



THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78
NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

THE LTC FRANK J. DALLAS CHAPTER

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 7

SEPTEMBER 2012



HORSE SOLDIERS

TASK FORCE DAGGER
ODA -595
AFGHANISTAN - OCTOBER 2001



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Cowboys

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Special Forces
in Vietnam

SOAR XXXVI

2nd Annual Green
Berets Shooters Cup



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Funding for publication and printing
of the Special Forces 78 Sentinel
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THE PRESIDENTS PAGE

PRESIDENTS COLUMN

September 2012



Lonny Holmes
President SFA 78

Aaron Anderson, Chapter 78 member and Founder and Former CEO of the Green Beret Foundation, brought his son, Atticus, to the August meeting. Atticus was the youngest potential 'new' Green Beret present at two months of age. Congratulations Aaron.

The chapter is rapidly moving to the years climax with the Green Beret Shooters Cup less than two months away and the Annual Christmas Dinner rescheduled for December 22. Please note in your calendar the change of the date for the Annual Christmas Dinner. The Newport Beach Christmas Yacht Parade was also rescheduled. Both of these chapter events are big projects and require the work and thoughts of many members. If you are called to help please do!

Presently the "Shooters Cup" registration is nearing its end with potentially twenty law enforcement and three to four military teams competing. To give some perspective I will name the teams who will finish registration soon: the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles County Sheriff, Los Angeles County District Attorney, Long Beach Police, San Diego Police, FBI, California Highway Patrol, Anaheim Police, and the California Prison Guards IMTT. We are also looking at I.C.E., Border Patrol, Riverside Sheriff, and the U.S. Marshals. Many of these departments are sending more than one team, for example, the L.A.P.D. will send 4 teams and the L.A. County Sheriff will send 2 teams. We also will have the U.S. Coast Guard MSST Team return and the Green Berets from the Naval Academy Post Graduate Program in Monterey, CA. **Steve Cowan** is also working with several active duty Special Forces Teams (Green Berets) to enter the competition, again possibly 2 to 3 teams. Remember the R.O.T.C. Cadets will field three teams this year plus one R.O.T.C. Cadre Team. They will shoot on Friday, October 12, 2012 and be awarded their trophy and prizes on Saturday along with the 'Professionals.' (Continued on page 2)



Atticus Anderson at Chapter 78 meeting on his 2 month birthday, son of Aaron Anderson, Green Beret Foundation Founder and former CEO



MACV-SOG 1-0 (Team Delaware) guy still working, only now in Afghanistan and supporting the Green Beret Shooters Cup.



THE PRESIDENTS PAGE

(Continued from page 1)

Many corporations have signed on and donated their products and funds to support team registration and support for the Green Beret Foundation. In dollars this support is currently about \$20,000 and will grow by event time.

August brings to an end of our work at local gun shows to sell our product to generate revenue for the event and the G.B. Foundation. We will however have a booth at the "Shooters Cup" to complete our product sales. This year we will also have several donated items to raffle to further generate funds for donation to the G.B.F. Again, we will require your help to staff this booth beside the concurrent operation of the "Cup." ♦

Lonny Holmes
SFA 78

UPCOMING EVENTS

**SOAR XXXVI Special Operations Association
36th Annual Reunion**

October 22 – 26, 2012

The Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada.

.....
**Special Forces Association Chapter 78
Christmas Party**

DATE HAS BEEN CHANGED TO

Saturday December 22, 2012

Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club in Newport Beach



From John Stryker Meyer, this RT Idaho photo was taken at CCN

MY HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COWBOYS

By Mike Keele, DFC

This October will mark the 36th Special Operations Association Reunion. It is a wondrous event in which crafty old warriors get together in Las Vegas to relive the wild days of their youth. Like a fly on the wall, and in spite of having no specialized training, I have the honor of rubbing elbows with this warrior elite by dint of having been the crew chief/door gunner on a UH-1H in 1968 which was sent to FOB-1 to support the operations of the SOG soldiers going into Laos, North Vietnam and the dreaded A Shau Valley. A few short days and two missions to extract Recon Teams from the A Shau Valley and Eastern Laos were all it took to convince me I was supporting the best, most unique soldiers on earth.

The Special Operations genre is represented by Green Berets, Seals and Para Rescue specialists. A contingent from the South Vietnamese Special Forces, including men largely of the Montagnard tribes meet quietly in the main meeting room. They were the Hatchet Force, the indigenous point of the spear sent to the various hot spots that cropped up whenever the communists decided they could do major damage to some outpost.

The King Bee pilots of the 219th Special Operations Squadron also have a major presence at the reunion. Last year, they brought down the house at the banquet, when they marched in wearing their flight suits when the color guard presented the flag. Then, the show was brought to a complete stop when Jimmy Tong, one of the indigenous troops sang God Bless America. Teary eyes, a standing ovation, thunderous applause and cheers marked this as the highlight of the evening, in spite of H. Ross Perot being the Guest of Honor.

