



Spring 2026

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Prez Prose

Curt Brown, President

To all USAFA Grads in the Minnesota/Wisconsin area: I hope 2026 has started off well for you! It sure has for your Chapter of the AOG! It was recently announced that **your AOG Chapter has once again been awarded the title of Distinguished Chapter**. We have received this distinction every year since our inception in 2011. This year there were only 10 Chapters in the whole world that received this distinction. Our Chapter has been so successful due to the great folks involved and the continued support we have from our local Grads. Thank you for your support and participation. I also want to say a big thank you to our Parents Club. They may be the best Parents Club in the country. It's the close work between our two organizations that makes us distinguished.

Since our last Newsletter, your chapter has been very busy. Just in 2026, we have had numerous events including luncheon speakers, a scotch tasting, and a Chapter dinner. Big thank you to Terry '64 and Margaret for the great scotch tasting event at their home. You can read about the other events later in the Newsletter. Don't forget to sign up!

Speaking of events, **our annual Heritage Dinner is coming up. It will occur on May 16th**, so save that date and we will see you there. It will be in the same general location but in a new hangar just a couple hundred feet from the previous location. Gregg Guider and his wife, Mary (Sawyer '29) are going to host the event in their hangar. Big thank you to the Sathers for all their great support over the years. The planning and search for a speaker is well underway.

Another part of the dinner is the silent auction. **We need donations for the auction.** Don't be bashful! If you would like to get involved, please reach out to me and I'll point you in the right direction. Also, again this year at the Heritage dinner, your TCA-AOG will be awarding our Scholarship winners. For future reference, this Scholarship is for any children, grandchildren, or spouse of USAFA Grads going on to post-secondary programs.

Also, coming up in May, we will be electing new Board members/officers for our AOG Chapter. **We would love to have some new members on our Board and even if you can't commit to a job, we would appreciate your inputs.** As I have mentioned in the past, we need more participating members and welcome anyone who would like to get involved. 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 open spots, ranging from Committees to actually being on the Board. This is the time to give us your fresh ideas.

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.** Hope to see you there!

Scotch Tasting *Terry Flower, '64*

Rumor has it that graduates of the Air Force Academy are outstanding examples of officers and gentlemen. We remember the challenges of the "couth" test from way back when but wanted grads who now reside in the Twin Cities area the opportunity to savor the finer points of tasting single malt Scotch Whisky. We accomplished this on Saturday, 24

January, the weekend of the birthday of Robert Burns, poet laureate of Scotland.

"Rabbie" Burns was born on 25 January, 1759 and lived a mere thirty seven years, but in that



time he wrote hundreds of songs, poems and stories for publication and became known as the Bard. He fathered no fewer than thirteen children by four different women. So, he was a rascal, a lover, and a poet. We read or referenced a good number of his works.

Dinner started with some bagpipe music and the *Selkirk Grace*:

*Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it,
But we hae meat and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be Thankit!*

We formalized the dinner, almost like a Dining In, with toasts to the President, the Secretary of War, the Chief of Staff, etc. and ending up with Terry Flower, '64, giving the Toast to the Lassies. This was a tongue in cheek friendly gender teasing toast in a playful atmosphere. His wife, Margaret, gave the reply to the Laddies.

We had four single malt whiskies, each distilled in different regions of Scotland, and one blended Scotch for comparison. After the evening was over we drew names from a hat and five people took the Scotch remaining in the bottle. I think this was the third time in a row that Denny Sultany, '64, took a bottle home with him. There were food pairings to match each Scotch, prepared by Margaret's culinary skills. When the main course of Haggis came out to the tune of bagpipe music, Terry recited *Address to a Haggis*, and pierced the "pudding" with a carving knife.

We did learn, by the time we got to the last Scotch whisky, to sense, taste, subtle flavorings of the oak barrels as well as the fruity, the sweet, and the peaty (smoky) that crossed our tongues, and noses. Men and women alike had a good time. We had grads from USAFA, USMA and the parents club. We ended the festivities by joining arms around each other singing Auld Lang Syne. All in all, we had fun and remember, it was education.

Food for Thought *Tom Wilson, '61*

First of all, I want to thank Curt Brown for his dedication in leading our Chapter over the past couple of years. Curt has been instrumental in his efforts to ensure that our Chapter continues to excel in the eyes of the National AOG and we have continued to be selected as a Distinguished Chapter during both years of his tenure. This is in spite of Curt being pulled in several directions with all the other organizations that he belongs to and is active in so many activities.

WELL DONE, CURT! Please accept our sincere thanks!!!

Now comes the hard part! We are looking for a new president, so if you are thinking about getting more active in our chapter, now is a great time to step forward. I promised Curt that I

would replace him, if necessary, but, perhaps y'all would like a younger grad to step up!!!

