



AFA MILE HIGH Newsletter

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY AFA CHAPTER 127



PRESIDENTS CORNER:

COVID-19 appears to be on the decline, Vaccines are being distributed, and AFA Chapter 127 stands ready to get out and mix with our Air Force and Space Force, ANG, Reserve and Veteran Communities

Despite the partial lifting of COVID-19 restrictions our team recently co-sponsored, with the Buckley Top3, a Professional development Program and brown bag luncheon on Buckley... (See page 2)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Our Community Partner Program includes the following businesses in the Mile Hi Chapter service area:

Kearney and Company

Liteye, Inc.

City Power and Light

Colorado Realty NOW

Spring Valley Golf Club

ACES Incorporated

(See Page 3 for Community Partners)

EXPLORATION OF FLIGHT

[Future Focus on new mission of Wings over The Rockies Air Museum.](#)

The popularity of Aviation and Space are growing across Colorado and the Denver Metro area. With an increased emphasis in schools on STEM programs, the Wings Museum has built a program of volunteers to support STEM-related activities in the Denver Metro community.

With an emphasis on STEM support, the Wings Museum will offer an opportunity for K-12 students to learn about aviation and Aerospace science...

(See Page 4)

Presidents Corner

(Continued from page 1) ...at the Buckley Chapel Fellowship Hall. My sincere thanks to MSGT Rashelle Dun and VP for Aerospace education Stephen Gourley for working through all the hurdles to make this an in-person and virtual experience comes to life. The chapter looks forward to supporting other professional development presentations for both enlisted and officers currently serving on Buckley Garrison.

In the meantime, our AFA chapter 127 Secretary, TSGT Damita Stevens, is building the AFA Mile High Chapter website. Our intent is to provide access for our chapter members, Our Community partners, as well as access to the STEM programs in public schools in the Mile High Chapter service area. We are also looking forward to including AFROTC, AFJROTC, and Civil Air Patrol programs as well. While still under construction, take a look at what we have posted at <https://milehigh.afa.org>.

Our next big event is the 16th Annual Charity Golf Tournament, and we want to see you there. To sign up for this tournament, see page 7. See you There!!

Cliff Klein, President, AFA Chapter 127 -The Mile High Chapter

USAF Considering Pilot Training Changes to Curb Flight Accidents

By Rachel S. Cohen

The Air Force is considering changes to its pilot curriculum to curb the rising number of aviation accidents across the service, Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. said Feb. 25. The Air Force saw 72 accidents in fiscal 2020—10 more than in the previous year, Air Force Magazine reported Feb. 23. Thirteen of the 72 accidents last year caused injury or death, according to Air Force Safety Center data obtained by the magazine. Air Education and Training Command is working with major commands that own those aircraft, like Air Combat Command and Air Mobility Command, on a new approach to flight training.

Space Force to Test New Insignia Next Month

Feb. 25, 2021 | By Rachel S. Cohen

Space Force troops will try out new rank insignia for the first-time next month, as the service looks to shake up the traditional chevron design it inherited from the Air Force.

“We’re excited about that, to get feedback and figure out what that insignia looks like, and [new uniforms](#) and all those things coming up later in the year,” Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force Roger A. Towberman said Feb. 25 during AFA’s virtual Aerospace Warfare Symposium.

The new insignia will accompany the Space Force’s fresh take on a [rank and grade structure](#) that took effect at the beginning of February. While officials know some people are disappointed in the decision not to throw the existing ranks out the window entirely, they said what Guardians do matters more than what they’re called.

“We were very deliberate to say, ‘Hey, we’re not going to call them first, second, third class. We’re going to treat them more as one group, where the levels within that group are mostly in the control of the specialists,’” Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force Roger A. Towberman said.

The Space Force landed on Specialist 1, 2, 3, and 4 for its first four enlisted ranks, followed by sergeant, technical sergeant, master sergeant, senior master sergeant, chief master sergeant, and chief master sergeant of the Space Force. Leaders hope that a ladder adds meaning to a Guardian’s career path as they improve over the years.