I was fortunate two years ago, to meet Steve Perry, who was the One Zero of ST Idaho when we pulled that team off a mountainside deep in the A Shau Valley. He initially dismissed my suggestion that it had been my helicopter that had dropped in to pull ST Idaho out while the NVA shot up a lot of ammo trying to bag a bird and a team all at once. During the phone conversation we held prior to the reunion, Steve was skeptical. However, he became very quiet as I described our flight path, the tangled "strings" that only three men could hook into and our race against the gunfire down into the valley. We landed on the A Luoi airstrip to put the team inside. Little did Steve realize just how close to dying he and the others had come that day, as we were virtually out of fuel, and had to get everybody inside the aircraft to have a chance to make it out of the valley. Our chase aircraft, onto which Steve and his One-1 had climbed, ran out of fuel just as refueling began at Camp Evans.

While standing in the hallway near the entrance to the Team

Room at that same reunion, I heard a commotion and saw a throng of old warriors greeting a rather tall Vietnamese. He was at once recognizable as "Cowboy," who was the Zero-2 of ST Alabama and who was highlighted in John Stryker Meyer's epic book, "Across the Fence." Cowboy was also featured in a History Channel documentary which described ST Alabama's bad day in Laos when three team members were KIA and everyone else was wounded. Three helicopters were also shot down, including two jolly Green Giants. Cowboy remains an icon within the Special Ops community and continues to act as an information link with the Vietnamese special operators who couldn't make it to freedom before the communist takeover.

These are just a smattering of the stories to be relived at the Orleans hotel this October. A keynote speaker has yet to be named for this year, but it won't matter, every story is captivating and each storyteller is a hero. The reunion will be held from October 22 through October 26, 2012. Anyone who would like to attend who is not an SOA member, may be the guest of an SOA member. ♦





THE LAST DAYS OF SPECIAL FORCES IN VIETNAM — THE END OF AN ERA!

By Lonny Holmes

Recently I was reading the current issue (August 2012) of the VFW Magazine, and noted an article by Richard K. Kolb; "Last Days of the Infantry in Vietnam, 1972." I read the article closely since I knew that all fighting troops were out of RVN by 1973 at the wars 'declared end.' I also remember that the 5th Special Forces Group officially left Vietnam on 5 March 1971 returning to Fort Bragg. So who was left from Group in RVN?

Very surprisingly Mr. Kolb in his article devoted a section on "Task Force Madden" which consisted of nine operational teams and 117 SF personnel from the 1st SFG (A), in Okinawa beginning on July 5, 1972. One of Task Force Madden's missions was to train indigenous personnel as instructors and cadre for the Cambodian Reconnaissance Patrolling Course. Reading further in the article I saw the name SFC Cliff Newman. The thought struck me; is this our Cliff at National SFA Headquarters?

So I called Cliff at SFA National. "Yes, he said that is me and my team is mentioned in the article." On further discussion he filled me in on the details of his 'last mission.' Cliff was assigned to Team 22 from B Company 2nd Battalion from the 1st SF Group. (A snake bite team?) His team was commanded by Capt. James Fletcher and the team sergeant was MSG Nicholas Marvais. SFC Newman was the operations and intelligence sergeant. Sgt. Fred G. Mick was assigned as the junior medic.

At the time of Cliff Newman's assignment he had extensive SF experience having been previous assignments to MACV-SOG at CCN as a recon team leader, 1-O, and participated in the "first combat free fall mission," (HALO). I suggest you read his SF Bio in the Summer 2012 issue of the "DROP" in the DMOR section.

In early October 1972, while he was 'supervising' a recon patrol, Cliff stepped on a booby trap and severely injured his left foot requiring the aid of his medic, Sgt. Mick. Ultimately Cliff was med-evaced to Okinawa and lost his foot.

On October 12 while returning from Bien Hoa, the convoy that Sgt. Mick was traveling in was ambushed and he and seven Cambodians were killed. Sgt. Fred G. Mick was the last official SF Team member to be killed during the Vietnam War.

For further information and background, I then called Steve Sherman in Texas. As many in the SF Community know, Steve has an extensive data base on all Vietnam era Special Forces men. Steve mentioned that it gets very complicated late in



1972 to 1973 regarding assignment, team and project names and various locations.

All Special Forces A – Camps were turned over to the Vietnamese by late 1970. Many of the border team sites became the Vietnamese Border Ranger Program. MACV-SOG was phased out in March 12, 1973 after becoming Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team 158 on May 1, 1972. SF Headquarters in Nha Trang became HQ for Task Force TISH for training and support and was phased out by 1973. The Paris Peace Accords were signed on January 1973. The Case – Church Amendment signed by Congress ended all U.S. Military involvement on August 15, 1973. So was any SF left?

