





February 2023

Volume 2023, Issue 1

Newsletter of the Colorado AFTAC Alumni Association

AFTAC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION COLORADO CHAPTER

Upcoming Events

The annual Sprint 2023 General Membership

Breakfast will be held on 4 March

At the Tin Cup Banquet Room, 50 S. Peoria St.

Breakfast will be served at 0900.

Cost is \$22.00; Children 12 and Under Free.

Pay at the Door — Cash (Exact Change Appreciated)

or Check made out to "Maureen Hampson".

Meet & greet the Alumni & families & friends.

Current and past military & civilians and their

families & friends associated with LRD/AFTAC are

welcome. Fifteen have signed up to date.

Please RSVP No Later Than 23 February To:

Maureen Hampson 303.695.0477

or Email treasurer@aftacco.org

Retiree personnel services available 24/7

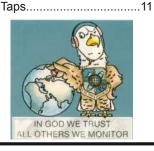
The Total Force Service Center can deliver personnel services to the retiree family via telephone any time and from any location. To



reach a Total Force Service Center agent, call 800.525.0102 and select the menu option for retired military with personnel inquiries.

Note: Expect a long menu of options to select, but you will find some useful information.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



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We're ALL on the Web!

AFTAC Alumni Association-Colorado: www.aftacco.org

Colorado Document Library: www.microbluesoftware.com/DocLibrary/AFTACDocLibrary.nsf

Florida AFTAC Alumni Association: www.aftacaa.us
West Coast AFTACAA-WCC: www.aftacwcc.org

Official USAF AFTAC Web Site: www.16af.af.mil/Units/AFTAC

12 November Fall/Veterans Day Dinner Recap

By Bryce Dunn

We held our annual Fall/Veteran's Day dinner on 12 November 2022 with 17 adults and 3 children signed up. Attendees included Major Nathanial Anderson, Det 45 Commander, Lt. Col Adam Ross, Det 46 Commander and his family.

The Tin Cup staff prepared our prime rib to order and it was excellent. After the meal we enjoyed the 21 minute video of the retirement of Constant Phoenix WC 130W tail number 2667, from a web link provided by our fellow alumni at the West Coast Chapter.

Afterwards, Major Anderson provided us an informal brief on how the Colorado Detachments are doing. Lastly, we held our traditional Fall Dinner fun raffle of gifts provided by the alumni which was enjoyed by all (especially the children!).

12 November Fall/Veterans Day Dinner Pictures

Photos by Sue Dunn





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12 November Fall/Veterans Day Dinner Pictures

Photos by Sue Dunn



12 November Fall/Veterans Day Dinner Pictures

Photos by Sue Dunn



Mark Your Calendars

Colorado Chapter Breakfast 4 March 0900 hrs

Tin Cup Banquet Room, 50 S. Peoria St.

From the Group Leader

By Bryce Dunn, President



2011 Fall/Veterans Day Dinner – Arch of Steel Picture by Ken Behrens

It was a sad thing to report the passing one of our dear members, Earl Pierce.

Earl passed away peacefully to his maker on 29 December 2022 in his home surrounded by family. He will be sorely missed. Earl has been a great friend and one of the pillars of our alumni organization. He was one of 18 original Charter members when the organization was founded by Ben Vlassick in September 1986 (reference Echoes Newsletter, Volume 15 article: Issue 1 – the first Colorado Newsletter). The original 18 were: R.T. Bennett, Richard E. Dalton, Glen Feakes, Lonnie Gibbons, Earnest D. Long, Fred Matthews, Wilbur C. McCallister, Jerry Moxley (MOX), William Osteen, Herbert J. Pabst, Dick Platt, Dennis Ramy, Earl Pierce, Felix Riveria, Stan Schultz, Charles Toner, Ben Vlassick and Ron Zorratti. Earl was our Vice President for over 20 years. While Earl was stationed at the Tech School at Lowry, he taught the specialized administrators that went out to our units around the world. Marianne and family held a celebration of life for

Earl on 26 January which we enjoyed – he was a well-respected, good man. Earl was interred at Ft. Logan after a military ceremony by the U.S. Air Force, the Patriot Riders, a gun salute, the Honor Bell, and Taps. May he rest in peace. The full obituary for Earl is posted on the Florida website AFTACAA.US.

Our next Colorado Chapter activity will be a general membership breakfast on 4 March at the Aurora Hills Tin Cup Banquet room. Details are in this newsletter and in our email blasts. Hope to see you all there.

