

The Sijan Sentinel

Volume IV – 2026 November 2026

WELCOME TO AFA SIJAN CHAPTER #125

President: Dave Geuting
Vice President: Ed Duffett
Secretary: Gayle Divine
Treasurer: Bruce Hall

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Fellow Sijan Chapter Members,

Greetings to all of you on a beautiful Fall day. The cooling temperatures have not slowed down our Sijan Chapter activities. We are still actively supporting our Airmen, our Guardians, and our community. Many of these events will be highlighted in articles later in this newsletter.

In September, I traveled to the AFA National Convention representing the Chapter and the State. There I collected an Aerospace Education Achievement Award and the Exceptional Service Award in Veterans Affairs for the Chapter. We were also recognized as an example of AFA in Action for planning and conducting the Colorado AFA State Awards Banquet. Later in the month, I was invited to attend a local Civil Air Patrol Cadet meeting at the Air Force Academy. This interaction has started a collaboration between our Chapter and these young adults. I also attended my first meeting of the Pikes Peak Veterans Council. This is part of our effort to reinsert ourselves as a vital member of the local veteran's community.

In October, my wife Caprice and I attended the ribbon cutting/kickoff for the newest chapter of Blue Star Families. This group is dedicated to helping military spouses. Our Executive Vice President Ed Duffett and I also supported rocket launch days for various school districts in the Colorado Springs area. In addition, Sijan Chapter bought the rockets and engines for the District 38 launch.

Ed and I also met with the Mt Carmel Veterans Service Center to examine ways we can collaborate more closely with them. This meeting resulted in Ed and I volunteering at the Stand Down for Homeless Veterans, serving as escorts for the veterans through the various stations. At the end of the month, Ed and I also supported the Arnold Air Society/Silver Wings Regional Conclave Banquet at the Air Force Academy on the same evening that Bruce and Jennifer Hall, our Treasurer and VP of Communications, attended the Front Range Air Force Ball.

I highlight all this Chapter activity not only to show you what your Chapter is doing, but also to let you know that we need our membership's help in supporting all these community outreach activities/events. We have events coming up like Wreaths Across America and Stockings for Kids that also need membership support. There will be more details on these and other events forthcoming, but if you can spare some time to help out, let us know. We want all 5,000 of you to play a role in our Chapter and appreciate your time and support.

See you at an event soon.

Dave

DAVID C. GEUTING, Colonel, USAF (ret)
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Helping Those Who Served Before



Our Sijan Chapter was honored to support the 28th Annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down organized by the Mt Carmel Veterans Service Center at Weidner Field in Colorado Springs on October 20, 2026. The event brought about 70 partners together in the community to provide services and resources for those in need who have served.

Along with Airmen, Guardians, and Soldiers from local military installations, Sijan Chapter members worked one on one with veterans in need by serving as escorts and guiding them through the various stations. Veterans Support Organizations, local businesses, and the Veterans Administration (VA) provided services, hygiene kits, clothing, medical and dental care, food, and housing support.



Commitment To Our Future



The AFA demonstrated its strong Association Partnership with the Arnold Air Society (AAS) & Silver Wings (SW) in support of the Region VIII Regional Conclave held at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) 23-25 October 2026. The conclave, dubbed FALCON, kicked off with a mixer on Friday night where AFA Rocky Mountain Regional President and Colorado State President Linda Aldrich along with State Vice President and Lance P. Sijan Chapter President Dave Geuting joined the National Director of AAS & SW Executive Director Jimmy Canlas in welcoming cadets from Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska, and Utah. Cadets enjoyed pizza (what else?) and mingling with their peers from other states.

Saturday was filled with business meetings in USAFA's Arnold Hall; guest lectures by Major General Erica Austin, Mobilization Assistant to The Judge Advocate General at Headquarters USAF; and Dr. Damon Coletta, Professor of Political Science at USAFA; and a tour of USAFA's 98th Flying Training Squadron. The day ended with a banquet at USAFA's Falcon Club, featuring Guest Speaker Colonel Max Renner, Commander of Cadet Group 3 at USAFA and awards for outstanding work done by AAS squadrons. AFA was represented by Aldrich, Geuting, Mel Harmon Chapter President Mike Sumida, and Sijan Chapter Executive Vice President Ed Duffett.

