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Air Force Sergeants Association

DIVISION 5

The Sunshine News



Pinellas Park - MacDill AFB - Tyndall AFB - Eglin AFB - Orlando - Patrick AFB - Lake Worth -

Oct - Dec 2011

Jacksonville - Port St. Lucie - Hurlburt Field - San Juan, PR

Volume XI, Issue II



President's Message

by Bruce Blodgett, CMSgt (Ret.), President

Greetings to all Division #5 members! Well, 2011 AFSA International PAC in San Antonio is over and lots of changes are on the horizon. In Division 5, we a "ramping" up to our mid-year tele-conference/meeting and planning events for our upcoming 2012 Division Convention in Savannah, GA. The event is set and we have "locked" in our Hotel (Holiday Inn Express Savannah, GA) that is just off I-95, just 10 minutes from beautiful, downtown historic Savannah, GA. I am excited because this is going to be a combined Division 3-4-5 Convention and we have a great opportunity to meet with our AFSA brethren from up and down the East coast! In addition, we will be voting in a new Executive Council for the newly formed "Division #2". So, I definitely need all Chapters to be represented at this very important convention to cast their vote for the leadership of this new and largest of AFSA divisions! More to follow from our Convention Manager for this historic event, our very own Senior Advisor, Mr. Tom Resler! We will get out an agenda and theme information as we "firm" up the agenda and meals. The good news is the cost of the hotel is relatively affordable and the meals are reasonable. Many thanks to Tom and Division 3 and 4 Presidents for conducting a great site visit and finalizing plans with the hotel staff!

It is sure to be an outstanding event. Also, don't forget that the 2012 AFSA International PAC will be held in Jacksonville, FL and we will be the host-division! I will need your help to show the world that Division 5 can put on one heck of a party!

Please don't forget you should now be working on your Annual Awards packages, if you haven't already finished them (yeah, right!). Let's not wait until the suspense to have your Chapter awards "spit and polished" in time for the Division suspense! Any questions on awards can be directed to our Division 5 Awards Trustee, SSgt Scott Burk at Tyndall AFB, FL. He is "ram-rod"ding our efforts this year and I would like to see more deserving Airmen and Chapters put in for awards this year! We must reward the people working so hard in the field for us all!

Also, Chapter Presidents, please don't forget that our 3Q11 Reports are due to me NLT 10 October 2011! This is a "drop dead" suspense, but I would hope that many of you will turn them in soon after the end of the month as possible! Please help me help you get your support checks and recruiting rebates!

Please see *President's Message*, page 3





A U X I L I A R Y

Coordinator's Comments

By Carol Waldrop, Auxiliary Coordinator

Summer is already a memory as autumn spreads her arms to welcome us into her season of change. The remainder of this year will also mark major changes for the proud Air Force Sergeants Association Auxiliary.

The AFSA International Convention in beautiful San Antonio, Texas was an interesting blend of informative sessions, meetings, networking opportunities and social events as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of AFSA. Two-thirds of our Division Five Auxiliaries were represented by delegates attending the convention. It was my pleasure and honor to represent Division 5 as Auxiliary Coordinator and to serve on the International Credentials Committee.

Congratulations to Chapter A564, Port Saint Lucie, FL for being awarded International **Chapter of the Year for 2010**. It is gratifying to see our Division's impressive nominee receive recognition for their outstanding achievements. I was very proud to receive the International Auxiliary President's Award from President Marie McDowell. I am humbled by this great honor. I also received a Certification of Appreciation for serving on the credentials committee.

Stars representing hundreds of pounds of coupons sent to overseas bases were displayed at the convention and Division Five was recognized by **stars for A527, Pinellas Park FL, A554, Eglin AFB FL, A556 Orlando FL, and A564 Port Saint Lucie FL.**

All incumbent officers ran for reelection and won their seats unopposed so our International Auxiliary officers remain the same.

President: Marie McDowell
Vice President: Helen Free
First Trustee: Patricia Parrish
Second Trustee Ruth Larr
Third Trustee: Cari Mansfield
Senior Advisor Past President Carolyn Piccoli

There were many proposed by law changes voted on that would determine the future of our Auxiliary. All proposed by law changes were printed in the Sergeants magazine prior to the convention. Our Auxiliary has suffered from declining membership numbers and lowered financial resources over the past few years. For that reason AFSA voted to merge the Auxiliary members into the AFSA chapters at the end of 2011. This will include the elimination of all Auxiliary officers and Auxiliary chapters.

