



SCOTT AFB

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

Bud Andrews

Gateway Chapter 872

August thru October

2014 Volume III

- 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

Message from Chapter President By SSgt Nichole Brown



Chapter 872 continues to amaze me with all the great things we do as a Chapter on and off the installation. A big "CONGRATULATIONS" to MSgt Chad Lee, as he is the 2013 International Member of the Year, and to SMSgt (ret) Steve Zalesky, as he was awarded the AFSA 4 Pillars Membership Achievement Award at the 2014 AFSA International Professional Airman's Conference. It was another busy quarter, our Chapter assisted with two Habitat for Humanity Projects, boxed 336 meals and donated \$500 for the Caring Hearts Program, hosted 40

plus Veterans from Jefferson Barracks to partake in the "Boots on the Lane" at Scott Air Force Base, and assisted with Exceptional Family Program's 'Back to School Carnival' for 41 children and their families. Our very own HQ AFSA CEO, CMSgt (ret) Rob Frank was the key note speaker for the 29th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day, so Chapter 872 had the opportunity to host him and his wife, Mendy. *Continued on page 4.*

Understanding The Survivor Benefit Plan

By Jill Pietrusinski, First Command

The Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) enables military retirees to financially protect a spouse or other survivors by ensuring that a portion of retired pay continues after the retiree's death, providing a guaranteed income to the survivors.

The decision to enroll in this program is made prior to retirement and is irrevocable. The retiring servicemember's spouse must consent to any protection level that is less than 100 percent. If no reduction is elected, the cost for spouse-only coverage is 6.5 percent of gross military retired pay.

Everyone's situation is different. As you consider the SBP and alternatives, there are some things to keep in mind. *Continued on page 4*

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



What motivates someone to volunteer for an organization? What motivates them to freely give their time, talent, and effort for the greater good of that organization? More importantly, what motivates their continued involvement? To answer these questions we must understand WHY.

The primary reason for personal involvement is often proper motivation. Individuals have a variety of reasons for their actions, the key is that it's 'their reason' and not yours. That being said, as an association our role is to create a culture capable of

casting a wider net when it comes to recruiting, retaining, and motivating a variety of diverse men and women. Some individuals seek camaraderie, friendship, belonging, and opportunity to give back to the community while others seek leadership opportunities. Ask yourself, "What is our association doing to fulfill present and potential members' needs?"

Sometimes the best way to recruit members and volunteers is through friendship ties. It is often difficult to say "no" to a friend. Often that initial push is all that is needed to inspire an individual and plant that desire to become a part of our association. *Continued on page 5*



Retiree Affairs By SMSgt (ret) Rebeca Gabel

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

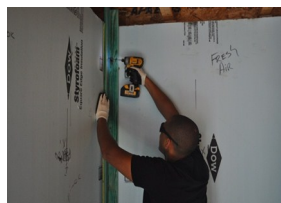
Greetings AFSA Nation! I can't believe it's already October, this year has really flown by. As a not too distant retiree myself, it is such an inspiration to come back every month and see the great turnout at our chapter meeting. A huge thanks to the Scott Air Force Base Retiree Activities Office and AFSA Chapter 872 members who supported the Retiree Appreciation Day that was held on Sep 27, 2014! As I mentioned at our October monthly membership meeting, I am reaching out to our local VFW and American Legion posts in an effort to establish contacts with each other for mutually beneficial efforts to support our chapter and our service organizations membership efforts on all sides. The more numbers we have in all service and professional organizations, the louder our voice on Capitol Hill will be. If you are a member of a VFW or American Legion Post in the local area, please send me a good contact for your group. Once I have contacts for everyone, we will have a good list of contacts for events and activities for the coming year! For more information about Retiree activities and AFSA efforts on behalf of retirees, visit the Scott AFB Retiree Activities Office website at <http://www.raolibrary>.

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. MSgt Brian Pettaway is AFSA Chapter 872's POC and has arranged two volunteer events this past quarter.



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



In July, a nine-person team worked 4 hours to prepare a local site for sidewalk installation, laid a rock foundation, and completed a vinyl siding project.

In August, a five-person team gave 4 hours to construct and install roof trusses which expedited the interior construction process. Thank you, MSgt Pettaway and team, you made a huge impact in the local community and positively represented AFSA Chapter 872!

Plans & Programs *By SMSgt Lee M. Ayers*

It has been another great quarter for AFSA Chapter 872 Plans and Programs! Our 12 programs collectively supported 39 events with 361 volunteers, contributing 932 volunteer hours and directly boosting the morale of 1,551 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.

**Air Force Sergeant
Association Chapter 872**

Caring Hearts



Caring Hearts is a local food drive, directed by the First United

Methodist Church in O'Fallon and supported by AFSA Chapter 872 on a monthly basis.

Our Chapter POC is TSgt Larry Adams and MSgt Amber Callahan. They schedule volunteers to assist in assembling and filling food boxes, which many churches in the surrounding community utilize in order to purchase essential sustenance for their underprivileged members and elderly homebound. In addition to assisting those in need, local citizens can order boxes if they wish to purchase food in bulk.

The Caring Hearts food drive occurs every fourth Saturday at the church. Volunteers meet by 0800 to assemble approximately 110-130 food boxes, but holiday seasons in November and December boast upwards of 250 food boxes! This quarter, AFSA provided 113 volunteers. Collectively they volunteered over 134 hours and filled 336 food boxes. What a blessing to the community! Finally, Chapter 872 donated \$500 to offset the cost of increased safety requirements. Thank you, Chapter 872, for your invaluable support!

