



# SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78  
The LTC Frank J. Dallas Chapter

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 12 • DECEMBER 2020



## The Army Gets WEIRD

### The Wedding Crashers



# SENTINEL

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 12 • DECEMBER 2020

## From the Editor



Jim Morris  
Sentinel Editor

This will be my last *Sentinel* as editor. I filled some big shoes as Lonnie left for Las Vegas. He built it into the best newsletter in the SFA, and I like to think it still is.

I'll be relocating somewhere in Oklahoma, Arkansas, or Missouri early in January. The leading contender is the Fayetteville, AR area where I went to grad school in the late '70s and early '80s. It is for my money the most beautiful area of the United States, and, coincidentally, very much resembles the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

In the meanwhile I have a book to finish, one that I started more than ten years ago, and then put aside to nurse my wife, Myrna, through her final illness. I had put off joining Chapter 78 for those years, because I could not leave her side long enough to attend meetings. Kenn and Tilt reached out during the sadness and confusion of that time, and before I knew it I had a place to go, and people to see.

This is the third Special Forces magazine I have edited. In 1962-63 I edited *The Liberator*, the magazine of the 1st Special Forces Group, and in 1968 I edited *The Green Beret*, the magazine of the 5th Special Forces Group in Vietnam. On Okinawa I got to go on some wonderful goofy exercises, submarine infiltrations, night drops in Korea, SCUBA dives, water jumps. I loved those water jumps. In Vietnam I got to cover the op that eventually got made into the movie *Operation Dumbo Drop*. You know that line, "Based on Real Events". A more accurate line would be "Very Extremely Loosely Based on Real Events". But, it's probably the only Vietnam movie that a Vietnam veteran can show his grandchildren without embarrassment, and that's something. Also, as the information officer, I got shot full of holes. I took the job seriously.

In the *Sentinel* we could do things the other SF magazines couldn't, because we didn't have to only do what the army said we could do. Also, on the *Liberator* and *The Green Beret* I didn't have Debra Holm as an art director. As a civilian I've edited other magazines, and I've worked with great art directors. Debra is by far the best art director I have ever worked with, met, or seen. She is brilliant, creative, and extremely diligent. I will miss working on the *Sentinel*, and I will miss working with Debra.

How Miller is the new editor. I welcome him to the job. I have no doubt that he will maintain, and probably enhance the quality. You are in good hands ❖

Jim Morris  
*Sentinel* Editor

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**FRONT COVER:** A C-17 from the Hawaii National Guard banks right by the Dolomite Mountains as paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade parachute onto Juliet Drop Zone in northern Italy. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman John Linzmeier)



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19TH SF GROUP



20TH SF GROUP



11TH SF GROUP



12TH SF GROUP



Bruce Long, President SFA Chap. 78

Fantastic meeting! We had forty Personnel in attendance. Thirty were Chapter members, and ten were from A/5/19. CDC guidelines were followed.

Breakfast was served buffet style, with ten personnel at a time. Due to the large turnout the meeting didn't start until 0845 hrs.

We had three new Chapter members — **SFC Jon Knea** A/5/19, **Charlie Gage**, and **Jim Lockheart**. ([Photos on page 14](#))

**SFC Ken Atkinson**, Operations NCOIC for A/5/19, gave a quick overview of A Company's current activities that include Change of Command and the reflagging, A Company to Charlie Company. The ceremony should take place in February 2021.

The Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club donated two Brunches, and one Prime Rib Dinner gift certificates which were raffled off. This was Scott Jones' way of saying *THANK YOU* for the ammo donation to his Boy Scout Troop.

**The Annual Christmas party has been moved up one day to 12/05/20 due to a clerical error.** Again, I emphasized the importance of members sending in their reservations in no later than 11/15/20. We will have a DJ. Valet parking will be provided at no cost to the attendees. A program of events and dinner menu will be provided at a later date.

The JROTC Sonora High School will again be providing the Honor Guard for the Posting of the Colors.

Our guest speaker will be Kevin Harry CSM (Ret) Special Forces Association National President. (See bio at right)

**At our Silent Auction, two (2) AR's donated by Zack Kasanijan-King owner of JUGGERNAUT — minimum bid will be \$500.00.**

As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns. ❖

Bruce D. Long  
President, SFA Chapter 78  
SGM, SF (Ret)  
De Oppresso Liber

## Special Forces Association (SFA) National President Kevin L. Harry

CSM (Ret) Kevin L. Harry assumed the duties as SFA National President on July 1, 2020. As the SFA National President, Kevin sits on the SFA National Board of Officers to establish policy and procedures that allow the 10,600+ SFA members and the 89 SFA Chapters around the world to effectively support the Special Forces Association Mission. The Special Forces Association serves as the voice for the Special Forces Community, perpetuates Special Forces traditions and brotherhood, advances the public image of Special Forces and promotes the general welfare of the Special Forces Community.

