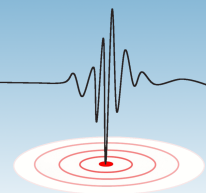


# ECHOES

Past — Present — Future



June 2020

Volume 2020, Issue 2

Newsletter of the Colorado AFTAC Alumni Association

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# AFTAC THE COLORADO ALUMNI CHAPTER

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION WEIGHING THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19, THE COLORADO CHAPTER STAFF HAS DECIDED TO CANCEL PLANS FOR A JUNE PICNIC THIS YEAR.**

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP BREAKFAST ANNUAL FALL/VETERANS DAY DINNER

**ALL CURRENT AND FORMER AFTAC PERSONNEL, SPOUSES AND GUESTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IS NOT REQUIRED TO ATTEND THESE EVENTS.**

### Colorado Chapter Staff

**W. Bryce Dunn, Jr.**  
*President*  
president@aftacco.org

**Darrel Kline**  
*Vice President*  
vicepres@aftacco.org

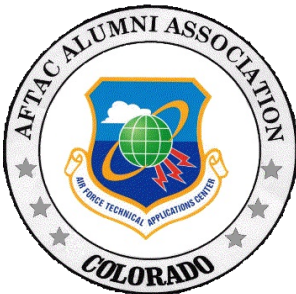
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### General Membership Breakfast 19 Sep 2020

Location Aurora Hills Golf Course Tin Cup Restaurant

### Traditional Fall/Veterans Day Dinner 21 Nov 2020

Location Aurora Hills Golf Course Tin Cup Restaurant

Details will be published



To those in uniform serving today and to those who have served in the past, we honor you today and every day.

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

Colorado Chapter: [www.aftacco.org](http://www.aftacco.org)

Florida Chapter: [www.aftacaa.us](http://www.aftacaa.us)

West Coast Chapter: [www.aftacwcc.org](http://www.aftacwcc.org)

Official AFTAC Web Site: [www.afisr.af.mil/units/aftac.asp](http://www.afisr.af.mil/units/aftac.asp)

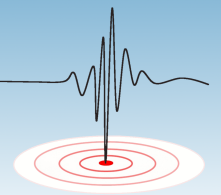
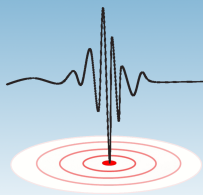
### Retiree personnel services available 24/7

The Total Force Service Center can deliver any time and from any location. To reach a select the menu option for retired military with



personnel services to the retiree family via telephone Total Force Service Center agent, call 800.525.0102 and personnel inquiries.

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



## 2020 February Breakfast

By Bryce Dunn

At the breakfast on 22 Feb 2020 we had 28 attendees: Dave Albers, Ken Behrens & Cyndie Wozniak-Behrens, Paul Detlefson, Bryce & Sue Dunn, Glen & Joncee Feakes, James Gardiner, Lonnie & Ginny Gibbons, Maureen & Alan Hampson, Dave Hursey, Jerre Jung, Larry Johnston, Frank Lepus, Bill Milnor, Rick Phillips, Earl & Marianne Pierce, Bob Sleddek, Bill Schmied, Chuck Toner, Tom & Larry Ware, and Ron Zoratti.

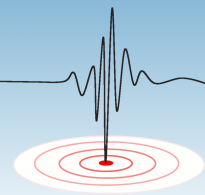
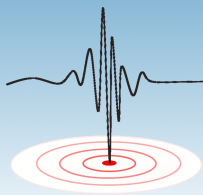
A hardy thank you goes out to Maureen Hampson who volunteered to take on the job of Treasurer because Bill Schmied has decided to retire after many years of excellent service to the Alumni Chapter.

