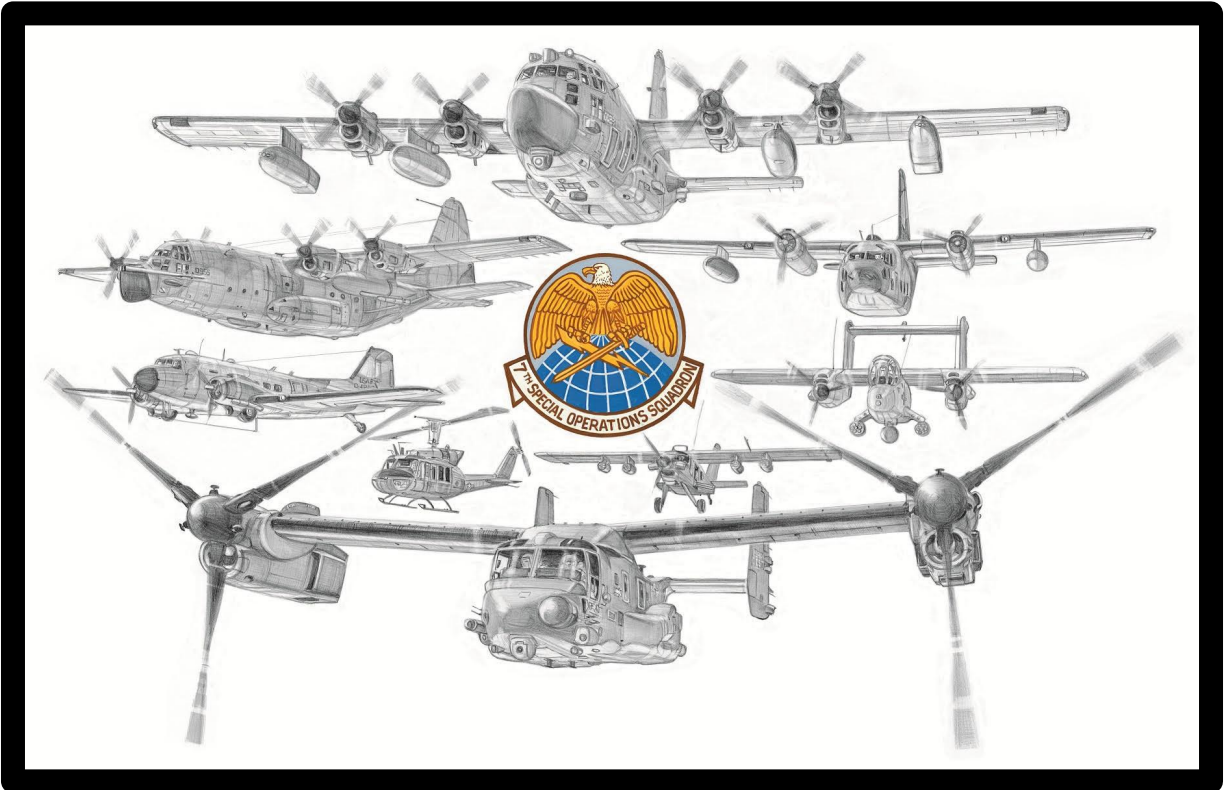




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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander’s Page

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC



Change of Command

Effective 5 June 2026, Lt Col Erik Towal relinquished Command of the 7th SOS to Lt Col Matt Sevey after two years of dedication and selfless work for SOT7. Lt Col Towal is now in Tampa Florida attending SDE.



**Col Adam Moore presiding over the
CoC between Lt Col Towal and Lt Col Sevey**



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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Operations and Exercises [Relevancy]

New Year’s Blowout



7th SOS arriving at interim basing location prior to operations kicking off

The TFFSITUSAF started the New Year out with a bang... well at least a blow out. Early in 2026 the 7th SOS was called upon to support Presidentially directed maritime interdiction operations targeting sanctioned vessels. While we cannot get into much detail on this, the unit deployed five aircraft and 71 people over a 16 day cumulative effort resulting in an astounding 1500 nm of coverage flights and the successful recovery of strategic assets.



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7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Operations and Exercises [Relevancy]

Exercise POINTBLANK 26



**7th SOS Flight Engineer monitors MC-130
rejoin during an evening mission in support of Exercise POINT BLANK 26**

Operation EPIC FURY

Throughout most of the Springtime, the unit deployed in support of major combat operations as a part of Operation *EPIC FURY*, launching nine aircraft and 160 personnel and transiting 4900 nm flying 200+ combat sorties. Again, much of what the squadron accomplished cannot be discussed at this time, but the unit was involved in a number of recovery operations including two MEDEVACs and the recovery of six fallen airmen.



Four aircraft returning to RAF Mildenhall after completing their OEF tour



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7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Operations and Exercises [Relevancy]

Maritime Operations

As the summer came on, the 7th SOS found itself being tasked with developing increased maritime proficiency and flexibility and jumped wholehearted into the mission. From July through the end of August the unit completed deck-landing qualifications for 16 personnel and validated shipboard fast-rope TTPs utilizing newly developed heavy-weight ropes specifically designed to handle the intense downwash of the CV-22. This training coupled range and speed of the CV-22 has made the 7th SOS more flexible and lethal to our adversaries while giving planners and leaders increased options across the AOR.



