



THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78
NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

THE LTC FRANK J. DALLAS CHAPTER

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 9 SEPTEMBER 2013



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**Welcome Home: Ex-Green Beret helps
struggling vets find a home**

**Green Beret Shooters Cup 2013 –
Sponsor Development**

3rd Annual Green Beret Shooters Cup Sponsors



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COVER PHOTO: Nha Trang Mike Force and Battle Flag and
streamers, Vietnam.

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THE PRESIDENTS PAGE



Lonny Holmes
President SFA 78

PRESIDENTS COLUMN SEPTEMBER 2013

Mr. Richard Simonian, a member of SF Chapter 78 since 1998 and an original member of the 10th Special Forces Group who accompanied them when they deployed to Bad Tolz, Germany in the 1950's has been a strong supporter of our chapter. As owner and C.E.O. of **Santiago Communities**, Richard Simonian recently founded a non-profit company, **Veterans Affordable Housing**,

to help house veterans. Mr. Simonian and his Veterans Affordable Housing have now come on board to be the **primary sponsor** of the **Third Annual Green Beret Shooters Cup**. The chapter and the GBSC looks forward to working with Richard and the Veterans Affordable Housing to make this the best "Shooters Cup." A "tip of the Beret" to Richard.

It is six weeks until the "Third Shooters Cup" and **Terry Cagnolatti** who leads the committee to vet and register the competing teams is working hard to ensure that we have a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 30 teams. Presently we have 12 paid teams, 15 more committed and several who want to field another team. The good news is we have one to two active Green Beret teams in the wing who are considering joining this years event. Indeed, if these SF GB team(s) do register the *Veterans Affordable Housing* will help defer their expenses.

The "Green Beret Trophy" is what all teams compete for and sincerely want to carry back to their departments trophy case for one year. Other awards and prizes have also been a large part of the competition and **Jim Duffy** has worked especially hard to garner these as well as corporate sponsorships. Recently we welcome **Kriss U.S.A.** and **Glock Perfection** on board. Members and spectators will be surprised and excited observing additional challenges to this years event by Kriss's addition of their products. **Glock pistols** will be awarded to the top team and Kriss will award a **Vector .45 cal carbine** to the top overall shooter and a **Sphinx pistol** to top shooter of a special side event.

Behind the scenes "Cup Director" **Steve Cowan** leads all members of the team who put together each years event. These individuals do their work silently and without their dedication we could not produce such a challenging competition. These valuable team members include **John Joyce, Mike Keele, Bruce Long, Joel**

Adams, Tom Redfern, Brad Welker, and Thad Gembacz. Remember on event day nearly all Chapter 78 member's join in and work hard to ensure the success of the "Shooters Cup."

ITS ELECTION TIME! After the September chapter meeting we will next meet in November and will vote for the 2014 -2016 board of officers. The election committee chaired by Terry Cagnolatti has a slate of proposed officers for the election. Remember any member can still nominate a chapter member in good standing or self nominate himself. The deadline for candidates is November 1, 2013.

Current candidates include:

<u>Office</u>	<u>Candidate(s)</u>
President	Bruce Long
Vice President	Tom Redfern
Secretary	Lee Martin
Treasurer	John Joyce
SGT at Arms	Mark Miller
Directors at Large	Richard Simonian
	Brad Welker
	Terry Cagnolatti
	Steve Cowan
	Lonny Holmes

Editor of the Sentinel

Voting will be held on Saturday, November 9, 2013 and officers will take the "Oath of Office" at the Annual Christmas Dinner in December and their term will officially start on January 1, 2014. ❖

Lonny Holmes
President
SFA C-78

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chapter Meeting

Saturday, September 14, 2013

American Legion Post 295, Cypress, CA

No scheduled chapter meeting in October. We will be hosting the Third Annual Green Beret Shooters Cup in Corona, CA.



Third Annual Green Beret Shooter's Cup

Saturday, October 12, 2013

Raahauges Range, Corona, CA



Special Operations Association

Reunion SOAR XXXVII

October 21 to 25, 2013

Orleans Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas NV.

For registration visit www.specialoperations.org



NHA TRANG MIKE FORCE VIETNAM

Nha Trang Mike Force was located in Nha Trang, Vietnam, at 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Headquarters. Companies and battalions from this unit deployed throughout central South Vietnam in efforts to defend various Special Forces A-Teams and engage in other major battles with our enemy.

Several photos on these pages are of "Operation Harvest Moon," the first Special Forces Tactical Combat Airborne Assault. Harvest Moon led by Captain Lee B. Wilson took place on April 2, 1967 and 350 Montagnards and 29 SF jumped from C-123's at an altitude of 700 feet onto DZ Bunard sixty five miles northwest of Saigon. No one was wounded on the DZ. Combat

casualties occurred later and several were treated by SSG Scott J. Whitting, a SF Medic of A-503 (Mike Force cadre). Scott served in the M.F. from 1966 through 1967 and provided information for this article via Ed Woody. For further information see "The Green Beret Magazine," Volume II, 1967, pages 4:16 to 4:19.

