



# THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78

The LTC Frank J. Dallas Chapter

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 9 • SEPTEMBER 2019



A Final Salute:  
Doug "The Frenchman" LaTourneau

2019 SFA National Convention

Chapter 78 Loses Longtime  
Friend Dewey Lund



# SENTINEL

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 9 • SEPTEMBER 2019

## IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Page .....	1
August 2019 Chapter Meeting .....	2
Cops Corner .....	3
SFA 2019 National Convention.....	4
A Final Salute: Doug "The Frenchman" LeTourneau.....	6
Chapter 78 Loses Longtime Friend Dewey Lund.....	12
Chapter 78 Christmas Party 2019 .....	14

**COVER:** Doug "The Frenchman" LeTourneau, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John "Jack" K. Singlaub and John Stryker Meyer at Singlaub's home in April 2017.



Please visit us at  
[specialforces78.com](http://specialforces78.com)  
and [sfa78cup.com](http://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](http://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](mailto:dhgraphics@earthlink.net).

## From the Editor



Lonny Holmes  
Sentinel Editor

With the recent loss of Green Beret Icons Major General Eldon Bargewell and Colonel Sully H. de Fontaine and now MACV-SOG legend Doug LeTourneau and Chapter 78 friend Dewey Lund, we as members of the Special Forces Regiment are beginning to feel the attrition of our fellow's due to age, injury and illness. Special Forces Association Executive Director Cliff Newman in his article in the Summer *DROP*, "The Director's Cut", stated "174 members have passed in the last year. And those are the ones we know about."

Time is taking a huge toll of our Green Berets from the Viet Nam era and earlier. Those of us who were recruited, trained and served during the Viet Nam War have been members of our brotherhood for fifty years or more. Now look at those Green Berets who entered the Regiment-as the "Originals" in the early 1950s — they have now been members of the brotherhood for nearly seventy years. Members of these generations of SF set the standards for today's Green Berets both in combat and 'other missions' around the world. Many became leaders in their community following their service or upon retirement thus continuing the image of our special group, the Green Berets.

Importantly as we age as a group I believe that it is imperative to keep in close contact with our fellow members who we trained and served with in both combat and assignments around the world. The Special Forces Association with its annual national meeting is a good way to promote this close relationship with of old team mates and associates. Of course the local SF Chapters is a more practical way as we age and our travel ability is reduced. Most chapters meet monthly, some weekly such as SFA C-51 in Las Vegas, NV. Many studies have demonstrated that close relationships with friends and associates is a way to promote a longer and healthy life which is what we all desire of course.

Lonny Holmes  
Sentinel Editor

Chapter 78 Vice President Brad Welker accepts the Golden Arrows for Excellence in Newsletters 2019 award from SFA Vice President John Dixon at the SFA National Convention in Charleston, WV.







John Stryker Meyer  
President SFA 78

## Chapter Members,

Over the last 20 months four of our members have lost their wives and Chapter 78 member **Doug “The Frenchman” LeTourneau** died on July 25 in San Antonio, TX. I mention this point to remind our Chapter members: If you haven't made final plans for your funeral and your last will and testament, please take the time to do it now. If you don't take care of those matters, your death will have a compounded element of pain and

suffering for your family, in addition to having your final possessions divided up by the County Probate Office, not by your family. On the other hand, if you want to piss off your family when you die, don't take care of those matters.

Turning our attention to a long-time Chapter 78 friend, first MOH recipient in the Vietnam War **Col. (R) Roger H.C. Donlon** continues to take physical therapy and rehab at a local facility outside Kansas City after having a medical issue that paramedics first diagnosed as a heart attack in late July. Further diagnosis revealed that he had heart-attack symptoms, but no heart attack. Regardless, the hard-working colonel was weakened by the incident and is gamely fighting back, once more, according to our POC at Chapter 23 Roy Williams. President Johnson draped the Blue and White cloth award around his neck with the Army MOH in 1964 — 55 years ago.

By the time the printed version of the *Sentinel* is distributed, there will be, or have been, two events of significance in the continuing POW/MIA mission stemming from the Vietnam War in Southeast Asia (SEA).

1.) September the 5th will mark the second anniversary of retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Kelly K. McKeague being sworn in as the second director for the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency (DPAA). McKeague was endorsed earlier in 2017 for DPAA director by the Joint Special Operations Association/Special Forces Association POW/MIA Committee and the National League of POW/MIA Families. Earlier he was the commander of Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) based at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, from 2012 until DPAA was formed in early 2014 — as the result of then-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel's decision to merge three separate federal agencies together under one single command. It must be noted here, for the record, that high-ranking DPAA officials and key DoD players first conspired to have another man named for that post — an act that was thwarted only after the selected man declined the job. Then McKeague was endorsed and sworn in on Sept. 5, 2017, in a very low profile ceremony.

