

## HALL OF ACHIEVEMENT

2007/2008  
Journal

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### COLONEL JAMES G. TIETJEN, USAF (R)

#### Class of 1970

Jim was very well prepared for life, but he didn't know it in 1970, when he graduated from Copiague High School. Jim believes that he succeeded due to a very supportive family, friends and a quality, well-rounded education. Copiague's combination of academics, sports and extra-curricular activities gave him all the tools he needed. He just used what his teachers and coaches graciously provided him.

Jim graduated with honors from the US Air Force Academy in 1974 and went on to fly ten types of jet fighter aircraft throughout Europe, Asia and the Pacific. He is also a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College and the USAF Air War College. As an Air Force pilot, he was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, as well as several other prestigious awards. As a "cold warrior" in Europe he was tasked to fly nuclear strike missions in the Soviet Union, and then in South Korea he flew armed missions along the border of North Korea. Later, Jim became an accomplished flight instructor for both military and civilian aircraft. He served two staff assignments in Hawaii, overseeing U.S. military activities in Southeast Asia. Finally, he served as a diplomat at the American embassies in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Singapore from 1997-2004. He directly supported Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and continued to fly F-15 and F-16 fighters until he retired in 2004 after 34 years of service. Jim lived in seven countries during his Air Force career and visited 30+ more.

Col Tietjen and his wife Valerie live happily in Singapore and Malaysia. They still visit his father who lives in Copiague. Jim feels blessed to have had such a wonderful and exciting life.

**“The greatest achievement in life is to turn your dreams into reality.”**

**- James Michener, *The Drifters***