Towberman indicated that adopting Specialist 1 through 4 as the lowest ranks helps reinforce the service’s model of leveling up as Guardians learn new skills. As troops reach the noncommissioned officer ranks, he argues it also sends a message to start out with sergeants.

“We really wanted to put the strong servant rank of sergeant right there to say, at the first level of supervision, there’s nothing more important than serving your team and their family and loved ones,” Towberman said.

When the new ranks were first revealed, many on social media criticized the Space Force for lacking more creativity. But just because the public wants different changes doesn’t mean it makes sense for the force, Vice Chief of Space Operations Gen. David D. Thompson said.

“There were a lot of people with opinions and ideas and things they thought were important about ranks,” he said. “The idea that there was going to be some deep and significant cultural impact to the Space Force ... was way over-emphasized and, frankly, not particularly supported in analysis.”

People connect first with their service, then to their mission area, he said. They tell others they spent their career as an Airman or an intelligence officer, not as a captain. Assigning Guardians, a completely different slate of ranks—such as one influenced by iconic pop culture like “Star Trek,” as some wanted—wouldn’t change that, Thompson said.

“We made changes that were important, that we need to make, and now it’s important for us to build the culture based on our service, based on our mission capabilities,” he said.

Community Partner Program

For more than 40 years, businesses have been joining the Air Force Association to support both AFA National and local AFA chapters. Becoming a Community Partner is a great way to get your business involved with your local Air Force community. Community Partners are partnership businesses that want to assist both AFA National and the local AFA chapters by becoming involved in community efforts to support the United States Air Force and Space Force.

By forming a partnership with your local AFA chapter, your business will help AFA fulfill its mission to promote dominant United States Air and Space Forces and a strong national defense. Any business or organization can become a Community Partner. There are two options for membership:

Category One (CP I) \$90.00 annually - Business can designate one person to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof.

Category Two (CP II) \$180.00 annually - Business can designate two people to receive AFA Membership and enjoy all benefits thereof. To sign up as a new Community Partner, please use the [Community Partner Application Form](#). Please connect with your local chapter to sign-up for the program.

For questions or for more information on the program, please contact field@afa.org.



Buckley Professional Development Session

The-Mile-High Chapter and Buckley Top 3 hosted a professional development session on 26 February. Held on the last workday of Black History Month, the session involved remarks by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General “CQ” Brown, the first African-American to have that assignment, and a panel discussion on “Diversity and Equity: Building an Ever-Stronger Aerospace Force.” Both the remarks and panel were from the AFA (virtual) Aerospace Warfare Symposium (vAWS) held that week. A special, personal presentation on the historical perspectives was given by Maj (ret) John Lamb from the “Hooks” Jones Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Additional presentations from the vAWS included remarks from General “Jay” Raymond, Chief of Space Operations, and a panel discussion on “The Total Force & World-Wide Engagement” with LtGen Mike Loh, Air National Guard, and LtGen Dick Scobee, Air Force Reserve, and their respective Command Chiefs.

The session was held “in-person” in the Buckley Base Chapel and broadcast to virtual attendees. A recording of the session will be available on the-Mile-High website in the near future. Coffee, water, and cookies were provided for those who attended in person.



Saturday Fly-In at Exploration of flight featured a WWII Navy SNJ-5

Home to Future-focused Aviation and Space Galleries

Pursuing a bold new vision, Wings Over the Rockies has launched construction operations on a unique-to-the-nation campus located on Centennial Airport in Englewood, Colorado.

Exploration of Flight is a 15-acre campus set on one of the busiest general aviation airports in the nation. Where the Air & Space Museum in Lowry will focus on aerospace heritage, Exploration of Flight will be home to future-focused aviation and space galleries offering experiences and exhibits found nowhere else in the world.

Phase 1: Blue Sky Gallery

NOW OPEN, the Blue Sky Gallery is filled with dozens of interactive exhibits and activities designed to excite and thrill while educating visitors about aviation. Watch airplanes, take off, land, listen to chatter from the tower, jump on VR headsets, learn about weather, fly pilot-quality simulators, and even experience flight itself.

Phase 2: Black Sky Gallery

Based around cutting-edge space technology and concepts, the Black Sky Gallery will be an exhibits-based facility.