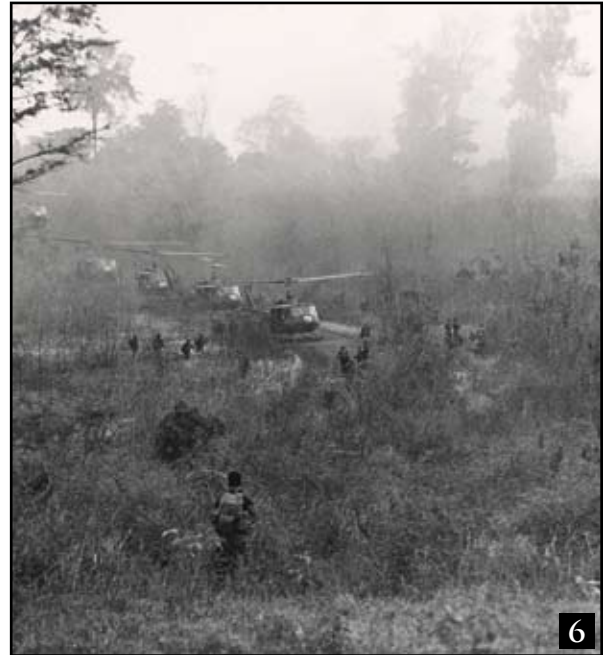
Photos for this essay are provided by Ed Woody and the Mike Force Association and many more also located on the associations Facebook page. Ed Woody was also deeply involved with the History Channel project; Special Ops: Mike Force a documentary on M.F. soldiers which has aired multiple times on T.V. The special may also be viewed on the internet.



1. Ed Woody, Nha Trang Mike Force Vietnam
2. J.C. Cooper, Mike Force, Vietnam
3. Weapons captured by Mike Force
4. Nha Trang Mike Force Troops on operation, Vietnam



5



6



7



8



9



10

5. Loading Mike Force wounded into Huey during fire fight in Vietnam
6. Nha Trang Mike Force on operation, Vietnam
7. Mike Force getting ready to jump into combat in Vietnam

8. Mike Force troopers hooked up and ready for combat
9. Members of Nha Trang Mike Force at Nha Trang HQ, Vietnam
10. Weapons captured by Mike Force in a firefight



WELCOME HOME:

EX-GREEN BERET HELPS STRUGGLING VETS FIND A HOME

By Nicole Gregory
Orange County Register
August 12, 2013

Giving struggling vets a place to call their own is the mission of a former Green Beret's nonprofit.

Richard Simonian looks you straight in the eye when he speaks. He's got a friendly smile, a warm handshake, but his eyes tell you: This trim 81-year-old successful businessman and former Green Beret, this man whose mission is to provide struggling veterans homes they could never afford, he misses nothing.

Within minutes of an introduction, he pulls a reporter over to see a framed article that ran in an issue of Soldier of Fortune magazine. "This guy here," he says, pointing to a blurry black-and-white image of a group of soldiers in Vietnam, "his name is Wayne Marchand, and he is part of the reason for all of this."

Marchand was caught and executed by the North Vietnamese, the first Special Forces soldier killed there in 1963.

That was a long time ago, but Simonian remembers his friend. He has feelings about the fact that he was discharged after serving in Germany, while Marchand went into Vietnam and never returned. He pauses to try to say what they are.

"Survivor guilt," fills in Simonian's colleague and friend Jim Duffy, also a former Green Beret. Simonian nods.

Simonian likes to be around veterans such as Duffy and John Stryker Meyer, another former Green Beret, who are both board members of Simonian's nonprofit organization, the Veterans Affordable Housing Program, which works with eligible veterans to buy or rent spacious manufactured housing at low cost.

Vets trust each other, and those who know Simonian revere and treasure him.

A self-made businessman, owner of the Santiago Communities, 40 mobile home parks in five states, Simonian has for years been deeply involved with Chapter 78, the Orange County organization of Veterans Affairs. He has supported many of its activities, but Simonian's primary focus for the last two years has been to reach struggling vets and help them get a home.

So far he has placed 100 such vets – some disabled from war injuries, some nearly homeless, and all struggling financially – into spacious mobile homes in one of his mobile home communities and, in some cases, supplied furniture and food as well.

Simonian freely admits he wasn't always such a good guy.



Today he's a success in every way: He is healthy, happily married and doing work he loves.