FALCON was a resounding success and helped cement AFA's commitment to the next generation of air and space officers and advocates.





AFA National Convention – Motivating and Educational

-- By Linda Aldrich



The 2026 Air & Space Forces National Convention, September 12-13, was another banner event for our Colorado Chapters! The Saturday evening Awards Banquet welcomed Colorado to the stage multiple times as is evident by all of the award certificates presented to Lance P. Sijan, Robert E. Huyser, Mile High and Mel Harmon chapters. All Colorado chapters received Aerospace Education Awards, with Robert E. Huyser and Mile High receiving two of the four National Aerospace Excellence Awards, the best in their size categories. In the Exceptional Service Award Categories, Mile High was recognized for Communications and Arnold Air Society/Silver Wings Integration; Lance P. Sijan won for Veterans Affairs, and Mel Harmon scored in the Advocates to Inspire Military Service (AIMS). The evening was topped off with the announcement of the top chapters in the Nation – Mel Harmon for Small Chapter and Mile High for Extra Large Chapter. There is no doubt that our Chapters represent an amazing group of volunteers from our state that did all the work to earn these awards with their dedication to the mission.

Our Individual Outstanding AFA Volunteers, Neil Burroughs and Brent Sawicki from Mile High and Dave Geuting from Sijan received Medals of Merit and Cliff Klein from Mile High received the Exceptional Service Award. Congratulations to all of you! Elections were held for various positions at the National level with the following results: Janelle Stafford, Vice Chair of the Board Field Operations; Linda McMahon, National Director, East Area; Bill Harding and Paul "Pablo" H. Weseloh, National Directors at large.

Saturday Morning offered workshops on various topics to include *Heritage and AIMS Activities* with Mike Sumida (Mel Harmon) as a primary presenter, *Working Smarter* featuring Brent Sawicki (Mile High), and *Advocacy and Aerospace Education*. All delegates chose the workshop that they wanted to attend and that would benefit their home chapter the most with the shared information. Business sessions on Saturday and Sunday included multiple updates from AFA leadership, strategic plans, and briefings from Civil Air Patrol, Arnold Air Society and Silver Wings. Thanks to our Colorado delegates, in person and virtual, for your attendance and for sharing the information with your home chapters.

In addition to the enjoyment of the recognition received by Colorado, the National AFA Convention is motivating and educational, reminding everyone of the valuable contributions AFA volunteers make for advocacy, education and support to our Amazing Airmen, Guardians, and their families.



Presenting the award was (L to R): AFA Board Chair Kathleen Ferguson; Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force John Bentivegna; Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force David Wolfe; and AFA President & CEO Lt. Gen. Burt Field, USAF (Ret.). -- Photo by Jud McCrehin/AFA

Following the National Convention, the very first Pitsenbarger Full Measure Award (FMA) was presented at the Air, Space and Cyber Conference to Sergeant Momomi M. Atkinson of the 68th Cyberspace Squadron, Schriever Space Force Base. Sgt Atkinson was nominated by and is an active member of the Lance P. Sijan Chapter. The Pitsenbarger FMA honors one Community College of the Air Force Pitsenbarger Award winner with a $3,000 grant for use toward a bachelor's degree. Sgt Atkinson was selected as the inaugural recipient of the award, competing against Pitsenbarger Award winners from AFA chapters nationwide. Sijan Chapter President, Colonel (ret) David Geuting said, "In 2026 alone, Sgt Atkinson served on our Teacher of the Year selection committee and participated in our Air Force JROTC presentation engagements. While presenting the Outstanding AFJROTC Cadet Award, Sergeant Atkinson served as a role model for the students, showing them what they could achieve just a few short years after graduation."