Jefferson Barracks

Periodically, AFSA Chapter 872 invites local veterans out for a day of fun with our chapter members. The mission for the program is to utilize therapeutic benefits of bowling or golf, such as increased strength, balance, range of motion, grip strength, endurance, competition, fun, and social skills with veterans who are disabled or wounded.

In August, MSgt Ronald Zokal coordinated a "Boots on the Lane" event, hosting over 40 veterans from Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis. The chapter provided 48 volunteers and 184 volunteer hours to ensure the veterans were well taken care of. Thanks again men and women of Chapter 872 for yet another successful event!



The Mission Continues



The Mission Continues program empowers veterans to project their military mindset and skills through volunteer opportunities in the community. In July, Chapter 872 sent volunteers to the 4th Annual Summer Slam Service project at Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center in Kirkwood, Missouri. The Summer Service Slam is a yearly project of The Mission Continues and FOX Sports Midwest, bringing together both veterans and volunteers from the public for a focused day of service work.

More than 400 volunteers of Veterans and civilians worked along side one another on a variety of projects to improve the nature center. Some of the accomplishments that took place amongst the 112 acres of oak-hickory forest grounds were replacing 4 fences, building a fire ring and seating area for public programs, cleaning a 3,000 gallon aquarium, servicing five miles of hiking trails by adding mulch and creating log barriers, building benches, repainting a gazebo, and removing countless amount of invasive honeysuckle. Thank you once again.



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

Although Chapter 872 continues to stay busy assisting others, we are also very fortunate to include our families. We know that time is valuable, but why not make the most of giving back when you can include the rest of the members in the household to give back as well. This summer when my husband's son came to visit, we made sure to make the most of our time...together. The majority of the projects that Chapter 872 gets involved with allows us to have our families volunteer beside us. It not only allows us to work side by side, but to instill great morals into our younger generation and teach them to be good citizens of



society. HQ AFSA as a whole even recognizes the importance of family. They recently voted to change family members from 'Auxillary Members' to 'Family Members'. They too can be members of our Chapter and even hold positions at the Chapter executive council level.

Understanding The Survivor Benefit Plan cont. from page 1

Potential Advantages:

- No evidence of insurability is required
- No suicide or incontestability clauses
- Benefits are tied to retired pay increases
- SBP costs are not subject to federal income tax or state income tax in most states
- Survivor's benefits are subject to federal taxes, but in most cases are eligible fo runlimited marital deduction
- Benefits are not subject to garnishment, lien, or other legal processes
- Benefits may be payable for the lifetime of beneficiary

Potential Disadvantages:

- No residual estate remains after death or marriage of designated beneficiary
- Monthly benefit is subject to state income tax in some states
- Preferred risks subsidize uninsurable risks

Additionally, SBP costs, benefits, and provisions are continuously subject to revision by legislative and administrative action. The Survivor Benefit Plan may contribute significantly to your loved ones' financial well-being and should be considered part of an overall retirement income strategy to address your needs and goals. A qualified financial advisor can help you develop such a strategy and plan.

29th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day *By SSgt Nicole Brown*



Chapter 872 had the utmost pleasure of hosting AFSA CEO, CMSgt (ret) Rob Frank, and his wife, Mendy the weekend of Scott Air Force Base's 29th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day, as Chief Frank was the keynote speaker for the event. During his three-day visit, Chapter 872 kept him busy visiting the Airmen of some Scott Air Force Base agencies. TSgt David Lang, 618 TACC, gave Chief Frank and Mendy a tour of TACC and provided the 618 TACC mission brief. The 618 TACC plans, schedules, and directs a fleet of nearly 1,200 mobility aircraft in support of combat delivery and strategic airlift, air refueling, and aeromedical evacuation operations around the world.



Chapter 872 Executive Council took Chief Frank and Mendy to dinner at Eckert's where Chief Frank met the Executive Council. At dinner Chief Frank and Mendy heard all of the 'goodness' that Chapter 872 is currently involved in and discussed upcoming events that will be hosted by the Chapter. Chief Frank and Mendy had breakfast with the First Sergeants Council of Scott Air Force Base and had office calls with the USTRANSCOM SEL, Chief Master Sergeant William Turner and the 375 Air Mobility Wing Command Chief, Chief Master Sergeant Wesley Mathias. Chief Frank also had the opportunity to meet the Airmen of the 375 Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Department and the Airmen of the 375 Security Forces Squadron. Chief Frank received a tour of both facilities and briefed the Airmen getting ready for guard mount.

Lastly, Chief Frank briefed the Air Force Space Command Top 4 and did a 'working lunch' with Chapter 872's general membership. Chief Frank reminded

those in the audience that AFSA is a federally chartered non-profit organization presenting the professional and personal interests of the Total Force . . . Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Retirees, and their families. He also briefed some of the



issues going on legislatively on Capitol Hill and ensured us that there are exciting upcoming changes with AFSA overall. Chief Frank and Mendy ended their visit by being the keynote speaker for Scott Air Force Base's 29th Annual Retiree Appreciation Day to approximately 200 retirees. Chief Frank reminded those in the audience that AFSA works very hard to represent each of them to make sure that 100% of Congress understands what it is like to be a Veteran and Retiree.

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

There is strength in numbers. This makes a recruiting team paramount to AFSA's success. Larger numbers means greater synergy which means a larger sphere of influence! This will inevitably lead to more individuals recruited and more volunteers. Again, as we grow our sphere of influence will grow.

Some join AFSA for a friend or for self-serving reasons; however, as time goes by and they begin to log numerous volunteer hours they begin to understand the purpose and greatness of our association. With that comes passion for the cause. This is our chapter's goal, let's get our members actively involved and instill that passion in them. In turn they will bring their friends and co-workers along so that the fire may be lit in them as well.