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Prez Prose

Curt Brown, President

To all USAFA Grads in the Minnesota/Wisconsin area: I think it is safe to say that summer is here. Seems like only yesterday we were wishing for snow for the winter activities. But now we have the new season, construction!! We held our 2024 Heritage Dinner on May 18th and boy was it a great event. We had over 160 folks in attendance including Grads, current Cadets, and our new USAFA appointees/Falcon Scholarship recipients. We were also honored to welcome General Kevin Chilton and his wife, Major General Cathy Chilton as our speaker and guests. Gen. Chilton said he was truly impressed with our event and was proud to be part of it. That says a lot about your AOG Chapter. We also presented our first two TCA-AOG Scholarships during the dinner to two very deserving individuals. Each Scholarship was worth \$500.00. Stay tuned for more exciting improvements to that program. I would also like to personally thank all the folks who contributed their valuable time and effort to make this a fantastic event. It takes a team!! Tom Wilson is going to discuss all the other details later on in the Newsletter. The AOG Chapter has also been

busy with other activities. We had our second Luncheon speaker on April 18th. Once again, Mr. Jim Johns impressed us with his knowledge and expertise concerning the Doolittle Raid. We had over 30 folks attend and the event went long with all the great questions that were generated from the presentation. We have more Luncheon speakers coming up, so please stay tuned and make time to attend one. We also have our St. Croix River Cruise coming up this fall (September) and other “Tasting Events” to wet your whistle. As always, we are looking to generate more involvement and more activities for our local Grads. If you have any great ideas, don’t be bashful, please give me a call, or better yet come to our monthly meetings. It is always great to see old faces and meet some new ones. We have a Chapter email at USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com or you can email me at curtbrown11@gmail.com or even call me at (651) 295-5834. Finally, 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.

Curt Brown, '78

TCA AOG Dependent Scholarship Winners

We had great applicants for our first TCA AOG dependent scholarship. Two recipients were chosen. Anna Dorson, (Dan Dorson, '99) attended the School of Environmental Studies on the MN Zoo grounds for the last two years of H.S. She ran a dog walking business, volunteered with the Humane Society and swam competitively. She will be attending Purdue University to study animal science and aspires to be a veterinarian. William Hockman (Bob Hockman '89) is a Senior at the University of MN-Duluth. He is active in the Catholic Student (Newman Center) and works in community outreach with the homeless community. He is studying Exercise Science and is hoping to attend College of St. Scholastica for a Masters Program in Occupational Therapy, specializing in pediatric OT. Thank you to all our applicants this year and we plan on continuing this program in the future.



Heritage Dinner 2024



Gen. Kevin "Chili" Chelton '76



TCA AOG Pres. Curt Brown '78



Master of Ceremonies Jason Overbeke '03

The 2024 Heritage Dinner was another great evening in a string of wonderful and fun-filled events celebrating the founding of the Air Force Academy and recognizing graduates, current Cadets, new appointees, parents and families. Most of you know that each spring our Chapter celebrates the signing of the law establishing the Air Force Academy. This was done on 1 April 1954 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. (Some even say this was done on April's Fools Day, somewhat "tongue-in-cheek" by that West Point grad. Unverified, of course.)

In order to be considered as a Distinguished AOG Chapter, we are required to host an annual event to celebrate that anniversary. For the record, our Chapter has been recognized as a Distinguished Chapter **every year** since our inception beginning in May 2011. Rather than make the event solely about graduates, the TCAAOG board elected to partner with the Minnesota Parents Club several years ago to celebrate not just the founding of the Academy, but to honor our shared heritage of past, present and future graduates. Hence the reason why we changed the event from the Founders Day Dinner to the Heritage Dinner.

We were fortunate this year to have Retired AF General Kevin P. "Chili" Chilton as our guest speaker. General Chilton is a 1976 USAFA graduate, a former Astronaut and former Commander of U.S. Strategic Command. As a bonus, we were also host to the General's wife, MG (AF Ret) Catherine A Chilton, whose final assignment was the Mobilization Assistant to Commander AF Space Command. Although Cathy elected not to address the audience, we are convinced she helped her husband in his preparation. (Just sayin'...)

