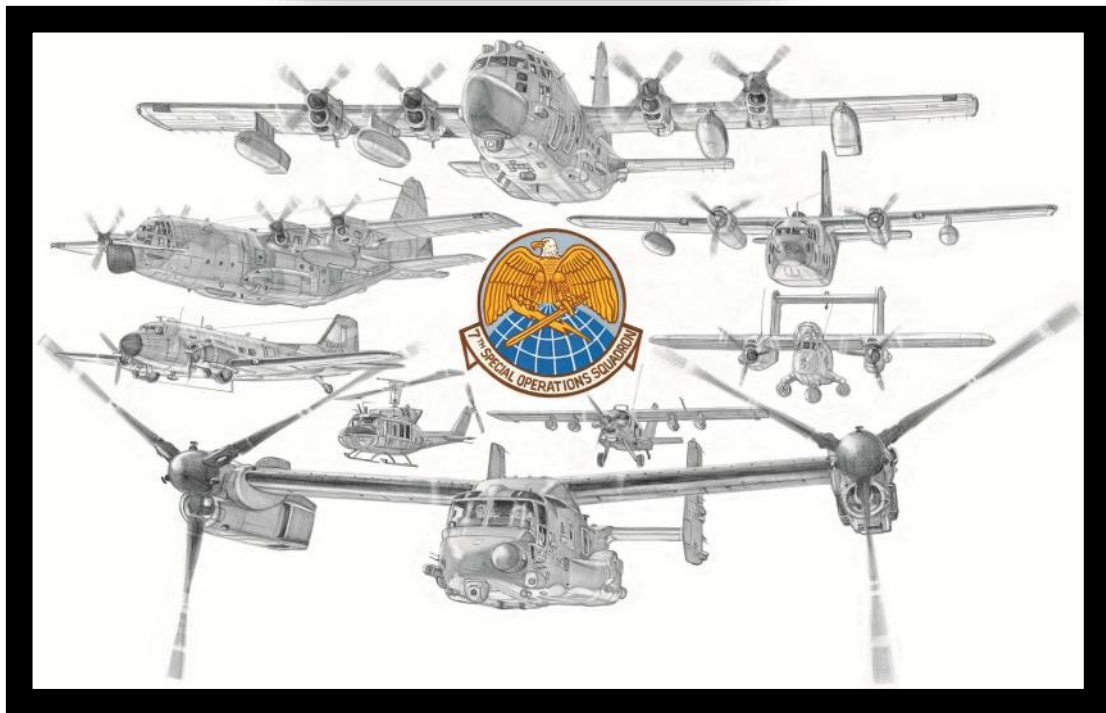




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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander's Page

By Lt Col Luke W. Lefever, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC



Sons of the 7th,

I'm honored to lead The Finest Flying Squadron in the United States Air Force, and hope that I can carry the torch that Rob Meyersohn and all those before him have passed on. I am amazed at the professionalism and dedication of the men and women of the 7th. We recently underwent a huge organizational change, incorporating Intel, Aircrew Flight Equipment, Comm, and Medical into the Squadron while we are still reducing the number of aircrew. The 7th is now close to 100 people with 9 AFSCs represented. Although the structure of the 7th is changing, the legacy of professionalism endures.

Before I get into all the amazing things the 7th has been up to lately, I'd like to tell you a little about myself. I grew up in the Midwest between Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin, but I call La Crosse, Wisconsin home. After high school, I went to the Air Force Academy, graduating in 2005, and then on to Pilot Training. I was lucky enough to spend a year in “casual” status at Eglin AFB where I got my Private Pilot License and got back seat rides with the 58th Fighter Squadron F-15Cs whenever they had an empty seat. From there I went to Pensacola NAS and Whiting Field for Undergraduate Pilot Training with the Navy flying the mighty T-34.



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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

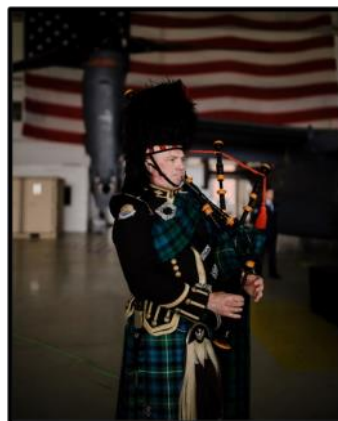
By Lt Col Luke W. Lefever, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Following UPT, I selected Helos and then went to Ft. Rucker in Alabama to fly the UH-1 Huey where I selected CV-22s. I was very fortunate in that my timing lined up for me to go directly into CV-22s. I was the second pipeline CV-22 student in a group of 4 of us that were the guinea pigs. All previous CV-22s pilots had cross-trained from either the MH-53 or MC-130, so to be in the first group selected out of pilot training was pure luck. After the first group of 4, there was about a year before the next CV-22 dropped at Ft. Rucker, so I guess we convinced them that pipeline students could learn to fly the Osprey given enough instruction. From Rucker, I was off to Marine Corps Air Station New River to learn the fundamentals of V-22 flying from Jim Peterson and then to Kirtland for the CV-22 specific training.

While I was at Kirtland I went back to Wisconsin for a friend’s wedding and ended up meeting my wonderful wife, Krista. We had known each other in high school but weren’t close back then. We started a long-distance relationship as she was teaching in northern Wisconsin while I finished up at Kirtland. After graduating from Kirtland, I was off to the 8th SOS at Hurlburt Field. Between deployments, Krista moved down to Florida and we got married in 2010.

After deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, I got an assignment to Kirtland to instruct, so Krista and I took advantage of the slower Ops Tempo to have both of our kids, Owen who is now 11 and Anna, now 8. After Kirtland I was off to the 20th SOS at Cannon, then to Maxwell for ACSC then back to Hurlburt, and back to Cannon again, where I was the DO at the 20th before coming out to Mildenhall to take command of the 7th.

