



THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78
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COVER PHOTO: 60 foot tower for Special Forces Training. Photo
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THE PRESIDENTS PAGE

PRESIDENTS COLUMN APRIL 2013

In January **Terry Cagnolatti** was elected as chairman of the Chapter 78 Elections Committee for officers in 2014 - 2015 term. At the March meeting the remaining members were elected which included **Richard Simonian, Sal Sanders, Mark Miller** and **Tom Redfern**. They will survey the chapter for possible candidates and present their names for consideration in September. Note, members



Lonny Holmes
President SFA 78

may also self nominate or be nominated by other chapter members in good standing. Elections will take place at the November meeting. Officers to be elected include; president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant at arms and directors at large.

John Creel makes the news again, twice. Bill Planschke, noted sports writer for the Los Angeles Times, wrote a nice piece about John which was published on the day of the L.A. Marathon. We have reprinted Planschke's article in this issue of the Sentinel from the Special Forces Association (national) website for your enjoyment. Douglas Morino writer for the Orange County Register also wrote about John, his love of his wife, Green Beret History and his running. Here is a link to the Register article;

<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/creel-499557-marathon-running.html>



Left to right, Colonel Roger Donlon, Medal of Honor recipient, Lonny Holmes, Jon R. Cavaiani, Medal of Honor recipient. All Vietnam era veterans. Mr. John "Tilt" Meyer, Special Operations President, at the podium, 2012.

The annual university ROTC awards ceremonies begin on Tuesday April 2, at UCLA and **Lee Martin** and **Ken Miller** will present the Special Forces Medal of Merit, Chapter 78 Challenge Coin, certificate and a check for two hundred dollars. The remaining four programs will began their ceremonies later this month and continue into May. During the April meeting we will seek volunteers to staff the other four programs. **Ed Barrett** is our point man with all university ROTC programs and continues to do an outstanding job. Many thanks to Ed!

Chapter 78 will have a booth at Mike Raahauge's Shooting Sports Fair beginning on Friday May 31 thru Sunday June 2. This is a fund raising activity to support this years (third annual) Green Beret Shooters Cup. **Mike Keele** is presently working with Travis Culver, assistant manager for Ammo Brothers in obtaining three pistols to raffle. This year our plan is to raffle one pistol per day and the winner will go directly to the store to begin the DOJ process. This is the only 'gun show' that the chapter will work this year. Please volunteer to help 'man' our booth.

Steve Cowan is leading the development for the Third Annual Green Beret Shooter's Cup. (Continued on page 2)



(MOH Citation) Photo of Sgt. Major Jon R. Cavaiani



THE PRESIDENTS PAGE

(Continued from page 1)

Steve has recently chaired several meetings and this years plans are moving ahead nicely. The "Cup" has also formed a new sub-committee for financial support which includes **Richard Simonian**, members of his staff, and **Jim Duffy** and **John "Tilt" Meyer**. Their goal is to garner corporate funds for the "Cup." Jim is also hard at work with his corporate sponsor committee in recruiting and continuing the support of past sponsors for products for prizes as well as financial support. **Terry Cagnolatti** is organizing his recruiting methods for team selection. We are looking for twenty five plus team this year. The top 10 are given first choice in returning each year. **Colonel Roger Donlon, MOH**, spoke with "Tilt" Meyer regarding returning as guest of honor. Richard Simonian is also contacting a VIP Special Forces General as a possible participant in the Third Annual G.B.S.C. Awards Ceremony.

Chapter 78 continues to be a leader in the association and our websites are second to none in the SF Community. The SF Mike Forces Association has contacted us and requested help with the redesign of their website. I put the Mike Force director in contact with Andrew of G35 Grid our developer and site manager, and it appears that he may get the contract. ♦

Lonny Holmes
SFA C-78

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chapter 78 Meeting
Saturday April 13, 0900 hours
American Legion Post 295, Cypress, CA.

