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## **250 Years Strong – A Night to Remember**



On **November 10, 2025**, the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum hosted a solemn and celebratory gathering at the Lyon Air Museum to mark the **250th birthday of the United States Marine Corps** — a night of tradition, tribute, and community.

The evening featured Marines (past and present), museum supporters, board members, aviation enthusiasts, and civic leaders dressed in formal attire. The centerpiece of the evening was the time-honored **cake-cutting ceremony**, highlighted by the presence of former California Governor Pete Wilson, the oldest Marine present, who joined in honoring the enduring legacy of the Corps.

In a special moment of remembrance and gratitude, FLAM presented an honorary award — in memory of veteran, entrepreneur, and longtime supporter Frederick W. Smith — to his daughter, Stacey Rokas. The award recognized Mr. Smith's many contributions to Marine aviation heritage and his lasting impact on aviation philanthropy and support for the veteran community.

vision, with more than 40 historic aircraft in our collection and a new museum building underway at Irvine's Great Park, the birthday event underscored our commitment to preserving Marine aviation history and inspiring future generations.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who attended, supported, or helped bring this meaningful evening to life. Your loyalty, generosity, and shared respect for Marine heritage continue to drive us forward.

**Semper Fidelis — here's to the future, rooted in honor, courage, and commitment.**



[VIEW A VIDEO FROM THE GROUNDBREAKING HERE](#)

## Leatherneck Aviation Museum to Life



Thanks to your incredible generosity, the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum is one step closer to becoming a reality. Your commitment ensures that the bravery, sacrifices, and achievements of Marine Corps aviators will continue to be honored and remembered for generations to come.

### Here's how your support is already making an impact:

- **Preserving rare aviation artifacts**—including historic aircraft like *Lady Ace*.
- **Advancing the design and development** of our state-of-the-art museum at the Great Park in Irvine.
- **Inspiring future generations** through powerful stories of courage, innovation, and service.

As we prepare to open the doors to the new museum, we invite you to deepen your connection by becoming a member. Our membership plans offer unique benefits for aviation enthusiasts, families, veterans, and supporters alike.

When you join, you become part of a dedicated community committed to preserving the proud legacy of U.S. Marine Corps aviation and sharing its vital role in defending America's freedoms.

**Thank you for helping us honor the past and inspire the future.**



## FLYING LEATHERNECK AVIATION MUSEUM MEMBERSHIPS

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS	FIRST LIEUTENANT	MAJOR	COLONEL	GENERAL
FREE ADMISSION	✓	✓	✓	✓
DISCOUNTS AT MUSEUM STORE	✓	✓	✓	✓
SUBSCRIPTION TO MUSEUM NEWSLETTER AND UPDATES	✓	✓	✓	✓
FREE ADMISSION FOR YOUR FAMILY (2 ADULTS, UP TO 4 CHILDREN)		✓	✓	✓
RECOGNITION IN MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS		✓	✓	✓
INVITATIONS TO EXCLUSIVE MUSEUM EVENTS			✓	✓
SPECIAL DISCOUNTS AND VIP ACCESS TO MUSEUM EVENTS/TOURS				✓
NOV. 10 FOUNDATION MARINE CORP BIRTHDAY TICKET				✓
BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR FOR 8 ONCE A YEAR & MORE!				✓

## From Vet to Executive: Meet Grant Williams, FLAM’s Very Own Vice President of Operations

The Orange County Business Journal recently featured Grant Williams in its “From Vet to Executive” series, spotlighting how his Marine Corps service shaped a distinguished career in business and nonprofit leadership. In the article, Williams reflects on lessons learned in the Marines — accountability, teamwork, and dedication — and how

As Vice President of Operations for the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum's foundation, he is playing a central role in raising funds, managing operations, and helping bring the new museum to life at the Great Park in Irvine.

His story is a powerful reminder that the discipline, leadership, and commitment forged in uniform continue to guide veterans long after they leave active duty — and can create significant impact in business and community institutions.



[READ MORE HERE](#)

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## **Toys for Tots at Hangar 297 — This Saturday!**



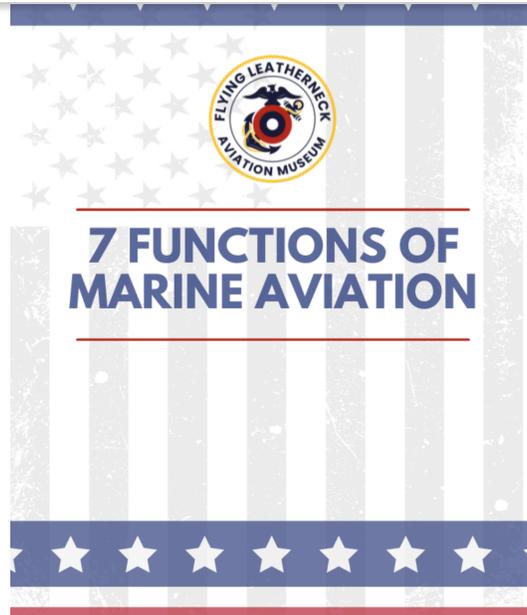
Join us **Saturday, December 6th, from 10 AM to 3 PM** at **Hangar 297** for our annual **Toys for Tots** event! We invite our community to help make the holidays brighter for children in need by bringing a **new, unwrapped toy** for donation. While the hangar will not be open to the public for safety reasons, the **hangar doors will be open** for guests to enjoy a special peek at several aircraft from our collection.