Also in this newsletter, there is an article about the first Det 45 Commander, Lt. Col Forrest Morgan. It was good talking to him and he agreed to let us put our conversation in the January/February newsletter. We also ran it by Rick Phillips, Col Tom Niquette and Susan Romano (Director of AFTAC Public Affairs) to ensure we did not cross any lines. Hope you enjoy it. FYI, The Detachment's second commander, Major Michael Welham, passed away in 2018. His ashes were sent into space on Celestis Memorial Spaceflight #17 two years ago on 1/24/21 (see Echoes Newsletter 2021 issue 2, "Alumnus in Space").

We wish our Vice President, Darrel Kline, and his wife, Wassna, a fond farewell. Darrel has been our Vice President since Steve Clark took over as President after Jack Smith passed away (Sep 2012). The VP baton was passed from Earl Pierce to him. They moved to a nice rural area in Idaho. Best of luck to you both and thank you for all you have done for AFTAC active duty and the worldwide alumni. In an email Darrel wrote: "For the newsletter if you can pass along that we both will miss the events and especially all of our friends in the Alumni."

A special call out to our Editor/Publisher, Ken Behrens, Treasurer/Membership, Maureen Hampson, and Webmaster Bill Harris for the great support they provide to keep our Chapter going.

Help needed: The Chapter needs a new President and Vice-President to keep our chapter going. I turn 73 this year and do not have any social media accounts (other than WhatsApp to stay in contact with our son & family in Germany). We need a new team that is proficient with Facebook and other social media. Most of the LRD/AFTAC organizations use Facebook and other social media and that is primarily where any potential new members are. We need a fresh look to energize and maintain the camaraderie of the organization. Most of us agree that AFTAC has been more like a family than a mere organization.

From the Group Leader

Continued from page 5

About our organization: The original charter of our organization (identified in the first 1986 Ben Vlassick newsletter) was: "To establish a single-point of contact for Colorado retired and ex-AFTAC personnel, organize willing participants, schedule occasional gatherings and distribute an annual newsletter." Since that original charter, 37 years later, we have evolved to sponsor two annual breakfasts (Feb/Mar & Sept), one semiformal dinner in November and one picnic around June. A few years ago we decided to publish three newsletters during the year like our sister chapters (Florida and West Coast). We also include all AFTAC related active-duty personnel and Civilians as automatic alumni members.

In the past we have also hosted a world-wide reunion every 6 years (our last one was June 2019), but at our current membership level it is doubtful that we can support a reunion. Discussions are ongoing between the three chapters on how to continue with occasional world-wide reunions. The Florida Chapter or "Mother Ship" as new president Ed Lindsay says, put on a great reunion last May with over 70 attendees (see Echoes Volume 2022 Issue 2).

To end this tirade, here in Colorado we are looking at wave #7(?) of snow, looking forward to spring.

Take care & be safe and please stay in touch.

Bryce Dunn, President



News You Can Use

News Flash Lifetime Membership now available for the Colorado Chapter: At the September 2022 Breakfast paid members voted to offer a lifetime membership (identical to the Florida and West Coast Chapters) for \$75. Paid membership includes advance distribution of Newsletters and voting rights at the meetings. Dues and donations are the only income for the Chapter – we use our treasury money to subsidize meals to keep the prices lower, to support the annual picnic, printing and website domain costs, and depending on the health of the treasury, provide donations to support the AFTAC Det 142 seismic display at the Grand Encampment Museum in Wyoming and other noteworthy causes (i.e., the AFTAC Memorial).

Becoming a 99 by Michael Clark was first published in the Echoes Volume 2018, Issue 3 and is now permanently posted on the Florida website (aftacaa.us). This is an exceptional article by Mike, who was inaugurated into the prestigious AFTAC Wall of Honor in 2021. His article was also published in the WCC October 2021 Fallout. Congratulations Mike!

New Charles Toner Book coming out soon. At our September breakfast, Sage nonagenarian Charles (Chuck) Toner announced that he is working on his fourth book. His last book was published on 22 January 2022: *If You Don't Know Where You're From, You Won't Know Where You Are Going* and is available on Amazon (ASBIN: B09RG64D8D).

Stories and history can only be preserved by those from generations before us who take the time to recollect and share the moments that shaped their life. *If You Don't Know Where You're From, You Won't Know Where You're Going* is a memoir from a small town, midwestern-raised boy who enlisted in the Korean War, and his extensive military career that led to experiences around the world. Journey with Charles through the rough times of The Great Depression, life in rural America, deep friendships formed from armed forces camaraderie, what it was like raising a family abroad, and life lessons learned along the way. Insightful and inspiring - this book will take you back to the good ole' days and leave you with sound advice to take away.

