



Reaching summit during a recent Rocky Mountain High / Spring Canyon photo



Ministry news, events, and resources  
to keep you informed and...

# CONNECTED

MAY 2021

You might be wondering—what exactly is *Connected*? It's a biannual newsletter for OCF members designed to keep you informed of ministry news, events, and resources.

Most of the content in each *Connected* will be time-sensitive information, and whenever possible, we'll make sure you're linked to the right place to get more information, register for an event, or ask a question.

In turn, we hope you'll share the content in this newsletter with those who might be interested.

If you have any questions about *Connected*, don't hesitate to reach out to me at [josh.jackson@ocfusa.org](mailto:josh.jackson@ocfusa.org).

—Josh Jackson  
Director of Communications

BY JOSHUA SCHUMACHER  
COMMUNICATIONS INTERN

For the past year, the OCF conference centers at White Sulphur Springs and Spring Canyon have both experienced surprising blessings despite the various shutdowns and setbacks caused by COVID-19 restrictions.

"God is at work whether there is COVID or not," said Col Kim Hawthorne, USAF (Ret.), the Center Director at Spring Canyon. "And we have found that God is still moving in mighty ways at our conference centers, even in spite of COVID."

The arrival of the shutdowns during the spring of 2020 brought an end to both conference centers' plans for their normal summer programs and events. Nonetheless, both locations have overcome many of the

challenges the pandemic has created.

"The idea was that we were going to maximize all the ministry that we could allow to take place," said Col Scott Fisher, USAF (Ret.), the Executive Director of OCF. "The bottom line is what didn't change was that ministry was taking place—ministry happened constantly, and we never shut down the ministry."

Both conference centers, in lieu of their normal summer programs, opened their properties for vacations and camping opportunities for individuals and families. White Sulphur Springs set up the property for those interested in camping, while still offering horse rides and other outdoor activities and keeping the kitchen open for those staying on the property.

Spring Canyon adopted a similar

**Story continues inside**





## Summary of Spring 2021 OCF Council Meeting

BY COL DALE HOLLAND, USAF (RET.)

The OCF Council met at White Sulphur Springs in early April for a weekend of prayer and fellowship. A rich time of Pray, Discover, and Obey (PDO) set the tone for the weekend, enabling quality and quantity discussion for a host of topics.

The OCF Council approved the FY22 annual budget, following an exciting presentation of goals and priorities by the Executive Director. In addition, the Council approved our Strategic Framework 2.0, which provides strategic direction for FY23-27 with increased emphasis on local leaders and individual OCF uniformed serving members.

The Council also refined and approved our OCF distinctives as: Member Led, Dual Calling, and Lifetime Fellowship. Recognition and thanksgiving were offered to God for His blessing to OCF, which includes our facilities.

Good stewardship of His blessings led the Council to approve completion of the 65 percent engineering design work on the old hotel at White Sulphur Springs (Harrison House) to enable future discussions of the possible way ahead for that facility.

Finally, the Council came together in a sweet time of fellowship to honor our outgoing Executive Director couple, Brig Gen David and Lori Warner, USAF (Ret.), and officially welcome Col Scott and Christie Fisher, USAF (Ret.), who came onboard in 2020 after the Warners retired. Thank you for your leadership and faithful service.

## Continued from the front

strategy and opened up their facilities for private bookings. Hawthorne says they found themselves blessed with a significant number of first-time guests who came with their families to enjoy the Spring Canyon experience for a week, even while still obeying social-distancing guidelines.

Donations helped alleviate the financial pressures created by the lost revenue from the cancellation of the original summer plans. "Seeing how God has provided through donations has been amazing," said Hawthorne, who added that this past year has been one of the best years for donations that Spring Canyon has ever had.

White Sulphur Springs experienced a similar increase in donations. "It was such an encouragement to see how the Lord sustained us through that," said LTC Paul Robyn, USA (Ret.), the Center Director at White Sulphur Springs. When revenue from guests came down, giving went up, and the financial losses turned out to be just a fraction of what they could have been.

The downtime from the normally scheduled summer programs has also provided the opportunity for the conference centers to get around to projects their staffs typically wouldn't have the opportunity to address.

"We want a lot of people here," Hawthorne said, "but if guests can't be here because of COVID, then we're going to turn a little bit of

lemon into lemonade."

These extra "projects" have also included increased family and vacation time for the staff, who usually don't have the opportunity to enjoy the seasonal holidays and breaks the same way the guests do.

The shutdowns also expanded the outreach of some of the conference centers' ministry efforts.

"Most military innovation comes when you're at a period of greatest conflict," Fisher said. "In the same way, at this time of conflict, it forces you to think outside of a box that you normally would think in."

