



Air Force Sergeants Association

Heart of America, Chapter 804
P.O. Box 213, Belton, MO 64012

October 6, 2020

Subject: **We Have Reached a Tipping Point**

My fellow AFSA Chapter 804 members,

I have written many articles over the years for our quarterly Newsletters, but none have hurt my heart more than this one. Our beloved Chapter has reached a tipping point in its long and illustrious history, one that if we can't find a way to recover from, will be the end of our Chapter as we have known it.

For decades, the same 15 to 20 members have kept our Chapter afloat. Unfortunately, we have lost many of those members to death, age and relocation to other states. The handful of dedicated members still willing to hold office and take responsibility for our Chapter has dwindled to a treasured few. Those that are left have worked themselves to the point of burnout and exhaustion. The demands of their time have harmed their relationships with family and have turned what once was a labor of love into a burden that dominates their lives.

We recently had an Executive Committee meeting via Zoom and it was clear that each person on the call was frustrated by the lack of support of members who live in the greater Kansas City area. We have lifetime members living right in Belton and its surrounding communities that haven't been to a meeting in decades and every year our participation gets smaller and smaller at events that used to fill the room.

The simple fact is we have almost reached the point of no return as a Chapter and, if we can't get current members to volunteer to participate in leading our Chapter, we simply will cease to exist as a functioning Chapter. Thanks to COVID-19 and diminished participation before the pandemic, we

have no revenue stream to speak of and we are running out of money. In fact, we didn't have the money to mail this letter to each of you, but we felt it was important to give you the truth about where we are as a Chapter, which is why you're receiving this letter via email.

We are going to hold a meeting in January 2021 or sooner. If we don't get new members attending who are willing to hold office, take on the position of Newsletter Editor, help with organizing Chapter events and fundraising, this will be the last Newsletter you receive from Chapter 804. We don't like this anymore than you do, but this is the reality of where we are today.

I would hate to see our Chapter become a Chapter on paper only so if you can volunteer to help, **please plan to attend the January 12th meeting, 7:00 PM, at the Belton Senior Center, 609 Minnie Avenue** and bring new energy to our Chapter. If you want to volunteer to help before the January meeting, **contact Chapter President, Charlie Dalzell at 816-331-7594** and we will put you to work. There is nothing to be afraid of; we will not throw any volunteer to the wolves. We will train them to fulfil the role they volunteer to fill and we will thank them for it. This is our Chapter and if we are going to save it, we will have to do it together.

The days of expecting someone else to keep the Chapter going are over. Can we count on you to help revive our Chapter? I sure hope so, but only time will tell. I hope to see you all in January.

Mark R. Clark, CMSgt, USAF, Retired
AFSA Chapter 804 Vice President