



Senior Advisor Call to Action!!! By Steven Zalesky, SMSgt (ret)

At the beginning of the year our chapter executive committee set a goal to recruit and retain 800 members. As of 28 July, we've recruited or retained 218 members! Last year efforts resulted in 644 members, so we have our work cut out for us the second half of the year and **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** We need help with recruiting activities and membership drives throughout the year, so please step forward and volunteer to assist our chapter. Membership is a vital link in making sure



our association remains viable and represents the interest of our members. Quite simply...membership is our strength on Capitol Hill. Our chapter has the reputation in being one of the best in all of AFSA, and that is because of members like you. We are the 5th largest AFSA chapter with nearly 2,300 members and the association as a whole has over 114,000 members. *Continued on Page 2.*

Message from Chapter President By SSgt Nicole Brown



Wow! Another great quarter for AFSA Chapter 872! We have been busy and each of you as members should be proud to represent this fantastic organization! Words cannot express the passion I have for this Chapter and AFSA organization as a whole.

I think the biggest challenge our Chapter faces is membership. Remember, as a member of this organization as a voice on Capitol Hill, each and every one of us is a 'recruiter'. Remember when we give up our time selflessly that we take a minute to 'speak AFSA'- let those that you may raking leaves next to, pushing a wheelchair, filling a food box, or even sitting next to a co-worker know about what AFSA does for you and your families and what it does for them.

What other organization do you know that will help maintain our existing allowances and contribute to discussions that lawmakers better understand our needs as a military? The more members we have in the organization, the better our leaders on Capitol Hill will listen and fight to improve our quality of life. *Continued on page 4.*

- Recruiting and involvement are the keys to a successful AFSA Chapter
- AFSA's Involved in the community!
- VA issues & staying connected to your Congressmen & Senators

Five Healthy Habits for Financial Well-Being

By Jill Pietrusinski, First Command

At a time of continuing economic uncertainty, military families are proving themselves significantly more conscientious than other Americans in scrutinizing their household finances — and in seeking out professional financial assistance.

Military families making at least \$50,000 a year are more likely than the civilians to actively monitor their bank and credit card statements, pay stubs and investments, according to the First Command Financial Behaviors Index®, which reports on research into the financial behaviors, intentions and attitudes of American families. That attention to detail is just one of several healthy habits you can adopt. Check out the last page for five tips to help improve your financial well-being. *Continued on page 4.*

Senior Advisor Call to Action!!! cont. from page 1

“Be a successful AFSA recruiter a member by socializing what AFSA does for us.”

We need your support in jump starting our membership recruiting program and help spread the word of AFSA. If each member could recruit one and retain one member, our chapter could easily eclipse 3,000 members. You can be a successful AFSA recruiter if you are willing to talk to friends, peers, and coworkers about the benefits of being a member by socializing what AFSA does for us. What's the worst thing that can happen to you? Perhaps an individual will say, "Yes." I recently spoke with a SNCO about joining, and he immediately wanted to leave. It happens. The good news is that sometimes an individual will say, "Yes, sign me up."

As a reminder, if your membership is about to expire we ask that you renew your membership through our chapter instead of using the form that AFSA mailed you. Our chapter receives a small financial rebate for each new member we recruit or retain and each dollar we earn determines how much we can give back to the base and local community. The credit for your membership must be linked to someone assigned to our local chapter. If you have a highly motivated Airman or NCO that wants to get actively involved with the chapter just have them contact me.

**We are on the web!
Visit us at
www.AFSA872.org**



Habitat For Humanity By SMSgt Lee M. Ayers

Habitat for Humanity is an international program designed to provide a decent place to live for everyone and relies on local volunteerism. Master Sergeant Brian Pettaway is AFSA's POC and has arranged three volunteer events this past quarter, with assistance from Master Sergeant



Eduard Dedousis and Staff Sergeant Devin Scott. Sergeant Scott led seven volunteers to package 16,000 Tulips that were donated from local companies and Sergeant Dedousis led nine volunteers to distribute the flowers to over 350 residents in



An AFSA member installs a corner brace for a Habitat for Humanity framing project



the local community. Sergeant Pettaway led a team of 7 volunteers to attach a porch roof, build and install interior walls and prepped a basement for wall installation, the first of five homes under renovation in the Spanish Lakes community.

Plans & Programs *By SMSgt Lee M. Ayers*

It has been another great quarter for AFSA Chapter 872 Plans and Programs! We began the quarter with nine sponsored programs, but have gained three new ones: The Fisher House in Jefferson Barracks, Relay For Life and Vets Caring for Vets. Our 12 programs collectively supported 68 events with 389 volunteers, contributing 1,757 volunteer hours and directly boosting the morale of 2,272 members of the surrounding communities! Thank you to all our program leads and volunteers for the tremendous support you have put forth on behalf of our chapter. Please enjoy just some of the highlights from our projects during the last few months.

