



"Kittyhawk Flyer"



Air Force Sergeants Association Kittyhawk Chapter 751

Issue No. 59

November 2008

Volunteers Make Holiday Program a Success

By MSgt James "Fig" Fuenfgeld, Chapter Trustee



AFSA volunteers take a short break in the commissary warehouse for a group photo.

AFSA Chapter 751 and members of the Wright-Patterson community came together November 22, to help Airmen in need by participating in the annual Thanksgiving Basket Program. More than 40 volunteers braved the early morning cold to gather at the commissary to assemble and transport boxes of holiday meals. The only thing that

slowed down the assembly line was the lack of space for the boxes awaiting pick up.

The community has really embraced this special program over the years and helped to make it a true success. An example of this is the canned food drive led by the Prairies of Wright Field. This year they collected over \$2,600 of canned goods and other items to complete a Thanksgiving feast. We also received \$2,881 in cash donations.

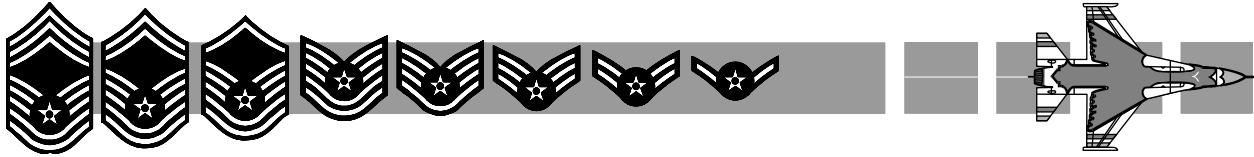
Despite all the generosity, the Chapter found itself with a bill that brought our expenditures \$2,500 over budget. A combination of higher food prices and greater demand for food baskets contributed to the cost. The Chapter provided 262 baskets, which is a record number for this event. Changes will be required in the program to ensure we can sustain this Chapter tradition. Nevertheless, this event is a core reason why we are regarded so highly on base and the local community. It is for this reason we will do everything possible to continue helping out our fellow Airmen.

I look forward to next year's event to see once again what Kittyhawk Chapter 751 can achieve when it rallies the base and the local community to come together.

Happy holidays to all!



Volunteers line up to load boxes of Thanksgiving meals into a First Sergeant's truck for delivery to Airmen across the base.



A word from the President...

By CMSgt (Ret) Ruben Garcia, Chapter President



The chill in the air and the frost on the ground ushers in the season when we realize another year will soon pass us by. I'm sure you feel as I do that every year seems to whiz by faster than the year before. And in our effort to slow down the calendar, we reflect on the year that was.

The year was as historical and challenging for Kittyhawk Chapter 751 as it was for the nation as a whole. I marvel at the many great Chapter accomplishments made possible by the greatest team on Wright Patt. I especially take pride in the "firsts" that occurred in 2008. These are the events that took place not out of tradition but out of innovation. I've been a proponent of improving the Chapter through introduction of new activities that reflect on an organization adapting to the changing needs of its membership and in a way that makes its members just as proud to be a part of AFSA as it is in being Airmen.

The list of first-time projects we took on this year include the AFSA Softball Challenge between the active duty and reservists, the Golf Tournament to benefit the Fisher House Capital Fund, a Halloween Door Decorating Contest at the dormitories and the Chapter's involvement in the Unaccompanied Airmen's Thanksgiving Dinner. These events all took place because the Chapter's Executive Council set their own course toward AFSA excellence using the path created by great Chapter leaders of the past as a guide, not a rule. These great people were then backed up by over 400 members and volunteers who made the decision to get involved in their community; many of them doing so multiple times throughout the year.

