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Prez Prose

To all fellow USAFA Grads in the Minnesota/Wisconsin area: Where has the year gone? One year ago, I wrote my first President Prose for the Chapter Newsletter and here we are again in the fleeting summer days. Yes, the kids are back in school, the state fair is over and the leaves are starting to turn. But, there are many adventures to have before 2024 leaves us. When I took the position as President a year ago, I told you I have two goals. One goal was to keep our Chapter in its leading position as a Distinguished Chapter. And yes, we are continuing to be a Distinguished Chapter in the eyes of AOG National. That's all great news! My second goal was to create more participation by our local Grads. I have not been very successful with this goal. Yes, we have created more events for our Grads to attend but the attendance is not what I wanted. We recently had to cancel our annual St Croix River cruise as we had only 12 Grads signup to attend. This is the second year in a row that we have had to cancel the cruise. However, all is not lost. Our Luncheon Speaker series has actually done quite well. We recently had Captain (USNR) Jon Gruen, speak concerning counter drone technology and had a packed room. This was one impressive topic, and you would not believe what drones are doing these days and how we are using counter-drones and AI to counter the threat.

Just think about drones flying across our southern border and what they might be carrying. Enough said. We also have an upcoming celebration of Veteran's Day at Mancini's Steakhouse November 13th. In December, we will have another Luncheon Speaker series event with our very own Grad, Terry Flower, giving his presentation on the Star of Bethlehem. We still have a lot of things to come in 2024, so check out our website and signup. As your President, I will not give up on my second goal, more participation. If you have any ideas, please let me know. You can respond to any TCA-AOG email and I will get it and respond to your inputs. Finally, as a reminder, our monthly Board meetings are open to all Grads and occur on the third Tuesday of each month. We meet at the Richfield VFW Post 5555, 6715 Lake Shore Drive South, Richfield MN. Social at 1700, meeting starts at 1730. Our website is <http://tcausafaaog.org/> and it has all the details for upcoming events. GO FALCONS!

Curt Brown, '78 President



ALO Update

Hello all. Applications are slightly up this year. In MN we have 115 applications for USAFA so far and we're already starting to do evaluations this cycle. I count 19 evaluations so far being assigned to Minnesota ALO's as we sit today. As far as active ALO's, we lost a couple this year putting us at 17 active ALO's across the state. We have 5 primary duty "Cat E" ALO's including myself and the rest are additional duty or civilian. The director of admissions has put on a hiring freeze on new ALO's for the moment while we evaluate our numbers and try to clean out some of the inactive ALO's from the list. I anticipate hearing more about what their plan is for hiring probably by the end of this application cycle.

As far as the team, we just completed a leadership change. I moved to the OSL position, overseeing the region of MN, ND, SD, NE, IA, and western Wisconsin and LtCol Tiffany VanDenBroeke '08 has taken over as the AAC (Area Assignment Coordinator) for Minnesota. She's been an ALO since 2011 and lives in the Twin Cities area.

Maj Ed Zarembo, '07
Admissions Liaison Officer

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Tom Wilson, '61

I was able to travel to Colorado Springs and USAFA earlier this month and had a very informative meeting with Mark Hille, the CEO of the National AOG. As a result, I want to share a few discussion items with you.

The first one involves the SUPT's and the Commandant's efforts to return the mission of the Academy to that of the "WARRIOR ETHOS." This is not an easy "fix" but the Academy leadership is attempting to do exactly that.

Many of you have heard that the Wing is now wearing Dress Blues for football games – without blouses in appropriate weather. (Personally, I consider that a plus factor.)

It is true, the SUPT is no longer making attendance at football games mandatory for the entire Wing (with the exception of Parent's Weekend and inter-service games). Instead, he is requiring only TWO GROUPS to attend, and left it optional for the other two groups. Mark explained that there are some thoughtful reasons behind this decision, though some grads may see it differently. The SUPT wants cadets to support all 27 Academy intercollegiate teams, in addition to Football. In place of those football games, cadets must attend other sporting events as a squadron. Stay tuned!