Auxiliary members will remain a class of membership different from regular active AFSA members within the AFSA chapter. The Auxiliary class AFSA members **WILL** be able to vote but **WILL NOT** be eligible to hold elected office in AFSA. They **WILL** be eligible to hold appointed offices. It is my understanding that there will still be auxiliary awards given out for the year 2011.

There will be many questions that come up concerning the transition from Active Auxiliary chapters to the new style AFSA chapters. I am awaiting guidance from International level to pass on to you. As questions come to mind PLEASE contact me or President McDowell and we will get answers for you. AFSA has also had a decline in membership so the merge of our members will help preserve a strong presence on Capitol Hill. AFSA's Auxiliary has enriched AFSA for many years and has a noble and proud heritage. The blending of Auxiliary members into AFSA chapters can only strengthen the organization and create a more powerful team.

While the convention was in session we received the sad news that Past International Auxiliary President, Past Division Five Coordinator, current President of Chapter A527 Peggy Stala passed away at her home. Peggy's health had been failing for many months and she was ready to join her beloved husband Dom in the great AFSA chapter in the sky. I took up a memorial collection for Peggy from the convention delegates which will benefit the Air Force Enlisted Village. There will be a memorial brick in the Bob Hope Village Garden of Hope in honor of Peggy.

It is an important time for all military families and *especially retired military families* to stay in contact with their elected officials to preserve our benefits including Tricare. There is much legislation that concerns budget cuts and our benefits are constantly on the table. It is proposed to increase the costs of Tricare including Tricare for life in 2013. Prescription payments are already due for an increase this year. YOU MUST remind your elected officials that we are not the same as other federal employees. Our military members have laid their lives on the line for the freedom of this country. Military families sacrifice along with them in ways civilians never will.

Please see *Coordinator's Comments*, page 3

President's Message continued from page 1

On the last page of the newsletter are our overall chapter numbers for recruiting and retention since 1 Jan 2011. I am saddened by these numbers, but I know we have great people out there and we can turn this around. I need your help. Please PUSH, PUSH, PUSH your people to "give a hoot and go recruit!"

God bless you all and best wishes for a wonderful upcoming holiday season. I can't think of a better gift to give than an AFSA membership! Please continue to get the AFSA word out there to everyone on your installations and in your AORs – sponsor activities and get people involved. It more than just \$25.00 a year – it is a way of life, a devotion to your fellow Airmen in fortune or distress.

I leave you with this recent quote from our CSAF; the handwriting is on the wall:

Expect to Pay More: *Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz warned Tuesday that personnel costs are "simply*

... not sustainable," and the service is having to carefully weigh changes in compensation and benefits as part of its cost-cutting program. In his speech to AFA's Air & Space Conference, he said healthcare costs alone will consume 10 percent of the defense budget by 2015, but he pledged that the Air Force will "keep faith with our airmen and families." Schwartz also said changes are due for the retirement system, suggesting something that is "contributory and more portable" will make sense. While the economy is in poor shape now leading to unprecedented retention eventually it will come back, and USAF will again have to compete hard for quality people, he said. Even so, making personnel cost reductions now, "no matter how difficult" will "put our successors in a better place."

Coordinator's Comments continued from page 2

Call, write and email your elected officials and spread the word to others to do the same. Current legislative information is available at www.hqafsa.org or 1-800-638-0594, extension 400.

It is time to get your reports in for the third quarter of CY2011. Your reports are due to me NO LATER THAN October 10. Please be sure to double check that you are using the current form and that you have filled in all of the correct boxes and blanks on the first page. Remember that writing letters to your elected officials and spreading the word about legislative issues should be listed as legislative activities. If you post notices about your meetings you are marketing AFSA. Sending coupons to overseas bases is supporting base involvement. You should always have a recruiting and retention goal even if you do not reach that goal

every quarter. Local suspense is the deadline I give you to get the reports to me. – **Oct 10**

Please contact me if you have any questions about completing your reports. I am here to help you. You will reach me quickest by email but feel free to call if that works best for you,

Don't forget to honor our Veterans on November 11 and Remember Pearl Harbor on December 7. I was honored to spend time with a Pearl Harbor Survivor last weekend and it reinforced to me how important it is that we never let that event be minimized.

