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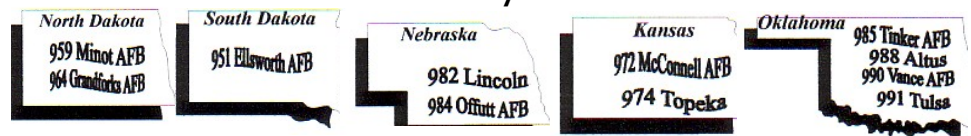


AFSA Division 9 Newsletter

"The Plainsmen"

From the Peace Garden to the Red River

January 2009



President's Remarks:

Happy New Year Division 9 Members!!

I and all the Division 9 Executive Council trust you had a good holiday season and extend the heartiest greetings to you in this New Year. We sincerely hope 2008 was a good year for you, and 2009 will be even better. I think you'll agree after reading this newsletter that 2008 was a busy and productive year! I attended a mid-year AFSA International Executive Council meeting in March at the Washington, DC headquarters; Division 9 and Chapter 972 hosted the joint Division 8/9 annual conference/convention in Wichita, Kansas in April; and delegates from Division 9 Chapters attended the International PAC/Convention in San Antonio, Texas in August. I wanted to get this newsletter out to you early to update you on ongoing projects and so you can join me in congratulating our hard working recruiters and retainers. Our most worthy organization's very existence depends on these dedicated individuals keeping our membership strength (numbers) at a level to afford access to our congressional leaders on Capitol Hill.

AFSA Division 89 Merger: We have been extremely busy drafting and coordinating with our two divisions Executive Councils an implementation plan and standing rules to insure a satisfactory merger transition. Our approved time line to finalize this merger is our joint annual convention in April 2009. Following is an update of the article about this merger in our Division 9 September 2008 Newsletter for those that may not have read about it:

The AFSA International Executive Council at their pre-convention meeting voted NO to a Talking Paper (TP) to reorganize/combine ALL AFSA Divisions. For Example; merge Div 1 & 2, Merge Div 3 & 7, and

so on to achieve functional size equality along with geographical closeness. The justification in part was the need to reorganize divisions in an effort to reduce costs associated with decreased revenue and membership. Under this plan it would have been necessary to renumber all divisions/chapters. As stated the plan was defeated and won't happen this coming year.

The Council did approve a separate TP on the requested merger of Divisions 8 & 9. Such a merger had been approved by delegates of both divisions at their annual convention in April 2008. A separate letter was sent to Division 8 and 9 members through chapter presidents outlining the transition process, concerns, and soliciting related input. The letter also explained that our two divisions could control its own destiny by taking the initiative and merging. It was brought out that: (1) we already have a family relationship by doing combined division conventions, (2) our two divisions adjoin one another, (3) the distance from the outer tip of one to the

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other is probably not different than when Divisions 6 & 10 did this successfully a few years ago, and (4) we could attempt to centralize division conventions to give all members access. For those that do not know, both divisions encompass 5 states; Division 8 Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri & Wisconsin and Division 9 Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

We don't foresee much change in the way chapters will operate in the new structure, even after the merger is finalized. The exception of course is after the April 2009 convention elections there will be one Division 89 President and Executive Council. Thus, points of contact for submission of awards, reports, and other correspondence will change accordingly.

Annual Division Convention: Division 8/Chapter 872 Scott AFB, Illinois will host our combined Division 8 and 9 Convention this year. It is scheduled for April 30-May 2, 2009. Arrangements are currently being made for a facility to accommodate us outside Scott AFB in the O'Fallon, Illinois area. Additional information about registration, lodging, cost, etc. will be published as it becomes available. Please mark your calendars to join us. As you've seen by the merger information above, this is a very important convention.

Membership Recruiting/Retention Achievers: Congratulations to the members shown in the chart below for recruiting or retaining at least 100 new members each in 2008. Please Note Jon Bennett did both! Mike Parente was Division 9's top recruiter and Jon Bennett the top retainer. Also, please look at the lifetime productivity of several of these members: Mike Parente and Steve Francis are among AFSA's all-time recruiters. Combine Jon Bennett's lifetime recruiting and retention and he has a combined 1,160. Although Dale Lutzen is not on the Skyhiger/Highflier qualifying list this year, he has a combined lifetime total of 1,152 (862 recruiting and 290 retentions). Some could have even higher personal figures, but once the magic 100 is attained, they unselfishly mentor and help others reach that status also.