Phase 3: Entrance Gallery

Connecting the Blue Sky and Black Sky Galleries together, the entrance gallery will provide visitors unparalleled access and views of Centennial Airport and the front range.



AFA Teacher of the Year Program Underway for 2021

STEM teachers shape the future of our nation - introducing students to exciting new concepts and offering a glimpse into what's possible. The very best educators transform learning into a boundless adventure and prepare their classes to explore new frontiers of technology for the good of us all. Along with grants and scholarships, the Air Force Association believes that recognizing those who educate America's youth is an important aspect of what AFA is all about. Every year, AFA's Teacher of the Year program sponsored by Rolls-Royce proudly honors the commitment and achievements of these extraordinary teachers.

AFA's 2020 National Teacher of the Year is Rachael Arens from Omaha Northwest High School in Omaha, Nebraska. Nominated by the Ak-Sar-Ben Chapter, she has taught 9-12th grade AP Environmental Science, Chemistry, Anatomy/Physiology, Biology, and Advanced Horticulture. A lifelong learner, Arens earned a master's degree in Biology, a graduate in secondary teaching certificate, and is now a doctoral candidate in STEM education. She has also held numerous STEM education leadership roles, serving on two state science education boards, serving as a state advisor to the National Geographic Education Society, and developing Nebraska standards and district-wide curriculum for science courses. This year, she was named an Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow, and will work at NASA in the fall. Rachael is one of many exceptional teachers AFA recognizes annually.

For our part, AFA Mile High Chapter has sent out instructions and information to each of the school districts in our service area of Denver metro. Since AFA must make a selection at the local, and national levels, the deadline set by AFA headquarters is April 30, 2021. If more information is needed visit the AFA website at www.afa.org. Instructions and application forms are posted on the website at Education and STEM.



Our AFA Chapter 127 Officers:

President: Cliff Klein

Executive Vice President, Veterans Affairs - Neil Burroughs

Chapter Treasurer: Kenn Bowen

Vice President, Aerospace Education: Stephen Gourley

Chapter Secretary/AFA State Secretary: MSGT Mita Stevens

Vice President Community Relations: Burnett L. "Chip" Deyerle

Children's Hospital of Colorado -Air Evac Turbo Prop visits Fly-In- Exploration of Flight



LITEYE presents the 16th Annual AFA Mile High

Chapter 127 Charity Golf Tournament



Time to register!

Friday, June 25, 2021

**16th Annual
Air Force Association
Golf Tournament**

***Spring Valley Golf Club
Elizabeth, CO***



**Proceeds for the benefit of the Wounded Airman Program,
Buckley Airman & Family Readiness, and the local Air Force Family!**

Sign up to be a tournament sponsor or register now at <https://defensetournament.golfreg.com>

**KEARNEY &
COMPANY**



Also sponsored by:





StellarXplorers Update

The third qualification round in the StellarXplorers (STLX) VII season occurred 4-7 February. Teams from across the US, as well as teams from as far away as Guam and Germany, worked to find the optimal solution for a launch vehicle (rocket booster) to best meet the mission scenario presented. Teams were also required to take a quiz to test their understanding of some of the basic principles of space systems. Most teams performed well; the biggest error we saw was expecting a launch vehicle to lift more mass than it was able.

Semi-Finalists

The top 30% of the STLX VII registered teams advanced to the semi-final round, conducted 25-28 February. The results of the semi-final competition will be factored with the scores from the qualification rounds to identify the top ten teams, which will be invited to compete in the National Finals.

Scores from all three qualification rounds were used for the selection of the semi-finalists. Fourteen teams from California have qualified to advance. **Colorado** and South Carolina qualified 5 each; Florida, North Carolina, New Jersey, and Oklahoma, four. Sixteen additional states qualified 3 or less teams. AFJROTC and CAP teams represent 50 of the 64 semi-finalists.

Teams not advancing to the semi-finals qualify for regional honors. The teams recognized for excellent performance in their region are West Aurora (IL) AFJROTC #1 in the Northeast; James Bynes AFJROTC, Duncan (SC) in the Southeast; **Pueblo (CO) County School in the Central Region**; and San Pedro (CA) High School #2 in the West.

