

2019 Armed Forces Celebration Luncheon

by
Ken Philippart
Image by *Naveen Vetcha*

The Greater Huntsville Section participated in the 2019 Armed Forces Celebration Luncheon at the Von Braun Center on June 26. The luncheon was part of the Huntsville community's week long commemoration of Armed Forces Week. Greater Huntsville returned to the event after last year's absence, marking the section's third time participating in the festivities.



General Perna giving the keynote address.

This year's luncheon commemorated the 75th anniversary of the World War II D-Day invasion. Four WWII veterans attended including one who participated in the invasion by transporting troops ashore at Normandy in Higgins boats. The veterans received a standing ovation from the audience after their introduction.

Over 500 people attended the luncheon, hosted annually by the Huntsville-Madison County Chamber of Commerce (CoC). Ms. Kim Lewis, CoC Chair, emceed the event. Dignitaries included Mayors Tommy Battle and Paul Findlay, Alabama congressional representatives, and General Gustave Perna, Commanding General of US Army Materiel Command (AMC).

General Perna gave the keynote address. He talked about the purposes of the US military and the need to always be prepared to defend the nation. He reviewed times in our history when the US was not prepared and lamented the lives lost because of the failure to prepare. He rededicated Redstone Arsenal to keeping the Army strong and thanked the active duty military members and veterans in attendance for their service.

AIAA was represented by section Chair LTC Greg Simpson and former chairs Dr. Naveen Vetch and Lt Col (retired) Ken Philippart. The Greater Huntsville Section salutes our military members and their families!