What also makes any accomplishment more noteworthy is the challenges that were overcome to achieve success. We certainly had our share and I foresee more in 2009. The Chapter has not been able to escape

from the effects of the economic hardships faced by this nation. Fundraising activities were not as profitable as in recent years; commissary vendors were not able to donate to the Thanksgiving Basket project as in years past; and expenses across the board went up. Still, we were able to meet our commitments to the community by relying on the cushion we saved in the bank account for a rainy day. Now it's pouring. So we'll have to work harder at fundraising next year and find ways of cutting expenses. I'm happy to say we won't need a bailout. We will instead rely on the dedication of our members to work through the problem and find the solutions as enlisted Airmen have done for generations.

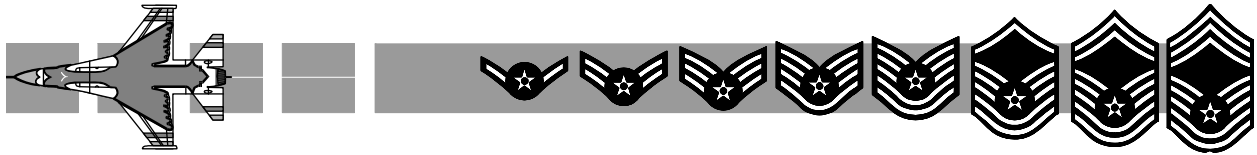
Another area of concern for me, which also affects the Chapter's bottom line, is membership. Both recruitment and retention of Chapter members has declined. Steps will be taken next year to reinvigorate this program through new initiatives and the support of senior leadership. Our focus will be to better publicize the AFSA mission, the success of Kittyhawk Chapter 751 and the importance of membership. Remember as a Chapter member, you have role in membership; however, only 26 people recruited members this year (as of November 2008). That needs to improve. Please help us out; recruit that Air Force buddy of yours.

Finally, I wish you a safe and joyous holiday season. When we cross into 2009, Chapter 751 will be there working for you still.

Upcoming Chapter Events

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Dec 2 | - General Membership Meeting |
| Dec 6 | - VA Holiday Party |
| Dec 8 | - Auxiliary Meeting, 6:00pm |
| Dec 24 | - Holiday Gift Wrapping at the BX to support the Fisher House |
| Jan 6 | - General Membership Meeting |
| Jan 24 | - Chapter Awards Banquet |
| Feb 3 | - General Membership Meeting |

Please contact the Chapter for more info.



Change is in the Air

By SMSgt (Ret) Fred Dembinski, Legislative Chairman

Fellow AFSA Members, November 2008 will forever be known as the month the United States made history when Senator Barack Obama became the first African American elected to the highest office in the land as our 44th President of the United States of America. Anytime there's a transition to a new Presidential administration, changes are seen throughout our government and I suspect the military will be affected as well. President-elect Obama says, as Commander-In-Chief, he will support the military and will ensure America keeps its promises to its military. He will also need to confront the many challenges facing our nation, so for the first year we should see and hear a lot about new proposals and changes.

Our organization must change as well in order for us to be more productive, to better serve our members. Membership is now at an all time low and we need to stand up and take note. Our recruiting numbers are way

down. Membership has always been the number one issue for AFSA as it is with other organization like ours.

Remember, when our International President meets with Congressmen and Senators, he tells them he represents X number of members. But right now it's going to get harder and harder for President McCauslin to lobby on behalf of Air Force enlisted members with the decreasing numbers. The fact is, if Airmen don't care enough to be an AFSA member, then Congress isn't going to listen.

Have you ever noticed that when we start losing benefits, it's the non-members who holler the loudest and yet they won't become a member? But that doesn't stop us from lobbying for all enlisted members. So I ask each and every one of you to go out and recruit at least one new member before years end!

Yellow Springs Street Fair Fulfills a Fantasy

By MSgt Scotty Cruz, Chapter Trustee

Ok...call me strange, but I always had this fantasy about being a carnary. You know, somebody that works at a carnival. Carnivals are fun and there's something about that life on the road that scratches me where I itch. Unfortunately, carnary opportunities were very rare growing up on the island of Guam. So I joined the Air Force.