It has been an incredible journey but there is nowhere we would rather be right now! It was an honor to take command on May 25th, especially with Mr. Will Bissett, 7th SOS Honorary Commander and long-time 7th supporter, playing the pipes.





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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Luke W. Lefever, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Operationally, the 7th continues to be called upon when the Nation needs exquisite vertical lift, which seems to be quite often. Shortly after taking command, the majority of the Squadron returned from a short-notice deployment where they assisted with the evacuation of Americans from an active conflict. Prior to that, the 7th supported a POTUS movement across EUCOM for a Key Leader Engagement, providing immediate reaction force infiltration should it have been needed. Currently, the 7th is postured to support contingencies throughout Europe and Africa if the call comes.

Additionally, the 7th is developing tactics, techniques, and procedures, to impose costs and compete with Russia. We continue to seek out opportunities to tackle high-end threat training and just sent a crew to China Lake NAS to fly with the 20th SOS and 14th Weapons Squadron against high-fidelity emitters. We have also been focusing on developing comm capabilities to allow us to integrate with the CAF and ground users through Link-16 and other emerging technologies.

This is an amazing unit and I am very proud to be a part of it. Thank you for the legacy that you laid and the support that you continue to provide. I am humbled every day that there are so many people that have invested so much into making this unit what it is today. THANK YOU!

Adapt or Perish!

Luke

LUKE W. LEFEVER, Lt Col, USAF
Commander
7th Special Operations Squadron
RAF Mildenhall, UK



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Future 7th SOS Reunions



7 SOS 2024 Reunion, Dayton, OH

by Max Friedauer

max@7thsos.org

We have a contract with the Holiday Inn in Fairborn, OH during our 2024 Reunion. Reservations will be available October 15th by calling 877-390-5931 and make sure you state that it's with the 7 SOS to get the Reunion rate. Approximate Hotel costs will be \$150.00 per night +tax. This rate will be good for 3 days prior to 3 days after the Reunion dates. Here is our draft schedule so far. The 2024 Reunion in Dayton will be from 25-29 September 2024. Breakfast is included every day with your hotel stay. We filed and were approved for a tax exemption and as long as you registered in our 7 SOS block the OH sales tax may be waived, we're still negotiating that but we will definitely not be taxed for food. You still have to pay a resort tax with the hotel regardless.

Approximate cost for the entire weekend including free access to Hospitality Suite drinks and snacks, welcome buffet, banquet meal, all event tickets (Carillon Park, Museum, Oktoberfest), transportation, & cost of site coordinator, will be, again **Approximate** \$295.00. This cost may vary as we are still negotiating with the hotel on meals, Carillon Park tickets, and bus rentals (costly). You will have the option to take the bus or drive, but we encourage you take the bus to keep the cost per person down and not driving while drinking. There will be an option on the registration for individual days/events vs. the entire weekend, but you'll save money by registering for the full weekend package.

We also signed a contract to have a 7th Air Commando Society Memorial Bench built in honor of the 7th Air Commando Squadron and 7th Special Operations Squadron. Thanks to the 22 SOT7 donors that raised \$9,600 in just three weeks. We will also produce a Memorial/Reunion RMO (round metal object).



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



7 SOS 2024 Reunion, Dayton, OH (cont.)

by Max Friedauer

max@7thsos.org

A preliminary schedule is below. We hope to have a registration form out by the February next year.

Wednesday arrival:

4:00 PM Registration and Hospitality Suite in Hotel

7:00 PM Welcome & Informal Buffet

Thursday:

10:00 AM Depart for AF Museum

12:00 - 1:00 PM Lunch on your own at the Museum

4:00-4:15 PM 7 ACS Memorial Bench dedication

4:30 PM Return to the Hotel

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Hospitality Suite in Hotel, dinner on you own.

Friday:

9:00 AM- 4:00 PM Carillon Park tour Wright B-flyer briefing. On site lunch on your own. Bus transportation provided to and from.

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Hospitality Suite in Hotel.

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Banquet in hotel (Surprise Guest Speaker, a past 7th Commander).

Saturday:

9:00 AM - 10:00 Business Mtg.

10:00-10:30 AFSOC Aircraft weapons System Update Briefing

11:30 Bus to downtown Dayton

12:00 PM - 11:00 PM Down Town Dayton Art Institute Octoberfest, (Bring your Lederhosen).

Intermittent Bus transportation provided throughout the day.

Sunday:

10:00 AM Memorial Service and Departure



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



7 SOS 2024 Reunion, Dayton, OH (cont.)

by Max Friedauer

max@7thsos.org

Trish Blanton, from the "ReunionBrat" will be making all the contracts, handling reservations, etc. Joe and Deb Primosch have been doing all the legwork locally in Dayton and helping with the agenda, Memorial Bench, and tours. We will have a fabulous time on Saturday for a true German Style Oktoberfest. So far, 136 people have indicated they are interested in attending. If you wish to be added to the list to get notifications of final information and registration, e-mail me at max@7thsos.org. Also keep checking our Sons of the 7th Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SonsOfThe7th> and our website at www.7thsos.org.



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



**7th Air Commando Society to Dedicate
7 ACS & 7 SOS Memorial Bench
at the
AF Museum at WPAFB on 26 September 2024**

Fellow Air Commandos,

We Have Exceeded our Fundraising Goal for the 7 ACS Memorial Bench

To the 22 contributors, thank you, thank you, thank you! What a fabulous and very generous response from our sons and daughters of the 7 SOS! We are now at \$9,100.00 in the bank, we have made our deposit to Morrison Consulting, LLP Morrison Monuments, LLC and we are well on our way to have our Black Granite Memorial Bench built. Our total cost will be \$6,087.50 if there are no unexpected delays and issues by WPAFB and Museum Memorial committee. The dedication ceremony will be held at the end our Museum tour at 16:00 hrs. on Thursday 26 September.