Thanks also to Georgetta Olson for volunteering to manage our website. Once she masters the nuances of her job, I am confident we will have no more problems with the site being outdated and that it will be up to date in all respects. No pressure, Georgetta!!!

We also have found a "computer savvy" grad that has volunteered to become our "email" staff guru and to publish our Quarterly Newsletter. THANK YOU, Jamie Lindman.

It is time also for us to nominate and for the board to select our Chapter Distinguished Grad for the year 2026. The selection is made so that we can announce the recipient at the Heritage/Founders Day Dinner in May.

In one of the last Food for Thought articles I wrote about Dad's role in the family. Allow me please to quote (mostly) an article written by Ann Landers several years ago about "The Military Wife."

(Forgive me here as I want to dedicate this to my late wife, Judy. She stuck by me all the 58+ years of marriage and helped me become a better man, husband and father!!!)

The good Lord was creating a model for military wives and was into his sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared. She said, "Lord, you seem to be having a lot of trouble with this one. What's wrong with the standard model?"

The Lord replied, "Have you seen the specs on this order? She has to be completely independent, possess the qualities of both father and mother, be a perfect hostess to four or forty with an hour's notice, run on black coffee, handle every emergency imaginable without a manual, be able to carry on cheerfully, even if she is pregnant and has the flu, and she must be willing to move to a new location 10 times or more in 17-20 years or more. And, oh, yes, she must have six pairs of hands."

The angel shook her head. "Six pairs of hands? No way."

The Lord continued, "Don't worry, we will make other military wives to help her. And we will give her an unusually strong heart so it can swell with pride in her husband's achievements, sustain the pain of separations, beat soundly when it is overworked and tired, and be large enough to say, 'I understand,' when she doesn't, and say, 'I love you,' regardless."

"Lord," said the angel, touching his arm gently, "Go to bed and get some rest. You can finish this tomorrow."

"I can't stop now," said the Lord. "I am so close to creating something unique. Already this model heals herself when she is sick, can put up six unexpected guests for the weekend, wave goodbye to her husband from a pier, a runway or a depot, and understand why it's important that he leave."

The angel circled the model of the military wife, looked at it closely and sighed, "It looks fine, but it's too soft. She might look soft," replied the Lord, "but she has the strength of a lion. You would not believe what she can endure."

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek of the Lord's creation. "There's a leak," she announced. "Something is wrong with the construction. I am not surprised that it has cracked. You are trying to put too much into this model."

The Lord appeared offended at the angel's lack of confidence. "What you see is not a leak," he said. "It's a tear."

"A tear? What is it there for?" asked the angel.

The Lord replied, "It's for joy, sadness, pain, disappointment, loneliness, pride and a dedication to all the values that she and her husband hold dear."

"You are a genius!" exclaimed the angel.

The Lord looked puzzled and replied, "I didn't put it there." —Author Unknown

Blessings to all the military wives!!! Husbands: Hug your wife and thank her for all she has endured so far in your marriage! Do your best to make sure she knows she is loved!!!

Air Force vs. Army Football Watch Event Pete Swanson, '95

The TCA-AOG and the West Point Parent's Club jointly hosted a football watch party for the November 1st Air Force Falcons – West Point Black Knights game at the Richfield VFW Post 5555. Sixteen service academy football enthusiasts from the West Point Parents Club, West Point Graduates Chapter, and Twin Cities Area Association of Graduates (USAFA) gathered for a fun afternoon of camaraderie, good food, and football action. The Black Knights emerged victorious winning 20-17.



Heritage Dinner & 2030 Appointees *Anthony Rodriguez, '94*

The 2026 Minnesota USAFA Heritage Dinner and 2030 Appointee Recognition will take place on Saturday, May 16, at the Flying Cloud airport in Eden Prairie. This annual joint event—hosted by the MN Parents Club (MNPC) and the Twin Cities Association of Graduates (TCA-AOG)—celebrates our newest Minnesota USAFA appointees, honors the graduating Class of 2026, and celebrates the Long Blue Line.

As part of the 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 along with the menu will be published in the AOG announcement coming out later in March. We look forward to seeing you there and celebrating a great evening!

Additionally, the MN Parents Club will host the 2030 Appointee orientation earlier in the afternoon of May 16. This event welcomes the new appointees and their parents/guardians with an informational presentation on what to expect during Basic Cadet Training through the 4th Class year. There will be several Cadets from MN at the orientation to answer questions the appointees have about life at USAFA.

