

Greetings, Illustrious Class of 1973!

Congratulations to Bruce “Orville” **Wright**, CS-39, who assumed responsibilities as Air Force Association President on 1 March! Orville reports: “Our family has been blessed and honored with opportunities to serve our US Air Force, Airmen and their families in 2019. Daughter, Lt Col Jaina Donberg, ‘04, took command of the 494th Fighter Squadron “Panthers” at Lakenheath Air Base in March. ‘73 classmates, please not hesitate to contact me at bwright@afa.org with much appreciated inputs on how to improve AFA support for our USAF.”

Several other CS-39 Campus Radicals—Dan **Pierre**, Kelly **McCullar** and Skip **Evans**—ducked down to the Florida Keys to escape the frigid weather in the rest of the country in late Feb/early March. They and their better halves enjoyed sailing, kayaking, biking, snorkeling, playing Jenga, and numerous meals together.



Campus Radicals Kelly & Thuan **McCullar**, Dan and Denise **Pierre**, and Skip **Evans** with Deb McKenna demonstrating what retirement ought to be like.

Al **Dunlap**, CS-08, sent in a couple of pix. Some of the Evil Eight-73 Texas gang gathered in Austin in February 2019 to share dinner, drinks, and old stories with Jim **lagulli** and his wife Mary Jo as they traveled from Anchorage Alaska to visit with their daughter in Austin.



(L-R) Evil Eight members Al **Dunlap**, Dave **Minto**, Larry **Radov**, Brian **Vance**, and Jim **lagulli**.

Al also reported that Dave **Minto** (R) has been selected to receive the 2019 American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Chanute Flight Test Award. The award is presented to recognize significant lifetime achievements in the advancement of the art, science, and technology of flight test engineering and the capabilities delivered in support of the nation's defense. Dave will receive the



award during the Excellence in Aerospace Awards Luncheon being held in conjunction with the AIAA Aviation and Aeronautics (AIAA) Forum and Exposition (AVIATION 2019), 17-21 June 2019, at the Hilton Anatole, in Dallas, Texas. Congratulations, Dave!

I remember well the last time I saw Dave. In late Spring or early Summer 1982, he was the program manager for the C-5 aircraft tow vehicle at Kelly AFB. The tug was designed specifically for the C-5, and was an 80,000-pound monster of a 4-wheel-drive machine. I was the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC) lead analyst for the C-5A Operational Utility Evaluation, an Office of the Secretary of Defense directed eval of the C-5's ability to taxi off-pavement. As we were planning the eval, someone asked what would happen if the airplane had to be towed while off pavement. While the aircraft had undergone some limited off-pavement testing on Harper Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert during development (which resulted in four fried engines and a ban on off-pavement ops), the tug's off-pavement capabilities had not been tested. With only 77 C-5As in the inventory, our test aircraft was considered a "national asset," and the AFOTEC commander, Lt Gen Howard Leaf, wanted to make sure we didn't break it. So before we had operational personnel hook a tug up to an aircraft with both off pavement, we decided to test it hooked up to something other than an airplane. Enter Dave **Minto**. He arranged support from a Reserve Red Horse team from Dallas-Fort Worth airport that pulled their Reserve weekends at Kelly. He also had a strain gauge connected to a really strong cable so we could measure the loads the tow vehicle would generate. Bright and early one weekend morning, we arrived at the designated patch of dirt at Kelly to find a humongous bulldozer and a tow vehicle in close proximity, connected by the instrumented cable. On command, the tug commenced to pull. It dragged the bulldozer backward. The dozer dropped its blade. The tug was still able to drag it. We turned the dozer around, connected the cable to the front and set the four huge teeth on the back of the dozer into the ground. That time it didn't budge, but the tow vehicle's tires—all four of them—broke lock with a huge "Whump!" The vehicle bounced up just a little, and when it came back down, the tires grabbed the soil for a split second, then let loose with another "Whump!" It probably did that about five times before we could get the tow vehicle operator to stop the machine. When the results of the strain gauge analysis came back, they showed to no one's surprise that the stress generated when the tug's wheels dug in exceeded the design limits of the C-5A's front landing gear, which is where the tow bar connected. In the end, as artificial a setup as it was, we put the tow vehicle on pavement and connected it to the airplane, which was off pavement. Worked like a champ.

If you haven't heard, classmate Mark **Ralston**, CS-02, succumbed to lung cancer on 10 Mar 19. Our prayers are with Bonnie and the rest of the family. His obituary is at usafa73.com and is in this edition of Checkpoints.

On 5 March 2019, Gene **Ogilvie's** (CS-16) British wife, Barbara, became a naturalized US citizen in a moving ceremony at the Penrose Library in Colorado Springs. In attendance were fellow Chickenhawks Rich and wife Teresa **Fazio**, Tom and Sally **Mayberry**, and Don and Joan **Sutula**.

Most of you probably saw pictures of Offutt AFB flooding in March. Not only were basements and one-third of the runway flooded on Offutt, but just south of the base, Chip **Frazier**, CS-02, had his basement flooded, as well. The Platte River runs just south of his house and reached a height of 16 feet above normal. They ended up with 78" of Platte River in their basement and were unable to live in the house until repairs were made. The whole soggy saga is told in the pictures below.