But recently I had an opportunity to fulfill my dream by helping out Chapter 751 at the Yellow

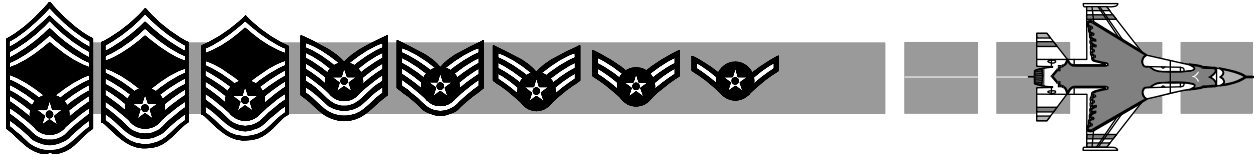


TSgt George Balderrama, Chapter Chaplain and Amy Tobin, A751 Secretary, make the best lemonade at the YS Street Fair.

Springs Street Fair on October 11. Street Fair! Man, that sounded cool to me. I knew instantly that this was my big chance.

When I got there I was amazed by the various types of people there. Banjo players, mimes, girls with hula hoops. Man, this place rocked! Of course a lot of the people seemed like they were still in the 60's. Beads, tie-dye shirts, funny smells...these folks looked more carnary than me! It was like carnary paradise.

So I was instantly put to work making funnel cakes which I'm told was the most important job in the place. I had a great time with my fellow AFSA members and in the end we raised \$525 for enlisted programs on base. Now that rocks!



Retiree Appreciation Day Gets AFSA Expertise

By CMSgt (Ret) Chuck Worm, Chapter Senior Advisor



TSgt Angela Gibson, Chapter Trustee, and Karol Worm, A751 Senior Advisor, share a moment with a happy WWII General.

Hi! Chuck Worm here. You might call me an expert in the retiree lifestyle. Believe me when I tell you...I'm about as retired as they come. You want to be like me when you grow up! Just writing this article is more work than I've done in a long time.

Anyway, the base hosted its annual Retiree Appreciation Day on October 29. So who better to be the Chapter lead on this event than me, right? After all, the purpose of this event is to provide information and assistance to the retiree community. Right up my alley!

Anyway, there I was proudly manning the AFSA booth with the help of my lovely wife Karol and other volunteers. I had a great time handing out membership and benefit information to potential and current AFSA

members throughout the day. I got to meet a lot of nice people too. Thanks to all that helped!

Chapter Offers Free Drinks at Air Force Marathon

By CMSgt (Ret) Ruben Garcia, Chapter President

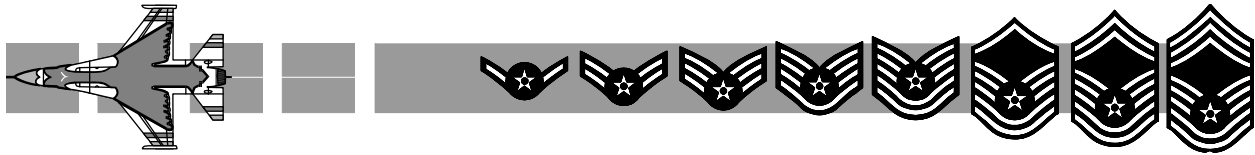
Wright Patterson celebrated the 12th Annual USAF Marathon on September 20 and AFSA Kittyhawk Chapters 751 and A751 were there at mile marker 8 for the twelfth year also. While some of the approximately 35 people who came out to help were returning volunteers from previous years, most were first-time helpers. However, it didn't very long for the group to figure out what needed to be done and soon they were operating like a well-oiled AFSA machine. When the first runners reached the Chapter's Hydration Station, they were met with cheers, cups of water and packets of "protein goo."

The Chapter also kept its tradition of fielding a team of runners. This year's 10K team consisted of SMSgt (Ret) Fred Dembinski, CMSgt Bill Gurney, SMSgt Garvis Leak and SrA Crystal Dean.

As usual, a good time was had by all.



Above: Volunteers of all ages stand ready to hand out "protein goo" to oncoming runners. Left: Cups of cool refreshing water are the drink of choice at the marathon's AFSA Hydration Station.