I wish you all the best in the coming months and holiday season. May you celebrate the holidays safely and surrounded by those you love.



Division Financial Report

By Tiffany Lopez, MSgt, Treasurer

As of September 30, 2011 here are our Division 5 bank balances:

Checking	2,923.09
Savings	8,194.87
Total	\$11,117.96



QUARTERLY REPORTS DUE

Activity & Americanism and Financial reports, for the 3rd quarter CY2011, Jul 1 - Sep 30 are **due October 10**. Please remember that AFSA reports are due to the Division 5 President and the Auxiliary reports are due to Division 5 Auxiliary Coordinator. To make the AFSA October 15 due date; **please submit them by October 10, 2011**. As always, if you need assistance please contact President Blodgett or Auxiliary Coordinator Waldrop. Thank you for all you do for AFSA!

Membership...The Heartbeat of AFSA!

by Thomas Pfister, SMSgt, Vice President

True, AFSA is more important than just membership growth and retention; Legislation and Lobbying for enlisted benefits rates much higher. However, considering that Senators and Representatives are more interested with an association's the total membership because this alone states how many voices that association represents, membership numbers are crucial to the associations' success lobbying on Capitol Hill. Therefore, an association with fewer members tells the law makers that everyone is happy and content with how things are and change is not a concern. Thus, Air Force members will continue to see their benefits threaten to elimination, from pay, bonuses, commissary and exchange services, medical and dental coverage's, etc. Evidence of reduced benefits is witnessed in any veterans or military publications, base newsletters, and national and local news feeds, etc. *Hopefully, we ALL agree that membership growth and sustainability are paramount for AFSA's success.*

This proves; Membership is the life blood and heartbeat of this great association!

Throughout my travels within this division, I am continually perplexed why are there more excuses for not recruiting and retaining then positive results. One resounding theme is I brief at such and such meeting or gathering and achieve no results. Maybe, that alone needs attention; possibly you are not connecting with the "What's In It For Me" (WIIFM) concerns with the audience; possibly there is a conflict of interest, say instructor to class attendees; are you overwhelming the audience with too much information; most importantly, are you staying on track with supporting documentation? I have been asked for me briefing so others may use during their briefing. Well, I do not have any one brief that I use; in fact this past August I was given three minutes to address 200+ reservists and here's what I presented.

"As for professional associations, there are many great ones to belong but the difference is AFSA is a 501 (C) 19 Veterans Lobbying Association fighting for your pay, benefits, and quality of life issues. Other associations are 501 (C) 3 educational associations and do not actively lobby for you. Please see me at the back. Thank you."

This short address gained 70+ membership applications. So you can see; it all depends on the audience, time allotted, and sincerity of the presentation. I gather my information from the Air Forces Times, Sergeants Magazine and various

veteran's publications, as well as local and national news feeds and compile it into my style. This is the greatest advice I can offer, find your own style of presenting information and be concise, brief, with supporting documentation.

To resolve the other mentioned issues, the chapter needs to establish a recruiting team broken down into parts that meld together utilizing the talents of all. The Chapter Membership Chair Person is not responsible to do it all themselves, there are too many parts that will overwhelm that person and no productivity is achieved. Establish sub-committees that are responsible for specific areas that report back to the Membership Chair. They can be recruiting, retentions, briefers, etc. The recruiting sub-committee is responsible for application submissions and establishes a schedule for briefers to attend. The retention sub-committee workers the lapse and terminated rosters by calling the folks and utilize the global system, people finder, and switchboard.com to include contacting HQ for application submission. Find briefers who have developed delivery skills, knowledgeable of AFSA and its' issues, and have supporting documentation. Have attendees there to assist with any application processes, but more importantly, to observe the briever and learn or hone skills.

Recruit: *TALK AFSA* to everyone you can. Take another Air Force member to your local chapter meeting. Remember what or why you became interested in AFSA and utilize that experience.

Retention: *Work the Rosters!!* Identify members to work the bad address and lapsed rosters. Retention as important as any other membership issue because recruiting new does not sustain our overall numbers. We have to retain!

Now for the cold hard facts; again, for another consecutive quarter Division 5 is trailing behind all other Divisions for recruiting and retention. This is a slap in the face and total embarrassment that reflects upon each of us. Just this past quarter this Division lost 720+ members that could have been retained if the chapter rosters where worked. This has to get corrected.