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is the oldest and largest national organization that is composed of and represents local, community-based Senior Nutrition Programs in all 50 states and U.S. territories.

There are 5,000 Meals on Wheels programs that provide well over one million meals to seniors who need



them each day. AFSA Chapter 872 supports local elders two weeks out of every month and is the backbone of the program in the Scott AFB surrounding area. As AFSA's main POC, Master Sergeant Hyman Hendrix solicits volunteers and schedules deliveries to numerous residences throughout the local community. This past quarter, he coordinated 70 volunteers and scheduled over 30 food deliveries to 515 elderly community members. These consistent volunteer efforts represent the deep relationship AFSA maintains with the local community and strengthens the positive image our military personnel have built in the eyes of the nation.

St Louis Dragon Boat Race

Dragon Boats are a 22-person Chinese style boat, consisting of 20 paddlers, 1 drummer and a steersman. The St. Louis Dragon Boat Festival raises money for Signature Foundation's Operation Family Help initiative, which provides financial assistance for healthcare related needs. AFSA's Chapter 872 Team Captain for this year's event was Master Sergeant Karie Cumba; she led 45 volunteers from our organization, as well as other Airmen, family members and personnel from both the Army and Navy. This year's gathering featured live entertainment, food vendors and a Drummer's Parade (most of the drummers were in costume). Our volunteers donated over 40 hours through team meetings, boat maintenance and the Kids Zone (face painting, obstacle course and bounce houses).



Exceptional Family Member Program

The EFMP Easter Egg Hunt and Dinner was held on 16 April at the Patriots Landing Community Center and led by Technical Sergeant Devon Cherry.

Thirty-two volunteers contributed a total of 124 service hours. There were five activities, from face painting to amazing crafts, pictures with the Easter bunny and lots of Easter eggs. The children had a blast looking for over 800 Easter eggs, while AFSA volunteers boosted the morale of 170 participants! Thank you so much for everything to ensure this event was a complete success! Finally, thank you all for your continued participation and care towards EFMP events. The EFMP program will not be a success without your willingness to dedicate your time and efforts for its activities. Once again, thank you for all for being compassionate! AFSA volunteers continued support will keep bringing smiles and joy to special needs children and their families.



Air Force Sergeant
Association Chapter 872



Addressing VA issues! "Long wait times for veterans seeking medical care erupted into a scandal this year, which led to the resignation of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki, calls from both parties to fire officials who covered it up, the termination of bonuses for senior officials, and reforming the entire department." In light of inordinate wait times for care and documented VA misrepresentation on these wait times, House and Senate VA committee leaders are hoping for a corrective bill. Legislation pushed by Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., would cost an estimated \$50 Billion per year (according to the Congressional

Budget Office) Sanders says he wants to use "emergency spending" to pay for the legislation. House-proposed legislation would be funded through offsets in other government spending programs. The major expense of either bill would result in letting veterans experiencing long waits or who are not near a VA medical clinic get care in non-VA facilities.

According to a VA press release, "New burial regulations effective now will allow the VA to automatically pay the max amount allowable under law to most eligible surviving spouses quickly and efficiently, without a written application. "Under former regulations, VA paid burial benefits on a reimbursement basis, which required survivors to submit receipts for relatively small one-time payments that VA generally paid at the max amount permitted by law.

We would like to say thanks and keep up your support; utilizing CAPWIZ to know the issues and alert your representative. AFSA is continuing to see success on Capitol Hill for our AD, Reserve, Guard, veterans and retired. With elections upcoming I urge you to check out MEGA-vote and learn how your representatives are voting on military issues. So you can make an informed decision when you vote.

Message from the President cont. from page 1

During this quarter, we had the unique opportunity to meet with Congressman Enyart's District Director, Ms. Renysha Brown, and his Military Legislative Liaison, Mr. Willy Lyles. SMSgt Sanabia, Mr. Zalesky, and I got to emphasize AFSA's interests on legislative issues and /or bill. We also got to express our gratitude for Congressman Enyart's constituent and voting to repeal military retiree COLA reductions earlier this year. Stay tuned as MSgt Timothy Carter, our new Legislative Trustee, (SMSgt Sanabia is currently deployed), helps organize Law Week in October.

