

Association President's Message:

January, 2018

Greetings fellow gunshippers. Happy, Healthy & Prosperous New Year. I pray that 2018 will be an awesome year for all.

The Association's Board is at full-power now, focused on the detailed planning for the October 2018 reunion in Tucson, AZ. Thank you to all the attendees of last year's Dayton reunion for completing the post reunion "survey forms". Secretary Ralph Lefarth did a superb job of summarizing your comments & feedback, & all that information will go into future planning. When can you register for the Tucson reunion? The IT Committee is quickly implementing an easier on-line registration process. You will be able to go to the Quartermaster's Page on the Association's Web site, & complete the registration process. Our Web site required an upgrade, & then some thorough testing. This should be completed by end-of-January. You can now make your reservations at the Double-Tree Hilton at the Airport. -- Call the hotel directly at 520-225-0800 or 800-222-TREE [8733] or go to

<http://group.doubletree.com/AC119GunshipAssn>

New Active-Duty Shadows!! This is HOT news. Chief (Ret.) William Petrie passed to me an email from the Duty Officer (DO) from a NEW AC-130J squadron formed under 1 SOW at Hurlburt. Capt. Chris Zenk asked us to provide detailed information regarding the components of the 17th SOS Shadow Patch. Capt. Zenk is the DO of the new 73rd SOS gunship unit known "Shadows", & they are in process of creating the unit's patch. As of this writing, I have not heard of the patch being finalized, but it WILL have the skull & horse carried from the AC-119J test unit "Ghostriders", & it will have our black-capped & hatted Shadow. Who know what evil lurks in the desert sand? (I just made that up).

Donation to USO: Ron Julian received a heart-felt thank you letter from the USO, Southern OH group, for the wonderful generosity of the AC-119 Organization! This is a result of the money donated by the Dayton Reunion attendees last Oct. Al Heuss' AC-119 flag holder, table center pieces, were taken home by a person seated at the table based on their donation. The Holiday Inn matched us dollar-for-dollar, & the USO was able to provide a much warmer & caring effort to airmen not home for the holiday season. Well done my brothers!

Happy Valley – Phan Rang AFB – Facebook Page: I joined this FB page & find it very interesting. Lot of history, pictures, & the stories range from long before AC-119s arrived. They have nearly 1400 members. Their group is planning another reunion, this year Oct. 11, 2018, in Nashville, TN the same week of our Association's reunion in Tucson.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Drzyzga

President, 2016-2018