We are in the process of designing a 7 ACS Memorial Bench coin and eve4ry donor will receive a coin. Donors of \$200 or more will receive 2 coins. The remaining coins will be sold at the reunion for \$5.00 each, if we can keep the manufacturing cost below \$5. We will also maintain about \$1,000.00 in the account in case there are any unexpected repairs due to damage by storms or vandals.



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



7th Air Commando Society to Dedicate 7 ACS & 7 SOS Memorial Bench at the AF Museum at WPAFB on 26 September 2024

The 7th Air Commando Society will have a Memorial Bench constructed and dedicated at the AF Museum on Thursday, 26 September 2024, at the end of the day, approximately 4:30 PM. The Bench will be located on the walkway towards the museum, details to be coordinated with the Museum. We have to choose a contractor to build the bench and the museum has provided us with four contractors that have built other benches for organizations. Basically, our Society will dedicate this bench in honor of all member of both squadrons, the 7 ACS (Sembach 1964-68) and 7 SOS (1968-Present)

Attached just for your information is some documentation and examples of inscription and layouts for the 7 ACS dedication of a Memorial Bench in honor of all present and past Air Commandos of the 7th Air Commando Squadron and 7th Special Operations Squadron. Our plan is to include both squadron patches one to the left and one to the right on the base. Buff Underwood is researching with the company that did our Combat Talon memorial and created the porcelain patches for that memorial to see what it would cost for them to do the attached squadron emblems.

Also attached is a simple FIRST Draft proposal of the engraving. This is where I need your help in selecting the proper verbiage, spacing, and font. For Lt Col Meyersohn, please engage your squadron and help us make this memorial one our members will come back to visit often. If you're thinking about also listing our aircraft losses, don't forget our 7 ACS brothers from Sembach also lost some aircraft and lives. I would recommend not go there. We are restricted somewhat on site and type of marble. I recommend we go with the black granite as depicted in two of the photos below.



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



**7th Air Commando Society to Dedicate
7 ACS & 7 SOS Memorial Bench
at the
AF Museum at WPAFB on 26 September 2024**

GRANITE BENCH

The following style of granite bench has been approved as a part of the NMUSAF Memorial Park program:

- The required size of the finished product must be: to seat: 54" x 14" x 4"; o leg: 46" x 8" x 14" high o concrete foundation: 60" x 18" x 24" deep (concrete foundation is only required if bench is not placed on a sidewalk)
- All exposed surfaces must be polished (except bottom of seat)
- Bench sections must be pinned together
- Bench must be made from one of the following types of granite: Barre Gray, American Black, Impala Black, India Black, Asian Granite Cost
- Payment to the Air Force Museum Foundation, Inc. (for perpetual care) \$500.00
- Cost of bench, foundations, etc. Estimate: \$3,000-\$5,000 The total cost of placing a bench at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force will probably cost between \$4,000 and \$7,000. This will include a one-time payment to the Air Force Museum Foundation, Inc. for the perpetual care of the bench.

The cost of the bench will greatly depend on several things: the type of granite, complexity of lettering, carving, foundation work, etc. It is suggested that you get estimates from more than one contractor. ALL ENGRAVING OR ETCHINGS (WORDS AND PICTURES) MUST BE APPROVED BY THE NMUSAF PRIOR TO CONTRACTING WITH A MONUMENT COMPANY.

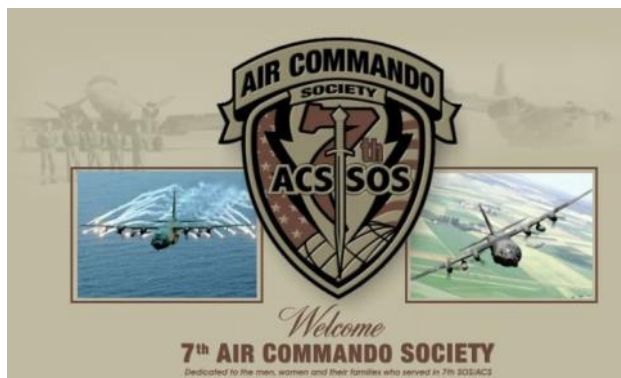


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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



**7th Air Commando Society to Dedicate
7 ACS & 7 SOS Memorial Bench**

**at the
AF Museum at WPAFB on 26 September 2024**

GRANITE BENCH WORDING (Proposed)

7th Air Commando Society

**Dedicated to all current and past members of the
7th Air Commando Squadron
7th Special Operations Squadron**



**In recognition of their dedication to
accomplish the mission, to
infiltrate, exfiltrate, and resupply,
under the most adverse conditions
in defense of the United States and
its Allies. Adapt or Perish (AoP)**





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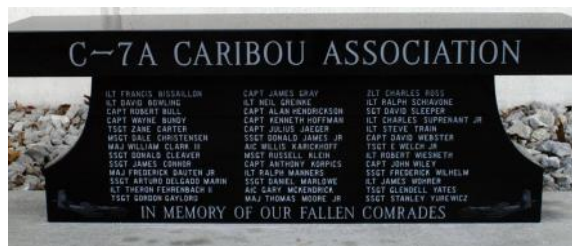
Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



**7th Air Commando Society to Dedicate
7 ACS & 7 SOS Memorial Bench**

**at the
AF Museum at WPAFB on 26 September 2024**

GRANITE BENCH STYLES (Samples)



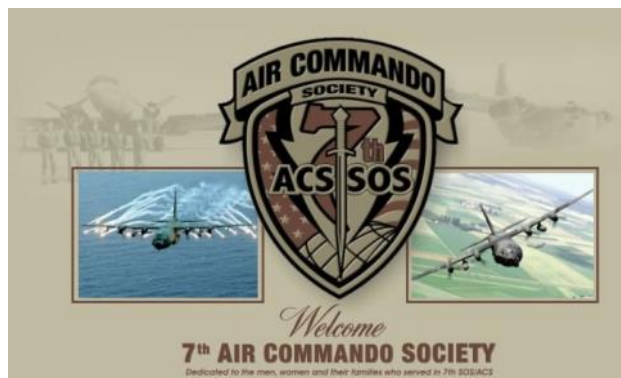


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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