AFSA Shines at Airmen's Thanksgiving Dinner

By MSgt Angela Gibson, Trustee

One of my favorite things about being a member of our Chapter is the truly amazing people with giving hearts and a desire to make a difference. And I never cease to be amazed by our ability to come together, regardless of the challenge. As we approach the holiday season, we demonstrated, yet again, what we can and will do to support our Airmen.

It is a WPAFB annual tradition to have an Unaccompanied Airmen's Thanksgiving Dinner for our Airmen who are separated from their loved ones. As early November approached, I asked my First Sergeant when this year's event was scheduled, only to be told there were no plans for the event this year. As it turned out, our Chaplain Services, who normally host this program, were experiencing significant manning challenges, and much to their disappointment, were unable to make it happen. Disappointed, I went to our ever-wise Chapter President, Chief Garcia, and asked if AFSA could help, to which he immediately responded, "Why yes we can." And thus began the whirlwind of preparation.

In just over two weeks (yes, I said TWO), Kittyhawk Chapter 751 led the combined effort between AFSA, the Chapel and the First Sergeants. In the end, not only was the event a GREAT success, but (like everything our Chapter touches) we raised the bar and put on a great show.

An estimated 200 Airmen came out on Friday, November 21 to enjoy a full Thanksgiving Dinner with all the fixin's served to the



MSgt Pamela Wilkins-Smith, 88th Communications Group First Sergeant, pours on the gravy to an appreciative Airman.

by Commanders, First Sergeants, Chiefs and AFSA members from across the base, to include Lt General Jack Hudson, Aeronautical Systems Center Commander, and Colonel Brad Spacy, 88th Air Base Wing Commander. As if that weren't enough, in addition to an atmosphere thick with camaraderie and holiday cheer, guests enjoyed a mind-boggling and mouth-watering buffet of homemade desserts and salads donated by AFSA supporters across the base, live violin and cello music, a balloon artist and even a caricaturist!

Needless to say, a good time was had by all, and yet again, where there was a need to be filled, there was Chapter 751 to step up to the plate and ensure we are doing the right thing by our Airmen!

So Long to Our Beloved Chaplain

By CMSgt (Ret) Ruben Garcia, Chapter President

Chapter Chaplain, TSgt George Balderrama, recently retired from the Air Force and returned to New Mexico. Although his tenure as Chaplain was less than a year, his humor, goodwill and Chapter accomplishments will long be remembered. He supported various fundraisers, coached the Active Duty team at the AFSA Softball Challenge and contributed several articles to the Kittyhawk Flyer. His invocations at the start of the General Membership meetings were heartfelt and passionate. He will be missed and we thank him for the service he provided us.



Chapter Presents \$4,500 at Fisher House Groundbreaking

By MSgt Angela Gibson, Chapter 751 Fisher/Nightingale House Board Representative

On Friday, November 7, the long awaited Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new Fisher House took place, and as dedicated Fisher House Supporters, Chapter 751 was there. As described in previous newsletters, supporting the Fisher House Capital Fund Campaign was a specific goal for the Chapter in 2008. We pledged 10% of our regular fundraisers throughout the year and we had a large dedicated fundraiser, our First Annual Golf Tournament, in which all the proceeds would go to the campaign.

The ceremony was very nice. Comments were made by Jack Nickert, Fisher House Foundation Trustee; Lt. General Terry Gabreski, Air Force Materiel Command Vice Commander; Colonel Bradley Spacy, 88th Air Base Wing Commander; Colonel Kimberly Slawinski, 88th Medical Group Commander; Senior Master Sergeant (Ret) Chris Stanley, Executive Director of Fisher/Nightingale Houses Inc; and Ms. Carol Holden. All eloquently described not only the importance and need of Fisher Houses, but also the significant impact the 10,000 square foot facility complete with 12 fully handi-capped-accessible suites will have as they provide a home away from home for our sick/

