



THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78

The LTC Frank J. Dallas Chapter

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 4 • APRIL 2018



So Who's the Hero?

Chapter 78 Celebrates 20 Years as a Chapter

Lang Vei Extraction of Survivors Under Heavy Fire: Unsung
Heroes of 176th Minutemen Assault Helicopter Company

FULRO at Lac Thien (A236, II Corp, RVN) 1965

MACV-SOG One-Zero School Part II

SFA Chapter 78 Presents Annual Awards to ROTC Cadets



SENTINEL

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 4 • APRIL 2018

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Page	1
So Who's the Hero?.....	2
Chapter 78 Celebrates 20 Years as a Chapter.....	3
Lang Vei Extraction of Survivors Under Heavy Fire: Unsung Heroes of 176th Minutemen Assault Helicopter Company.....	4
The Forgotten Warriors: Update on the Montagnards — FULRO at Lac Thien (A236, II Corp, RVN) 1965	6
Cops Corner	8
The Army Video That Finally Introduced America to the Green Berets	8
MACV-SOG One-Zero School Part II	9
Letters to the Editor	16
SFA Chapter 78 Presents Annual Awards to ROTC Cadets.....	17
Plei Me SF Camp — Then and Now	17
SFA Chapter 78 March 2018 Meeting	18

COVER: Photo received from Captain Evan McGhee of 10th SFOD-A 0215 along with this note: "We just finished an awards ceremony with our Afghan National Army Special Forces Company that we went to combat with over the last six months and they gave us these awesome robes as a sign of respect. Thought it would be fitting attire for a Sentinel picture."

Captain McGhee is pictured displaying the January 2018 *Sentinel* where he and his men appeared on the back cover.



Please visit us at
specialforces78.com
and sfa78cup.com



CHAPTER OFFICERS:

President

John Stryker Meyer / D-238

Vice Presidents

Don Deatherage / M-13962

Brad Welker / M-2319

Secretary

Gary Macnamara / M-12789

Treasurer

Richard Simonian / D-7920

Sergeant At Arms/ Quartermaster

Mark Miller / D-8296

Coordinator of ROTC Program

Ed Barrett / M-11188

Chaplain

Richard Simonian / D-7920

Sentinel Editor

Louis (Lonny) Holmes / D-6067

Immediate Past President

Bruce Long / D-7464



Funding for the SFA Chapter 78 Sentinel is provided by

VETERANS AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

A program of American Veterans Assistance Group

888-923-VETS (8387) • VeteransAffordableHousing.org

MISSION STATEMENT: The Sentinel will provide interesting and meaningful information relative to the Special Forces experience — today, yesterday and tomorrow. Articles will be published that were written by knowledgeable authors who will provide objective and accurate accounts of real world experiences.

The Sentinel is published monthly by Special Forces Association Chapter 78, Southern California. The views, opinions and articles printed in this issue do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Army or the United States Special Operations Command, the Special Forces Association, or Special Forces Association Chapter 78. Please address any comments to the editor, "Sentinel" to dhgraphics@earthlink.net.

From the Editor



Lonny Holmes
Sentinel Editor

Robert Crebbs began just a little over twenty years ago, along with several other former members of SF, to form a new chapter on the southern California coast since most of those involved in local meetings at that time lived in the eastern counties where they met. Bob prepared the required paper work and submitted it to the SF Association National Office led at the time by Jimmy Dean. Approval was granted and Chapter 78 became a reality based in

Orange County, CA. Thanks to Bob we are beginning to celebrate our "Twentieth Anniversary" this spring. To celebrate our twenty years' **John Joyce**, a long time chapter member, has designed a special Chapter 78 "Anniversary Coin" which will be available to purchase at our April meeting. Our new coin incorporates the Special Forces Eagle off our regimental flag and a high stylized SF shoulder patch design. All 250 of these original coins are numbered and the chapter will keep a record who purchases each coin by number. One hundred will also be made without a number which are designated to be presentation coins.

The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal at the Emancipation Hall at the United States Capital on Wednesday, March 21, 2018. SF Colonel Sully de Fontaine (a member of the OSS at age 17) attended the ceremony along with over twenty of the living members who served in the unit during World War II. Colonel de Fontaine stated that "it was a fantastic ceremony." The May Sentinel will have a feature story on the OSS and those members who then served in the Special Forces including Colonel Aaron Banks, MG John K. Singlaub and Colonel Fontaine.

Brad Welker writes in this issue the first story for a new feature, "Cops Corner," which will relate to our relationship between Green Beret's and the law enforcement community. If you are working or retired from law enforcement and have a story to relate to our readership please contact Brad. ❖

Lonny Holmes
Sentinel Editor



Aurelio Flores and Colonel Sully H. de Fontaine with the program issued at the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in honor of the OSS held March 21, 2018 in Washington D.C.



John Stryker Meyer
President SFA 78

Same Time, New Place

Gentlemen of Chapter 78,

Our April 14 meeting will begin at the same time at a **new location**.

Here's the meeting details:

Time:

8:30 a.m., April 14, Breakfast will be served.

Location:

Embassy Suites

3100 East Frontera

(The SE Corner of Hwy 91 & Glassell St.)

Anaheim, CA 92807

Phone #:714-618-9020

CRITICAL REMINDER:

Please contact Chapter Vice President **Brad Welker** or me to confirm your attendance. We need an accurate head count for breakfast.

Speakers:

Chapter Member **Tony Pirone** will give us a 10-minute update on SF at Ft. Bragg following his recent visit for training there.

Our second speaker will be another unique Green Beret speaker, SOG veteran SOA/SFA POW/MIA Committee Chairman Mike Taylor. He will give Chapter 78 the first public disclosure about his trip to Vietnam in January on a parallel mission with DPAA in SEA. The most fascinating part of his trip involved Mike meeting personally with NVA soldiers who served in an NVA unit dubbed simply C-75. Don't be fooled by its simple nomenclature: Its soldiers were SOG-killer/hunter teams.

MEETING FEE UPDATE:

Beginning at our next chapter meeting, we will begin collecting \$15 per head for breakfast.

Mike Keele, Chapter 78 Deputy Special Assistant to the Chapter Treasurer will collect the fee.

And, he'll also collect \$20 from anyone who fails to appear at the breakfast without his Green Beret or a Chapter 78 coin, per our membership's vote at the March 10 meeting.

Regarding breakfast: If any chapter member cannot afford \$15 on a Saturday, the Chapter Board of Officers will quietly cover the fee. FYI: Since I first mentioned this, two chapter members have sent me donations to cover any breakfast fees for chapter members. Both members asked to remain anonymous. The first check for \$150 has been deposited.

Future Guest Speakers:

May 12 meeting – Guest speaker will be Gordon Denniston, a Cobra gunship pilot who flew support missions for SOG missions mostly run out of CCC in Kontum. He'll have more than 30 minutes of footage from SOG missions.

June 9 meeting has two possibilities — have not locked in a confirmation yet.

July 14 meeting will feature MSG Chris Spence, the medic who took the photos of the SF troops riding horses in Afghanistan, who was portrayed in movie *12 Strong*.

We're also working on lining up Yvette Benavidez Garcia, the daughter of SF MOH Recipient Roy Benavidez. She has unique stories on her father, including details about a movie that's been in production for nearly three years. At that meeting, we'll hopefully have chapter member **Lee Martin** in attendance as he holds a most unique place in the amazing Benavidez story — when Benavidez was lying in a body bag, bloodied and muddy, unable to speak, a doctor began to zip up the body bag. The doctor thought he was dead. Unable to speak the Green Beret spat in his face, surprising both the doctor and Lee Martin. ♦

John Stryker Meyer
President, SFA Chapter 78



Richard Simonian, Col. Paul Longgrear and John Stryker Meyer. Col. Longgrear was one of the guest speakers at the March 10 Chapter meeting.

So Who's the Hero?



Mike Keele

By Mike Keele

Chapter 78 had its third monthly meeting of the year on March 10, 2018, some fifty years and a month after one of the most horrific battles of the Viet Nam war. I can't say what the weather was like at Lang Vei on the night of February 7th 1968, but on the East side of the mountains in Thua Thien Province, it absolutely sucked. Low clouds, cold with intermittent rain and fog; just what the enemy

was counting on to keep air support from spoiling their plans.

Thus, the stage was set for our guest speaker, retired SF Col. Paul Longgear, who spoke to a packed house in describing how war is conducted when everything goes wrong and the enemy attacks with Russian T-76 tanks. Chapter 78's president, John "Tilt" Meyer, had met Longgear at a militia show about ten years ago, and the two hit it off.

So, when Tilt took office last December, he contacted Paul with a question: Would he give a talk to Chapter 78's finest? So here we were, in a rented meeting hall, having sausage and eggs at the expense of Chapter 78's Chaplain and Treasurer, Richard Simonian. The RSVP process had only yielded thirty-five committed attendees, and we had to guarantee the house fifty, so we were really thrilled when sixty six patriotic souls showed up.

When Col. Longgear began to speak, not another voice could be heard. Even the kitchen crew was respectful! He talked about the lead-up to the battle, which was expected, and how the Lang Vei camp had been preparing, to include Longgear's Mike Force Company, which had been giving the NVA fits for several weeks. So stout had been their interdiction and defense, that the NVA brass in Hanoi ordered the use of sixteen T-76 tanks which had been imported to the AO with the intention of using them to overrun Khe Sanh, a couple of miles East of Lang Vei on Route Nine.

