

ECHOES

Volume 2010, Issue 1

January 2010

Colorado AFTAC
Alumni Association

Colorado AFTAC Alumni Events 2010

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Upcoming Events!

General Membership Breakfast **27 February 2010** **Aurora Hills**
0830 Hours **Golf Course**

Alumni, Wives, Guests and Active Duty
are invited to participate

Annual Picnic **More News Forthcoming**

General Membership Breakfast **More News Forthcoming**

Dinner/Social **13 November 2010** **Aurora Hills**
1730 Hours **Golf Course**

Alumni, Wives, Guests and Active Duty
are invited to participate

General Membership Breakfast 27 Feb 2010 08:30 cost \$12.00 — Buffet Breakfast. Eggs, potatoes, meats, toast, chili, etc., juice and coffee. Please **RSVP** to Jack Smith 303-428-1812 or email coaftrmkt@aol.com on or before 23 Feb 2010. We will collect your money at the breakfast.

Special points of interest:

- * Check the last page for dues expiration date
- * Update, as necessary, your address & EMail

Yearly Membership dues

Are only \$5 per year. Please check your expiration date on your mail label. If you have not paid your dues, please send it in. MAIL TO: BILL SCHMIED, 2078 Kenton St., Aurora, CO 80010. Membership questions may be directed to Bill Schmied BilSchmied@aol.com. Please make checks payable to Bill Schmied.

New TRICARE Fee Shot Down

The last decision made by House-Senate conferees negotiating final details on a fiscal 2010 defense authorization bill late October was to insert language that will rollback an announced Oct. 1 increase in fees charged to TRICARE Standard beneficiaries for stays in civilian hospitals....

No Retiree COLA in 2010

It was higher oil prices last year that led to the largest annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to federal entitlements since 1982. Good thing, too. Lowered oil prices since then will almost certainly block any COLA this year for military retirees, federal civilian retirees, Social Security recipients, survivor benefit annuitants or disabled veterans.

Misinformation Fuels 'TRICARE for Life' Scare

In a Military Update column written a year ago, it described a Congressional Budget Office report that presented options for the new administration and Congress to consider to control federal health care spending. Among 115 cost-saving options in the report, it explained, some suggested raising fees on military retirees and veterans. So far, neither the Obama administration nor the Congress has embraced any of these options....

From the DFAC Retired Pay Newsletter

Retired, Annuitant Pay Returns to DFAS operations.

As many of you know, DFAS is returning Military Retired and Annuitant Pay to government operation

and management Feb 1, 2010. While Lockheed Martin has provided excellent service over the past eight years, an independent analysis determined that the transition could improve customer satisfaction by enhancing flexibility and responsiveness.

DASF is working diligently to ensure a smooth transition of all functions. This change should not affect you. Should you have any questions or experience any difficulties, you may continue to use the same customer service telephone number (800) 321-1080.

TRICARE Extends OTC Medication Project

Week of November 09, 2009

TRICARE's over-the-counter medication demonstration project has been extended by one year. The program allows TRICARE beneficiaries to substitute over-the-counter (OTC) versions of certain prescription drugs. The OTC program, which was scheduled to end Nov. 4, 2009 as TRICARE's new pharmacy contract starts, will continue. However, it will now offer beneficiaries certain OTC medications for a \$3 copayment. The program previously did not require any copayment. To learn more, read the full article on Military.com.

TRIWEST Offers NEW Service

Week of November 23, 2009

TriWest Healthcare Alliance is offering a new lung health service to West Region TRICARE beneficiaries eligible for its Disease Management programs. Beneficiaries suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, can receive extra help for a group of lung diseases that include emphysema, chronic bronchitis and, in some cases, asthma. Eligibility is determined by TRICARE and is based on claims history. Once a beneficiary is identified as eligible to participate in the program, DoD refers the beneficiary to TriWest. Beneficiaries can find additional resources on the TriWest website.

VETS Shielded From Health Care Reform

Military.com November 25th, 2009

The national health reform bill passed by the House last month, and the Senate version to be debated in early December, pose no threat to current health care benefits provided to military families, retired or veterans, say advocates for these beneficiaries as well as congressional staffs.