7th SOS crews executing deck landing qualifications with the USS Arlington last July



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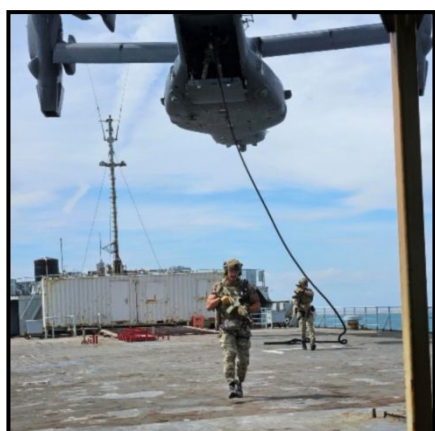


“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Operations and Exercises [Relevancy]



US SOF personnel and crewmembers from the 7th SOS try out the latest type of fast rope designed for the V-22 on the UK Navy’s training vessel the Sir Tristam

STOL

While the V-22 was designed to have the vertical take-off and landing capacities of a helicopter, sometimes it’s nice to get a little extra lift using its fixed wing parts. To that end, the 7th SOS, in conjunction with its CONUS sister unit the 20th SOS at Cannon AFB, set out to develop TTPs, limits, and procedures for utilizing traditional fixed wing landing zones to conduct rolling take-offs and landings on. Gaining 3-star authorization, the units located a suitable proving ground, utilized a Special Tactics recon team to test soil composition, then conducted three separate iterations of rolling take-offs and landings at various speeds and CBRs to great success. This previously prohibited maneuver is now being incorporated as an approved standard practice, enabling up to 50% additional lifting capacity when a suitable fixed-wing landing zone is available, further increasing the 7th SOS’s reach and flexibility on the battlefield.



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7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

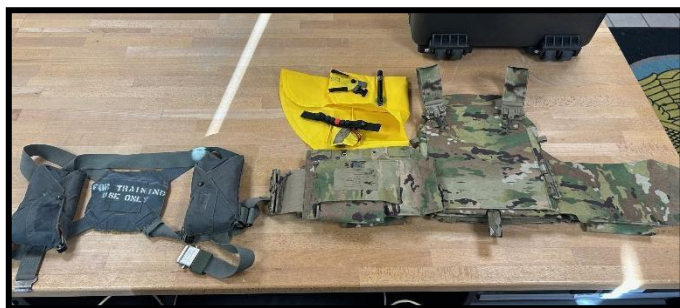
Operations and Exercises [Relevancy]



7th SOS crews completing austere landing and rollout on dry lakebed LZ

Life Support Refresh

The squadron is always looking for better ways to increase the utility, survivability, and comfort of our life support equipment, and over the last several months has made great strides in researching and procuring the best gear out there.



Old underarm LPUs vs integrated ABAV vest



New thin/lightweight armor plate



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7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

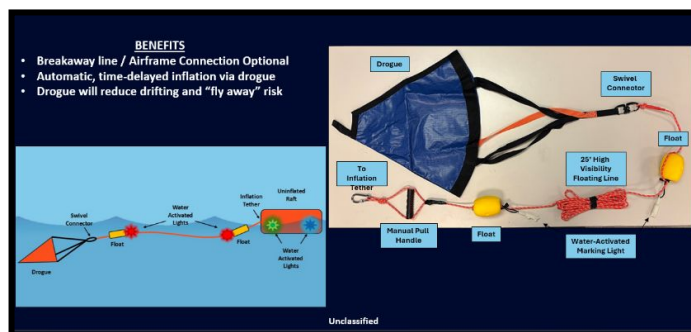
By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

We have left behind the old underarm LPUs that were bulky and difficult to work around in a vest, and now have integrated them into our standard plate carrier style body armor, significantly boosting mobility. In similar fashion, we have upgraded from the traditional ceramic armor plates to a thinner, more flexible, and 70% lighter option, again increasing mobility and lowering inflight fatigue.

Our “on-deck” projects include the procurement of the Rotary wing Advanced Tactical Helmet (RATH) which combines the best of the Ops-Core style helmet with the comfort and flexibility of the Peltor communication systems all in a 30% lighter package.



Traditional H56P helmet next to the RATH



Finally our members successfully made the cut during the SOCOM IGNITE innovation challenge to continue development on survival raft improvements. Dubbed Project Castaway, these enhancements to the current systems will improve stabilization during employment from a V-22, enhanced lighting and visibility for finding the raft at night, and a better righting capability in the event the raft is inverted during water-emergencies or ditching.



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“Adapt or Perish”

7th Commander's Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC

Community Outreach

It's airshow season again in the UK, and the 7th SOS is out building local relationships and showing off the aircraft all over the UK. So far we have hit Leeming, RAF Valley, and RAF Wattisham.



7th SOS aircraft and crew at RAF Wattisham Family Day... look at that line

Heritage Project

In a concerted effort to maintain our lineage and heritage, the Intel shop launched the ADAPT or PERISH Heritage Project. This effort takes pictures, plaques, and memorabilia from every era of the unit aligning it in a timeline that stretches down the hallways in the building. While it is still a work in progress, the eventual outcome will be a museum quality walk through the history from inception to current day... with plenty of room to grow.





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7th Commander’s Page (cont.)

By Lt Col Matt Sevey, USAF AFSOC, 7th SOS/CC



Key Support Liaison of the Year



Mrs. Pratt receiving the AFSOC KSL of the Year Award

Black Friday

Finally, on 28 Aug the squadron held its first Black Friday of the year due to the number of deployments and operations that have consumed much of this year already. Those that completed their Combat Mission Training syllabus challenged their favorite instructor to a feat of strength for the right to gain their Air Commando hat. As per tradition, we also passed the Bell to the youngest member of the unit as they recited the poem long passed down.

ADAPT OR PERISH!

Matt Sevey, Lt Col, USAF Commander
7th Special Operations Squadron
RAF Mildenhall, UK





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Exfil of US SOF members at a training range in Montenegro



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**Practicing water hoist with the
Caister Lifeguard Service off the Anglican Coast**



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352ND SPEC OP'S WING MACH LOOP 08/01/2025





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Exercise Northern Viking 2026



Akureyri, Iceland – Air Commandos from the 352d Special Operations Wing are participating in Exercise Northern Viking 2026, a premier multinational training event designed to bolster defense capabilities in the strategically vital High North.

Operating alongside NATO and joint U.S. forces, the 352d SOW is utilizing the exercise to sharpen tactical readiness, test long-range force employment concepts, and ensure seamless air-domain interoperability in austere Arctic environments.

“Our objectives are the same as NATO objectives: to increase interoperability with our Allies and partners and to deter and defend against potential adversaries in the High North,” said the 352 SOW mission commander. “We are specifically exploring opportunities to employ emerging SOF-peculiar technologies, enabling long-range logistical sustainment of the Allied and Joint Force. Basically, we’ll be employing non-standard airdrop platforms to deliver logistical and medical supplies to far-forward troops.”