Two years into the job, I must say that McKeague is a class act, a unique man who has proudly served our country for decades. However, on a personal level, he's simply too nice of a gentleman for the serpentine snake pits he inherited as director. Some of the upper

echelon bureaucrats who conspired against McKeague are still in place, protected by federal union constraints that pay little attention to job performance or service to a mission that eats at the hearts of most Vietnam veterans, as well as the families who seek answers. McKeague needs a tough command sergeant major or a deputy committed to helping him, not to protecting bureaucrats, someone who will kick ass and take names. Next month, I will detail some of the bureaucratic issues that stymie efforts needed to locate, identify and return to CONUS the remaining 1,587 Americans still and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam — both north and south. And, on a very personal SOG level, in Laos alone there are 50 Green Berets who died in the eight-year secret war, along with more than 120 fearless Army, Marine Corps and Air Force aviators who died supporting SOG operators and are among those 1,587 still missing Americans.

2.) September 20th will mark the annual POW/MIA Recognition Day, an event the National League of POW/MIA Families has endorsed and supported for decades, with the help of active veterans groups and support from DPAA and DoD. This issue requires maximum support and as much public support as possible to ensure that Congress recognizes the need for adequate budget and resources to support the dedicated men and women of DPAA who are on the ground in SEA. These mostly military personnel are deeply committed to the accounting mission. They take it personally, but, they're working against seasonal monsoons and mother nature, in soil that is among the most acidic in the world, meaning the basic evidence leading to a possible recovery and identification of remains — primarily, teeth, dental work and fragmented bones — are being destroyed by the soil. This is occurring at a time of unprecedented levels of cooperation from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia — the new support offered has to be matched by an upgraded US effort. Again, I want to stress, the men and women in the field, and many others working to analyze information gained through critical interviews by DIA's highly trained POW/MIA investigation specialists are outstanding, committed people. Stand by to stand by on this issue.

If you are planning to attend our September 14 meeting, please e-mail **VP Don Deatherage** at: [drdeathca@gmail.com](mailto:drdeathca@gmail.com), no later than Thursday September 12, midnight. We need an exact headcount.

At the end of the year, Chapter elections will be held. We're looking for someone to run for president. ❖

## Meeting details:

**Time:** 8:30 a.m., September 12, Breakfast will be served.

**Location:** Embassy Suites  
**3100 East Frontera, Anaheim, CA 92807**  
**(The SE Corner of Hwy 91 & Glassell St.)**

John Stryker Meyer  
President, SFA Chapter 78

# SFA Chapter 78 August 2019 Meeting



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

1 Left to right, Chapter 78 member John Joyce, John Vislosky, CEO of Vital Point Partners, LLC and meeting speaker. Chapter President John Stryker Meyer and Chapter Vice President Brad Welker.

2 John Meyer presenting a plaque to Robert Crebbs and Gary Macnamara both Chapter 78 members who are also members of the Lew Millett (MOH) Memorial Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association in appreciation for their service at the funeral of Chapter 78 member Doug "The Frenchman" LeTourneau.

3 4 John Creel wearing his original 1957 Green Beret from his service with 10th SFGA in Bad Tolz. Creel's original Green Beret is nearly worn out after 62 years!

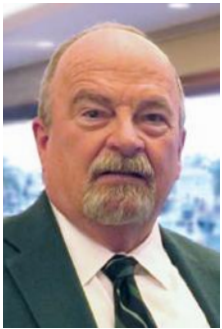
5 The custom plaque presented to the Lew Millett (MOH) Memorial Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association designed by John Joyce of Excalibur.

6 Brad Welker presenting John Meyer with a challenge coin.

7 8 John Joyce presenting John Meyer with his custom coin. The front and back of his personalized coin is shown at left.



# COPS CORNER



Brad Welker

By Brad Welker

Those of us that have experienced the rapid growth of technology in the last several decades have been exposed to startling changes. Recently the automobile world has given birth to innovations that have created self-driving vehicles — a concept that many of us scoffed at just a few years ago.

Currently one can sometimes observe someone driving one of these “pilotless” cars cruising along the street. One must ponder if the notion of a nation of self-driving vehicles has been reviewed an environmental impact study. We have become familiar with major projects that were subjected to such studies with the intent to forestall any problems in the future.

Better and more efficient electric cars are rapidly being developed to the joy of the Green community. Electric vehicles owners are proud of the fact that they do not have to pay for fossil fuels that assertedly damage the health of our environment. Eventually owners of such vehicles will have to be taxed in some fashion to fill the void left by the fact that they do not pay any highway maintenance fees. Such taxes are currently charged as part of the cost of driving a gasoline or diesel vehicle.

As the self-driving technology improves and the necessity of a human to override the system, we must explore the potential impact upon our current traffic issues. Imagine the mixture of self-driving cars on the highway versus our gas guzzling machines that currently are often driven with NASCAR intensity. If 50% of the traffic are on auto pilot proceeding with such arcane factors as maintaining a safe distance between cars and actually abiding by the posted speed limit, how does that mix with the muscle cars and trucks speeding and rapidly changing lanes?