Congratulations were in order for Glen & Joncee Feakes who celebrated their 62<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary today. 🌐

Photos by Ken Behrens



Continued on page 3

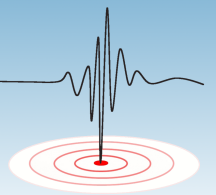
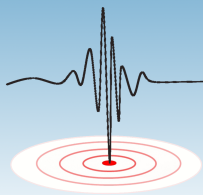


## 2020 February Breakfast

Continued from page 2



**Happy 62<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary!**  
**22 February, 1958**



## Air Force Technical Applications Center Inducts Three Into Famed Wall of Honor

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs // March 17, 2020



Three former members of the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick AFB, Fla., were inducted into AFTAC's Wall of Honor March 11 during a ceremony held in their honor. Pictured above, from left to right are retired Col. Donald Whitney, retired Chief Master Sgt. John T. Horsch, and retired Chief Master Sgt. Larry D. Silhanek. (U.S. Air Force/Matthew S. Jurgens image)

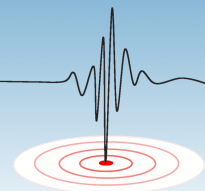
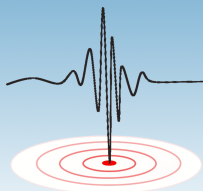
Inductees include retired Col. Donald Whitney, retired Chief Master Sgt. Larry D. Silhanek and retired Chief Master Sgt. John T. Horsch

BREVARD COUNTY • PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA – In keeping with its annual tradition, the Air Force Technical Applications Center here inducted three members onto its Wall of Honor March 11, memorializing their work that propelled the nuclear treaty monitoring center well into the 21st century.

Hosted by Col. Chad Hartman, AFTAC commander, the ceremony was held in the center's Northrup Auditorium, which is named after a 2014 charter member of the Wall of Honor, Doyle Northrup.

This year's inductees include retired Col. Donald Whitney, retired Chief Master Sgt. Larry D. Silhanek, and retired Chief Master Sgt. John T. Horsch.

Whitney began his career as an Air Force meteorologist and weather officer before becoming a pilot in the RC-130 in Vietnam. Upon his return to the U.S., he was assigned to the 9th Weather Reconnaissance Wing at McClellan AFB, Calif., which marked his first exposure to the AFTAC mission.



## Air Force Technical Applications Center Inducts Three Into Famed Wall of Honor

*Continued from page 4*

Throughout his career, he was well immersed into the operational and airborne sides of the center's global responsibilities, which culminated in his direct involvement with AFTAC's role in monitoring the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, prohibiting tests that produced yields greater than 150 kilotons.

On one of Whitney's officer performance reports, his superior officer wrote, "Fostered by his leadership, Don knew the importance of the mission. He is a premier O-6 who excels in a most-demanding job."

"I worked with the best people in the Air Force," Whitney said.

"The mission was important, but the people were more important. I especially loved my time spent at the center's headquarters because I was able to see all the pieces of our work around the world come together."

Silhanek's 30-year active duty career was spent exclusively as an AFTAC technician in various roles worldwide.

Starting out as an electromagnetic pulse technician, he graduated at the top of his class and spent his first assignment in the South Pacific, first in Fiji, then in American Samoa.

He was AFTAC's first logistics manager for the J-technique – AFTAC's system that collected and analyzed electromagnetic pulses – and had the rare opportunity to be selected as a detachment chief as a master sergeant – a role historically held by senior personnel. Upon his retirement from the Air Force, for the next 19 years he continued to employ his vast knowledge of seismic and hydro-acoustic systems as a government contractor, greatly enhancing AFTAC's partnership with the International Monitoring System. "As I sat and took in the magnitude of the ceremony, I found myself reflecting on my career and all the amazing officers and NCOs of all ranks I was lucky enough to work with," said Silhanek.

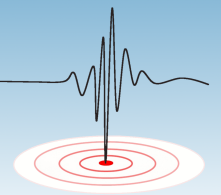
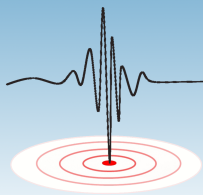
"Seeing my name on the wall alongside my 'elders' who came before me is an incredibly humbling feeling. Thanks to everyone who made this possible."