There is also some good humor that Chuck injected throughout the book.



A Conversation with the First Det 45 Commander By Bryce Dunn

I had a very enjoyable talk with Lt. Col Forrest Morgan (Retired), on Saturday, 14 January. He was the first Det 45 Commander.

[Prior to Det 45, the unit was known as OL AO, with Major R. Jefferies (deceased), OIC; TSgt W. Bryce Dunn; NCOIC, and SSgt Peter Andrea, Ops NCO. OL AO provided maintenance and limited backup operational support to the AFTAC and AF Space Command missions.]

Colonel Thomas Niquette AFTAC/DO directed Detachment 45 to be activated in 1985 to encompass the existing OL AO responsibilities and to provide 24X7 operational support to the AF Space Command mission.

Proactively, while stationed at HQ AFTAC, then Captain Forrest Morgan, worked with the new Superintendent, Richard Phillips, to create a tailored standardization/evaluation program for the new Det. They also attended the DetCO/ Superintendent class at Lowry.

After Det 45 was formed up with the new staff and operations personnel, the new training and stan eval program was coordinated with HQ AFTAC/DO, TX and AF Space Command and successfully implemented.

[In late 1985, Major Jefferies retired and TSgt Dunn PCS'd to HQ AFTAC Sensor Analysis under Major Hironaga, HQ AFTAC/DOFS. SSgt Andrea stayed on to provide maintenance and operational continuity to the new detachment personnel.]

In 1988, Major (Select) Morgan transferred to HQ Space Command at Peterson AFB.

During his AF career, he continued his education: Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), Maxwell, and a follow-on to the Air Force School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS), where he earned a Masters in Airpower Arts and Science (1994); While at the SAAS, he was selected to attend the University of Maryland where he completed a PhD in Policy Studies (1998).

From there, he was assigned to HQ Air Force, Pentagon, where he worked in the Directorate of Strategic Planning. Morgan spent the last three and a half years of his Air Force career as a professor of comparative military studies back at Maxwell, teaching at ACSC and SAASS.

Forrest retired from the Air Force in 2003.

After his AF retirement, he was hired by the RAND Corp as a senior political scientist, where he did strategy and doctrine research for the Air Force and other Defense clients. He retired from RAND in 2019 in Pittsburgh, PA where he now resides. We reminisced about AFTAC and the Det life and he asked about Colonel Tom Niquette and Rick Phillips. Said to give them his best regards at our next encounter. He currently teaches at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh (one course per semester: Space & National Security and Cyber Warfare).

Forrest said that his family is doing fine, he keeps up with his two sons and 4 daughters and grandkids in various locations. One of his sons was a network engineer in the Air Force and is now a Navy civilian network engineer. One of his daughters has a master's degree in education and is teaching in an international school in Osaka, Japan. She is working on a Doctorate.

I told Forrest that I will send a copy of our newsletter with this article and the links to the chapter websites. He said that when he heard my voice mail on his phone he was very surprised.

It is hard to believe that it has been over 37 years since the Det was activated and is still going strong - accomplishing the mission it was designed to fulfill. Job well done sir!





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Editor's Corner

By Ken Behrens, Editor & Publisher



January issue of *Echoes* is being home office. published in February. have

activities. I logged 181 hours from 01 Jan to 24 Jan. I and party after being cooped up for 2 years. arrive at the National Western complex during the show between 0500 and 0515 and leave around 1400 to 1415. I|I'm really happy that the cold weather seems to be moving usually roll out of bed a 0300 which means that I hit the out and we are getting out of the deep freeze. sack early in the evening. The week prior to the start of looking forward to Spring and warmer temps in a big way. the show is spent setting up my work area, take possession of the leased radio equipment, and install my computer for use in the 16 days of the show, then on the *Echoes* and ideas for articles for publication with proper Monday and Tuesday after the show I tear everything attributation if it is copyrighted material. down put the office into storage, return the leased radio

You are probably wondering why the equipment to the vendor, and reinstall my computer in my

discovered that volunteering at the We had a very successfull show with 702,697 people Stockshow the entire month of January attending the event, the fourth highest attendance in just does not give me time to work on history. We were hurt by the snow storm and cold weather the newsletter and give it the attention it the second week, but it still was 116,000 more than 2022 deserves. For this reason, I am moving which was the first show after COVID. We set new the publication date to February to have attendance records on 4 days out of the 16 which was no interferrance from the Stockshow simply amazing. I believe people were ready to get out

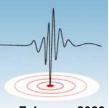
Det 45 Family Day Activities Photos

Photos by Maj Nathaniel P. Anderson

Ed Note: Because of an email problem, the photos for the Det 45 Family Day activities on 30 Jun 2022 were not available for publication in the September issue of Echoes.