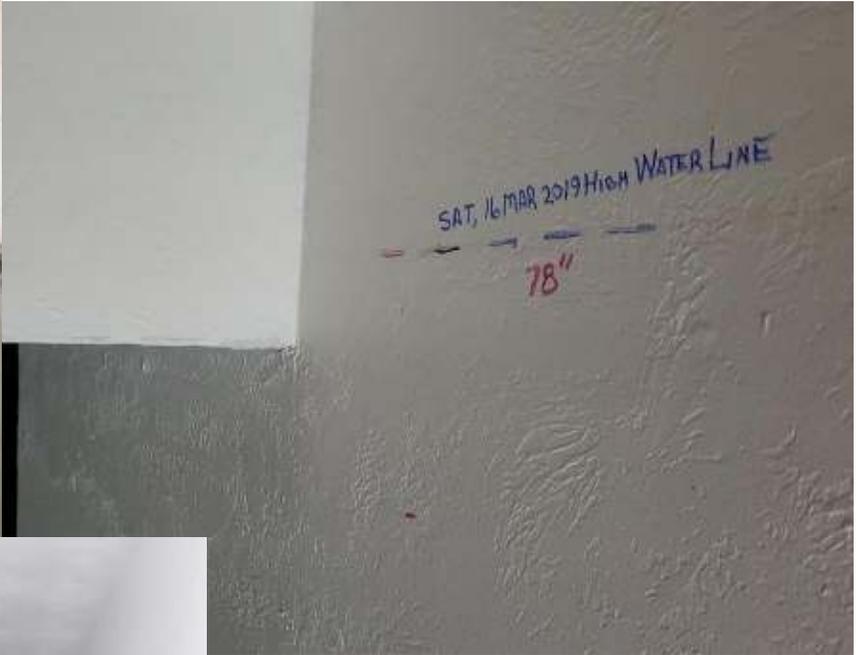
Chip's "Pot o' Gold" at the end of the rainbow...before the flood. Note how far above the river the deck (just above the white wall) is. They were six weeks from selling their home when the flood started.



At the height of the flood, the water (and ice!) almost reached the deck floor, 16 feet above the pre-flood river level. The ice melted as the water receded.

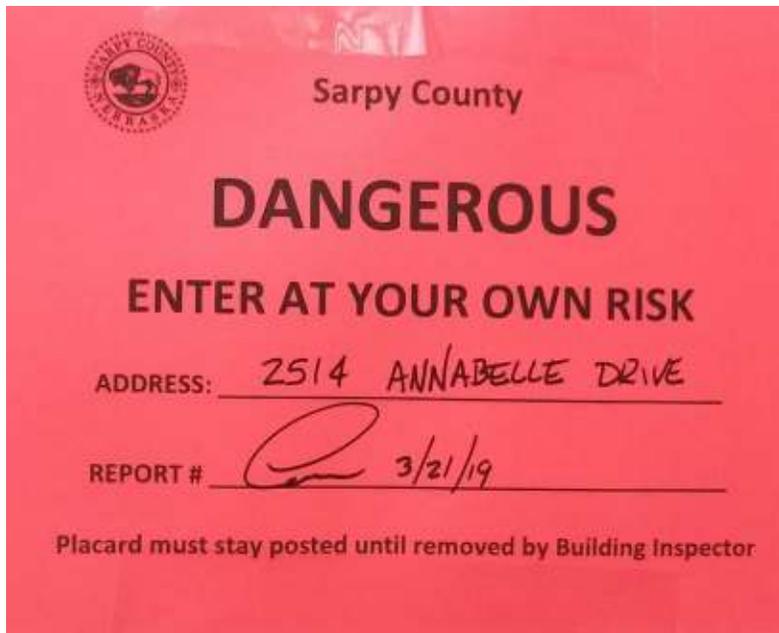


The water forced open the basement door (left), eventually reaching 78" in depth (below) on 16 Mar 2019.



Looking down the stairwell into the basement (left). Note the debris on the stairs; the water has receded some. Below, family room disarray in the basement, water still in the room.





The county declared the house uninhabitable until repairs were made.



Team Rubicon to the rescue! Chip's in the orange jacket on the left.

Carl Foerster, CS-34, wrote that after over 20 years supporting the Intelligence Community with the MITRE Corporation in Northern Virginia, he's now on their Bedford, Massachusetts campus supporting Air Force Space, Cyber and Intelligence programs. He and Mary have returned to their New England roots and their daughter is just down the road in Boston. They're also about two miles from Vic and Connie Thuotte, CS-09.

Al **Howey**, CS-20, reported he is staying busy playing in a Civil War brass band, volunteering at Carillon Brewery in Dayton and teaching music. Check out his website at www.SpeakeasyJazzBand.com. He also used to volunteer at the National Museum of the United States Air Force, but has had to cut that out—except for any classmates who happen to wander through Dayton. Let me know if you need contact info.

Rich **Hayes**, CS-31, is quite the birder. He frequently posts pictures he has taken on Facebook, including some from a recent trip to Japan.



Following on to my comments last quarter about [“73” meaning Best Regards in Ham Radio Operator lingo](#), Don Ramm sent in the following excerpt from a Big Bang Theory episode:

Sheldon: "The best number is 73. Why? 73 is the 21st prime number. Its mirror, 37, is the 12th and its mirror, 21, is the product of multiplying 7 and 3."

Leonard: "We get it, 73 is the Chuck Norris of numbers!"

Sheldon: "Chuck Norris wishes. In binary 73 is a palindrome, 1001001, which backwards is 1001001. All Chuck Norris backwards gets you is Sirron Kcuhc!"

Just more evidence that we are The Illustrious Class of 1973!

Finally, if you did not get an email from me in Feb about Orville Wright's selection as AFA President or one about Mark Ralston in March, please let me know so I can add you to my email list. And please let me know whenever you change email or mailing addresses.

[73!](#)

Mike Arnett

"Here's a toast...to the host...of the men we boast...the U.S. Air Force!"