

Greater Huntsville Section Salutes Military and Veterans

by
Ken Philippart
Images by Lisa Philippart



The Greater Huntsville Section saluted its military and veteran members during the month of November, leading up to Veterans Day.

The Section arranged a private tour of the US Veterans Memorial Museum in Huntsville for November 5 and invited Tennessee Valley Chapter 335 of the Air Force Association (AFA) to participate in honor of our veterans. AIAA/AFA members and guests included Section Chair Brandon Stiltner, Vice Chair Naveen Vetcha and his wife Sindu, Jason and Rachel Thrasher, Mike Pessin, Tony Miller, Ken and Lisa Philippart, Bob Jones and Joe Viviano.

The tour began with an overview of the museum. Opened by private collectors as a non-profit educational institution in 2001 right after 9/11, the museum has an extensive collection of 30 military vehicles including the Ford Pygmy, the oldest known surviving example of the vehicle that became the jeep. Along with other jeep models, the collection also contains a variety of military trucks, halftracks, tanks, watercraft and aircraft. Following the orientation, Rob Robley, a Korean War and Vietnam



War veteran and retired US Army CW4, guided the group through the museum, explaining the significance of the exhibits while mixing in interesting personal anecdotes

from his three decades of military service as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialist. Brandon presented Rob with the Greater Huntsville Section coin to thank him for the outstanding tour.



AIAA and AFA members during the tour





After the guided tour, the group wandered the museum on its own before traveling to the Jackson Center to participate in the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War event. The group visited the anniversary exhibits including AFA member Lt Col (ret) Zig Jastrebski's Red River Rats Fighter Pilot Association display. For some of the younger AIAA members, this was the first time they had talked to a Vietnam War veteran and they were fascinated by Zig's war stories. The event concluded with free lunch and the opportunity to meet and greet other veterans.

The following week, AFA South Central Region and Alabama State President Colonel

(retired) Russ Lewey, spoke to AIAA at the Greater Huntsville Section's monthly luncheon. Russ' talk was titled, "*Boeing B-52 Stratofortress: Half Century of Excellence.*" AIAA invited Russ to speak in the month of November to recognize Veterans Day, the third year

Boeing B-52 Stratofortress
Half a Century of Excellence



in a row that the Tennessee Valley Chapter has supported AIAA's November lunch presentation. Russ' multimedia presentation covered the long and illustrious history of the B-52 from its design and development to operations during the Cold War and into the 21st century along with his personal anecdotes about flying the BUFF. A lively question and answer session allowed AIAA members to gain more insight into military aviation and operations and helped broaden their perspectives on weapon system operations.

Greater Huntsville Section Vice Chair Naveen Vetcha presented Russ with the section's challenge coin and thanked the Tennessee Valley Chapter of AFA for supporting the section's veteran outreach and education activities.

Finally, Chair Brandon Stiltner culminated the section's veteran recognition activities in November by acknowledging all of the section's military and veteran members by name and branch of service in a personal email of thanks on Veterans Day.

The Greater Huntsville Section salutes our military and veteran members!

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|---------------|--------|-----------|
| David | Butler | Air Force |
| Brig Gen Gary | Connor | Air Force |
| Katherine | Crowe | Air Force |
| Franklin | Dement | Air Force |

Jay	Ferreira	Army
L. Michael	Freeman	Air Force
John	Glynn	Air Force
Bradley	Gudgel	Air Force
Maj Gen John	Holly	Air Force
Richard	Kramer	Army
Alexander	Jehle	Army
Chuck	LaMar	Air Force
John	Lassiter	Air Force
Anthony Brent	Marley	Air Force
David	McDaniel	Air Force
Brian	McDonald	Air Force
James	McVoy	Army
William	Nash	Army
Michael	Naumcheff	Army
Bob	Noblitt	Air Force
Greg	Olsen	Air Force
Myron	Pessin	Army
Ken	Philippart	Air Force
Frank	Powell	Army
Lethenaul	Stanfield	Air Force
Caitlin R.	Thorn	Army
Buzz	Toth	Air Force
Eldon	Triggs	Army
Richard	Tuggle	Army
Phillip	Young	Army
William	Vaughan	Air Force
Otha "Skeet"	Vaughn	Air Force
Neil	Walker	Air Force
Dave	Weeks	Air Force
James	Wilbeck	Air Force
Phillip	Young	Air Force