7 SOS 2027 Reunion, Back to our Roots July 2027, Approx. 14 Days

by Max Friedauer

max@7thsos.org

We are also in the very early stages of planning our THIRD 7 SOS Reunion returning to our Squadron at RAF Mildenhall, unless of course someone has an incredible idea to move the squadron again. Our preliminary plan, as we've done in the past, is to stay at the Angel Hotel in Bury St Edmonds and then have a "Combat Dining Out" with the squadron on July 7th 2027 (7/7/27), probably two to three nights. We will then probably fly to Berlin for a two-night stay, head to Heidelberg (train or bus approx. 6 hrs) for an overnight stay, next day bus to Bad Friedrichshall Württemberg for lunch at "Weingut Friedauer," and then head on to Munich for two nights. After that we either bus or go by train and head south to Aviano, then to Pisa, and finish in Rome. This will be about a 14 day trip and will most likely cost about \$5,000 to \$6,000 per person plus your own airfare. We again will use a professional Reunion Coordinator, our proven and trusted friend The Reunion Brat, Trish Blanton (<https://www.thereunionbrat.com>) who will provide us with a detail trip book, all reservations, meal plans, costs, collect fees, make name tags, and provide us with schedules. You will be responsible for flights to London and flights home from Rome, but everything else in-between will be costed out and booked for us by our reunion coordinator, whether it be bus, train, or airlines. This will be the one to remember and see some new places we haven't seen during our other two reunions back to the 7th in 2007 and 2017. Contact me if you have any questions and are interested in going to this reunion so I can at least get you on an e-mail update list. So far we have 34 people that are interested but if we don't get at least 40 interested people, we will not proceed any further. E-mail me at Max@7thsos.org.



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Fulton Surface to Air Recovery (STAR)

Twenty-seven years ago, a 30-year practice ended for Air Force Special Operations when members of the 8th Special Operations Squadron conducted the final Fulton Surface-to-Air Recovery (STAR) system training mission in the MC-130E Combat Talon I, tail number 0568, at Hurlburt Field, Florida.

Originally developed for the CIA by inventor Robert Edison Fulton, Jr. in the 1950s, the Fulton system was adopted by the Air Force in the 1960s. Fulton's system evolved from a similar system that was used during World War II by American and British forces to retrieve both personnel and downed assault gliders following airborne operations.

The STAR system, though infrequently used, was transformative for personnel recovery in special operations missions. In its final mission, this MC-130E, made nine recovery passes to end the AFSOC Fulton STAR mission.

Any place, anytime, anywhere!





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Phase I of Construction Complete as AFSOC Prepares to Open Hurlburt Field Airpark to Public



With names like Wicked Wanda, The Ultimate End and Big Daddy, there's a story behind each aircraft and monument on display at the Hurlburt Field Memorial Airpark.

For the first time in more than 20 years, Hurlburt Field plans to open its airpark to the general public in spring 2024 - allowing visitors to see the aircraft first-hand and learn more about the history of Air Force Special Operations Command.

"We are dedicated to preserving the legacy of our Air Commandos and we want to share our mission - past, present and future - with our community," said Lt. Gen. Tony Bauernfeind, AFSOC commander. "We look forward to educating and inspiring our visitors about the rich heritage and traditions that we have here at Hurlburt Field and within AFSOC."

The park, a one-hour drive from Pensacola, Florida and a three-hour drive from Tallahassee, Florida – features static displays of more than 20 aircraft, flown during eras ranging from World War II to the Korean War and Vietnam War through the Cold War, in addition to the Global War on Terror.

Aircraft featured in the park include an AC-119G Shadow, C-46D Commando, B-25J Mitchell, HH-3E Jolly Green, AC-47D Spooky, T-28A Trojan and an O-1E Bird Dog, to name a few.

"Even in their silence, airplanes tell a story," said AFSOC historian Todd Schroeder. "They tell the story of our Air Commandos, operations, missions and achievements."



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Phase I of Construction Complete as AFSOC Prepares to Open Hurlburt Field Airpark to Public (cont.)



Crews that flew on The Ultimate End, for example, remember March 4, 1972, as both the luckiest and unluckiest day of their lives. That night, enemy anti-aircraft artillery struck the AC-130A Spectre gunship, causing severe damage to the structure of the aircraft.

Likewise, Wicked Wanda, an AC-130H Spectre gunship on display at the airpark, deployed in nearly every conflict the U.S. has been involved in, officially and unofficially, since the end of the Vietnam War.

Big Daddy, on the other hand, earned its name as the “father” of the AC-130U Gunship fleet.

In addition to aircraft, the park includes memorials and monuments dedicated to honoring AFSOC heroes, including Master Sgt. John Chapman, a special tactics combat controller who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect his teammates during a conflict in Afghanistan in 2002 and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions.

“The airpark is special because it’s a tangible timeline of special operations and Hurlburt Field,” Schroeder added. “It shows how our Air Commandos innovated and adapted and never settled for the status-quo.”

At this time, officials expect the airpark to open to the public in spring 2024. Additionally, there are plans to expand the park to include a museum and heritage center at a later date.

As construction continues, visitors with base access are able to tour the airpark. Plans to expand the park are being coordinated in partnership with the Air Commando Association, a nonprofit veterans organization committed to preserving the heritage of Air Commandos and to honor their contributions.



