volunteers at the gate will have directions).

This event is sponsored by the Minnesota Parents Club and the Twin Cities Area chapter of the Association of Graduates. We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating a great evening!

Registration deadline is May 8, 2024 using the following link: <https://cvent.me/mNEeR1>

For those attending last year's Heritage Dinner The USAFA MN Parent's Club and the TCA AOG turned an aircraft hangar into a hotel type atmosphere. This year's event is guaranteed to provide not only a unique and fun dining experience, a great time to meet and greet old and new friends who have AFA connections, and a great opportunity to hear from an honored General officer who can shed some light on the military and space challenges and accomplishments we as a nation have met and will face in the future.

In addition, the Parent’s Club has worked tirelessly to present wonderful finishing touches to the banquet and presenting a grand silent action for all those who attend. The auction is the primary fundraiser for both the MN Parents Club and the TCA AOG and has featured everything from warbird and biplane rides, to local experiences, dining and all sorts of fun items.

The goal of both the TCAAOG and AFA Parents is to provide a memorable experience for graduates, soon to be AFA graduates, for those young men and women who are just starting their journey, for all their parents, and all guests invited. You can still check out pictures from last years dinner on our website under the News page.

Denny Sultany, '64

## Past Events

### January Scotch Tasting



On 27 January the TCA USAFA AOG held its annual Scotch Whisky Tasting and celebration of Robert Burns' birthday. We started tasting Scotch whiskies on (or near) Robert Burns' birthday since he is well known as Scotland's most famous bard. He is known for his way with words, clever understanding of human nature and appreciation of women and whisky.

We (USAFA grads, some spouses, and grads from Both West Point and Annapolis) gathered at the home of Terry ('64) and Margaret Flower down in Hastings, with seventeen revelers meeting to taste the subtle nuances of fine single malt Scotch whiskies paired with food items prepared by Margaret. Her culinary delights included traditional foods from the Scottish countryside like cock-a-leekie soup, various shortbreads and of course, that infamous Haggis. Having purchased a lamb, Margaret had available the necessary portions to prepare the Haggis. Terry and Margaret together, stuffed the sausage casings to make it as genuine a dish as could be had.

As the Haggis was being served, Burns' Address to a Haggis was read with as Scottish a tongue as possible. Then again, everyone is Scottish in a way, on Burns' birthday.

“His knife see rustic Labour wipe,  
And cut you up with ready slight,  
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,  
Like any ditch;  
And then, O what a glorious sight,  
Warm steaming, rich!”

And, as the rhyme described, a butcher's knife was thrust into the Haggis itself!

But the tastes of the single malt whiskies captured the afternoon. We sipped, swirled, and swallowed spirits from bottles of Glen Morangie, Lagavulin, Glenlivet and Highland Park, mixing some with straws of water. Consensus was that there was no consensus regarding the best tasting. Each one had its own “character” and that was far more than taste alone. The color, the vapors rushing into our nasal cavities, the warmth and the hints of the oaken casks, the fruitiness, all of these combined in ways to tease our palates.

The afternoon was filled with laughter and serious toasts to all the military services, including the Marine Corps. Curt Brown led the Toast to the Lassies and Margaret read the Response or Toast to the Ladds. We ended the gathering singing Auld lang Syne (by Robert Burns of course) and vowed to come back next year if not sooner for a Bourbon Tasting.--

Terrence F Flower, PhD  
Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Physics  
St. Catherine University

Upcoming events: You can always check for the latest event updates on our website as well as CVENT signup links for events



## **TWIN CITIES AREA ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES**



[tcausafaaog.org](http://tcausafaaog.org)

Facebook

**[Minnesota Twin Cities Area United States Air Force Academy AOG Group](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1573865806263936)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1573865806263936>

## This Newsletter Is Possible Thanks To These Great Sponsors



## TCA AOG Key Personnel Roster

Twin Cities Area Chapter - USAFA Association of Graduates March 2024

If you need to contact the board, please use our new email [USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com](mailto:USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com)

### Chapter Officers

<b>President</b>	Curt Brown '78
<b>Vice President</b>	Mike Reiss '67
<b>Secretary</b>	Ed "Skip" Wipson, '88
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rick Knoll '65
<b>Legal Advisor</b>	Charlie Nelson '96
<b>President Emeritus</b>	Tom Wilson '61

### Board Members (10) with term expiration included:

<b>Name (spouse)</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
Denny Sultany '64	2026
Mike Reiss '67	2026
Ed "Skip" Wipson '88	2026
Tom Wilson '61	2024
Bob Hockman '89 (Christine)	2024
Pete Swanson '95 (Angela)	2024
Curt Brown, '78 (Mary)	2024
Terry Flower '64 (Margaret)	2025
Rick Knoll '65 (Kathe)	2025
Zach Turcotte '00 (Jessica)	2025

### Committee Chairpersons

<b>Advanced Education</b>	<b>Terry Flower '64</b>
<b>ALO Programs</b>	Ed Zarembo '07
<b>Financial and Budget</b>	Rick Knoll '65/Terry Flower '64
<b>Fundraising</b>	Open
<b>Membership</b>	Zach Turcotte '00
<b>Parents' Club Coord</b>	Bob '89 & Christine Hockman
<b>Newsletter</b>	Tom Wilson '61