The House-passed Affordable Health Care for America Act ([HR 3962](#)) states in Section 311 that "nothing" in the bill "shall be construed as affecting" authorities used by the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to provide TRICARE programs or VA health care benefits.



Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora is home to Detachment 045.

Air Force Aid	720-847-6708
American Red Cross	303-343-1294
Auto Registration	<i>NO Longer Required</i>
Base Exchange	720-847-9628
Casualty Assistance	720-847-6123
Chapel	720-847-6411
Commissary	720-847-7100
ID Cards/Deers	720-847-9159
Legal Office	720-847-6144
Operator	720-847-9011
Outdoor Recreation	720-847-6101
Pharmacy	720-847-7455
Retiree Activity	720-847-6693
Ticket/Tour Info	720-847-6853
TriCare for Life	888-363-5433
Veterans Admin	800-827-1000
Visitors Center	720-847-9381



Any Idea Where and When these two photographs of the same place were taken? We know...

November 2009 Dinner/Social



Facing Camera - MSgt Ed Pineda (Buckley AFB) & Vicky Pineda
Foreground with backs to camera: Ken & Susan Kurdziel



Foreground L to R: Barbara Ware, Lonnie Gibbons, Tom Ware, Glen Feakes



Foreground L to R: Cyndie & Ken Behrens, Col Lisa Ann Onaga (AFTAC/CC), Amanda Muller



"Paperwork Never Ends" Col Onaga & Jack Smith (Colorado Chapter President)



L to R: Marianne Pierce, Col Onaga, Lonnie & Ginny Gibbons



L to R: Helen Smith, Monique Miller, Denise Burroughs



Foreground table CW starting at bottom left: Vicky Pineda, Carolyn & Lanny Fahlenkamp, Barbara & Tom Ware (back to camera)



CW starting at top left: Bryce & Sue Dunn, Rick Phillips, Joncee & Glen Feakes, Susan & Ken Kurdziel (backs to camera)



"Command Table" CW starting at top left: Col Onaga, Capt Muller (Det45/CC), Amanda Muller, Capt Donovan Cirino (Peterson AFB), Kimberly Graves (back to camera), Maj Graves (Det46/CC)



"Buffet Line - Chow Time" - too many people to list.



"Socializing before Dinner" - too many people to list.



More Socializing before Dinner" - too many people to list.

Purloined from the POST-MONITOR December 2009

“The Way iT Was ... and The Way iT is”

The mission, over The years Prepared by the Center Historian, Mr. James **Moyers**. Mr. Moyers (he prefers Al) has kindly agreed, as he can find the time, to prepare articles concerning mission entities ... how and when they started and what their status is at this time. Thank you, Al, and we look forward to your participation and inputs.

A Brief Look at the Roots of Aerial Sampling

AL MOYERS, AFTAC HISTORIAN

On February 21, 2007, Air Combat Command managers issued Special Order GB-60 **activating Detachment 1, Headquarters Air Force Technical Applications Center**, at Offutt Air Force Base, near Omaha, Nebraska, effective July 1, 2007. AFTAC leadership requested the activation of this detachment in order to collocate the operators and maintainers of WC-135 aerial sampling equipment with the two WC-135 CONSTANT PHOENIX aircraft stationed there with Air Combat Command's 55th Wing.

Prior to the on-and-off cancellation of the WC-135 program in the 1990s and the inactivation of the Technical Operations Division in 1999, AFTAC's Special Equipment Operators and maintenance personnel had been for several decades co-located with the Air Weather Service operated WC-135 aircraft at McClellan Air Force Base, near Sacramento, California. However, the roots of today's Detachment 1 are entwined with the heritage of long range weather reconnaissance. Weather reconnaissance is arguably as old as military aviation; but, according to the research of Mr. Jerry **White** published in the booklet “The Roots of Army Air Forces Weather Reconnaissance in World War II: A First Look,” prior to World War II there had been little need for long range weather reconnaissance. At that time, military pilots generally didn't fly very far from their base and, with few exceptions, local weather flights were sufficient for military flying operations. World War II changed military aviation roles and the need for long rangeweather reconnaissance. Knowing that Europe's weather was influenced by systems over the North Atlantic, the British and German air forces were flying weather tracks as early as April 1941. On November 28, 1941, General “Hap” **Arnold** signed a memo recommending that long range weather reconnaissance units be organized to assist in the safe delivery of combat aircraft to Great Britain via the dangerous orth Atlantic air route. In the summer of