Horsch enlisted in the Air Force in 1958 and was immediately selected to work as a special instrument technician, specializing in seismic analysis.

According to his supervisors, he had an uncanny ability to recognize potential trouble areas and act accordingly to provide the most reliable data to his superiors, and he was instrumental in the development and implementation of all processing techniques.

As he achieved success in his work, he also progressed as a leader. He made rank quickly, and was rapidly

*Continued on page 6*



## Air Force Technical Applications Center Inducts Three Into Famed Wall of Honor

*Continued from page 5*

put in management positions. He was AFTAC's Inspector General, Logistics Directorate superintendent, chief of an Operations Branch, and ultimately the center's Senior Enlisted Advisor.

One general officer remarked on his performance report, "Chief Horsch is the pacesetter for all other noncommissioned officers in AFTAC—he's truly one of the Air Force's finest!

Horsch was overwhelmed by the outpouring of accolades. "I feel so undeserving of this honor," the retired chief master sergeant said.

"I spent my whole career with AFTAC and they are as much a part of me as members of my own family. I want to thank everyone who supported me throughout my time on active duty and beyond. I couldn't be more pleased."

Addison Mitchell, AFTAC's mission software program manager, delivered the ceremony's invocation and highlighted the contributions of the inductees.

"These men have singularly and collectively played a major role in the advancement of our technologies to detect, locate, identify and report nuclear detonations around the world," Mitchell said.

"We thank them for providing us with breakthroughs that can only be accomplished by personifying the Air Force core values of Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do."

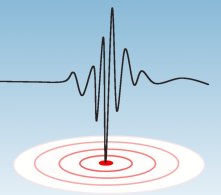
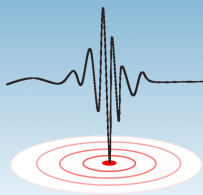
The wall was established in 2015, shortly after AFTAC's headquarters personnel moved into their new \$158 million facility, to recognize individuals who profoundly contributed to AFTAC's global mission.

"When you think about the rich heritage of this organization, you're looking into the eyes of the Airmen whose work makes us who we are today," Hartman said during the ceremony. "The complexity of the work they performed – which was cutting edge at the time – and the new and emerging technologies they oversaw illustrate the innovative culture that is deeply ingrained in AFTAC. We are honored to recognize their immeasurable contributions our global mission."

Selection to the Wall of Honor is no easy feat; AFTAC's Heritage Committee meticulously reviews dozens of nomination packages of former scientists, analysts, engineers and technicians, while only three per year are considered for induction.

The committee looks for nominees who demonstrated great character and whose actions truly discriminated them from thousands of other center employees, both military and civilian.

*Continued on page 7*



## Air Force Technical Applications Center Inducts Three Into Famed Wall of Honor

*Continued from page 6*

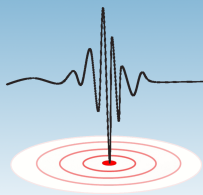
“The AFTAC Wall of Honor not only recognizes the tremendous contributions of our former members who played such a vital role in our historic mission, but it gives our more junior personnel an opportunity to see the giants upon whose shoulders we stand today,” said Dr. Mike Young, AFTAC Historian.

“In the seven decades of our long-range detection mission of monitoring foreign nuclear tests and arms control treaties, many of our Airmen and civilians have pioneered remarkable technologies that have enabled AFTAC to be so successful. This ceremony formally acknowledges their tremendous contributions and leadership.” 🌐



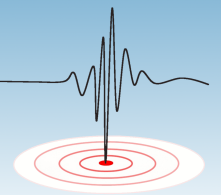
### Mark Your Calendars

- 22 May - Grand Encampment Museum (GEM) Open for the summer
- 13 – 14 June - Woodchoppers Jamboree, Parade, & Rodeo Encampment
- 24 – 26 July - GEM Sierra Madre Muzzle Loader Mountain Man Rendezvous
- 26 July - GEM Living History Day
- Be sure to verify that GEM is open prior to making your trip
- June Alumni Picnic has been cancelled
- 19 September - Fall Breakfast at the Aurora Hills Tin Cup
- 21 November - Traditional Fall/Veterans Day Dinner at the Aurora Hills Tin Cup



