



*“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”*  
~ John Fitzgerald Kennedy



**From Clockwise:**

Senior year picture at the U.S. Naval Academy.

Receiving diploma in 1975 from Vice President Nelson Rockefeller as the top graduating Marine. United States Naval Academy Graduation, June 4th 1975.

State GOP Central Committee Meeting 2011.

**Images in this story courtesy of Alex Plechash**

## Alex Plechash: *A Lifetime Of Service*

You may know Wayzata resident Alex Plechash as your neighbor, you may know him as a member of the Wayzata City Council. But you may not necessarily know that he is a veteran and has quite an impressive military service record.

"My first inspiration occurred when I was about six years old," said Plechash. "The family that lived next door were all Marines. I looked up to them as role models. As I got older, John Glenn became a hero of mine. He was a Marine fighter pilot and astronaut and served as an inspiration to me."

Plechash grew up in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, Illinois. In high school he played football, was a wrestler, and was on the track team. He began his military career at the U.S. Naval Academy where he earned a degree in Aerospace Engineering and had the distinction of being the number one ranked Marine Officer in his class. In his senior year, he was nominated for a Rhodes scholarship and won a Guggenheim Fellowship for PhD study at Princeton, Cal Tech and MIT.

After graduating from Annapolis, Plechash reported for duty to the Marine Corps Basic School at Quantico where he graduated at the top of his class of 270 Marine Lieutenants. Although deeply drawn toward becoming a Marine infantry officer, he ultimately chose

to go to flight school and earned his Naval Aviator wings and transitioned to the F-4 Phantom II – the most prolific supersonic fighter of all time.

While serving in the Fleet Marine Force, Alex made deployments to the Western Pacific and Asian Theater of Operations and was twice selected for early promotion. He attended the U.S. Navy Fighter Weapons School - more commonly referred to as TOPGUN - and earned designations as an Air Combat Tactics Instructor; Weapons Tactics Instructor; and Fleet Test Pilot. He has logged nearly 2000 hours in jets of various types including the F/A-18 Hornet.

An interesting footnote is that early in his career, Alex appeared in the movie "The Great Santini" starring Robert Duvall when his squadron was used on-location at MCAS Beaufort, SC during the filming of the movie.

Following his military career he went into the world of business and eventually moved to Wayzata. "I like the fact that it is a small town with a distinct downtown area," said Plechash. "It has a character that is unique among all towns in the Lake Minnetonka region and has a reputation for being outsized given its small population."

Plechash is currently in his second term on the Wayzata City Council. Earlier this year, he retired after 16 years as a volunteer firefighter. He serves as a national committeeman representing the state of Minnesota in The Republican National Committee.

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