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Family of AFTAC Headquarters' namesake visits for first time

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs

Published on the Sixteenth Air Force (Air Forces Cyber) Website 15 Dec 2022 (used by permission)



Singlevich Family Photo by Susan Romano

PATRICK SPACE FORCE BASE, Fla. -- In 2014, the Department of Defense's sole nuclear treaty monitoring center held a ribbon cutting ceremony to officially commemorate the naming of its headquarters after an iconic leader and pioneer of long range detection.

The Air Force Technical Applications Center christened its 276,000 square-foot facility after Walt Singlevich, a giant in the field of atomic energy and nuclear research. Eight years later, 12 of Walt's relatives paid a visit to the center Nov. 22 to learn more about his role during the Atomic Age.

Composed of nieces, nephews, in-laws, and great nephews from New Jersey, South Carolina, Florida and Arizona, the extended family traveled to Patrick SFB for the sole purpose of expanding their knowledge about Walt's legacy.

"This is such a great opportunity for us," said Melissa Singlevich, Walt's niece, "because for the longest time we were told that Uncle Walt's job was highly classified, so we never really knew much about what he did during his time with the Air Force."

Walt began his career in 1944 where he was assigned to the Manhattan Project – the research and development program that produced the first atomic bombs during World War II. After several years in industry, he began working for the Air Force's Office of

Atomic Energy in 1952, where he directed the research for many nuclear tests that took place in the South Pacific and at the Nevada Test Site.

The elder Singlevich ultimately became AFTAC's senior scientist, and throughout the 1980s until his death in 1992, he operated the U.S. Atomic Energy Detection System; directed the work of 850 scientists, engineers, technicians and analysts; and oversaw 20 laboratories in the U.S. and overseas.

While that information briefly describes Walt's role in nuclear event detection, it only scratches the surface. In order to provide the family with a greater sight picture into Walt's considerable contributions to national defense and global security, AFTAC invited Dr. James "Mike" Young to come out of retirement and serve as a visiting docent for the family. Young was AFTAC's Command Historian for 11 years before bidding farewell to government service in May 2022.

"Melissa is spot-on with her assessment," said Young. "Like many other AFTACers of that generation, Walt and his colleagues were never allowed to discuss anything about their work on the Atomic Energy Detection System due to the extreme sensitivity of the mission. The family seemed extremely interested in learning as much as they could about his service."

Family of AFTAC Headquarters' namesake visits for first time

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The Singleviches were given the rare opportunity to spend time in the AFTAC Heritage Room, where the center houses some of its priceless artifacts and historic memorabilia. They also got to see the commemorative plaque dedicating the building to their patriarch, as well as the framed portrait of Walt sitting at his desk, complete with a set of toy trains in the foreground.

"Uncle Walt absolutely loved trains," said Jack Singlevich, Walt's nephew. "When I was about 10 years old, I spent the Christmas holidays with him and (his wife) Aunt Joan. He had an elaborate Lionel train collection set up all through the living room. While I sat and watched, Uncle Walt and his friend and colleague Dr. Uri were on their hands and knees playing with the trains like little kids. It was a sight to behold, and definitely not what I thought nuclear scientists did in their spare time!"

It's no easy feat having a federal building named after an individual. For the Air Force, it requires several layers of higher headquarters coordination, dozens of pages of justifying records and documentation, and ultimately the seal of approval from the Air Force Chief of Staff. Young was the catalyst who made that happen for AFTAC.

"I felt we had an obligation to the memory of Walt Singlevich to dedicate our new facility after him," he said. "It really is a big deal to get the most senior Air Force leaders to sign off on a request of this magnitude, but it was worth the effort because now Walt's family has inherited an important legacy, and they can take pride in knowing the highest levels of the Air Force agreed he was well worthy of this honor."

Throughout the visit, Young discussed some of the major projects Walt was involved with and the importance of that work, especially during the dangerous years of the Cold War. He also confirmed the rumor the family had been hearing about for years – that Walt was, in fact, the original "Roswell Alien."

"I explained to them that back in the day, Walt and his team would launch balloons from Alamogordo Air Force Base in New Mexico to collect radioactive particles from detonations at the Nevada Test Site. The scientists were testing their ability to use this technology to detect secret Soviet nuclear tests, and due to the nature of the work, they had to wear protective gear – full suit, hood, and respirator. On one occasion, a rancher's wife stumbled upon Walt when he was retrieving his large mylar balloon and immediately fainted right there on the spot, thinking she had seen an alien!"