USAFA Admissions Update – ALO Program

LtCol Tiffany VanDenBroeke, USAFA Admissions Liaison Officer, USAFA '08

Greetings Minnesota grads! The state of Minnesota saw a record year for USAFA applicants, topping out at approximately 160 started applications for the Class of 2030, approximately a 30% increase from last year. Some initial offer letters have been sent from USAFA to candidates, and we look forward to sending off our newest appointees at the Heritage Dinner on May 16th. It was also a record evaluation year; our team of 15 ALOs in Minnesota conducted and input 152 evaluations, significantly exceeding our expected capacity of 95. Thank you to the MN ALO team for going above and beyond!

USAFA continues to pause the hiring of CAT E ALOs. As evidenced by our recent numbers, this remains a significant hindrance to the MN ALO program. USAFA stated they must first clear personnelist actions and procedures with AFRC—specifically regarding promotions, position changes, tracking points, and retirement processes. USAFA Admissions indicated they are close to a solution and should resume hiring processes soon.

Summer Seminar applications were due January 15, with acceptances announced in

mid-February per the usual cycle. ALOs have been assigned their mentors and are tracking cadet-candidates who accept their appointments. Spring also brings several college fairs; we will attend Military Academy information nights at Wayzata and St. Thomas Academy High Schools, as well as the annual Private School College Fair week. Team members will visit schools including Benilde, Cretin-Derham Hall, Holy Family, and Totino-Grace. Our primary target is high school juniors, as the USAFA application for Pre-Candidate Questionnaires opened on March 1st. Looking ahead to the summer, we will be at the Duluth Air Show on July 11-12 and the Girls in Aviation show on September 19.

Speaker Series *Jamie Lindman, 95*

We planned to have a notable WWII / 8th AF Veteran and POW, Les Schrenk, speak on March 11th. Unfortunately, Les Schrenk passed away at the age of 102 on March 3rd, 2026. Although he is gone, we are welcoming his longtime friend and travel buddy, Mike Johnson, to share the amazing story of Les Schrenk this summer. Mark your calendars for an inspiring presentation about Schrenk's remarkable veteran's story of bailing out of his aircraft, being captured by the Germans and surviving in a POW camp.

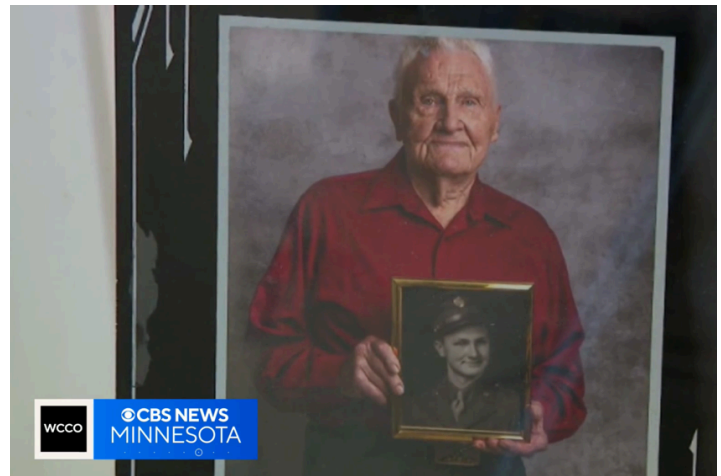
Mark the Date – July Speaker Series:

What: The story of Les Schrenk, Minnesota's own WWII hero (as told by Mike Johnson)

When: **Wednesday, 22 July 2026.** 1100 social/lunch; 1130 speaker presentation.

Where: **Fred Babcock VFW Post 5555, Richfield, MN.**

RSVP: Via Sign-Up Genius (details to be sent via email).



Standby: **we plan to schedule a June Speaker and will send out details via e-mail.**

TCA AOG Key Personnel Roster 2025-26
Twin Cities Area Chapter - USAFA Association of Graduates
If you need to contact the board, please use our email USAFA.TCA.AOG@gmail.com

Chapter Officers

President: Curt Brown '78
Vice President: Denny Sultany '64
Secretary: Jamie Lindman '95
Treasurer: Pete Swanson '95
Legal Advisor: Charlie Nelson '96
President Emeritus: Tom Wilson '61

Board Members (10) with term:

<u>Name (spouse)</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>
Denny Sultany '64	2026
Mike Reiss '67	2026
Ed "Skip" Wipson '88	2026
Tom Wilson '61	2026
Jamie Lindman '95 (Allison)	2027
Tony Rodriguez '94 (Sarah)	2027
Curt Brown, '78 (Mary)	2027
Terry Flower '64 (Margaret)	2027
Pete Swanson '95 (Angie)	2028
Jason VanOverbeke '03 (Holli)	2028

2025-26 Committee Chairpersons

Advanced Education	Terry Flower '64
ALO Programs	Tiffany VanDenBroeke, '08
Financial and Budget	Pete Swanson '95/Tony Rodriguez'94
Fundraising	[* Open]
Membership	[* Open]
Parents' Club Coord	Tony Rodriguez '94
Newsletter	Tom Wilson '61