Air Force Association
Waterman-Twining Chapter 316 Meeting
Virtual via MS Teams
September 26, 2026

**Call to Order**

- Chapter President Bill Yucuis called the Waterman-Twining Chapter of the Air Force Association Meeting to order at 10:01 AM EST on Saturday, September 26, 2026, virtually via teleconference on AFA MS Teams.

- These Chapter officers were virtually present. **For note: the Chapter Executive Committee (EXCOM) includes all elected and appointed Chapter officers.**
    - Bill Yucuis President
    - Joseph Muhlberger Vice President
    - Teri Weide VP Education
    - Emily Farkas VP ROTC liaison
    - Mike Lezaun Secretary
    - Shannon Boyles USF AAS CC (EXCOM member)
    - Gage Spencer VP Communications
    - Other AFA members in attendance Virtually: EJ O'Brien, Bao Nguyen, Susie Lezaun, Gryphon Borgeas-Beach, Kobe Whitlock, Liam Doyle, Emmanuel Nyeh, Madison Yates, Eric Schmeiser

**Chapter President Welcome and Goals**– Bill Yucuis
Chapter President welcomed attendees and shared chapter goals:

- Promote AFA Strategic Advocacy Objectives with community leaders.
- Promote AFA STEM education goals throughout the community.
- Support airmen, guardians, and their families stationed at MacDill AFB, cadets at USF AFROTC, and local Civil Air Patrol (CAP) units.

**Chapter Accomplishments –** Bill Yucuis

- Congressional Veteran Commendation – Emily Farkas

- AFA State Individual Awards
    - Chapter Member of the Year Joe Muhlberger
    - Exceptional Service Citation Joe Muhlberger
    - Exceptional Service Citation Mike Lezaun
    - Exceptional Service Citation Emily Farkas
    - Exceptional Service Citation Edward "EJ" Obrien
    - Exceptional Service Citation Nathan Grafton
    - Exceptional Service Citation Vito Demalteris
    - Special Citation Teri Weide

- AFA State Chapter Awards
    - Exceptional Service Award Best Single Program, 35th Anniversary of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm

- AFA National Individual Awards:
    - Exceptional Service Award Emily Farkas
    - Medal of Merit Joe Muhlberger
    - Medal of Merit Mike Lezaun

- AFA National Chapter Awards
    - Exceptional Service Award Heritage, 35th Anniversary of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm

- USF Arnold Air Society
    - RCON / NATCOM support
    - Mutual Support: Meetings and Volunteering

- AFJROTC: Awards Ceremonies

- MacDill Support
    - Monthly Newcomers Briefing / Spouse Meeting
    - Monthly FTEC
    - Pitsenbarger Awards

- Education Support
    - Teach In and school visits
    - Chapter Teacher of the Year
    - Hillsborough STEM Leaders Conference

- Advocacy
    - Tampa Bay Defense Alliance
    - Tampa Chamber of Commerce

**Chapter Officer Elections** – Bill Yucuis

- Current officer nominations were as follows:
    - **President**: Bill Yucuis
    - **Vice President**: EJ O'Brien
    - **Secretary**: Mike Lezaun
    - **Treasurer**: Emily Farkas

- Appointed Chapter Position:
    - VP for Education: Teri Weide
    - VP USF Arnold Air Society Liaison: Emily Farkas
    - VP Communications: AAS Cadet Gage Spencer

- The floor was opened for more nominations from the virtual membership. There were none, so the Slate was elected unanimously.

**Chapter Elected Officers** are as follows:

- President: Bill Yucuis
- Vice President: EJ O'Brien
- Secretary: Mike Lezaun
- Treasurer: Emily Farkas

**Proposed Budget** - Bill Yucuis

The 2025 Chapter Budget details are as follows:

- Budget Overview (past year)
    - Starting Amount as of October 2025: $8506.65
    - Current Amount as of September 2026: $8329.27

- Anticipated Income: $2000 (AFA National Support)
    - Increase due to adding 1000+ Mission Members (discussed later)

- Planned Expenditures: $2800
    - USF AFROTC, including Arnold Air Society: $1300
    - Stewart Middle School: $500 (John Glenn Space Club support)
    - Operations Desert Shield/Storm Event: $500
    - FTEC at MacDill: $500 (Professional Award)

- Discussion on some amounts that were tabled later in the agenda when the events will be discussed.
- Emily Farkas motioned for budget approval, and EJ O'Brien seconded it.Then budget was approved unanimously.

**Membership Overview**– Bill Yucuis

Membership Summary (as of September 17, 2026)

- Total Membership: 2170
  - Life Members: 665
  - Mission Membership: 1318
  - No Membership (???): 64
  - 3-Year Members: 31
  - 1-Year: 138; includes Arnold Air Society

- Bill Yucuis explained the Mission Membership initiative by AFA National. Bill mentioned that if you go to the Chapter website (https://waterman-twining.afa.org/) and look under Latest News and select National Convention. You can find a detailed explanation about AFA's membership initiatives.