1942, American B-17 crews began flying dedicated long range weather reconnaissance flights over the North Atlantic. However, the first Air Force weather reconnaissance squadron was not activated until August 21, 1942; and wasn't ready for route reconnaissance until June 1943. By the end of World War II, weather reconnaissance squadrons were assigned to every combat theater. From the necessities of WWII developed the resources and experience to provide the platforms for aerial sampling. During the United States' first nuclear detonation test, Operation TRINITY, conducted near Alamogordo, New Mexico on July 16, 1945, no aeriassampling was conducted. In the summer of 1946, during the second series of nuclear detonations, Operation CROSSROADS, unmanned Army Air Forces B-17 drones with filters fitted on top and bottom of the forward fuselage completed the initial aerial sampling of debris clouds. Most sources credit Lieutenant Colonel Paul H. **Fackler** and his crew as the first to fly a manned aircraft through an “atomic cloud.” On May 15, 1948, during Operation SANDSTONE, the RB-29 Colonel Fackler and crew were flying penetrated the test debris cloud. Subsequently, Air Force leaders concluded that a manned platform would more efficiently obtain aerial samples. In 1946, Army Air Forces headquarters assigned all weather reconnaissance squadrons to Air Weather Service. The nation's military leadership agreed in the summer of 1947 the Air Force was best prepared to conduct long range detection of nuclear detonations. And, by early 1949, Air Weather Service crews flying filter-equipped RB- 29s from Alaska, California, Guam, and Bermuda conducted aerial sampling in concert with long range weather reconnaissance tracks. On September 23, 1949, President Harry Truman announced that the Soviet Union had become the second nation to develop and detonate a nuclear weapon. An Air Weather Service RB-29 crew on a weather track between Japan and Alaska on September 3 had signaled the event with the collection of radioactive debris. It's not clear from the record when uniquely trained sampling equipment operators first accompanied long range weather reconnaissance crews or when the term Special Equipment Operator came into use. Retired Lieutenant Colonel Thomas R. **Richardson** stated to an AFTAC *Monitor* reporter in 1991 that he had flown the 1949 Soviet detonation detection flight “as a master sergeant radar observer performing the duties of what we now call a Special Equipment Operator.” Clearly by the mid-1950s the predecessors of today's SEOs were routinely members of the weather reconnaissance crews. One of these, Technical Sergeant Richard K. **Brown**, was killed with the rest of his crew when the Air Weather Service

WB-50 *Golden Heart* crashed into the Susitna river, near Willow, Alaska, on August 30, 1956. According to Air Weather Service records, Sergeant Brown was listed on the flight crew manifest as an Auxiliary Crew Member. Air Force leadership selected the WC-135 to replace the aging WB-50 in the 1960s. In January 1966, Air Weather Service received the last of ten WC-135s. Soon thereafter, the WC-135 became the primary platform for aerial sampling. As part of the major reorganization of the Air Force in the 1990s, Air Combat Command became the WC-135 operator. Then AFTAC's senior Special Equipment Operator and superintendent of the Current Operations division, Chief Master Sergeant Clark N. **Wilberg**, summed up the role of SEO in the previously mentioned 1991 *Monitor* article. "We often times have considered ourselves in a role similar to a firefighter. We respond to the call knowing that we're putting a certain amount of our lives on the line even though the long-term effects haven't been fully documented." Chief Wilberg might have been speaking today when he summed up the SEO operation rather prophetically for that 1991 article. "Everything we do from now on will have to be balanced against fiscal constraints and the new force requirements we're going to see. We're going to have to do things even smarter." A few years after Chief Wilberg was interviewed Air Force leadership concluded that the WC-135 program was no longer sustainable. The WC-135 program was eulogized at a termination ceremony in 1993; but before it could be permanently delegated to the "bone yard," the program and two aircraft were re-instated. AFTAC's chief scientist, Dr. David F. **O'Brien**, was quoted in a 2000 *Air & Space* magazine article, "At the 11th hour and the 59th minute something happened. If India and Pakistan hadn't [each detonated nuclear explosions], that aircraft would be retired and sitting in the desert outside Tucson, Arizona." Colonel Mark W. **Westergren**, commander of AFTAC from August 2006 to May 2008, officiated the ribbon cutting ceremony opening **Detachment 1** at Offutt Air Force Base on November 27, 2007. As part of the ceremonies, Major Bryan V. Rogers ceremonially assumed command of Detachment 1 having officially been appointed detachment commander on July 2, 2007. These brief, yet auspicious, ceremonies began the latest branch in the long heritage of aerial sampling.