Under the heading "if you don't laugh, you'll cry," upon hearing rumors that Mr. Charles had tanks in the area, the A-Team commander ordered in a large supply of LAW rockets. It was on the night of February 7, 1968, that they learned those rockets needed a minimum distance to arm upon being fired. In some cases, the rockets were duds due to the close quarters combat. Still, for all the damage the tanks did, more than half of them were destroyed.

Col. Longgear spoke with reverence for the A-Team troops who manned the defenses and fought to the death in some cases, and among the casualties were five SF Soldiers who were captured or went MIA. He also paid homage to his Mike Force Soldiers, who suffered horrendous casualties, including his Vietnamese counter-part, who was shot numerous times and was the subject of a photograph showing Longgear half-carrying him away from the extraction helicopter at Khe Sanh following the battle.



Col. Paul Longgear speaking about the Battle of Lang Vei at the March meeting of Chapter 78.

Longgear's gut wrenching account of being thrice wounded, holed up in the TOC with a group of men while the NVA sat atop the bunker with a tank, dumping gasoline, tear gas, and grenades in on them through the air vent was heart rending. His description of their desperation from a lack of command presence was a bit humorous when he laid out his announced plan, born of frustration, to go to the surface where he could at least die like a man, which was seconded by several others. But, they said, since it's your idea, you go out first.

Last, he spoke of laying flat on his back and helping the others out of the bunker. A-1 Sky Raiders, the ultimate close support aircraft for the ground pounder, were the life and death difference in the survival of the Lang Vei veterans, and none more critical than the A-1's flown off the Kitty Hawk, braving horrid weather with minimum visual reference rules applied only sparingly. There were Marine H-46 helicopters circling the area, but none would land. Then he saw a tiny spec waaay up in the sky which began spiraling down. It was a Huey belonging to the 176th Assault Helicopter Company and it was flown by Bob Hartley and Tom Lake. The crew chief was Teddy Spurlock and left door gunner was Ray Cyrus. They are being mentioned here, because they got no acknowledgement from the Army.

It would be nice to give you a blow by blow account of the battle, but those details are best given by Col. Longgear. If you want him to speak to your chapter, contact him — he's a wonderful man with a well-spoken message. Just don't bother to ask him to join your chapter; 40569994 he is already a member of Chapter 78. ❖

Chapter 78 Celebrates 20 Years as a Chapter



SFA Chapter 78's 20th Anniversary Medallion

Design by Chapter 78 member John Joyce



Robert Crebbs

By Robert Crebbs

In 1995 I transferred from SFA Chapter 23, in the Bay Area, to SFA Chapter 12, in Southern California. At that time, SFA Chapter 12 was the only active SFA Chapter south of the San Francisco area and was preparing to organize the starting point of the "Bank to Bank Walk" sponsored by SFA HQ.

Most of the active members of SFA Chapter 12 lived in the Riverside and San Bernardino areas and while contacting members for support of the "Walk" it was noted that there were several members in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas who would like to participate in Chapter functions if held in areas closer to the coast.

In 1996 through 1997 Ted Encinas and I started contacting friends and acquaintances from the SF Community in the Los Angeles area to see if there was an interest in forming a local SFA Chapter. On April 18th, 1998 an organizational meeting was held and it was decided to submit an application for a new chapter in the South Coast area of California. Provisional officers were elected; Ray Estrella as President, Bill Taylor as Vice-President, Bob Crebbs as Secretary, and Jack Eckles as Treasurer. Ted Encinas acted as Chaplain. I was instructed to obtain at least fifteen member's signatures on an application and submit it to National. This was done and the application was submitted in May of 1998.

The chapter's third meeting was held on June 13, 1998. Col. Bank was a guest.

On June 23, 1998 the Chapter was given provisional status as "The South Coast Chapter #LXXVIII." We had twenty members at that time with Art Dolick and "Pappy" Valdez becoming numbers 19 and 20.

The members were looking for a chapter name and it was suggested we contact LTC Frank J. Dallas, the first president of the SF Decade Association and the holder of SF Association Card number D-1. Bill Taylor reported that Frank Dallas would be honored to have our chapter named after him. SFHQ approved the name change in April of 1999.

LTC Frank J. Dallas visited Chapter 78 on April 29, 2000. He presented his "Life Membership Card" with the Number "D-1" to the Chapter along with his own "Decade Crest". Bill Taylor presented the First Chapter 78 Polo Shirt to LTC Dallas. LTC Dallas told the story of how the Green Beret was worn prior to its official recognition and the story of how he earned his "Silver Star".

Sometime between July 2000 and June 2001 Chapter 78 dropped its "Provisional" status and became a regular chapter in the Special Forces Association. ♦



Colonel and Mrs. Aaron Bank at the table



LTC (R) Bill Taylor on right.

Lang Vei Extraction of Survivors Under Heavy Fire:

Unsung Heroes of 176th Minutemen Assault Helicopter Company



Above top left, Crew Chief Teddy Spurlock (left) and co-pilot Bob Hartley (right) performing a pre-flight check. Da Nang, South Vietnam, 1968.

Bottom left, Ray in ARVN fatigues. The 176th flew covert missions into Cambodia and Laos to drop sentries. They took their dog tags off for these missions and wore the ARVN fatigues for concealment in case they were ever shot down.



Mike Keele

By Mike Keele

Ray Cyrus was an ordinary guy with a job to do in Viet Nam, but he wanted more. He fancied himself to be door gunner material, and extended his tour by six months to live his dream. He was assigned to the Minutemen in Chu Lai, and in February of 1968, he was gunning on “slicks” because he could see that they got more hours in the air than did the gun ship guys. So, on/

about 7 February, '68, he was assigned to go out on an emergency extraction mission at a beleaguered SF camp called Lang Vei.

The flight from Chu Lai to Khe Sanh was a long one, which should have warranted a medal just for the flight, but the day was only beginning. Ray said that they fueled up at Khe Sanh, which is a lobbed mortar round down the road from Lang Vei, and even at that, they were driven away from the POL (refueling point) by mortar and/or artillery fire in Khe Sanh — and they hadn't even gotten over their target area yet. He went on to explain that the crew was an odd assortment: The aircraft commander that day, Bob Hartley, normally flew as the “Peter Pilot”, and the PP, Tom Lake, was normally the aircraft commander. The crew chief was Teddy Spurlock, who kept some bubble gum and band aids on hand for emergencies. None of these men was likely to have realized the enormity of their mission until the pilots were briefed at Khe Sanh. Still, they took off for Lang Vei with high hopes of.....surviving.

Ray said they got in touch with a Covey aircraft, a Super Sky Master flown by a guy named Rushworth. With everything that was going on, the rotor-heads were relying on Rushworth pretty heavily, as he had time in grade in that AO. He told them that their job was to just glide on down where smoke was to be popped, pick up the surv-uh, troops and then get out. On the way in, there were indigenous troops firing AK47s and NVA troops firing AK47s, and it was a little hard to tell which was which, except that some of them were shooting at the Huey, and the rest were shooting at those guys. That gave Ray all the guidance he needed and he went to work in this target rich environment, where bullets and rockets and mortars were flying every which way.



Door gunner, Ray, with his fixed-mount gun. According to Ray, "Early on, our machine guns were mounted with bungee cords, but too often we ended up shooting our skids. Later we changed to fixed-mount guns, which limited our range some but spared our skids."

By Ray's recollection, there were no A-1 Sky Raiders in the air when he was there, so he was a little sore about not having any of the 176th Muskets along to provide gun cover. Still, a chance to snatch a few live bodies from impending death should never be overlooked, so they touched down right on the appropriate color of smoke. At that point, Ray encountered 1st Lt. Paul Longgear, who had multiple wounds, but he was pushing other wounded men onto the aircraft. Ray said that, complicating Longgear's job, were a bevy of "civilians" who were scrambling onto the chopper, a problem the Lieutenant solved by ordering them off the bird at gunpoint. Ray said that one particularly tenacious sort was clinging to a skid as they made their take-off, and Ray could see that the man wouldn't be able to hang on long enough to land with the rest of the load. This problem was solved when Ray stepped on the man's fingers, causing him to let go at a speed and altitude which would not be likely to kill him when he got back to mother Earth. (an aside on this was a phone call Ray received years later from the pilot, Rushworth, who said he thought Ray had shot the man off the skid, (which he hadn't) and saw this young, would-be sky diver crash through the roof of a hootch to end his flight.

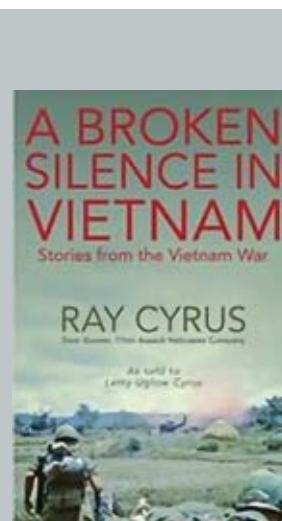
The incoming gunfire was horrendous, and they wondered how many rounds had hit vital spots on the Huey. Well, apparently none had, and they limped over to Khe Sanh where their load of survivors was discharged. Ray described an oft seen photo of Paul Longgear being half-carried, half-dragged away from the aircraft by a Marine. By this time, Ray and the rest of the crew was assessing the damage to their helicopter: T-tt-twelve, th-th-thirteen, and on and on. One particularly grievous wound suffered by the old bird was a .50 cal round which went through a push-pull tube connecting the swash plate to the rotor blades. Now, that might sound innocent enough to you neophytes, but us rotor-heads know that to lose that one part, even if you're sitting on the ground with the blades turning, is game over for everybody within shrapnel range.