The family got a kick out of that humorous anecdote!

When asked about what they thought about their trip to the nuclear treaty monitoring center, each family member had varying perspectives, but similar sentiments.

"Our visit to AFTAC was the highlight of our trip to Florida," said Patrick Lane, husband to Kimberly, Walt's grandniece. "It was an honor to learn more about our 'famous' relative and celebrate his accomplishments with the base personnel."

Kim added, "I was uncertain what we would see or learn, but the tour was fantastic and so educational! Up until our visit, I had no idea the critical role AFTAC has in our national security, and how its importance continues to grow."

Paul Singlevich, Walt's grandnephew, seemed most impressed with the esteem and reverence the AFTAC workforce has for the scientist.





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Family of AFTAC Headquarters' namesake visits for first time

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"I knew Walt played an important role in government, but I didn't realize it was 'portrait-on-the-wall, name-abuilding-after-him' important! I really liked learning that his portrait gets daily morning greetings from current employees. It underlies the camaraderie among the AFTAC staff – a very special group of people who are devoted to protecting us all."

Before the tour wrapped up for the day, the family posed for a few group photos – one with the aforementioned lobby portrait, and also one next to the plaque showing Walt as the first inductee to AFTAC's Wall of Honor.

"This opportunity exceeded anything I thought would happen," Melissa said. "The time and thought that went into our visit was awesome, and I learned so much about the organization and the importance of the mission. We can't thank the men and women of AFTAC enough for their hospitality and heartfelt welcome."

Paul and Cynthia's son, Spencer, seemed to capture the visit in a single sentence: "It was the best day ever!" (\$)



Taps

The following deceased alumni and family members have not been reported in previous Echoes. Additional information can be found at the Florida website (http://aftacaa.us/) or at the West Coast Chapter (http://www.aftacwcc.org/index.htm).

Name	Birth	Death	State
Anderholm, Nordin Curtis "Curt"	21 Jan 1937	21 Oct 2022	FL
Balentine, Robert A. "Tony"	28 Jun 1943	05 Jan 2023	<u>TX</u>
Dobbins, Carey Leon	01 Oct 1930	17 Aug 2022	<u>TN</u>
Kelchner, Roy J.	09 Sep 1940	18 Oct 2022	FL
Kimball, Earl Jack	13 Dec 1930	30 Mar 2022	<u>TX</u>
Kridle, Robert "Bob"	03 Apr 1930	31 Jul 202	MS
Lemire, Pennie	09 Aug 1940	22 Nov 2022	CA
McCarter, Donald Eugene "Don"	17 Dec 1935	21 Nov 2022	FL
Milligan Jr., Lewis "Lew"	May 1931	21 Sep 2022	<u>CA</u>
Payne, James "Jim"	28 Apr 1934	25 Mar 2020	VA
Petersen, Jesse Leroy "Pete"	05 Oct 1953	02 Sep 2022	FL
Pierce, Earl C.	02 Nov 1932	29 Dec 2022	CO
Pound, Donna	09 Nov 1941	07 Nov 2022	FL
Shader, Rita Jean	07 Jun 1948	09 Nov 2022	NC
Thomas, Edward W. "Ed"	21 Jul 1932	14 Aug 2022	PA
Williamson, Gail	19 May 1937	16 Oct 2022	WI





Ken Behrens, Editor 2153 S. Scranton Way Aurora, CO 80014-5307



Email:

MAIL FLORIDA DUES (\$10 PER YEAR or \$75 Lifetime) TO:

AFTAC Alumni Association P.O. Box 254892 Patrick AFB, Florida 32925-0892

MAIL WEST COAST DUES (\$10 PER YEAR or \$75 Lifetime) TO: AFTACAA-WCC c/o 6605 Sweet Gum Ct. Citrus Heights, CA 95610

For Colorado Membership Application, Change of Address, or Dues Payment

Name:	Spouse Name:
Address:	
City:	State: ZIP:
Telephone No:	Mobile No:

Unless advised to the contrary, personal Information listed above is releasable to otherAFTAC/LRD members.

DUES ARE \$5.00 PER 12 MONTH PERIOD PAYABLE DURING THE EXPIRATION MONTH. (PLEASE check your dues expiration date on the label above or in the email if you receive the electronic newsletter). **Lifetime Membership is available for \$75**. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "Maureen Hampson".

MAIL TO: Maureen Hampson, 1371 S Victor St., Aurora, CO 80012-4341.

Membership & dues questions may be directed to Maureen Hampson at Email Address: treasurer@aftacco.org