As always, I am available anytime to assist you how and wherever you need, whether it is to develop a team, brief, provide materials, train, or in any capacity your chapter needs; Just Holler!

Give a Hoot, Go Recruit!
Your Friend in AFSA!

From the Awards Chairman

by Scott Burk, SSgt, 1st Trustee

Hello Division 5!!!

We have plenty to talk about that is happening in Congress these days. Some of these items make great conversation pieces between members, but sometimes conversation just isn't enough. I would like to encourage each member to recruit and retain just one member. Let's make the rubber meet the road and put the "pedal to the metal" and really show our brothers and sisters in arms that we really do care about their (and our) benefits. Give a hoot, go RECRUIT!

I would also like to encourage you to award your

outstanding members each quarter. This, in turn, will encourage others to become more involved. Please make contact with your chapter's "idle" members. Many of whom simply lost contact and don't know the problems we are facing and the challenges our military members, retirees, and dependants are facing.

As your Awards Chairman, I am available to each and every member in this fine Division. Please feel free to contact me regarding anything awards related and I will help any way possible.

AFSA Is For Young Airmen Too!

by Sara Gauthier, AIC, AAC

Hello once again AFSA members,

I hope you are all doing well with recruiting and planning activities on your base to get your chapter more involved with the community and getting the AFSA name out there. In order to get our numbers up, we need the AACs from each chapter to be continually working with airmen on your base and showing them what we are all about. The First Term Airman Class would be a great place to start getting the word out to the junior enlisted about who we are and what we do. Most likely they are not going to come to you. As an ACC for your chapter, you cannot be complacent; our job is never finished, there are always airmen to be recruited.

On a second note, I have only heard from one AAC. I would like to hear from everyone about what you are doing to recruit and get the airmen on your base involved. Let me know what

is working for you and what is not. I have sent out emails with some great attachments from our international AAC to help you out in getting started. I have also shared with you the information that I have gotten back from the only AAC who has been corresponding. I can only help you if you help me help you. I need to hear from you. We are all on the same team, so please share your ideas with the rest of the division. If you have not been receiving emails from me please let me know so that I can add you to my list.



I look forward to hearing from all of you! Recruit, recruit, recruit!

Inspiring Quote

"The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand."

- Vince Lombardi



DIVISION FIVE WEBSITE

Don't forget to visit your Division 5 website for the latest AFSA Newsletter, division and chapter info. So, while your surfing the net, make a stop at your Division 5 Website, you'll be *AFSA glad* you did.

www.afsadivision5.org

Division 3/4/5 Convention

by Thomas Resler, TSgt (Ret.), Senior Advisor

On September 1-2, 2011, I joined Division 3 President Rich Mansfield and Division 4 President Murphy Green near Savannah, Georgia. We met at the Holiday Inn Express just west of Interstate 95 within a few miles from Savannah to plan for the 2012 Division 3/4/5 Convention. This was a very productive planning meeting as we were joined by the hotel Sales Coordinator and General Manager to bring our members a great convention. Both were very receptive to our unique needs with having three divisions meeting at their lovely hotel.

First off, for Division 5, this will be a smaller hotel than what we are use too. However, smaller has its rewards because if we have a large attendance, we will have the hotel for ourselves. Second, the location is reachable for almost everyone who is a member of Divisions 3, 4, and 5. Granted some may have to drive a little further than most, but it will be worth it because we will meet new AFSA friends and share important information between our divisions to create a new division and to help make our AFSA stronger!

I have volunteered to be the Convention Chairman for this convention. It will be a challenge, however, it is well worth it since it involves AFSA members! I look forward to a very successful, informative and fun convention.

Please mark your calendar to attend this convention. By attending you will be part of history in the making.

Division 3/4/5 2012 Convention

DATES: April 19 - 22, 2012

LOCATION: Holiday Inn Express - Savannah North, Port Wentworth, GA

HOTEL ROOM RATES: \$89.00 plus tax

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEE: \$85.00

REGISTRATION FEE COVERS:

- Opening Ceremony - Thu., April 19, 1900
- Luncheon, Fri., April 20, 1215
- Honors Banquet, Sat., April 21, 1900

ADDITIONAL INFO:

All three divisions will have joint and breakout sessions throughout the convention. We will vote for executive councils for each division and the new Division 2 that will take over on January 1, 2013.