Musket bombers loading up 81-mm mortar bombs for a bombing mission. L-R: Crew Chief Miller, behind him unknown, Buzz in dark glasses, our pilot Warrant Officer Fitz, possibly SP/5 Tom Wahden, and Martin "Chief" Ochoa. Notice "The Musket Bombers 176 AVN" on bomber box.

Ray said they made a get-away from Khe Sanh as quickly as pleasantries could be conveyed. They limped as far south as Phu Bai, where there was an air field. The next morning, they got a replacement push-pull tube which Spurlock hammered into place, and off they went to beautiful Chu Lai-By-The-Sea. The bedraggled quartet was more than happy to get home, as everyplace they had stopped had been inhospitable, unless you like being shot at with small arms, large arms, mortars, rockets and maybe, artillery.

An amazing part of this story is that, although Marine CH-46s were flying race track patterns around the perimeter of Lang Vei, none of them was willing to land and make the extraction. And the most amazing part is that this one, lone Army Huey from 200 miles south of Lang Vei, flew in and got the survivors out and went home without so much as an atta-boy. So, does anybody know someone with influence who could make it possible for these men to be belatedly awarded the medals for bravery they so righteously earned? ♦



Ray Cyrus' book *A Broken Silence in Vietnam* contains the story of his wartime experiences in Vietnam. Each chapter is followed by stories of several fellow Vietnam veterans Ray met out in public places while wearing his Vietnam veteran hat.

The book is available for purchase at major online bookstores and Outskirtpress.com, the publisher's website.

THE FORGOTTEN WARRIORS



Updates on the Montagnards



Lac Thien (A-236) Under Construction



Don Gonneville

FULRO at Lac Thien (A236, II Corp, RVN) 1965

By Don Gonneville

Those whom we know as the Montagnard peoples of Vietnam are actually descendants of two separate migratory groups that made their way to what is now Vietnam centuries ago. The Malayo-Polynesian tribes, originating in Polynesia and Indonesia, consist of the

Rhade, Jarai, Chru, Rai, Roglai and Hroy. The Mon Khmer tribes who migrated from Burma, include the Bahnar, Rengao, Sedang, Halang, Jeh, Monom, Koho, and Chrau, Katu, Phuang, Bru and Pacoh. There are over 28 tribal groups within 5 major tribes.

These groups originally settled along the coastal regions, but later moved up into the central highlands. There they lived peacefully for centuries.

During the French colonization period of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the French Federal Government recognized the territorial sovereignty and integrity of the Montagnard people. There were no ethnic Vietnamese and others living in the Central Highlands during that time. In 1946, the French created an autonomous country for the Montagnard population of South Indochina called "Pays Montagnards Du Sud Indochinois" (PMSI), granting self-administration and self-determination to the Montagnard people of the Central Highlands.

When the French Indochina War between the French and the North Vietnamese Communists began, the French Federal government recruited thousands of Montagnards and formed 13 battalions of Montagnards who were armed and recruited to join the French Forces in their fight against the North Vietnamese Communists, the Viet-Minh.

Fast-forward to 1954. The defeat of the French Army at Dien Bien Phu led to the withdrawal of the French from Indochina, the creation of a divided Vietnam (North Vietnam and the Republic of South Vietnam), and the accession of Ngo Dinh Diem as the first

president of South Vietnam. That was a major turning point for the Montagnard civilization. The autonomy granted by the French was eliminated, and the area was annexed by the South Vietnamese government. The Montagnards were classified as an ethnic minority, and were subjected to an ethnic cleansing with the goal of complete assimilation without the benefits of civil rights. In fact, they were considered as "Moi", savages, and were treated accordingly.

When our Special Forces units were given the mission of interdicting the flow of North Vietnamese soldiers and equipment on the "Ho Chi Minh" trail along the Laotian and Cambodian borders, we found the Montagnards willing and able to serve with us. Those of us who had the good fortune of working with the Montagnard CIDG forces knew them as fearless fighters, generally fiercely loyal to the American Special Forces with whom they served. Many of the older Yards still spoke some French, which made it easier for me to form relationships with them.

The desire for freedom and autonomy did not disappear, however, but resurfaced in a movement known as the United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races (FULRO). This was a movement among the Montagnard peoples of South Vietnam to regain autonomy from the governments of North and South Vietnam, and after 1975, from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. There is sufficient information online to provide the reader with a comprehensive history of this movement, so I will focus on a single incident in which I was a participant. It occurred on 18 December 1965, and was relegated to a single paragraph in a Wikipedia summary of the movement:

"Political tensions rose again and in December 1965, a second FULRO uprising broke out, in which thirty-five Vietnamese, including civilians, were killed. The rebellion was put down in a day; four of the FULRO leaders were condemned to death and publicly executed, and fifteen others were imprisoned."

I arrived in country on 1 December 1965 and quickly moved through group headquarters in Nha Trang, the C Team in Pleiku, and the B Team in Ban Me Thuot, and was assigned as the XO of Detachment A236 in Lac Thien. The camp was about six months old, having moved from Bu Prang in June. It took its name from the district capital, rather than from the nearby village of Buon K'Die.

At 0700 on that fateful Saturday morning, I walked out with several teammates to oversee the morning formation and to organize the days' activities. However, the usual formation failed to materialize, and our CIDG troops were milling around. When I asked our interpreter the reason for the delay, he simply said "FULRO" and pointed to an individual behind me, who promptly saluted me and informed me that he was taking over the camp. The .45 on his hip told me that he was not one of ours. I immediately told him that he would NOT be taking over the camp, and was met with the intense stares of several well-armed Montagnards who obviously knew our new friend. At that moment, the team CO, CPT John McKinney, joined our group and I quickly briefed him on the situation as I knew it. The five Vietnamese Special Forces soldiers being led out of the camp at gunpoint accentuated the seriousness of the situation.

We were then informed that our A Team would be taken hostage, and that our CIDG Force would attack the district headquarters at Lac Thien. At that point, they would join a larger force from several other camps to take over the provincial headquarters at Ban Me Thuot. We were instructed to cease all communications with the B team, but the CO informed our "captors" that to do so would incur serious consequences from the ARVN forces. We knew that our most serious threat did not come from our Montagnard forces, who continued to treat us cordially, but from the ARVNs who nurtured an intense dislike and fear of FULRO.

Throughout the day we never felt threatened, and everyone on our team acted very calmly and professionally. We did inform the Yards at some point early on that the ARVN were more concerned with the threat of FULRO than they were with the well-being of an American A team.

At this point it is not clear exactly what happened, or how the FULRO elements were able to communicate with each other. During the day we were not restrained in any way, but we were largely ignored while long discussions took place with and among the 200 or so CIDG troops. By mid-afternoon, however, it became obvious that the odds of success were stacked against them, and their mission was aborted. The FULRO leader politely took his leave, and the Vietnamese Special Forces soldiers were returned to the camp unharmed.

That probably should have been, at minimum, an uneasy truce between FULRO and the Vietnamese leadership in Ban Me Thuot.

However, as in most situations, politics looms larger than what we may perceive as a more important mission, that of defeating the Viet Cong and the NVA moving down the HCM trail.

Early Sunday morning, when we thought everything had returned to normalcy, our camp was suddenly "buzzed" by two menacing Hueys, sent by the Vietnamese with the knowledge and consent of our B Team. In fact, we believe our B Team commander was on board one of the Hueys. They obviously did not believe our reports that the situation was very much under control. When they were satisfied that the threat had passed, they left without further fanfare.

Shortly thereafter, the VN LLDB (Vietnamese Special Forces team) left, never to return. They were eventually replaced by a Montagnard captain and a smaller team.



The Negotiations

What happened next is a situation that, to this day, I have never come to grips with. Our B Team sent us a list of about twelve of our Yards, the leaders and interpreters, who were asked to go to Ban Me Thuot to help prepare an after-action report. Hueys would be sent to take them there, and to return them soon after. We assured them that everything would be OK, because our B Team was involved. On arriving in Ban Me Thuot, they were turned over to the Vietnamese, and we were never able to contact them again. Our repeated requests to the B Team were met with silence or worse. We have to this day no idea of their fate, these loyal Yards who believed in us. As soldiers, we obey orders unless these orders are unlawful. In retrospect, what should we have done?



Our lead interpreter

.....

The FULRO movement never succeeded, and the Montagnard civilization continues to be decimated and scattered throughout the world. I sometimes think that we are more concerned with the survival of a subspecies of rodent than we are with the promulgation of a people who have a rich history, and who were without a doubt very loyal friends to us, Special Forces veterans, many of whom owe our lives to them. ❖

SUPPORT THE YARDS

Contribute to The Vietnam Fund

<http://vietnamemifund.org/donate.html#SFlogo>

and

Save The Montagnard People

<http://www.montagnards.org/donations> to save the montagnards

Do you have a story about the Yards you worked with in Vietnam. Tell your story – contact Tom Turney (turney@newcap.com) for details.