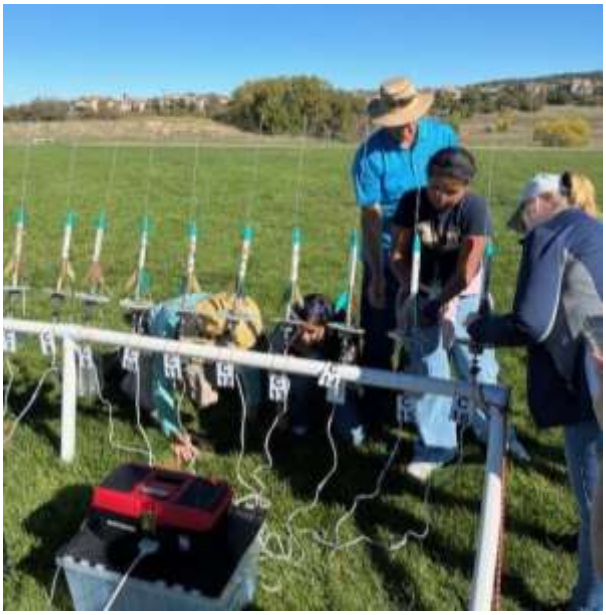
Supporting and Empowering Military Families

In support of improving the quality of life for Airmen, Guardians, and their Families as part of the AFA United Forces & Families program, on October 2, the Lance P. Sijan Chapter attended the ribbon cutting and official launch reception of Blue Star Families Chapter #15 at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs. Founded in 2009 by military family members with the military family in mind, Blue Star Families empowers military families to thrive by connecting them with their civilian neighbors - both people and organizations - to create strong communities of support. The event was attended by representatives from numerous military service organizations and military offices across the Pikes Peak region.

The ribbon cutting was performed by, among others, Senator John Hickenlooper; Congressman Jeff Crank; and General Stephen Whiting, Commander of United States Space Command.



Out and About with the Sijan Chapter



5th Grade Rocket Day



More than 4,000 Colorado Springs area fifth graders participated in the 5th grade rocket day launches this fall. Sijan chapter President, Dave Geuting; Executive Vice President, Ed Duffet; Secretary, Gayle Divine; and former President, Caty Rozema all had a BLAST helping out with this hands on STEM event!





Out and About with the Sijan Chapter!



Front Range Air Force Ball



The Sijan chapter was a sponsor for this year's Front Range Air Force Ball hosted by USAFA Top III. Sijan Treasurer, CMSgt (ret) Bruce Hall and VP of Communications, Jennifer Hall attended and were in for a big surprise when Col. Brown honored Chief Hall as the longest serving airman, calling on him for the ceremonial cake cutting.



Executive Vice President spoke to the Coronado High School Space Force JROTC on October 28th. He encouraged them to explore their career options in space and let them know how the AFA could support them in those efforts.

COMING UP!

Air & Space Forces Appreciation

(formerly our quarterly birthday parties)

Wednesday, November 18th, 4:30 – 6:00 pm

Every quarter we visit The Hub on Peterson SFB to show our appreciation for our airmen and guardians and the community that supports them. We'll have free cake for all and a gift card drawing for everyone with a birthday during the quarter.

Join us as we say "thank you for your service", and to find out more about what we do.

COMING UP!

Nov 7, 11:00 am





Our present and our future are grounded in our past. Come join your local Air & Space Forces community along with all those who are currently serving and those who will serve in the future to show your support and celebrate those who served and sacrificed in the past.

Veteran's Day Wreath Laying

Nov 11, 11:00 am

Colorado Springs Memorial Park

Be a part of this annual ceremony honoring veterans and their service to the nation as we place a wreath at the Air Force Memorial.



December 19, 2026

National Wreaths Across America Day

Join millions of volunteers and supporters who will gather to Remember, Honor and Teach at over 5,500 participating locations in all 50 states, at sea and abroad.

Sponsor a wreath for only $17 and gather with us on December 19th to place a wreath on every hero's grave.

Click the QR Code to donate or register.



Adopt or Shop

Your AFA Sijan chapter is partnering with Colorado Springs Early Connections Learning Center in support of their Stockings for Kids program.

Adopt 2 for 1! Thanks to a generous donor who has committed to a matching grant, your donation of only $125 will be matched and will fill TWO stockings, providing much needed essentials like books, coats, shoes, and a craft or toy. Our goal this year is $5000 to sponsor all 40 military kids.

Donate today!