But growing up in East Los Angeles, he was a juvenile delinquent. The son of first-generation immigrants from Armenia, he was kicked out of high school for causing an explosion in chemistry class (as he tells the story, Simonian's eyes twinkle), and he spent time in juvenile hall.

He joined the Army in 1952 when he was just 21 – the Cold War with Russia was in full swing. He went into basic training, advanced training, then on to become a paratrooper. He was asked if he wanted to volunteer for a secret mission: All he knew was that it was a new, special group, and if he signed on he could be promoted quickly.

Simonian immediately said yes and was sent to Europe for clandestine missions in East Germany.

This wasn't just any group: It was the 10th Special Forces, the first Green Beret group.

After three years, he was discharged. He returned to Southern California and had to adjust to civilian life.

"The military feeds you, houses you, clothes you. They take care of you. That's what a lot of the veterans are having trouble with now," Simonian says. "When you come back, you don't know anything."

Simonian taught himself how to draw building plans and managed to convince others that he knew what he was doing. And though

(Continued on page 5)

GREEN BERET SHOOTERS CUP 2013 – SPONSOR DEVELOPMENT



By Jim Duffy
Chapter 78 Member

In January the quest for this year's competition began in earnest with the attendance of Lonny Holmes and myself at THE SHOT SHOW in Las Vegas. It provided us an opportunity to get reacquainted with our 2012 event sponsors and meet new potential sponsors

for 2013. This process gave us the best chance to discuss face to face sponsor product donations with over a hundred companies.

As usual, and expected, lots of initial emails and telephone calls combined with lots of follow up is required to get this done successfully. Trying to avoid a last minute crunch I'm asking committed sponsors to send product donations as soon as possible. Some sponsors (20) have already sent product donations.

The impact of firearm and ammo control efforts has already adversely affected some sponsors to commit not knowing whether or not they will still be in business or, if so, at a reduced level. In fact, one will be out of the firearms and accessories business shortly.

On the brighter side, one company has decided to showcase their 3D Dimensional Targets at this event. These are lifelike targets that can hold a gun, cell phone, knife, badge or soda can. The decision has been made to incorporate these targets into several of the shooting scenarios.

Another company will showcase its firearms at the event and run its own extra stage for one member per team with the top shooter receiving special recognition. One ammo company will showcase & demonstrate its ammunition, provide ammunition to the active Green Beret Teams and also for the Public Shoot.

Currently, I consider the pace of sponsor products received as not too much unlike last year where the final two months of August and September, right up to the event day, comes into play. ♦

(Welcome Home – Continued From page 4)

he had no formal training, he eventually became an expert in water systems, sewers and underground utilities.

But remember, Simonian was a Green Beret. "There is a Special Forces mindset," Duffy explains, "an adaptability and motivation to overcome crises and challenges, to think that nothing really is impossible."

The 1960s was boom time for building in California. Simonian built his first mobile home park in 1967, seizing one opportunity after another, making acquaintances with bankers, lenders and politicians. There were ups and downs, successes and failures, good times and bad.

Simonian remembers a time when he came face to face with death – not in wartime but in civilian life: An employee he'd fired broke into a meeting and put a gun to Simonian's head.

For 10 minutes, he did not know whether he'd live or die in that room.

Eventually the employee put the gun down; Simonian never pressed charges, but made sure the gunman eventually got psychological help. He struggles to explain the reason this episode is so closely linked to his commitment to offer quality, dignified houses to vets. It boils down to this: Life is important. It should be meaningful.

So when at a Christmas party in 2010 Simonian found himself talking to a man from a veterans organization about the most pressing challenges facing many veterans, "I thought to myself, how can I help?" Almost immediately, his nonprofit vet housing program was born. Today it offers financing opportunities, rent relief and even monthly stipends for struggling vets.

One important message he wants vets to know: This is not government related. The rules and bureaucracy that make government programs so slow and cumbersome don't apply to this nonprofit.

Applicants don't need a credit score or even necessarily a down payment for this housing, and applications can be approved within a couple of days.

Simonian is there for his fellow vets – that is clear. And he is humble, the first to say he has tremendous help from those around him – the employees, board members and, of course, his trusted former Green Beret friends.

And he still takes orders, only these days from his wife, Bonnie. "I'm a smart guy. When my wife tells me what to do, I do it!"

How you can help:

Tell a veteran who is in need of housing to call Veterans Affordable Housing at 888-923-VETS (8387); or email info@veteransaffordablehousing.org; or visit www.veteransaffordablehousing.org. ♦



SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78
and the Third Annual GREEN BERET SHOOTERS CUP
wish to thank our current 2013 sponsors,
who are on board as of August.



Ammunition

If your corporation would like to become a sponsor of the this years event,
 please contact LTC (ret) Jim Duffy, Chair of Sponsor Development, at sfoda109@cox.net