COPS CORNER



Brad Welker

By Brad Welker

I have been asked to open a dialogue concerning the relationship between Special Forces veterans and law enforcement. My thirty-two-year career in law enforcement began a few months after I returned from Viet Nam in 1970. There were few job opportunities for someone that had a primary MOS of 11F4S. I found a job with a construction company as a laborer initially but found the work to be boring

and repetitious. I learned that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department was hiring at \$842 a month with medical benefits. I

passed the exam and went to a local Sheriff's Station and talked to several working Deputies and decided I wanted the career.

The fact that I had a Top-Secret clearance and that the previous four years had been spent in the Army sped the background process up and I was hired two months later. Training in 1970 was based upon Marine Corps boot camp and trainees were expected to perform under stress. Accordingly, we lost approximately 40% of the class. I spent the next 31 years working in a job that I loved.

Like Special Forces law enforcement is an environment that presents new challenges and responsibilities virtually every day. My time as a Patrol Deputy was highlighted by the fact that I left the station without knowing what might happen next on my shift. I thrived on the fact that nothing was "routine".

I was often given assignments at critical potentially disruptive events due to my SF background. I was chosen as a Field Force Commander early in my career and later chosen as member of the Area Management Team, primarily based upon my military experience. After retirement I spent several years conducting emergency management related training courses throughout the United States.

I have encountered many law enforcement professionals that had served in SF over the years, many of whom achieved high rank. Special Forces attracts men with unique personalities as does law enforcement. The desire to work under varying levels of stress and the acceptance of responsibility for one's actions are traits common to both. The ability to make critical decisions under trying circumstances is likewise a major part of both professions. Just as

Continued on page 15

The Army Video That Finally Introduced America to the Green Berets



Larry Thorne (pictured above in a painting on display in the 10th SFG(A) Group HQ Hall), the first casualty on the first SOG mission, appears in the mini-documentary "Phantom Fighters."

"behind" operation to push back against growing Soviet control over Western Europe. The soldiers organized guerrilla resistance fighters along German border, destroyed

By Jared Keller
March 20, 2018
taskandpurpose.com

Just over a year after the U.S. Army's Psychological Warfare Center officially activated its Special Operations Division in May 1952, the Green Berets received their first mission.

A handful of soldiers assigned to the newly minted 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) were deployed to Bad Tolz, Germany, in September 1953 as part of a "stay-

enemy infrastructure, and generally scared the bejesus out of Russian forces — and they did it all without public recognition.

It would take six more years before the American public finally met the soon-to-be-fabled Green Berets in the oddest way possible: the 30-minute mini-documentary "*Phantom Fighters*." The film — produced by the Army Signal Corps and first broadcast on the Corps' documentary program, "*The Big Picture*" — captures soldiers with the 10th SFG conducting field training exercises "in the vicinity" of Bad Tolz.

The Army video plainly states that the 10th SFG is "trained to organize guerrilla resistance in enemy occupied territories," but these soldiers do a little more than advising and assisting; in the 10th, a narrator explains, "a man's hand is as deadly a weapon as a rifle or hand grenade." And while the Army mini-doc may seem a tad too cheerful, it's a nice reminder of the gritty, hazard-filled origins of the Green Berets as they become increasingly entwined in combat operations around the world.

To watch "*Phantom Fighters*" [click on this link](https://taskandpurpose.com/green-berets-video-phantom-fighters/) or visit <https://taskandpurpose.com/green-berets-video-phantom-fighters/>

MACV-SOG One-Zero School

Part II in the Series:

School Development and Assignment of Class One



Travis Mills

By Travis Mills

I spent 31 days on the Sanctuary and then returned to FOB 4. When I got back to camp it was noon meal time. It was a bittersweet reception. Seeing old friends and learning of the ones that were gone. My old hooch was now occupied by new guys and all my stuff was in a foot locker in supply waiting to be shipped back to the states. I was assigned a room in the transient quarters. The next day I went to the S-1 and S-3 to see about

getting back on the team and getting back in the game, but life had other plans.

I had been able to talk my way out of the hospital and back to camp rather than being sent to Japan for rehab. So I was assigned to work with Maj. Toomey until I was recovered enough to get back on a team. After a couple of weeks, Maj. Toomey said SOG Headquarters in Saigon had sent a levy for a One-Zero qualified officer to start up a "Recon Team Leader's Course" (One-Zero School) in Camp Long Thanh. He told me this would be a good assignment, give me time to "heal up" and in couple of months come back to the FOB to get back on a team.

The next day I was on the "milk run" to SOG Headquarters I was given a quick briefing by Col. Cavanaugh (Chief SOG) and Col. Johnson (Chief OP 35). Basically, SOG was in a difficult position because of recent heavy losses of experienced One-Zeros and increased demands for missions. The vast majority of the replacements had no SOG experience and there was not enough experienced One-Zeros to train them, let alone field as many teams required by the demands from MACV. The classic Army solution was "Start a School". Then I was handed off to a MAJ in the S-3. He gave me a US Army Manual on Patrolling and a general outline for a 21-day "patrolling course". The course was to be conducted at Camp Long Thanh and I would be assigned one experienced One-Zero or One-One from each of the FOB's as instructors. I would go to Long Thanh the next day and the first group of students would arrive in 3 weeks.

The next day I was escorted to Long Thanh by the MAJ from S-3 and introduced to the CO and the OPS Officer as "the person who will be organizing and running the new team leader school." By the look on their face, I had a feeling this was the first time they had heard of this new school. With that, the MAJ stated he had to leave in order to get back to Saigon before it got dark and the road closed. After he left, the CO and S-3 began asking all kinds of questions about who, how many, when, how long, about logis-

tics (food, lodging, training materials, ammunition), etc., etc. I showed them the Patrolling Manual and the one page training outline. We all agreed we had better have a long meeting tomorrow. I

was given a bunk the transient quarters and as I lay down that night my only thought was "What in the hell have I gotten into?"

Camp Long Thanh was a very unique camp. On the 5th Group Organization Chart it was listed as B-53. It was about 35 miles SE of Saigon about 5 miles off of Hwy 15. It was rumored to have been established by the French prior to WWII, supposedly it had been occupied by the Japanese during WWII and reoccupied by the French after WWII until their withdrawal from Viet Nam. Upon their departure it was taken over initially by the CIA, and eventually by MACV-SOG. From the very beginning it had always been a highly secretive site and occupied by very high level intelligence units. The camp was quite large and very compartmentalized. There were several "compounds" within the camp, that unless you had the correct clearance and/or need to know, you didn't ask questions or try to enter. It was home to the projects "Borden", STRATA, as well as many others never acknowledged. There was a small airstrip just south of the camp where a steady stream of C-130 and C-123 "Blackbirds" picked up and dropped off non-descript teams and supplies. Everyone in the camp wore sterile uniforms (unmarked tiger suits), and when outsiders visited they were required to turn their jackets inside out to mask names, ranks, etc.

Due to the camp being established so long and occupied by these "secret organizations" with very substantial "discretionary funds", the accommodations were quite extraordinary for a "combat zone". If you were permanent party in this camp you had an individual, air conditioned room, with clean starched sheets. The dining facility was one of the best in Viet Nam. The chief cook had been the "chef" at the embassy, but he had two draft aged sons. So one of the previous CO's made the offer if he would come to the camp, the camp would hire his two sons as part of the security staff, which would give them a complete deferment of the Vietnamese Draft, and they would be assigned temporary (permanent) duty as his KP assistants. As the saying goes; "it was an offer he couldn't refuse." The mess sergeant made regular trips to the Saigon docks when the Navy ships were in with a truck load of "War Trophy's" (VC Flags, VC Sandals, etc. — made by the camp sew-girls, sprinkled with chicken blood and a few bullet holes) to trade for the Navy rations. The end result: Life was good at Camp Long Thanh.

Initially it was a strange relationship. Long Thanh was an OP 34 camp and I (and the instructors coming later) were from OP 35 and

definitely considered “outsiders”. I at first, and the instructors when they arrived, were given very specific guidelines and restrictions on where we could go around the camp and what we could do, and especially don’t be asking any questions that didn’t specifically pertain to the One-Zero school. Even though this One-Zero school seemed to be pretty high on OP 35’s priority list, it didn’t seem too high to the OP 34 list. I was told in Saigon the camp would provide logistical support, i.e., training facilities, materials, ammunition, and transportation. The S-4 told me to submit a list of what I needed and they would forward it to SOG S-4. SOG S-4 didn’t seem to have a very high priority on our requests, so we received only about 30% of the materials requested. I was told this is a new project and supplies are limited, so you’ll have to make do with what you’ve got.

Near the end of the first week the instructors started showing up at the camp. They were all experienced One-Zero’s or One-One’s. Just like me, they were told to go the airfield, get on a blackbird and get off at Long Thanh. Most of them had been told very little about the project and were also told they were only “on loan” to the school for a couple of cycles. As a result no one had any orders other than the “special travel orders” from the FOB’s and the infamous “get out of jail free” card. Those “special travel orders” identified the bearer as a member of MACV Studies and Observations Group, a highly sensitive unit and verified the bearer had all the sufficient security clearances and authorization for travel via the “Blackbirds” and/or Air America. Most of them were not very happy to be there, they wanted to be back at their FOB with their team. A couple of them had an injury and were sent to the school while they healed up. The only thing that made it somewhat palatable was the opportunity of an occasional trip to Saigon.

