



AFSA CONNECTION

In a high-tech, sometimes impersonal and disconnected world, AFSA Chapters serve the important purpose of **connecting** its members around common values and causes. While the Headquarters and Divisions can provide membership campaigns, resources, and tools to recruit and retain, ***the real work is done at the Chapter levels.***

A recent AFSA survey showed that 52% of our members believe that “**Connection** and Information” is the most important benefit of their AFSA membership! A “5 for \$25” membership special can bring them in the door, but it’s up to the Chapters to keep them by **connecting** with them regularly!

So how do we connect and give people the opportunity to make a difference in their communities and to each other? Much of this is done through events organized by the Chapter. The key is to find a need, get a group together to meet it, and watch how it connects people!

Below are some great ideas on ways to **connect**; these ideas have worked for other Chapters. We believe these ideas are a great way to bring AFSA and Family members together to make a difference! This list is not all inclusive – just a way to spark some ideas!

- Boots for Vets Drive
- Clothing drives for kids
- Visits to state Veterans Homes (AFSA VAVS Program)
 - Veterans Homes
 - Sponsor or Provide Entertainment at State Veterans Homes
- Member Socials, Picnics, BBQs
- Fun runs, 5K, 10K, etc
- Christmas in April event
- Volunteer with Habitat for Humanity
- Help in Disaster Relief
- Help with Honor Flight (\$, chaperone, departure & arrival ceremonies)
- Veterans Stand downs
- Veteran Information Fairs
- Military Job Fairs
- Veterans History Project
- Raise \$ to buy and train a service dog
- Participate in a Veteran’s Day parade
- Place flowers/flags on the Graves of Veterans
- Surprise junior Airmen at Gas Station/Commissary by paying for their purchase
- Monthly Birthday Celebrations
- Sponsor Spartan Race/Sports Days
- Grant a Wounded Warrior’s Wish
- Donate Frequent Flier miles to Fisher House, etc.
- Host a Veterans Breakfast for Local Veterans
- Offer Companionship to a Veteran to Show Gratitude
- Sponsor a Donation Drive for a Local VA Hospital or Shelter
- Raise money to buy wreaths for Wreaths Across America;
- Participate (host) Wreath-Laying Ceremonies
- Offer a Veteran Assistance to Improve Quality of Life. Hands-on service projects depend on the abilities and skills of the people offering to help and might include:
 - Running household errands
 - Adapting the environment for independence (ramp, handrails)
 - Transportation for appointments
 - Services like reading mail or light housecleaning

***Be sure to invite your local public affairs office to the event so they can let others know what AFSA is doing, which in turn encourages more to join us!*