



# AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

February 2007

### Warrior Foundation helps children

*Tuition offered for kids of  
fallen Special OPS Soldiers*

*By Rachel Houston*

Heather Harris is attending Georgia Southern University, but she isn't paying for it. The Special Operations Warrior Foundation is.

Harris' father was a Ranger who was killed in a training accident in 1994.

The Special Operations Warrior Foundation provides college grants for the children of Special Operations Soldiers killed in combat and training.

"If it wasn't for (the SOWF), I probably wouldn't be in college," Harris said.

See **WARRIOR** pg. 3



### Wing reclaims family name - "1st SOW"



**By Master Sgt. Stuart Camp**  
*1st SOW Public Affairs*



**LGen Wooley and Col Brozenick**

back our 'family' name - with the pride and strength of the blood-line."

During the 1 p.m. ceremony at the Hurlburt Field Air Park, General Wooley and Col. Norman Brozenick Jr., 16th SOW commander, furled and cased the flag of the 16th SOW. This action ended that unit's existence at Hurlburt Field. General Wooley then unfurled and presented Colonel Brozenick the 1st SOW Flag.

Known as the 16th SOW since Oct. 1, 1993, the unit traces its lineage back to the 1st Air Commando Group of the World War II Burmese theater.

The flag of the 16th SOW will fly again shortly, as the wing des-

ignation moves later this year to the new special operations unit at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M.

.....

### **Rebirth of 1st SOW**

**By Mike Yared**

In the minds of many special operators, the rebirth of the 1st SOW corrects a wrong-headed decision made in 1993. That year, then-Chief of Staff Gen. Merrill McPeak directed that no wings could have duplicate numbers. That put the 1st SOW in competition with the 1st Fighter Wing of Langley Air Force Base, Va.

The 1993 change angered

See **1st SOW** pg. 5

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The special operations wing at Hurlburt Field reclaimed its "family name," in a redesignation ceremony Nov. 16.

With several dozen distinguished visitors in attendance, the 1st Special Operations Wing moniker returned to the home of the America's Air Commandos after a 13-year absence.

"This is a ceremony that, in my mind, is long overdue," said Lt. Gen. Michael Wooley, Air Force Special Operations Command commander. "Today, we're getting



**Men and women of Hurlburt Field salute during redesignation ceremony.**

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# Editorial: Immigrants in Australia - Way to go Aussies!

*This checked out on TruthorFiction.com and they say it is true. The remarks by the Australian Finance Minister Peter Costello were made in a speech on February 23, 2006 to the Sydney Institute. His speech was titled Worth Promoting, Worth Defending, Australian Citizenship, What it Means and How to Nurture it.*

(Why can't we have the backbone to start something like this in the US before we lose this country completely?.....)

Muslims who want to live under Islamic Sharia law were told on Wednesday to get out of Australia, as the government targeted radicals in a bid to head off potential terror attacks.



**Finance Minister Peter Costello**

A day after a group of mainstream Muslim leaders pledged loyalty to Australia and her Queen at a special meeting with Prime Minister John Howard, he and his Ministers made it clear that extremists would face a crack-down. Treasurer Peter Costello, seen as heir apparent to Howard, hinted that some radical clerics could be asked to leave the country if they did not accept that Australia was a secular state, and its laws were made by parliament. "If those are not your values, if you want a country which has Sharia law or a theocratic state, then Australia is not for you", he said on National Television

"I'd be saying to clerics who

are teaching that there are two laws governing people in Australia: one the Australian law and another Islamic law that is false. If you can't agree with parliamentary law, independent courts, democracy, and would prefer Sharia law and have the opportunity to go to another country, which practices it, perhaps, then, that's a better option", Costello said.

Asked whether he meant radical clerics would be forced to leave, he said those with dual citizenship could possibly be asked to move to the other country. Education Minister Brendan Nelson later told reporters that Muslims who did not want to accept local values should "clear off. Basically people who don't want to be Australians, and who don't want, to live by Australian values and understand them, well then, they can basically clear off", he said.

Separately, Howard angered some Australian Muslims on Wednesday by saying he supported spy agencies monitoring the nation's mosques.

Quote: **"IMMIGRANTS, NOT AUSTRALIANS, MUST ADAPT.** Take It Or Leave It. I am tired of this nation worrying about whether we are offending some individual or their culture. Since the terrorist attacks on Bali, we have experienced a surge in patriotism by the majority of Australians."

"However, the dust from the attacks had barely settled when the 'politically correct' crowd began complaining about the possibility that our patriotism was offending others. I am not against immigration, nor do I hold a grudge against anyone who is seeking a better life by coming to Australia."

"However, there are a few things

that those who have recently come to our country, and apparently some born here, need to understand."

"This idea of Australia being a multi-cultural community has served only to dilute our sovereignty and our national identity. And as Australians, we have our own culture, our own society, our own language and our own lifestyle."

"This culture has been developed over two centuries of struggles, trials and victories by millions of men and women who have sought freedom."

"We speak mainly ENGLISH, not Spanish, Lebanese, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, or any other language. Therefore, if you wish to become part of our society ... Learn the language!"

"Most Australians believe in God. This is not some Christian, right wing, political push, but a fact, because Christian men and women, on Christian principles, founded this nation, and this is clearly documented. It is certainly appropriate to display it on the walls of our schools. If God offends you, then I suggest you consider another part of the world as your new home, because God is part of our culture."

"We will accept your beliefs, and will not question why. All we ask is that you accept ours, and live in harmony and peaceful enjoyment with us."

"If the Southern Cross offends you, or you don't like "A Fair Go", then you should seriously consider a move to another part of this planet. We are happy with our culture and have no desire to change, and we really don't care how you did things where you came from. By all means, keep your culture, but do not force it on

# Warrior

*Continued from page 1*

The 20-year-old also got a laptop computer and printer from the foundation.

"They always check up on you and send birthday and graduation cards," she said.

"I could not say thank you enough to them," she said.

The SOWF participates in the Combined Federal Campaign, and their campaign number is 2124.

"We make sure that the sacrifice of the fallen parent is never forgotten," said Edie Rosenthal, public relations director of the Special Operations Warrior Foundation.

"Any child of a Special Operations person who is killed is automatically in our program, whether they're an infant or an 18 year old," Rosenthal said.

"We keep in touch with them over the years, and once they reach high school, we start talking to them about their college plans," she said.

The foundation provides scholarship grants for tuition, book, room and board, and any other fees, covering the full cost of a college education.

"One of the things that makes us unique is that we are active in contacting all of the people to let

them know we're here for them," said Steve McLeary, executive director of the SOWF. "They will never have to look for us."

The foundation began a new program this year that provides money to wounded Special Ops soldiers.

"When a member of Special Operations is seriously wounded, requiring hospitalization in the U.S., we immediately send them a check," McLeary said. "We overnight a check to them for \$2,000."

The SOWF researched what would really help wounded Soldiers, and determined that immediate cash was it, he said. There are many other organizations that provide help after about a week, he said, but the Soldiers need financial assistance immediately to get their families to their sides.

The foundation also provides counseling and has a staff psychologist, who is available to talk to them, Rosenthal said.

In 1980, the SOWF was created after nine men were killed or incapacitated after the Iranian hostage rescue attempt and service members felt the need to take care

of fallen comrades' children.

There are about 57,000 Special Operations personnel in the U.S., McLeary said. All Special Operations Soldiers' children are eligible for the program, including those of support units, he said.

Last year, 69 Special Ops personnel were killed, and 72 children were added to the SOWF program. There are 668 children currently in the program, 429 of whose fathers were in the Army.

Thirty-nine of the children in the program are living in Georgia.

The SOWF has been participat-

ing in the Combined Federal Campaign since 1996.

"We know we're making a difference because the people we're providing for believe in us," McLeary said. People know that when they make a contribution to the foundation, the money will go directly to helping the children, he said.

For more information, go to [www.specialops.org](http://www.specialops.org) or look up the foundation in the CFC booklet.

Contact your unit's CFC key person to donate, or visit the Web site.

## A GREAT QUOTE

"I know why men who have been in war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted at their best; men who suffered and sacrificed, who were stripped of their humanity. I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They are willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we're so willing to die for one another. As long as I have memory, I will think of them. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thoughts will be of my family and comrades...such good men"

*Author unknown.*

# Aussies

*Continued from page 2*

others.

"This is OUR COUNTRY, OUR LAND, and OUR LIFESTYLE, and we will allow you every opportunity to enjoy all this. But once you are done complaining, whining, and griping about Our Flag, Our Pledge, Our Christian beliefs, or Our Way of Life, I highly encourage you take advantage of one other great Australian freedom, 'THE RIGHT TO LEAVE'."

"If you aren't happy here then LEAVE. We didn't force you to come here. You asked to be here. So accept the country YOU accepted."

Maybe if we circulate this amongst ourselves, American citizens will find the backbone to start speaking and voicing the same truths!

*Submitted by ACA member Fred Nowak.*

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# Membership News



## TAPS

*In Memory of:*

Donald L. Berstler  
July 2006

John B. Cook  
September 2006

Orel T. Hooks  
July 2006

Claude T. Lovelace II  
Unknown

Calvin F. Nay  
December 2006

Herschel R. Peach  
September 2006

Leslie H. Quinn  
December 2006

Joe F. Reynolds  
2005

David G. Smith  
December 2006

### Converted To Life

Stuart 'Whitey' Carr  
Frank M. Rose  
Ken Spring

### Lost Members

MGen John R. Folkerts

### Found Members

Nathen E. 'Gene' Hires  
110 A Lincoln Dr  
Ft Walton Bch, FL 32548

### On The Move

Albert E. Adcock  
1027 Isle Of Palms Path  
The Villages, FL 32162

Rae Artman  
197 SW 132 Rd  
Webster, FL 33587

FLeeta Baldwin  
716 Tyrolean Way  
Canon City, CO 81212

Quida Barrineau  
C/O Douglas  
5155 SE 115 St  
Bellevue, FL 34420

John Bashonski  
1331 Cunat Ct #1C  
Lake In The Hills, IL 60156

Edward J. Bernard  
13378 Windsong Way  
Carrullton, VA 23314

Billy J. Brown  
78860 Pelican Pointe  
Grove, OK 74344

Terry F. Clark  
960 Forge Rd  
Carlisle, PA 17015

MGen Hugh L. Cox III  
232 Chichester Pl  
San Antonio, TX 78209

Karen Crane  
19191 Randall Rd  
Juneau, AK 99801

William H. Diggins  
432 Bouchele Dr #303  
Ew Smyrna Bch, FL 32169

Bgen Richard Dunwoody  
6910 Abbeyville Rd  
Melbourne, FL 32940

Jerry L. Faddis  
4080 Glenbar Ct  
Cincinnati, OH 45236

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PO Box 5260  
Breckenridge, CO 80424

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2004 McClelland Ave  
Tampa, FL 33621

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2200 W Acacia Ave #E122  
Hemet, CA 92545

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596 Summerbrooke Park Rd  
Ft Walton Bch, FL 32547

Mary Lou Hughey  
1001 Mar Walt Dr #106  
Ft Walton Bch, FL 32547

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14151 Cuddy Loop #104  
Woodbridge, VA 22193

David P. Jones  
44 Willow Creek Dr  
Ruckersville, VA 22968

John A. Koren  
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Hampton Cove, AL 35763

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Laguna Vista, TX 78578

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New River, AZ 85087

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Valparaiso, FL 32580

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7 Indian River Ave #405  
Titusville, FL 32796

James A. Richmond  
5802 Sandshell Cir E #15201  
Fort Worth, TX 76137

Frances L. Ringman  
3330 Summerfield Dr  
Grapevine, TX 76051

Howard K. Sanders  
5409 Franklin Rd  
Nashville, TN 37220

Louis D. Schindler  
Po Box 366012  
Bonita Springs, FL 34136

Ronald L. Selberg  
1693 S Forest Oaks Dr  
Beaumont, CA 92223

Cass Seymore  
6880 N Baggett Rd  
Calhan, CO 80808

Albert D. Shinkle  
1280 NE Ellis Way #C-4  
Pullman, WA 99163

Dale Sissell  
351 Litelil Rd  
Hiawassee, GA 30546

### New Annual Members

William Becker  
Charles W. Catherman  
Albert C. Del George  
Phillip Derosa  
Hewitt Gomez  
Jorge Gutierrez-Diaz  
Robert E. Lewis  
Donald J. Luke  
Todd W. Pennington  
Jeffrey L. Richardson  
Charles T. Woolard

### New Life Members

Abner M. Aust III  
Kristine Skee Brackett  
Robert Fran Mance  
Howard J. Scheuren

# Hap's Comments



I'll begin by informing you of the recent birthdays of three of our famed octogenarians. Past 1st Air Commando Wing Maintenance Officer "Spider" Ramsey began his 87th year on January 8. Past 1st Air Commando Wing Commander "Heinie" Aderholt started a little earlier on his 87th year on January 6th. And Past 1st Air Commando Wing Commander Bob Gates trumped them both by beginning his 88th year on 21 January! A hearty Happy Birthday to all three. If any of you out there are senior to them, please let me know ASAP. I won't say for certain, but I believe Jack Sirney may have the edge on all three. Let me know Jack.

Ninety of us celebrated our annual Christmas Social at Mr. "Ts" Two Trees Restaurant. The food and service were excellent, as always, and you couldn't get any better or cheaper anywhere! We had a great time even though the numbers were disappointing. (There are almost 600 of us in the local area.) We did collect and donate a goodly amount of canned and boxed foodstuffs to Sharing and Caring.

Our next social event will be on the 4th of July at the same venue. "Bim" Barker will again be at the helm of his famed rib cooker with Mr. "T" providing the traditional sides. You will be receiving a reminder in the mail and I do

hope you partake of both the great food and commando camaraderie.

I must share with you that "Bim" is now on the cancer survivor list. He detected what he thought was just an annoying tooth or gum problem some 6-8 months ago. He finally consulted his physician in Union City, TN, underwent some biopsy tests, and then learned of the dire results. Thirty nine radiation and five chemo therapies later, "Bim" is cancer free. Another success story. He shared with me that his combat tour in Korea was nowhere near as cantankerous as this past cancer experience.

I recently had a pleasant visit with Bob Cherry. He dropped by the ACA office following a visit to south Florida. I hadn't seen him for quite a few years. Like many of our friends, he too is experiencing the medical frustrations and infirmities of the "Golden Years."

Our back room "Hangar" is becoming more and more a thing of beauty. Roger Klair and Willie Hall have spent countless hours hanging artifacts, restoring pics, arranging furniture, and generally making all things good. We have an extensive library owing to Mike Sheehan and Don Maxwell's generosity. It is very user friendly, but unfortunately we have very few users. Our librarian, Bob White, invites you in the local area to visit and read or take home and read and return.

On a matter of administrative concern, please do not send any mail to our building address. We do not have a mailbox up and do not intend to put one on the highway. All mail goes to PO Box 7, Mary Esther, FL 32569-0007. As well, you cannot mail UPS, FEDEX, or any of the private carriers to a Post Office mailbox.

And since we are only in the office from 0900 to 1200, please mail all packages via the US Mail Service.

Another matter of concern is changing addresses. We lose far too many people simply because you do not inform us when you move. This is particularly true with members having APO addresses. The Air Force Post Offices will not notify us of your move. It is also

true of folks stationed stateside and living on bases receiving mail through Base Post Offices. So do it yourself and you'll know it is done right. We hate losing your valued membership.

Finally, if you have a story to tell, and many, many of you do, put it on a floppy or CD if you are computer literate. It saves us tons of time and consternation.

## 1st SOW

*Continued from page 1*

many in the special operations community, who pointed out the 1st traced its lineage to World War II, when the 1st Air Commando Group was formed in India for operations in Burma.

Appeals that no one could mistake a 1st SOW AC-130H Spectre gunship for a 1st FW F-15C Eagle went nowhere. The older 1st FW kept its name. The 1st SOW became history, although the wing's heraldry and patch design were passed onto the 16th SOW.

Earlier this year, as plans solidified to establish a new special operations wing at Cannon, current and former air commandos convinced the Air Staff to bring the 1st SOW back to flying.