We were provided a barracks type building that was previously used by the STRATA Teams. We used half for bunks and the other half as a work area for class preparation. In the days (and nights) before the instructors arrived I had been racking my brain to come up with a training program that would provide “keep you alive” information and mission essential skills. I thought back to my first days on a recon team: What knowledge and skills would I liked to have had that first time I jumped off that Kingbee 20 miles from nowhere? We spent the first two days just sitting in a circle getting to know each other and formulating a plan. I told them, “You guys are still 1-0’s, you’ve just got a different mission for a little while. These guys we’re getting are new to SOG. You guys, better than anyone, know that Prairie Fire and Daniel Boone recon is an entirely different animal. There are no manuals – it’s all acquired knowledge from being on the ground and coming back alive. Our job is to teach them that knowledge and those skills so when they go back to their FOB, they can be an immediate asset to their team. The teams now are so heavily committed the 1-0’s don’t have the luxury of spending a week or two to train new guys — they have to be ready and able to contribute within a few days of being assigned to a team. We will have two weeks here — then we all go to FOB 2 for the ‘final exam’: to be assigned a target and launched. FOB 2 agreed to this plan because their teams are over committed and 3 or 4 extra teams will help relieve some of the pressure and give their teams a much

needed break. These will be real targets, so take your side of the training very seriously because these “students” will be your team. When you come back from the mission, if you give your approval, the “students” will be given a handshake, a pat on the back, a Zippo lighter with the SOG crest, a very sincere “Keep Your Head Down”, and a ride to the airfield to catch a blackbird back to their FOB. We come back here for a one week break to get ready for the next cycle of students to arrive, then we do it again. How long will this school last? I don’t know. Col. Johnson, Chief of OP 35 told me we will continue until there are no more new guys to train. At the current rate of our losses, we may be here quite some time. You will be here until your FOB sends a replacement.”

With that piece of business out of the way, we launched into a brain storming session of what are the most critical subjects and skills they need to learn and how we are going to get it all done in two weeks. Each one had their own opinion of what was most important as well the differences in operating procedures between the Prairie Fire and Daniel Boone AO’s. At the end of a very long day, we had compiled a preliminary list of subjects and tasks.

The next day we began to formulate a training schedule. Because the vast majority of the “students” will be new to SOG, we felt it extremely important that the very first thing was to emphasize that our “business” is vastly different than anything they have ever seen or been involved in before. This is not just some glorified long range patrolling. The standard mission is 7 days, but very few last that long. Once you get off that helicopter the only “friendly’s” are the other members of your team and Covey (a forward air controller dedicated to SOG). You and your team immediately become one of the most hunted groups in the country. The North Vietnamese take it so seriously, there is a real bounty on the SOG teams and they have a special, highly trained unit whose sole mission is to hunt down and destroy SOG teams. You will always be outnumbered. Sometimes it’s only 2 or 3 to 1, but it can rapidly and easily escalate to 100’s to 1. Once the enemy knows you’re in the area, they will devote entire regiments to find and kill you. You will be operating up to 17 miles deep into enemy territory. And because we do operate so deep across the border, once the helicopters insert you they are only able to stay in the area a short time, then they have to go back to refuel and rearm. If you get in trouble, it can take up to an hour before they can get back to you. There is no mortar or artillery support. In Prairie Fire you have air support, but in Daniel Boone you only have helicopter gunship support. In some areas there is communication through a relay site, but as a general rule, Covey is your only communication and your lifeline. Running recon is a tremendously hazardous business, and if there is a secret to success and survival, it’s knowledge and training. Every one of these instructors are experienced 1-0’s or 1-1’s. Our mission over the next two weeks is to share as much of that knowledge and experience, both the successes and mistakes, so you can make a significant contribution to your team. Your “final exam” will be a mission on a real target. This is very serious business, so pay attention and train hard.

Once we had their attention, the next subject was to define the mission of SOG. The primary mission is gathering intelligence. There are some direct action missions, but those are primarily for

the Hatchet Forces. Your ultimate goal is to be inserted into your target area, spend your time gathering the intelligence and being extracted and no one ever knowing you were there. Unfortunately that rarely happens. Although your mission is not to go in and “shoot up” the place, you and your team will be among the most heavily armed groups in the country. If you are discovered by the enemy, your survival depends on being able to win that fight even though you’re heavily outnumbered and outgunned and a long way from help. Some of the advantages you have are: 1. stealth; 2. a small team (6 to 8 men) can move fast; 3. intensive training and 4. precise team execution.

By stealth we don’t necessarily mean slinking around in the shadows, but more of being able to move through the area silently and invisibly. You will be carrying a lot of equipment, weapons, etc. Almost all of them are made of some type of metal and/or hard plastic. Unless properly prepared, every time you move or take a step, these things make noise. As a 1-0, it is your responsibility to ensure every member of your team has sufficiently “silenced” his gear. One of the first things is to get rid of is the standard rifle sling. It and the attachment swivels make lots of “hard noise”. Remove the sling, and secure or remove the sling swivels. All other equipment that can come in contact with another hard object must be secured or cushioned so it doesn’t make hard noise. Your movements and “noise” must blend with the natural sounds of the jungle and it is essential that you hear “them” before they hear you. Not only must you “silence” your gear, you have to communicate silently. Once you’re on the ground, talking must be held to an absolute minimum. You must have your team so well trained and drilled, that 95% of communications can be done with hand and arm signals. The first time you are lying beside a trail and observe an NVA unit move by, you will be amazed how much noise they make and how far you can hear them coming. It will totally confirm the importance of silence in your movements.

The other part of stealth is being invisible. It is obvious that means blending with the surrounding environment, and most importantly covering your trail. It is almost impossible for 6 or 8 men, carrying very heavy loads (rucksacks & weapons), to move through the jungle and not leave evidence of their passing. The “tail gunner” is one of the most important members of your team. He must understand the importance of covering the trail and how to remove and/or camouflage the signs of your passing. In our operational areas the enemy employs highly skilled trackers. These are usually people who are native to the area and extremely familiar with the local terrain. If they can pick up your trail and determine the direction of travel, their familiarity of area will allow them to use a parallel trail to get ahead of you and assist the local unit in setting up an ambush, and just lie in wait for you. As a general rule they will not follow your trail directly or too close. They will travel off to the side and far enough back to be out of sight, but within hearing distance. If they can’t get ahead of you, they will track you to your RON site, then one will go back and guide a larger, heavily armed unit to overrun your RON site. You have to always be aware of the possibility of trackers and take the necessary precautions. On the other side, even though there’s a good chance you have

trackers, don’t let that panic you into taking unnecessary risks. You may occasionally run into tracker dogs. The dogs are not as big a threat as the human trackers. The dogs are usually not well trained and tend to bark, alerting you they are there. There are several things to deter the dogs such as powdered CS, pepper mixed with dried blood, etc. During the movement techniques phase, we’ll talk about ways to evade, elude, and possibly eliminate trackers. Although it may be close to impossible to not leave some evidence of your passing through the area, the important objective is to make it as difficult as possible for the enemy to detect your trail. The more difficult you make it, the more likely they will make an error and if you know they are there you can take appropriate actions.

Although these were only three of the many tragic events within SOG, they were significant teaching tools to emphasize to the students the seriousness of our operations. They drove home the point that your team will be hunted like animals and in order to survive you have to be at the top of your game every minute you are on the ground. Contrary to popular belief, the enemy that is hunting you is very, very good, extremely dedicated and unrelentingly persistent. If there is just one thing you take away from this course, it should be that just one minute of inattention can result total disaster.

The next topic area was gear. The choice of uniforms is almost unlimited. The only thing that is “chiseled in stone” is that you will be completely sterile. No dog tags, no ID Cards, No Jump Wings, No Patches, No Name Tags and/or Nickname Tags, etc. At this time in the war, there have been enough US uniforms and weapons lost, captured, sold on the black market, etc., that just because you have one of those items, the State Department can still have plausible deniability. Most of you will not immediately be assigned as a 1-0. The vast majority will go to an existing team as a 1-1 or 1-2. The other team members will be full of advice about uniforms and weapons and other gear. Almost everyone has their own personal preference, but many prefer the standard US jungle fatigue uniform. It has lots of pockets, it dries quickly and is pretty rugged and is readily available. All the FOB’s have a sew-shop, and almost everyone will have their field uniforms modified with extra pockets, compartments, and appendages. Again, the 1-0 will have plenty of advice on what you add and how to utilize it. The boots of choice are the standard US issue Jungle Boot with the nylon tops. They’re light, rugged, provide good ankle support and most of all they dry quickly.

Keeping your feet and your other body parts as dry as possible will be a top priority. It’s a highly debated issue, but many of the experienced team members chose to not wear underwear or socks in the field. It rains a lot in the A/O’s and most team members don’t carry any type of rain gear, so you’re going to get wet. You are going to spend days in wet clothes, whether it be from rain or sweat, combined with accumulated dirt, grime, etc., and you will be prone to develop a rash. The standard issue underwear has a tendency to bunch up and exacerbate the rash and in that hot, humid, dirty environment, pretty soon you have a good case of the classic “crotch rot”. It can get extremely uncomfortable and you will likely fight it for the rest of your life. Continually wet feet can be a tremendous problem. The skin begins to get the “prune” appearance, and continued walking, running, etc. causes the skin to begin to flake off and develop into

areas of raw tissue. Again, in that environment, infection is rampant. Many of the “old hands” go without socks, because they retain the moisture, both sweat and rain, and increase the chance of “trench foot”. Sure you can wear socks, and many team members do. You just have to be continually aware of your feet and change socks as often as possible. Also, you can’t decide the day before the mission to not wear socks. You have to condition your feet, by going without socks all the time in camp and when training. It will take a few weeks to get them really tough and develop callouses in the right spots. Once you have your feet conditioned and you’re wearing the jungle boots with the air vents and nylon tops, you will have a much lower chance of developing foot problems. But, whatever you decide to do, be aware of these potential problem areas and take the necessary precautions to prevent injuries and/or infections.