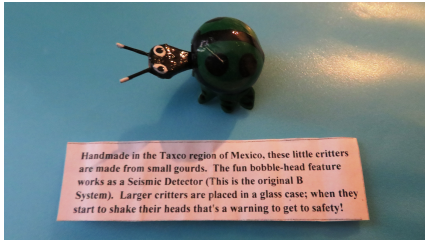
# ECHOES

Past — Present — Future



## From the Group Leader

By Bryce Dunn, President



First of all, I sincerely hope that everyone is staying physically and mentally healthy during these trying times. It has been a challenge for everyone.

Second - Congratulations to the newest inductees to the AFTAC Wall of Honor: retired Col. Donald Whitney, retired Chief Master Sgt. Larry D. Silhanek, and retired Chief Master Sgt. John T. Horsch. They have made so many significant contributions to the organization both as active duty and as alumni. Thank you for your dedication, service, leadership and inspiration to others!

Welcome to our newest Colorado Chapter members, John and Tara Strickland and congratulations on your family! It will be good seeing you again at our Chapter functions.

Speaking of Chapter functions – our 2020 planned functions are the September Breakfast and the Traditional November Dinner. Both events will be at the Aurora Hills Tin Cup.

Sue & I made a trip to Melbourne Florida this January to attend the annual Snowball, visit some friends we made when we were stationed at HQ 1985-1990 and some friends that retired and moved to Tampa from Aurora. This was also a great opportunity to get away from the snow and freezing temperatures in Colorado. We really enjoyed the Snowball and would like to thank some special people for their hospitality: Col Chad Hartman, Ed & Angelica Lindsay, Frank & Edna Calenda, Lou Seiler, Phil Godfrey, Sean & Michelle Ryan, Bob Wiley, Steve & Barbara Herrick, Arlin Massey and everyone else at the event. May God bless you all and thank you for a wonderful time.

Kudos to our Colorado Alumni Staff: Bill Schmied, Treasurer and Membership; Maureen Hampson, Assistant Treasurer & Membership; Darrel Kline, Vice President; Ken Behrens, Editor/Publisher; and Bill Harris, Webmaster. I cannot say enough about you all and how you have kept our Colorado alumni organization informed and active.

A recap on the February 2020 Breakfast – at the time, little did we know about how things would change so drastically in March. At the breakfast I asked for nominees for President, Vice President, Secretary (a new position for our organization) and someone to help Bill with the Treasurer and membership. Maureen Hampson volunteered to help Bill out – Thank you Maureen! Since no one stepped up for President or Vice President, Darrel and I will continue for another year. We will make the call again at our February 2021 breakfast. I have enjoyed being your president since February 2017, you are an awesome group with so many stories and experiences, but Darrel & I would like to step down and give someone else this opportunity.

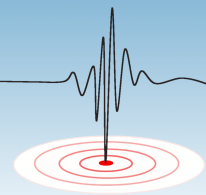
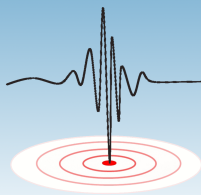
Unfortunately we recently lost some Colorado Sages, our sincerest condolences to their family and friends: RT Bennett, Ernie Freeman and Dick Platt. We will miss them.

We received positive feedback from our Colorado Alumni members to purchase a Brick to support the AFTAC Memorial. With the assistance of a local business, on 5/16/20 we purchased an 8” X 8” Brick with the following:

**To remember those  
Who gave their life  
For our Freedom  
LRD & AFTAC  
LEST WE FORGET  
Colorado Alumni**

Best wishes to you all and stay safe. 🌍





## Editor's Corner

By Ken Behrens, Editor & Publisher

I hope that all of you are well and have avoided the COVID-19 virus. Cyndie and I are coping with the shelter in place edicts and are looking forward to the time when we can once again dine in a restaurant. Take out is so boring!