The change will be formally made Nov. 16 as part of AFSOC's celebration of the Air Force's 60th anniversary. The celebration also will include the arrival of the first CV-22 Osprey assigned to Hurlburt Field.

As part of the redesignation, the 1st SOW will keep the heraldry it had until 1993, while the 16th SOW will retain the honors since then.

The Air Force announced June 20 that AFSOC would establish a

new wing at Cannon after the 27th Fighter Wing disbands its three squadrons of F-16 Fighting Falcons and several aircraft maintenance units.

Cannon had been slated for closure by the end of the decade if a new military or government owner wasn't found for the base in rural eastern New Mexico.

Cannon was an obvious choice because of its available facilities and the Melrose Range, about 25 miles away.

AFSOC doesn't expect to begin sending aircraft to Cannon before Oct. 1, 2007.

In 2007, the 16th will be re-established as the wing in command of Cannon. The new 16th will be formed from existing units and new squadrons, he said.

Since October 2001, 16th SOW aircraft have flown more than 11,000 combat sorties, rack-ing up more than 38,000 combat hours, Air Force officials said. The wing has deployed more than 8,500 personnel to 16 geographic locations around the world.

*Mike Yared is an ACA Member, email: mike\_yared@yahoo.com*

# King Dedication Presented By Major General L. W. (Svede) Svendsen, Jr., USAF (ret)

Good morning ladies and gentleman and a special welcome to Gen Kings family, thank you for coming. I have been honored today to speak at this dedication honoring one of the greatest warriors the Air Force has ever had. In each generation of Americans God produces some warriors and within that select group he occasionally produces an extraordinary one, Ben King was that warrior. I have served with Gen Ben King in three different combat units – the 4th Fighter Group, the 49th Fighter Bomber Group and the 1st Air Commando Group.

When the Korean War started on 25 June 1950, then, Major King along with a dozen or so of us fired up Lieutenants from the 4th Fighter Group, left Langley Field as volunteers to be first in the fight. I mention that because Major King, an already distinguished veteran of both the Pacific and European theaters in WWII, was the only field grade officer to volunteer when the first shots were fired. It was his very nature, driven by an intense sense of duty and a keen sense of adventure, that compelled him to be the greatest of warrior-leaders. He knew that those who stepped forward when their country called were doing what most Americans either can't do or won't do but for him fighting for his country was instinctive.

After my tour with an Infantry Regiment during the perimeter campaign I was assigned to the 8th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 49th Fighter Bomber Group, in Korea, the commander of the 8th Fighter was Major Ben King.

I witnessed first hand the superior qualities of this warrior-leader. I remember him using terms

like: "when it's too tough for everybody else it's just right for us"; for him it was more than just a war fighting colloquialism, he



**Major General L. W. (Svede) Svendsen, Jr.**

meant it, he led by example, he was big red-leader. He led most of the high-risk missions deep into the enemies most heavily defended targets in North Korea, we would follow him anywhere – into Hell and back if he asked. One of my favorite incidents that captures the essence of his character was when he received a tasking from 5th Air Force JOC to do an on-the-deck visual recon of both airfields at the Capitol of North Korea, Pyongyang, and do it ASAP. He turned and asked for a volunteer and I was first. We briefed on the way to the aircraft. The temp. that afternoon was about 40 degrees F and we had a restriction on take-offs without JATO assist above 35 degrees F, this because of our weight with big tip tanks, and ordinance and only 5,000 feet of PSP (pierced steel planking). There were no JATO equipped birds available but rather than abort this urgent mission, he pressed on. He

instructed me to wait until I saw him airborne before I released brakes, in other words, if I don't make it you don't go, typical Ben King. I released my brakes when he was about ½ to ¾ of the way down and saw him blowing dust off the end a few seconds later. As we approached Pyongyang we hit the deck and I took a wing position line abreast as we went across both airfields with enemy gunners firing all around us. Breaking to the south, we armed-receded the MSR's shooting up targets of opportunity so as not to haul any ordinance back to base – it was not his policy to leave enemy territory with unexpended ordinance.

Uncle Ben, as we affectionately called him, had an altruistic and selfless manner always giving credit to others. He said: only the beginners go for the medals. If he ever had anxiety he never showed it, he was fearless in his pursuit of his duty. After briefing on heavy anti-aircraft defenses of a target we were going to strike he would get a glint in those steely blue eyes and with a boyish grin would say "remember lads, they can't hit you" – coming from him it gave comfort, even though we lost half our squadron in about 4 ½ months, 18 aircraft out of a combat UE 36.

Ben King was a leaders leader and warriors warrior. There may be a precious few as good but there are none better. He understood that military forces are about war fighting and winning, period, they are not institutions for social experiments. He tested each policy proposal with one simple question: does it enhance our ability to win the fight, especially true on today's 21st Century non-contiguous, non-linear battlefield? That simple test

is one I wish all military personnel would use at all levels, because, if the answer is no then it is prejudicial to our national interest and a disservice to national defense and has no place in our forces. Political correctness and equal opportunity have no place in war fighting. Ben King evaluated each war fighters metal and capability in the combat units he commanded and he made decisions on leadership positions based on capability not rank.

But his legacy is not of history alone it lives on in a geometric way with today's warriors who don't even know his name, because, of all the war fighters he trained and all the war fighters they trained, etc. etc. it's a geometric progression, a generational thing, but his spirit and leadership live on in today's force.

It came as no surprise to me, 12 years later, when I was a Major and chief of the fighter branch of Tactical Evaluation at 5th Air Force Hq., that I read a classified document that addressed the formation of an Air Force Special Operations, volunteer only unit, code named Jungle Jim, being formed by then Col. Ben King. He had been personally selected by the Chief of Staff, Gen LeMay and who better to found an Air Force volunteer organization doing extra hazardous duty. The first question he had for volunteers, myself included, was: "there will be no promotions, no medals, only extra hazardous duty, sometimes in civilian clothes and if captured we may deny you exist, are you still a volunteer? – no penalty for saying no". If your answer was positive you could apply and be subject to further intense screening. As a

# Gen King

*Continued from page 6*

result, he gathered a group of high-spirited adventurous warriors, many of them among you today, – and who better to lead them. Uncle Ben understood human nature and that sheep didn't make good warriors, his combat leadership skills enabled him to channel the high energy and spirit in his troops into war fighting, innovation and thinking outside the box – before the term was invented.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, circa 1962, Tactical Air Command, now ACC, released their classified war plan. Uncle Ben read it over and there was no tasking for the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Commando. Ben was airborne in short order on his way to TAC Hq. He went to the TAC commander at the time and convinced him that there was a place in this fight for the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Commando Group and a day or so later he and I were sitting strip alert on the end of the Hurlburt runway ready to deploy to south Florida. Once again the spirit of being “in the fight” showed his tenacious warrior spirit.

Uncle Ben had a very warm human side with a great sense of humor. Whether counseling subordinates in the squadron or organizing a songfest or other activities at the Officer's club he used positive leadership because he understood it was long term leadership that motivates the troops to produce beyond their own expectations.

The Air Force Special Operations doctrine and procedures established under Ben King's guidance transcends over 40 years and while

weapons and technology have advanced the basic doctrine continues. We all remember that impressive news video of the AFSOC forward air controller on mule back with Afghan forces at the beginning of that campaign. Most thought it was something new and innovative, I thought to myself, we did that 40 years ago in the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Commando. I personally served, alone, with indigenous forces in north Laos who were trained and equipped by CIA's Para-military Directorate. I was in civilian clothes and while I had no mule, I did have a backpack battery operated UHF radio. We stalked and ambushed NVN forces on the trails in north Laos using, among other weapons, F-105's. Indeed, Ben King's wisdom and professional skills live on today most of them institutionalized in AFSOC and typically anonymous, the way HE would prefer it, but not the way HIS legacy should be treated.

Teddy Roosevelt once said: “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a

worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” I say it is time to give public recognition to this esteemed visionary warrior leader who lived his life on the tip of the spear, who knew triumph and high achievement and who founded Air Force Special Operations during a time when it was not popular with supersonic Air Force Generals and budgets reflected it. He knew that better was the enemy of good enough and that budget restraints would not support gold plating – instead, he put a golden arrow in the quiver of national defense.

While we greatly appreciate this first class auditorium being dedicated in his name, AFSOC would be well advised to rename Hurlburt Field, King Field. We are a better force today because Ben King passed our way and gave us a warrior model to emulate. May God rest your soul Ben King and give you that peace that surpasseth

all understanding. Amen and thank you.

## Membership

*Continued from page 4*

R. Todd Small  
1365 W Hwy 98 #506  
Mary Esther, FL 32569

Cher Chou Thao  
4595 Cordon Rd Ne  
Salem, OR 97305

Jack Thompson  
325 Oldfield Rd  
Montgomery, AL 36117

Mike Thurber  
311 Hillside Terr  
Newport News, VA 23602

Steven Vautrain  
Psc 1 Unit 775  
Scott AFB, IL 62225

F. Jack Williams  
5378 Nw 109 Way  
Coral Springs, FL 33076

L. Todd Wood  
5 Tory LN  
Newtown, CT 06470

## To All ACA members

If you have not already done so, please send your email address to [aircomando@aol.com](mailto:aircomando@aol.com). Note: the one m in commando. Please title subject of email "ACA MEMBER'S EMAIL"

We intend to send out information of interest to as many folks as possible. By using email we can fill the gap between publications of our quarterly newsletter and allow us to keep our membership informed of special events, loss of members, and other items of interest. Your email address will not be given out to anyone, it will be used solely for ACA official business.

*Caution is the oldest  
child of wisdom.*

# Letters

## DEAR ACA,

Really sorry to hear about Charlie. He will be missed by all. Good to hear that the reunion was a success and enjoyed by everyone. Sure missed being there, but I plan on being there next year.

Please wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday.

Sincerely,  
Bruce Hendrix, ACA # 3925  
588 Rocky Point Road  
Conway, AR 72032

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## TO ALL ACA MEMBERS

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with peace, good health, prosperity and most of all happiness.

We urge you to stop for just a minute to enjoy the spirit of the season.

Warmest Regards,  
John & Nancy Sweet  
38 Seabrook Village  
Seabrook, N.H. 03874

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## PETE,

Last week I sent a donation to the McCoskrie / Threshold Foundation (#4727 dated 10 Dec for \$25.00). I forgot to ask for a Korean War Blood Chit.

Can I still get one or do I have to send another donation? Appreciate your advice and help.

Nolan Schmidt  
408E 100 S  
Franklin IN 46131-8465

*Ed. Note:*  
*Hap assured me he took care of the matter.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## AIR COMMANDO ASSOC

We are settled in and really like the area. Gretchen has joined the

art guild. We are sandwiched between the town of Startzville and Sattler and everything is close by. There is plenty of Tex\_Mex food and the people are really friendly. We are about 2 blocks from the lake. I am getting lazy — not too much to do.

Gretchen takes art classes in New Braunfels and she will start taking golf lessons-part of her Christmas gift. I'll have to find something to do too before I turn into an old poop.

Hope you have a Merry Christmas-OOPS! Happy Holiday - politically correct.

May your troubles be less, your blessing be more and nothing but happiness come through your door.

Juan & Gretchen Bazan  
1620 Connie Dr  
Canyon Lake, TX 78133

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

Thank you for supporting Sharing and Caring. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

Peggy Tillman, Secretary  
Sharing & Caring, Inc.  
126 SW Beal Pkwy  
Fort Walton Beach FL 32548

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## TO HAP, JIM BONEY, HEINIE, PETE AND THE WHOLE GANG!

Sure sad to hear about Charlie Jones passing, but hear that Heinie is doing well!

We missed last years reunion due to the 20th FTR GP's being the same dates and we had missed that one the past two years, but God willing we'll make next years.

We lost our entire Kiwi crop this year due to an early freeze 24-25 Oct.

Have a Merry Holiday and a prosperous New Year.

Alfred S. Gummerson  
2225 Oswego Hwy  
Sumter SC 29153-9445

PS (Boney): Talked to Larry Harwood last week!

*Boney Note: Sorry very big for the loss of of your Kiwi fruit crop Al. I know it must be devastating with all the work and effort you put in. See you in 2007!*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## BOB WHITE,

I want to thank you for our friendship.

Also, thank you deeply for the dog tag with the encouraging scriptures inscribed on it! I wear it faithfully. Each time I read it, I think of so many of my dear friends, such as you. God bless you, Bob!

Charlie Jones  
8249 Pompano Street  
Navarre, FL 32566

*Editor's note: Because of my oversight, this "From the Heart" note was not in the December edition, my apologies.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR AIR COMMANDOS:

Being remembered in such a nice way meant so very much. It is people like you who make this world a better place to live.

Sincerely,  
La\_Juana Hooks  
10 Forest Gr. Place  
Fort Walton Beach FL 32548

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION:

Sorry we missed the Association Reunion and other

functions.

Since Katrina, with rebuilding of the family residences and deaths in the family, we are finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel.

Many of the family members can't drive because of illnesses and sight. This keeps me busy between Mobile, Biloxi and Pensacola VA's, etc.

Got a nice letter from BG Heinie Aderholt.

Thanking all hands. All the best and enjoy the holidays.

Val & Irean Bednekoff  
7700 Deakle Rd  
Irvington AL 36544-4054

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR SIR:

Enclosed find check for my dues for 2007. I look forward to getting my newspaper every quarter and hope to get to Fort Walton soon.

Thanks,

Bill McClellan  
3385 Bancoft Dr  
Aston PA 19014

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## GREETINGS ACA,

After all the hustle and bustle of the holidays, I'm hoping you have a little spare time to read this and I'm not just bothering you...

Received a telephone call and then the follow-up e-mail message shown below from an author wanting to help spread the word on our great little bird. If you can help him with this effort (either stories or slides), he would appreciate it and I would too. (Maybe it will be read by some long-lost A-37 person who will then contact us... I always want as many as possible to know about our organization!)

Incidentally, I've sent him our five little booklets to show what

See **LETTERS** pg. 9



# Letters

*Continued from page 8*

stories some of you have. So if he contacts any of you asking for permission to publish your story from it, don't be surprised.

Ollie

Hello again Ollie,

It was very nice talking with you earlier. As I mentioned to you, I have been a military aviation historian / writer / contributing editor for over 40 years. This has led to my having numerous articles and books published. You can get on line and go to either [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and where they ask for "search", type in Warren Thompson. It'll show you a lot of what I have done in the past few years. Unfortunately for me, one cannot make a living at this, so it has remained a serious hobby.

If you can put me in touch with some of the A-37 pilots, I would like for them to write down all the details of a memorable mission and send it to me. I also need to make contact with any of the guys that took 35mm color slides. I would like to borrow and copy anything showing the aircraft on the ramp, with ordnance loads and also air-to-air pictures. I will promptly return anything that is loaned to me and the original donor would always be credited under any of their pictures that are published. Hopefully, this will lead to my having a couple of good articles published in major magazines. Also, there is no hurry on any of this. I have two email addresses: [migalley@bellsouth.net](mailto:migalley@bellsouth.net) and [migalley@gmail.com](mailto:migalley@gmail.com). The latter one has unlimited capacity.

Thanks very much for any help,

Sincerely,

Warren Thompson  
7201 Stamford Cove  
Germantown, Tennessee 38138  
(901) 754-1852

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## UPDATE

The newsletter I receive opens a lot of doors but most of the people do not include an email address. One in particular is a (ret) LtC J.M. Bunts in NM. Was at Det 1 56 ACW for ever it seems and at 19 years old I loved it. I was a gun plumber. Was in Laos for a while and will see an old friend when I go to Kansas City to put my brothers silver leafs on in Jan. The friend was a Laotian pilot who made it back. Looking forward to the trip. Any pictures will be shared and maybe someone else will remember.