For example, the conference centers recorded many of the scheduled speakers and posted those videos to the OCF website and both centers' websites, where they could reach individuals who hadn't planned on visiting either place before programs were cancelled.

With summer sessions about to start, both conference centers have begun to increase their operations as restrictions loosen. Spring Canyon is looking at bringing in close to its normal capacity for guests this summer, as is White Sulphur Springs. Both Hawthorne and Robyn encourage people to come to the conference centers and enjoy the experience that is waiting for them there.

"The doors are open, and our staff are standing by wanting to serve. So please come," Fisher said. "The best thing that the members can do is come and be in fellowship with one another. So come, allow us to love on you. Come, allow us to minister to you—to serve you."

### CONNECTED TEAM

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 comms@ocfusa.org or 800-424-1984.  
 OCF's mission is to engage military leaders in biblical fellowship and growth to equip them for Christlike service at the intersection of faith, family, and profession.

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## Ministry News

### Simpsons return to OCF as Regional Coordinators

Col Larry and Bobbie Simpson, USAF (Ret.), are back in the OCF saddle as the volunteer Regional Coordinator couple to the Pacific Northwest! This region includes Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California.

Many of you know about the sincere hearts, spiritual maturity, and wealth of experience the Simpsons bring to this new role. They spent 14 years serving as OCF Field Staff, are fully trained marriage and family advocates, and thrived in a very full Air Force career.



Their vision is to develop, grow, and sustain relationships with OCF Area Coordinators, Local Leaders, members, chaplains and ministry co-laborers. You can contact them via email at: [pacificnorthwest@ocfusa.org](mailto:pacificnorthwest@ocfusa.org).

## Ministry Events

### There's still time to register for summer programs

Depending on when you're reading this, summer sessions may already have started, but don't let that stop you from signing up to attend a summer session this year.

>Spring Canyon: [bit.ly/celebrate-2021](https://bit.ly/celebrate-2021)

>White Sulphur Springs: [bit.ly/rnr-2021](https://bit.ly/rnr-2021)

### More events you might be interested in

The OCF website maintains a list of events at both conference centers and throughout the ministry. Get more info at: [bit.ly/ocfevents](https://bit.ly/ocfevents)

>**Rocky Mountain High Outdoor Leadership Program, 5 June-31 July:**  
at Spring Canyon, 8 sessions throughout the summer.

>**Aspentime Retreat, 24-26 September:** at Spring Canyon, a weekend getaway filled with opportunities for Christian fellowship, fun, and vibrant teaching.

## Video Resources from RightNow Media

**Text: RIGHTNOW OCF to 41411**

OCF has partnered with RightNow Media to offer thousands of online videos available to you, your family, and your fellowships—24/7/365. If you already have a RightNow Media account, we encourage you to still sign up so that you will have access to the OCF library, which has videos that are aligned with integrating faith in every aspect of your life. After you activate your OCF account, download the app for your devices.

## Births, Weddings, Taps

### TAPS

**Jim Broadbent**, 27 December 2020; husband of Pam Broadbent, Meridian, ID.

**COL Michael Carkhuff, USA (Ret.)**, 1 January 2021, husband of Carole Carkhuff, Newport News, VA

**CAPT Clarence Carter, USN**, 14 May 2020, husband of Lea Carter, Granger, IN.

**Maj Gen Frank Casserino, USAF (Ret.)**, 4 January 2021, husband of Gloria Casserino, Colorado Springs, CO.

**Capt Richard Cox, USAF (Ret.)**, 27 December 2020, husband of Nancy Cox, Longmont, CO.

**CAPT Leonard Dodson Jr., CHC, USN (Ret.)**, 29 September 2020, Monticello, FL.

**COL John Hocker, USA (Ret.)**, 19 August 2020, husband of Barbara Hocker, Bethesda, MD.

**Esther Hubbard**, 1 June 2020, wife of LCDR James Hubbard, New Holland, PA.

**Barbara Meredith**, 6 March 2021, wife of COL James Meredith, USA (Ret.); mother of Cindy Wesley, Monument, CO, and LTC James Meredith II, USA (Ret.), Colorado Springs, CO.

**Lt Col Virgil Ridings**, 22 March 2021, husband of Barbara Ridings, Frankfort, KY.

**Dr. Bob Spoede**, 16 March 2021, father of Paula Halvorson, Manns Choice, PA, and David Spoede, Schellsburg, PA. Dr. Spoede authored *More Than Conquerors: A History of the Officers' Christian Fellowship of the United States*, a book on the first 50 years of OCF.

### SEND US YOUR BWT

Births, Weddings, Taps are published as space allows. To submit a BWT, email [karen.fliedner@ocfusa.org](mailto:karen.fliedner@ocfusa.org).





## Have you accessed your videos?

Through our partnership with RightNow Media, OCF members can view thousands of Bible study videos. **Details inside.**