Division 9 was second in with the highest number of SkyHIGHER qualifiers in AFSA worldwide, following Division 610. These individuals will be recognized at the 2009 AFSA International PAC/Convention in August at Atlanta, Georgia.

We also thank those that may not have recruited/retained 100 members, but was part of the team nevertheless by obtaining what they could. We're proud of all accomplishments and special achievers in 2008, but just being a member is important too. The law of large numbers applies. AFSA's effectiveness in lobbying Congress depends on a large membership base. So, if it's time to renew your membership, I encourage you to do so without delay. Remember, *if every member recruited and retained just one member we would more than double our membership base.*

Name	SkyHigher	Chapter	Recruits	Lifetime
BARNHART, NATHAN	Yes	959	110	119
PARENTE, MICHAEL	Yes	984	187	1,489
THOMPSON, BRYAN	Yes	985	109	214
TURNER, TERRY	Yes	985	104	237
FLEMING, BETHANN	Yes	985	104	105
BENNETT, JONATHAN	Yes	985	101	715
FRANCIS, STEPHAN	Yes	988	108	1,380
HAMM, JOHNNY	Yes	988	100	308
	Highflier			
BENNETT, JONATHAN	Yes	985	107	455
GALLUP, GREGORY	Yes	959	100	436

Membership Information: Following are partial comments from CMSgt (Ret) Dan Yeomans, AFSA International Membership Chair concerning a 2008 year end summary:

This is the first of three ends of year summaries I will provide as the current Membership Chair. This mail concerns current AFSA Membership Strength and Growth

1. Our current strength as of Dec 31st based on numbers available to me are 103,492 AFSA + 10,611 Auxiliary for a total of 114,103. At the PAC, we were briefed that our numbers were at approximately 17,000.
2. At the PAC, it was briefed that we need approximately 20,000 combined new recruits and renewals to break even. We missed this number this year by about 3,000 and experienced about the same number of negative growth or membership losses. We of course need to stop the negative trend
3. I will update growth by Chapter and Division during the final 8 months of my tour of duty as Membership Chair. I will use the Dec 31st baseline as a measure of how we are doing. The bottom line—we need to maintain our strength at minimum. Optimally we can grow.

One area for potential improvement you may wish to consider is the number of AFSA and Auxiliary Chapters with 1 or 2 members. I would recommend all Division Presidents review these Chapters and consider consolidating the one and two member Chapters under a larger and active Chapter

Best wishes to all. Two more mails will follow later today or by no later than the 2nd of Jan. The second mail will share the unofficial results of our 2008 membership campaign. The final mail will be a summary of what went well, what we need to improve upon, and a high level breakout of how your International membership Committee will attempt to partner with you to move AFSA forward

Warm regards,
Dan Yeomans

Reports: First, thanks to all chapters who submit their reports accurately and timely! They comprehend the old adage, "the job's not finished until the paperwork is done." I don't know how to emphasize the importance of these reports more than we're doing. AFSA Headquarters needs the completed activities/financial information accurately and timely to consolidate into one major report for submission to IRS to maintain our tax-exempt status, including filing one corporate tax return. This relieves chapters of the burden of having to file their own tax returns. This in itself should be an incentive to get the information to them.

We've had a workshop every year, starting with 2004, at our annual division convention suggesting activities and ways to document them to help prepare the required reports. We've suggested you have a "Reports Chairperson" just like any other committee chair to assure compliance. We published a Division 9 Standing Rule 2008-3, April 2008, that outlines the entire reports process "when, how, why" without you having to do extensive research of various AFSA directives. This Standing Rule is attached.

Last, but important; reports compliance has to be met by each chapter for them to remain an active chapter. **Additionally, if you don't submit these reports timely you lose your rebate.** If you have to do it anyway, why not do it timely and get the rebate funds you deserve – and probably need? Look at the standing rule; put the reports' due dates on your calendar and let's improve in this area. If you have a unique problem that prevents you from doing this, then please contact your Division President and let's resolve it.

Hqs AFSA E-Mail Address: If you want to correspond with AFSA Headquarters via e-mail their correct address is: staff@hqafsa.org (you'll notice the hq is now in front of AFSA and not following it as in the past). From that point, the e-mails are distributed to the various departments. In case you didn't see the announcement, Robert D. Shaw is now the Director of Member and Field Relations.