Road rage is an all too common event in this era. Often the rage is found with the driver speeding through those with the temerity to drive within the speed limit. Horsepower is often in inverse proportion to a driver's intelligence quotients. How often do people with cars capable of racing at 200 miles an hour stay within the speed



Driving in traffic with Tesla's autopilot controlling distance from the lead car and centering the vehicle in the lane. Vehicle is a 2017 Model X 75D with dark interior. Photo by Ian Maddox, CC BY-SA 4.0

limit? The current generation contains a significant population of those who believe in driving fast and furious. How would they relate to a family in a self-driving van serenely cruising at the speed limit as they each engage in their personal social media devices?

How would a Highway Patrolman respond to a “driver” who had an accident in such a conveyance saying, “it was the cars fault that it crashed as I was sleeping?” If the car is driving can the occupants enjoy adult beverages as they roll along? Does there need to be a designated “driver.”

Would there have to be a licensed driver in the car? Could a parent fill a self-driver with kids and program them to school without a qualified driver in the car? Would intellectually challenged people be permitted to be the sole occupants? Could you send Fido to the vet without a human in the car?

Would there be some method to facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles being driven by first responders? Would there be a system that automatically had self-drivers safely pull over and stop when sirens rang? Would there be a requirement that made it mandatory for a trained and licensed human driver be in a position to assume the driving role in such an event.

Would the Uber or Lyft you called actually have a human driver? Would it be pre-programmed to pick you up and leave you at you designated location? Would Taxis be driven by a human or would it merely require you to use a credit card to activate?

That compels the question that how many people would actually have any experience at driving as they had spent the majority of the time riding as a passenger? Recent passenger airliner crashes have revealed that flying has become so automated that there are fewer experienced pilots with extensive experience in emergency maneuvering.

I am certain there are other significant issues that have not been mentioned in this article. I encourage you to look to the future through your own driving history and visualize what might be of concern. ❖

# SFA 2019 National Convention



Brad Welker

By Brad Welker

Several hundred SFA Members and their guests attended the 2019 National Convention in Charleston, West Virginia hosted by Chapter 68. Our own Chapter 78 member John Joyce supported the event by helping to design and manufacture the Challenge Coin given to each attendee. John also presented the guest speaker Major General James A Hoyer with a presentation set of Challenge Coins representing the current SF Groups both Regular Army and National Guard.

The week long convention was highlighted by several events; a tour of the State Capitol and Governor's Mansion, a picnic at the West Virginia National Guard Air Base complete with static aircraft and equipment displays and parachute jumps from the Black Daggers Parachute Team and the Special Forces Association Parachute Demonstration Team, a concert at the levee, and a great banquet at the Convention Center.

Members spent many hours reminiscing and re-uniting with old comrades in arms. SFA National President Gary Koenitzer and the Board members presented everyone with a status report at the Banquet. General Hoyer, who served in the 19th Special Forces Group in various command positions, then gave a rousing closing speech before everyone returned to the headquarters at the Marriott for re-hydration and dancing.

Next year's Convention will be held near Eglin Air Force Base and will be hosted by Chapter 7. The dates are not yet formalized. ❖

## SFA 2019 National Convention Keynote Speaker: Major General James A. Hoyer The Adjutant General — West Virginia



Major General James A. Hoyer assumed the duties as the Adjutant General, West Virginia Joint Forces Headquarters-West Virginia on 1 February 2011. As the Adjutant General, State of West Virginia, he provides command guidance and vision to the West Virginia Army and Air National Guard of more than 6,500 Citizen Soldiers and Airmen. He provides the overall

supervision of the day to day operations and management of the readiness, fiscal, personnel, equipment and the real property resources of the agency.

General Hoyer received his undergraduate degree from the University of Charleston and was commissioned in 1983 through a joint Reserve Officer Training Corps program with West Virginia State University. General Hoyer began his military career in the West Virginia National Guard as a Cavalry Officer. He attended the Special Forces Officer Qualification course and spent over 14 years with the 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group. General Hoyer led the development of the West Virginia National Guard Counterdrug Task Force and the Joint Interagency Training and Education Center and its Center for National Response; a national level operational and training capability for critical infrastructure protection and consequence response. General Hoyer's most recent assignment was Director, Joint Staff, West Virginia Joint Force Headquarters.

### EDUCATION:

1983 University of Charleston, Bachelor of Science, Management/Marketing, Charleston, West Virginia 1987 West Virginia Graduate College, Master of Science, Management/Public Administration, Institute, West Virginia