The training comes at a critical time as coalition forces continue to reinforce collective security and deterrence protocols across the European theater.



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Exercise Northern Viking 2026 (cont.)



“This exercise gives us a unique opportunity to practice like we expect to play, where we expect to play, and alongside the partners we will play with,” continued the 352d SOW mission commander. “Simply by being here in Iceland and working with our Allies, we are strengthening the relationships across the Alliance and identifying key areas where we can improve our ability to project U.S. and Allied combat power.”

Integrating air and maritime components to conduct joint military operations allows the 352d SOW to partner with other U.S. military services and showcase enhanced training and coordination.

“We specifically want to train in long-range resupply in contested environments and intend to airdrop a powered glider to a detachment of fellow U.S. service members,” continued the 352d SOW mission commander. “This glider will be filled with supplies and airdropped to the servicemembers on the ground validating our capability to deliver critical supplies to SOF teams operating far beyond friendly supply lines.”

The tactics and techniques developed at Exercise Northern Viking will be codified as another important tool in the 352d SOW’s toolkit for supporting a wide variety of SOF-peculiar missions across the U.S. European Command theater of operations.

“We want to express our gratitude and deepest thanks to the government and people of Iceland, and the city of Akureyri in particular,” said the 352d SOW mission commander. “Everyone has been extremely welcoming and supportive of our presence here and it’s been a thrill of a lifetime to be a guest and perform operations across their beautiful country.”



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In Memoriam



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alsnD87uOeo>



Talon Brothers and Sisters That Are No Longer With Us

https://www.7thsos.org/site.php?n=sv_deceased

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



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In Memoriam (cont.)



Robert D. "Bob" Dubee

1928-2026

7th SOS Pilot 1968-1972

Another of our 7th sons has passed through the heavenly gates.

Robert D. "Bob" Dubbe died on July 26th 2026. Bob was a pilot in the 7th SOS from 1968-1972 and he is survived by his daughter Debbie Dubbe-Gray.

He was 98 years old and lived in Stedman, NC.



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In Memoriam (cont.)



CMSgt. (Ret) Howard “Jim” Mowry

March 27, 1959 - August 22, 2026

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of retired Chief Master Sgt. Howard “Jim” Mowry. Chief Mowry was a decorated veteran of the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom, who served as the Command Chief Master Sgt. for Air Force Special Operations Command from August 2003 until his retirement in August 2006.

During his 29 years of distinguished service, he was a pivotal leader and mentor to thousands of Airmen. As the only Air Force Command Chief deployed to Northern Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, he provided crucial leadership to over 5,000 joint force enlisted members. His unwavering dedication, expertise, and tireless advocacy for the welfare of our Airmen left an indelible mark on the Air Force. He was a true Quiet Professional whose legacy of leadership and service will not be forgotten. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and all who knew him.

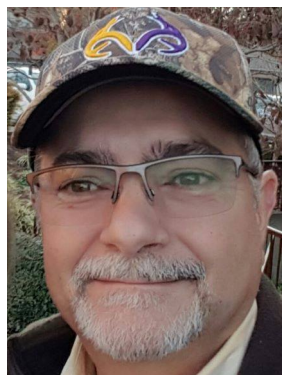


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ADDRESS AND STATUS CHANGES



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 or darreneskind@gmail.com. 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 (225) 324-1433 or 13157 Gentry Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70817.

Darren Eskin
Database/Website Mgr.



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7th SOS Memories





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Honoring the Legacy: 352 SOW Commemorates 82nd Anniversary of Operation Thursday



Leadership from the 352d Special Operations Wing recently gathered alongside international allies to commemorate the 82nd anniversary of Operation Thursday, one of the most daring, unorthodox, and pivotal joint military campaigns of World War II, during the Chindit and Burma Star Memorial Day event Aug. 15, 2026.

Veterans from both the United States and United Kingdom marked the anniversary at the National Memorial Arboretum with both the 352d Special Operations Wing commander, Col. Shane Muscato, and command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Vanessa Leon, laying wreaths in memory of the fallen, ensuring that the legacy of those special operations members will never be forgotten.



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Honoring the Legacy: 352 SOW Commemorates 82nd Anniversary of Operation Thursday (cont.)



“The Chindit Memorial holds special importance for us due to the historical ties between the mission of the British Chindits and the role of American Air Commandos in World War II,” said Muscato. “It highlights our unique SOF heritage and the direct tie to today’s changing character of war and what we can learn and apply from the past to today’s missions.”

The event, which included a flyover by a 352d SOW MC-130J Commando II, highlights the continued partnership and enduring bond between the United States and the United Kingdom.

“As a student and lover of history, having the opportunity to attend this event fills me with a profound sense of pride and respect,” said Muscato. “It’s an opportunity to honor the extraordinary bravery and sacrifices of the Chindits and Air Commandos of yesterday, who undertook remarkable long-range operations behind enemy lines during World War II.”

The event commemorates the 81st anniversary of Victory over Japan, and the 82nd anniversary of Operation Thursday, conducted by the Chindits behind Japanese lines in Northern Burma, when they were flown in and then supported from the air by the United State Army Air Force’s 1st Air Commando Group (predecessors of the 352 SOW).

“The memorial serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience, resourcefulness, and commitment made by these great warriors,” said Muscato.

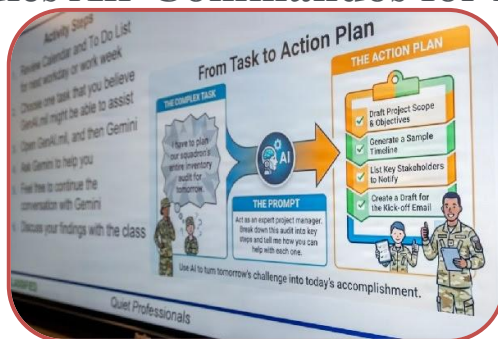


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AI Bootcamp Readies Air Commandos for Next-Gen Advantage



Air Force Special Operations Command has begun hosting AI Bootcamps, a pioneering training course designed to arm servicemembers with the skills to ethically and effectively integrate artificial intelligence into their daily duties.

