



## **AUSA Sunshine Chapter Newsletter - Fall 2020 (July-Nov)**

*Well, we have tried to keep at our Prime Directive during this period of Covid-19 and its imposed restrictions. Not as busy as some years, but the Chapter is still moving and preparing for a re-opening. Here are some of the highlights and continuing events you don't want to miss!*

### **Remarks from the President:**

Greetings Sunshine Chapter Members,

With the advent of a new operational year, the Chapter's Executive Committee (EXCOM) is set to go. I would like to welcome the following new members and returning members to EXCOM for the period of 01 July 2021 through 30 June 2022.

I am proud to be the Sunshine Chapter's new President and have some tremendous "shoes" to fill taking over the leadership role from Daila "Dee" Espeut-Jones. Dee has been the best of mentors over the past two years, and I can only hope to accomplish as much as Dee has contributed to the Sunshine Chapter. Dee is a recognized and award winning AUSA leader throughout the AUSA organization. She typifies the core of the United States Army .... Soldier for Life, Army Strong. Thanks, Dee, for your guidance and leadership these past years.

Taking over as Executive Vice President is Harry Buhl, COL, US Army (ret). Harry served the Sunshine Chapter the previous two years as our Secretary providing outstanding guidance and capturing of all Chapter activities. Well done,

Harry, and I look forward to our two years together to continue to make the Sunshine Chapter one of the best throughout AUSA.

The Chapter's new Secretary is Ms. Catherine Emerick who brings a wealth of Army and Industry knowledge to our EXCOM.

Sunshine Chapter Vice President for Programs is Brian Holmes who has returned to the EXCOM after serving as the I/ITSEC Program and Conference chair. Brian's deputy is none other than Ms. Traci Jones who stepped forward from retirement to assist Brian in all our program efforts.

Sunshine Chapter Operations Vice President is Kevin Vizzarri, COL, US Army (ret). Kevin is new to the EXCOM and is also the current President of the local Quad A Chapter.

Sunshine Chapter Vice President for Communications and our Historian is Clay Edwards, COL, US Army (ret). Clay is a returning EXCOM member.

Another returning EXCOM member is Mr. Joshua Johnson, the Chapter's Vice President for Young Professionals and UCF Liaison.

Again, returning as the Sunshine Chapter EXCOM member and Vice President for Membership is Wells Barlow, COL, US Army (ret). His deputy is new member, Mr. Tom Kehr.

Sunshine Chapter Awards and Recognition Vice President, and new to the EXCOM, is Mr. Scott Ariotti. He is also the guy who will help us get and stay connected with Social Media.

Sunshine Chapter Treasurer is Mr. Steve Kennedy, a returning EXCOM member.

Sunshine Chapter's returning Chaplain is Mr. Marvin Luckie, from the VA.

I would like to thank each and every one of these great Americans for stepping forward. They will represent and lead our Chapter for the next two

years. They bring years of experience from active duty, civil service, and industry to our efforts. I am thankful for their service.

As we continue in various forms of lockdown due the COVID pandemic, we are continually adjusting of our Chapter's operations. We will strive to keep moving forward within the limitations and protocols we must endure for an unknown period of time. We will continue to use virtual meeting platforms to keep the Chapters mission moving forward. We will always look for a way to get the mission accomplished, safely. Adjusting our means and our communications methods will allowed us to maintain contact virtually with AUSA 3<sup>rd</sup> Region and AUSA National. No doubt, events will be postponed or outright canceled due to COVID, but we will persevere and come out the back side of this storm just as **Army Strong** as we were before.

Some changes you have already seen...the Army Birthday Ball was virtual. We have canceled, for now, our Chapter General Membership Meetings. The EXCOM meetings will be 100% virtual. Organized participation in outside events such as "ride along", parades, etc., have been canceled. Individuals will continue as they can.

Our military community of Active Duty, National Guard, and Army Reserve troops will continue to serve operationally where they are needed, but other involvement within the community is strictly limited. As with most government organizations, the majority of the PEO STRI and ACC-Orlando workforce is still teleworking with only essential personnel going into their facilities. Collectively, we as a Nation will get through this. We look forward to wrangling this pandemic into control, which will allow us to return to normal activities, and our Prime Directive of helping Soldiers, as soon as possible.

Very Respectfully  
Michael J. Motko  
LtCol, USAF (retired)  
President, Sunshine Chapter AUSA

## A Successful Army Birthday Ball.

One of the Sunshine Chapters premier annual activities is the Army Birthday Ball. It is always a wonderful evening full of

comradery and entertainment.