Timothy Scott  
9307 Shoveler Ln,  
Murrells Inlet, S.C. 29576

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## THE PASSING OF JOHN KLEPERIS

I am saddened to inform all of my dad's friends of his passing, on 29 Dec 2006, from complications from kidney and lung cancer. He passed at 9:45 am, and it was a peaceful passing. He passed away while at the Hospice of Dayton facility. He had his wife of 49 years and his two sons at his side. The funeral arrangements have been made, and there is a viewing at the Newcomers Funeral Home in Beavercreek, OH on Wed, 3 Jan from 6-8 pm., and the funeral will be conducted on 4 Jan at 1:30 pm. This will be followed at 2:30 pm with his internment in the National Cemetery of Dayton. In true John Kleperis fashion, we will meet at Jays Restaurant in Dayton at 3:30 pm to celebrate the life, drink some of his wine, and to gather in friendship. In lieu of flowers,

please make a donation to the Hospice of Dayton or to the American Cancer Society.

I apologize for the nature of this e-mail, but I do not have everyone's phone number, and wanted to get the info out as quick as I can. Thanks. If you did not receive a personal phone call, please don't be offended, but we are a bit overwhelmed getting the information out to everyone. Thanks for understanding.

Rich Kleperis  
[jkleperis@who.rr.com](mailto:jkleperis@who.rr.com)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR AIR COMMANDOS

I do not know whether John Kleperis ever joined our organization, but he had every qualification. There were three USAF Captains. FAC advisors to the VNAF at Can Tho, Vietnam: Wayne Chaffer, John Kleperis and I. We were in the same AFAT-7 that "BO" Moore was in as a helicopter advisor.

As previously published, Wayne and "BO" have passed on and now, with sadness, I am reporting of John's passing on 29 December 2006 as sent to me by his son.

Sincerely,  
Jose J. Olvera  
2816 Northview Ave  
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420-5560

*Ed Note:*

*John Kleperis was not an ACA member Jose. We are printing his son's note and your add on for the benefit of all that knew him.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## IN LOVING MEMORY

Enclosed please find a donation to the McCoskrie/Threshold Foundation in loving memory of our dear friend and Air Commando, Charlie Jones. May he rest in peace.

Sincerely,  
Lamar and Gloria Doster  
704 Holmes Blvd  
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR JIM,

Under separate cover I'm sending a scrap book (Photo Album) that was prepared by Lt. Carlton D. Ferriby, who was the Photo Off. for the 2nd Ftr. Sqdn. of the 2nd Air Commando Group. He, along with George Egling, Photo Off. for the 1st Ftr. Sqdn., took all of these pictures. I hope they will find a spot in the Air Commando Archives.

I tried to label the photos that did not have a label on them, so hope they will be preserved for future references.

I was sorry to learn of the death of Charlie Jones and know he will be missed. I got to know Charlie and always enjoyed his company.

As you know, we folded our WWII Air Commando Activities January 1st and I already have missed the many contacts I had with members. But life moves on!

My wife, Anna Belle and I both have trouble walking, but we still keep on the go...at a very slow pace.

All for now and my best to you and the Air Commando Association.

Sincerely,  
W. Robert Eason  
10031 Barnetts Ford Road  
Orange, VA 22960

P.S.

I turned 90 years young on July 24th. Life has treated me great!

*Jim's Note: The photo album arrived in excellent condition Bob.*

*See **LETTERS** pg. 10*

# Letters

Continued from page 9

*It will be honorably displayed in the "Hall of Memories" of the Air Commando Association Building for all to view and remember. It is, indeed, a fitting resting place and tribute to all those depicted and scripted in the marvelous collection of our forerunner Air Commandos.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**HAP:**

I cranked up my machine to 16-point type so that I can read what I'm writing! As I remember, it has been a while since any of us has had 20/20 vision.

Enclosed is my beer mug from when I was in the Commandos. I was on official orders as custodian of Motha's Nursery, which under AF regs, was an illegal operation (using cash money, selling beer and things like that!) Willie Sierer came up with the idea of getting coffee mugs and beer mugs for everyone in the squadron and as I remember, we paid for the mugs with the profits from Motha's.

Willie found a place over in Pensacola that made mugs for the anchor clankers thereabouts: good heavy stuff, designed to work aboard ship. We needed a larger version of the chess piece that appeared on the matchbooks we used to pass out at Motha's. I took one of the matchbooks up to the Intel shop at Wing Hqtrs. There was a guy who worked in that shop who was also a good artist; I *think* it was S/Sgt Divine.

I told him we needed a larger version of the (knight) chess piece: could he produce that? He allowed as how he could and started sketching. He had a hangover that day and the way he felt started to come out in his drawing! You can see the bloodshot eyes, cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth, pot belly hanging over his 'belt' and the generally disheveled

appearance. And I watched him create his masterpiece.!

He was going to start all over and produce a 'straight' version. I allowed as how he'd created a masterpiece and he should stop right there. We inserted the lettering and Willie took it to the shop. The rest is history. So, if you have space, mount it somewhere in the museum! I can't drink liked I used to. I even changed drinking hands and that didn't help either!

Louis D. Schindler

P.O. Box 366012

Bonita Springs, FL 34136-6012

Enclosed find my check in the amount of \$10.00. Could you make up some new address labels for me, using that address? Many thanks.

*Hap's Note: Address labels sent. Beer mug is in a place of honor in the "Hangar." Knew Sergeant Divine well. Cheers.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**JIM,**

Thanks for your prompt reply regarding NIMROD license plates. Appreciated your note on the Christmas Card too.

We had black eyed peas Boney style (and recipe) on New Years Day with a few folks over-nothing like your 100+!!!

Don't forget you are welcome here anytime. You need to take a vacation from the newsletter business and maybe you can stop this way when NASA schedules an orbiter launch and we will get as close as we can.

The enclosed check can be applied as you determine and if more is needed let me know. Thanks! Hi to Lee, Kay, and Rita.

George A. Matthews

3186 Longwood Blvd

Melbourne, FL 32934

*Ed Note: Thanks George, The extra bucks are appreciated.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DEAR SAM, HAP, SHIRLEY, ROGER, AND FELLOW AIR COMMANDOS:**

As my family and I look back over this past year and reflect on friendships and significant events in our lives, one of the things that continues to stand out is the Air Commando Association Memorial Service of Sunday Oct 8, 2006. The service was sensitive, powerful, patriotic. Each part was so beautifully carried out.

**Hap,**

I would like to thank you for being a true friend, a life long friend of my father, WWII Commando, Carlous L. Christian. You meant so much to him. I miss the times we'd meet at Two Trees Golf Course restaurant and enjoy corned beef on rye sandwiches.

My family would like to thank you and all who made it possible for honoring our father, WWII Commando Carlous Christian, and having a Hurlburt Field dormitory named after him. It was so special and was a loving tribute to our dad.

The ACA is a fine organization that cares so much and keeps up with its membership. I am very proud to be a lifetime member.

I look forward to meeting with you again the next time we're in Florida. We've already blocked off a couple of weekends next October so we can attend the reunion.

May you have a blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year in 2007.

Sincerely yours,

John Christian and Family

308 Birch Lane

Pine Mountain GA 31833

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DEAR JIM,**

It has been a while since we've had a drink together. I plan on attending the reunion this year and I'm available to help you on the golf tournament if needed.

Thanks for publishing the article ( On The Lighter Side) in the last ACA newsletter. I got several calls from members indicating we need a few comments or stories like that in our paper. Therefore, I respectfully submit a few to fill in blank spaces if you choose to use them.

Happy New Year to you and your wife and sincerely hope this brief note finds you in the best of health.

Jim Alberts

Phoenix, AZ

*Ed Note: Jim, we're happy you will be attending Reunion '07, and yes, I'll need your help with the golf tournament. We will be back playing at Gator Lakes (Hurlburt.) The Hurlburt course renovation is complete.*

*Are you bringing Carynn, or are you going to make her stay home and work again? I hope to see you both in October. Blue skies.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DEAR ACA,**

I called Bill Palank last night to wish him a Merry Christmas and a happy new year. Bill was one of my bunkmates with Michael Kadenacy and our ever so inebriated intel officer who we all remembered well and who got us all drunk on occasions. I passed on to him what I picked up at the ACA reunion. He said he was 81 years old, has 20-20 vision, still flies and has to take a physical shortly and says he doesn't need Viagra. He has two airplanes he flies regularly and they are a T-6 and an Erocoup

See **LETTERS** pg. 11

# The War on Campus

Last spring, at the University of California's Santa Cruz campus, when the university hosted its annual student career fair, a large band of angry protestors overwhelmed the Army recruiters who were forced to retreat off campus under police protection. The vocal and aggressive activists are increasingly using U.S. schools as staging grounds for war protest. At one California high school, the counter-recruiters have worked so hard to spread their message, that recruiters no longer venture onto the campus. The Theodore Roosevelt High School in East Los Angeles had a reputation for producing record numbers of new Marines. That has changed and one Marine recruiter said, "We

don't even try to go there. They made it so tough it's not worth our while anymore." "They" refers to the Los Angeles based Coalition Against Militarism in our Schools (CAMS). The group was formed after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

A former teacher decided it was her moral responsibility to stop the recruitment of youth into the military. CAMS continues to succeed in turning candidates away from military careers.

The protestors' hostility runs deep, rejecting U.S. military accomplishments and important figures in American history. Last February, a proud University of Washington student asked the school to erect a memorial to



Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, a former student, who was held as a prisoner of war by the Japanese and received the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross. Other students quickly protested the plan and one student asked whether the University "should honor a Marine who killed people" The student government voted to reject the proposal.

In late 2004, the Phi Beta Kappa honor society objected with a vengeance when George Mason University in Virginia withdrew an invitation to Michael Moore to speak on campus. Moore demanded a \$35,000 fee and the school withdrew its invitation. The Phi Beta Kappa rebuked the school on a free-speech issue and denied permission for George Mason to form a Phi Beta Kappa chapter.

The recently formed Campus Anti-War Network (CAN) staged protests in New York, at a conference that included speakers from the Palestine Awareness Committee and others who spoke favorably of Islam. One activist criticized recruiters and the military for "lies and violations of human rights."

Last year when the CIA agreed to appear at New York University, the CAN group threatened to protest. When the CIA withdrew from the program, the CAN leaders boasted about their victory. A number of groups, such as CAN, Military Out of Our Schools, Students Against War, and others aim to silence military recruiters on campus.

Despite counter-recruiting

activity, though, schools are required by law to allow recruiters on campus. Otherwise, the schools will be denied federal funding. Last December, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Solomon Amendment, which says that if a school hopes to accept federal funds, it must allow recruiters. At Yale University in Connecticut, students may join the ROTC, but there are no ROTC classes at Yale, and students are told they may participate in ROTC on the grounds of another institution.

Not all skirmishes on campus have gone in favor of the activists. At the San Francisco campus of California State University, a group of students that disrupted a career fair, were removed by the police, were banned from the grounds and faced additional disciplinary action. At the University of Washington, in the wake of the Pappy Boyington protest, veterans and students took a firm stand in support of military heroes. The student council agreed, and voted in April to build a memorial to the school's alumni who have received the Medal of Honor, and Boyington's name will be among those listed. At Santa Cruz, the protest received so much local publicity that a number of curious students followed up with phone calls to the recruiting company, and two people will become Army officers as a result of the event.

The above article in part, as reported by Susan Katz Keating, appeared in the American Legion magazine, September 2006 issue.

## Letters

*Continued from page 10*

(sometimes called an Aircoupe). Her says the Erocoupe flies like a car, won't stall or spin and is a great aircraft. His wife died some 20 years ago and he has never remarried and lives by himself in Sacramento. If any of you get a chance, call him to wish well.

His address is:

Bill Palank

7813 Olympic Way

Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Tel 916-961-9618

Bill is not on the Internet and doesn't intend to go there. He doesn't have a fax and spends some of his time at a local bar where flyers tell stories and adds his authoritative recollections to the great stories.

Gene Rossel

## If you are under 40 - you won't understand!

- The term cell phone would have conjured up a phone in a jail cell and a pager was the school PA system.
- Mom used to defrost hamburger on the kitchen counter. I used to eat it raw. Our school lunches were wrapped in wax paper and placed in a brown paper bag, not ice packed coolers. E-coli? Never heard of it.
- We played "King of the Hill" on

piles of gravel left on vacant construction sites, and when you got hurt, Mom pulled out the mercurochrome (kids liked it better because it didn't sting like iodine) and then we got our butts spanked.

- Now it's a trip to the emergency room, followed by a 10 day dose of \$49 a bottle of antibiotics, and then Mom calls an attorney to sue the contractor for leaving a horribly vicious pile of gravel where it was such a threat.

# SOF truths set Air Commandos apart

By Master Sgt. Stuart Camp  
1st SOW Public Affairs

Four Air Commandos - two from a previous era and two still on active duty - attached personal meaning Nov. 15 to the four "truths" associated with special operations forces.

Retired Col. Kent Mueller and retired Chief Master Sgt. Gordon Scott joined Lt. Col. Michael D'Argenio, 319th Special Operations Squadron commander, and Senior Master Sgt. William Turner, 16th SOS, as speakers at the Through the Eyes of a Commando speech series sponsored by the 1st Special Operations Wing History Office.

At the outset, Maj. Gen. Donald Wurster, himself an Air Commando and former commander of the 16th SOW, framed the evening's goal - developing the next generation of Air Force and Air Commando leaders. He said, "Cut thumbs and become blood

brothers with these men."

Each of the speakers dissected a SOF truth, telling stories and explaining their thoughts to the assembled crowd of 100-plus Airmen and spouses in the base theater.

Chief Scott covered "Humans are more important than hardware." With his experience as a supply troop and loadmaster, the chief said, "It's knowing your senior leaders are taking care of you and are looking forward."

The second truth, addressed by Sergeant Turner, is "Quality is better than quantity." He recalled having 10 years of training before his first combat mission in the opening stages of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Now, we're sending Airmen into battle three weeks after completing training. Focus on getting these people quality training on the front end," he said.

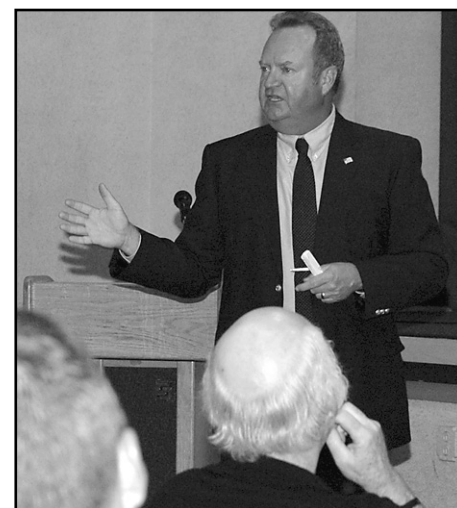
Boiling down the truth of

"competent special operations forces cannot be created after a crisis occurs," Colonel D'Argenio recounted how the 319th SOS fielded the U-28A in minimum time.

As a second generation Air Commando, Colonel Mueller spoke to "special operations forces cannot be mass produced."

"It's a culture; an identity," he said. "The over-the-edge, running with a rucksack is part of who we are. That can't be pulled out of a bag at AFPC."

The SOF truths, touted as axioms to the special operations community, became more than simple catch phrases as the experienced Air Commandos spoke, and Col. Norman Brozenick, 1st SOW commander, wrapped up the evening with a series of introspective questions aimed at prodding the Airmen in the audience into believing in the Air Commando brotherhood.



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Gordon "Gordo" Scott speaks during the "Through the Eyes of the Commando" event Nov. 15 in the base theater. (U.S. Air Force Photograph by Master Sgt. Stuart Camp)

He asked: "What are my personal and professional aim points?" "What are my contributions?" "Am I really working it out?" "Am I ready to accomplish the unbelievable?"

## Social Security - Special Military Earnings Credit

There is a little known program/benefit for people who've served in the military prior to Jan 2002. In a nutshell it boils down to this:

- Credited for years of active duty through 2001 (the program was done away with in January 2002).
- Up to \$1200 per year of earnings credit (see below website for more detail).
- Credited at time of application.
- Bring in DD-214 to Social Security Office - you must ask for this benefit to receive it!
- Soc Sec website: [www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/military.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/military.htm)

For those of you who do not have this info, it is something to put in your files for when you

apply for Social Security down the road. It is not just for retirees but anyone who has served on active duty prior to January 2002.