The course stems from the command's commitment to leveraging emerging technologies to maintain a competitive advantage in an increasingly complex operating environment. The goal of the initiative is to empower Air Commandos to utilize AI tools, streamlining procedural processes and tasks to reclaim valuable time for mission-critical responsibilities.

"The AFSOC AI Bootcamp was created out of a forward-thinking effort to prepare our service members for an AI-integrated environment," said Dr. Christina Parker, AFSOC chief learning officer. "We accomplish this by identifying and addressing concerns of using AI; identifying AI appropriate tasks; highlighting "Human in the Loop" strategies and techniques; and providing highly practical, hands-on application training."

As part of practical application practice, students are taught how to assign the AI system a role to play for accomplishing an identified task.

"AI can serve as a 'brainstormer' to move past the 'blank page' problem, a 'translator' to reformat data and adjust the tone of materials, a 'red teamer' to identify weaknesses in a plan, and even a 'tutor' to break down complex topics for upskilling," said Parker.

The course was designed to create a bridge the knowledge gap on generative AI systems, creating a baseline understanding for users no matter their experience level.

Parker states AFSOC's proactive stance in designing, developing, and delivering the AI training has led higher headquarters and other commands across the Joint Force to reach out to request her team's materials for review and use.

Through this forward-leaning approach, AFSOC is not just initiating the charge for mass AI adoption but is actively building the framework to teach servicemembers how to rapidly integrate these capabilities. This initiative positions them at the forefront of shaping how the Joint Force will team up with artificial intelligence.



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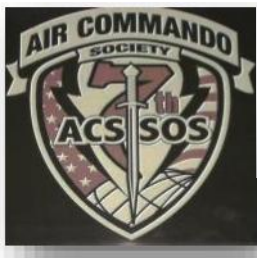
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Play Ball!



That's what twenty Air Commandos witnessed in Tampa over the 26 Feb - 1 Mar 2026 weekend. Spring Training baseball started and for the Air Commandos it also signaled another road trip to the sunshine state. Several games were attended around the Tampa Bay Area. The Spring Training baseball events were also accompanied by a trip to the Bad Monkey, a favorite SOF bar, followed by dinner at the Columbia restaurant in Ybor City. If that wasn't enough, the Air Commandos attended a Tampa Bay Lightning hockey game and wrapped up the weekend at Mike Brennan's for a backyard barbecue. Good times were had by all. The photo below was taken at Benchmark International Arena, formerly Amalie Arena, the home of the Tampa Bay Lightning Hockey team. Air Commandos in the photo include (L to R), Scotty Burnette, Joe Primosch, Glenn Brown, Joe Hastings, Mark Saturno, Roy Garcia, Mallory Knight, Greg DeYonker, Mark Crisafi, Arcadio 'Skinny' Alaniz, Kent Shin, Vinnie Franco, Jeff Lum, Mike Brennan, Tom Mims, Kevin 'Ernest T' Simmons, Jim Bonn and Tom Bell. Jim 'Lindy' Linder and Phil Lawlor, not in the photo, also attended the weekend activities.



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Air Commandos The Foundation of Air Force Special Operations



[Click here for a Pictorial History of the 7th ACS/SOS](#)



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OA-1K Skyraider II Red Wolf Missile



NEWS

**U.S. Deploys Red Wolf Missile
on OA-1K Skyraider II for
Long-Range Strike**

The U.S. has integrated the Red Wolf missile onto the OA-1K Skyraider II, transforming the platform into a long-range strike asset.

Developed by L3Harris Technologies, the system enables engagement at distances exceeding 200 nautical miles (~370 km), allowing operations from outside high-risk zones.



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Air Commandos Seek 'SOF-peculiar' Attack Drones with Automatic Target Recognition Capabilities



SOCOM's Program Executive Office-Fixed Wing is conducting market research for the loitering munition technology.

U.S. Special Operations Command is looking for vendors of small one-way-attack drones that could be launched from aircraft and use automatic target recognition capabilities to find their prey.

Specifically, SOCOM is interested in Group 1 and Group 2 unmanned aerial systems that could fit inside a common launch tube with a form factor of 5.9-inch diameter and 42-inch maximum overall length, according to a sources-sought notice published Friday on a government contracting website.

Most of the loitering munitions that have made headlines in recent years have been ground-launched. However, there is growing interest in U.S. military circles in one-way attack drones that can be fired from airborne platforms.

Last month, Special Operations Command released an RFI for an air-launched loitering munition. However, the new notice indicates that the organization is now seeking a drone with a significantly lower maximum munition weight — not to exceed 55 pounds — and focusing exclusively on UAS that can fit inside the common launch tubes on its fixed-wing aircraft rather than considering other release mechanisms.



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Air Commandos Seek 'SOF-peculiar' Attack Drones with Automatic Target Recognition Capabilities (cont.)



Program Executive Office-Fixed Wing is performing market research “to better understand industry capability and the levels of current expertise in performing spiral development, engineering services, and production of a SOF-peculiar munition” that could be used “across SOF Air platforms” by special operations forces, officials wrote in the latest [RFI](#).

The office wants technology that allows for pre-planned routing and “Intra Platform Communications,” they noted.

The loitering munition “shall support government-owned FANTOM Core collaborative mission autonomy to command and control the platform flight controller via a machine-to-machine (M2M) API and/or C2 integration via BMS (Battle Management System),” officials wrote, noting that the command prefers a seeker assembly that’s integrated with automatic target recognition.

Amid concerns about operating in contested environments, SOCOM is interested in learning about vendors’ alternative position, navigation, and timing technologies that could be integrated into their systems.

According to the notice, the command wants air-launched kamikaze drones with a minimum range of 75 nautical miles from launch point to loitering point; 50-100 knots cruise and loitering speed; and a minimum “dash speed” of 100-plus knots “on attack profile.” The organization is eyeing systems that could be dropped from an altitude as high as 35,000 feet.