Mark Hille and I also discussed the lack of being able to get better information from the AOG with regards to our local grads in MN who sign up for the events that our Chapter has planned. Part of this "problem" has to do with privacy concerns throughout our nation. The Academy cannot release contact data to our Chapter without expressed consent from the grad themselves. We can get around this sometimes with an acknowledgment by the grad that when they sign up for an event, they are authorizing the release of their email address or contact information to our Chapter, in case of changes or confirmation of our events.

In the future, this may also be accomplished through the new AFA "Portal" that the AOG is trying to establish and make more usable. Mark admitted that more work is being put into the portal to make it more "user friendly." We must be patient for a while longer.

Our Chapter along with the MN Parents Group, has a great relationship with the AOG and we want to keep it that way. Let me know if any of you reading this have questions, comments or suggestions and I will pursue the info or answers with Mark and his staff.



On a separate note, I want to share some thoughts about our Chapter's Scholarship Program. This is a new venture that we instituted this past spring. We awarded two \$500 scholarships to two separate dependents of our graduate members. Simply stated, we wish to increase the scholarships in number and in the values of each award. Many of you have donated to our Chapter in the past, but have stopped doing so because we have not pressed any of you for donations. We currently have no real need for additional fund raising to carry on our Chapter aims and goals.

This will change if we want to improve this scholarship opportunity. For this reason, we will be soliciting donations in the future for scholarships. We would like to increase the value to \$5000 per recipient and offer as many as we can each year. To do this, we have some requests: First, if any of you wish to donate to this program, all you have to do is contact our Treasurer, Rick Knoll, '65, and identify your donation for the Scholarship Program and that is where the money will be held until awarded. (Rick's contact info is rickknoll@msn.com or 612-518-3737).

Additionally, if any of you work for a company that would love to donate any amount of dollars to this endeavor, please let me know. I would be delighted to meet with you and the appropriate person to make that happen. Also, if any of you are aware of a local Foundation that would like to support education for military families, again, let me know and I will pursue that option as well.

We should do all we can to make this a viable program.

One final input: Please read elsewhere in this Newsletter about the possibility of obtaining a framed picture of your respective Graduation Class Crests. I hope you find it interesting for your own personal use and for possible gifts for family grads – especially for multiple generations of family grads...

CLOSING QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"So, you want to improve the world? Then, do it! To the next person who crosses your path, say something kind, do something generous, perform a simple act of service. By doing this on a regular basis, you will indeed improve the world."

Richelle E. Goodrich, "Slaying Dragons: Quotes, Poetry, & a Few Short Stories for Every Day of the Year."



Parents Club

The MN Parents' Club kicked off the 2024-2025 academic year with Parents' Weekend at USAFA over Labor Day weekend. It was great to see so many parents and cadets enjoying their time together from the parade and campus tours on Friday to the football game on Saturday afternoon. The first Parents' Club meeting in September revolved around event planning for the academic year. The fun part will be to put that plan in motion. The events for this year will include a finals care package, winter cookie packing, and Taste of Home, which is a wing-wide event sponsored by parents and parent clubs from around country. It should be another jam-packed year!



Parents Weekend USAFA vs Merrimack College

TCA AOG Chapter Fund Raising Idea

In my "Food for Thought" article, I alluded to this column. As you can see below our Chapter has some options for a fundraising idea that makes a great gift for an Academy grad. This framed USAFA Class crest is an attractive way to showcase your Academy pride at home or at the office, while raising funds for our Chapter.

Each crest can be personalized by class year with specific class motto. All you need to do is to provide the correct spelling of the grads name and year of graduation. Crests can be individual per grad (see example of Rick Knoll's individual crest below), or if there is a Long Blue Line legacy, can be made with all family grads. (See the Wilson example of three generations of graduates. We do not have a picture of a "two crest" frame, but it will be available also.)



This might be something that each local grad might be interested in purchasing for your own use or as a gift to a graduating child or grandchild. The cost for a single framed crest is \$75; for a double framed crest, \$100; a triple crest, \$125. Size of the single crest is 8x10, framed 11x14.