Fulltime, Kevin is the President of KLH Professional Services and works with the West Virginia Military Authority on a variety of Special Operations initiatives between the West Virginia National Guard and organizations throughout the SOF Enterprise.

He holds a Bachelor of General Studies degree from East Tennessee State University and a Master of Science in Strategic Leadership from Mountain State University. He is a graduate of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, CSM/SGM Executive Education Course and the National Defense University's Keystone Course. He is a graduate of the 2015 Leadership West Virginia program.

Kevin Harry spent over 32 years of military service and retired as the Senior Enlisted Leader of West Virginia National Guard, where he advised the Adjutant General on enlisted issues for more than 6,500 citizen Soldiers and Airmen. He spent over 20 years in Army Special Forces assignments after attending the Special Forces Assessment and Selection Course in May 1991. His Special Forces assignments were split between 3rd SFG (A) and 19th SFG (A). Kevin's other significant assignments include: Command Sergeant Major for the West Virginia Army National Guard, Command Sergeant Major 2/19th SFG(A), Sergeant Major Det-1, 2/19th SFG(A), 1SG Support Company, 2/19th SFG(A) and Team Sergeant ODA 955.

He is a decade life member of the Special Forces Association, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), Association of the United States Army (AUSA) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He currently serves as Senior Vice-Commander of VFW Post 9796 in Milton, WV. He has served as past President, past Vice-President and past Secretary for Chapter 88 of the Special Forces Association in Kenova, WV and past Commander and past Junior Vice-Commander of VFW Post 9796.

His military awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars, five Meritorious Service Medals, four Army Commendation Medals,

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# The Army Gets WEIRD



Col. (Ret.) John B. Alexander

By Col. (Ret.) John B. Alexander

“Strange things are done in the midnight sun by the men who moil for gold;” But stranger things also have been done by men, and some women, who push the envelope of human capabilities. Named after the famed Star Wars order of Master Yoda, Project Jedi explored such boundaries. There do appear to have been several unofficial Jedi ventures as skills derived from New Age lore caused

Army explorers to reach out into the realms of psychic phenomena. In the early 1980s I headed such a project and was associated with others, both formal and informal.

One thing most Special Forces (SF) soldiers agree on is that mental fitness is even more important than physical attributes. The body can keep going well beyond its limits. But most of those who drop out do so because their minds tell them to do so. Of all of the Special Operations elements, SF are known as the smart ones as their missions often require considerable maturity and constraint. Breaking things is relatively easy compared to sensitive operations “Left of Boom.”

## Project Jedi – Making Excellent Soldiers Better

Under Project Jedi we saw examples of that in situations that were not even high stress. Operating with the Intelligence Community (IC) we explored a therapeutic modality known as Neurolinguistic Programming, or NLP. The creators, Richard Bandler and John Grinder conducted their doctoral research developing the process. Their fundamental question was, why do some therapists have great success, while others, seemingly using the same processes fail. The question was, what is the difference that makes a difference.

Like Special Forces, personnel in the IC are generally a cut above the Army standard. While Bandler and Grinder worked on fixing broken people, our question was what can we do to take really good people, improve their skills and make them even better. To begin with we hired separately both Bandler and Grinder. Working with John Grinder was a relative unknown at the time, Tony Robbins. Obviously, his fame went on to eclipse his teacher.

Jedi was multi-agency and a common factor was that all of us shot weapons. Also, while most therapies were evaluated on whether or not the patient felt better, shooting was highly quantifiable. Either you hit the target or you didn't. For the demonstration project we chose the then-Army standard sidearm, the M1911, .45 caliber pistol, right out of the arms room, not specialized. To provide models of excellence the Army Marksmanship Unit (AMU) provided the U.S. Army Champion, the Interservice Champion, and their boss, a lieutenant colonel.



We quickly learned they had very different shooting styles, but mental preparation was a common factor. Although they shot every day, before a match each of them would mentally shoot the entire match in their head; not general practice, but every round that would be going down range. We quizzed them on their belief systems and carefully watched them shoot. What we were looking for could be called a “critical path model.”