Officials are looking to evaluate solution providers’ technologies via a demonstration on the AC-130J Ghost rider gunship or another SOF platform equipped with common launch tubes.

The RFI did not provide a specific cost target for the drones, but it indicated that the command is looking for best value at procurement quantities of 500, 1,000, or 3,000 platforms.



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Air Commando Heritage Foundation Aims to Preserve Legacy with New Museum



The Air Commando Museum is coming.

And the support behind it continues to grow.

We're honored to have former AFSOC commanders standing with us as we work to preserve the legacy of America's Air Commandos for generations to come.

Thank you for being in this with us.

The list is growing. The momentum is building. And the museum is coming.

Learn more here: aircommandoheritagefoundation.org



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Air Commando Heritage Foundation Aims to Preserve Legacy with New Museum (cont.)

While the focus is often on the operators at the tip of the spear, the museum will also pay tribute to the unsung heroes—the support personnel whose expertise makes every mission possible. From intelligence specialists and maintainers to medics and logisticians, these Air Commandos work behind the scenes, embodying the Quiet Professional ethos, never seeking recognition, yet playing an essential role in the success of special operations.

“Many of these stories have never been told,” Heithold emphasized. “That changes here. This museum will shine a light on the entire Air Commando community—every operator, every supporter, every mission.”

The vision for this museum is a space that honors service and sacrifice while inspiring the future. A state-of-the-art STEM classroom will provide hands-on learning to engage the next generation.

A dedicated area for military retirements, ceremonies, and events will ensure this museum remains a living, breathing tribute to those who serve.

“Young people who visit will see the grit, determination, and innovation that define Air Commandos,” Heithold added. “They’ll see what it means to be part of something greater than themselves, to push the limits of what’s possible. And when they leave, they won’t just be inspired—they’ll want to be the next Air Commando.”

Beyond preserving history, the museum will be a point of pride for the panhandle, drawing visitors nationwide, strengthening the bond between the military and the community, and supporting local businesses.

The Air Commando Heritage Foundation has one mission: to raise the funds to build and sustain this museum.

“This is about more than history,” Heithold emphasized. “It’s about preserving a legacy of valor, service, and sacrifice—not just today, but forever.”

Because legacy and valor should never fade.

For more information on how to donate, get involved, or support the museum project, visit <https://aircommandoheritagefoundation.org>.



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Release Date Announced

As reported by [Deadline.com](https://deadline.com), Amazon MGM Studios and Imagine Entertainment have officially announced the release dates for *Alone at Dawn*, directed by Ron Howard, based on the 2019 book by retired USAF Lt Col Special Tactics Officer and Combat Controller Dan Schilling and Lori Chapman Longfritz.

The film will begin a limited theatrical release on December 25, 2027, followed by a wide nationwide expansion leading into MLK weekend in January 2028.

Starring Adam Driver as John Chapman and Anne Hathaway as the Air Force intelligence officer who helped uncover the full truth of his actions, the feature brings John's extraordinary legacy and the 2002 Battle of Takur Ghar to the big screen.

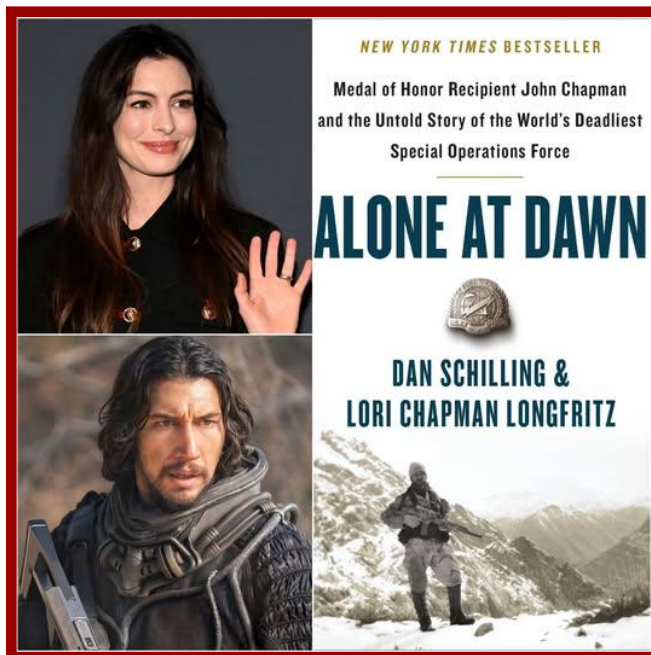


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ALONE AT DAWN (cont.)



John Chapman, known to his friends as 'Chappy' joined the Air Force in 1985 and was trained as an Information Systems Operator. Chappy later retrained as an Air Force Special Tactics Combat Controller in 1990. On March 4, 2002, Combat Controller Tech Sergeant John Chapman was involved in a grueling 17-hour firefight during the Battle of Takur Ghar supporting Operation Anaconda. The heroic actions Chappy decided to make that day, would end his life but would save the lives of 23 team members. John was posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross for his extraordinary heroism, superb airmanship, aggressiveness in the face of the enemy, and dedication to the service of his country.

He is the first Airman to receive the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War, and the only combat controller to receive the award.

It is an honor to see John's extraordinary legacy, his story, and the sacrifices he made at the Battle of Takur Ghar, shared with audiences around the world. This is a meaningful moment for the entire Combat Control and USAF Special Operations community as the world learns more about the strength, valor, and brotherhood of warriors.