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In Memoriam



James L. Hobson, Major Gen. (Ret)
July 16, 1942 - May 17, 2023

ACA is saddened to report that Major Gen (Ret) James L. Hobson, Jr. has taken his last flight. Gen Hobson commanded Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Hurlburt Field, Florida from July 1994 to July 1997. During his command, AFSOC operated one wing, three flying groups and a Special Tactics Group with more than 100 aircraft and 11,900 personnel assigned worldwide. As 8th SOS Commander, Gen Hobson courageously led the airfield seizure and rescue of Americans at Point Salines Airport, Grenada in Operation URGENT FURY. His efforts resulted in being awarded the 1983 Mackay Trophy, for the most meritorious flight of the year. Hobson became the Commander of the 8th SOS prior to the crisis in Grenada. After his heroic actions in Operation URGENT FURY, he and others were personally thanked by President Reagan. Gen Hobson also served as the Vice and then Commander of 39th Special Operations Wing at Eglin AFB, FL. After promotion to Brigadier General in 1989, Gen Hobson became the Vice Commander of 23rd AF at Hurlburt Field, and assisted in the planning of the Panama invasion in December 1989. He commanded the 322nd Airlift Division, Ramstein AB, Germany and orchestrated the massive logistical air bridge through Europe in support of Operation DESERT STORM. Next, he commanded the 435th Airlift Wing at Rhein-Main AB, Germany and then became the Director of Operations and Transportation at Air Mobility Command. Major General James Hobson retired in 1997 as a command pilot with 6,850 military flying hours. He is a member of the Air Commando Hall of Fame and the USSOCOM Commando Hall of Honor. RIP sir and blessings to your wife Diane, family and friends.



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In Memoriam (Cont.)



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY

THE COMMANDO HALL OF HONOR AWARD TO MAJOR GENERAL JAMES L. HOBSON, JR. UNITED STATES AIR FORCE (RETIRED)

Major General James L. Hobson, Jr., distinguished himself during a lifetime of service to the United States and Special Operations Forces in a myriad of assignments. Major General Hobson's contributions to Special Operations aviation, Air Commandos and their unique brand of airpower, are inscribed throughout the history of Air Force Special Operations. While on active duty, he held command of groups and wings, both stateside and overseas. His most notable command positions were serving as Commander, 39th Special Operations Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and as Vice Commander, 23rd Air Force, Hurlburt Field, Florida. His career in Special Operations culminated his selection and final assignment as Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Florida. Major General Hobson's unwavering loyalty, devotion to duty, and lifetime of dedication reflect great credit upon himself, Special Operations Forces, and the United States Special Operations Command.



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In Memoriam (cont.)



Joseph Leonard Di Vito, Lt. Col. (Ret)

December 1, 1956 ~ July 12, 2023

Joseph Leonard Di Vito, Lt Col (Ret), USAF, died in the early morning hours of July 12, 2023 at the age of 66. His wife, Patricia Di Vito, was by his side when he passed at the Hillsboro Medical Center. Joe suffered from several health issues over the years, surviving through grit and determination until his body could not continue. Joe and Tricia were married Dec. 1, 2020. They were both born on December 1, so they knew their wedding day had to be on that date, as well. Joe found true love with Tricia and enjoyed the fullness of family during their marriage, spending time between their beach house in Rockaway Beach, Ore., and an apartment in Hillsboro, Ore.

As an Air Force navigator in four variants of the large C-130 cargo planes, Joe traveled the world, including 10 months in the desert based in Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar. His work supported missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas around the globe. After 31 years, Joe retired from the Air Force in 2012 with 7,814 flying hours logged. He was extremely proud of his military career and the lifelong friendships forged during his service.

The family requests that any donations in Joe's memory be made to his chosen organization the Special Operations Warrior Foundation (specialops.org) of Tampa, Fla.



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In Final Memoriam

Angel Flight:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIsnD87uOeo>

Never Forgotten



Talon Brothers and Sisters that are no longer with us.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xy6qCeE_6rE



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ADDRESS AND STATUS CHANGES



Moving? New phone? Be sure to let us know so we can stay in touch with you.

If you have a change to your name, address, phone, or e-mail, you can do it online.

You can also send directly to admin@7thSOS.org. My phone number and address are also on that link. If you are paying dues, send to Russ Painter. He will forward your info to me.

If you are not in the computer mode, contact me at (850) 203-1716 or 4317 Tallwood Court, Gulf Breeze, FL 32563.

Mike and Sharron Scott

7th SOS Air Commando Bush Hat





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The Last of Them: The boneyard receives final MC-130H Talon II



On April 2, the final MC-130H Combat Talon II made its last flight, arriving at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona to retire at the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group (AMARG). This aircraft was the last of the final six MC-130Hs transferred for storage at the 309th AMARG, known as the boneyard.

The aircraft, tail number 89-0280 belonging to the 1st Special Operations Wing, was flown by a Total Force crew and included Lt Gen Tony Bauernfeind, AFSOC commander, to pay homage to the heroic legacy and service the Talon II has provided for AFSOC and the joint force over the past 30 years.

“Today marks the end of a legacy for one of the finest airplanes ever flown in AFSOC,” said Bauernfeind. “The MC-130H Combat Talon II, or as the crews that’ve flown it call it: “*The Chariot of Armageddon*,” held a critical mission of special operations forces mobility in infiltrating and exfiltrating into many of the hardest locations in the world while upholding the Talon Standard of absolute precision. I’m very proud of the entire Talon community; the crews, maintainers, and operations support personnel.”

Initially arriving at Hurlburt Field in June 1992, the MC-130H Combat Talon II is a derivative of the C-130H Hercules modified for special operations and played a vital role in AFSOC operations across the globe.

The mission of the Combat Talon II was to provide infiltration, exfiltration, and resupply of special operations forces and equipment in hostile and denied territories, while also providing a secondary air refueling capability for helicopters and vertical lift platforms. Additionally, it also provided SOF commanders with an all-weather, low-level penetration option utilizing its terrain following capabilities.

The standard aircrew complement for the MC-130H was seven consisting of two pilots, a navigator, two loadmasters, a flight engineer, and an electronic warfare officer.