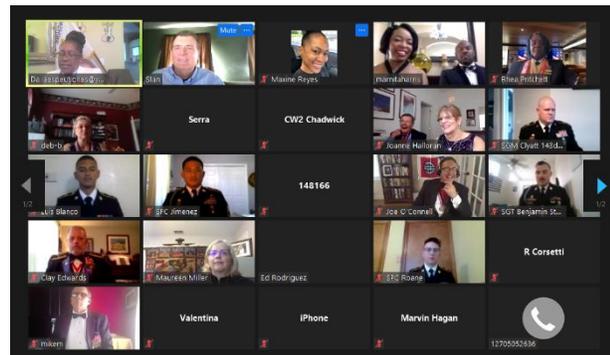
This year it was ... different! We had a Virtual AB Ball. As always, we are grateful for the continued generosity of our Community Partners, Sponsors, and Friends of the Chapter. Thanks to their



support, we were able to carry on the tradition of recognizing Soldiers, Veterans, Wounded Warriors, Cadets, Family-

members, and the local community helpers. We recognized

Mrs. Mary Trier for her decades of effort with the Earle L. Denton Award. The Corporate Member recognized for long-standing and continued Community Support of the Chapter and



Soldiers with the David G. Halloran Award was Cole Engineering Services, Inc. Again, our thanks to then-President Dee Jones for persevering and organizing our 2020 Virtual Army Birthday Ball. She was the driving force.

## Veterans Day

Many events are scheduled every year, and this year, as we have said, many events have been canceled or postponed. But,

like it or not, the governments cannot cancel the march of the calendar. God had the 11th of November come along no matter. It is still Veterans Day here and Armistice Day across many of our allied countries. Smaller, less-inhibited places continued with their schedule remembrances and parades. Many of us attended these events, or just went out on our own to celebrate the reason for the holiday. We must not let our celebrations be all organized by someone else, or by a big entity. We are each an individual, and we can each stop and be thankful on our own. As long as we do this, then in our hearts and in our civic actions, our morals and cherished memories will be perpetuated. As the song said, "Teach your children well", and you do not have to be worried about what they might be exposed to on the outside. They will grow to respect Service to the Nation and, just maybe, do some themselves. There were plenty of organized events to attend. I am glad I attended. I still had time for the burgers and brats on the grill.

On 13 November 2020, AUSA Sunshine Chapter member, COL(R) Fran Fierko, supported the first "Home of the Brave" Veteran's Day Celebration at the Lake Nona Town Center. The event included local Veteran's Groups, an award presentation and a special musical tribute in a night of honor,



remembrance and gratitude. COL(R)

Fierko, who also serves on the Board of Directors for the Central Florida Chapter of



the Gary Sinise Foundation, brought his restored 1942 Ford GPW Jeep as part of a display of vintage military vehicles. COL(R) Fierko restored "Sky Pilot" to accurately represent the Jeep his uncle, T/5 Edward Hudak, a Chaplain's Assistant with the 197th Ant-Aircraft (Self -Propelled) Battalion, drove ashore on Omaha Beach on D-Day, and subsequently across Europe until VE day, ending at the liberated Nazi Buchenwald Concentration Camp.

## Scholarships Notifications Coming Soon!



Annually, the Association of the United States Army awards more than \$300,000 through more than 40 national level scholarships. In times of Covid-19, the awards kept coming.

Congratulations to this year's 47 awardees. Study hard. This program will be back next year, so keep up to date on the AUSA National Scholarship Program by visiting:

<https://www.ausa.org/news/ausa-announces-2020-scholarship-awards>

<https://www.ausa.org/chapters/sunshine-chapter>

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
July			1	2	3	 4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10 	11
12 <b>NDIA</b>	13	 14 PALT 	 15 EXCOM	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 	25 
26	27	28	29	30	31	August 1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 <b>NDIA</b>	10	 11 PALT	12	13	14 	15
16	17	18	 19 EXCOM	20	21	22
23	24	 25 Annual Board of Governors	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Key Events:

24 Sep AFA State Convention  
25 Aug: Annual BoG Meeting

EXCOM Priorities:

Army Ball AAR, and 2021 Planning  
Update of By Laws  
Operational Calendar in Pandemic

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
September		1	2	3	4	5
6	 7 Labor Day	<b>NDIA</b> 8	9	10	  11	12
13	 PALT  14	15	 16 EXCOM Army Ball 2021 Kickoff	17	 18	 19
20		21	22	23	24	25
						
 27 Gold Star Mothers & Families	28	29	30	October 1	2	3
4	<b>NDIA</b> 5	6	7	8	9	10
						
11	 12 Columbus Day	 PALT  13	14	15	16 Navy Birthday 	17
18	19	20	 21 EXCOM	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	 31 Halloween

Key Events:

16 September ABB Kickoff  
 27 Sep Gold Star Mothers' Day  
 13 Oct National Convention (Virtual)

EXCOM Priorities:

Army Ball 2021 Planning  
 Chapter Events with National Guidance  
 Financial Planning and Sponsorships

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
November 1	2	 3 Election Day	4	5	6	7
8	<b>NDIA</b>	9  PALT 	 11 Veterans Day	12	13  	14
15	16	17	 18 EXCOM	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving 	27	28
29	30 	December 1 	2 	3 	4 	5

Key Events:

- 13 Nov Marine Corps Birthday Ball (Virtual)
- 30 November: IITSEC (Virtual)

EXCOM Priorities:

- Army Ball 2021 Planning
- Leveraging IITSEC for membership & sponsors