Please pass this information on to all the folks who have served on active duty who are entitled to this benefit, but remember they must ask for it!

*The following is taken directly from the Social Security Administration website.*

### Special Extra Earnings for Military Service

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1940 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings may help you qualify for Social Security or

increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings are not granted for inactive duty training.

Note: Social Security cannot add these extra earnings to your record until you file for Social Security benefits.

### How You Get Credit For Special Extra Earnings

The information that follows applies only to active duty military service earnings from 1940 through 2001. Here's how the special extra earnings are credited:

#### Service In 1978 through 2001

For every \$300 in active duty

basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

#### Service In 1957 Through 1977

You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

#### Service In 1940 Through 1956

If you were in the military during this period, including atten-



# Seeking a hero? 'Bud' Day is the real deal

By Pat Rice, Northwest Florida Daily News

I received a great book as a gift over the Christmas holiday. Its title is "Medal of Honor."

Written by Peter Collier, with photo portraits by Nick Del Calzo, the book is a powerful tribute to 138 living or recently deceased recipients of the medal. The book costs \$45. It can be purchased or ordered at area bookstores or online. I highly recommend it.

All told, about 3,400 men have received the Medal of Honor. Just 115 of them are alive today.

One of them is George "Bud" Day, now 81, who lives in Shalimar. His incredible story is in the book.

Like many people on the Emerald Coast, I knew something about Mr. Day's war experiences - but not the specifics. I met him for the first time recently at a party at Eglin Air Force Base. He was a Marine in the Pacific in World War II. After that war, he earned a law degree, then joined the Air Force and was a pilot in the Korean War. Mr. Day earned the Medal of Honor in the Vietnam War. Here are the details of Mr. Day's experience, straight from the book I'm now reading:

"In 1967, Day, now a major, was put in command of a squadron of F-100s in Vietnam involved in a top-secret program. Nicknamed the Misty Super Facs, their mission was to fly over North Vietnam and Laos as 'forward air controllers,' selecting military targets and calling in air strikes on them.

"On Aug. 26, ground fire hit Day's plane, destroying its hydraulic controls and forcing it into a steep dive. When he ejected, he smashed against the fuselage and broke his arm in three places. North Vietnamese militiamen below, seeing his parachute open,

were waiting for him when he landed.

"They marched Day to a camouflaged underground shelter. When he refused to answer his captors' questions, they staged a



George "Bud" Day

mock execution, then hung him from a rafter by his feet for several hours. Certain that he was so badly hurt that he wouldn't try to get away, they tied him up with loosely knotted rope.

"On his fifth day in the camp, while a pair of distracted teenage soldiers stood guard, he untied himself and escaped.

"On his second night on the run, Day was sleeping in thick undergrowth when either a bomb or a rocket landed nearby. The concussion left him bleeding from his ears and sinuses and sent shrapnel into his leg. Even so, he continued to hobble south for the next several days, eating berries and frogs and successfully evading enemy patrols.

"Sometime between the twelfth and fifteenth day after his escape - he had lost track of time - Day heard helicopters and stumbled toward the sound. It was U.S. choppers evacuating a Marine

unit, but they left just as he got to the landing zone. The next morning, still heading south, he ran into a North Vietnamese Army patrol. As he limped toward the jungle, he was shot in the leg and hand and captured soon afterward. He was taken back to the camp from which he had escaped and subjected to more torture.

"A few days later he was moved to the 'Hanoi Hilton.' His untreated wounds were infected, and he was suffering from malnutrition and unable to perform even the simplest task for himself. The fingers on both hands were curled into fists as a result of his torture; he regained some motion by peeling them back, flattening them against the wall of his cell, and leaning into them with his full weight.

"For more than 5 1/2 years, Day resisted the North Vietnamese guards who tortured him. On one occasion in 1971, when guards burst in with rifles as some of the American prisoners gathered for a forbidden religious service, Major Day stood up, looked down the muzzles of the guns, and began to sing 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'

"George Day was released on

March 14, 1973."

If you want to read about bravery and courage and heroism and the real deal, go get a copy of "Medal of Honor."

Read Mr. Day's story, and read all of the others. And thank God for people like them.

*Patrick Rice is editor of the Daily News.*

ACA Editor's note - George E. Day, a retired Air Force Colonel (ACA Life member) is the most highly decorated Air Force officer as noted in the Air Forces history of the Medal of Honor. He has nearly 70 decorations, which 50 of those are for combat.

During his five-and-half years as a POW, he spent 37 months in solitary confinement. Day demonstrated such personal bravery and conspicuous gallantry that he received the Medal of Honor, Air Force Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal. He also wears the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguish Flying Cross, Air Medal with "V" for Valor, and the Purple Heart.

Today, Col. Day has a law practice and is involved in politics and veterans affairs.

## 461st Test Flight Squadron Reactivated

The 461st Flight Test Squadron was reactivated on Oct 27, 2006 at Edwards AFB California. The squadron will be responsible for testing the conventional take-off and landing variant of the F-35 Lightning II, and will also play a role in testing the other variants of the aircraft. The 461 FLTS is trying to contact former members of the squadron from its days in West Germany and Luke AFB Arizona in the hopes of recovering the history of the

squadron and significant historical squadron artifacts. Also, since the 361st Fighter Squadron and 461st Fighter Squadron were consolidated in 1985, the 461st FLTS is hoping to make contact with members from the 361st FS during World War II. If you are a previous member of the squadron and would like to share your bit of squadron history, please call 661-277-5942 or send and e\_mail to 461FLTS@sf.mil.



# It's not easy to forgive our enemies

*From Charlie Self (A-37 member)*

It's not easy to forgive our enemies, but as evidenced in this story there is good in everyone. It is amazing how and when it shows up. Look for the good in others and your life will be richer. Smile at everyone and you will see that 9 out of 10 times you will get a smile in return. Smiles, hugs and love always come back to you. Maybe not when given, but when you need them most.

Smiles, hugs and love, Charlie

*This is an excerpt from John McCain's Destiny is Character where he shares a powerful experience that occurred during his 5 1/2 years as a POW during the Viet Nam Conflict.*

There was one other occasion during my imprisonment that moved me greatly as evidence of Gods transcending love. During the time I was held in solitary, I was caught, not for the first time, communicating with my dear friend in the cell next to mine. For my transgression, I was kept overnight in a punishment cell tied very tightly in ropes.

On this particular night as I sat on the stool cursing my bad luck, and straining against the painfully tightened ropes, the door suddenly opened and a young gun guard I had occasionally seen wandering around the camp entered the room. He motioned to me to remain silent by placing his finger to his

lips, and then, without smiling or even looking me in the eyes, he proceeded to loosen the ropes that bound me. His kind action completed, he left without uttering a word to me. As dawn approached, he returned to tighten the ropes before he finished his watch and another guard might have discovered what he had done.

In the months that followed, I occasionally saw my Good Samaritan when I was moved from one part of the prison to another. He never allowed himself a glance in my direction, much less spoke to me, until one Christmas morning, when I was briefly allowed out of my cell to stand alone in the outdoors and look up at the clear, blue sky.

As I was looking at the heavens, I became aware of him as he walked near me and then, for a moment, stood very close. He did not speak or smile or look at me. He just stared at the ground in front of us, and then, very casually, he used his foot to draw a cross in the dirt. We both stood looking at his work for a minute until he rubbed it out and walked away.

For just that moment I forgot all my hatred for my enemies, and all the hatred most of them felt for me. I forgot about the Jerk, and the interrogators who persecuted my friends and me. I forgot about the war, and the terrible things that war does to you. I was just one Christian venerating the cross with a fellow Christian on Christmas morning.

I saw him again occasionally. But he never looked at me or attempted to speak to me. We never worshiped together again. But I have never forgotten him or the kindness he showed me as a testament to the faith we shared.

That experience helped to form my lasting appreciation for my own religious faith, and it took the faith of an enemy to reveal it to me, the faith that unites and never divides, the faith that bridges unbridgeable divisions in humanity, the faith that we are all, sinners and saints alike, children of God.

I became a better man, a stronger man, a more faithful man, who, for at least a moment, could love his enemies.

## A-37 Reunion Sept 6-9, 2007

*"Dragonfly" members and friends*



If you flew, worked on, worked with, or just have a high admiration for the great little A-37 Dragonfly fighter aircraft, why not COME AND ENJOY a reunion with

others to be held at the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel in Herndon, VA during Sept 6-9, 2007. (A great place for a memorable vacation at our wonderful nation's capital.) Plus if you GIVE US your name and address, you will receive the A-37 'Reunion' Association newsletter FREE for a year. Why not give it a try. Contact Ollie Maier, at GM08@TxState.edu (that's GM zero eight) or 512/353-7432. Also check out the homepage: A-37.org. See you in there?

Thank you, Ollie

## BERETS

In the December newsletter we published a list of berets seen on Hurlburt Field. We left one out - black. The list is now complete.



- Black - Tactical Air Control Party (TACP)
- Scarlet red - combat controllers (CCT)
- Blue - security police (SP)
- Grey - combat weather (CCW)
- Maroon - para rescue (PJ)

*Now you know.*

## Airmen's record clearly deserves praise

In order to qualify as a historical record, a document or narrative must display one primary quality - it must be true.

Politically correct history must also possess one primary characteristic. It must serve a beneficial purpose for a specified individual or group.

History has revealed that claims of a perfect record by the Tuskegee Airmen are not true. Politically correct history says the truth has no place here because it serves only to tarnish the record of the Airmen.

I have yet to read or hear a sin-

gle comment by anyone who has anything but praise for the accomplishments of these brave men. The truth harbors neither friends nor enemies. It stands as a permanent marker, a sentinel guarding an unchanging fact.

I still have tremendous respect for the courage and integrity of the Tuskegee Airman as individual heroes. But sadly, history must now record that the legacy bestowed upon them as a group was, in fact, a lie and will forever remain so.

Robert E. Segrest, Jr.  
Shorter, AL

# Social Security

*Continued from page 12*

dance at a service academy, you did not pay Social Security taxes. However, your Social Security record may be credited with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from September 16, 1940, through December 31, 1956, under the following circumstances:

- You were honorably discharged after 90 or more days of service, or you were released because of a disability or injury received in the line of duty; or
- You are still on active duty; or

- You are applying for survivors benefits and the veteran died while on active duty.
- You cannot receive credit for these special extra earnings if you

are already receiving a federal benefit based on the same years of service. There is one exception: If you were on active duty after 1956, you can still get the special

earnings for 1951 through 1956, even if you're receiving a military retirement based on service during that period.

## Important ACA Website Information

Please note the old website [www.aircommando.net](http://www.aircommando.net) is no longer maintained by the Air Commando Association. The ACA cannot be held responsible for any information and/or content associated with that website. The ACA can not guarantee the availability or price of any Country Store items ordered off [www.aircommando.net](http://www.aircommando.net) or any web pages associated with [www.aircommando.net](http://www.aircommando.net). In order for your Country Store purchase to be valid, all Country Store items must be ordered either from the printed ACA newsletter or from [www.specialoperations.net](http://www.specialoperations.net), this is the website the ACA is currently using for all internet based inquiries. This site belongs to and is maintained by ACA member Gene Rossel.

## ACA Newsletter Advertising Rates

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QUARTER PAGE .....	\$60
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*Frequency discounts available.*

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# MICHAEL YON : ONLINE MAGAZINE












## COMBAT JOURNALIST

**Michael Yon's Online Magazine.** More than just award-winning photography capturing the chaos and drama of combat. More than just acclaimed frontline dispatches that are among the most downloaded news items on the internet. More than just trenchant analysis that time and again proves prescient way before any other reporter or website calls it. More than just insightful interviews and profiles of military leaders, war correspondents and experts in international affairs. Michael Yon's Online Magazine is all these things and more. Log on and see why General Barry McCaffrey says, "Michael, I never miss a word you write."

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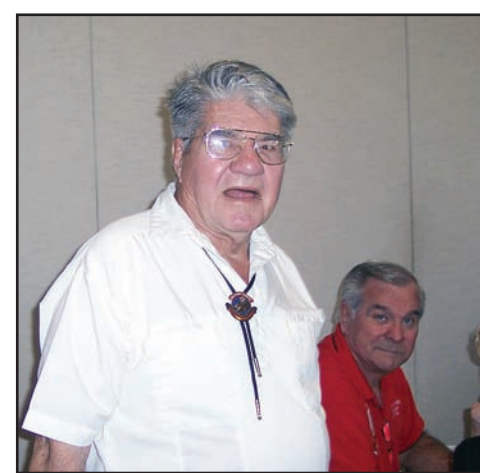
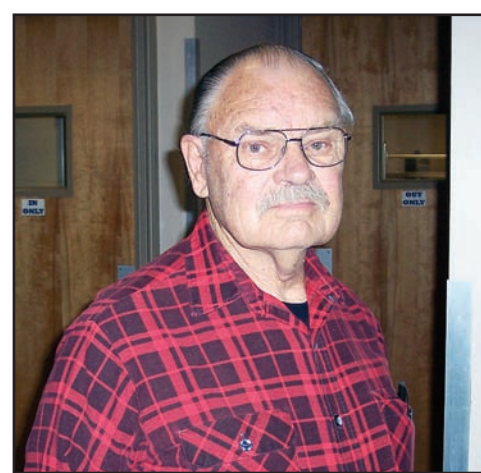
**AUTHOR**

**BLOGGER**

**PHOTOGRAPHER**



# Air Commando Association Christmas Party





# Explosion Incident at Wattay (VTE - Vientiane) Laos

Gene,  
In reference to an Info Request from Debra Morris, email: tomaanddeb@sbcglobal.net

I read the note from Debra Morris in the current newsletter and the subsequent reply from M/G Secord. It sure sounds like the very bad accident at Wattay in 1965. She may be mistaken about the 1967 or 1968 time period. I do not have Dick Secord's email address; however, I thought I'd pass this along to you before responding to Debra. My memory has gotten a bit on the fuzzy side so perhaps you can square it with others that may have been at Waterpump during the same period.

In early '65, the CO, L/C Keith

Mahon, told me to appear at our ops shack in the Air America area at Udorn. I didn't have a clue what he wanted me for, and I didn't think I had done anything evil - at least lately. After hanging around for a while, I was called into what turned out to be a briefing. To my surprise, the principals were Maxwell Taylor and a real strange dude that looked as if he had combed his hair with a hand grenade. I later learned he was from CIA. At the time, Taylor was the US ambassador to Saigon and effectively the military commander of the Vietnam War. Other than Mahon and a couple of our T-28 pilots (I don't remember whom), I did not recognize the others. Joe Holden may have been there, but I am not sure.

I was asked a hypothetical question concerning a max effort of ten T-28s flying during the daylight hours out of Laos. They wanted to know how many armament turns we could do with a mixed specialty bag of about ten maintainors assuming 1 - 1.5 hours per mission. After a little butt scratching, I said five or six, or a total of 50 - 60 sorties, assuming the airplanes or other equipment didn't break. About an hour would be required to refuel and rearm all ten T-28s. That drew quite a few questions. I qualified my answer by saying that we would have to put aside normal USAF munitions handling practices by pre-prepping the ordinance. This meant building up fused bombs, pre-loaded rocket pods, .50 ammo cans already filled, etc., so the T-28s could be quickly loaded. The prepping of ordinance would be done at night for the next day's missions. From my perspective, safety was not a big issue, but it definitely wasn't according to USAF practices. It would not be the first time we worked under similar conditions. It also meant an ammo holding area would be needed for the pre-prepped ordinance. Mahon later told me that Taylor was not satisfied with what I had to say. I was going into a funk when he further explained that Taylor didn't think it was possible with the limited manpower, etc. Ho, ho, ho - shows you how little Taylor knew about us.

Some time after, the operation got under way at VTE. This is where it gets fuzzy because I was at Udorn and not on the ground at VTE. However, these are my mostly second hand recollections. We got word at Udorn that a major explosion destroyed all of the T-28s at VTE. There was no word on casualties, but it was assumed

there were many. The smoke rising from VTE could be seen at Udorn. The flight surgeon, Phil Choate and his medics plus a few others immediately got on board a C-47 for the ten or fifteen minute hop to VTE. Hap was the medical NCOIC, but I think he was elsewhere at the time...Savanakhet? They returned later that day.