Brad Welker will give a presentation on the current aspects of terrorism and counter terrorism. He is a retiree Los Angeles Sheriff Lt and has been working at the state and national level as an instructor on this topic.

.....
Raahauges Sports Shooting Fair,
May 31, June 1-2, 2013.
See their website for time and exact location.
<http://www.raahauges.com/sports-fair.php>
14995 River Rd, Corona, CA 92880 | 951-735-7981
.....

Special Forces Association Annual Convention
San Antonio TX, June 26 to June 20, 2013
See your issue of the "DROP" or go to their website
www.specialforcesassociation.org for registration and hotel information.



Lonny under the "Big Guns" of the Mighty Mo, the U.S.S. Missouri, BB 63.

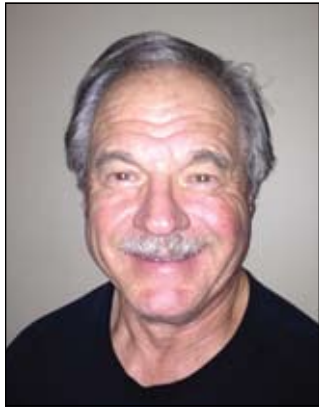


The Battle Ship U.S.S. Missouri and the U.S.S. Arizona Monument on a rainy day in Hawaii.



Nilda and Lonny at dinner in Hawaii.

RANCHO REMEMBERS... VETERANS



By Mike Keele, DFC

On May 1, 2013, Rancho Cucamonga High School will host its 6th annual veteran's oral history event. Last year's event drew nearly 300 veterans. They came from all over So. Cal and there were guys currently in uniform and some as old as 90. They were hosted by Rancho students who were very attentive and enthusiastic.

The announcement for this year's event is asking for new participants and they are offering a light breakfast and full lunch as an inducement to participate. The biggest inducement to get involved deals with the opportunity to interact with these kids; every one of whom was more professional, mature and polite than I could have imagined. Last year was a truly uplifting experience. ♦



Rancho Cucamonga High School junior Megan Conrado listens to U.S. Navy World War II veteran Ray Lundquist, 86, from Barstow, as he talks about his experiences at the 2012 annual Rancho Remembers. (Will Lester/Staff Photographer, Inland Empire Daily Bulletin)

**For information and to confirm your intent to participate,
contact Aaron Bishop via e mail at aaron_bishop@cjuhsd.k12.ca.us,
or by phone at 909/989-1600, ext. 2316.**





AT 77, HE'S RUNNING FOR TWO



John Creel runs in the Grandfather Mountain Marathon in Boone, North Carolina

**By Bill Plaschke
Los Angeles Times,
March 12, 2013**

John Creel's thoughts are never far from his wife, who is confined to a wheelchair by multiple sclerosis. Sunday's L.A. Marathon will be his 60th.

He runs with a cellphone pressed tightly against his hip, but she never calls, so for 26.2 miles he runs with his memories.

In the first hour, she is walking again through the German countryside. By the middle of the race, she is dancing again to their classical favorites. At the finish line, she is strolling with their two children into the best years of her life.

Then John Creel, 77, towels off, catches his breath, and returns to the marathon that is his life as a full-time caregiver for wife Ingrid, whose body has been rendered helpless by the evils of multiple sclerosis.

"My life is pretty simple," Creel said. "It's all about taking the next step ... just take the next step."

The Brea man's next official step will be taken in the Dodger Stadium parking lot Sunday as one of 24,000 runners in the 28th L.A. Marathon. In what is annually trumpeted as the human race, Creel will be one of the most human of runners.

When his wife's degenerative illness confined her to a wheelchair in 1995, Creel made the decision that he would be her primary caretaker. When the stress from that decision became overwhelming, he began running for relief.

That was 59 marathons ago. He has run at least one marathon in each state. He transports her in her wheelchair to most of his races, twice even making sure somebody pushed her to the finish line. She doesn't understand running, but she likes the company. He sometimes weeps over her losses, but he still loves her smile.

He feeds, bathes and clothes her. Yet after 53 years of marriage, he says she is his strength.