“The Talon II was a navigator’s dream due to the planning required and systems expertise necessary to fly it,” said Col. Richard Greszler, Jr., AFSOC Operations Center commander and prior MC-130H navigator.



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The Last of Them: The boneyard receives final MC-130H Talon II (cont.)



“The ability to fly in mountainous terrain in [instrument meteorological conditions] required extremely detailed mission planning, so every flight required the whole crew to understand the limitations of the aircraft and the crew, and to push right up to the edge in order to be successful. The ability to project power and penetrate denied or sensitive areas to further our Nation’s interest was the hallmark of the Talon II.”

Over the last 30 years, the Combat Talon II was critical to many missions from evacuations of civilians from the Republic of the Congo in 1997, to enduring counterterrorism and counter-violent extremist organizations (C-VEO) operations.

“The legacy of the Talon II fills me with pride,” Greszler said. “Pride in a community which looked to be tasked to defend our Nation no matter the danger. The aircraft was an amazing machine, but it was the men and women who crewed and maintained the Chariot of Armageddon that made it special. They constantly strove to improve and never let their teammates down.”

With the completion of the final trip to AMARG, the MC-130H fleet has approximately 264,442 total flight hours and 106,850 sorties since its start of operations in late 1992.

Replacing the MC-130H, along with the retired E and P models, is the MC-130J Commando II, which has been in operation since 2011.

The Commando II flies clandestine, or low visibility, single or multi-ship, low-level infiltration, exfiltration, and resupply of special operations forces, by airdrop or airland and air refueling missions for special operations helicopters and tiltrotor aircraft, intruding politically sensitive or hostile territories. The MC-130J primarily flies missions at night to reduce probability of visual acquisition and intercept by airborne threats.

The last MC-130H in the 1st SOW’s inventory will be retired later this summer in Hurlburt Field’s airpark, cementing the retirement of the Talon II fleet in AFSOC.



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The Last of Them: The boneyard receives final MC-130H Talon II (cont.)



Below are a few of the notable MC-130H tail numbers and missions that highlight the various missions the Combat Talon II will be remembered for:

89-0280: Coined “The Highlander”, 89-0280 is one of the few Combat Talon II aircraft to have been stationed at every permanent duty location for Talon II aircraft, it was later the first aircraft to respond and land at Sendai International Airport during Operation Tomadachi following the 9.0 earthquake and tsunami in Fukushima, Japan on March 16, 2011. The mission to Sendai opened the airfield for mass follow-on relief missions, and the first C-17 was able to land four hours later.

85-0011: Coined “The Ace of Spades”, aircraft 85-0011 is known for transporting Saddam Hussein after his capture near the town of Tikrit in December 2003. Additionally, this aircraft participated in earthquake relief efforts during a 1997 JCET down in Venezuela. During the immediate aftermath, the crew of 0011 airlifted 175,000 lbs of supplies and received the Order of Jose Antonio Anzoategui, Venezuela’s highest medal for gallantry.

86-1699: Coined “Merlin’s Magic”, it participated in Operation Firm Response to conduct a 14.4 flight hour NEO of 56 non-combatants from the Republic of the Congo in 1997.

89-0283: This aircraft was the fourth of four Talons that opened OEF as a Rhino Raider in 2001. Rhino LZ was the first combat airfield seizure in Afghanistan in 2001. Additionally, 0283 conducted the exfil of Hamid Karzai on November 4, 2001. This aircraft also conducted a BLU-82 drop on Masir-e-Sharif and participated in the 2008 Colombia hostage rescue.



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New Wing at Davis-Monthan Will Include MC-130s, 'Light Attack' CSAF Says

The Special Operations “Power Projection Wing” planned for Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., will include MC-130s and “light attack” aircraft—probably the new Sky Wardens—Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. told Congress on April 27.

The new mix of Air Force Special Operations Command aircraft will replace the A-10s now based at Davis-Monthan as they are retired in coming years.

The Air Force cited plans for the 492nd Power Projection Wing in its 2024 budget request and subsequently confirmed those plans to Air & Space Forces Magazine. But exactly which aircraft would be included was not clear until now.

Asked by Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-Ariz.) to provide more details, Brown said the Power Projection Wing would be “bringing in our MC-130s [and] light attack aircraft.”

The MC-130 is a tanker/mobility aircraft, used by Special Operations Forces for covert day, night, and adverse weather infiltration, exfiltration, and resupply. Based on the Air Tractor AT-802 crop duster, the heavily modified Sky Warden won the Armed Overwatch competition. The aircraft will replace Air Force Special Operations Command’s aging fleet of U-28A Draco ISR aircraft and augment remotely piloted MQ-9 Reaper drones when they reach initial operational capability in 2026.

Also headed to Davis-Monthan are new EC-37 Compass Call electronic warfare aircraft and HH-60W Jolly Green II search and rescue helicopters.

“Their access to the ranges that are there in Arizona and in the western United States will increase their training opportunity,” Brown said of all the new aircraft.



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President's Letter

The Prez Sez:



Sot7,

It's easy to take some things for granted in the midst of living our typically busy lives. I try hard to be grateful for all the people in my life, but I never expected the death of a complete stranger to hit me as hard as the death of Jimmy Buffett. I'm sure you've all heard that he sailed into his final sunset over the Labor Day weekend. I always enjoyed his music, but I was never a full-on Parrot Head. As I made my way thru the massive number of tributes this week, I was struck by the fact that I have never heard anything but positive words about this man. Not one single time while he was alive or after he passed! That is an amazing record and perhaps as important as the lyrics he created to help all of us forget our troubles and live more carefree lives.

Jimmy Buffett's daughter posted a touching tribute to her father, days after the singer-songwriter died following a 4-year battle with skin cancer.

"I knew my dad my whole life, but in his final days, I saw who he was: a man whose spirit could not be broken," Delaney Buffett wrote on Instagram Wednesday.