On a positive note, I have come to appreciate the value of the ZOOM application to keep in touch with the members of organizations to which I belong. The virtual meetings do not feel the same as real face-to-face get togethers, but at least we can see each other and have live conversations.

As is mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter, I want to thank Glen and Joncee Feakes for sharing their 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary at our February breakfast. The breakfast fell on the actual date of their wedding in 1958 that was held at the Little Brown Church in the Vale, Nashua, Iowa. This church became nationally known when Dr. William S. Pitts used it as the inspiration to write the song "The Church in the Wildwood". We were honored to be able to celebrate this momentous event with them.

Please send me ideas for articles to include in the next issue of the newsletter that will be published in September.

Please feel free to send me your critiques and suggestions to improve my work! 🌐

## Welcome to our newest Colorado Alumni Member

**A hearty welcome to Lt. John and Tara Strickland of Colorado Springs!**

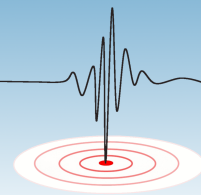
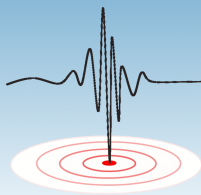
Letter from John:

I enlisted in 2010, started tech school as a 9S100 in October and graduated fundamentals in March 2011 as top grad of my class, and finished remote sensing in April. I was then assigned to Schriever AFB in 2011. I served as a 9S100 under Lt. Col Graves, Lt. Col McLaughlin, Maj. Miller, Maj. Dalton, Lt. Col Curiel and Maj. Ford.

In 2014 I supported the Australian Det for a month as an augmentee. In January 2019 I began officer training school leaving Detachment 46. I became a 2d Lt 13S00 Space Operations officer waiting for training. While in casual status I supported the Detachment's move to CMAFS.

I am still in training to be a 4th Space Operations Squadron SGLS Protected Communications Space Vehicle Officer where I will continue to support the Nuclear Command and Control mission.

My wife Tara, and I have two children. My son was named after Edward Teller. I am enrolled in AFIT right now getting a Master's degree certificate in the effects of nuclear weapons. 🌐



## Mail Call

Lonnie Gibbons

23 February 2020, Via Email - THIS IS AMAZING  
This is really sobering.

Enter the URL below in your browser



Click on a state. When it opens, scroll down to the city and the names will appear.

Click on the name and it should show you a picture of the person, or at least their bio and medals.

Click on full profile. It will give the service history and location on the wall.

This really is an amazing web site. Someone spent a lot of time and effort to create it.

I hope that everyone who receives this appreciates what those who served in Vietnam sacrificed for our country.

The link below is a virtual wall of all those lost during the Vietnam War with the names, bio's and other information of our lost heroes.

Those who remember that time frame, or perhaps lost friends or family can look them up on this site.

Pass the link on to others, as many knew wonderful people whose names are listed.

Vietnam Wall Link:  
<https://www.virtualwall.org/iStates.htm>

LONNIE GIBBONS <[lgib14893@comcast.net](mailto:lgib14893@comcast.net)>

*Ed. Note: The home page <https://www.virtualwall.org/index.html> will give you other options found on the site.* 🌐

## Taps

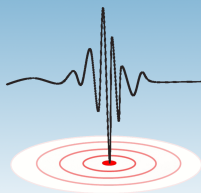
The following deceased alumni and family members have not been reported in previous *Echoes*. Additional information can be found at the Florida website ( <http://aftacaa.us/> ) or at the West Coast Chapter ( <http://www.aftacwcc.org/index.htm> ).

