

AIAA Members Celebrate Air Force 70th Anniversary

by

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Images by Lisa Philippart

Members of the Greater Huntsville Section joined Tennessee Valley Chapter 335 of the Air Force Association (AFA) to celebrate the US Air Force's birthday at the Air Force 70th Anniversary Ball on September 22, 2017. Greater Huntsville section members joined over 100 AFA members and guests at the Jackson Center to commemorate the founding of the world's greatest air and space force.

The evening began with a social hour for guests to relax before the formal program commenced. Guests viewed displays of Air Force memorabilia from 1947 to today while a multimedia presentation documenting Air Force history, including AFA members' personal photographs, played on the monitors.

The Bob Jones High School Air Force Junior ROTC Color Guard posted the colors to commence the evening's formal program. This was followed by the singing of the National Anthem and introduction of dignitaries including AIAA Senior Member Brigadier General (retired) Gary Connor.

In the front of the ballroom, in a place of honor, stood a table covered in white linen and set for one, the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action table. The emcee explained the significance of the items on the table, a stark reminder of comrades who could not be present at the event. Guests raised the traditional toast in water to the missing.



Following toasts to the United States, the President and the Air Force, attendees enjoyed dinner and socializing. At the conclusion of dinner, everyone rose to sing Happy Birthday followed by the Air Force Song and the traditional cutting of the cake. In accordance with military tradition, the oldest and youngest veterans in attendance cut the cake. AIAA Emeritus and Associate Fellow Otha "Skeet" Vaughan was the senior veteran present and helped cut the cake.

With formal ceremonies complete, dancing and socializing rounded out the evening.

The Greater Huntsville Section salutes the United States Air Force and thanks AFA Tennessee Valley Chapter 335 for including AIAA in the Air Force 70th Anniversary Ball.



AIAA Emeritus Otha "Skeet" Vaughan & Ken Philippart pose in front of a ¼ scale model of the F-35 Lightning II.