"Honestly, I don't know what I would do without her," he said.

And he doesn't know what she would do without him. If he dies first, she probably will have to go into an assisted-living facility, and he can barely tolerate even the thought, so he keeps running, for her, for him, for them.

Said Ingrid with a grin: "Sometimes I don't understand why he has to run so much, but it makes him happy, so let him run, let him run."

Said John with tears: "She's the best thing that ever happened to me."

You can glimpse strands of their enduring affection in a back room of their Brea home, the place where Ingrid spends her days watching television, the channel tuned to episodes of "Little House on the Prairie" and "Bonanza."

All around the room there are vases with purple orchids, some blooming, some decaying, gifts from weekly visits to Trader Joe's.

"I love orchids," said Ingrid. "He still brings me orchids."

She still calls him "Johnny." He sometimes calls her "Mom." During a recent weeknight interview they giggled at each other from across the modest living room, he in his shiny running shoes, she in her black wheelchair, their lives having taken them to different worlds, their spirit forever connected

"When you get older in a marriage, things change, but the caring just gets deeper," John said.

They still laugh about how they met in 1958 on a snowy night in a small town in Germany. She didn't speak English, he barely spoke German, yet a year later they were married. At the time he was a member of the U.S. Army's Green Berets. Today he runs his marathons with the actual green beret atop his balding head. It reeks of sweat and has been tattered by moths, but, like his devotion, it is unmoving.

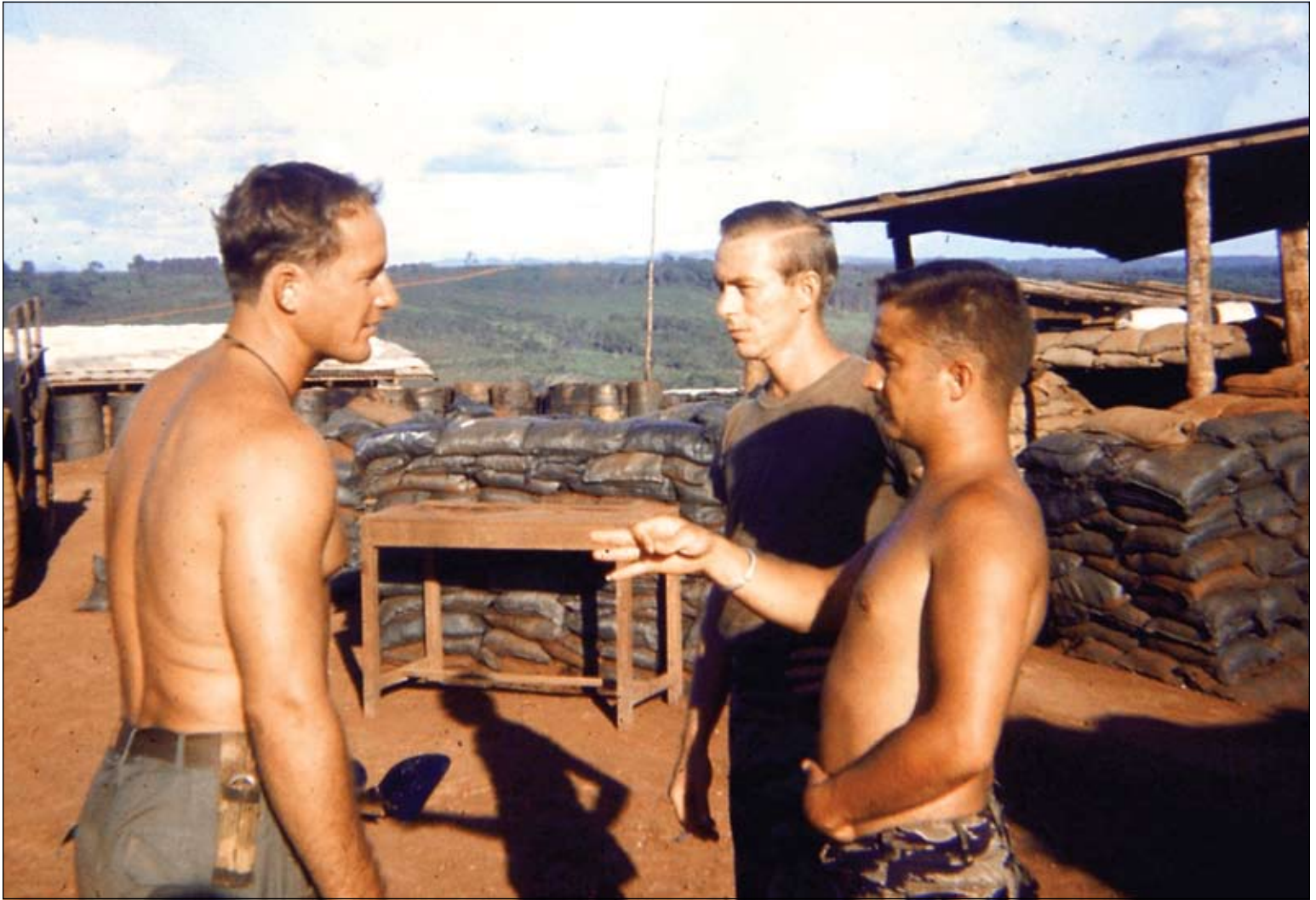
"He is an amazing man, so determined, so faithful," said former longtime running partner Denis Paez. "On a daily basis, it's hard to imagine doing the things he does."

