

eNewsletter



Issue 12
Autumn 2009

Welcome

Welcome to the autumn edition of the SSAFA Forces Help eNewsletter. This has been sent to everyone we have an email address for, but please feel free to forward it on if you feel it would be of interest to them. It has also been designed to be printed, if required (using the blue print button). If you require the eNewsletter with a larger typeface, click [here](#).

We are planning to update this newsletter in the near future and would appreciate any ideas you have to improve the newsletter. Please send these to newsletter@ssafa.org.uk

Gabriele Black
Editor



HOLIDAY FUN

The SSAFA's Got Talent competition proved to be a hit with youngsters on one of SSAFA Forces Help's children's holidays.

The fun event was part of this summer's holiday for the siblings and young carers of children with additional needs and

disabilities, with both children and volunteers providing the entertainment.

The annual siblings' holiday was sponsored by VT Group and took place

NEWS IN BRIEF

Forget me Knots Supporters are being reminded to think of SSAFA in their wills as part of Forget Me Knot week, 14-21 September. For more information about legacy giving, contact the Central Office Fundraising Team.

Demand for Homes
SSAFA Norton Homes at Selly Oak and Headley Court are running at full capacity. The homes for the families of injured troops have seen a dramatic rise in demand following the recent increase in casualties returning from Afghanistan.

at YMCA Fairthorne Manor, near Southampton. It was followed by two holidays for children with additional needs and disabilities in Northumberland and Exmoor, and one for children from Western Europe at the Het Heidjebos Center Parcs in the Netherlands.

The week-long activity breaks give young people the opportunity to try things that are often not otherwise available to them. At the same time, they provide valuable respite for parents who can take the chance to recharge their batteries.

Ten-year-old Liam Cousins, who has ADHD and Autism, had the time of his life. His dad Stuart, based at RAF Odiham, said: "Liam came home and did not stop talking about his holiday for days. They took him rock climbing, abseiling, kayaking, orienteering, swimming – all the sorts of things that we cannot really do as a family. It did so much for his self-esteem. He does not believe he can do a great deal, but on that holiday he certainly came out of his shell. He took part in everything and enjoyed everything.

"It also gave us a chance to have a couple of days out with the other three children and focus more on them so they are not constantly wondering what Liam is doing."

The breaks cater for the children of military personnel from all three Services.

CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES

Cards for Good Causes (CGC) are seeking volunteers to raise money for SSAFA Forces Help Branches this Christmas.

Each year, CGC opens hundreds of shops around the country selling charity cards direct to the public. Any Branch or Division that provides volunteers for a CGC shop over the Christmas period can receive up to 25 per cent of the income from the SSAFA cards sold.

Last year, SSAFA was ranked 11th out of more than 40 charities that raised money this way. The amounts that can be raised can be quite significant, with one Branch earning £1,141.66.

If you would like to volunteer, first inform your local Branch or Division and then email cfgc@interalpha.co.uk for details. For additional information regarding SSAFA Christmas cards, please call Yasmin Antonowicz on 020 7463 9248 or email yasmin.a@ssafa.org.uk

Taxi for SSAFA!

A London taxi is publicising the SSAFA message around the Capital this summer. The cab is in the tri-Forces colour scheme and also contains leaflets informing passengers about the Association's work.

Isle of Wight Rocks

In July, Australian singer Nicki Gillis took time out from her UK tour to entertain residents at St Vincent's, our care-home for ex-servicemen and women on the Isle of Wight. Nicki had previously sung for troops in Iraq and East Timor.

Scottish Walk

An unusual sponsored walk has raised £3,300 for SSAFA's Angus Branch. Bobby Campbell clocked-up more than 3,000 miles walking around his hometown of Edzell. Starting in March 2008, Mr Campbell,

ARMED FORCES DAY
SSAFA Forces Help Branches and Divisions around the country took part in events to mark the first Armed Forces Day on 27 June 2009.



The national Armed Forces Day event was held at The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, where around 30,000 people attended to show their support for the men and women of our military, past and present.

Suresh Khanna, of the Kent Branch, commented: "We attracted lots of attention from the visitors. Many of the people we spoke to have an Armed Forces connection, so we met with a lot of potential clients, as well as potential volunteers. We were delighted to brief the Duke of Gloucester on our stand. He was particularly interested in SSAFA's work and spent a good deal of time with us, along with a number of senior Navy and Air Force officers."

In London, staff from SSAFA Central Office joined the celebrations outside City Hall where the Association had a stall.

Armed Forces' Day replaced Veterans' Day and will be an annual event. Next year, Cardiff will host the national celebrations and it is hoped more towns and cities will stage events.

RECRUITMENT ONLINE

SSAFA Forces Help is going online to search out new volunteers. Its latest recruitment campaign is a series of banner advertisements on the popular Army Rumour Service and the Forces Reunited e-newsletter.

"I see online recruitment as a natural progression," says Glen Smith, Branch Support Advisor (Membership). "An ever-increasing number of the potential volunteers that we are targeting use the internet as an everyday part of life – and we need to reach these people."

The campaign is SSAFA's first venture into joint print and online activity, although Marketing Manager Alex Bozeat says that the association will be doing more: "The great thing about online advertising is that it targets a relevant audience and its success is measurable. The internet will become increasingly important in spreading the word about SSAFA, as

63, who has a hip replacement, walked six miles every day, completing his feat on 11 July this year.

SSABBA

In full ABBA costume and wigs, SSABBA, formed by Branch Chairman Dick Bogg and his wife, together with committee member Phil Clements and his wife, brought the house down in a show that raised almost €700 for the France Branch.

We hope you have found this edition of the eNewsletter informative.

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the use of traditional print media continues to decline."

MIA FELTON



Mia Felton is the Chairman of the SSAFA Service Committee at Catterick. Although she only took the position in February, she has made her mark among the super-garrison's 12,000-strong community.

Mia commented: "The committee had already done some excellent fundraising, but we needed to become better at getting the SSAFA message out there. I believe that by valuing our troops and

families we can improve operational effectiveness and help them bond before deployment.

"We set about getting people to come forward with ideas of how SSAFA could help. The first big project was 'Escape', a chillout zone for soldiers from The 1st Lancashire regiment. SSAFA paid for some empty rooms to be transformed into a recreation centre with pool tables, internet access, TV and soft drinks. This is staffed by the WRVS."

With deployments on the horizon, the patter of tiny feet is expected to become a charge. So, other projects include refurbishing a baby-change unit, plus a family room where children can be entertained, while parents meet with the welfare team.

But Mia's most ambitious project, by far, is Soldier Come Dancing. Taking place this autumn, the idea combines all the glitz and glamour of the TV show featuring the servicemen and women of Catterick Garrison as its 'celebrities'. Volunteers are invited to submit videos of themselves to be posted on the internet and voted for by the public in return for a donation. "The idea has the backing of Julia Morley, whose Miss World Organisation owns the copyright for the *Come Dancing* format. "Julia was very enthusiastic and we hope to get lots of celebrity and media support," says Mia.

To find out more about Soldier Come Dancing, visit the website: www.soldiercomedancing.co.uk

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