When you start putting your gear together, you start from the inside out. Once you’ve decided on the basic uniform, you build from there. What you carry in or on your basic uniform is your absolute last line of survival. It means you’ve ditched your rucksack and web gear and all you have left is what you have in your pockets. The first thing in your fatigue pocket is the URC-10 Emergency Radio. This is your last line of communication. It puts out an emergency signal on the guard frequency that is monitored by all aircraft. The next thing is a compass on a piece of suspension line around your neck. In one of your breast pockets is your operational map and your mission KAC code sheet. The operational map only covers your current A/O (usually 16 to 20 grid squares). It is covered with acetate so you can annotate it with grease pencil. Again, it only covers your current A/O — it’s a need to know situation. If you have no idea if there is anything going on in the grid squares around your A/O, you can’t compromise anything or another team, no matter how much they beat you. The KAC code sheet is a 5X5 matrix of colors and numbers with each square a predetermined response. Each team has a unique KAC for a mission and covey has a copy of each individual team’s KAC. An example would be once a team is on the ground, within 10 minutes the 1-0 will call covey with a Black 23. On their KAC sheet that’s a “Team OK!” These KAC sheets change with each team and each mission. After mid-1968, and the introduction of RDF along the “Trail” minimum time on the radio was essential to avoid team detection. Also there was an “emergency KAC code”, that was a minimal code committed to memory by the 1-0 and covey. This was used in absolute last ditch commo and used with the emergency authentication code. That code was committed to memory and only known to the 1-0, the S-3 Briefing Officer, and Covey. If you make a mistake on the authentication code, the next thing you will see is a 2.75 WP rocket marking your spot followed by a 250 lb. bomb, or a napalm canister, or 20mm cannon fire! So make sure you remember the emergency authentication code — it is for MEMORY ONLY — DO NOT WRITE IT DOWN!!

In one of your other pockets is your emergency medical kit. That contains morphine, compress bandage, cravat (tourniquet), marching pills (amphetamines), surgical thread and needles, and water purification pills. Again, these are last ditch emergency supplies — you have dropped or lost everything else and severely injured and this is what will get you the last few hundred meters to the LZ. In

my right breast pocket I had a pen flare. On a piece of suspension line tied to a belt loop was a Swiss Army knife or a standard demo knife in the right trouser pocket.

In the two big pockets on the pants you put one indig ration in each pocket. The indig ration was a bag of dehydrated rice with some vegetables and some type of protein (squid, or shrimp, or mystery meat). You put water in the bag and put it in your pocket to “cook” with your body heat for a few hours. You always have two bags cooking. Once you use one, you put another one in the pocket to replace it. The normal situation was to carry one bag per day of anticipated mission, (Very Important: *always* have a bottle of Tabasco Sauce — this stuff is totally inedible without Tabasco Sauce) YOU NEVER COOK IN THE FIELD! The only reason you carry this food is because you have to have some type of food to maintain your energy. You are not on a family outing or picnic, this is not food to enjoy or savor — it’s only function is to provide you the necessary energy to accomplish your mission. A team’s most vulnerable position is when it’s taking a chow break. For some reason, humans get so complacent and/or distracted when eating, they have a total tendency to ignore their surrounding situations. NEVER relax during a chow break! NEVER let more than half of the team eat at a time — the other half MUST be on full alert. The last thing you must have after you have dropped everything else is some water. You can survive several days without food, but only hours without water. You have some purification pills in your emergency medical kit, so even if you have to skim the scum of the top of a pond, it can sustain you and maintain your energy level to continue you evasion and escape effort. The next thing is a signal mirror. You put it on a loop of suspension line through a button hole on your shirt, and carry it in one of your breast pockets. And finally, if you wear a hat, we recommend a “stingy brim” hat (the FOB sew shop will know how to do it). Line the top of the hat, with a piece of “Air Force Emergency Panel”. If you prefer to wear something other than a hat, i.e., cravat, or whatever, carry an emergency signal panel in one of the big pockets of the pants.

Once you’ve got your fatigues loaded, the next level is your web gear. A lot of the RT members really liked and preferred the BAR Belt (WWII Browning Automatic Rifle). Each pocket on the BAR Belt would hold 5 CAR 15 magazines, plus it had open space for grenades, canteens/ water bottles, grenades, etc. It was a great piece of equipment, but because of being WWII vintage, the availability was quite limited. (When I was in the Hatchet Force I had a BAR Belt, but when I was moved to an RT, I left it with my replacement platoon leader and opted for traditional web gear with canteen covers for ammo pouches) Even though BAR Belts were preferred, the traditional web gear is the norm for most RT’s. The most common ammo pouch is the traditional canteen cover. You can put 7 CAR 15 magazines in each one. You can put 5 magazines vertical and 2 two laying on their side on top of the 5. On the standard web gear you can easily put 4 canteen covers (4 X 7 = 28 mags X 18 = 504 rounds + 1 mag in the rifle = 522 rounds). We put 18 rounds per magazine because you didn’t want to overstress the magazine spring. If the spring gets weak, it causes a misfeed and a potential jam. The magazines are loaded facing down, bullets out, so rain and debris can drain out,

and we put tape on the bottom of the magazines so we have a tab to pull them out easily. When you come back from a mission and get a 2 or 3 day stand down, get the entire team together and spend 1 or 2 hours, unloading all the magazines, cleaning the rounds, cleaning the magazines, cleaning and oiling the springs. It's only a couple of hours, but it can mean the difference between life and death on the next mission. You are only one misfeed from disaster.

Next on the belt is water: one standard canteen on each side. As stated before, you can survive days without food, but hours without water. On the right side, I carried a canteen cover with M26 hand grenades. On the left side I carried a canteen cover with 2 WP grenades. That left one space, and I carried a canteen cover with the standard medical/first aid supplies.

On the left shoulder strap I taped a strobe light (the cover was colored blue with magic marker). Underneath that I had a yellow smoke grenade.

On the right side I had a 6" Buck Folding Knife, and underneath that a WP Smoke Grenade.

Now that we're finished with the web gear, we're at about 40 lbs. of gear, but now we get to the rucksack. One of the first decisions to be made is who carries the radio. Some 1-0's prefer to carry the radio so they can communicate directly rather than relaying through another team member. Others prefer to have the 1-1 or 1-2 carry the radio. They feel that while the radio operator is occupied with the communication, it allows the 1-0 to concentrate on the immediate situation and directing the team. It all comes down to what is most comfortable for each 1-0. If you are the one who will carry the radio, it's the first thing that goes in your rucksack. The PRC-25 weighs about 25 lbs., and takes up quite a bit of room so you will be somewhat limited in what else you can carry.

Your assigned mission will have influence on what equipment you take. Once the equipment list has been done and distributed within the team, then you can load your personal gear. Mission essential items are the first to go in. Extra magazines, claymore mines with the firing device and connecting wire, toe popper mines, a collapsible canteen, C-4 (if needed), pre-cut time fuses for the claymore mines and/or C-4, a few extra frag and smoke grenades and extra batteries for the PRC-25 and URC-10, a box of blasting caps and the PEN EE camera. The only creature comfort items I carried was an indig poncho and a long sleeve sweater. The indig poncho was only about 2/3 the size of the standard army poncho, it was light weight nylon and made very little noise. When you're wet, which was most of the time, it gets very cold in the mountains in the wee hours of the morning and the sweater helps make those long nights bearable. These were folded and put in a pocket on the rucksack that provides some cushioning between your back and the radio. The last thing that goes in is food and a C-Ration packet of toilet paper. I carried the indig rations, 2 in my fatigues, and 2 in the rucksack. That would last 4 or 5 days. I had rather risk being hungry, than running out of ammo or not having a back-up battery for the radio. On the outside of the rucksack I carried a Swiss seat rope on one side and an indig machete on the other. At the top of the rucksack where the straps attach to the "bag" I had a snap link

attached. This was to be used if we had to come out on McGuire rigs or strings.

DO NOT take heat tabs or cigarettes to the field. NEVER cook or smoke in the field. If you have heat tabs in your rucksack, it's a tremendous temptation to make a cup of coffee on those long, cold nights. If you don't have them, there's no temptation. American cigarettes have a unique odor and carry a long way in the jungle. Again, if you smoke and you have them, it's a tremendous temptation and if you smoke in the field, dying of lung cancer will be the least of your worries.

Once you are loaded out, the fatigues, web gear, and rucksack you will be carrying about 70 lbs. of gear, etc. What you carry will evolve as you get more experience and re-evaluate what works best for you.

The next thing is your weapon. The weapon of choice is the CAR 15. It is very versatile, has good knockdown power, and you can carry lots of ammunition. SOG has access to various weapons, i.e., the Swedish K, the British Sten, the old WWII Grease Gun, AK 47, the M-79 Grenade Launcher, and the silenced 22 Cal. Pistol, just to name a few. During your time here you will do familiarization firing of these various weapons. The all have pros and cons, and it's really up to you and your team leader as to what you carry. Sometimes the mission will influence the choice of weapon for some members of the team. Whatever weapon you select, make sure you are thoroughly knowledgeable of its operation and maintenance. Many 1-0's and team members opt to carry a modified (sawed off) M-79 Grenade Launcher in addition to their primary weapon. The stock is sawed off and modified into a pistol type grip. Two or three of these on a team can add a lot of firepower and shock effect.