Apparently, a .50 caliber API round either cooked-off or accidentally fired during maintenance hitting a fuel truck parked in front of a loaded T-28. (An armorer's cardinal law: Never, never, ever fool with the guns when fuel trucks are parked in front of them.) The resultant explosion cascaded down the flight line causing the other T-28s to explode. The prepped ordinance was stored in a hangar that also blew up as was mentioned in Debra's message. I think the control tower went down, too.

Miraculously, there was only one relatively minor casualty, not the two killed and three injured as mentioned by Debra. However, others may have been outside of our immediate unit. The sheep-dipped maintainors were ours, but I do not recall who were flying the T-28s. It may have been a combo of ours, Air America's and Thais.

A few days later a short paragraph buried deep in the New York Times noted that the RLAFF lost twelve T-28s in an accidental explosion at Vientiane. We were, of course, not there...

Hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We are driving to Houston tomorrow to spend the holidays with family.

Regards, Paul Tobey  
4271 Congreve Place,  
Sarasota, FL 34241

## COMMEMORATIVE ACA BRICK



The commemorative ACA bricks are now under the direction of Board Member Ted Saunders. He will be assisted by Roger Klair and Willie Hall.

There are only 72 brick spaces available and will be allotted on a first come, first served basis. The donation for each brick remains at \$100.00. Ted asks that you submit your request early so he can commence work on the project. Forward requests to : Air Commando Association, ATTN: Brick, P.O. Box 7, Mary Esther, FL 32569-0007

Yes! I would like a Commemorative Brick displayed on the Wall of Fame in the hallway of the Air Commando Association Building. My three (3) lines should be crafted as follows:

I understand that my three (3) lines are limited to no more than 17 characters per line. By definition that means letters, spaces, periods, commas, dashes, etc. Here is an example:

Theodore Saunders

TSgt, USAF, Ret.

USA and USAF

# Eglin Toy Distribution 2006

The Airman's Attic was tasked to distribute toys to Team Eglin Families from donations received from the U.S. Marine Toys-For-Tots program, Eglin Units and from individuals. This annual effort is extremely popular and helps a lot of folks.

Thanks to the timeless efforts of a group of volunteers who magically answered the call, we transformed the Airman's Attic into a wondrous Christmas setting. Two dependent wives even came in at 0500 the day before the distribution and stayed with me the whole day.

Thanks to all the volunteers we were set up and ready to go at 0800 the next day. Toys and refreshments that we furnished were quickly gobbled up. The distribution exceeded my expectations and we had a fantastic day. We were so well received that we conducted a second distribution a few days later.

In all, 237 families took part and received 2,265 toys for 473 children! In addition, there were 17 decorated Christmas trees and boxes of donated food handed out.

After the holidays, one of the shoppers, a Navy wife whose husband was away on TDY, came back and almost in tears told me, that because she was able to get Christmas presents from our program for her children, she was able to afford to travel to be with her husband over Christmas. Boy, did that make my day!

*Bob White*



*Photo by Craig McDonnell/Courtesy of Eglin Eagle*

**Bob White, Airman's Attic director, and Amber Vadala, 46th Maintenance Squadron Key Spouse, puts gifts out for display at the Airman's Attic for more than 150 families Tuesday. Those families picked up more than 1,600 toys for more than 325 children. The toys were donated to the Airman's Attic from numerous Eglin agencies, U.S. Marines Toys-for-Tots and a multitude of individuals.**



**Bob shares a moment with Airman & Family Readiness Center Team Leader Barbara Turney and Flight Leader Jiri Crowder.**



**One of the nine large tables laden with toys and stuffed animals.**



**Volunteer Jim Cassell welcomes shoppers to the Attic.**



**So much great stuff, so hard to decide.**



**Volunteers help wrap gifts to keep from prying eyes.**

## Air Commando Association Membership Application

### Membership is open to:

- A. Persons who served with or supported Air Force Air Commando/Special Operations Units.
- B. Widows of persons eligible for regular membership qualify as non-dues paying members.
- C. Other units/interested parties may join as non-voting associate members with approval of the Board of Directors.

*Newsletter is published quarterly.  
Annual Reunion held in October*

### Type Membership requesting:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 20.00 Annual Regular      \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 20.00 Annual Associate  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$150.00 Life Regular      \_\_\_\_\_ \$150.00 Life Associate  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Widow (No Dues)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Home# (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service: ☐ USAF ☐ Army ☐ Navy ☐ USMC ☐ Other

Please list: \_\_\_\_\_

AFSC/MOS: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Service: From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Retired? Y or N

### Air Commando/Special Operations Service:

From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location \_\_\_\_\_ Aircraft \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location \_\_\_\_\_ Aircraft \_\_\_\_\_

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From \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location \_\_\_\_\_ Aircraft \_\_\_\_\_

Present Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission to provide phone # & address to other Members only? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Permission to publish phone # & address in ACA Newsletter? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Return application to: Air Commando Association  
 P.O. Box 7  
 Mary Esther, FL 32569-0007

**For Office use only:** Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Entered in Mailing List: \_\_\_\_\_ Entered in Accounting Log: \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome Letter: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership File: Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_



## BOOK REVIEWS

### FIVE YEARS TO FREEDOM

*By James N. "Nick" Rowe*

Originally published in 1971 FIVE YEARS TO FREEDOM is a book that reaches to the heart of the POW/MIA issue; POW escapee and Medal of Honor recipient Nick Rowe takes you through the ordeal of captivity and reveals the practice and techniques of the communist Viet Cong in South Vietnam's Delta region of the U Minh Forest from October 29, 1963 to his escape 62 months later.

The first hand accounts of indoctrination, the impact of a fellow POW executed in retaliation for the South Vietnamese execution of three terrorists. Rowe courageously reveals the slow breakdown of his resistance and

struggled to survive under the VC's use of long term isolation, physical exhaustion, and brain-washing pressures.

This book is also a wake up call to the public to know your enemy, and to date to know your trading partners now that Vietnam has been accepted into the World Trade Organization (WTO).

If you haven't read this book - it is a must read. The information is timeless. If you can't get this book at your local book store you can order it at

[www.powfoia.org/reading.htm](http://www.powfoia.org/reading.htm).

Or send a check for \$6.99 plus \$3.00 (shipping and handling) = \$9.99 total to POW FOIA, P.O. # 8044, SS, MD 20910



### FINAL STATEMENT

Terrorists seize a train, shutting down the Eurotunnel linking England and France. British response to the hijacking and plans to resolve the crisis move along traditional lines. The story soon takes an unusual twist, however, as our counterterrorist experts Nelson Bartlett (British) and Jim Grissom (American) join talents to get to the bottom of the plot. With the help of the CIA, the Italian Intelligence Service, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the officers uncover the theft of two thermonuclear bombs in Italy that the US Air Force was denying. With help from their friends in USAF Special Operations, the two officers answer the question: Are the terrorists' demands real, or is someone making a Final Statement!

**This exciting book is available at [www.publishamerica.com](http://www.publishamerica.com) (\$16.95 + postage). Autographed copies are available from the author (check or money order) for \$19.00, postage paid. Send to address: 3714 NW 134th Circle, Vancouver, WA 98685 or [bobbyterri@comcast.net](mailto:bobbyterri@comcast.net)**

The author: Retired Air Force officer, Bobby Clark, worked closely with the United States Army Special Forces and their counter-parts, the British Special Air Service, in a career spanning three decades. He logged more than 400 hours as pilot-in-command on nearly 100 combat missions in the AC-130 "Spectre" Gunship, often providing critically-needed close air support to special forces teams during the Vietnam war. Later Colonel Clark flew the MC-130 "Combat Talon" low altitude intruder aircraft throughout Europe and Africa. His more "routine" flying operations include four years with the USAF Hurricane Hunters, pitting his aviator skills against such famous storms as Camille and Gladys.

*Dear fellow Air Commandos:*

*Enclosed is a copy of my book, Final Statement, a work of fiction. I look forward to hearing from a number of old friends. Bobby Clark, LTC, USAF (Retired) ACA Life member*



# "They just fall apart in mid-air"

*From The Nation, July 13, 1964*

*I just came across this in my files and thought it is still a good article with some facts that still bother vets. It is a 1964 article and most of the facts are accurate but some need to be fine tuned. It was something Heinie has preached for a long time. Jerry Shank, from Notre Dame, went to ROTC summer camp with me and we were in the same flight. His death set off a firestorm but it had to be done at some point. I still find it interesting reading some 42 years later. Hope you enjoy.*

*Gene Rossel*

In every daylight hour, from runways and clearings all over South Vietnam, the aircraft lift off under maximum power--helicopters, cargo planes, fighter-bombers, observation craft, even an occasional U-2 spy plane. They strain for altitude, climbing in tight spirals until their altimeters read 2,000 feet or more. Only then do crews and engines relax. The only safe highway in South Vietnam is the sky, and the only safe accesses to it are the slender columns of air space above government-controlled outposts and towns.

"We've been shot at right over the city," a helicopter pilot told me at Vinh Long, home of the 114th Aviation Company. "So we don't fool around any more. These aircraft are flying at max gross every time they take off. Watch the tail-boom--you'll see the skin wrinkling from the torque. No aircraft can take that kind of strain every day of the year."

He might have been any military pilot in South Vietnam, but he happened to be flying the turbo-jet helicopter which the Bell company christened the Iroquois, but which everybody else calls the Huey, from its military designation as the

HU-1. The Huey is fast, compact and fairly powerful. It was designed for evacuating battle casualties, but here it flies every conceivable mission, from transporting pigs and cabbages to assaulting fortified Vietcong positions. Most of the Hueys in the 114th have flown more than 1,000 hours in the past year. Four of them have gone down, and ten of their crew men have died.

Altogether, 136 of the 277 Americans who have lost their lives in South Vietnam [up to July 1964] died in plane and helicopter crashes. All but forty of these deaths were attributed to "hostile action," but there is a general feeling here that the casualty list gives the Vietcong far too much credit.

"You'll hear about planes being shot down," one T-28 [North American Nomad modified trainer] pilot told me when I first arrived in Saigon. "But don't you believe it. They just fall apart in mid-air."

This attitude is common among fighter pilots, who must push their aircraft to the limits of their endurance. It became public opinion when the letters of Captain Jerry Shanks were published in Life magazine. Shanks was killed on March 24 when his T-28 shed its wings during a bombing run, a possibility he had predicted many times in letters to his wife.

Since the Shanks letters were published, the Department of Defense has been fighting a rear-guard action against journalists and politicians in search of headlines. A particularly misguided example of legislative zeal appeared in Stars and Stripes a few weeks ago. The story told of a Congressman who was demanding an investigation of "obsolete" air-

craft in Vietnam, because one of his constituents had died when a Huey lost its tail-boom and spun into the ground. But the HU-1 is not obsolete; it is simply over-worked. And so is every plane which lifts off from a field in South Vietnam--even the great Boeing 707 jetliners. A Pan Am Clipper was hit by rifle fire last year, and its pilots don't fool around any more, either. They take off with the same urgency as the military aircraft.

It is the urgency that kills, not obsolescence. Not all U.S. aircraft are as new or even as reliable as the Huey. The twin-engined B-26 [Douglas Invader, originally designated A-26], which killed nineteen airmen before it was grounded, was designed and built during World War II. But even the B-26 cannot fairly be called obsolescent, given the combat conditions in Southeast Asia, just as a burro isn't obsolete on the east wall of the Grand Canyon. We now build jets. And our planes can fly at twice the speed of sound, carry enormous loads, and span continents without refueling. They're useless in South Vietnam. Here we need planes that can rise from short, makeshift runways and fly at tree-top level at speeds slow enough to permit the pilot to spot the most elusive enemy the U.S. has ever encountered. In short, we need planes very much like those we fielded in World War II. (The reader will have noticed that I write as though the United States were waging a war in South Vietnam. Technically, of course, it isn't, but out here it is difficult to be technical about it. Hypocrisy isn't easily maintained in a combat zone.)

We should have learned the

lesson of air combat in the Pacific fourteen years ago. The Air Force put its newest jet fighters into Korea, only to discover that they were too fast to support the ground forces. The pilots could not sight their targets at supersonic speeds, nor could they return soon enough for a second strike, nor pull up in the face of Korea's precipitous mountains. So the Air Force took its P-51 Mustangs out of moth balls, and the Navy flew AD-6 Skyraiders from carriers in the Sea of Japan.

The Skyraider is beginning to see service in Vietnam. It has not been used until now because it is a single-seat aircraft, and Americans fly air strikes against the Vietcong only when there is a Vietnamese aboard, to maintain the fiction that we are here only to advise and assist, not to fight. Whether he was a legitimate student pilot or just a sacrificial lamb, the need for a Vietnamese observer prevented us from using the Skyraider until the Vietnamese Air Force had competent pilots of its own, or until the plane was modified to seat two persons. Both changes are now in progress. Vietnamese pilots are flying a squadron of Skyraiders (under the designation of A-1H) out of Bien Hoa, near Saigon, and two-seater A-1E Skyraiders are scheduled to arrive soon.

The Army has had a similar experience with cargo planes. A few years ago, over Air Force protests, the Army won its case for a cargo plane that was small, sturdy and able to operate under primitive conditions. Vietnam has proved the wisdom of that decision. But when the Army went shopping, it found that there was no U.S.-built aircraft which met its

See **MID-AIR** pg. 22



# A Short History of C-130A, Tail # 56-0518

The C-130A Hercules, tail # 56-0518, was the 126th built by Lockheed Aircraft corp. of Marietta, Georgia.

It was accepted into the Air Force inventory on 23 August 1957.

It was assigned to the 314th Troop Carrier Wing at Stewart AFB, Tennessee, from 1964 to 1972.

On 2 November 1972, it was given to the South Vietnamese Air Force as part of the Military Assistance Program.

A few years later, the aircraft would be involved in a tremendously historic flight.

On 29 April 1975, this Herk was the last out of Vietnam during the fall of Saigon. With over 100 aircraft destroyed on the flight line at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, some of them still burning, it was the last flyable C-130 remaining. In a very panicked state, hundreds of people

were rushing to get aboard, as the aircraft represented a final ticket to freedom.

People hurriedly crowded into the Herk, packing in tighter and tighter. Eventually, the loadmaster informed the pilot, Major Phuong, a South Vietnamese instructor pilot, that he could not get the rear ramp closed due to the number of people standing on it.

In a moment of inspiration, Major Phuong slowly taxied forward, then hit the brakes.

The loadmaster called forward again stating he had successfully got the doors closed.

In all, 452 people were on board, including a staggering 32 in the cockpit alone. Using a conservative estimate of 100 pounds per person, it translated into an overload of at least 10,000 pounds. Consequently, the Herk used every bit of the runway and overrun before it was able to get airborne.

The target was Thailand, which should have been 1:20 in flight time, but after an hour and a half, the aircraft was over the Gulf of Siam, and they were clearly lost. Finally, a map was located, they identified some terrain features, and they were able to navigate. They landed at Utapao, Thailand after a three and a half hour flight.

Ground personnel were shocked at what "fell out" as they opened the doors. It was clear that a longer flight would almost cer-

tainly have resulted in a loss of life. In the end, however, all 452 people made it to freedom aboard this historic C-130.

Upon landing, the aircraft was reclaimed by the United States Air Force and was assigned to two different Air National Guard units for the next 14 years. On 28 June 1989, it made its final flight to Little Rock Air Force Base, current home of the 314th Airlift Wing and was placed on static display.