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President's Letter

The Prez Sez,



7th Family,

I just started reading a book written by the daughter of a great friend of ours and I thought I would share a bit of his story. When I arrived at the 20th SOS to fly MH-53 Pave Lows as a newly minted 2nd Lieutenant in the spring of 2000, one of my very first flights was with a guy named John Alvarez. John was a Navy pilot serving a joint tour at the 20th. On the day I met John he was wearing an Air Force uniform (more on that in a few) and I was scheduled to fly with him on a day tactical sortie. When I showed up for the preflight briefing I did not know anything about him. It wasn't until we were walking towards the Flight Equipment shop to grab our gear that I noticed him walking with a limp. When I asked John if he was nursing an injury, his response was something like, "You could say that." Eventually someone pulled me aside to inform me that John was an amputee. Needless to say I was shocked, confused and found myself hoping that the Air Force had made sure he was capable of safely flying the MH-53. Turns out he was an excellent pilot, even with 1 ½ legs. So here's the story written about by John's daughter Lisette and titled, "Walk Run Fly Again". While on loan from the Navy to the Air Force, John was further loaned to the 6th SOS because he is fluent in Spanish. While on loan and serving as a member of a foreign internal defense team in Ecuador, the helicopter he was flying on crashed into a river on 19 Sep 1996 killing the pilot and leaving John severely wounded and drowning. Thankfully, through his relentless struggle and the help of some SEALs, John survived. I'm not sure what is most remarkable about his story of survival, but living through the crash to eventually walk, run and ultimately fly again is a story of determination that we can all learn from. After recovering from his injuries, John transitioned from the Navy to the Air Force and finished his career doing some amazing work for our nation. If you have a chance, I highly recommend this book as it tells an incredibly inspiring story that we can take something valuable from.

AoP

Jim



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John "Vinnie" Vincent
7th SOS Rep: Lt Col Matt Sevey*

*Darren Eskind
Dennis Vogt*

Tom "Omar" Bradley (non-voting)



7th Air Commando News September 2026

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NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

JIM PETERSON

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



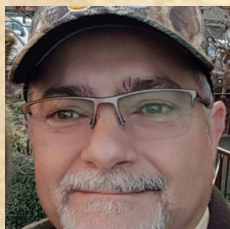
RUSS PAINTER

7th ACS/SOS
Treasurer



DARREN ESKIND

Website/Database
Manager for the
7th ACS/SOS



MAX

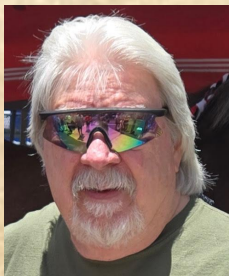
FRIEDAUER

"Anytime, Any-
place", keeping
us straight



BILL "HOLLYWOOD" FOWLER

Publisher & Editor
of the 7th ACS/SOS
Newsletter



DENNIS VOGT

7th ACS/SOS
Podcast Program
Producer/Director



LT COL MATT SEVEY

Commander, 7th SOS
And 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 family members for inputs to 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"



7th Air Commando News September 2026



www.7thsos.org

7th ACS/SOS Website

By Ryan O'Brien, 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 email address to login. You may also have received an email 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 email.
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 email 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 emails from your society, and can send an email to our 7th ACS administrators.



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7th ACS/SOS Website (cont.)

By Ryan O'Brien, 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 Darren Eskind for help, darreneskind@gmail.com or (225) 324--1433.

Login to the website

1. Click on the "Profile" Link on the top horizontal Admin Links bar.
2. 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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NEW PODCAST SERIES By Dennis Vogt

THE MISSIONS. THE MEN. THE STORIES.

Seven new podcasts. Extraordinary stories. One remarkable legacy.

Did a 7th SOS aircrew dine with the Queen of Iran inside the Imperial Palace in Tehran?

Did an Arab king sit in the pilot's seat of a 7th SOS combat Talon?

After the legendary **Son Tay Raid**, was another mission planned to rescue the American POWs who remained behind?

You may be surprised by the answers.

Over the next year, we're going behind the scenes and into the history of the **7th Special Operations Squadron** to uncover declassified stories that deserve to be remembered—and stories that, until now, many people may never have heard.

These aren't simply stories about aircraft and missions.

They are stories about **people**.

About air commandos who were asked to do extraordinary things under extraordinary circumstances.

About dangerous missions, painstaking preparation, unexpected friendships, split-second decisions, and experiences that stayed with these men for the rest of their lives.

Most importantly, these are **first hand stories**, told by the men who were there.

A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY

Our first five episodes will take us through nearly six decades of the complicated and fascinating relationship between the **United States and Iran**—from the years when the two nations were allies to the events that transformed that relationship forever.

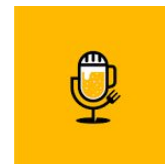


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NEW PODCAST SERIES By Dennis Vogt (cont.)



EPISODE 2 — FRIENDS TO FOES

December 2026 (Release date)

Before Iran became synonymous with the hostage crisis and the failed rescue attempt, the United States and Iran had a very different relationship.

American military personnel worked closely with Iranian forces, and 7th SOS Air Commandos found themselves in places and situations that would be almost unimaginable today.

What was it like to serve there?

What happened behind the scenes?

And what are the stories that never made the history books?

We'll hear directly from those who experienced that era.

EPISODE 3 — THE EAGLE CLAW MISSION

January 2027 (Release date)

Fifty-two Americans were being held hostage in Iran.

The United States needed a way to bring them home.

Operation Eagle Claw would become one of the most ambitious and consequential rescue attempts in American military history.

We'll explore the mission from the perspective of the people who planned it, prepared for it, and participated in it.

The training.

The aircraft.

The coordination.

The risks.

And the events that unfolded in the Iranian desert.

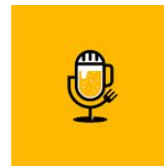


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NEW PODCAST SERIES By Dennis Vogt (cont.)



EPISODE 4 — DESERT ONE

February 2027 (Release date)

The name alone evokes one of the most difficult nights in American Special Operations history.

Desert One.

What really happened in the Iranian desert?

What challenges confronted the crews?

What decisions had to be made?

And what lessons emerged from the mission?

This episode takes us beyond the headlines and into the human story behind one of the most closely examined operations in U.S. military history.

EPISODE 5 — HONEY BADGER AND BEYOND

March 2027 (Release date)

The story didn't end at **Desert One**.

The effort to rescue the American hostages continued.

Operation Honey Badger represented another chapter in that effort—and another example of the determination, creativity, and capability of America's Special Operations forces.

We'll explore what happened next and how the lessons of these missions would influence Special Operations for years to come.

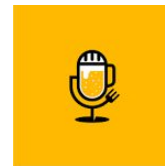


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NEW PODCAST SERIES By Dennis Vogt (cont.)