The Program Office offers its congratulations to the regional winners, the semi-finalists, and all the StellarXplorers competitors for tackling this highly competitive program.

National Finals

The National Finals for StellarXplorers VII will be held virtually in mid-April. Each of the 64 semi-finalist teams was surveyed to determine its organization's current approach to COVID-19 restrictions, and the team's ability to travel to, and compete in-person at, the National Finals. About two-thirds of the Semifinals would be unable to travel to Houston, TX, the planned site for the Finals. With this in mind and the projection that the progress of vaccinations will not be rapid enough to provide sufficiently for the safety of the students and educators, the StellarXplorers Program Office has decided to conduct the Finals virtually over the weekend, 15-17 April. An in-person Finals, while much preferred, will have to wait until the current pandemic has subsided in the US, perhaps in 2022 for StellarXplorers VIII.

Registration for the next season, STLX VIII, will open the week of 21 April under the auspices of the AFA STEM Program Office.



StellarXplorer Camp

The AFA STEM Program Office plans to facilitate six sessions of its new StellarCamp this summer. An enhanced, multi-module curriculum of the StellarCamp (“in a Box”) is nearly complete. Six sites have been selected to conduct the pilot sessions of this new version in July, 2021. A beta version, “coaching the coaches” from each of the six sites, is planned for June, the lessons from which will improve the final pilot version.

The six sites are being hosted by Exploration of Flight, Centennial, CO; Oklahoma Career Tech & Education and FAA; Gulf Coast State College, Florida; Virginia Civil Air Patrol; Leesburg; and the Basic Research Innovation Collaboration Center with the National Society of Black Engineers, Arlington, VA.

For more information About StellarXplorers, Contact: stellarxplorers@afa.org

CyberPatriot Program and Summer Camp to be announced:

CyberPatriot is the National Youth Cyber Education Program created by the Air Force Association to inspire K-12 students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future. At the core of the program is the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition, the nation's largest cyber defense competition that puts high school and middle school students in charge of securing virtual networks. Other programs include AFA CyberCamps, an elementary school cyber education initiative, a children’s literature series, and CyberGenerations –a cyber safety initiative geared toward keeping senior citizens safe online. (See <https://uscypatriot.org>)

2021 AFA CYBERCAMP REGISTRATION:

Registration for the 2020 season of AFA CyberCamps is open from February 1, 2021 through May 1, 2021.

Special Bulletin:

AFA Mile High Chapter 127 –Breaking News...

In December, the Air Force Association opened a new membership drive Nation Wide called the “12 Days Of AFA”.

During the 12-day period, Active-Duty Air Force, enlisted or officers, were given a three-year AFA membership at no charge! All that was required was to sign up for the limited membership within the allotted 12 days. During that period, Mile High Chapter counted record number of 69 new members added to our Chapter! We salute our new members for deciding to join to become a vital part of AFA, especially on base and in the Denver Metropolitan area. Welcome Aboard to our newest team members!!



Air Force Association Chapter 127

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TO:

The Air Force Association (AFA) is a 501c (3) nonprofit, professional military and Aerospace Education Association promoting public understanding of Aerospace Power and the pivotal role it plays in the security of the nation. AFA publishes Air Force Magazine, conducts national symposia and disseminates information through outreach programs. To this end we:

EDUCATE the public on critical need for unmatched aerospace power and a technically superior workforce to ensure U.S. National Security.

ADVOCATE for aerospace power and STEM Education.

SUPPORT the TOTAL Air Force Family & Promote Aerospace Education

EMAIL: <https://milehigh.afa.org>

Upcoming Schedule of Chapter Events:

March 16, 2021-Monthly AGA Meeting (ZOOM)

March 27, 2021 - 10:00 Am Quarterly State AFA Mtg- Pueblo, CO

April 20, 2021-Monthly AFA Chapter Meeting- 4:00PM (ZOOM)

May 16, 2021 –Monthly AFA Chapter Meeting – 4:00PM (ZOOM)

June 15, 2021- Monthly AFA Chapter Meeting-4:00 pm (ZOOM)

June 25, 2021 – Annual Mile High Golf Tournament -Spring Valley Golf Club