The former systems engineer for Kaiser Permanente awakens with Ingrid every day at 4:30 a.m.. He spends the next 90 minutes dressing and feeding her. He then puts a cellphone near the left hand that she can still use for dialing and leaves the house for his morning workout. Except for a brief return home to check on her, he is running or lifting weights or simply exercising for the next couple of hours.

"Running is the only time he's completely relaxed," said daughter Karola. "He goes to another place."

Sometimes that place is filled with anger, the slap of steps along the pavement punctuated by screams to the sky.

(Continued on page 5)



May 1968 at Special Forces A Camp, Plei Djereng Vietnam. Left to right, SSG Lonny Holmes, SFC Charles Carpenter (foreground), SGT Leverton (back). SFC Carpenter was K.I.A. as a member of the II Corps Mike Force supporting A Camp Ben Het in 1969.

(Continued from page 4)

"I get mad at God a lot; I yell and scream," Creel said. "What has Ingrid ever done to anybody? It doesn't seem right that she has to suffer."

But mostly that place is filled with calm, and by the time he returns home for good, his mind is clear and his body is amazingly untaxed. He will spend the rest of the day pulling his wife's wheelchair up and down the several steps in the house — a 150-pound task — yet he says he never feels it.

"You know that 'He ain't heavy, he's my brother' thing?" he said. "It might be a little bit of that."

When they attend an out-of-town race, he will arrange for a caregiver to watch her in the hotel room during the race. Then there were those four glorious moments when they actually raced together. Yes, for four 5K races in the area, Creel pushed her

through the course. She said it felt as if she were flying. He said he was most happy about the ending.

"She always finished ahead of me," he said with a grin.

On Sunday Ingrid will not attend the marathon, remaining at home with her son Greg and his family. But after her husband finishes his 5 1/2-hour run, sits in a cold bath, and rejoins her late Sunday night, she will again feel like a winner.

Before they fall asleep, John will lean over and hold her hand. Ingrid will stare at the ceiling and, in a voice softened by age and slowed by disease, give thanks that she married a man who will finish the race.

"God, you know what you are doing," she will say. "I don't know why I am sick, but you know what you are doing."

bill.plaschke@latimes.com



SFA CHAPTER 78 SHOOTOUT SATURDAY MAY 11, 2013



Come join us for a fun day at the range. This will be an all day event and family and friends are invited. There will be a \$15.00 per person charge which will include range fees, targets, Hot Dogs and soft drinks. Make your checks payable to SFA Chapter 78. Proceeds will benefit Chapter 78.