New Division 9 Auxiliary Coordinator: Rebecca Streeter at Altus, OK was unable to continue as the Division 9 Auxiliary Coordinator. Once she resigned, Division 9 did not have sufficient operating auxiliary chapters to have its own coordinator. Altus and Minot are anticipating deactivating because of declining interest to have even enough officers to continue. The remaining Lincoln chapter is currently strong operating under an exception because their parent AFSA chapter deactivated in January 2008. International Auxiliary President McDowell, with Division 9 President Lutzen's concurrence, appointed the Division 8 Auxiliary Coordinator Jean Kolwitz to also oversee Division 9. Some of you may have already had contact with her. She has contacted the struggling chapters and is working the Division 9 Auxiliary rosters. She is very experienced in AFSA and its Auxiliary's principles, goals and operating procedures. Following is her contact information: Jean Kolwitz, N5235 Harvest Road, Hartford, WI 53027-9302, Telephone 262-673-7503, E-mail budjean3@intergate.com.

Greetings from snowy Wisconsin—

Well, Christmas is past and I certainly hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas with family and friends. The year is over and I know everyone is saying, "Where did it go!" The New Year is upon us and we all make resolutions. Let's all make one this year—to make AFSA the best organization there is.

All of you know that last August I was appointed the Division 9 Coordinator until the upcoming elections. I have been in touch with the Division 9 AFSA Chapter Presidents and I am pleased to say that there has been interest expressed among them to get the Auxiliaries in their area reactivated. It is work, but I know that, together, we can do it. Now that the holidays are just about gone and we all get back to our regular routine, my priority is to work with each AFSA Chapter Presidents in this respect. President Lutzen has already mentioned the status of the active Auxiliaries in Division 9, so I won't repeat what he has said.

As all of you know, the merger has been a topic of discussion lately, and I, for one, have put in my two cents worth on the various topics of discussion. I have enjoyed working with each one and look forward to doing so even more. So, to all—let's make 2009 the year the Auxiliaries make a strong comeback!

Jean Kolwitz, Division 9 Auxiliary Coordinator

Legislative News by Bryan Thompson, Division 9 Legislative Trustee: The legislative initiatives are the biggest 'seller' of our association. When people hear of the changes we are making in our laws, they get excited and want to be a part of it. Please pass along legislative news, especially to non-members, so they hear of the important work your AFSA is doing.

Since the last Division 9 newsletter, there have been a number of important changes on the legislative front. The most obvious of course is the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into law on October 14 as S. 2001 Hunter Douglas National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2009. Most notably in the 2009 NDAA were a 3.9% pay raise, no increase in Tricare fees including prescriptions, and an increase in our end-strength to 330,000, undoing some of the damage done by reducing our size to 312,000.

Here are a number of pieces of legislation currently being considered.

H.R. 6925, by Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, D-SD, would amend title 10, United States Code, to require that each member of the Armed Forces receive employment assistance, job training assistance, and other transitional services provided by the Secretary of Labor before that member separates from active duty service.

H.R. 6930, by Rep. James Moran, D-VA, (and 11 original cosponsors) would amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize extended benefits for certain autistic dependents of certain retirees.

H.R. 6939, by Rep. Bob Filner, D-CA, would amend title 38, United States Code, to provide two-fiscal year budget authority for certain medical care accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. Related bill: S. 3527.

AFSA Staff Note to H.R. 6939 and S. 3527: This reflects a compromise on an issue long-sought by AFSA to provide 'mandatory funding' for Veterans Health Care. While it won't put this important

program in the 'must pay' portion of the budget, it will provide significantly better predictability for the VA , so they can improve access and how they deliver health care for America's veterans.

H.R. 6945, by Rep. Steve Scalise, R-LA, would amend title 38, United States Code, to expand access to hospital care for veterans in major disaster areas, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6968, by Rep. Gwen Moore, D-WI, would require the Secretary of Defense to conduct a demonstration project regarding access to mental health services by members of the Armed Forces.

S. 2617. After clearing Congress on September 16, the "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2008," was presented to the President for signature. This bill would give veterans the same cost-of-living adjustment (effective December 1, payable January 1, 2009) as that given to Social Security recipients. The actual COLA will not be known until mid-October. However, current trends, based on the Consumer Price Index, show that it may be as high as six percent. The President is expected to sign this legislation within the next week.

S. 2969, by Sen. Daniel Akaka, D-HI, would amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to recruit and retain nurses and other critical health-care professionals, and for other purposes. Related Bill: H.R. 6153. UPDATE: Placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar 9/18/08.