## Mid-Air

*Continued from page 21*

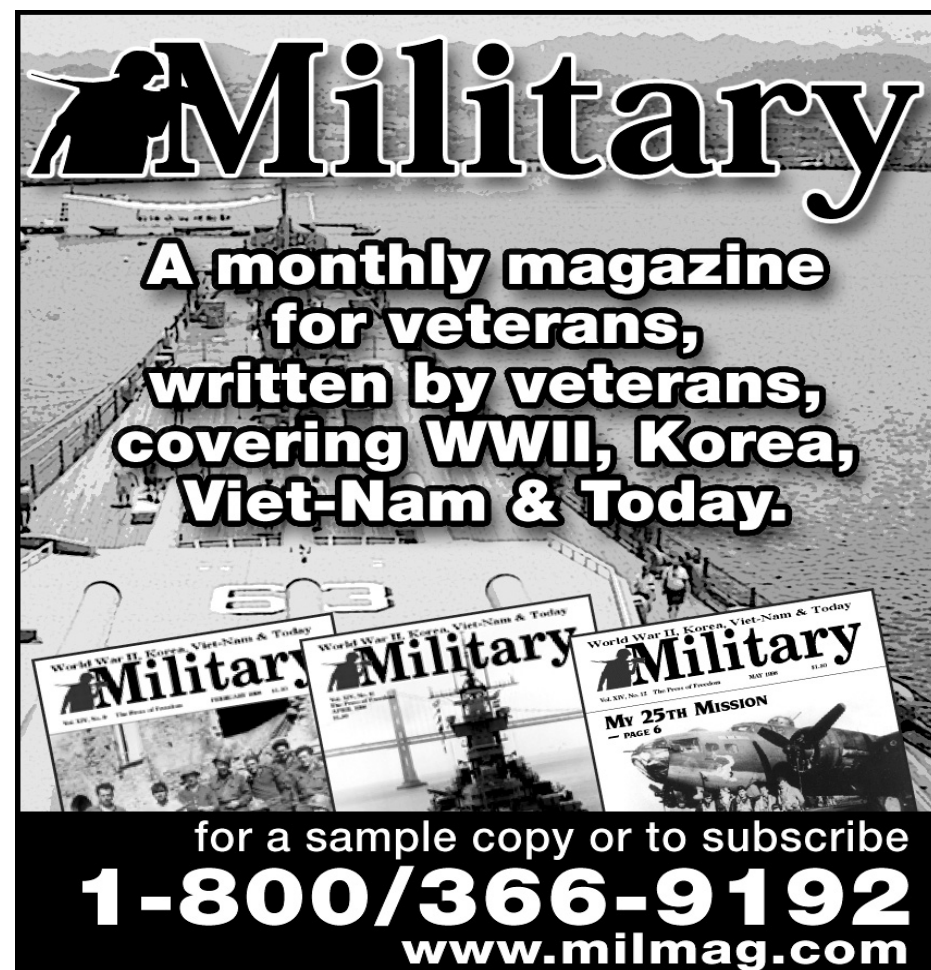
specifications. So it bought the Caribou from de Havilland in Canada, where bush pilots still value tough little planes. The Caribou is a Roman-noses, cigar-shaped plane with a great, soaring tail and an endearing homeliness that is matched by one other vehicle in the world: the Volkswagen [Beetle] sedan.

We are not winning our non-war in South Vietnam--perhaps we are losing it--and we insist upon knowing why. First we blamed our setbacks on the oppressive Diem government, and that government was changed; then we blamed the Vietnamese soldier's reluctance to fight, and that was disproved by a series of costly operations; now we are blaming our aircraft. Down in the Mekong Delta at the end of June, while waiting for the afternoon Caribou to Saigon, I read an editorial entitled "Brave Men Betrayed." It had been clipped from a Scripps-Howard newspaper by an irate colonel, and it told how "courageous young Americans are being betrayed by ancient equipment that is no longer equal to the demands of modern aerial combat."

Unfortunately, combat in South Vietnam is neither modern nor aerial. If it were, we would have won long ago.

First published, in slightly different form, in The Nation, July 13, 1964. I wrote the dispatch on a tiny Hermes typewriter while waiting for a flight to Pleiku in the Central Highlands. I put it in an envelope with a five-cent stamp on the outside, and the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group generously flew it to Carey McWilliams in New York. McWilliams was what most Army officers would have called a pinko, but he was happy to publish even Republicans like me, if they'd work for what he could afford to pay, which in this case was \$65. The T-28 pilot quoted in the story was Mark Diebolt, whose wife I'd met flying on the plane to Saigon, and he later flew an O-1 Bird Dog in America's secret war in Laos. He was a great guy, and I'm happy to say that he survived both wars.

Lou Schinder  
PO Box 366012  
Bonita Springs, FL 34136



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# The McCoskrie/Threshold Foundation Update

By John Grove



Happy to get MTF stuff

## Honduras Shipments

### Really great news

Your MTF started the year with two large shipments to the Bless the Children and Pro Nino folks in Honduras. The total weight was 70,000 pounds. We have been building up storage units full of 'stuff' and because of a lack of help could not get the shipments out. The old retired dudes and Doris Eaton (87 years old) came to the rescue. One load-

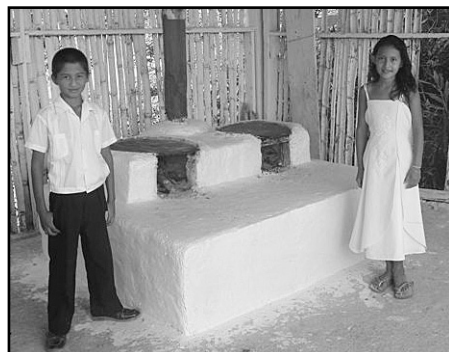


MTF donated Bikes

ing we had half of the crew on Social Security, and the youngest dude was Lt Col Ken Sipperly. He ain't no spring chicken. The other crew members were Steve 'Cons' Connelly, Bill Vano, Mike Stevenson, Jim "Rawhide" Connors, John Easley, Craig Dock, Bob White, Ken 'Redman' Poole, Scott Minas, and three great 2L-T's from the 20th SOS.

The stuff that is needed in Honduras for many projects is in hand and just waiting for another burst of energy so we can ship. All

the old dudes are ready to carry the load. Recent donations will make it possible to build additions to the schools we support. I expect to visit Honduras and these projects



School Kitchen

and will give you photos and an update in the summer.

## Montagnard Update

### Great News

I received a call from Mike Linnane, he said that a GI donated all the funding to pay off the 'Yard resettlement land in North Carolina. This does not eliminate the need for funding for follow-on folks who are in the pipeline to resettle in the USA, but it sure takes lots of the worry away. Future funding is needed to cover the initial cost for each family that comes to our shores. Call or check with John Grove if you want to donate to this cause, and thanks to all of you who have donated so far.

## Thailand Initiative

### A great project

General Heinie Aderholt has asked that we again get involved in helping the people in Northeast Thailand. He suggested that we get more involved with the TLC-Brotherhood. They are a small group of mostly GI's who have been supporting projects in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Projects usually involve schools and small upgrades to facilities. The MTF concept is to fund some

projects that TLC wishes to carry out. TLC has said they will send us a prioritized list of projects and estimated cost. We will determine what we can support from our checkbook now and send the funding. They will provide before and after photos and an after action report on the projects.

*Where do you come in.* We are asking for your donations, all the funds collected from you will go to the next round of projects. We will keep account of the Thailand donations and all that you donate for this effort will go to this effort.

Please write Thailand on your donation. Please send your donations to MTF at our PO Box. Donations are tax deductible as provided by law. We also can accept donations of appreciated stocks and the like, if you want to avoid some extra taxes next year.

Several of our ACA members are very interested in a first hand look at these projects and might get in a Thai visit in the future. I am sure the list of volunteers is long and a CCT dude or two are ready and willing to go back now. We will send a camera.

## Operation Christmas Wish



The 1SOW and MTF joined forces again this year to support the Christmas at Honduran orphanages program. This year we had the best effort by far. The project POC's at Hurlburt got involved early and were able to get the names of

about 860 kids in orphanages at several locations. What a trip it was, all the kids received school supplies, clothing, toiletries, and toys. Santa (a C-130 crew dog) was the star of the show for three days. We are already looking at next December and have several POC volunteers.



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Original Air Commando Gp Patch .....	\$3.00
ACA Cloth Patch .....	\$3.00
POW/MIA Patches .....	\$3.50
ACA "AIR COMMANDO" Cloth Tab.....	\$3.00
ACA Challenge Coins (Bronze) .....	\$5.00
50th Commemorative Coin (Bronze).....	\$5.00
Pens with "60 years Air Commando" .....	\$1.00
ACA Bumper Sticker .....	\$2.00
"AIR COMMANDO" 8" decal car window display .....	\$3.00
<b>Aircraft License Plates</b>	
B-26 "Over the MeKong"; B-26 "in SE Asia in the 60's"; B-26 "Nimrods Over Loas"; "Son Tay Raiders"; "A1-H Hobos".....	\$10.00
<b>NEW</b> ACA License Plates, white or blue .....	\$12.00
ACA License Plates, white.....	\$10.00
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ACA Decal (4"x 5") .....	2/\$1.00
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Air Commando Bush Hat (M, L, XL).....	\$20.00
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ACA T-Shirt (white only) (XXL) .....	\$12.00
ACA Golf Shirt (misc colors, white, red, royal blue, waffle weave, navy and black with lettering).....	\$15.00
Denim long sleeve shirts (Ladies M, L, XL Men M, L, XL, & XXL).....	\$20.00
Jackets - (M to XXL- Tan, Navy, Black, Royal Blue) .....	\$35.00
**50th Poster (full color) (20"x 24").....	\$1.00
POW/MIA Flags .....	\$12.00
Golf Towel (24"x16" with ACA Logo) .....	\$8.00
Beer Mugs with logo or lettering "60 years Air Commando" .....	\$10.00

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Grand Total	_____

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## Old Hunan II Building Burns (Formerly "Bacons By The Sea.")



### Blaze was 'suspicious in nature'

By Wendy Victoria  
wendyv@nwfdailynews.com

Mary Esther - An area landmark burned down to a sagging pile of rubble Wednesday.

Formerly Hunan II restaurant, the building on the south side of U. S. Highway 98 dating back to the 1930s has been vacant for more than two years. It was slated to be demolished.

Cash Moore, who owns the five-acre parcel, said that homeless people were "continuously" being run off the land.

An empty oversized beer bottle sat on a patio table.

According to news accounts, the building dated back to 1936. Then known as Bacon's by the Sea, the inn featured a sweeping view of the Santa Rosa Sound.

Local folklore has Gen. Jimmy Doolittle and Gen. Hap Arnold sketching plans of the famous raid on Tokyo on a tablecloth. Actor Gregory Peck also stayed there during the filming of "12 O'clock High" in 1949.

The Bacon family sold the property in 1957, and it went through several owners and business uses before becoming Hunan

II. More than 30 years ago, it came into the hands of a group of local businessmen that included Dale Hull of Crystal Beach.

"We gutted it, worked on it and found all kinds of old paperwork and memorabilia," Hull said. "(The view) just kind of went on and on."

He said that during renovation they discovered a lot of old wooden beams, as well as little "get-away rooms" in the back of the building.

"It was a real popular spot with the military," he said.

The building has been vacant since hurricane Ivan.

.....  
Ed Note: Another 'Ole Watering Hole" gone the way of others. For examples; "Ole Shalimar Club" is now an office complex, Seagull ("Dirty Bird") burned down, the landmark Green Knight is gone and the all night eatery, "Joe and Eddies," has been razed.

In the former O'Club complex, "Connie's Hooch" and the Top Three Building have been razed. "Tis a shame, nothing is sacred anymore."



# MTF 2006 donor's list

*The following list includes the great folks who donated \$17,363 to the McCoskrie Threshold Foundation in 2006. Thanks to their generosity the MTF continues to help the less fortunate. Currently, the main focus is on the needy in Honduras.*

Alnwick, Kenneth  
Barrett, E.  
Baumann, Robert  
Bazan, Juan  
Bednekoff, V.G.  
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Britain, H.L.  
Bissell, Anthony  
Bowman, Pete  
Busby Family Trust\*  
Cardenas, Robert  
Carl, William  
Clark, Robert  
Clayton, Gerald  
Clements, Franklin  
Colotta, James  
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Combs, Aaron  
Conran, Philip  
Cook, Peyton  
Cooley, Lonnie  
Crantz, Carl  
Crowther, Gary  
Cullen, Bill  
Cupboard Food Stores  
Delany, Linda  
Doster, Lamar  
Douglas, Edward  
Elliott Revocable Trust  
Eveleigh, Robert  
Flournoy, John  
Flynt, Michael  
Frick, Mary Alice  
Frye, Donald  
Garand, Joseph  
Ginn, William  
Givani, Ernest  
Goodson, Elaine  
Grovdahl, David  
Gummerson, Alfred  
Hall, Gaylord  
Halsey, Woodruff

Hansen, Lester  
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Harrison, Homer  
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Hilpert, A. L.  
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Howard, Thomas  
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Smith, Herman  
Smith, Jeff  
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Swedberg, Chad  
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Tobey, Paul  
Trainor, Robert  
Tully, Richard  
Wallace, Byron  
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Wills, James  
Withuhn, William  
Wood, Richard  
Wright, Richard

\* Indicates a donation of a \$1,000 or more.



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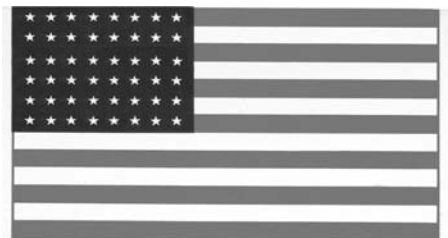
Genuine USAF issue Blood Chits are available. To obtain a Korean War Blood Chit, all you have to do is recruit a new member. If that is too hard for you to handle, a \$15.00 donation to the McCoskrie/Threshold Foundation will achieve the same purpose.

There are three varieties of Blood Chits currently available; The Korean War variety, published in 1951; the Southeast Asia variety published in 1963; and the East European and Middle Eastern published in 1951. For a donation of \$30.00 you can obtain the Southeast Asia variety. And for a \$50.00 donation, you can obtain the East European and Middle Eastern variety. Again, make check payable to the McCoskrie/Threshold Foundation and mail to the address listed below.

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If you are recruiting a new member, make sure you indicate on the application that you recruited the new

member so that Pete can give you credit for your Korean War Blood Chit. Get busy today so you can get your chit together!



*Official Korean War Blood Chit  
1951 issue from survival kits*



# Rossel Report

## ACA WEB SITE CHANGES.

I just updated the Air Commando Association web site at <http://home.earthlink.net/~aircommando1/> with a few new items you may be interested in. There is now a search engine to find what you want easier. I have put the official USAF listing for USAF KIA/MIA SEA from 1960-1975, a separate listing for USAF KIA/MIA Laos from 1960-1975 on the web page. If you disagree with any of this data let me know since AFPC sent them to me. There is a page of some 250 Air commandos/Special Operations patches from SEA which some of you have been asking about. The Air Commando Association quarterly newsletter from 2004 to the present are in their full length. The book on the Air Commando history by Col Bob Gleason is in its full length and you can download it if you want to. Bob Gleason had the book on a disk and gave permission for us to put it on the web page. There is also a search engine to find things.

Gene Rossel

## A LITTLE HISTORY OF T-28 COMING THE WAY OF FINLAND:

*Legendary Finnish war hero Lauri T (Larry Thorne) to get final resting place in Arlington National Cemetery*

There is a Larry Thorne Guild in Finland that honors one of their heroes who fought for the Finland in WWII and for the Americans in the Vietnam War. Major Larry Thorne, US Army, was the first and only Finnish born who was killed during the Vietnam War while inserting SOG troops in a special operations into Laos on 18 Oct 1965. He along with two VNAF (Van Lanh Bui, and Rao Tung Nguyen) were killed in a H-34 when it was returning from the mission in a heavy fog which crashed into a mountainside. All three are buried in Arlington Cemetery.

