

Letter to AFAQBC Members from President Brad Bernero

Happy Thanksgiving to the members and friends of the Air Force Academy Quarterback Club of Denver!

One more game to complete another successful regular football season for your Air Force Falcons. Successes include winning the CINC Trophy for the first time since 2016. To add to that, we have proven on the field that we have the best football program in Colorado, which we have known for years. We also will be playing in a bowl game again this year with the opportunity for another 10 win season. Another impressive effort for the Falcons and their staff. Still proud to be a Falcon fan!

As for the Club, we ended a challenging year, given that we have a few different dates and locations for the lunches. We had a great opening meeting hearing from Offensive Coordinator Mike Thiessen at Valley CC. We held meetings in September at Maggiano's and heard from Brett Briggeman, AFA sports reporter for the Colorado Springs Gazette; Baseball Coach Mike Kazlauskys, and heard about the stadium renovation from AFA Athletics Corporation CEO Nancy Hixson along with Hockey Coach, Frank Serretore. In November, we heard from AD Nathan Pine at Valley CC again, and finished with AFA Women's Soccer Coach Laura Busby at Meridian Golf Club. Good speakers all and a successful year. We thank Tim Mahan and Matt McGahey at the Academy for their help in arranging for the Academy speakers. Thanks especially to the speakers who give their time to drive to Valley and give us their thoughts and perspective.

Perhaps because of the challenges in various location and dates, we did seem to have a steady attendance of around 30 people per meeting. The board had agreed earlier that this level of attendance is continuing to decline and is a concern about the viability of the club in the future. It is difficult to attract speakers from the Academy to take their time to come to us to speak for such a small audience. We have decided that we need to make some changes to the club to continue.

Your Club Board met after the last lunch on November 17th to discuss how to continue our Club next year and how to propose we meet next year. We will still expect that we will have only limited opportunities to use Valley Country Club next year, perhaps not at all. We have also agreed that we enjoyed the lunches and facilities at Maggiano's, but we would have to expect that there would be an increase in the cost of the lunch to continue to meet there too. Meridian was a good location and cost, but has some limitations to availability during golf season, and the parking was a little harder. But we still plan on trying those same three locations in our proposal for next year, with a preference for Maggiano's.

The board discussion concluded with several suggestions on how to proceed in 2023 and recommend the following:

- Our goal for 2023 is to have regular scheduled meetings on the first Thursday of each month in April, May, June, August, September, October and November.
- The lunches will be social gathering for our friends and may or may not include speakers from the Academy. We will ask for speakers to come and talk to the group, and we may be able to hear from some Academy related speakers, depending on their schedules and availability.
- We will attempt to keep the lunch costs at or below \$30 per person.
- Club dues will be \$25 per family for 2023, a reduction from \$55 and \$65 in prior years.
- We will continue to send funds to support the AFA football by sponsoring the years Most Valuable Player Award at Graduation, at the cost of \$650/year. We support further gifts to the Academy in general and would do so, if funds are available and make sense for the QB Club.

December 2022

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While this would be a change in the way we meet, we continue to want to accomplish the following:

- Invite new attendees and interested parties to join the Club. We continue to need to focus on Club growth in order continue in the future beyond 2023.
- We still would like to count on our current members to bring friends that would be interested and encourage them to join the Club as members. We also desire to expand our communications to reach a broader audience in Douglas County and the South Denver Metro area, including the AOG and other AFA grads in the area.
- We would welcome and encourage joint meetings arranged by the Air Force Athletics staff in the South Denver Metro area for larger groups with invitations to all ticket holders and parents in Douglas, Arapahoe, Denver and Jefferson Counties.

We want to know if you would support the club in 2023 with the changes as outlined. I would welcome any of your comments and thoughts on these conclusions. I would also be happy to field any further suggestions on how to make our Club grow. Please feel free to call or email me at 303-829-8833 or bradbernero@gmail.com , or send your thoughts and level of support back to Clay Hodge.

The AFA Quarterback Club of Denver was founded in 1962, so we have been able to make it to our 60th anniversary, a goal the board made a few years ago. A lot has changed in that time, and we have outlived many clubs like ours.

Thanks for your attention to this update and newsletter. As mentioned, please give me or Clay your thoughts.

Go Falcons!

Brad Bernero, President, Air Force Academy Quarterback Club of Denver