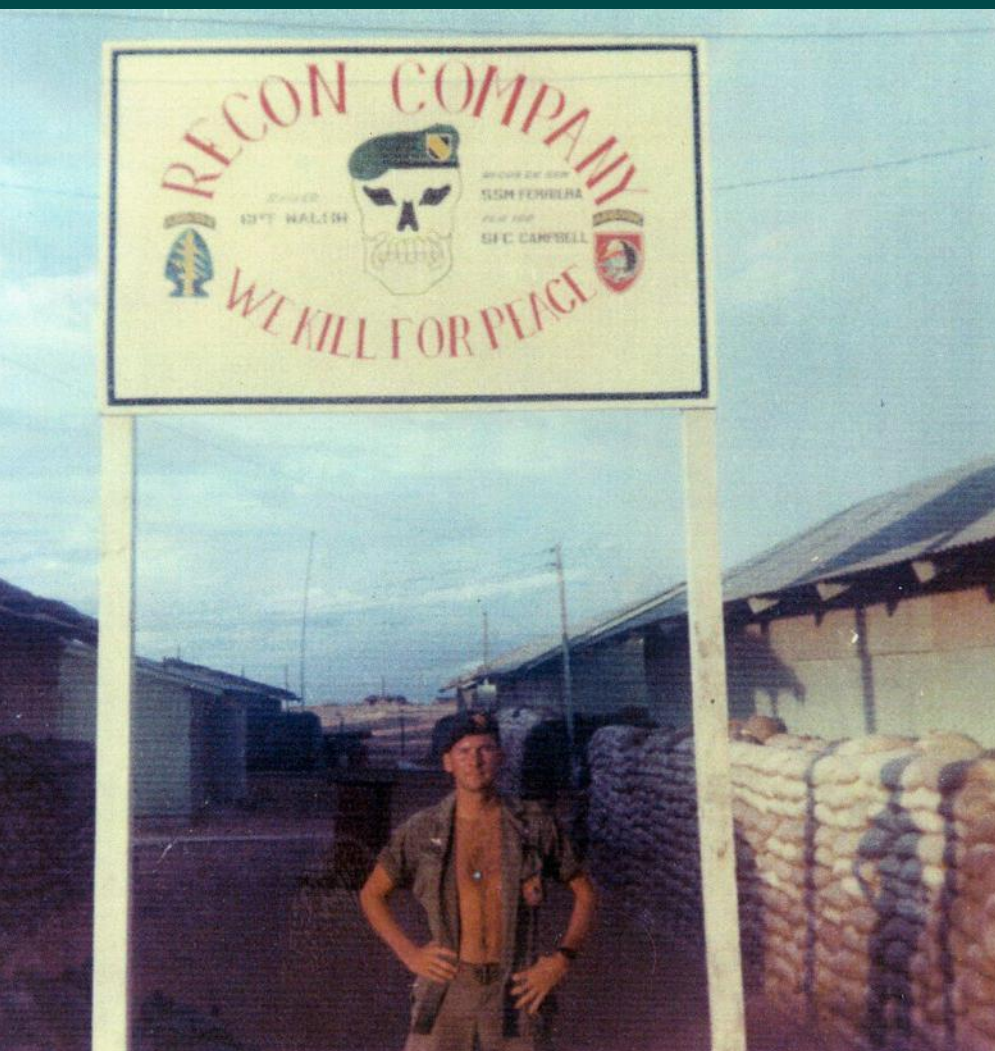




- ❶ Chapter 78 member John Joyce, right, presented Major General James Hoyer with a set of custom challenge coins.
- ❷ Left to right, Chapter 78 member Brad Welker, Chapter 51 member Fred Horne and John Joyce.
- ❸ Brad Welker with Ozzy and John Joyce.
- ❹ In addition to its work on the event's Challenge Coin, Excalibur Industries, owned and operated by John Joyce, had a booth at this years convention.
- ❺ Ozzy Joyce at Excalibur's booth.
- ❻ Brad Welker helping a convention attendee at the Excalibur booth.
- ❼ Excalibur's wide selection of products, car badges pictured here, on display.
- ❽ Custom plaques design by John Joyce



# A Final Salute: Doug "The Frenchman" LeTourneau



Above, Doug LeTourneau standing under the new CCN sign that he built/erected at the entrance to CCN Recon Company area, taken in 1969.



Left, Doug in Training Group.



John Stryker Meyer  
President SFA 78

By John Stryker Meyer

I first met Doug "The Frenchman" LeTourneau in October 1968 at the top secret MACV-SOG compound in Phu Bai, FOB 1. Actually, I should say I first heard him at FOB 1 — Spider Parks and I were sitting in our

team room when we heard a loud new voice in camp, "The Frenchman". It was the beginning of a long friendship and bond between the skinny 135-pound California cowboy and fellow SOG recon men at FOB 1 and later at CCN in Da Nang.

The year 1968 was a landmark year for the U.S. in Vietnam, it was the year of highest casualties both in conventional forces and among SOG recon teams and Hachet Force troops. When I reported to FOB 1 in May 1968, there were 30 recon teams listed on base, by October, only a few were fully operational. In the Prairie Fire Area of Operations (Laos), the NVA had more than 40,000 troops plus indentured indigenous personnel forced to support the communists. By the end of October, ST Virginia One-Zero John McGovern was wrapping up a tour of duty running recon and recruited Doug for that team moments after The Frenchman and John "Bubba" Shore landed at FOB 1 — Shore joined ST Idaho.

It didn't take long for LeTourneau to ingratiate himself with the indigenous team members of ST Virginia. One night, while LeTourneau was recording a taped message to his parents on his portable cassette player, Lap — the young point man on ST Virginia — came into his room and spoke into the recorder: "I want to tell you parents of Private LeTourneau, not to worry about him. We respect him and I'll keep an eye out for him. And, don't worry; if an enemy shoots at him, I'll catch the bullets with my body. I'll protect your son. Thank you for sending him to Vietnam. He's a good soldier."