When Maj Thorne died he had three pictures of T-28s on his body. They were Air Commando birds and one was involved in a combat loss. The Finnish Guild, which has done extensive research into their hometown hero, has tried to find out what significance the T-28 pictures were to Larry Thorne. One member of the Guild, Jari Salo is a Finnish historian of special operations and has contacted a number of our Air Commandos for help. He contacted me in December 2006 with the pictures of the T-28 pictures and wanted to get the history behind tail number 53-8369 which looked like someone threw a grenade into the cockpit since the aircraft was burning from the middle with the tail and engine in tact. I made numerous contacts with the T-28 community and Chris Hobson of the UK who wrote the book "Fixed Wing Aircraft loss in Vietnam" which does a nice job of listing all the US aircraft lost there. The T-28 crews provided an excellent history of some of the things that our T-28 endured in Vietnam. Hobson listed T-28 53-8369 as being destroyed but did not have a pilot's name or the location of the loss for 18 Feb 1964. He looked at his original research and the Arlington National Cemetery webpage and found out that it was Ken Lengfield, our ACA VP, who was shot down flying 53-8369. Ken researched his flying records and found out that it was indeed him flying that aircraft when it was shot down.

The Finnish Guild has a booklet out on Maj Larry Thorne and it shows a T-28 with the tiger teeth painted on the cowlings of the aircraft attacking the enemy. The Guild has put out some excellent booklets on Larry Thorne and now they want to include Ken Lengfield in their findings on the life of their legend. We haven't determined why he had the pictures but I would assume Thorne was in the area when the aircraft (53-8369) went down and was probably disrupting a VC attack against his troops. The Air Commandos are now an integral part of the Larry Thorne Guild in Finland. We would like to thank everyone for contributing to the closure of this historical search.

Larry A. Thorne who was from Finland, fought in WWII with the Fins against Germany, after the war came to the US, joined the US Army, went through basic training, later was commissioned and joined the Special Forces and was killed in Vietnam 18.10.1965 in the crash of a helicopter. Jari Salo is working in Finland to establish a memorial for Larry Thorne who was the only Fin killed in Vietnam. The search for the T-28D was caused by Jari. When Larry Thorne was killed in 1965 he had 3 pictures of T-28Ds one which was a crashed tail number T-28D 53-8369. They were trying to locate the pilot of the T-28D to include him in the memorial. The pilot was Kenneth Lengfield and at first didn't remember the aircraft he crashed in. The picture I sent to you was the one with a fire gutting out the middle section but had the tail and motor standing--looked like someone threw a grenade in it. It took emails from Finland, across the USA, to England and then back to the USA to confirm this--I sent you the emails on this.

Jari Salo, email: [jarisalo@netikka.fi](mailto:jarisalo@netikka.fi)

The following is a story on Larry Thorne (Finish Lauri Torni) sent by Jari Salo

### *Remains of victims of 1965 helicopter crash will be interred simultaneously*

By Asko Temmes

Lauri Torni (1919-1965) was a World War II hero and a recipient of the Mannerheim Cross - the highest award for gallantry on the field - in his native Finland. After the end of hostilities, the fiercely anti-Communist Torni found life at home difficult, and he emigrated to the United States. There he entered the U.S. military and became a decorated and much-revered Vietnam War hero in Special Forces.

Torni, by now better known to his colleagues as Larry Thorne, disappeared after the helicopter he was in went down close to the Laos border in 1965.

At long last, his remains have been formally identified, and he will be laid to rest in the Arlington National Cemetery on June 26 of this year. Torni's remains will be buried in the same coffin with those of three other victims of the same helicopter crash.

When the crash site was finally located four years ago, the U.S. military made inquiries concerning Torni's final resting place. In Finland, hopes were raised for the national hero's possible burial in his home country.

Separating the remains of the crash victims, however, turned out to be an impossible task, which led to a pragmatic decision to organize a joint burial at Arlington.

# Rossel

*Continued from page 26*

The day before the interment, a memorial service will be arranged. Larry A. Thorne, the name by which Torni is remembered in the United States, was a captain and a Green Beret in the U.S. Special Forces. Special Forces will also organize a tribute to their hero.

After Torni's status was changed from "missing in action" to "presumably killed in action", a memorial service was already organized in Helsinki back in 1967.

*Jari Salo is very instrumental in honoring his countrymen and is very well read on all our air commandos/special operations. His email is [jarisalo@netikka.fi](mailto:jarisalo@netikka.fi) and his address is Pellavantie 2.A.5, 60320 Seinäjoki, Suomi, Finland, Europe. His English is excellent. He has a large collection of special operations books and patches and would appreciate if any one would like to send him patches or books on special operations. He wants to come to the US one day and I said when he does he is invited to attend our ACA annual reunion.*

## INFORMATION ON T-28D 53-8855

Dear Gene,

I found the information about Air Commando and VNAF T-28 operations very interesting.

I found the following passage on the Arlington National Cemetery webpage [www.arlingtoncemetery.net/bflukasik.htm](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/bflukasik.htm) that relates to the late Captain B F Lukasik. It mentions that 53-8369 was flown by Lt Col Ken Lengfield on the day it was shot down. This information has only recently been posted on the website and was not available to me when I was preparing the book. Unfortunately the Arlington website does not record who posted this particular piece of information but their webmaster may be able to assist and verify that it came from an authoritative source. I note that Ken Lengfield is the ACA Vice-President so perhaps he can confirm the details? I will have a look through my records at the weekend to see if I can find anything else on the aircraft in the photographs.

2nd Lt Christine Lukasik, granddaughter of Captain Bernard Francis Lukasik who was KIA in Phuong Dinh Province, Vietnam on 19 February 1964 in a T-28D 53-8855 (the 10th so far) when supporting ARVN ground troops in the Province, was given a life long membership in the ACA. Heinie Aderholt arranged for all this to happen including getting then 4th year Cadet Lukasik out of class at the Academy to attend the ACA reunion.

Lieutenant Colonel Ken Lengfield, the man who her grandfather saved from being captured the day before on 18 February 1964, who was flying T-28 53-8369 which got shot down, was introduced. He told the story how Captain Lukasik saved him from capture by the VC which he was attacking with his T-28 before being shot down. Captain Lukasik attacked the VC with his guns and after he ran out of ammunition he then took his T-28 down on the deck using his propellers to drive off the VC. A helicopter finally arrives and picked him and his Vietnamese AF

back seater for another day of fighting. The next day, 19 February 1964, Captain Bernard Francis Lukasik was shot down and killed.

Thank you Gene, for your offer of the ACA Newsletter. I would indeed be interested as I have a great admiration for the Air Commandos and I have always found the A-1 to be an amazing aircraft.

Best wishes and kind regards. If I can be of any further help please do not hesitate to contact me.

Chris Hobson, email: [CHobson.jscsc@defenceacademy.mod.uk](mailto:CHobson.jscsc@defenceacademy.mod.uk)

## DEAR JOE HOLDEN

I found this in Hobson's book for 8369. Does this strike a bell with you or do you know someone who was there at the time.

From the "Vietnam Air Losses USAF, Navy, and Marine Corps Fixed-Wing Aircraft losses in South East Asia 1961-1973" By Chris Hobson Copyrighted 2001 by Midland Publishing.

Reference to Page 8:

18 February 1964

T-28D 53-8369, 1ACS, 34TG, USAF Bien Hoa

2 crew, names unknown (survived)

Another T-28 was hit and caught fire when attacking dug-in VC troops and crashed.

*Gene Rossel*

## REGARDING ALL THE T-28 QUESTIONS AND INTEREST

Perhaps some of this will be helpful. My T-28 shoot down on 10 Sep 63 had a tail number of 38373 (according to a water color that Frank Gorski painted eons ago shortly after the shootdown had this tail number). However; my personal recollection is 38364 because it was Barney Cochran's favorite plane and he was really pissed when I did not bring back my T-28 to Bien Hoa that day. So with that Gene & Joe the photo of 38369 belongs to someone else. Maybe this will help? I do not recall the lightening bolt on the tail but the nose painting was certainly one we had at Soc Trang. I believe about that time; in mid 1963 to early 1964 some of the vietnam Farm Gate T-28's were transferred to Water Pump in Thailand/Laos as we, in Vietnam, were beginning to get some of the later D-models.

Tom Schornak, [schornakt@comcast.net](mailto:schornakt@comcast.net)

## THEY FALL APART IN MID-AIR ARTICLE

Interesting article (pg 21), if I recall correctly they didn't do anything about either the T-28 or B-26 until a B-26 lost a wing under the flares at a night aerial demonstration. I think at perhaps Range 52. Since the audience was the press it was difficult to continue the fiction that the airplanes were not "falling apart". I was leading the flight of T-28s that was supposed to follow the B-26, I saw him make his pass and the big ball of fire but thought he had a hung napalm from his first pass and it had come off on the second, in fact I had already started my dive and fortunately control was able to call it off before I expended any ordnance. It was interesting that a team from North American was there in

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# Rossel

*Continued from page 27*

a very few days with a fix, they obviously knew of the wing weakness. A good friend of mine was killed in a B-26 in November of 1962, I asked a few questions when I got to Vietnam but never got a strait answer, always wondered if it was wing failure because the pilot was a well experienced B-26 pilot.

Joseph Holden, [aceusaf@earthlink.net](mailto:aceusaf@earthlink.net)

## JUST AN ADDED BIT OF HISTORY

I briefed Secretary McNamara and General LeMay when they visited Saigon in the late summer of 1962. (I had recently left Luke as an F-100 squadron commander; travelled all over Vietnam---was in the process of organizing the Air Liaison Officer/Forward Air Controller program and was checking out to fly combat missions with the VNAF and go on ground operations with the ARVN and the incoming U.S. Special Forces teams that were being positioned on the Cambodian and Laotian borders. At that time, I was probably the officer most knowledgeable of the actual current situation in country. I did not believe that we should commit large numbers of U. S. ground forces since we had the full capability to defeat the North Vietnamese with Air Power and a modest number of U.S. advisors from the Navy, Army and Air Force plus logistic support and training for the South Vietnamese forces.

After I finished the formal 2nd Advon (pre 2nd Air Division) briefing, McNamara asked me, "Major Schneider, what do you personally think we should do?" I gave him exactly the same answer as that given to President Johnson by the Joint Chiefs of Staff three years later -- mine Haiphong Harbor, use B-52's to bomb the industrial facilities in North Vietnam and have the U.S. Navy intercept all boat traffic coming down the coast). McNamara didn't answer but just stood up and stalked out of the briefing. I thought Brig Gen Anthis (Commander of 2nd Advon)--a total butt kisser--(and who hated fighter pilots) was going to have a hissy and was never civil to me again during the remainder of my tour in Vietnam. (My personal opinion was definitely not "the party line"). General LeMay gave me a "Thumbs Up" as he exited behind Robert "Strange" McNamara. Obviously, the honest personal opinion didn't hurt my career -- and 10 years and 50,000 deaths later -- it was implemented! Just an added bit of history.

Cheers---MG Carl Schneider, [dukesch@aol.com](mailto:dukesch@aol.com)

## COMMENTS FROM THE FIELD ON BG ANTHIS

I knew Anthis. He was there when I arrived in 1963. He was a complete ass along with Harkins who was the Army Commander. At the higher levels there was absolutely no cooperation between the Air Force and Army during this time; at the peon level we all worked together. All of this changed when General Westmoreland for the Army and General Joe Moore for the Air Force arrived. Anthis and Hawkins were complete disasters. Who ever assigned these two to their positions in Vietnam certainly did not do any favors for the US Forces stationed there.

Joe Kittinger, [ACOLJOEADV@aol.com](mailto:ACOLJOEADV@aol.com)

## ANOTHER RECOLLECTION OF GENERAL ANTHIS

In 1963 I was detachment commander at Soc Trang, we had a mighty force from four to six T-28s, among the pilots was Brooks Morris, Jim Ahman and Bob Gochbauer. We had had a bad day the day before and picked up quite a bit of battle damage and two of the airplanes needed some repair before they could be flown. Around 10 AM Gen Anthis and I guess his deputy, a Col., walked into our operations trailer. We were busy playing parcheesi or something and suddenly someone hollard attention! We all jumped up and Anthis sat down and asked who was in charge, I allowed that I was. Then the General asked me why we were getting hit so much, it kind of took me back but I thought a second and replied " General I think it's because the little bastards are shooting at us so much", things got real quiet. The General looked at me for a few seconds didn't say anything but got up along with the Col. and left the ops trailer.

A side story to that one was that at the same time we were making our strikes there was a B-26 in the pattern, we reported to him that we were picking up a lot of ground fire, Charlie Holden (no relation to me) was the Navigator on the mission and the Pilot was the Detachment Commander, a Col. whose name I can no longer recall, they took a hit and it struck Charlie in the foot, later the Col laughed about it but it seems Charlie told him " you dumb son of a bitch, I told you not to make another pass" I guess when you get shot in the foot you aren't to rational.

Joseph Holden, [aceusaf@earthlink.net](mailto:aceusaf@earthlink.net), General Anthis

## TO ALL GREEN HORNETS & FRIENDS:

Please join me in remembering and mourning the loss of Colonel David K. Sparks, former Commander of the US Air Force 20th Special Operations Squadron (20th SOS) "Green Hornets" (UH-1F and UH-1P Slick and Gunship helicopters) in Vietnam in 1969. Dave died on December 5, 2006, in Athens, AL; he was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Athens, AL where he loved serving many years as a Sunday School teacher. Dave was the finest officer and commander I had the privilege to serve with . . . EVER. Please help me by forwarding appropriate obituary notices to AF Times, Air Force Association (AFA), USAF Helicopter Pilots Association (HPA), Air Commando Association (ACA), SOG Publication, and other appropriate media.

Dave Sparks loved you all, Air Force AND Special Forces, and he bled when we bled. I personally saw him weeping when he learned of the deaths of our members. Dave Sparks was a man's man with a passion for our mission. He stood up for the Green Hornets when the 7th Air Force Director of Logistics (3-star general) denied any responsibility for 20th SOS support . . . Dave paid with his career, but our support was restored!!!

Dave Sparks remembered your many kindnesses and spoke fondly of all who wrote, e-mailed, and telephoned him in his declining years. HE SALUTES YOU ALL FROM ABOVE AS HE SERVES A HIGHER COMMAND. FOR THE COMMANDER

Maurice A. "Maury" Lange, Major, USAFRES (Ret), CCS/Green Hornets, '69-'70. email: [mal41@earthlink.net](mailto:mal41@earthlink.net)

# Rossel

*Continued from page 28*

## OUR AUSSIE MEMBER IN AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL

Dear Gene, I have spoken to Marge and she reported that Ron Workman has had another two stents inserted yesterday (Monday, 22nd January 2007), he is feeling a little rough at this stage. Regards, Mal Rose, "Roseind" mro73819@bigpond.net.au

Spoke with Ron last night. Last week he had two stints in the heart and goes back for the third next Monday. Seems quite confident that it will all be OK. He had 95% blockage to the heart.

I guess AFPC are still on holidays. They did previously say to call back in February I seem to recall. I find that research on the T-28, and any such information, quite fascinating.

An old friend of mine, Don Rudkin (RAAF), was with the 619th Tactical Control Squadron in 68/69 as a Tactical Weapons Controller. His Bronze Star disappeared into the RAAF system. If I get together the details, do you think you could resubmit for him? Regards, Garry Cooper. Email: tamale35@bigpond.net.au

## DEAR MR LATTIN, MR FIELDS, AND MR ROSSEL,

First my wife and I would like to thank for your heroic efforts to fight for our freedom in Vietnam, and putting together the story of the web.

My name is (Peter) duong pho. I live in Tampa Bay area of FL. My Dad, Trinh Thinh Pho, who was a captain of the ARVN, he was an intelligent officer of the 22nd ARVN army division, he was the only Vietnamese who was killed in action together with 4 American officers in the downed Shawnee in Dakrede, in the vicinity of Ban Me Thuot, on July 15th, 1962. I was 12 years old at the time. I learned that there was 1 American survivor in the crash.