"Despite the pain, he smiled every day. He was kind when he had every excuse not to be. He told us not to be sad or scared, but to keep the party going. And as much as I'd like to use that as an excuse to drink myself into an oblivion worthy of his literary heroes, I know it's not what he meant," she continued. "Yes, he loved his weed and his wine, but the truth is, most of the time, he was just high on life, and that is what he wanted for everyone: to enjoy the fantastic trip that life can be."



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President's Letter (cont.)

The Prez Sez:



The example he set for all of us is something I hope to copy each and every day. Although I never actually met Jimmy or attended one of his performances, I consider him one of our most precious resources for getting thru the good times and the bad. For me he was the kind of personality that I needed to help guide me during the chaotic times we find ourselves living thru. Thank you Jimmy for working so hard to help all of us maintain our perspective, our empathy and our humility!

"Life is a journey that's not measured in miles or years, but in experiences."

- **Jimmy Buffett**

I will always be grateful for the amazing friends I made during my time spent in the 7th and for the incredible experiences we all shared together. I am already getting excited about meeting old friends and making new friends while sharing in new experiences at the 7th Reunion, which is now less than a year away! Whatever time the party starts in Dayton, I can assure you that it will be 5 o'clock somewhere.

AoP!
Jim



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President's Letter (cont.)





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NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

JIM PETERSON

Our fearless leader,
proudly serving the 7th
ACS/SOS



RUSS PAINTER

7th ACS/SOS
Treasurer



MIKE & SHARRON SCOTT

Database Mgrs. for
the 7th ACS/SOS



**MAX
FRIEDAUER**
“Anytime, Any-
place”, keeping
us straight



BILL “HOLLYWOOD” FOWLER

Publisher & Editor
of the 7th ACS/SOS
Newsletter



LT COL LUKE LEFEVER

7th SOS
Commander, 7th
ACS/SOS Board
Member & great
supporter.



Note From the Editor:

As the Publisher & Editor of the 7th ACS/
SOS Newsletter, I depend on all of my
fellow 7th ACS/SOS members for inputs
for the newsletter - it's not my newsletter,
it's ours.

So please help me by sending a current
“SITREP” on what's happening within our
7th ACS/SOS Family.

Load Clear!
“Hollywood”

Feedback is always welcome.....



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<http://www.7thsos.org>

7th ACS/SOS Website

By Max Friedauer, Website Administrator

Great News! Our previous Offline & Online databases have been merged into one online database on our website at www.7thsos.org.

For those of you who have had access to the website in the past but forgot your password or if you're new to the site and have never been registered, you are now registered but **we need you to update your Profile**. Please follow the below procedures to login and view your profile:

1. Go to the following address and use your primary e-mail address to login. You may also have received an e-mail already asking you to validate and update your profile and login.
http://www.7thsos.org/site.php?n=sv_subscribe&action=request_pw_reset
2. You will receive a secure "password reset" email.
3. Click on the "Reset Password" Link in the e-mail.
4. On 7thSOS.org website, enter your new desired password. MUST be a minimum of 12 Characters, include Upper & Lower-case characters and at least 1 number. Longer phrases of words not typically found together with mixed numbers and or special characters is best, be creative, but memorable, and write it down. Don't worry, you can always reset this later using the same above procedure.

Now you should be able to login with your Primary e-mail and your new password.

Fully Paid-Up Members receive full access to the Gallery (pictures, movies, and Papa Joe's songs), Forum (announcements, news, and a place for you to post and communicate), News, important links, history, and a digital copy in PDF format of the "PraetorianSTARShip" by Jerry Thigpen. If your dues are not current, have never paid dues or do not wish to become a dues paying member, you will still have access to the website to browse our "Country Store," check on upcoming reunions, update your profile, and receive important e-mails from your society, and can send an e-mail to our 7th ACS administrators.



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7th ACS/SOS Website (cont.)

By Max Friedauer, Website Administrator

SPECIAL NOTE: We upgraded the website with new and stronger security protocols and you can be assured that your data is safe. We do not provide information to any public service or advertise and you'll never see an ad on our website except our own message to provide you with the latest news. **IMPORTANT:** If your login fails, please **do NOT** repeatedly try logging in, as you may get locked out of the website completely. If this happens please contact admin@7thsos.org. **Other News!** In addition to other methods, you may now pay & check on your dues payments or register for future Reunions while logged into our website, as well as update your Profile, Contact info, Duty History, and other information.

We have seen quite a few of our members attempt incorrect logins. The result is, you will be automatically banned from the site entirely for repeating the same bad action over and over again. The website will defend itself against a perceived threat like this.

If you do not know what your password is, then please click on the "Forgot Password?" link under the Login button on the Login errors page. This will send you an email you can use to reset the password. In the future, you can avoid being banned by not repeating the same bad action over and over again. Instead, please reset your password, or contact me for help, maxfriedau@me.com or 850-543-0475.

To check & pay Dues as well as view and update your Profile and other info:

1. Login to the website
2. Click on the "Profile" Link on the top horizontal Admin Links bar.
3. Click on Edit on the top of the Profile to change your profile info.

To view and make Dues payments see the Dues section below your profile info.





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Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) News and Updates



ANNUAL SOWF FUNDRAISER IN FT WALTON BEACH

THE HARLEY DINNER

On September 16, 2023 the local VFW Spectre Post 11367 put on their annual Harley Davidson raffle/fundraising dinner for the Special Operations Warrior Foundation. The event drew a large crowd as usual (over 625 people) filling the large room at the local fairgrounds. Each ticket earned you one chance at a sparkling new Harley Davidson Motorcycle with a "one of a kind" Patriotic Warrior Foundation paint job, a prime rib dinner for 2 along with an open bar....a formula for a wonderful evening. Lots of familiar faces from the past with plenty of time to catch up makes it a special event for the Air Commando community in NW Florida.