The event will also feature **live entertainment** and a selection of **food and beverage vendors**, making it a festive and meaningful way to support an important cause.

We hope to see you there as we join together to lift spirits and give back this holiday season!

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## Spotlight on the Assault Support one of the Seven Functions of Marine Aviation



The third in the series of articles that delve into the reason the United States Marine Corps Aviation exists, and building on “The Seven Functions of Marine Aviation” generic article featured at the beginning of this series, this month the Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum Newsletter, will provide a snapshot into **Assault Support (AS)**.

**Assault Support (AS)**, as it relates to being a foundational element of the Seven Functions of Marine Aviation, supports the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) by enabling the rapid airlift of personnel, supplies, and equipment into or within the battle space via rotary wing, fixed wing, or tilt rotor aircraft inherent to the Air Combat Element (ACE) of the MAGTF.

Agility on the battlefield is a key to success and the tactical mobility to move ground forces, logistics, and weapons by air gives the MAGTF Commander the decisive capability to concentrate power at decisive points using speed and surprise. AS integrates with the other Functions of Marine Aviation to enhance the overall success of integrated MAGTF operations to gain and maintain tactical and operational momentum.

AS encompasses the following key operations:

- Combat Assault Transport of personnel and equipment for rapid force deployment and obstacle bypass, both inter-theater and intra-theater, giving the MAGTF Commander regional and global freedom of movement.
- Air delivery, aerial refueling, air evacuation, and Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP).
- Air logistical support and battlefield illumination to sustain MAGTF forces.

categories are, Light, Medium, and Heavy. The flexibility of the KC-130 aircraft is a separate category. Presently, the Marine Corps Aviation assets that conduct AS operations include, but are not limited to:

#### UH-1Y "Venom"

The "Venom" is a light utility helicopter that can conduct command and control, limited troop movement, and logistics support within the AS Function. Given the new significantly upgraded power package and a more efficient 4-bladed rotor system than earlier versions of the venerable UH-1 series of "Hueys," the "Venom" has a lift capability that virtually equals some of the old medium lift platforms from the past.

#### MV-22B Osprey

The "Osprey" is a medium lift tiltrotor aircraft, utilizing revolutionary technology to match the speed and distance normally associated with fixed wing transport aircraft but retains the low altitude, low speed, and hovering capability of a traditional helicopter. It is the primary AS platform for transporting troops, equipment, and supplies from ships to land bases into an objective area. The speed and range (intra-theater given the inherent capability to receive aerial refueling) of the "Osprey" allow for rapid insertion and extraction over much longer distances relative to traditional helicopters like the CH-46E which it replaced.

#### CH-54E/K Super/King Stallion

The 53 is the premier heavy lift helicopter in use throughout the world by any military force. It is used for transporting large loads such as vehicles, artillery, and bulk supplies from amphibious shipping to inland landing zones. Its inherent in-flight refueling capability significantly extends the distances normally associated by rotary wing platforms.

#### KC-130J "Hercules"

The "Herc" is the largest AS platform in the Marine Corps aviation inventory. As a transport aircraft, it provides air delivery, aerial refueling of other Marine Corps and joint force aviation assets, and logistics support to AS operations, including delivering personnel and cargo by airdrop.

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## Do you have a special connection to a Marine Aircraft? Your support can help!

Each of our aircraft has a rich history and a story to tell. By supporting our restoration efforts, you contribute to preserving these flying legends for future generations. Your donation helps cover the costs of materials, labor, and expertise required to bring these historic aircraft back to their former glory.

Your support ensures that these iconic aircraft's legacy lives on. Together, we can honor the past and inspire the future.

Click below to search our inventory of 34 aircraft and make your donation for restoration today!

[CHECK OUT THE AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE FOR SUPPORT](#)

## Have you Become a Member Yet?

As we approach our grand opening in 2027, we invite you to join our Membership program. This exclusive group



role in shaping the future of the museum and preserving the storied legacy of Marine Corps aviation. Get exclusive access, discounts and more!

LEARN MORE

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## You Won't Want to Miss....

Each month you'll discover the latest milestones we've achieved, meet some of the dedicated individuals making this vision a reality, and get a glimpse of what to expect when we open our doors. Your support and enthusiasm fuel our journey, and we can't wait to share more with you each step of the way.

Thank you for being a valued part of our community. Stay tuned for exciting news and exclusive previews!



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