Lastly, this quarter we rocked in getting out in the community and participating in base activities as well. I am looking forward to you taking the time to read through the newsletter to find out what Chapter 872 has been keeping busy with. Chapter 872 helped in hosting a successful Easter Egg Hunt for our Exceptional Family Member Program, collected 102 units of blood (that is approximately 306 lives saved!), entertained approximately 80 local Veterans during the "Boots on the Green" event, delivered 515 meals for the Meals on Wheels Program. We have also added a few more volunteer opportunities as well for our members to get involved with as well, to include the Fisher House of St Louis, and putting a call out for volunteers to assist with the Vets Caring for Vets Hospice Program.

Even with all your hard work and selfless time, we still had time for some fun, as we hosted the 25th Annual Inter-Service Dining Out. Read more to find out! Again, "THANK YOU!!" to each of you, as you all contribute to keeping our Chapter among the best!

Five Healthy Habits for Financial Well-Being cont. from page 1

#1: Pay yourself first. It's a principle so fundamental that many call this "the golden rule" of personal finance. Before you pay your bills, before you buy groceries or shop for clothes, before you head to a restaurant or the movies, put a portion of your income into savings. Regular, consistent contributions to a savings account can help ensure that you have money to meet unexpected expenses or emergencies, and can help you build a nest egg for the long term.

#2: Establish specific, meaningful financial goals. For most people, saving as a matter of principle just doesn't provide the necessary motivation to keep it up. So, set specific goals — with a dollar figure attached — for saving for a home or vehicle purchase, or investing for a child's education or your retirement. And consider setting up separate accounts for each goal.

#3: Set deadlines. Be realistic about how much will be required to reach your goals. While it may be unrealistic to save for the full price of a vehicle or home, you could set a goal for a down payment and a deadline for accumulating that amount. And remember that big goals like a college or retirement fund require long-term commitment. Think marathon, not sprint.

#4: Make saving and investing automatic. Tools like automatic bank drafts and automatic contributions to your Thrift Savings Plan account can help make paying yourself first and living within your budget easier.

#5: Stick with your plan. Consider the assistance of a financial professional. Research shows that military families are more likely than other Americans to ask for help, with 30 percent saying they frequently meet with a financial planner compared to 24 percent of the general population.

25th Annual Inter-service Enlisted Dining Out

Oh what fun times this Chapter has to offer! On May 10, 2014, AFSA Chapter 872 hosted the 25th Annual Inter-Service Enlisted Dining Out at the Four Points by Sheraton in Fairview Heights. It was an evening of tradition, camaraderie, fun, and fellowship with all five branches of the military services. The highlight of the evening was honoring our distinguished guests, 3 Prisoners of War: Mr. Roy E. Ziegler, United States Army, 58th Aviation Detachment, Vietnam War; Mr. Bill Effinger, United States Army Air Corp, 486th Bomb Group, World War II; and Mr. Vic Morris, United States Army Air Corp, World War II. Their stories instilled a passion for service in the attendees and reminded each and every one of us the sacrifices we make every day.

Air Mobility Command's Command Chief, Chief Master Sergeant Victoria Gamble served as our President of the Mess, while Joint Transportation Reserve Unit's Reserve Command Master Chief Jim Cunningham served as our guest speaker. There were approximate 190 attendees in the audience enjoying the event that evening. Senior Airman Jason Bohanske and Airman First Class Arnurcy Turner served as our Mister Vice and Madam Vice. Sergeant First Class Shawn Grace served as our 'Grog Master', in which there was a surprise performance of one of our very own 'fire dawgs' came in to stir our tasty concoctions of the evening.

United Air Force band of Mid-America was our fantastic entertainment for the evening and Chief Gamble even convinced them to continue playing after the event, as members of the Mess danced their evening away. Master Sergeant Kristy Gates and Petty Officer Third Class Montanez Pedro did an awesome job chairing the event, along with their planning committees. This will always be an evening to remember by members of AFSA Chapter 872.



JROTC & Civil Air Patrol Presentations By Suzie Signore-Hayes, SMSgt (ret)



Each year, Chapter 872 is provided the honor of representing AFSA International by bestowing the AFSA Award on deserving recipients at local AF JROTC and Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Annual Award ceremonies. This year we presented this award to cadets at seven local high schools and CAP Squadrons. Our heartfelt appreciation is extended to chapter members MSgt Timothy Carter, MSgt Rodney Hattery, SMSgt Brian Pettaway, SMSgt Jeffrey Peterson, MSgt T'Erricka Rush, SMSgt Jacob Sanabia, TSgt Daniel Singleton, and TSgt William Taylor. Each of these Airmen did a wonderful job serving as ambassadors for AFSA and as outstanding representatives of our Air Force. Chapter 872 looks forward to maintaining this important tradition for many years to come with the continued support of our dedicated members.