**The event raised over \$55,000 for SOWF.
WELL DONE BROTHERS AND SISTERS!**



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Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) News and Updates (cont.)



Many thanks to Gus and the staff of "EMERALD COAST HARLEY" who donated the Harley.



The winner of the Harley was Dave Harkleroad



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Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) News and Updates (cont.)



LEST WE FORGET!



At a remote airstrip known as DESERT ONE, a battlefield promise made to 17 American children – when 8 Special Operations Forces were tragically lost in a daring mission – OPERATION EAGLE CLAW – to rescue 52 American hostages in Iran.

The Special Operations Warrior Foundation was founded after the daring attempt to rescue 52 American hostages in Iran during Operation Eagle Claw.



A Trusted Charitable Organization



Special Operations Warrior Foundation is proud to be recognized as a Four-Star Charity for the last 16 consecutive years by Charity Navigator. SOWF is also a recipient of Guidestar's 2021 Platinum Seal of Transparency.

A 2022 Actuarial review identified a \$224 Million Dollar need to fund the educations of current and future children supported by SOWF. Ernst & Young LLP, one of the world's leading professional services firm in the areas of risk, strategy and people, published the Actuarial study in February 2023.



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Combat Talon Memorial Foundation (CTMF)



Dear Combat Talon Memorial Committee,

Yes, you can count on me to make a donation to the Combat Talon Memorial Foundation whose goal was to design and erect a memorial to honor all Combat Talon warriors and especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice. A special commemorative coin will be presented to anyone making a minimum \$20 donation.

The Memorial was dedicated and placed adjacent to the MC-130E Combat Talon I aircraft (Serial # 64-0567) in the Hurlburt Field Memorial Air Park. Updates will be provided via the 7th ACS/SOS, SGI, and Combat Talon Memorial Foundation organizational websites and Face Book pages and newsletters.

☐ Enclosed is a one time donation of \$_____. Please make check payable to "CTMF" and mail with this form to:

Bill Saier
1359 Players Club Cir.
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563-3521
Saier.william@gmail.com
850-221-1845

☐ I would like to make this a recurring donation. I pledge \$_____ for _____ years for a total donation of \$_____.

☐ I would like to make a gift In Honor or In Memory of a Combat Talon warrior.
To make a donation in honor or in memory of someone, please indicate in the space below.

☐ I would like my contribution honoring a Combat Talon warrior to be acknowledged by the Combat talon Memorial Foundation.

☐ I understand that while no formal recognition of my contribution in memory of someone will be made on the memorial itself, the Combat Talon Memorial Foundation may publish my name/designation on their website and in their newsletters.

Donor Information:

Name:	
Address:	
City:	
Zip/Postal:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Please indicate your affiliation with Combat Talons (squadron/years/duty position/family member):



Our current CTMF balance is \$4,540.88. This remains an important CTMF reserve for any future expenses with the care and tending of The Rock. We will, of course, still be accepting further financial donations to cover any future costs.

We still have DVDs of The Rock dedication ceremony available for a nominal donation of \$10.00 (covers the production and postage). The DVDs are in either standard or Blu-Ray format. If you would like a DVD, you can send me a check for \$10 per DVD, to:

CTMF
c/o Bill Saier
1359 Players Club Circle
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563

Make sure you include your address and which format (standard or Blu-Ray) you want to receive. Also included in the mailer with the DVD will be a copy of the ceremony program and a CTMF coin. Naturally, all donations will remain in the CTMF treasury to meet future expenses with regards to The Rock.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments. My e-mail is: saier.william@gmail.com

Regards

Boomer





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Financial Report 7th Air Commando Society (7th ACS/SOS)

By Russ Painter, Treasurer

We remain in good financial standing, current balance as of August 29, 2023 is \$20,434.97

Balance Sheet		
Balance	Activity Date	Actual
Checking Account Balance	8/29/2023	\$719.73
Money Market Account	8/29/2023	\$19,511.06
Savings Account Balance	8/29/2023	\$204.19
	TOTAL	\$20,434.97

We'd like to send out a huge 'Thank You' to Maj James (Jim) Bailey (Retired) for his generous donation to the 7th ACS. Jim was assigned to the 7th SOS as a Combat Controller between 1966 and 1969, SMSgt NCOIC Ops, at both Sembach AB and Ramstein AB, Germany. He went on to get his commission after his tour of duty with the 7th. We hope he gets a chance to attend our next reunion so we can thank him appropriately.

Contact info remains; email, famousg@me.com , or ctload7and8@outlook.com , home (850) 710-3292 or cell (850) 281-4858

Russell E. Painter
7th ACS/SOS Treasurer



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The 7th ACS Country Store Combat Talon Legacy T-Shirts



Front (All)



White Back (Men's and Ladies)



Ladies Back



Men's Back

Contact info - Steve Noble email: churnobl@yahoo.com , phone: (850) 642-0082 or Brendon "Grimey" Grimes email: Grimesbb@gmail.com



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“TDY” Sites to Visit ***(Don’t forget our 7th SOS Website)***

7th ACS Gallery -

Check out the Gallery too. We have all the 7th Songs by “Papa Joe” Sheldon, movies, and lots of pictures. Check it out at:

http://www.7thsos.org/site.php?n=sv_gallery/

C-130E(I) Combat Talon I (1965-2013)-

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_axy1PDb48

US Air Force Special Operations Facebook Page -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1695577247387031/?ref=bookmarks>

Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) Facebook Page -

<https://www.facebook.com/AfsocOfficial/>

Air Commando Association (ACA) Journal (Vol 8_Issue 3_Hall of Fame 2019)-

https://aircommando.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Vol-8-Issue-3-Hall-of-Fame-2019-web.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0jUim-U84xpxpkFZ8eaXT3n_PPp-UOVKuFNNhtwoDLWRI_4FRVEQBPNUM



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One Last Thing.....



Never be without your Coin