Is it possible that I can learn more about the story? Also my mom (78), my brothers, sisters, and I would like to know the names/addresses of the 5 American heroes to honor them. If you know, please help us. Very sincere, Peter Pho, email: pkpho2002@yahoo.com

## CH-1 DOWNED ON JULY 15, 1962

Many thanks for the information that you sent. Yes, this information is absolutely accurate, because it matches the story my Mom was told right after my Dad got KIA. Thanks a million, If you can help to locate the families of the people that died on that mission, we will be very appreciated. I will talk to my Mom and then put together information that I know about my Dad, and may be some pictures of the downed chopper. Sincerely,

Peter Pho, email: pkpho2002@yahoo.com

## BIRD DOG FLIES PAST 10,000 HOUR MARK

By 1LT Mack D. Gooding

TAY NINH - A 17-year-old O-1 Bird Dog, a light observation airplane, recently broke the usual mark of 10,000 air hours and still has

'spirit' for the Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) attached to the 1st Brigade.

Captain Walter Lehman of Phoenix, who flew the Bird Dog past the milestone, gave an explanation of what this meant. He stated, "If you were to drive your car around the world thirty times or 750,000 miles this would be the amount of wear and tear that this aircraft has been through."

Within the 1st Brigade, the U.S. Air Force TACP uses this aircraft for finding and marking positions for air strikes.

Major Everett E. Prichard of Waycross, Ga., who serves as liaison officer of the TACP at Tay Ninh West airfield commented, "If we had a Hall of Fame for airplanes I feel sure this particular Bird Dog would be right there."

The O-1 Bird Dogs presently assigned to the 1st Brigade TACP are due to be supplemented with several new, twin engine OV-10s later this month. "Even though we're getting in new OV-10s, the O-1 Bird Dog is a great little airplane," said Prichard. "I hope the OV-10s can stand the test of time as well as the Bird Dog has."

## RUSSIAN SU-30MK FIGHTER AIRCRAFT

Gene, The threat isn't the airplane. An undetected F-22 could knock it down from a hundred miles away. The problem is any moron politician in Washington who would require an ID pass to determine the nationality of the pilot. If we fight the Chinese we should melt these airplanes where they sit. IMHO

Jim Roper, jimroper@ropersbooks.com

## DEAR GENE:

Wow what a great Xmas letter, sounded like you folks are really enjoying life. I plan to be at the reunion next year, last year was missed because I took my wife to the 60th Colton High School reunion in San Bernardino.

We have been in Colbert, WA for the past year working on remodeling my daughter's garage. We now have it very livable. George had a bad time last March with kidney failure and came back to Spokane because the VA hospital here treats him real good. He did not like the Parker, AR hospital-any way our address here is 1505 W. Pinto Rd, Colbert, WA 99005.

It was great to hear from you and Heinie--our senior years are creeping up on us.

I tried to find a baseball cap with USN, Army Air Corps and USAF-Retired, but didn't get any help at the Fairchild AFB BX.

George & Laura McNamara

1505 W. Pinto Rd, Colbert, WA 99005

## REMEMBERING SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING

Just a note; My wife (Thelma E. Nolen) and I, both USAF veterans were stationed at Hurlburt Fld, FL. from 1985-1994. We witnessed many changes in the Special Operations Wing, 1st SOW-16th SOW. We miss the unit dearly, it was a fond and proud time of service for us.

James W. Nolen, email: jamesnolen@yahoo.com

# Rossel

*Continued from page 29*

## LOOKING FOR BACKGROUND ON C-123

During my AF C-130 flight engineer career, I was privileged to attend the Combat Talon course on two separate occasions. Unfortunately, my commander killed the first assignment, and my wife killed my security clearance for the second.

However, at the moment I am a volunteer crewmember on one of the few airworthy C-123K's in the country. It is privately owned, and only flies to airshows to honor all the veterans who crewed, maintained, and "rode in the back" of the C-123. The serial number is 54-0592, and was assigned to the 19th ACS. According to the AF Historical Group at Maxwell AFB, this squadron earned a NAVY Presidential Unit Citation for Khe Sahn.

The owner would like a little background on some of the missions flown in this bird, as well as some of the bases it was assigned. Feel free to e-mail me at [arplmech@earthlink.net](mailto:arplmech@earthlink.net), and if interested, I can send you a list of shows we are scheduled to appear (all in the Atlantic side of the country).

Michael Beasley, email: [arplmech@earthlink.net](mailto:arplmech@earthlink.net)

## JUST CHECKING IN

Great web site...I was a weapons specialist with the 602 FCS from 1966-67. Michael J Hall, email: [19canyon@sbcglobal.net](mailto:19canyon@sbcglobal.net)

## LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ON MCVEY

Anybody know of a Patrick F McVey, USAF who served in MACV-SOG 67-68, rank unknown. Received The Purple Heart. That's all the info I have.

Jim Burns, email: [eastbayjim@earthlink.net](mailto:eastbayjim@earthlink.net), ACA Member-Yes

## WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE ACA NEWSLETTER

I am Pete Smiths wife. I have recently moved back to Florida and would still like to receive his newsletter. Pete passed away 20 Aug 2005. My address is; 816 Ridgewood Cove, Niceville, FL 32578, Retta J. Smith, email: [PNSmith3623@aol.com](mailto:PNSmith3623@aol.com)

## MANY GREAT STORIES CAME OUT OF VIETNAM

As editor of the Central California Chapter #6105 AUSA I was doing research for information to include in the Newsletter. This site was suggested as a good source. There is a lot of information here that I would like to use if possible. Of interest right now is Bill Lair and Site 85. I read Chapter 6 of Richard Secord's book and found it very interesting. I am looking for the book now.

There are so many great stories that came out of Vietnam, especially for anyone that was not there and only has the news media for a source.

Thank you for making this site available.

James M Windsor, email: [j\\_windsor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j_windsor@sbcglobal.net)

## CHECKING IN

Danny Ciolek, email: [patriot75g3@verizon.net](mailto:patriot75g3@verizon.net), Indiana

I was a crew chief MH-53, 1983-1987, 20th SOS  
ACA Member - no

## VISITING THE WEBSITE

Comments: Good job Gene

Jim Alberts, email: [azreddog1@cox.net](mailto:azreddog1@cox.net), ACA Member - yes

## JUST CHECKING IN

Excellent site!

Chris, email: [admin@shadowspear.com](mailto:admin@shadowspear.com), ACA Member - yes  
ShadowSpear Special Operations NOVA,  
website: [www.shadowspear.com](http://www.shadowspear.com).

## LOOKING FOR UNIT PATCHES

I was looking for unit patches and found bx/also looking for telephone number for ACA (found it)

George L Jennings, email: [george19acs@netzero.com](mailto:george19acs@netzero.com), ACA Member-yes

## NEED INFORMATION ON THE ARMY AIR CORPS

My Great Uncle Julius Yackie was on a glider in April 1944 with two others. Their tow rope broke and the glider crashed. The three cleared a landing for future Allied forces and then tried to go up the Chindwin river to escape. They were captured and taken to the Rangoon prison. Julius was sick and the Japanese refused him medicine and food. They said he was going to die anyway. He did die and was buried in the prison cemetery.

In 1946, they tried to fly Julius's body home, along with other buried at Rangoon. The 10th Air Force C-47B, tail No. 43-48308, crashed on 17 May 1946 after leaving Rangoon, Burma.

I am trying to get as much information on the Army Air Corps. Along with Julius Yackie, my Grandfather Wenzel Yackie and Great Uncle Ted Yackie were in the Army Air Corps. Grandpa switched to the Air Force and made a career of it. He served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. I am still very proud of him.

Thanks for your time! I would love to buy a patch if they are sold.  
J. Taylor, email: [jbtaylor@earthlink.net](mailto:jbtaylor@earthlink.net), San Diego

## CHECKING OUT THE ACA WEBSITE

I was a tower controller in 67-68 at Hurlburt and RAPCON controller at NKP 68-70. Enjoyed the site. Also, member of TLC Brotherhood.  
Phil Weiler, email: [philylr@comcast.net](mailto:philylr@comcast.net), North Port, Florida

## GREAT WEBSITE

Hi Guy's! I am the Vice-Chairman of the Association of Belgian Airfield Defence Units and Air Commando's. You have a great site. This is a well done job. Keep up the great work.

The friends from Belgium - Europe. Please visit our website: [www.uda.be](http://www.uda.be)

JP Van Doorselaer, [vve.uda@skynet.be](mailto:vve.uda@skynet.be),

Vereniging der V.V.E. en Air Commando's, Belgium - Europe

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# Rossel

*Continued from page 30*

## MY TWO CENTS

Bat 21- The Bat-21 movie has some good flying scenes in it, but the story is changed to reflect the media view of the murderous Yankee imperialist Air Pirates (all of us). As I recall, they drag out a civilian child with napalm scars on her back. Sheese! I think most FACs had some hand in a SAR during their tour. On a lousy day in July 1971, I watched Jolly 54 vanish into the trees. Later I met Chuck McGrath, a crew chief aboard that chopper. In fact, he and one of the PJs and Bill Forsythe at Project Full Accounting helped me with the large mosaic. Bill sent SAR logs where I read my own words (with the hair-raising effect of a sudden trip back to that moment) "Jolly 54 is on the ground, upside down." Chuck retired and worked for J-6 at Pentagon. He set up the original Joint Electronic Library. Another time I'll tell a funny story about Chuck and his library.

Blaster Shelton's boys in SOG gave FACs a SAR opportunity almost every day. Some were easier than others, but the extreme stress of those adventures have matched nothing I have seen since. So the Hollywood moviemakers are clueless at best. If they can't sell it to a 15 year old, they don't make it. I don't care for cartoons and movies (most, today) which caricaturize actors and action to the cartoon level. I don't think Hollywood could actually pull off the true drama, the life-or-death second-by-second sudden-rush-of cold-shit-to-the-heart experiences that aged all of us involved in real SARs.

Jim Roper, email: jimroper@ropersbooks.com

## NOTE ON MAJ DON NICHOLS

I got a call from SOCOM to get a bio of Maj Don Nichols, who is in the ACA HOF. Tom Bradley sent me the HOF writeup and I sent it to Angelia Vazquez and asked for a copy of whatever they writeup. He has quite a bio. I will have something for the next paper. Angelia Vazquez ,813-826-4431, email angelia.vazquez@socom.mil  
Gene Rossel

## KITTINGER TO SPEAK AT FIRST FLIGHT DINNER

Kittinger, a retired Air Force colonel, will speak at the annual First Flight anniversary dinner in the National Museum of the United States Air Force.

The event is co-sponsored by two nonprofit groups, Aviation Trail Inc. and the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

The \$50-a-plate event features a traditional Wright family Christmas dinner, a book signing by local aviation photographer Dan Patterson, and music by the Air Force Band of Flight.

He's also scheduled to take place in the annual wreath-laying ceremony at 10 a.m. at the Wright Brothers Memorial, atop Wright Hill, at Ohio 444 and Kauffman Avenue on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

A 1997 aviation hall of fame enshrinee, Kittinger made the world's highest free-fall parachute jump in 1960 a record he still holds in support of Air Force research. He later flew combat missions over North Vietnam and was shot down and held as a prisoner of war in Hanoi. In 1984, he became the first person to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a balloon.

## Two other aviation heritage events are also scheduled:

The National Park Service will unveil a 1910 Wright "B" Flyer flight simulator exhibit at its Huffman Prairie Interpretive Center. The center is adjacent to the Wright Brothers Memorial, and the event will follow the wreath-laying.

The Park Service will also hold a 2 p.m. ribbon-cutting ceremony for a newly restored house at 26 S. Williams St., next to the Wright Cycle Co. in the Wright-Dunbar Village.

The restoration will provide office space for the staff of Aviation Heritage Foundation Inc. and will fill a gap in the historic streetscape between the Wright brothers' restored bicycle shop and 30 S. Williams, a similarly restored house where the National Park Service has its offices.

Contact this reporter at (937) 225-2390 or [tgaffney@DaytonDailyNews.com](mailto:tgaffney@DaytonDailyNews.com).

Eugene D. Rossel

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ACA Home Page Web site: [www.specialoperations.net](http://www.specialoperations.net)

## Humor - Mrs. Goodnest...

A mom was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school. He didn't want his mother to walk with him. She wanted to give him the feeling that he had some independence but yet know that he was safe.

So she had an idea of how to handle it. She asked a neighbor, Mrs. Goodnest, if she would please follow him to school in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her.

Mrs. Goodnest said that since she was up early with her toddler anyway, it would be a good way for them to get some exercise as well, so she agreed.

The next school day, Mrs. Goodnest and her little girl, Marcy, set out following behind Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbor boy he knew. She did this for the whole week.

As the boys walked and chatted, kicking stones and twigs, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week. Finally he said to Timmy, "Have you noticed that lady following us to school all week? Do you know her?"

Timmy nonchalantly replied, "Yeah, I know who she is".

The friend said, "Well, who is she?"

"That's just Shirley Goodnest", Timmy replied, "and her daughter Marcy".

"Shirley Goodnest? Who the heck is she and why is she following us?"

"Well", Timmy explained, "every night my Mom makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life', so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!"

*May Shirley Goodnest and Marcy be with you today, and always*

*Kindly submitted by ACA member Fred Nowak*



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**February 2007**

## President's Corner

By Felix "Sam" Sambogna

50 of Charlie's' family and friends paid their final respect. What a fitting final resting place for our friend – among many other warriors from wars past.

We have a new VP, Ken Lengfield, a lifetime member with many air commando assignments including flying the AT-28 and the A-1. Ken replaced Dick Geron who has served in so many capacities in the ACA and MTF. Much more about Dick later. We also have appointed 2/Lt Christine Lukasik as our Board Representative to the 1st SOW. Christine, a recent graduate of the AF Academy, is an intelligence officer in the wing. She is the granddaughter of Dee and Robby Roberson and the granddaughter of Capt Lukasik who was killed in VN while on a T-28 mission. He received the AF Cross for his actions, and a street on Hurlburt is named after him. We welcome Christine and intend to use her talents when she is not deployed.

In the December newsletter, Hap complimented the various folks who keep our association functioning, except he left out one very important, dedicated person – himself. For years Hap has done so many things. In addition to manning the office; keeping records; writing

columns; tending to our building; planning social events; organizing and executing the pick up, labeling, and mailing of our newsletter; helping members to verify their service in Vietnam/Laos; he does numerous other things. He certainly is the key player in this successful operation. Once again he organized our Christmas social that was attended by about 100 folks. As usual, it was fun to eat, drink, and be merry with our friends. We presented gifts to the following:

- David Krebs Jr., owner of Ariel Seafood. David and his dad have donated fish for our reunion fish fry for many years. Their generosity and support of the ACA is outstanding. David is an honorary member of the ACA.

- Gloria Doster: Gloria puts the many inputs we get for the newsletter into electronic format on her home computer. She is a great typist and PC operator and eagerly assists us with each newsletter.

- Joyce Harrington: In addition to running our country store, Joyce helps in every social function. She is so dedicated to the ACA.

Our goals for 2007 are simple: continue to refine many of our administrative and financial

procedures, produce an interesting newsletter, do our best to have a great reunion, recruit and support our membership, and recognize folks who have made special contributions to special operations and the ACA.

We have a new year ahead of us, full of opportunities and challenges. We (the membership) can sit still and just read the newsletter, or we can get involved.

- Instead of having to scramble to get Board members we should have a waiting list of eager volunteers.

- We should take the initiative and recommend deserving folks for the Hall of Fame.

- Each of us should recruit a new member.

- The annual reunion banquet hall should be filled to capacity. All the events should be well attended.

- We should continue to support the humanitarian efforts of the McCoskrie Threshold Foundation, not just with funds, but also with volunteer time.

And finally, lets all pray for our country and the warriors involved in the war on terror – this war must be won.

Lets have a great 2007.

Cheers,  
Sam

It is hard to believe that we are now in the year 2007. Except for the fact that we lost some of our very precious members to Air Commando Heaven, 2006 was a great year for our association. The ACA is healthy, our building gets better and better, the air commando spirit is alive and well, and we have a great relationship with the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt where many of us began our career in special operations. 1st SOW Command Chief, CMSgt Todd Small, has left Hurlburt Field. He has been a great friend and asset to the ACA, and we will miss him. He has helped us in many ways. We wish him continued success in all future endeavors.

Even though much has been written about the passing of Charlie Jones, I feel compelled to mention the wonderful service during his internment at the Barrancas National Cemetery, Pensacola Naval Air Station. On a very cold and windy day over