If any of you readers are interested, please contact me personally and I will be glad to fill your order(s.)

Respectfully,
Tom Wilson,'61
651-275-5167 (H) or twil906k@aol.com

“SOME CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS”

Tom Wilson, ‘61

With Christmas right around the corner, and with no opportunity to produce another Newsletter until the new year, I think it appropriate to share some lessons I have learned over the years about some of the holiday and Christmas meanings. We all have probably sung the “Twelve Days of Christmas” carol. But do you know the real meaning and background of this famous carol??? Allow me, please.

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not allowed to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning – the surface meaning, plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality, which the children could remember.

The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.

Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.

The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The five golden rings were the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament. The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represented the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, council, knowledge, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord.

The eight maids a milking were the eight beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing were nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The ten lords a leaping were the Ten Commandments.

Eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful apostles.

Twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles’ Creed.

Now you know!!! But do you know the synopsis of the symbolism of gold, frankincense and myrrh???

For Jesus: Gold is a symbol of royalty and represents the kingship of Christ; frankincense is used in the worship of God and points to the divinity of Christ; myrrh is a burial oil and symbolizes the humanity of Christ, especially His death and resurrection.

For us: Gold (resplendent) is the wisdom of Christ that should shine forth from us; frankincense is the prayer that we offer to God each day, especially the Eucharist; and myrrh is the daily self-sacrifice that we do for God.

BTW, the Mixture of Burgundy and Holy Water makes “Amazing Grapes.” Cheers!!!

Chapter Events: Past And Future

Upcoming Events

Veteran's Dinner at Mancini's November 13



We are excited to announce that we will host our Veterans Day Dinner at Mancini's Char House in St Paul on Wednesday, 13 November. As in past years, we join together to celebrate all those who served this great country, especially graduates of the US Air Force Academy. We invite you, your spouse and other family members, friends too. The dinner will, as in the past, cost merely \$30 per person. It includes your choice of the fabulous Char House Steak, the Walleye or Chicken Dinner, including appetizers. For 2007 and younger grads, \$20 for grad and one guest!

To make this work at this price we've agreed to a *cash only* venue so please bring cash. Our esteemed Treasurer will bring some cash if needed and there is an ATM machine in the lobby.

We are holding off until 13 November in case you, like some grads, have special events on the 11th. Mancini's was voted number one Supper Club in Minnesota. Additionally, Mancini's is known for supporting for supporting deployed and active-duty military.

Plan now to attend this dinner. We will plan to toast our grads – active duty, separated and retired, at 6:30. (That's 1830 if you haven't transitioned to civilian time yet.) If you have any questions, call Terry Flower at (651) 261-8873. Please register by Monday, 11 November, so we can turn our count in. Register by sending an email with name and number of guests to curtbrown11@gmail.com . Free parking in the lot. Pay us at the dinner.

Quarterly Speaker December 11

Our next quarterly speaker will be our own Terry Flower. Terry has given this presentation for several decades. He will be discussing the science, history and scripture behind the biblical Star of Bethlehem. As always, these are free and lunch is available to purchase. Richfield VFW 11:00-13:00.

Scotch Tasting Save the Date 25 February

We are looking at 25 February for our Scotch Tasting. Look for details to follow.

Past Events

AF-Navy viewing party

The Naval Academy parents club and grad group hosted a game viewing party at the Richfield VFW. We had 7 grads and a few from the AF parents club attend. While outnumbered by Navy, it was a fun time regardless of the final score. We are working to put together a joint viewing party for AF-Army. Look for details soon.

Summer Speaker



Our summer quarterly speaker was very engaging. The rapid proliferation of drone and counter drone technologies, and what companies like FORTEM Technologies are doing, was eye-opening. Thanks again to Capt (USNR) Jon Gruen, CEO FORTEM Technologies.

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)

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TCA AOG Key Personnel Roster

Twin Cities Area Chapter - USAFA Association of Graduates Oct 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
Jason VanOverbeke '03	2025

Committee Chairpersons

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