Picture One - Aircraft 667, WC-135W CONSTANT PHOENIX, on parking ramp. Picture Two - Col Westergren, AFTAC/CC, 2006-2008, and Maj Rogers, Det 1/CC, 2007-2009, cut ribbon at "grand opening" of Det 1, 27 Nov 2007 Picture Three - Col Westergren, AFTAC/CC, 2006-2008, passes Det 1 guidon to Maj Rogers, Det 1/CC, 2007-2009, at Det 1 assumption of command ceremony, 27 Nov 2007 Editor's NOTE: As a matter of interest, readers recall that Det 1 is the detachment we will be recognizing at the 2010 SnowBall!!

Remember When

Old age, I decided,
is a gift.
I am now, probably
for the first time in my life,
the person I have always
wanted to be.
Oh, not my body!
I sometimes despair
over my body ...
the wrinkles,
the baggy eyes,
and the sagging butt.

And often I am taken aback
by that old person that
lives in my mirror,
but I don't agonize over
those things for long.

I would never trade
my amazing friends,
my wonderful life,
my loving family
for less grey hair or
a flatter belly.
As I've aged,
I've become more kind to myself,
and less critical of myself.
I've become my own friend.

I don't chide myself
for eating that extra cookie,
or for not making my bed,
or for buying that silly
cement gecko that I didn't need,
but looks so avant-garde
on my patio.

I am entitled to overeat,
to be messy,
to be extravagant.
I have seen too many
dear friends leave this
world too soon;
before they understood
the great freedom
that comes with aging.

Whose business is it
if I choose to read or play
on the computer until 4 a.m.



and sleep until noon?

I will dance with myself to
those wonderful tunes
of the 60's, and if I,
at the same time, wish to
weep over a lost love...
I will.

I will walk the beach
in a swim suit that is
stretched over a bulging body,
and will dive into the waves
with abandon if I choose to,
despite the pitying glances
from the bikini set.

They, too, will get old.
I know I am sometimes forgetful.
But there again, some of life
is just as well forgotten .
and I eventually remember
the important things.

Sure, over the years,
my heart has been broken.
How can your heart not break
when you lose a loved one,
or when a child suffers,
or even when a beloved pet
gets hit by a car?

But broken hearts are what

give us strength and
understanding and compassion.
A heart never broken is
pristine and sterile
and will never know the joy
of being imperfect.

I am so blessed
to have lived long enough
to have my hair turn grey,
and to have my youthful
laughs be forever etched
into deep grooves on my face.

So many have never laughed,
and so many have died
before their hair could turn silver.
I can say "no", and mean it.
I can say "yes", and mean it.

As you get older,
it is easier to be positive.
You care less about
what other people think.
I don't question myself anymore.
I've even earned the right
to be wrong.

So, to answer your question,
I like being old.
It has set me free.
I like the person I have become.

I am not going to live forever,
but while I am still here,
I will not waste time lamenting
what could have been,
or worrying about what will be.
but will continue
to rejoice in what was.

author unknown

Least We Forget

Florence Jackson of Melbourne Florida passed away peacefully at her home on Thursday, November 5, 2009. Florence is survived by her husband, Walter "Jack" Jackson Retired USAF of Melbourne, FL; sons, Timothy and Richard Jennings; daughter, Angela Jennings.

Harold Martin passed away the morning of 15 January 2010 at the Hospice Care Center Wuestoff Hospital in Rockledge of late stage liver failure.