Finally, here is an extract from the June 6 AFSA Newsletter that contains a bill, introduced by Congressman Turner that we need to get reintroduced in 2009: **House Passes Bill to Protect Child Custody Arrangements During Deployments.** H.R. 6048, sponsored by Rep. Michael R. Turner, R-OH, passed the House and would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to protect child custody arrangements for parents who are members deployed in support of a contingency operation. This clarifies a change implemented in the 2008 NDAA regarding child custody. If a motion for change of child custody is filed while the member is deployed, no court may enter an order modifying or amending a previous child custody judgment, except if there is clear and convincing evidence it is in the best interest of the child. H.R. 6048 would also prohibit any court from considering a member's absence due to deployment, or possible deployment, in support of a contingency operation in determining the best interest of the child.

If any AFSA members would like to express their support to Congressman Turner, he can be reached via e-mail: <http://www.turner.house.gov/Contact/>

AFSA Past International Presiden Chuck Bryant passed away November 22, 2008. His funeral, with full military honors, was Nov. 29th. Past International President Joe Spence was AFSA's representative. Chuck was our AFSA International President in the mid 80s. Members of Division 9 extend their heartfelt condolence to his wife Margo and family.

Scholarships: Division 9 will offer two \$500.00 scholarships again this year to be awarded at our annual convention in April 2009. Trustee Shelia Russell will be disseminating information containing applications, qualifications and the submission process separately to Chapter Presidents. Request Chapter Presidents give this program your broadest distribution upon receipt. Shelia's contact information is shown on the first page of this newsletter.

New Password Reset Process: The following process is repeated in case you missed notice PDS #443 from Lorinda Tromblee, Hq. AFSA, dated September 19, 2008

This correspondence was transmitted from AFSA headquarters via AFSA'S Electronic Pyramid System (PDS). Please disseminate it to all appropriate parties however; it is not intended for distribution via government computers.

Our customers now have a new automated response to their "reset password" requests. We were unable to fully utilize the automated process previously because member records were not populated with enough data. Now that iMIS has been in place, we have captured enough data to turn this functionality back on.

The new process will ask the member for their email address loaded against their record. If there is no email address or an incorrect address, they will not be able to retrieve the password, but may call Member and Field Relations to update their record so they can go online to request a new password.

Please remind your recruiters of the extreme importance of entering a **valid** email address when signing people up for membership online. Additionally, all applications sent to AFSA International Headquarters for processing must have a valid email address.

The staff of Member and Field Relations is ready to update member records to reflect their preferred email address.

AFSA Forms and Manuals: You can download AFSA forms and manuals from www.hqafsa.org. Click on "Resources" and then forms or manuals as preferred. Please note that each of these "pulldowns" has dates of recently added/posted forms and manuals. Don't just download and forget to check for updates. I recommend you check forms before preparing each quarterly/annual report to make sure you have the latest version. Checking the manual posting dates for changes would also be advisable before researching topics. As you know, any manual page changes are reflected by a vertical line in the left hand margin.

Division Awards: Division Officers/Chapter Presidents should have received a letter in December from Division 9 Vice President/Awards Chair Jon Bennett. This letter (with AFSA Awards Guidelines attached) emphasized that **ALL formats** have changed on awards packages submissions; provided where to send AFSA and Auxiliary packages and set a March 20, 2009 deadline. Now that the Division 8/9 Conference/Convention dates are known to be April 23-25, 2009 that gives us more time to work with the awards. Therefore, **the deadline is extended to March 31, 2009**. A separate reminder will also be sent to the distribution mentioned above. If you have any questions, contact Division President Lutzen, VP Bennett or Coordinator Kolwitz.

Importance of Working Bad Address Roster by Div 9 VP Jon Bennett: I included a lengthy article in the Division 9 Newsletter, September 2008, about the importance of working this roster. I'm not going to repeat the article in its entirety, but just reemphasize a couple of key points. (If you want to read the entire article go to www.afsativ9.org and click on Legislative/Newsletters then scroll down and click on "Division 9 Newsletter").

1. If for no other reason, there is a monetary reason for AFSA and the Chapters for working this roster. Every time an issue of Sergeants magazine is returned to AFSA Hq. for a bad address it cost approx. \$2.25. That's money down the drain – now look at what the chapter loses:
2. Folks listed on your Chapter's Bad Address Roster don't count in your overall chapter strength. Therefore, when computing your quarterly Administrative Support rebate – you lose 25 cents for every member on that roster. That itself should be reason enough to purge your list every month. Assign someone to contact these people and get a correct address updated to AFSA.