Name	Birth	Death	State
Bennett, Richard T. "RT"	29 Mar 1938	21 Jan 2020	CO
Chamberlain, Virginiaia Nann	1926	25 Feb 2020	CA
Clawson, Thomas "Tom"	23 Nov 1943	29 Jan 2020	FL
Freeman, Ernest "Ernie"	25 Jun 1933	12 Apr 2020	FL
Henning, Kathleen M. F.	1965	5 Mar 2020	FL
Isbell, Martha Anne	1958	7 Mar 2020	
Jones, Bernadine Strain	30 Jan 1922	10 Feb 2020	MN
McGettigan, Gloria		6 Mar 2020	
McLaren, Robert Douglas "Bob"	1938	17 Mar 2020	VA
Payne, Jim		25 Mar 2020	FL
Platt, Richard "Dick"	1940	23 Apr 2020	FL
Schuster, Charles "Chuck"	14 Aug 1931	8 Nov 2019	FL



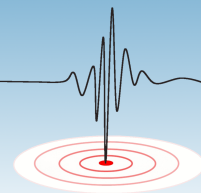
## Get Well Wishes

We send get well soon wishes to Sue Schmied, Bill Kimbrough, Bill and Gem Harris, Randy Vlassick who have been ailing. 🌐



# ECHOES

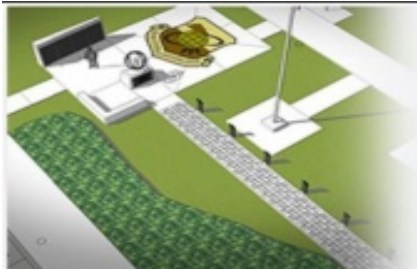
Past — Present — Future



June 2020

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## AFTAC Memorial Corporation



### AFTAC MEMORIAL CORPORATION



Order online  
<https://brickmarkersusa.com/donors/aftacmc.html>

The Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC) Memorial is a project managed by the AFTAC Memorial Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The mission of the organization is to design, construct and maintain a memorial on the AFTAC HQ campus located at Patrick AFB, FL. This memorial will be dedicated to all those who lost their lives in service of the AFTAC mission since its inception in 1947, and will provide a solemn location to honor and remember these patriots.

The Memorial consists of a path leading to a sculpture, a memorial monolith and a bench. The path, comprised of bricks inlaid with the names and messages from contributors, heads west, passing our nation's Flag and chasing the sun, for the sun never sets on the AFTAC mission, leading to the memorial monolith. Across the top of the monolith is inscribed: "This memorial is dedicated to all those who have given their lives in support of the Long Range Detection mission, and the Air Force Technical Applications Center. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten."

Below this will be inscribed the names of those who have passed while supporting the mission. The monument imbues the solemn dignity by which all AFTAC members, past and present, honor their sacrifices.

The AFTAC Memorial Corporation is a Florida not for profit, 501(3)c corporation. It is not part of the Department of Defense or any of its components and has no governmental status.

Colonel Frank Hall  
Hq PACTOA  
Jul 1982 - Jul 1985

\$150 - 4x8 Brick     \$50 - Mini Replica

3 lines of text, 20 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation)


\*Replicas may only be ordered with purchase of full-size brick.

Michael Steskal  
Dedicated to those  
who have passed  
in service to the  
AFTAC mission  
since 1947

\$300 - 8x8 Brick     \$50 - Mini Replica

6 lines of text, 20 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation)


\*Replicas may only be ordered with purchase of full-size brick.

**Your Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail form and payment to:**

AFTAC Memorial Corporation  
P.O. Box 372012  
Satellite Beach, FL 32937

**Please make checks payable to:**

AFTAC Memorial Corporation

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



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

**For Colorado Dues Submission or Address Change**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Unless advised to the contrary, personal information listed above is releasable to other AFTAC/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.)  
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO "Bill Schmied".  
MAIL TO: Bill SCHMIED, 2078 Kenton St, Aurora, CO 80010-1310.  
Membership questions may be directed to Bill Schmied at Email Address: [treasurer@aftacco.org](mailto:treasurer@aftacco.org)