Soon we learned that their muscle memory was so good, we could get them quite a bit off balance and they could still hit the target. However, when mentally disrupted, like having them sing “Mary Had a Little Lamb”, their capabilities rapidly degraded. One of the AMU shooters had a very complex process that began when he set the case down, opened it, put on his glasses, etc. If at any point in the cycle he was interrupted, he would unload his weapon, take off the glasses, put the gun back in the box, then start from the beginning. Another shooter would simply answer questions, return to his firing position and continue. In a couple of days, we identified the critical path and were able to develop a new training protocol for pistol shooting. One innovation was never allowing the person to fail. Using the traditional method, the shooter started with a target at 25 meters and kept practicing until they hit it. We innovated a “success cycle.” We place the target at point blank range – a couple of feet in front of the shooter. They simply could not miss. The target was then moved back until it was at the normal range. The difference was that our shooters never had a chance to fail.

To test the protocol, we had two groups of young soldiers assigned to us. A few previously had never fired the .45 pistol. One group was trained by members of the AMU employing the standard four-and-



Left, Richard Bandler, one of the creators of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP), and at right, John Alexander. (Photo courtesy John Alexander)

a-half-day course. The paired sample was trained using the new technique. A problem soon arose. Using our protocol, all of the soldiers, both men and women, had qualified by the end of the first day. By noon the following day all were shooting at expert level. There was nowhere else to go and we had proven we could save considerable time and ammunition.

### Metal Bending

My main project involved psychokinesis, or “mind over matter.” Yes, it is real. The project focused on metal bending and was known as PKMB or psychokinesis metal bending. In reality that meant spoons and forks. Through the grapevine we heard about an aerospace engineer at McDonnell Douglas who had created a process whereby regular people could experience metal bending. Jack Houck was interested in exploring these realms. He had an unrelated CIA contract which brought him to the Washington area fairly frequently so we arranged a meeting.

After I observed the process at a friend's house, I reported to my boss, MG Bert Stubblebine, Commanding General of U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) what I had seen. Quickly I contacted Jack and arranged for another “PK Party” to be held at my apartment at Alexandria Knolls West inside the Beltway but down I-395 from the Pentagon. In addition to MG Stubblebine, those attending included Andrija Puharich who is also featured in Annie Jacobson's book, *Phenomena*. Annie has spoken to SFA-78 on her latest book, *Surprise, Kill, Vanish*. There were two Navy captains including Joe Dick who was using psychics to assist in finding POWs who were unaccounted for from Vietnam. My friend Ted Rockwell, who had been Admiral Rickover's technical director developing the Nuclear Navy, introduced us to a professional medium, Anne Gehman. That introduction would be a game-changer.

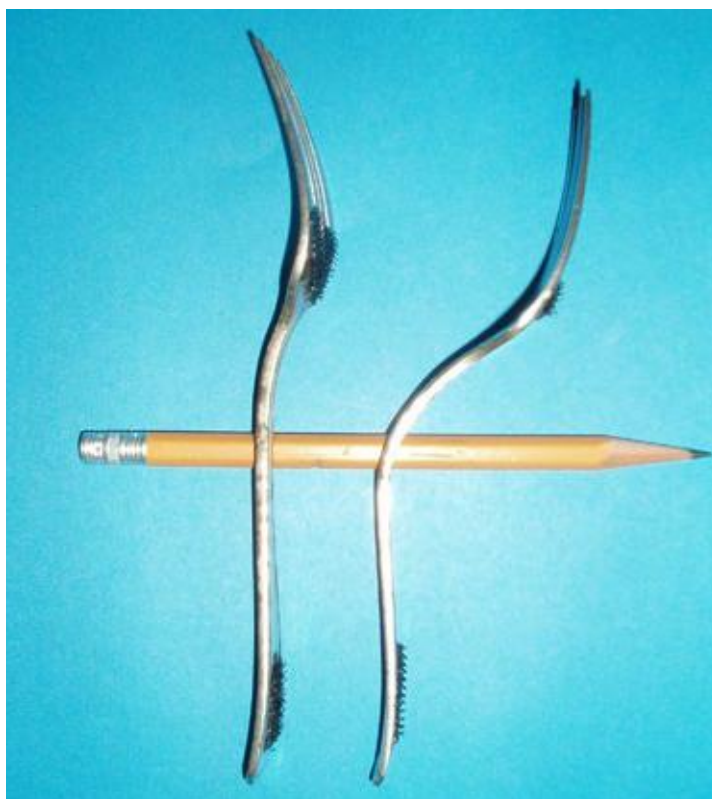
As the event began that autumn evening, Jack led us through a dowsing exercise that was supposed to determine if the assembled forks and spoons were agreeable to bending for us.