I, personally, came away with two primary thoughts about the presentation. General Chilton stressed that it is fine to set goals throughout each graduate’s career, but not to be afraid to change them enroute. He said that it’s best to reevaluate periodically based on your individual situation, circumstance and future expectations. His presentation was well received by all. One-hundred and sixty-nine (169) of us attended this event this year. Included were 27 AF graduates, 11 current Cadets, 13 Appointees to the Class of 2028, and a Falcon Foundation Scholarship winner. As part of the evening festivities, a silent auction and a “wine pull” were offered to support fundraising efforts. We were fortunate to take in over \$10,000 as a result. Final net amount is still to determined once all the expenses are totaled, but all indications point toward a nice profit which will be shared between our two organizations.

Special thanks go out to all who gave of their time, talents and treasures to make the event such a delightful, fun and profitable evening. Included in these is Scott Sather and his family for donation the hangar for our use and the Parents Club on MN who did a fantastic job setting up and decorating enhance the “Air Force” ambiance, and running the silent auction, both the TCA AOG and Parents Club’s major fundraiser of the year. To those who were not able or who elected not to attend, please reconsider about attending next year. It seems to get better every year!!

Tom Wilson, ‘61



Class of '24 Graduating Seniors



Incoming Class of '28 Appointees



Pictures from the Heritage Dinner are available to view and download though the end of August. Instructions on the TCA AOG web page. <https://tcausafaaog.org>



Sabre Society Donor Spotlight: Twin Cities Area AOG Chapter

Building bonds and giving back

Since its establishment on May 18, 2011, the Twin Cities Area Chapter of the Association of Graduates has grown into a vibrant and generous community. The chapter began with 24 graduates coming together to draft bylaws and elect officers. It has since grown, reaching more than 600 graduates in and around Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. In 2021, the chapter was motivated to give back and began making an annual Sabre Society-level gift to support the U.S. Air Force Academy.

“We were looking for good military recipients to support, and I had just contributed to the Sabre Society, so I brought it up at a board meeting,” says Col. (Ret.) Tom Wilson ’61. “It was approved, so I contacted the AOG to see if we were allowed to donate as a chapter to be Sabre Society members. After consideration, we were permitted to do so, and we did!”

The Sabre Society includes graduates, parents and friends who make leadership gifts of \$1,000 or more annually to the Air Force Academy Fund. The Twin Cities Area Chapter became the first chapter to join the Sabre Society.

AOG Chapters

Chapters are local alumni groups across the United States and even overseas. The groups allow graduates to remain connected to one another and to the U.S. Air Force Academy, providing benefits such as career and networking services, social events, guest speakers, and volunteer opportunities.

AOG chapters provide graduates with a means to unite to make an impact, both in their respective communities and at the Academy. Shared heritage, experiences and aspirations connect each class to the Long Blue Line, inspiring graduates from all generations to stay updated and involved for the rest of their lives.

“Without my education at USAFA, I have no idea how my life would have turned out and who I would have shared it with,” says Col. Wilson. “I realize that graduating from the Academy had no guarantees. It did, however, give my fellow graduates and me a head start on a terrific career.”



Distinguished Chapter Award

Within its first year, the Twin Cities chapter had earned a Distinguished Chapter Award. To be eligible for the award, a chapter must accumulate at least 2,000 points using the Association of Graduates' pointing system and accomplish five essential activities:

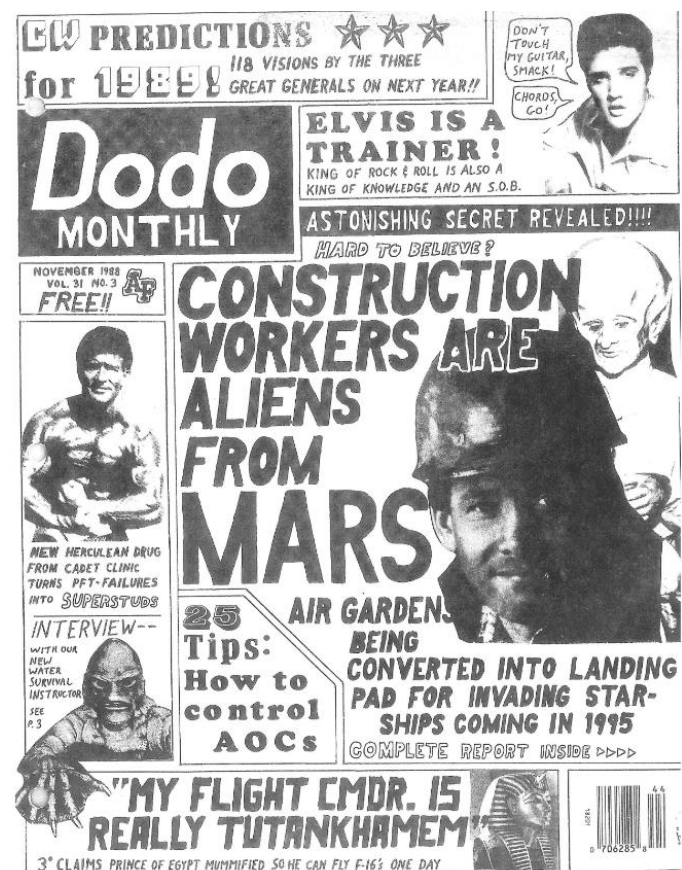
- Have a Founders' Day celebration.
- Have at least one service-related project or event.
- Send a representative to the Chapter Presidents Conference and submit a report to the chapter leader and/or members following the conference.
 - Accumulate at least 150 points for engagement and outreach efforts.
 - Submit a list of proposed activities and events for the upcoming year.

The Twin Cities chapter has achieved this distinction every year since its establishment.

See the entire article at the following link <https://bit.ly/3V3B7Fa>

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Tom Wilson, '61



At several of our board meetings, the subject of the Academy publication entitled “The DODO,” has come up. Allow me to give you a little history of that publication. Most of this information comes from my classmate, Col. Hector Negroni, who contributed to some of those original issues.

The DODO was instituted with the “mission” of allowing the Cadets to foster their desire to flaunt authority in a humorous and irreverent manner. It started in 1957 and was manned primarily by a select group of then Second Classmen of the class of '59. (Note: There was no senior class at that time...) It became a fixture of cadet life shortly, but the “powers that be” attempted some form of control by assigning the Deputy Commandant as the Officer in Charge of the DODO. The DODO was published until the first four issues were published in 1961, when it was disbanded. It is our understanding that it was reborn in 1962, but how long it lasted is unknown to me.

An example of a couple of the “early gems,” was an article indicating that Football was more important than God, because the Cadet Wing wore white gloves to the games but not to mandatory chapel!!! Another was one of the best descriptions of the new Chapel was the saying that the cadets did not know whether to pray to the Chapel, at it or for it.”

When Col. Negroni came back to the Academy in the Foreign Languages Department, the DODO was in full swing. Col. Negroni left the Academy in 1971 and I have no idea what happened after that, but there is a Dodo archive website where you can see the archived issues. If anyone has additional knowledge, please let me know and I will share it in my next newsletter article.

<https://thedodolives.org/>

(Editors note-The Dodo was written for and by college kids and many of the articles and jokes are reflective of the times they were written. Please view them in that context)

On another note, let me share an “old” thought about how each of you grads can easily get together with your classmates and renew friendships and swap “lies” about your respective pasts. Why not start going to the monthly all-Academy breakfasts when you can? Sure, it’s early (0700) but you’ve done that before... Every first Friday of each month it’s held at Kip’s Irish Pub in St. Louis Park. Jeff Shields, '79, sends out a reminder every month in case you can’t remember where or when it’s held. The second Friday it’s held at the Machine Shed in Woodbury at 0700 also. I send out reminders for that one. It’s usually a pretty small turnout but large enough to have good conversations and exchanges of ideas and thoughts. Occasionally there are speakers who present interesting subjects. You also will be able to meet other Service Academy grads and hear their stories and adventures. Try it – you might like it!!!

Cheers, Tom

Chapter Events: Past And Future

Upcoming Events



FORTEMTM
TECHNOLOGIES

10 July-Quarterly Speaker Series

Jon Gruen is the CEO and Executive Chairman of Fortem Technologies, a deep tech company that provides Artificial Intelligence enabled airspace awareness and counter drone solutions to defense, law enforcement, and commercial customers.

Previously, Jon was a corporate business development and strategy lead for Lockheed Martin where he won over \$10B in program value. After which, he co-founded a defense innovation management and operations firm which scaled start-up companies to over \$1.5B in combined revenue in just three years.

