

**2018**

**“Honoring the Past to Challenge the Future”**

**Kathy Hackwith Groth**



## Kathy Hackwith Groth

Kathy has five generation deep roots in Plattsmouth. Her mother's English teacher was Miss Jessie Whalen, one of the first Hall of Fame Inductees.

Kathy graduated from PHS in 1968. She has many vivid memories of her time there. She was a hard working choir member, student directing three school musicals. She was also a fellow student confidant. While in high school she already showed her sense of community responsibility...she quit Pep Club because there was no community service component to the club.

She attended Rockford College (University) in Rockford Illinois. While there she was again very involved in theater...even met Vincent Price on a set. She participated in the college radio station.

After meeting and marrying Mark Groth at Rockford College, they were stationed in Campbell, Kentucky. Then they moved to Colorado where they have lived since.

Kathy was the volunteer manager of the Central Presbyterian Church and via writing a Federal grant, she created the agency that became The Food Bank of the Rockies, the largest non-profit in Colorado. She and a Colorado State Senator wrote a Good Samaritan law, which protects donor organizations. Food Bank of The Rockies is now 40 years old, and she still drives excess food around the Denver metro area in her trusty Volvo station wagon.

She has worked paid and unpaid in public schools, running a book swap, a multicultural event, a break out elementary session for students with different learning styles, has counseled gifted non-compliant middle school students, and chaperoned after prom. For 25 years, she distributed surplus books to dozens of recipient organizations for The Friends of the Aurora Public Library and served on that board as well as the Board of Trustees for the Aurora Public Library with 7 years as president.

Kathy was a member of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Homelessness in Aurora and the county. At Mountain View United Church, she served on the governing body, sang in the choir, taught Sunday School for 18 years, was Sunday School Superintendent for 15 years, and served on five search committees. She organized and ran retirement celebrations, ordinations, church anniversaries and Bible School. She served on the neighborhood association for 20 years. She was named Outstanding Auroran. She can do a sit-down dinner for 40 people in her home, white linen and fine china, and do all the cooking.

In addition to being a community activist, she worked for Denver area artists, a transportation company, and a mining tire company. She managed the practice of a psychiatrist and organized national training sessions for the doctor.

Like her late mother, Kathy has a constant flow of people needing a place to stay, dinner, or backyard counseling at her home. She stays in contact with immigrants whom she has helped find work and homes.

She and husband Mark live in Aurora, Colorado. They have two grown children: Christian and Jessie.

Kathy was surprised, honored, and delighted to be nominated and accepted into the PHS Hall of Fam

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**Lieutenant Colonel William McGraw**



## Lieutenant Colonel William McGraw

Bill is the son of William "Butch" McGraw and Betty (Watson) Phelps. He graduated from Plattsmouth High School in 1987.

He has spent many years becoming educated in a wide variety of disciplines. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from Creighton University and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Air Force in 1991. He earned a Master's degree in Business Administration from Oklahoma City University in 1997 and a Master's Degree in Secondary Education in Old Dominion University in 2014. During his military service he completed Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College and Air War College.

After completing the Air Force ROTC program at Creighton University, Bill spent a total of 26 years as an officer in the United States Air Force. He began his military career as a Ballistic Missile Systems Engineer and was responsible for reviews of Nuclear Non-Proliferation and START Treaties. He later led and advised Air Force Cost Analysis Agency teams across 6 major acquisition programs worth over \$18 billion dollars at the Pentagon in Washington DC. Bill's teams effectively developed budgets and cost estimates for GPS, Satellite Communications, and Space Reconnaissance capabilities, ensuring mission success. Also, he was Lead financial manager for multiple test and evaluation programs at the Air Force Research Laboratory in New Mexico. There he was rated #1 of 217 officers leading an award-winning security team and #1 Risk Management Program. After 9-11 he provided critical guidance and support to over 3,000 deployed Airmen, maintaining a \$55 million dollar budget in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. After that he became a Professor of Financial Management and Chair of the Business, Cost Estimating and Financial Management Department of the Defense Acquisition University at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. There he led 17 professors who graduated 8,000 students per year and instructed over 40 courses.

In his final active duty assignment he retired as Comptroller and Director of Financial Management at Special Operations Command South in Miami Florida, where he was responsible for the oversight of a \$40 million dollar budget in direct support of Special Operations Forces in over 30 Central and South American countries.

Bill has been deployed to Russia in support of nuclear weapons treaty monitoring as well as to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Iraq.

His awards and decorations are many and impressive: Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Joint Service Achievement Medal, and Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters.

After retirement in 2017, he served as an AFJROTC instructor in Kansas. He now makes his home in McLouth, Kansas where he continues to seek education. This time he is pursuing an agricultural degree to facilitate his interest in gardening and farm animals on his acreage.