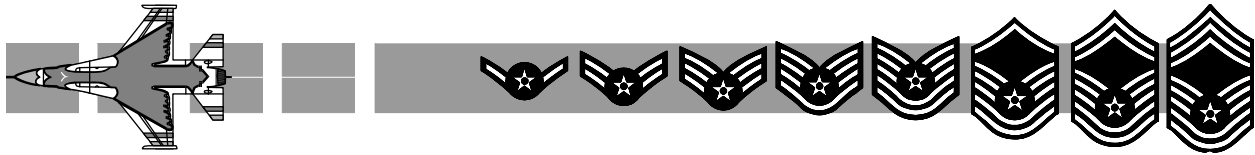
injured Airmen and family members. Most moving were the comments made by Ms. Carol Holden, the proud mother of one of our war heroes who was severely injured while serving in Iraq. Ms. Holden learned of the Fisher Houses while her son recovered at Walter Reed Medical Center.

As a result of the Golf Tournament and other various fundraisers, AFSA Chapter 751 was able to proudly present a check for an awesome \$4,500 to Sergeant Stanley. I know I speak for the entire Executive Council when I say we are SO very proud of the Chapter's efforts and contribution towards this great cause. We thank all the many members who helped us to achieve this goal. The new \$2.75M House is expected to open in 10 months.

While our Capital Fund Campaign drive may have reached its end, we look forward to continuing to support the Wright-Patterson Fisher Houses. Not only are we a standing charter member of their Executive Council, but we also participate in many of their supporting programs throughout the year. If you would like to learn more about the Wright-Patterson Fisher Houses, to include other ways you can assist, go to www.fnhi.org.



Chapter 751 presents check. From left to right: TSgt (Ret) Jeff Stepanek, Chapter Trustee; Karol Worm, Auxiliary Chapter A751 Senior Advisor; SMSgt (Ret) Chris Stanley, Fisher/Nightingale Houses Inc. Director; CMSgt (Ret) Ruben Garcia, Chapter President; TSgt Angela Gibson, Chapter Trustee and SrA Angela Reffett, Chapter Airmen Activity Coordinator.



Volunteers Needed at the VA

By CMSgt (Ret) Chuck Worm, Chapter VAVS Representative

As many of you know, Kittyhawk Chapter 751 serves on the Dayton Veteran's Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly at the Dayton VA Medical Center. The committee is briefed on current VA issues and programs and takes back information to their respective organizations so their membership can decide on how to best participate in service to our veterans at the VA.

Currently, the Dayton VA is in need of volunteers to assist in several areas at the Medical Center. One such area is making and selling popcorn in the main hospital lobby. Popcorn sales are a major source of income for VAVS Programs. Another area is in the Hospice Unit on the ninth floor serving coffee and snacks to patients and visitors and attending to any lounge area needs. If you have some free time and are interested in one of these or other volunteer opportunities at the VA, please contact Kay Crawford at (937) 262-2162 or email carolyn.crawford@va.gov. You may also contact me at (937) 237-1792 or by email at chiefcootie@aol.com.

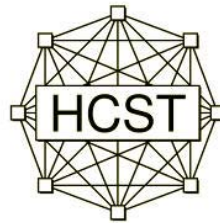
Chapter 751 Annual Awards Banquet Coming Soon

By MSgt Scotty Cruz, Trustee

On January 24, 2009, Kittyhawk Chapter 751 will host their annual awards banquet in the Wright-Patt Club. The Chapter takes this opportunity to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding support to the Enlisted corps, the base, and the community during 2008.

Colonel Brad Spacy, 88th Air Base Wing Commander, will serve as the guest speaker and will assist in recognizing the SNCO, NCO, Airman and Enlisted Spouse of the Year. Other awards presented will be Member of the Year, Auxiliary Member of the Year and the President's Award.

Please mark your calendars and come out to support the nominees and your Chapter. You may register for the banquet online at afsa751awards.eventbrite.com or contact MSgt (Ret) Geoff Oliver at (937) 904-5205.



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