Prior to joining Lockheed Martin, Mr. Gruen was a Navy SEAL Officer where he served in increasing leadership positions in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). He is currently a Navy Reserve Captain and has commanded Unmanned Air Systems and Technology Innovation Units.

Jon received his Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Naval Academy and received his Master of Business Administration from the Haas School of Business, University of California – Berkeley.

11:00am – 1:00pm CDT

Free – Sign-up via the sign-up genius link

Location: [Fred Babcock VFW 5555](#) 6715 Lake Shore Drive, Richfield, MN 55423

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C4BACAB2CA2FB6-49898765-tcaaog>

27 July Annual Parents Club Picnic



The USAFA Parents Club of MN would like to invite the AOG to their annual summer picnic. on Saturday, July 27th. The event will be from 4-7:00 PM at beautiful Lake Susan Park located at 903 Lake Drive, Chanhassen, MN.

This will be a great opportunity to meet families from current and former USAFA classes as well as hear from 2028 families about how basic training is going. The picnic will be hosted by the parents of the 2027 graduating class. Food and refreshments will be provided. Details on TCA AOG website events page.

7 September Sutton Farms Military Appreciation Day

Come celebrate our freedoms and our military Veterans as we gather for a day filled with fun activities, good food and love for our great country during the Salute the Troops event with Every Third Saturday (ETS).

Sutton Ridge Farm is honored to host their fifth annual military appreciation event. This year they are again partnering with Every Third Saturday (ETS), a non-profit that assists Veterans in finding new purpose after military service.

Join us in a family atmosphere at a local farm for a delightful day of fun, food, and community.

Activities at the event include:

- Speakers from various Veteran organizations
- Flag raising ceremony
- WWII airplane fly-over
- Music
- Kids boot camp featuring a 60-foot-long obstacle course with inflatable climbing Wall, 25' square Inflatable jousting ring
- Farm animals, including Scottish Highland cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens \
- Catered lunch, food concessions
- Silent Auction, with proceeds going to DAV MN
- Hay wagon rides, local vendors and more!



SALUTE THE TROOPS!

Sutton Ridge Farm invites you to the fifth annual
Military Appreciation Day at the Farm

Saturday, September 7, 2024
 10am – 3pm (gates open at 9:30am)



Join us at this outdoor event to honor all military members and to support Veteran-Owned Businesses.

SUTTON RIDGE FARM
 1500 West 200th Street • Jordan, MN 55352

- WWII airplane fly-over by the T-6 Thunder pilots
- Flag raising ceremony by the Patriotic Heritage Allegiant Honor Guard
- Giant inflatables for the kids - including a climbing wall and jousting ring
- Live music by country western band **NORTH OF DODGE**
- Farm animals - including sheep shearing
- Vietnam Era Huey helicopter on display
- Silent Auction proceeds to DAV of MN
- Featured speakers
- Hay wagon rides
- Catered lunch (included)
- Food concessions for purchase
- Veteran-Owned Businesses
- Live remote by KCHK radio



Register at: www.everythirdsaturday.org/salutethetroops
 Registration deadline August 30

Cost: Free to Military & Veterans / \$8 per Family Member
General Public - \$20 each / Children (6-17) - \$15 each / Children 5 & Under - Free



REGISTER HERE

Service dogs welcome. Event proceeds donated to ETS, directly benefiting Veterans and their families.

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

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 June 2024

If you need to contact the board, please use our new email USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com

Chapter Officers

President	Curt Brown '78
Vice President	Denny Sultany '64
Secretary	Bob Hockman, '89
Treasurer	Rick Knoll '65
Legal Advisor	Charlie Nelson '96
President Emeritus	Tom Wilson '61

Board Members (10) with term expiration included:

Name (spouse)	Term Expiration
Denny Sultany '64	2026
Mike Reiss '67	2026
Ed "Skip" Wipson '88	2026
Tom Wilson '61	2027
Bob Hockman '89 (Christine)	2027
Tony Rodriguez '94 (Sarah)	2027
Curt Brown, '78 (Mary)	2027
Terry Flower '64 (Margaret)	2025
Rick Knoll '65 (Kathe)	2025
Zach Turcotte '00 (Jessica)	2025

Committee Chairpersons

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