More information will be coming out by early 2012.



AFSA: Not Just Another Volunteer Thing

by Crystal Taylor, TSgt, Chapter 567, Hurlburt Field Member

Since my arrival to Hurlburt Field in June 2010, I set multiple reminders to attend a meeting for an organization I honestly knew nothing about. Sure I had heard of it, but if I was to tell a fellow Airman about it, I wouldn't know what to say except, "I heard it's good to be a member of the Air Force Sergeants Association because the organization ensures our enlisted voice at Washington is heard." Okay, yeah sure that's the basic canned answer, but what does the Air Force Sergeants Association really do?

Thirteen months passed before I attended my first AFSA meeting. I have to admit, the chance of winning a free iPad if I attended and signed up as a member may have accounted for 60-70% of the reason behind my being present at that particular meeting. The AFSA Division 5 President, Retired Chief Master Sergeant Bruce Blodgett, was present and served as the guest speaker that day. Chief Blodgett brought to light a lot of issues that resonated with me had me wondering why I hadn't tried harder before to become an AFSA member. He briefed the audience on the fact that less than 25% of congress members have served in uniform. Those same congress members who've never served have significant impact on our enlistments and benefits. Another interesting fact he mentioned was that any Airman, yes Airman with a capital "A," can be a member. I always thought only noncommissioned officers could be members, hence the title Air Force "Sergeants" Association. In his conclusion he stated AFSA membership is in danger of falling below the required 100,000 needed to exist as a voice on Capitol Hill, and so it needs Airmen like us to do our part. So I did.

I AM NOW a proud member of the Hurlburt Field, Local Chapter 567 Air Force Sergeants Association. I'M THE ONE who has direct impact and influence on the benefits I

receive in my Air Force career. I CAN ENSURE when there is an issue that arises which could potentially jeopardize the security of my educational benefits, basic pay, hazardous duty pay, health care premiums, and most importantly, my retirement pay, MY VOTE WILL COUNT.



Even though I was not the recipient of that shiny new iPad, I most definitely still walked out a winner.

If you are not a member of the Air Force Sergeants Association, but voiced your anger and concerns amongst your fellow Airmen about the possible attacks on our retirement and other benefits, shame on ya! You have a direct impact on what decisions are made on Capitol Hill, but if you and the person or persons next to you have stripes, brass, and nickel, and you sit without action, what voice do we have? If you're worried about membership fees associated with AFSA, let me put it in perspective for you.

One night, dinner, movie tickets, popcorn and drinks) - **\$46.50** (or more if you go to a 3D movie)

AFSA membership for an entire year, which guarantees your voice is heard and your career benefits are secured - **\$25.00**

Not bad huh?

For additional information on the Air Force Sergeants Association, please go to <http://www.hqafsa.org>. You will not only learn what the Association is about, but you'll be able to join as a new member as well.



TOP RECRUITERS for 2011 (As of Sept. 26)



Here is the top recruiters and retainers. These recruiters have recruited/retained five or more members. Thank you for your "Give a Hoot, Recruit" attitude!

Recruiter Name	Chapter	# Recruited	# Retained
Mari Quiroga	557	53	5
Brad Robbins	552	34	
David Rodriquez	554	34	
Demika Hunter	567	22	
Jayly Jackson	567	22	
Tom Pfister	556	19	14
Jamison Warrick	553	18	
William Ross	567	17	
Emily Eisenlohr	A564		13
Jack Eisenlohr	564		13
Jen Spaulding	567	11	
Ed Puttbrese	567	10	
Keith Snyder	557	10	
Bruce Blodgett	554	9	5
Dustin Tatem	552	9	
Rachel Davis	552	7	
Rebekah Morris	567	7	
Hector Mejia	570	6	
Tim Otterman	553	6	
Sylvia Morris	557	5	
Tim Burk	553	5	18
Joseph Mojica	553	5	

Division 5 Recruiting and Retention Statistics—2011

Chapter	# Recruited	# Retained	Chapter	# Recruited	# Retained
527	0	0	A527	0	1
552	57	2			
553	44	20	A553	0	0
554	48	7	A554	3	2
556	22	18	A556	2	2
557	73	9	A557	5	0
			A558	0	0
564	1	14	A564	0	16
567	103	8			
570	10	1			
TOTALS	363	79		8	21