The shootout will be at the Burbank Rifle and Revolver Club which is approximately 8 miles north of "Magic Mountain". See below for exact directions. Check out the BRRC web site at www.brrc.org

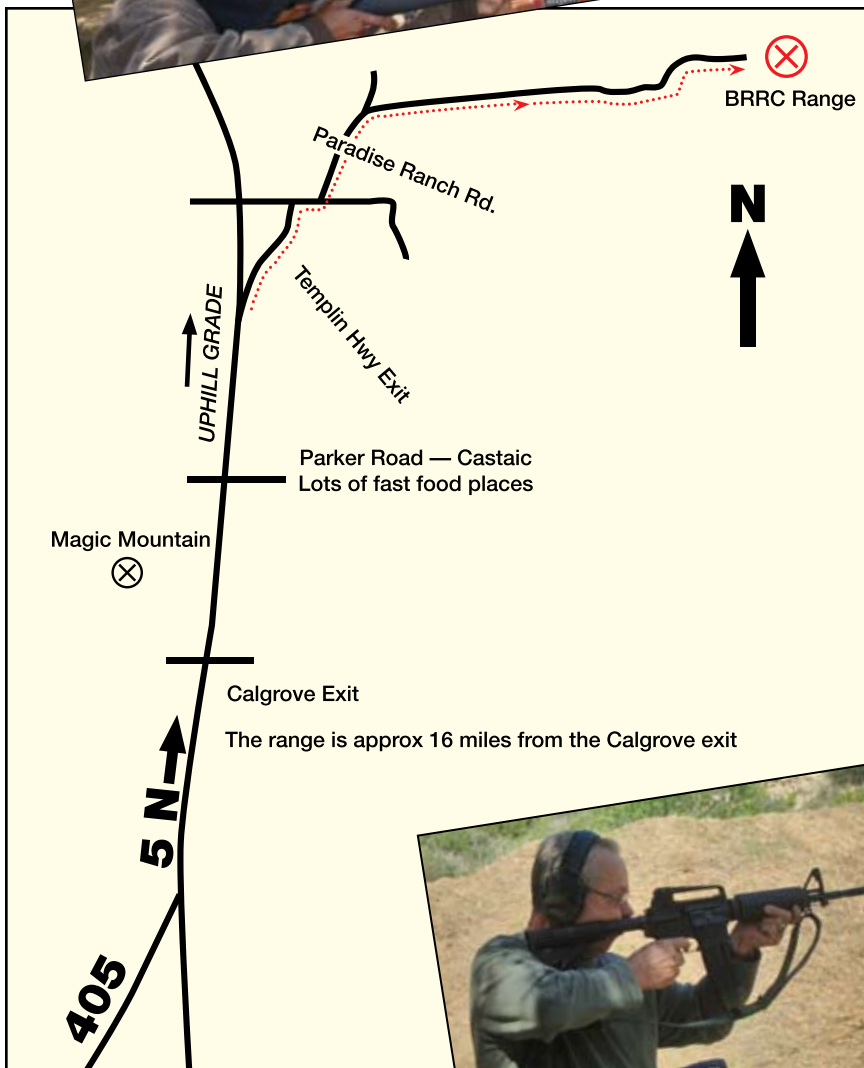
DIRECTIONS TO CHAPTER 78 SHOOTOUT

**Drive North on I-5 and
exit at Templin Hwy**

Exit at Templin Hwy – Turn right at bottom of exit ramp – Then make a quick left turn onto Paradise

Ranch Road. Drive about two hundred yards on Paradise Ranch Rd

At the entrance to the Paradise Ranch trailer park – veer to the right and follow the over head power lines back into the canyon. After about a mile you will pass the first gate (locked open). The second gate will have chain link fencing on both sides. This is the entrance to BRRC range.



**NOTE: The May 11 Chapter 78
meeting will be held at
"The Day at the Range."**

This is the chapter 'shoot' and BBQ hosted by Tom Redfern.