

# Officer Donald John “Jocko” Campbell, Jr. (1948-2026)

Jocko was born on May 14, 1948 to Air Force General Donald John and Elizabeth “Bettie” Campbell, Sr. He attended Oak Hills High School, graduating in 1966. He then attended the University of Cincinnati from 1966 to 1970, majoring in History and minoring in Social Studies.

On July 10, 1970, Jocko joined the United States Army. His basic training was in Fort Polk, Louisiana and Primary Flight Training in Fort Wolters, Texas and Fort Rucker, Alabama. He then shipped out to the Vietnam War with call sign, “Soup,” where the life expectancy of a helicopter pilot was between 11 and 30 days. Within seven months, he earned a dozen medals, including two Bronze Stars with Valor Device. Toward the end of the conflict, the Army released him as part of an “Early Out Program” due to rapid withdrawal of U.S. forces. He was honorably discharged as a Warrant Officer 1 (a foundational, highly specialized technical expert and combat leader appointed by the Secretary of the Army) on March 3, 1972.

Jocko then joined the United States Marshall Service as a GS-4 from June to October 1972.



He joined the Cincinnati Police Division in its 58<sup>th</sup> Recruit Class on October 29, 1972. He was promoted to Patrolman on February 25, 1973, issued Badge 94, and assigned to District 1 (310 Lincoln Park Drive). A year later, Patrolman Campbell was rotated to District 3 (3201 Warsaw Avenue). On February 1, 1976, he transferred back to District 1. He was transferred to District 5 on May 13, 1984.

In April 1986, the new AH-64 Apache attack helicopter was introduced to the U.S. Army, and the Army came calling for Officer Campbell to train pilots in how to fly it. Officer Campbell requested a year’s leave of absence without pay to accept a position as a civilian GS-12, Chief Warrant Officer-Helicopter Pilot as a flight instructor for the United States Army Reserves, 83<sup>rd</sup> Army Command in Columbus. When his leave of absence expired, Officer Campbell resigned from the Police Division on June 14, 1987 with 15 years of law enforcement service and 16 letters of appreciation and/or commendation.

Chief Warrant Officer Campbell transferred in 1996 to the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 229<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment at Fort Knox, the “Flying Tigers.” He and his wife took up residence in Elizabethtown. The Flying Tigers were called up for active duty in Bosnia, and he served there from August 15, 1999 to March 24, 2000. He then went back to teaching at Fort Knox. He was activated again, this time in Iraq, from January to October 2004 where he flew another 600 combat hours, arguably as well or better than other pilots half his age. He again returned to Fort Knox. By then, a legend with his former peers in the Police Division, Sergeant Paul Vogelpohl began collecting a “buck for Jocko’s party,” and in November, General and Mrs. Campbell, many cops, family, and even childhood friends attended the celebration.



At the end of his military career, his list of awards and medals included the aforementioned Bronze Medals, an Army Commendation Medal, twenty Air Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, five Army Reserve Components Achievement Medals, and many lesser awards.



Officer Campbell was admitted into homecare hospice near the beginning of 2026. He died at 12:25 p.m. on February 10, 2026, at the age of 77.

He was predeceased by his parents, Air Force Brigadier General Donald J. Campbell, Sr. and Elizabeth Campbell, and brother-in-law, Cincinnati Police Officer Thomas J. McAlpin, III. Police Officer/Chief Warrant Officer Campbell is survived by his wife of 55 years, Patricia Ann (McAlpin) Campbell; children, Alison and Donald John “DJ” (Kelsey) Campbell, III; grandchildren, Alyssa, Eli, Landon, and Lilly; great-grandchildren Kainen and Kyryn; and brothers, United States Navy Captain (and fighter pilot) Craig Campbell, United States Air Force Lieutenant Colonel (and fighter pilot) Christopher Campbell, and Mark Campbell.

A visitation will be held from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Saturday, February 21, 2026 at the Norman Chapel in Spring Grove Cemetery at 4521 Spring Grove Avenue. A funeral service will be held there at 10 a.m. and burial follows at 11 a.m. The family invites friends to a life celebration from 12 to 4 p.m. at Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6428 at 140 Main Street in Addyston.

The family requests memorials be sent to the [Greater Cincinnati Police Museum](#), 201 Reading Road, Suite 201, Cincinnati OH, 45202 or [Tunnel to Towers](#) Foundation.