RT Idaho at the Phu Bai Launch Site on Camp Eagle, in April 1969, getting ready to board 101st choppers for insert into Laos.

In late November, ST Virginia was inserted into a target. On the third day, following a team rest, LeTourneau earned his unique spot in SOG history: as he rose from a sitting position he slung his rucksack on his back. Just as it hit his back, AK-47s opened fire. LeTourneau was suddenly slammed to the ground face first.

The impact was so severe he thought he had broken his nose. Startled, LeTourneau jumped up with his CAR-15 pointing toward the AK-47 gunfire that was near the front of the team. Surprised that there were no NVA near him, LeTourneau removed the rucksack to discover that four AK-47 rounds had ripped through it and the PRC-25 FM radio.

He reached into an especially tailored pocket on his fatigue shirt, which was sewn with vertical zippers — one on the left side of the shirt and one on the right side, between the top and bottom pockets on the shirt — pulled out his URC-10 emergency radio and broadcast a general alert for any aircraft in the area, ST Virginia was declaring a Prairie Fire Emergency, while moving to the team leader Mike Childress, without the PRC-25. The One-Zero chided LeTourneau and ordered him to go back and get it. Somehow the old PRC-25 still worked. LeTourneau picked it up as the NVA launched several attacks against ST Virginia, which was beginning to move toward an LZ, under heavy enemy fire.

NVA soldiers were moving toward ST Virginia team member nicknamed Cowboy and LeTourneau. Without saying a word, the two men took turns firing at the enemy while moving down hill. Rotating around each other, Cowboy would fire several bursts from his CAR-15, and then reload. As he reloaded, LeTourneau would open fire, providing covering fire for the team. During one short

lull, Cowboy again planted a claymore mine in the direction of the advancing NVA and LeTourneau dug out another claymore from his ruck sack and placed a 10-second delayed fuse in it. When the NVA again advanced, Cowboy ignited his claymore mine. When the NVA moved toward the team again, LeTourneau ignited his fuse and ran down the hill with Cowboy to catch up to their team.

Before they reached the team, two B-40 anti-personnel rockets slammed into the trees above them, showering them with shrapnel. A few more exploded as LeTourneau and Cowboy moved down the hill. Then the 10-second fuse ignited another claymore. It bought precious time for the run-and-gun team of LeTourneau and Cowboy to cover ground and catch up to the remainder of ST Virginia. As Childress called in the air strikes, LeTourneau reflected on how surreal this firefight had been. It wasn't anything like he had witnessed on television or in any movie. Instead of men charging each other and killing each other in plain sight, here in triple-canopy jungle, he observed green tracers from AK-47s first, or at the most an enemy hand or foot. And, somehow the NVA found firing lanes where they could launch shoulder-held B-40s anti-personnel rockets that slammed above them and around them as they raced down the hill for their lives.

ST Virginia was finally extracted from the target by South Vietnamese-piloted H-34 choppers, codenamed Kingbees. The entire team was lifted out of the jungle on ropes from the helicopter, where team members were peppered with shrapnel from enemy rocket fire. A few weeks after that mission, fellow recon men were amazed as medics pulled out pieces of shrapnel from his arms, neck, head which had become infected. This was the first of 13





SOG recon missions and one Bright Light mission that LeTourneau would run during his one-year tour of duty in Vietnam.

By the end of April 1969, ST Idaho was given a suicide mission into northern Laos, above the DMZ river, which ran from west to the east. Lynne M. Black Jr., was the One-One and LeTourneau joined the team for that mission. At the last minute, as the team was boarding choppers for insertion, the mission was cancelled. I returned home to the 10th Special Forces Group, Black became the One-Zero and LeTourneau was his One-One. They ran 10 missions and a Bright Light mission before his tour of duty ended.

The last mission that LeTourneau ran with Black and RT Idaho, was a Bright Light mission to recover two downed Air Force pilots — of all the missions he ran, that mission was the one “that Lynne and I thought we’d die on,” he said. On that day in early October, the Bright Light mission came down shortly after the Air Force plane crashed. “Lynne was up at S-3 getting this mission. When I was walking up to meet him, he said we had a Bright Light and asked if the team was ready. I told him yes. He said an Air Force Jolly Green Giant (a heavily-armored HH-3 Sikorsky helicopter) would pick them up at CCN. In short order, they got Sau, Hiep, Phouc and Quang, jumped in the three-quarter-



Top left, inspection one day prior to leaving for mission in Laos, late 1969 at CCN HQ Da Nang. RT Idaho Team Members, from right: Cau, Doug “The Frenchman” LeTourneau, Capt. Mike O’Byrne, Hung, Max Funtenberry, Lynne M. Black Jr., Nguyen Cong Hiep — interpreter, Nguyen Van Sau — Vietnamese Team Leader, Son, John S. Meyer, saluting Lt. Gen. Richard Stilwell, Col. Jack “The Iceman” Isler, CCN Commander, wearing beret.

Bottom left, Lt. Gen. Richard Stilwell inspects Doug LeTourneau.



ton truck and drove to the northwest corner of CCN in Da Nang, on the landing pad.