REPORTS

1. **Purpose:** To provide Division 9 Chapter Presidents/Officers guidance to help them submit AFSA quarterly and annual reports a timely manner without extensive research of issued directives.

2. **Authority:** AFSAM 100-2, Principle 15, Section 2b. This rule was approved by the Division 9 membership attending the Division 9 Convention held on April 24-26, 2008 and provides guidelines concerning the submission of reports by Division 9.

3. **Procedures:**

a. **AFSA Fiscal Year.** Most know, but some may not – The AFSA fiscal year is May 1st through April 30th each year. For example: AFSA FY2009 will begin May 1, 2008. The AFSA fiscal year is divided into 4 quarters as follows:

AFSA FY1Q09 – 1 May-31 July 08
AFSA FY2Q09 – 1 Aug-31 Oct 08

AFSA FY3Q09 – 1 Nov 08-31 Jan 09
AFSA FY4Q09 – 1 Feb-30 Apr 09

b. **Who to send the reports to?** *All Division 9 chapter reports, quarterly and annual, will be sent to the Division 9 President.* This requirement started in 2007; in the past reports have gone directly to AFSA with a copy to the Division President.

c. **When must they be sent?**

(1) Quarterly reports (Combined Activities/Americanism and Financial). AFSAM 100-2 Updated September 2007, page 66, still states they are due by the 15th day following the end of each quarter. Also not changed is the additional 30 days (for a total of 45 days) provided to get these reports in. Rebates are dependent upon timely submission. It is hoped that chapters can have these reports submitted by the 15th due date without regard for ANY additional days, but we know circumstances sometimes prevent this. Regardless, the assignment of a more proactive role to division presidents in the reports preparation/submission process necessitates establishment of an earlier suspense to accomplish this management function.

(a) *Therefore, in Division 9 chapters will only have an additional 20 days and not 30 for a total of (35 days).* These extra 10 days, if necessary, will afford the division president time to monitor your progress and help you be timely, thus helping you qualify for your much earned/needed rebate.

(b) The quarterly Financial Report is set-up for and must be prepared on the same from for all 4 quarters. When the next quarter ends, just add that data to the preceding quarters and change the file name to reflect the current quarter you are completing so AFSA can find it by doing a search. The file name should show the chapters name, the report and the quarter; *for example: 985 Qtrly AA FY1Q09 or 985 Qtrly Financial FY1Q09.*

(2) Annual reports. There are no additional days built in for these reports. There is also no reason you have to wait until the last minute to prepare them. Forms can be downloaded from www.afsahq.org. *Don't forget, all these reports now go to the Division President, not direct to AFSA.*

(a) Audit. AFSAM 100-2, Updated September 2007, page 66, states the annual audit is *due not later than June 15th*. The audit form has conflicting information stating May 15th. June 15th is the correct day; however, look for a change out of AFSA on this. The date needs to be NLT June 1st to permit AFSA time to get chapter/division audits to Headquarters' Auditors. *Tip: Pay attention to the form. Even though the electronic*

version is prepared on a computer, it must be printed out, signed and mailed – not e-mail to the Division President. The form recommends you print out 2 original copies, one for file and one for AFSA. Please prepare 3 copies and forward 2 to the division president, so he/she will have a file copy also.

(b) Budget. The annual budget is *due NLT than May 15th each year*; same reference as the audit above. **Tip:** *You can start preparing this report in December or January, don't wait until April. How do you start the New Year without knowing where you stand on your finances?* You don't have to wait for the elections/new regime "because it's their money you're proposing usage of," you're the one with the experience of the past year. Do the initial preparation and let them make any necessary changes.

(c) Directory of Officers. A Directory of Officers must be submitted NLT May 15th of each calendar year, and within 15 days of any changes. Most chapters have elections and installation of officers in the first few months of the calendar year. A report of course is required with 15 days of the new officers taking office. **Regardless, if there are no changes, a Directory of Officers has to be submitted at the beginning of every fiscal year and NLT May 15th.** Reference AFSAM 100-4 (1), pages 1 & 2, updated January 2008.

4. Alert: Your attention is directed to AFSAM 100-4 (1), page 2, updated January 2008. The importance of filing all reports timely is critical and the reasons are given in this manual. **Division/chapters failing to submit a quarterly report within established timeframes will be considered INACTIVE.** As briefed at convention, if you're unsure of something, don't sit back and do nothing - ASK??

//Signed//

Dale C. Lutzen
Division 9 President

Distribution:
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Chapter Presidents
Auxiliary Presidents
Director, Member and Field Relations