This night Bert Stubblebine sat on the floor directly across from Anne Gehman. After about an hour during which people were allowed to use some physical force to bend their cutlery, we move to what Jack referred to as the “graduate course.” Now, we each held a pair of matched forks by the base, but no additional touching was allowed. Suddenly, without warning one of Anne Gehman's forks dropped a full 90 degrees. Our eyes nearly popped out when that happened. It was a real “Oh Shit” moment when we saw the effects were real. The other bending of cutlery we had observed had been very modest, but this left no doubt.

INSCOM elements were scattered across the globe. Quarterly MG Stubblebine held meetings that became known as “love-ins” where at the O-6 level commanders would update on progress and set the agenda for the following three months. At the time, we had been blindsided by certain Soviet advances, starting with Sputnik, but there were others as well. Normally when post-mortems were



(Department of Defense; U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Jona R. Meme/Released)



Forks depicted are from the INSCOM incident. In the INSCOM incident, one fork dropped 90 degrees, returned upright, then bent again, all without any physical force. (Photo courtesy John Alexander)

conducted, the IC found they had the information before the event, but failed to recognize it. Fearing complacency in his subordinates, Stubblebine wanted them to be sure they did not disregard data just because they didn't think it could happen.

That is where I came in. He decided that I should conduct a PK party for the assembled group at one of the love-ins held at the Xerox National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA a few miles outside the Beltway. Many of them were none too happy to be involved in such nonsense. Some knew of my projects but considered them on par with voodoo.

For this evening event, the group of about 25 was seated in two tiered rows of desks in a horseshoe. Not ideal, as I preferred to have



access to direct contact with the participants and the table provide both a physical and psychological barrier. Snide remarks could be heard, but not too loud as their boss was there.

What happened at the “graduate session” was mindboggling. One of the few LTCs was seated to my left front. Suddenly I heard a commotion from his area, but I did not see what happened. When I turned, I saw his fork was bent a full 90-degrees. I was noncommittal as I feared I was being set up. But then, as we all watched the fork moved back to the original upright position, again dropped 90-degrees then moved up about to about a 45-degree angle and stopped. Everyone in attendance had seen that happen including the INSCOM Science Advisor, GS-18 Ed Speakman. Sitting directly behind that LTC he had witnessed the entire event.

The officer was badly shaken. He put the forks down and stated, “I wish that hadn’t happened.” Fortunately, we were sequestered as it took a couple of days for our shrink to put him back together again before he was returned to Europe. The photo (see page 3) shows those forks, as I did keep them.

That is the most spectacular PKMB event I have ever witnessed. Of course, the snide comments kept coming. A favorite seemed to be, “What are you going to do, bend tank barrels?” Even in the early 1980s my answer was no; move electrons. Then computers were just emerging as mainstream. The risk, I thought, was to computers. And you did not have to cause them to crash. Even then, to make computers unreliable would be sufficient to constitute a strategic threat. Today the field of Information Warfare has emerged. Rarely considered, however, is a PK threat even though there are people who do impact computers without touching them.

Jack developed the PKMB format based on the exploits of the Israeli performer, Uri Geller, Jack, now deceased, called himself a “cheer leader” at the “parties.” There is an emotional component to the metal bending process. Following Jack’s format, I soon learned how to teach the process, and found that groups of 20-30 were the best size. For truth in advertising, Uri, a former Israeli paratrooper, now has been a friend for several decades and he provided a foreword for my most recent book, *Reality Denied: Firsthand Experiences with Things that Can’t Happen — But Did*. For anyone interested, it contains an appendix describing how to hold a PKMB event such as this.

### Firewalking

There was one extraordinary day in Project Jedi that combined several feats of PKMB and pushed NLP techniques to new limits. In the morning that day, at Arlington Hall Station, we took a small group of volunteers plus those of us who had designed the shooting methodology and taught them karate board breaking. That was not particularly challenging but most of them were not martial arts students and had never previously tried to put their hand through a wooden board. Splintering boards accomplished, in the afternoon I conducted a successful metal bending event such as described above. A few of the design group had been to one of Jack’s parties. Most participants had not.