THEN... VIETNAM

After our journey through Iran, we're heading back to Vietnam.

To a mission that has become legendary.

A mission that required extraordinary courage, planning, intelligence, precision, and teamwork.

The Son Tay Raid.

To understand what happened that night, you need to understand what happened in the months leading up to it.

You need to understand the intelligence.

The planning.

The rehearsals.

The aircrews.

The ground forces.

The risks.

And the men who knew exactly what they were being asked to do.

Our three-part series will take you there.

To Be Continued in the next Newsletter (March 2027).

EPISODE 6 — PLANNING FOR SON TAY

Note: We are interested in hearing from all Air Commandos that have declassified stories they would like to share on our podcast. Please send your contact information and a short note on the story/mission you would like to share to:

Dennis4AmericanSOW@gmail.com

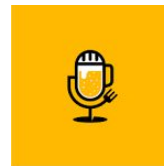


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NEW PODCAST SERIES By Dennis Vogt (cont.)



AND THE STORY DOESN'T END WITH THE PODCASTS.

JULY 2027 — RAF MILDENHALL

If these stories capture your imagination, there's something even better waiting for you.

The 7th SOS Reunion at RAF Mildenhall in July 2027.

Imagine sitting in a room with the men who flew these missions.

Listening to stories that never made it into the official record.

Hearing the laughter behind the history.

Meeting the Air Commandos who helped build the legacy of the 7th SOS.

Reconnecting with old friends.

Making new ones.

And hearing the stories **directly from the people who lived them.**

The podcasts will give you the stories.

The reunion will give you the people.

And together, they offer a rare opportunity to experience the history, brotherhood, and legacy of the **7th SOS** in a way that simply cannot be recreated.

DON'T JUST READ ABOUT HISTORY.

COME HEAR IT FROM THE MEN WHO LIVED IT.



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NEW PODCAST SERIES (conr.) By Dennis Vogt

THESE STORIES ARE MORE THAN HISTORY.

They are memories.

They are friendships.

They are lessons.

And they are a legacy.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the incredible **7th SOS Air Commandos** who have taken the time to sit down, share their memories, and open a window into a part of our military history that few people have had the opportunity to experience firsthand.

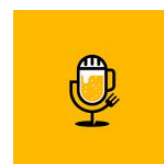
Thank you for trusting me with your stories.

Thank you for sharing the funny moments, the difficult moments, the unbelievable moments—and the moments you may never have thought anyone would want to hear about.

Those stories matter.

Because someday, the only people who will know what it was really like will be the people who heard it from you.

I am also incredibly grateful for the hospitality, generosity, and friendship that so many people have extended to me throughout this journey.





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Stay connected with **#SOWF** through our bi-monthly newsletter, the SOWFocus! ... **See more**



SOWFOCUS



SPECIALOPS.ORG/NEWSLETTER



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Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) News and Updates



Since 1980, Special Operations Warrior Foundation has honored the sacrifice of America's heroes by standing with their families. Our "enduring promise" is to provide "cradle to career" educational support for the children of fallen Special Operators, children of active-duty Special Operators whose spouse has passed, and all Medal of Honor Recipients. We also deliver immediate financial assistance to severely wounded, injured, and ill active-duty Special Operators. Guided by this mission, we ensure these families are never left behind.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,446

Warrior
Fatalities

45

Non-Military
Spouse Fatalities

41

Medal of Honor
Recipients

2,067

Surviving
Children

1,193

Eligible
Children

634

College
Graduates

1,375

Severely Wounded,
Ill & Injured



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Combat Talon Memorial Foundation(CTMF)



Dear 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 Facebook pages and newsletters.

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

Bill "Boomer" 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/State:

Zip/Postal:

Phone:

Email:

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



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Financial Report Combat Talon Memorial Foundation (CTMF) By Bill "Boomer" Saier, Treasurer

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 email is: saier.william@gmail.com

Regards

Boomer





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**7th SOS Reunion
22-26 April, 2026**



Our reunion this year brought in approximately 100 people with approx 60 checking in on Wednesday, 80 for the Banquet on Thursday night and BG Clay Freeman as our guest speaker and some just signing up for Thursday, Fri, or Sat only. 11 played Golf, ten did the Hash House Harrier Run, approximately 40 went on the Sunset Cruise, and 40 were at the Business meeting, and approx. another 40 attended the cleanup, Sunday Memorial Service, and burger, bratwurst, hotdogs, and beer/wine closing.



For additional photos click the link below:

https://www.7thsos.org/site.php?n=2026_22_26_april_7_sos_reunion



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Future 7th SOS Reunions

7th SOS 2027 Reunion

“Back to Our Roots”

July 5-19, 2027

Approx. 15 Days

by Max Friedauer



As of this writing, we have 24 Sons of the 7th and their significant others that have made the \$500 deposit and we are a “Go for Launch” for our 7th SOS Reunion at RAF Mildenhall arriving on 5 July 2027 and completing our journey on 18 July 2027 in Munich. After our visit with the 7th we will head to Edinburgh and Glasgow Scotland; Berlin, Heidelberg, Weingut Friedauer (Heilbronn), Ulm, Augsburg, and Munich Germany. This is my last overseas reunion trip for sure as in 2037 I will be 94 and I’m not sure I’ll still be able to walk by then. I’m doing good for now but if anyone wants to continue with these 10 year returns to our squadron, please come forward and accept the challenge. All you really need to do is come up with a proposed visit schedule and let The Reunion Brat (Trish Blanton) do the rest. We will surely miss some of you on this trip, but be assured, we will party on in traditional 7th SOS style.





