



## AUSA Sunshine Chapter Newsletter

Summer 2018

*It has been a busy time for our chapter. Here are some of the highlights and some upcoming events you don't want to miss!*

## Scholarships Now Available!



In 2018, AUSA National will award more than \$120,000 through 22 national level scholarships. The largest award is \$25,000. All scholarships are open to AUSA members only.

This program includes several new scholarships (covering STEM studies, college debt-reduction, professional certifications) and a new, user-friendly application system here: <https://scholarship.ausa.org/>

Application submissions are now open. The application deadline is 31 July 2018.

## Mark Your Calendars:

- Family Day Picnic, 15 July 2018 @ J Blanchard Park
- Monthly Networking Event, 20 July 2018 @ Bubbalou's
- Gen Membership Meeting Luncheon, 7 Aug 2018 @ Holiday Inn UCF
- 5K/10K Fun Run, 17 November 2018 @ J Blanchard Park
- Army Birthday Ball, 15 June 2019

## Army Ball Highlights:

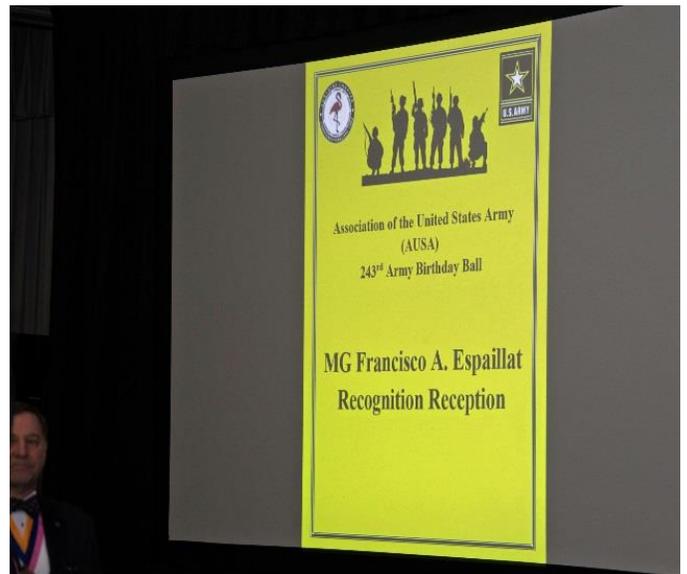
Each year, before the ball, we have a VIP Reception to honor many deserving Soldiers, DA Civilians and others. Before we began this year, Joe O'Connell, Chairman of the Board of Governors, announced another special honor.



*"Margie Espaillat, Dr. Homer Ooten, Yvonne Ooten, please come up here with me. Many of you know Margie. Dr and Mrs. Ooten were an integral part of Francisco's life and are pleased all of you could be here tonight. When we started doing these separate VIP Receptions, we*

*looked for a Senior Leader to host the event. Without hesitation, General Francisco Espaillat stepped up and led the events for the first few years. Just as he did when he led PM CATT over at PEO STRI, or when he led the 143rd Expeditionary Support Command here in Orlando. He was an integral part of our Orlando-based Army and AUSA Community.*

*And Therefore, I'd like to announce that forever more, this VIP Reception will be known as the MG Francisco Espaillat VIP Reception. "*



**It was a very special moment for us all.**

## Photos: MG Francisco Espaillat VIP Reception

# Army Ball Photos

Once again photographer Frank Webber did a great job capturing this amazing event. Sit back and enjoy these special moments!



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## President's Message



*COL De Voorhees Jr., USA Retired*

Wow! It's been two years already. Yes, the end of my tour as President of the Sunshine Chapter. How time flies.

On the 24th of May we celebrated **Armed Forces Day** appreciation event at the **Citrus Club** in downtown Orlando. This year the event was sponsored by the four Service advocacy organizations – **Sunshine Chapter (Army); Central Florida Marine Corps Foundation (USMC); Central Florida Navy League (Navy); and the Air Force Association (USAF)**. Over 150 attended the event with the majority from the Sunshine Chapter. Thanks again to our event planner, **LTC (ret) Jan Drabczuk** who has organized all these events in the past.



AUSA Sunshine Chapter  
*243rd Army Birthday Ball*

Double Tree Universal ★ Studios, Orlando FL  
Saturday, June 9, 2018

At my last writing we were deep into planning for the Sunshine Chapter's 243rd Army Birthday Ball which was held on the 9th of June at the Doubletree by Hilton at the entrance to Universal Orlando.





This year's theme was the remembrance of the 50th year since the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam and the 45th year since the Paris Peace Accords and Ceasefire. Our Guest speaker was **Colonel (retired) Bill Reeder**, the last captured Army POW from Vietnam who spent time in the Hanoi Hilton. He provided us with a close look at his captivity and the ordeal he endured as a POW. The Chapter purchased 10

copies of his book ([Through the Valley: My Captivity in Vietnam](#)) that were used through a silent auction to generate \$2,000.00 for the Nancy Blue Scholarship Fund. Colonel Reeder autographed those books for the silent auction awardees.

The Chapter presented him with a Forever Heroes statue that depicts the return of the Soldiers from Vietnam being welcomed home by two young children that was rendered by George McMonigle for the Franklin Mint.



Thanks to the **Army Ball Planning Committee co-hosts, Ms Karin Zielinski and COL (retired) Jim Taylor** for their skillful coordination in making this a successful event at a new venue. Thanks to all members of the Planning Committee who assisted Karin and Jim.





*click here*

**to view more**



Since the last writing, we have had 3 very successful joint **AUSA Sunshine Chapter / Central Florida Marine Corps Foundation Networking Events** at **Bubbalou's BBQ**. We have selected the 3rd Friday of each month to conduct these events with the most recent one (June 15, 2018) having a full house. Each event has been co-sponsored by one of our industry Partners with GDIT and Cole Engineering Services, Inc., (CESI) as early sponsors.

[MORE PHOTOS HERE](#)

Following along with the Networking Event has been our initiation of the **Young Professionals Event** co-hosted with the **University of Central Florida (UCF) Veterans Assistance Resource Center (VARC)**. Thanks goes to our Young Professionals VP, Ms. Marnita Harris and Mr. JJ Johnson from the VARC.



As this is my last correspondence as your President, let me thank all the Executive Committee members who have made us the successful chapter we are. The **Sunshine Chapter EXCOM** has been a terrific group of dedicated volunteers that has made my job a real pleasure.

As I depart, I'd like to especially thank our **Executive VP, 1SG (retired) Dalia "Dee" Espeut-Jones** who has been my battle buddy on this journey. Thanks D2 for all you have done for me and the Chapter.

I look forward to her continued success with what I believe is the best Chapter in all of AUSA.



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*Thank You De for everything!*

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.”

John C. Maxwell





Watch your email for the announcement next month!