The powerful chopper took the team straight in to the LZ. LeTourneau was the first one out of the chopper. As he jumped, the chopper lurched upward momentarily and descended back to ground, with the right wheel landing on LeTourneau's chest. "I was lying there and couldn't move. I was afraid I was going to die right there," he said. Fortunately, the chopper lifted up as the rest of the team jumped to the ground. From the moment the chopper first arrived, it received enemy gunfire.

Black and LeTourneau set about the grisly task of trying to extricate two dead Air Force pilots from an O-2 observation plane that crashed into a berm that was covered with elephant grass. NVA soldiers swarmed in and around the crash site and poured every ounce of lead they could muster at RT Idaho. Black recounted in admiration how calm LeTourneau was under fire, and how he took charge of setting up team defensive positions before returning to assist Black in attempting to extract the bodies from the twisted wreckage of the crushed Bronco. It was apparent to Black the pilots were dead and that getting them free was going to be a major, time-consuming effort. As the NVA kept up their heavy fire and worked their way closer to the team, Black passed his appraisal of the situation to Covey (FAC). Covey responded by reminding Black that he and the Frenchman were not doctors and so possessed neither the medical knowledge, nor the authority, necessary to determine if the pilots were dead or alive. He then ordered them to get the bodies out of the aircraft and prepare them for extraction.

It was impossible to free the bodies of the pilots. Short of desecration, the extraction just couldn't be done with the equipment at hand. The bodies were so tightly wedged into the small aircraft's mangled fuselage that it would take cutting torches and crow-bars to get them out. After several more heated exchanges, and

as the enemy's noose tightened, Black snatched the radio from LeTourneau and abruptly informed Covey he would bring out the airmen's dog tags. And if Covey demanded further, more absolute proof of death, LeTourneau was ready to bring out their heads in his rucksack.

"We observed a moment of awkward radio silence," Black said, "before Covey finally came back and told me to recover any items from the plane that had intelligence value and prepare for an immediate extraction." LeTourneau added: "During all of this, I looked across to Lynne and said, 'I don't think we're going to make it out of here. They (the NVA) are closing in on us, the weather is clouding over and they want proof they're dead, meaning the pilots.' Lynne looked back at me and agreed. I'll never forget that moment. We didn't think we'd get outta there alive. I took the pilot's watch, it stopped at 10:10 a.m., the moment they crashed, so his family would have it."

As Black recovered maps, secret documents, codes, and personal information from the pilots, LeTourneau called in a series of deadly airstrikes on the NVA. Finally, it was time for extraction, the Jolly Green Giant couldn't land, but dropped ropes down for extraction. "Every mission I ran, we were pulled out on strings, this one was no different," LeTourneau said. An A-1 Skyraider punctuated that mission with a special display of flying verve and skill: As RT Idaho was being lifted out of the jungle on ropes, an A-1 flew underneath the team, bringing in an airstrike on the downed aircraft and enemy soldiers. "I'll never forget it, he flew underneath us, I could see inside his canopy. Damn, that was close." Once the team was out, airstrikes destroyed the aircraft and kept the NVA from getting their hands on the bodies of the airmen. No member of RT Idaho was injured. A couple of days later, LeTourneau returned to "the world", his last memory of a SOG mission being of a honorable but ultimately futile effort to reclaim the bodies of some of America's finest airmen.



Doug with retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John "Jack" K. Singlaub in April 2017. Note Jack's OSS mug on the table.



Doug meeting with Richard Simonian, Chapter 78 Chaplain and publisher of the Sentinel, on July 8, at Richard's office in Orange, CA.



He went on to become a master carpenter, builder, eventually building everything from stylized log cabins to massive Wal-Marts, a bank and hundreds of homes in northern California. LeTourneau also earned his fixed-wing and rotary pilots licenses, while returning to his first love from his FFA days, showing his prized Hereford cattle around the country.

However, like many Green Beret combat veterans, the thing that he was most proud of, after his loving family, was his service in the secret war under the aegis of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group, or simply SOG, for that one-year tour of duty with RT Virginia and then with RT Idaho at FOB 1 and CCN. Because it was a secret war he couldn't talk about it with his family for years, but he was proud to finally share those stories, especially with his father, a B-17 pilot during WWII who flew 13 missions over Europe before being shot down on April 13, 1944 and serving the remaining 13 months of WWII in a German POW camp.

LeTourneau, an SFA Chapter 78 member attended the July 13 meeting, where he shared some of those stories and of his growing up in Southern California, attending Van Nuys High School, where another alumnus, Chapter member John K. Singlaub attended before WWII. During that meeting he spoke of his friendship with fellow recon man Eldon Bargewell. We all met at FOB 1 in 1968, we all ran recon. And Eldon survived getting shot in the chest by an NVA soldier in Laos, which LeTourneau notes: "Eldon and I always joked about how we both got shot by the NVA with AK-47s and lived to talk about it. It was an unique, little club."

Sadly, Bargewell died in a tragic accident in April. LeTourneau died July 25 from complications following heat stroke and suffering a scorpion sting.