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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)

7th SOS 2027 Reunion

“Back to Our Roots”

July 5-19, 2027

Approx. 15 Days

by Max Friedauer



We're just nine months out from our Epic Return to our roots with the 7th Special Operations Squadron on July 7th of 2027. After careful consideration and getting input from the approximate 50+ people that have expressed an interest in going, we have decided on the following itinerary:

- 4 July - Personal travel and departure to London.
- 5 July - Arrive in London, pick up Bus transport to Angel Hotel in Bury St Edmonds.
- 6 July - Self-guided tours around Bury St Edmonds.
- 7 July - Visit with 7 SOS and attend Combat Dining out with the Squadron that evening.
- 8 July - Fly to Edinburgh Scotland
- 9 July - walking tour of Edinburgh, visit Edinburgh Castle
- 10 July - Take bus to Glasgow for a tour of the city
- 11 July - Fly to Berlin.
- 12-13 July - Travel around Berlin, Germany.
- 14 July - Travel to Heidelberg Germany.
- 15 July - Visit and tour Heidelberg
- 16 July - Travel and visit Weingut Friedauer for lunch, spend the night in Ulm.
- 17 July - Travel to Ulm, Augsburg, spend the night in Munich.
- 18 Visit Munich - walking tour of Munich
- 19 July - Everyone departs and travels back home on their own.



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)

7th SOS 2027 Reunion

“Back to Our Roots”

July 5-19, 2027

Approx. 15 Days

by Max Friedauer



- You will be responsible for your own airfare to arrive London (preferably Heathrow) on 5 July 2027. Strongly recommend making flight reservations by 15 September. (Limited to one 50 lb checked bag per pers. + a carry-on)
- Tour ends in Munich 18 July 2027 with individual return flights or personal agendas on 19 July.
- I hate to estimate but maybe the per person estimated cost is \$6,000 based on double occupancy and \$7,000 based on single occupancy. (Prices are still an estimate and they will change up or down depending on final contracts and exchange rates.) Prices could increase if we don't have 45 people for the bus as that is a sunk cost split by all of us. Also, many of the tour rates are based on 40-50 attendees so less will cost us a bit more. I'm hoping to keep the cost below \$6,000 per person for double occupancy. Prices in Europe have doubled from 10 years ago and we have air travel from Edinburgh to Berlin and longer bus trips than what we had in 2017.



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)

7th SOS 2027 Reunion

“Back to Our Roots”

July 5-19, 2027

Approx. 15 Days

by Max Friedauer



There is still room for you to join us and here is the registration form for the down payment. Final payment will be due in January 2027. Contact me for more details, Max@7thsos.org, 850-543-0475. Pictures from our 2017 (7/7/7) reunion. Think again, don't miss out on a great vacation and reunion.

Hope to see you in July 2027 for a fabulous reunion tour. Cheers my brothers and sisters.





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7TH AIR COMMANDO SOCIETY REUNION



YES SIGN ME UP FOR THE
7TH AIR COMMANDO SOCIETY 2027 ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & GERMANY REUNION!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Number of Person Attending _____ x \$500 = Total Enclosed _____

Make Checks payable to "The Reunion Brat" and send with registration Form to:
The Reunion BRAT 19009 178TH Ave E. Orting, WA 98360

Also, E-mail or send a copy of the completed form to:
Max Friedauer
10 Ridgelake Drive
Mary Esther FL 32569
850-543-0475 maxfriedau@me.com

If using a credit card, an extra 4% needs to be added for a total of \$520.00

Name on card: _____

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

Security Code: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____



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Future 7th SOS Reunions (cont.)



7th ACS/SOS Reunion

May 17-20, 2028

San Antonio, TX

by Max Friedauer

At the business meeting during our April 2026 Reunion in Fort Walton Beach, we all agreed to have the 2028 reunion in San Antonio, TX with the Reunion Brat handling all reservations and contracts. Drew Cunnar will be the reunion Chairman with help from Rich Garcia, Tony Gregory, and Jerry Thigpen, and Ron Jones.

The 2030 Reunion will be back in Fort Walton Beach and briefed at the business meeting in San Antonio.

So put this on your calendar, no excuses, see you in Texas! If you want to volunteer or have a suggestion, please contact Drew Cunnar.

Contacts:

Drew Cunnar (Reunion Chair) - andrew.cunnar@hotmail.com

Rich Garcia - mc130fe@aol.com

Tony Gregory - happywith4sons@gmail.com

Jerry Thigpen - jerry-mary_thigpen@att.net

Ron Jones - talon.pilot7@gmail.com





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

By Russ Painter

We remain in good financial standing, current balance as of September 3, 2026 is \$16,493.33.

Balance Sheet		
Accounts	Activity Date	Actuals
Checking Account Balance	9/3/2026	\$1,269.07
Money Market Account	9/3/2026	\$15,064.48
Savings Account Balance	9/3/2026	\$105.78
	TOTAL	\$16,493.33

I'd like to thank Omar, our Director Emeritus, Max, our PA and Comm guy, Jim, our President, Steve, our Vice President, Joe Primosch, our Secretary, B'Rat, one of our Board members, Dennis and Aida Vogt, and Bill Houston for stepping in and making the reunion a success in my absence. If I missed someone, please accept my sincere apologies. I did manage to stop by a couple of days for a few minutes and could tell everyone was having a great time.

Contact info remains the same; 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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7th ACS/SOS Country Store Update

Many folks agree that the Country Store should not have any inventory and that we should continue reducing current inventory stock through on demand mail requests. Any future requests for current or new items could be replaced by a vendor barcode on the 7 ACS website. Items can be purchased individually directly from vendors, eliminating the need for maintaining an inventory.

The new Country Store manager's main tasks are to find vendors, identify popular products, and update product lists on the 7 ACS website. Seragraphia, located in Fort Walton Beach, says they could help us manage this endeavor. It has also been suggested that we could hold a silent auction for much of the remaining inventory during the period that the hospitality room is open at the next reunion.

The most sought after item is still the soft cap with the Pterodactyl.

If anyone would like to order country store items now, make your request through the 7SOS.org website.



Contact info - Country Store Manager (TBD)

Email:

Phone:



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

7th ACS/SOS Gallery -

Check out our Gallery too. We have all of the 7th SOS 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_axy1PD48

Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) Facebook Page -

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

Air Commando Association (ACA) -

<https://aircommando.org>

USSOCOM “Tip of the Spear” October 2025-

<https://www.socom.mil/latesttots>

“The Guts to Try” Song-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yg2GijLL37M>



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One Last Thing.....



Never be without your Coin (RMO)