Shop! We're looking for 20 (or more) volunteers to join Sijan chapter leaders to shop for the kids we adopt with our member's support. You will be provided a list of items and all the information needed choose the right gifts. Bring your family, bring your friends. The more the merrier!

Location for shopping: Walmart at Woodmen and Powers

Date/Time: Nov 28, 29, and Dec 1; multiple times available

Click here or scan the QR Code to register and sign up for your favorite time.

HOMEFRONT Military Child of the Year – Nominations Due Dec 1



Help us find Operation Homefront's next award recipients!

WHAT

Operation Homefront's Military Child of the Year Awards celebrate and recognize the tremendous achievements of outstanding military children.

WHEN

The Awards Gala will be held in Washington, D.C. in April 2027 during the Month of the Military Child.

WHO

Each year, hundreds of military teens (ages 13–18) are nominated by a parent, teacher, mentor or guardian. Candidates for the Military Child of the Year Awards demonstrate resilience, strength of character, and the ability to thrive in the face of the challenges of military life.

RECIPIENTS

Military Child of the Year Award recipients receive a $10,000 cash award, a laptop, and are flown with a parent or guardian for a 3-night stay in Washington, D.C.

Nominations accepted September 2 to December 1, 2026

For more information, scan the QR code or visit **operationhomefront.org/mcoy**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER

Become a Community Partner!

"Becoming a Community Partner is a great way to get your business involved with your local Air Force and Space Force community! For more than 40 years, businesses have been joining the Air & Space Forces Association to support both AFA National and local AFA chapters.

Not only does a Community Partner receive all the benefits of an AFA membership, such as a variety of product and service discounts, insurance programs, and much more, but the partner will also receive a wooden plaque with a date medallion and a window decal. These will show customers and clients that your business supports our troops!"

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.

Want to know more? Check out https://www.afa.org/membership/community-partners

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! Do you like golf? Birthday parties? Races? Ball games? Corn hole? ***Send us a note, stop by an event, or join us for our monthly leadership meeting.***



VOLUNTEER! Whether one hour one time or one hour a week, your AFA Sijan Chapter has opportunities for involvement in multiple areas. Areas of most need are in support of veterans and government outreach, community partnerships, and programming/events.

CHAPTER AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

- ***To contact us or to be added to the Lance P Sijan chapter distribution list, please email us at: lancepsijanafa@gmail.org***
- ***To update your contact information, email National AFA at membership@afa.org. Note that the chapter cannot change your email, mailing address, or other contact information. It must be done on your National membership profile.***
- ***To join or renew your AFA membership, visit www.afa.org***
- ***For details on AFA member benefits, visit http://www.afa.org/afa/memberbenefits***

Make sure you continue to receive our communications. You don't want to miss out on $1 ice cream sundaes, free birthday cake, or any of the other exciting events we have in the works. Update your contact information today. Email National at Membership@afa.org.

While we can update our mailing list, Sijan representatives cannot update your official AFA contact information. You must contact National.

Do you know someone who would like to know about our events but isn't a member yet? We're happy to add them to our mailing list. Have them send a request to us at LancePSijanAFA@gmail.com.

CONTACT US!

Sijan Chapter Website:

www.lancepsijanafa.org

AFA National Website:

www.afa.org

Email

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The AFA is an independent, nonprofit, civilian education organization 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. It sponsors professional development seminars and recognizes excellence in the education and aerospace fields through national awards programs. AFA presents scholarships and grants to Air Force active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members and their dependents, and AFA awards educator grants to promote science and math education at the elementary, secondary, and high school level. Nationally, AFA has more than 100,000 active members. The AFA National Website is WWW.AFA.ORG

The Lance P. Sijan Chapter is one of the largest chapters in AFA, with nearly 3000 members. The Sijan Chapter, one of four AFA Chapters in Colorado, primarily focuses on support to the Colorado Springs area, including Peterson SFB, Schriever SFB, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the USAFA. The AFA Sijan Chapter is proud of our rich heritage and strong support for the Colorado Springs Air & Space Forces community. We pride ourselves on active support to the local Colorado Springs "Air & Space Forces Family," providing approximately $40,000 and thousands of volunteer hours in support annually!