

## **A SALUTE TO FALCON**

Colonel Stu “Falcon” McCurdy, the founder of Formation Flying, Inc., went West on March 30, 2018, after fighting the tough fight with esophageal cancer. Falcon was surrounded by his entire family, which included his wife Diana, his son Craig and his wife, and Falcon’s five grandchildren.

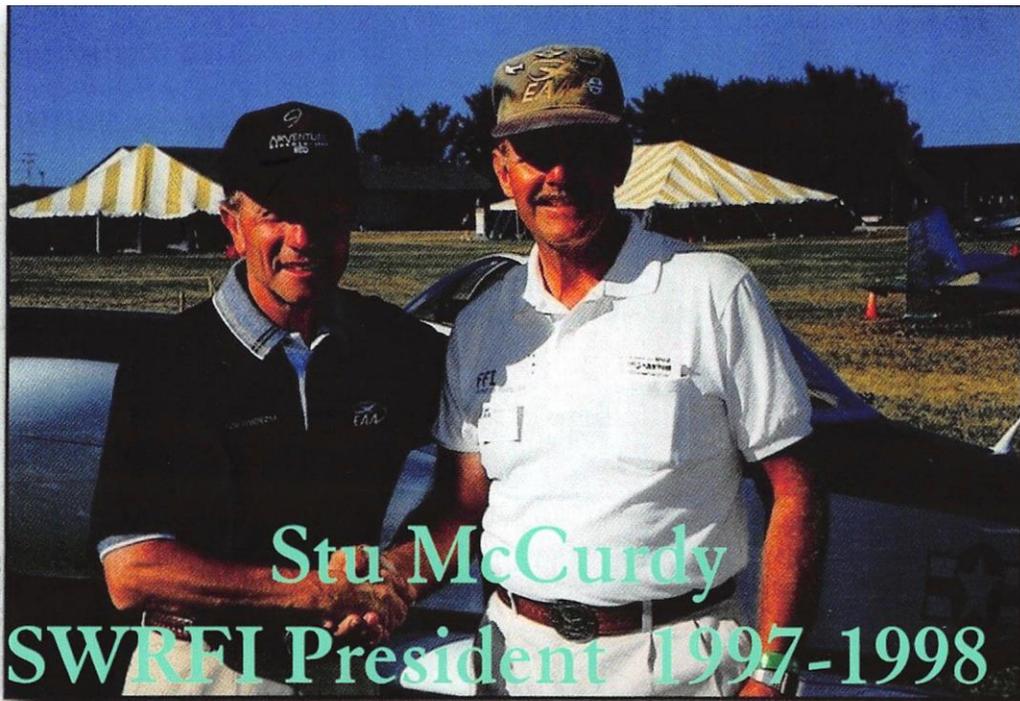
Falcon was born in 1941 in Providence, RI, and was a 1964 Air Force Academy graduate. While at the USAFA, Falcon started the Academy’s first parachute team, which today is a thriving organization that competes and performs nationwide. Falcon always took great pride in the Academy’s jump team, and visited with current members often at airshows in later years.

Falcon graduated from Air Force pilot training in Laredo, TX, earning his Silver Wings in 1965. He remained in Laredo as a T-33/T-38 Instructor, where he and Diana were married, and where Craig was born. Falcon then went on to Fighter Upgrade, where he became an F-4 Phantom Fighter Pilot.

Falcon’s distinguished 28-year Air Force career as a Fighter Pilot included overseas assignments at Udorn AFB, Thailand during the Viet Nam war, at Torrejon AFB, Spain as an F-4D Squadron Commander, and at Clark AFB, Philippines as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations. Falcon was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions in suppressing enemy forces during a POW raid in Viet Nam. In an interesting family note, Falcon’s son Craig, who is also an Air Force Academy graduate, and flew the A-10, didn’t know about his father’s heroics until reading about it while studying at the Academy. Falcon was also the recipient of the Legion of Merit, multiple Meritorious Service Medals, and 13 Air Medals. Falcon retired from the Air Force in 1994 as the Inspector General of 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force at Bergstrom AFB, near Austin, and settled in nearby Round Rock, TX.



Falcon owned and flew two Bushby Mustang II aircraft while on active duty, and after retirement purchased a Vans RV-3 aircraft. He then built his Vans RV-8, N78TX, and began his journey as the figurehead of General Aviation formation flying, and the mentor to hundreds, if not thousands of formation pilots nationwide. In 1994 Falcon formed Falcon Flight, and in 1999, in cooperation with EAA, Falcon formed Formation Flying, Inc. (FFI). FFI became the second FAA Recognized Industry Organization, along with FAST, authorized to evaluate and issue credentials for civilian General Aviation pilots to perform formation demonstrations at airshows in the US. Falcon worked tirelessly at the helm of FFI for its first 17 years, and was indeed, the force that drove FFI pilots everywhere to an extraordinary level of excellence.



**Tom Poberezny, left, congratulates Stu McCurdy on the successful introduction of Formation Flying, Inc. (FFI). FFI was recently approved by the FAA to evaluate non-warbird formations and issue formation cards that allow pilots to fly non-aerobatic formations in FAA waived airspace. EAA recognizes the importance and excellent service FFI provides.**

One of the Falcon Flight Wingmen, Ron “Shorts” Walker, described Falcon’s impact best, when he said:

*“It’s no exaggeration to say that formation flying in the GA world, especially the E-AB side, would not be the thriving, tight-knit, community that it is today without the efforts put forth by Falcon. His creation of FFI back in the late 90’s set the gold standard to which we are all held. It allows dozens of flight teams, consisting of hundreds of pilots, to fly together in safety and grace. It seamlessly brought together pilots from all over the country to set world records, whether over EAA AirVenture, NFL games or the occasional NASCAR race. Falcon \*will\* be missed, but his legacy continues each time we ‘strap on’ our aircraft.”*

An informal gathering of family and friends was held at Georgetown Airport, Falcon’s Home Field, on April 6, 2018. The event was well attended, and a Missing Man Flyby was performed by members of Falcon Flight. Falcon’s family was deeply touched and grateful for this show of support and honor.



The celebration of Stu's Life and Achievements continues with two more events that will honor Falcon, and highlight his legacy.

On June 22, 2018, Colonel Stu McCurdy will be interred at the Air Force Academy, per his wishes. Falcon flight will host a 16-ship flyover and Missing Man Flyby at the Academy, and FFI RV Pilots are invited to join the formation. All FFI pilots, family and friends are welcome to attend the burial services at the USAFA. For more information, please contact Ron "Shorts" Walker at [n520tx@gmail.com](mailto:n520tx@gmail.com) or (512) 635-6325 or Bobby "Luke" Lucroy at [rv98vr@gmail.com](mailto:rv98vr@gmail.com) or (512) 657-6167.

At AirVenture 2018 at Oshkosh, Falcon Flight will lead a 30-ship presentation during the Airshow, currently targeted for Monday, July 23, 2018. The team has been established, and will practice together prior to AirVenture. Additionally, during the week, in the morning periods before the airshow waiver begins, FFI formation groups will conduct large formation flyovers. Groups of RVs are being coordinated, and there is discussion of groups of Bonanzas and/or Mooneys putting together a large formation flyover as well. For more information on the morning large formation flights, please contact Bob Mills at [rvmills@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rvmills@sbcglobal.net) or (775) 544-3511.