The next subject area was team organization and training. Again, there are no concrete rules on team organization other than the 1-0 is the BOSS. His word is law. Up until a short time ago, all 1-0's had at least 5 missions as a 1-1, most had close to 10, and a recommendation from his former 1-0 to be assigned as a 1-0. Experience, not rank was the primary qualification factor. When I joined an RT as a 1-1, I was a 1LT, my 1-0 was a SSG, but as long as I was a member of that team he was in charge until he rotated and recommended that I be moved up, otherwise I would have remained the 1-1. As a result of heavy losses and increased operational requirements, we don't have that luxury any longer. Many of the 1-0's today only had the opportunity of 2 or 3 missions before being moved into the 1-0 position. But even so, he is still in charge. He may ask your opinion or input during training and mission prep, but on the ground in a firefight is no place for a tactical discussion.

The 1-0 will organize the team, set up the order of march, and assign specific duties. The organization of the team will be a reflection of the 1-0's experience. Unless the mission dictates differently, most prefer a six man team. Under normal circumstances of altitude and lift capability, the entire six man team can be inserted and extracted on one chopper. Usually, the point man will be the most experienced indig team member. Obviously he will be first in order of march. Some 1-0's prefer to be next in line with the M-79 man third for increased firepower during an initial contact. Fourth in line will be another indig, next will be the 1-1, followed by the tail gunner, the

second most experienced indig team member. Because of the importance of the tail gunner in covering the back trail, some 1-0's prefer to have the 1-1 as tail gunner. Most teams will have 6 to 8 indig members which allows for sickness, injuries, etc.. All members continually train together which allows substitution without degrading the expertise level of the team. The indigenous personnel who work for SOG are not part of the VN military. They are Yards (Montagnards), Nungs (Chinese), and/or Cambodians (KKK), and basically are mercenaries who work strictly for SOG and are very well paid compared to the VN military. They come from tribes of highly respected traditional warriors and are fiercely loyal to the Americans.

The 1-0 will organize and supervise the team training. If you are not on a mission, you are training. If there is such a thing as the "magic bullet" in recon, it is continuous and intense training and flawless execution. You will constantly be practicing IA Drills (Immediate Action Drills), both dry run and live fire. These are primarily actions taken immediately upon contact. Over time, numerous IA Drills have been developed from the experience of literally hundreds of contacts, and what has proven to provide the team with the best chance of surviving the encounter. During this course you will go through some of the major and/or standard IA Drills, e.g., Frontal Contact, Flank Contact, Rear Contact, and LZ Contact. Each of you will rotate performing the duties of each team member. We will spend more time on this phase than any other part of the course, because it is so vital to the survival of the team. The first 10 to 15 seconds of the contact will have a tremendous impact on the final outcome of the firefight. Every member of the team must know exactly what to do instantly and execute his duties immediately and exactly. The only way you achieve that level of performance is practice, practice, practice, and when you have it down to absolute perfection, practice some more! All the FOB's have firing ranges and training where teams can do live fire IA Drills. Again it is essential that every member of the team participate in the training and is totally proficient in the drills.

In addition to contact drills, there will be drills for actions on the insertion LZ and the extraction LZ. The same as the contact IA Drills, every team member must know his responsibilities both going in and coming out. Coming out of a hot LZ can be a harrowing experience, especially when you have the enemy only a few meters behind you and/or surrounding the LZ. Whether it be the Vietnamese Kingbees or the American Hueys, those crews are fearless and dedicated to getting you out. Needless to say, when the LZ is full of hostile gunfire, everyone's nerves are on edge. Again, our operation is unique and when a door gunner sees a guy in a NVA uniform carrying an AK come busting out of the tree line running toward his helicopter, he's very likely to open up on him. Some of the teams have the point man in NVA uniform and carrying AK's, and in fact we did have a team member shot by a jumpy door gunner. Fortunately the team member survived and a resourceful 1-0 came up with an effective technique. The team would carry two or three colored bandannas in their pockets, and if the LZ might be hot just before choppers arrived the 1-0 will tell covey "team color is yellow", and each team member would tie a yellow bandanna around their head or neck. That way, anybody without a yellow bandanna on the LZ is fair game. It's not a mandatory technique,

but it's something to consider. Two or three bandannas in your pocket don't weigh much and it works. As the 1-0, it's your call.

Another extraction technique that is pretty unique to SOG is coming out on strings, i.e., McGuire rigs or just on the end of a 150 ft. climbing rope with a Swiss seat. During this course, you will ride a McGuire rig and do a string extraction. I had a very personal experience with a McGuire rig extraction and I assure you the time to start learning how to ride a McGuire rig is not when it comes crashing through the trees.

Another area of importance will be directing air strikes. In the Prairie Fire A/O you will have air support from the Air Force with fast movers (jets) and A1-E's from Thailand. You will communicate with the Covey rider and he and the Covey pilot will communicate with the attack aircraft. The jets will have 20mm cannons, 500 lb. bombs, and napalm canisters. Unfortunately the jets consume fuel enormously and usually can only stay on station for about 15 minutes. The A1-E's can stay on station for about an hour, with 50 cal wing guns and 8 250 lb. bombs and 2 napalm canisters. In addition to being able to stay on station, they move slow and can accurately put their ordnance within 50 meters of your position. Unfortunately in the Daniel Boone A/O you won't have the luxury of air strikes, you will only have helicopter gunship support. During the course we won't have jets or A1-E's, but we will have a two FAC (Forward Air Controller) aircraft, one being the Covey with one of the instructors serving as Covey rider. FAC 1 will fire WP rockets to mark your "target" based on your directions (azimuth and distance) and FAC 2 will roll in and fire HP rockets on the "smoke". You will be evaluated and critiqued on your ability to accurately direct the "air strike". Once you are "on the ground" your team's survival could very well depend on your ability to accurately direct the air strikes. Long Thanh didn't have any assigned air assets, so I had to find some way to acquire the necessary support to be able to do the air strike training.

Last, but not all least, there will be plenty of physical condition training. It will include road marches with 60 lb. rucksacks, running and some variation of the Army Daily Dozen. This is not just something to do to take up time on the training schedule. There will come a time when your survival will depend on you being able to out run, out walk, or out endure the enemy chasing you.

That pretty much covered the major training areas we could cover in the time allotted. There were two areas we were not going to spend much time on: (1) was map reading and land navigation; and (2) was artillery and mortar adjustment. Every student was a graduate of the SF Q-Course which had extensive instruction on map reading and land navigation. If you are not proficient now, we don't have time to teach you. You will be evaluated and critiqued during our exercises and training here, but that is a skill you should have by now. Also, calling for and adjusting artillery and mortar fire is another skill you should already have. In our area of operations, artillery and mortar support is all but non-existent, therefore we are not going to spend time on it.

With the basic subject matter pretty well set, we started working on how we were going to get it done. All of us that were there as the cadre had gotten our training from our team leaders. Also one

of the major learning methods was when a 1-0 came back from a mission and had encountered something new, everyone would gather around in the club as he would recount what the enemy had thrown at him and how he had been able to counter it. It would be an open discussion with questions and suggestions (what if's) from the other 1-0's to begin the formulation of possible responses and/or prevention measures for the enemy's new tactics and techniques. It was informal but very intense and effective. It was a system we all knew and were comfortable with. I decided we would use somewhat of a modified version of that system. The classes would be small, between 20 to 24 students. There would be a primary instructor assigned for that segment and the other instructors that were not otherwise engaged in preparation or support would be in the classroom. The primary instructor would start with a presentation on the subject matter, then it would be an open question and answer session with all the other 1-0's and/or 1-1's providing insights and answers to the "what if" situations from the students. We all felt this would be close to the "around the table in the club" sessions and the students will feel they are getting the real information "straight from the horses' mouth."

In addition to the classroom sessions, there would be a significant amount of field work, i.e., IA Drills, both dry run and live fire, range firing, demolitions training, air strikes, etc.

As mentioned earlier, Long Thanh was a large camp with extensive training areas and facilities to support the many projects within the camp. It had a very substantial firing range with sufficient area for live fire IA Drills as well as a demo range. One of the major cover stories for the camp was conducting a Vietnamese Jump School, so it had an area for airborne training and a drop zone. (In fact the Vietnamese cadre did conduct 2 or 3 airborne cycles per year just to keep up the cover story). It had very adequate classrooms and a training aid production shop. All in all, it was a very adequate location for the 1-0 School. We, the cadre, spent the next two weeks preparing lesson outlines, scheduling ranges and training areas, fine tuning the training schedule and getting acclimated to the camp and camp personnel.

As I outlined earlier, Long Thanh was an OP 34 camp and we were all OP 35 people. Because of the strict compartmentalization within SOG very few knew what the other sections did, so at first it was somewhat of an uneasy relationship. We were all Special Forces and as the instructors arrived, some of them knew some of the camp personnel from prior assignments in other Groups. During the first couple of weeks over a few drinks in the club we all began to feel more comfortable with each other. By the time the first group of students arrived, we had established a good working relationship between the camp and the 1-0 School.