Lynne M. Black Jr., who served in SOG for two years including running 10 missions with LeTourneau, said this: "Doug was the most professional One-One I operated with during my two years in SOG." ❖



## A Final Salute

On August 7, SFA Chapter 78 members and Special Forces MACV-SOG Recon Veterans attended the funeral of Chapter Member Douglas "The Frenchman" LeTourneau, who ran SOG missions with RT Idaho and RT Virginia, 1968-69. LeTourneau died suddenly following complications stemming from a heat stroke and scorpion bite.

The SOG members rendering a final graveside salute in Thousand Oaks, CA are, from left, clockwise: Bill Barclay, Ken Van Ardsdel, Ron Owens, funeral assistant Eric, John S. Meyer, L.J. LeTourneau, son of Doug LeTourneau, and George Sternberg. (photo courtesy of Anna M. Meyer)

**Editor's Note:** On July 9, LeTourneau was featured in a two-hour Jocko Podcast, which was posted by Jocko Willink, on July 17. This is the link to that memorable podcast:

<http://jockopodcast.com/2019/07/17/186-taking-a-secret-war-to-the-enemy-in-vietnam-w-the-frenchman-doug-letourneau/>

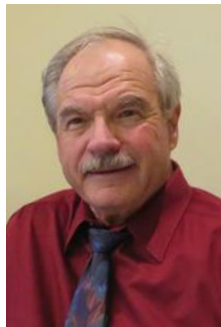




- ❶ Green Beret's, all MACV-SOG veterans, in attendance at the funeral.
- ❷ John Stryker Meyer lays a rose on LeTourneau's casket during the services.
- ❸ Members of the Lew Millett (MOH) Memorial Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association perform the gun salute during the ceremony. The family and Chapter 78 were grateful to members of the Lew Millett (MOH) Memorial Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Association who were present to participate in the funeral in Thousand Oaks when everyone else said no.
- ❹ SSG Manden Conklin and SSG Matt Brown, SF soldiers from 5th Special Forces Group with John Meyer after the post-funeral lunch where they were presented a Chapter 78 appreciation plaque produced by John Joyce.



# Chapter 78 Loses Longtime Friend Dewey Lund



Mike Keele

By Mike Keele

August 14th, 2019, marked the passing of one of Chapter 78's favorite non-members. Dewey Lund was a 79-year-old retired rocket scientist who came to meetings whenever we had a good speaker. Ironically the last meeting he attended was the July 13 meeting to see Annie Jacobsen and his friend from the SOAR meetings he attended, Doug LeTorneau, who passed on two weeks before Dewey

By the time I met Dewey, his kids were grown and gone and had their own lives. The two boys, Bret, the older and Brian, the youngest, eventually got college degrees, while Debbie, the oldest, got married, had daughters and kept up her mechanical skills. She can gut a deer, too. It was not a surprise to them when I called with news that Dewey was in a bad way. He never went to see a doctor, wouldn't think of having a physical, and colds were cured with an occasional shot of whiskey and some noodle soup.

Many in Chapter 78 knew Dewey, because he came to more meetings than a lot of full-fledged members, since he was interested in where America was headed, and because, although he didn't want to be in the limelight, could be seen in the background of many Chapter events, pullin' that plow and totin' that bale. He talked occasionally of his Air Force Reserve days, where he rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant, kicked tires on F-86's and F-102's and went off to faraway lands like Elmendorf for his summer active duty before Alaska was a State.

Dewey volunteered for every dirty job that came up in the Chapter's activities, especially if it included getting an opportunity to bang away with his many short and long guns. His favorite fire stick was easily the CAR-15 replica first seen in an advertising poster at SOAR, about three or four years ago, modeled by Lynne Black and John "Tilt" Meyer.

When Dewey and I got our CAR-15s home, I put mine in the safe: Dewey took his apart, an activity befitting an engineer. It wasn't long before Dewey, Bruce Long and I were up in the mountains of Lytle Creek, blasting away. Mine was dead on, Bruce's was high and to the right, and Dewey's was, fittingly, waaay to the right. Dewey was not one to consider it a correction when an adjustment needed to be made to the left, so he put a scope on the gun and was right on target after that.

Although trained as an electronics geek, Dewey was a student of world and national politics, seemingly having details of every political maneuver being made on the world scene. On his last day on earth, he was in his usual seat at the donut shop visited by many of the Chapter faithful, including Lonny Holmes, who was prez when he first met Dewey, current prez, John Meyer, who has held court there many times, although it's 90 miles from his RON, Brad Welker, Kenn Miller, and even out-of-towner Gordon Denniston, made a touch 'n go for coffee and a buttermilk, when he first met Dewey.

Lonny Holmes was always impressed with Dewey's intellect and analytical mind. Dewey was a whiz with numbers and angles, having obtained his B.S. in Engineering from Cal Poly Pomona, when they still figured stuff out with an abacus. The undergrads got slide rules, and everybody was agog at the new fangled transistors coming out in scientific papers (he still has some vacuum tubes). Dewey probably never would have left the Continental United States, had Aerojet and Northrup not shipped him off to France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, not to mention Houston, Cape Canaveral and Long Island. And when he got turned loose, he was known for being able to get out of the shop coat and check them shorts with the best of the furiner's. Dewey said so little about what his job was that I began accusing him of either being incompetent or a CIA Spook. But he said no, he wasn't a spy on some black project, it was just too difficult to explain to dummies who held a degree in Police Science and Administration.