Col. Franz "Herb" Dettmer (Retired), passed away peacefully at home on November 16th, 2009 at the age of 89. Born in Oslo, Norway, he immigrated to the United States with his parents at the age of two. Herb proudly served for 34 years.

James W. Salus CMSGT (Retired), passed on Thursday, August 13, 2009. Jim was laid to rest Wed, 18 Nov '09 in Arlington National Cemetery..

Jack Dorneden passed away unexpectedly November 20th 2009 at his home.

Allen J. "AJ" Johnson died on Monday, 11 January 2010 of natural causes. AJ served in the U.S. Air Force from 1965 through 1971 during Viet Nam stationed at [Det 407].

TRICARE Payment Cut to Hurt Care

Military.com January 27, 2010

TRICARE Payment Cut to Hurt Care

If Congress doesn't intervene, a funding formula will trigger a 21 percent cut in reimbursements to doctors in the Medicare and TRICARE programs on March 1, a group of national organizations warned. That, the group said, will force doctors to drop out of the programs and make it tougher for elderly and military beneficiaries to get health care.



Tax Tips & Information

**A Summary of Federal Tax Law Changes for 2009
- 2017**

Can be found at:

<http://www.military.com/finance/taxes/tt/summary-of-fed-tax-law-changes-2009.html>

TRICARE Offers Seasonal Vaccines

Week of January 11, 2010

TRICARE beneficiaries who are eligible to use the TRICARE retail pharmacy benefit can now receive the seasonal flu, H1N1 flu and pneumonia vaccines at TRICARE retail network pharmacies at no cost. Other vaccines still must be administered in a doctor's office or authorized convenience clinic to be fully covered by TRI-

No Change in TRICARE Contractors

Week of January 25, 2010

Six months ago TRICARE announced that support contractors that run TRICARE's North and South Regions had lost the competition for the next generation of contracts. In November government auditors concluded that the winning bids, for TRICARE contracts were mishandled. TRICARE officials have vowed to take "corrective action." Until then the current TRICARE contracts will be extended through at least March 31, 2011.

Mail Call

November 20, 2009

Dear Jack,

We are writing you a quick note to complement you and your committee, for the planning and organization of a "great AFTAC dinner party!" The party was quite delightful, the food – excellent and the fellowship – very nice. YOU DONE GOOD! Everything was well planned, Ken Behrens' programs were exceptional, Colonel Lisa Ann H. Onaga's presentation was very informative and of course, the quest's dialog and door prizes all helped to make the evening exceptional. So, please do share with your committee members that their efforts were very much appreciated. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and enjoy the days to come. Again, thank you for a great evening.

Joncee and Glen Feakes

10/28/09 — Membership dues in Colorado AFTAC Alumni Association enclosed for the next five years.

Enjoy the Newsletter every time. You're doing a good job of keeping us informed about events. Thanks.

Franklin Mann AFTAC 1955 to Present

Retired 1971

ED. - Glad you enjoy the ECHOES and thanks for your dues payment.

Colorado AFTAC Alumni Association

**AFTAC ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION OF COLORADO**
c/o Jurell Moxley
4721 S. Queen St.
Littleton, CO 80127

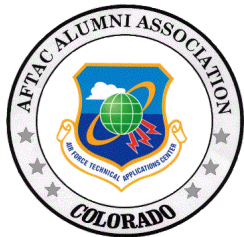
We're **ALL** on the Web!

Colorado Chapter:
<http://www.aftacco.org/>

Florida Chapter:
<http://www.aftacalumni.org/>

West Coast Chapter:
<http://www.aftacwcc.org>

Official AFTAC Web Site:
www.afisr.af.mil/units/aftac.asp



**FOR COLORADO DUES SUBMISSION
OR ADDRESS CHANGE**

Name: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, ZIP: _____

Telephone No: _____

Email _____

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

**TO: Long Range Detection Alumni Association
P.O. Box 254892
Patrick AFB, Florida 32925-0892**

MAIL WEST COAST DUES (\$10 PER YEAR or \$75 Lifetime)

**TO: AFTAC Alumni Association
West Coast Chapter
P.O. Box 3974
Citrus Heights, CA 95611-3974**