The answer is yes, but not as fighting or training A Teams but, as special projects which were not combat units. In Nakhon Phanom Thailand the Joint Casualty Recovery Center (JCRC) was established by COMUSMACV General Frederick Weyand to recover the remains of American personnel as the war wound down. Special Forces Colonel Roger Pezelle (a Lt. in the original 10th Group in 1953) established the leadership and parameters of the teams to include SF personnel because of their training and background. Colonel Pezelle became the overall commander in NKP. Colonel Charlie Beckwith was one of the team commanders and the other was Saully Fontaine (an original OSS Jedburg).

On December 15, 1973 one of these Joint Casualty Resolution Teams Commanded by Captain Richard Morgan Rees of Field Team 6, Control Team B, HQ, was operating in Vietnam and was ambushed in Gia Dinh Province South Vietnam and he was killed by small arms fire. For his heroic actions he was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. (Note, as a Lt., Rees, of 5th Special Forces Group, Company A, Detachment A-302 was awarded the Silver Star for valorous action on April 11, 1968).

What else took place after December 1973? Only detailed research or direct contact with those SF personnel involved will continue the legacy of Green Beret History. ❖



SOAR XXXVI

22 October – 26 October 2012

The Orleans Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada

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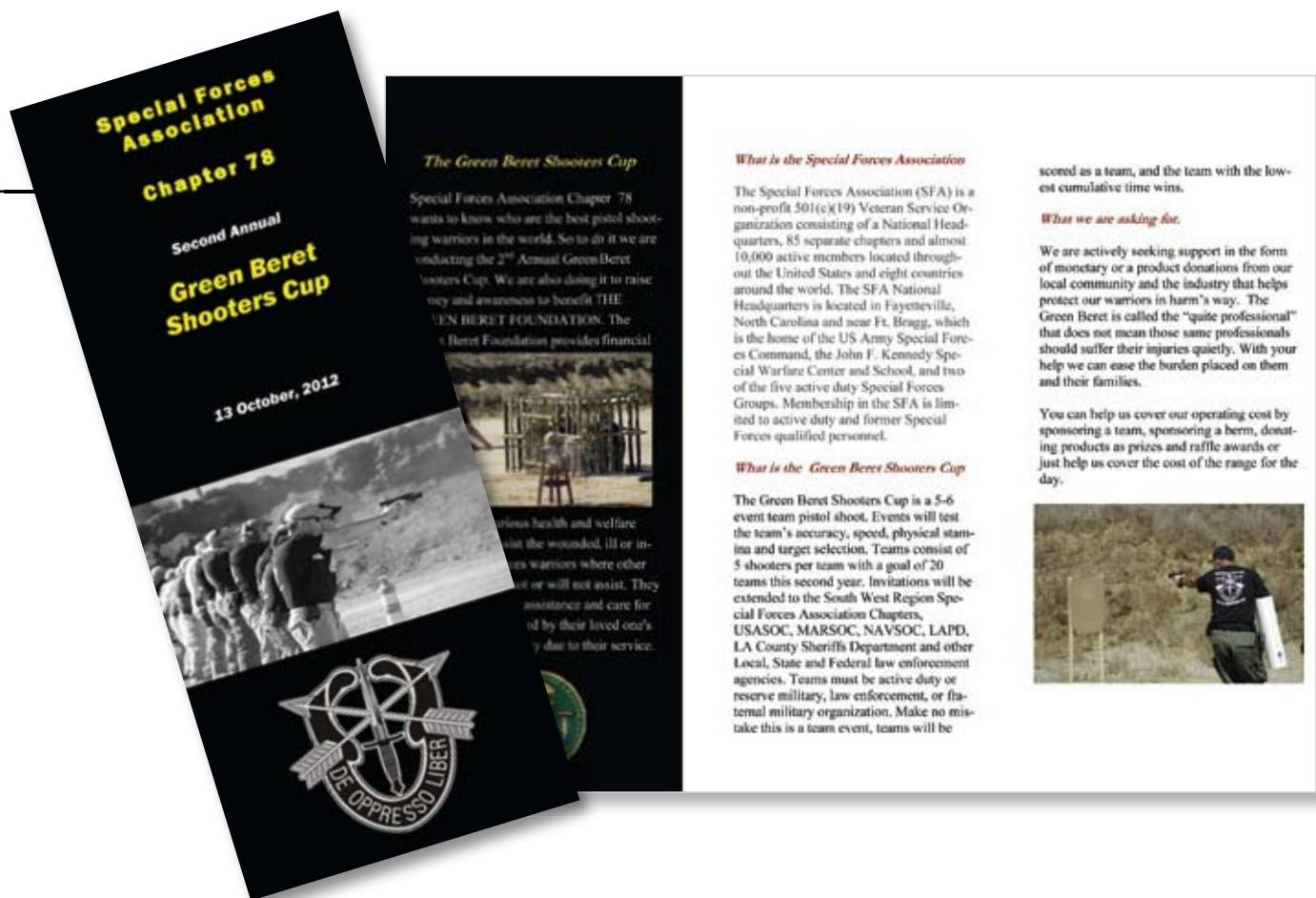
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