To say Dewey was "old school" hardly befit the term. Seven or eight years ago, he announced he was going to cut back the hillside between his yard and mine, so he could get a bigger truck in his back yard. Finally, the day came to start measuring. That took about six weeks. Then he started digging away the hillside — by hand. Then came the trench for the footing blocks, by hand.



Dewey Lund and his best friend.





Dewey Lund, Mike Keele and Ramon Rodriguez at Chapter 78's 2012 Day at the Range and BBQ.

The footing blocks, like all the others, were enough to make a grunt squeal, at 65# each. And so it went for four years, sixty five pounds to the block, thirty six blocks to the pallet, nineteen pallets. In between each course came replacing the dirt, compacting it and dead men (those are engineering terms). If you called him "Patience," he wouldn't have got it, even if you giggled.

Dewey's longest streak of self-torture was working the Green Beret Shooter's Cup, an event we held for three years, before concluding that there was little charitable money in working for weeks on end, skinning knuckles, bruising knees and tearing tendons. Dewey was right in the middle of every work day we had, pulling his share and then some. He never complained, but he did, from time to time, look plaintively towards the west, trying to will the sun to go down faster. Dewey was a man of few words. Back in 2008, we were putting down the freeway towards Glendale, California, about 6 A.M., en route to a meeting with the renowned author, J. Stryker Meyer, who was out there pedaling his latest books. I may have been on the loud pedal a bit too hard when Dewey turned to me with all the stoicism in the world, and said "khdjuc wuff." Well I didn't know what that meant, so I kept the foot to the fire — until my rear view was filled with red and blue lights. It was June, not Christmas, so I reprimanded my right seater for not telling me there was a cop about. He said "I told you, you didn't listen."

I'm telling ya, the man didn't speak loud enough to be heard over tinnitus. He never made a fuss over himself, in spite of being a third degree black belt in some unpronounceable martial art, being a

much sought-after dancing partner for all the Chapter's wives nor did he drink to excess, or anything else.

So, if you couple a man's refusal to show weakness, never utter a complaint, and work every day at something strenuous, it's hard to know if anything is really wrong with him. Our daily dog walk calls for a couple of uphill trudges, and neighbor Tom and I figured that Dixie was slowing Dewey down, not the other way around. And in the last week of Dewey's life, when he stopped a few times to catch his breath, it didn't seem unusual for a 79-year-old man to stop for a minute or two. Then, on the last couple of walks he took, when he said he had some shortness of breath and tightness in his chest, Tom, a truck mechanic in the 82nd, and I, a rotor-head greaser in the Cav, didn't see the signs for what they were. On Dewey's last day, he declined to go for a walk, but said he was going to our beloved donut shop for coffee. When I arrived there, Dewey was laughing and joking and having a good old time.

Later that day, he called me in great physical distress, so I went down to his house and found him sitting in his easy chair, again, seemingly unconcerned with a thing. After a little interrogation, he conceded that he needed help and 911 was called. Even when the paramedics questioned him, he made light of the situation, even getting up and getting onto the gurney unaided. And the ambulance left the house code-2, and Dewey was gone.

He loved his dog more than anything else, and never abused anything, not cars, women or otherwise. He's gonna be hard to replace, we all miss him.. ❖





# Chapter 78

# CHRISTMAS PARTY 2019

**SUNDAY** DECEMBER 1st 2019  
1500 hrs

at the

**BAHIA CORINTHIAN YACHT CLUB**

1601 Bayside Dr., Corona del Mar, 92625

---

This year's event is hosted by Richard Simonian and will be held at the renowned BAHIA CORINTHIAN YACHT CLUB.

Although the annual boat parade will not be running on the evening of the event, this year's event *will* feature a DJ and a dance floor in the club's large banquet room.

## **COST**

\$40.00 per person.

## **DRESS CODE:**

Semi Formal, Chapter Members are encouraged to wear their SFA Blazers, Regimental tie, white shirt, dark slacks.

## **SPECIAL GUESTS:**

A Company, 5th Battalion 19th Special Forces Group (ABN) Rear Detachment.

These personnel will attend, FREE of charge, but MUST be in CLASS A uniform.

Wives/Girlfriends are also included in the FREE admission.

**Please mail your check payable to SFA Chapter 78 to the following address:**

Santiago Communities Inc.  
PO Box 11927 Santa Ana, CA 92711

You must have your checks mailed in *NO LATER THAN November 15th, 2019*, again, payable to SFA Chapter 78.

There will be no collection of monies at Chapter meetings, all checks MUST be mailed to the above address for accountability.

Questions, feel free to call, text, email me at; Bruce D Long (951) 317 4767 • [blong26774@gmail.com](mailto:blong26774@gmail.com)