The students arrived on a Sunday afternoon. Once we got them settled into the barracks, we gathered them in a class room and gave them the orientation briefing. We explained this camp had several other missions in addition to supporting this school. Just like our missions, theirs are classified as well, so respect the restricted areas and don't be asking questions regarding the other projects. We explained this is going to be different from any school they have been to before. This is not an academic exercise; there will be no written exams. Everything is going to be hands-on. Whether you pass or fail will depend on your team instructor/team leader. For the "final exam" he will take you on a real target. Only if he feels you are a competent team member will you successfully complete this course. You will not receive a Certificate. This is not a sanctioned school, it will not be recorded in your personnel file. You will get a Zippo lighter with the SOG Crest, a firm hand shake and a ride to the airfield to catch the next Blackbird back to your FOB. The training schedule runs 7 days a week. There are no "off days". We only have 3 weeks to teach you a tremendous amount of information. Our goal is to teach you the essential survival skills for what will likely be the most difficult assignment of your career. We will start early with PT and some days will extend into the night. After a question and answer period, we took them on an orientation tour of the camp pointing out the mess hall, dispensary, club, showers, etc. We finished with rules and etiquette of the club and cautioned not to stay too late – we will be starting early tomorrow. ❖

Cops Corner continued

SF soldiers often must think out of the box so must many members of law enforcement.

As a member of both the Special Forces Association and the Special Operations Association I have met fellow members who spent careers in law enforcement after SF. We often talked about how easy it was to transition from SF to law enforcement.

The role of law enforcement, particularly that of a first responder is much more difficult and certainly more hazardous than in previous generations. In the 1970s and 1980s we would race to the scene of a crime such as a gunshot victim, knowing that the community wanted you there. Paramedics would rush to the scene, concerned only with treating the injured. Now they wait until law enforcement has control of the scene before they arrive. Many paramedics now wear protective vests as a safety measure.

The challenges to law enforcement are extraordinary in California due to the recent legislative and initiative measures that have markedly change the role of local law enforcement as well as the courts and prison systems. My next article will highlight those challenges and what it means to the citizens of California. ❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brad Welker served in Na Trang, Vietnam as a Special Forces Intelligence Sergeant assigned as 'cadre' in the MACV-Recondo School. Following his military service he was a Los Angeles County Sheriff.

Letters to the Editor

Lonny, Bob, an absolutely incredible issue with stories never before told. I know the woman Bob mentioned in his story and hope she got out somehow. The entire Air America story is now out in public — no reason this chapter should be buried.

The story of the overrunning of FOB-4 is very apt. I got to FOB-4 two days after the battle on my way to Bangkok for R&R. The command bunker was a burned out mess — NVA shoved the a/c units into the inside then tossed satchel charges into the bunker. Warehouses were burned...with all the stuff we couldn't get up country. It was the largest loss of life in one day for the 5th SFG. And it's good to see some modern warriors tell their story. Congratulations!!

On FOB-4 attack I can add a couple of things from memory. I got in there afternoon of 25 August 1968. Went over to the comma shack and heard that my team RT Delaware had just been inserted into Laos on a mission under Jimmy Marshall's command. I was mad as a hornet. Next morning I got a tour of the warehouse and TOC. Such was Vietnam that though the attack had occurred two days earlier...it already was ancient history. I was told that the NVA sappers had cut the bottom off of the chain link fence then adhesive taped it back on to help their initial assault. That morning I went out to the beach. I watched a gunship rocketing a karst formation about 2 miles away. Then a full blown Los Angeles class cruiser came just boiling up over the horizon, leveled off about 1000 yards off shore and proceeded to fire full broadsides at some target. After about 20 minutes it turned abruptly, accelerated, squatting down by the stern and headed full speed for the horizon....where I dunno..but it was in the direction of San Francisco. What a show! Shades of Iwo Jima from a Japanese perspective.

And by the way, here are the KIA from 23 Aug 1968 attack: Largest single day loss in Special Forces history. By the way SGM Pegram... was pictured in the story about the AN/GRC-109

1968 08 23 E-3 PFC William H. Bric III11B1P KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-4 SP4 Anthony J. Santana11B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-5 SGT James T. Kickliter05B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-5 SGT Robert J. Uyesaka05B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-6 SSG Howard S. Varni91B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-7 SFC Tadeusz M. Kepczyk11C4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-7 SFC Donald R. Kerns11B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-7 SFC Harold R. Voorheis76Y4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-7 SFC Donald W. Welch11F4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-8 MSG Charles R. Norris11B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-8 MSG Gilbert A. Secor91B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-9 SGM Richard E. Pegram, Jr.....11G5S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4

1968 08 23 E-8 MSG Rolf E. Rickmers12B4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4, Nung Reaction Company 1SG

1968 08 23 E-6 SSG Talmadge H. Alphin, Jr..... ..KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4, Recon Company

1968 08 23 O-2 1LT Paul D. Potter74419 KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4, S-4

1968 08 23 E-7 SFC Albert M. Walter76Y4S KIA SVN; CCN, FOB4, Quang Nam Prov., Attack on FOB4, S4 NCOIC

Gene Williams

A-233 Ban Don 1966-67, MACV-SOG, FOB 2 Kontum, 1-0 of Recon Team Delaware, 1968

.....

Another great issue of the Sentinel.

When I returned for my second tour, I was flying LTG. Stilwell. One day when we were flying single ship in a UH-1H in the A Shau Valley the General wanted to investigate Khe Sanh.

The General wanted to go down and land at Khe Sanh and look around. The camp had been long abandoned since this was 1969.

The place was completely blown up with bomb creators all over the runway. The bunkers were mostly destroyed.

I was responsible for the General's safety not to mention my own life. Here we sat on a part of the runway, one ship with no gunships in the area.

I kept the engine running so we could get out of there if we encountered any problems. Kind of a lonely feeling sitting out in the middle of the A Shau Valley and only a few people with you.

How was I going to explain that I landed with a 3 star general in the middle of the A Shau Valley with no gun support or a chase ship.

Can you imagine how happy an NVA sniper would have been if he hit a 3 Star General.

Amazing story in the Sentinel.

Thanks,
Gordon Denniston

SFA Chapter 78 Presents Annual Awards to ROTC Cadets



As part of our active and ongoing ROTC program support to Southern California area universities including USC, UCLA, Claremont McKenna College, and Cal State University Fullerton, SFA Chapter 78 annually presents "Outstanding Candidate of the Year" Awards to exceptional Cadets from each of these institutions who consistently demonstrate superior performance and leadership attributes. Our lead-off Award presentation for 2018 was recently made by Chapter members Len Fein and Gary Macnamara, to USC's Trojan Battalion Cadet Eric Lee on 3/09/18.

In addition to the Chapter 78 Award Certificate, Cadet Lee was presented with an autographed copy of the newly released book *SOG CHRONICLES, Volume I*, authored by current Chapter 78 President John Stryker ("Tilt") Meyer, and former "One-Zero" with MACV-SOG Recon Team Idaho during 1968-69. As was described by USC Alum Len Fein to the attending ROTC audience, this book provides a highly detailed accounting of "Operation Tailwind", a top secret 1970 U.S. Army Special Forces mission to distract NVA enemy forces from hindering CIA operations deep in Laos — where wounded Green Beret Medic Gary "Mike" Rose selflessly treated more than 70 wounded members of a combined "Hatchet Force" consisting of U.S. Special Forces and Indigenous personnel over four days of continuous "over the fence" combat, and was recently and justly awarded the Medal of Honor by President Donald Trump more than 40 years later.

Gary MacNamara (LTC, Retired) further presented Eric with a copy of the *Army Officer's Guide*, after which Cadet Lee formally received his Infantry Branch designation and insignias from USC Professor of Military Science LTC Laura Skinner in a following presentation. ♦



Len Fein overviewed *SOG CHRONICLES, Volume 1* to USC Awardee Cadet Eric Lee and attending ROTC members



Chapter 78 President John Stryker Meyer and Gary Macnamara with Cal State Fullerton's Major Cruz.



Plei Me SF Camp — Then and Now

From Chapter 78 Sergeant At Arms/ Quartermaster Mark Miller:

"This picture (at far left) was our MSS site Long Range Patrol company running missions out of A255 Plei Me SF Camp-1967.



Former USSF camp Plei Me now

I noticed in the latest edition of *Sentinel* a picture of where this camp was now (shown at immediate left).

Sharing before and after."

SFA Chapter 78

February 2018 Meeting



- ❶ Chapter 78 President John Stryker Meyer and Paul Longgear at the podium
- ❷ Steve Thompson of Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command
- ❸ Brad Welker and Ed Barrett
- ❹ The meeting continued afterwards in the parking lot
- ❺ Terry Cagnolatti, Paul Longgear and Richard Simonian
- ❻ John Kaper, a Marine at Khe Sanh – WIA, Tom Turney and Don Gonneville
- ❼ ROTC cadets from Cal State Fullerton with Paul Longgear and John Stryker Meyer
- ❽ Steve Bric, SOG Gold Star brother of FOB 4 KIA Bill Bric, John Stryker Meyer, Jim Suber Jr., nephew of SOG KIA Nov. 1969 Randy Suber, killed in Laos on CCN recon mission.
- ❾ Mark Miller, Paul Longgear and Kenn Miller
- ❿ Robert Crebbs, a founding Chapter 78 member
- ⓫ Chapter members and videographer.