  - AFA hopes to have 1 million members in the next 5 years. Stage 1 is called Mission Membership, which is free 1-year membership. Mission Members receive such benefits as Daily Bulletin, Webinars, Tech Expos, and Shopping Discounts. Essentially, they receive all the benefits of a paying AFA member except for access to the *Air & Space Forces Magazine.*

  - In March if 2026, AFA added any person which AFA had contact information as a Mission Member. Between March and September, the number of AFA members jumped from 150,000 to 370,000, and it is growing. As a result, the Chapter membership jumped from about 1,200 members to over 2,100 members. Th goal was for AFA Chapters to contact all these new members and try to get them involved. Unfortunately, Chapters, including our Chapter, does not have an easy, or inexpensive, way to contact members via email. AFA National puts restrictions on the number of emails which can be sent daily using the recommended "afa.org" email system. For example, Bill Yucuis attempted to contact all Chapter members recently and it took almost two weeks to just send them. AFA is aware of this issue and is working on a solution.

  - The Chapter's only current method of receiving money to run the Chapter comes from AFA National Chapter Support Payments, which is based on the number of Chapter members. In case you are not aware, AFA is a 401c(3) Education non-profit, which means ANYONE can become a member. To join, a person just goes to afa.org and under the Membership Tab is Mission Membership.

**2027 Planned Activities** – Bill Yucuis led an overview of current and planned Chapter activities. You can review all the current Chapter Activities by going to the Chapter Website https://waterman-twining.afa.org/ and look under the Chapter Activities Tab. These activities shown below are either enhancements or newly proposed activities.

- Arnold Air Society (AAS) interaction: Both AFA and AAS promotes increased interactions between the two organizations. Our Chapter is already active, but we both would like to increase them.
    - Volunteer Opportunities: This should be a two-way street. The Chapter will highlight volunteer opportunities and AAS will let the Chapter know if they have opportunities for Chapter members to volunteer at their activities.
    - Unit Visits: My goal is to have one chapter member visit the unit each month to talk about their experiences in the Air Force.
- MacDill Activities: Chapter Officers recently met with the new MacDill 6ARW/CC, Col. Eley and 6ARW Command Chief, CMSgt Ottenwess, to discuss Chapter support. On initiative we agree on was to have our Chapter coordinate Quarterly events, shown below.
    - Quarterly Professional Development: The Chapter will look to provide speakers to provide professional development for 6ARW personnel.
    - Spouse Events: The Chapter has worked with the 6ARW Family Support Center to provide some spouse support, but we are looking to increase this. The 6ARW is in the process of forming a MacDill Spouse non-profit organization and we will be part of that organization.
- Advocacy: Chamber of Commerce (CoC): There are actually several CoCs around the Tampa area. Emily Farkas is currently a member of the Tampa CoC and is about to become the head of their Military Affairs Committee. We have also recently been talking with the South Tampa CoC, and we hope to connect more closely with them this coming year.
- STEM programs: Great American Teach In (November 19, 2026, in Hillsborough County); AFJROTC, CAP.
    - Every school district has a Teach In date, where they invite community members to talk to students about their experiences. For example, I have done a Teach In with Stewart Middle School for several years and last year, I decided to change to Morgan HS, which is new school near me. I will talk about AFA STEM programs. If anyone elects to do this this year, let me know so I can include that in our Chapter activities, which we reported to AFA State and National, as one requirement to receive AFA National Support Payments.

- This year, our goal is to reach all 12 AFJROTC units in our Chapter area and have increased CAP contacts.

- Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm Event – Friday, March 5, 2027

    - This past year, the Chapter cosponsored this event with the Veterans Council of Hillsborough County (VCHC) and it was very successful, as evidenced by the Chapter receiving AFA State and National Awards for the event. We have decided to make this an annual event and again work with VCHC. You will start seeing more information in the future.

- New Funding Sources: Community Partners

    - For the past several years, the Chapter has run a deficient Budget. While the $8,000 we currently have in our checking account, along with the AFA Support Payments, should allow us to continue for several more years, it is desired to find other sources of income.

    - One method is to contact people or companies and ask them to support specific items. For example, the Chapter spends about $500 to provide a Profession Airman Award at the monthly FTEC. It would be nice to have someone sponsor this cost. Last year, the Chapter spent about $1300 to support the Desert Shield event, including $800+ for the Award we gave out. We were able to do this because we had applied for, and received, an AFA Heritage Grant which covered all these costs. This grant is a one-time grant, however, so we will need to find ways to cover costs this year.

    - Another way is to request individuals or companies to become AFA Community Partners. You can find details at https://www.afa.org/community-partners/. When someone signs up, the Chapter receives half. I know of other Chapters who ask people like their dentist, or car dealers, etc. to become a Community Partner.

President Bill Yucuis adjourned the meeting at 10:54 A.M. EST.

Recorded by Mike Lezaun, Secretary on September 27, 2026 with updates from Chapter EXCOM.

These Minutes were approved unanimously by the Waterman-Twining Chapter EXCOM on October 5, 2026.