The crowning experience, however, was when we traveled to a relatively remote area in Maryland and built a roaring bonfire. It was there that Tony Robbins showed us how to walk on a bed of hot



Tony Robbins doing the first firewalk that night in Maryland. (Photo courtesy John Alexander)

coals without getting burned. That was serious business, and mistakes can be agonizing. Pictured above is Tony doing the first walk. We were all successful and no one was burned that night. What seemed to be key was a shift in mental state when we each felt we could safely transit the glowing embers. Yes, it was hot and pyrometers have measured temperatures at 1200 degrees (F). Importantly, the issue was not pain control. Rather, there appeared to be a discernable shift in consciousness that is hard to explain. Everyone in our group chose to conduct the firewalk. As is often stated, “Don’t try this at home.” People have been seriously injured attempting to walk on fire, even under Tony. We were unconstrained by human use boards at that time, and I doubt any unit could pull that off today.

### Psychic Spying

Imagine a world in which one can know what is happening anywhere in the world. Or, there is an ability to know what is likely to happen in the future. This is not hypothetical and we did it. Once the blanket of secrecy was peeled back, remote viewing, the best known of our psychic related programs, eventually made public headlines as Star Gate. Exposed in 1995, this program had been covertly running for about two decades out of an old, nondescript wooden barracks on Ft. Meade, Maryland.

Despite that all that I just said is true, there were significant downsides. Sometimes it worked. There were occasional successes. Unfortunately, they usually were proven to be so after-the-fact. Classification was sensitively guarded. That protected the participants but also restricted the flow of data and growth of support.

While scientists debated the theoretical possibility, remote viewing, under Star Gate, became an operational capability.

Remote Viewer 001, was Chief Warrant Officer Joe McMoneagle, who possessed innate capabilities for psychic spying and amassed an enviable record for accuracy. He was known as the best of the best. He demonstrated the potential for strategic applications of remote viewing nearly three decades ago. The classic example was Joe's identification of the development of a new class Soviet submarines.

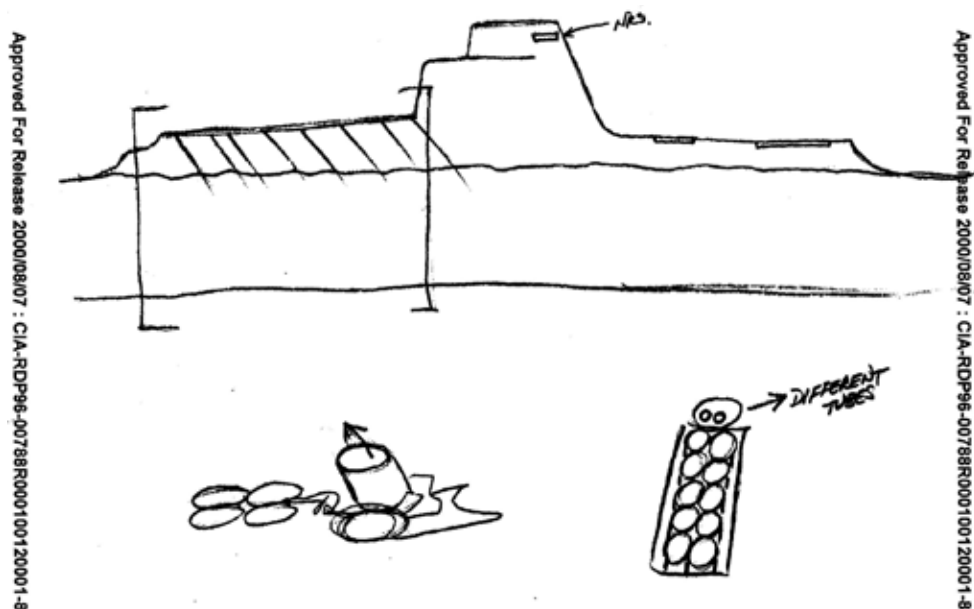
Early satellite coverage revealed a facility near the port of Severodvinsk on the White Sea close to the Arctic Circle. The activity got the attention of the intelligence community but nothing was verifiable. The building under scrutiny was very large with content shielded from reconnaissance satellite observation. It was obvious that some form of construction was occurring there. All conventional intelligence means failed to provide answers about what was happening inside the huge building.

At the time, then-Lieutenant Commander Jake Stewart was assigned to the National Security Council. A remote viewing supporter he was willing to take a chance. Jake decided to task the detachment at Fort Meade to determine what information they could produce on this seemingly impenetrable target.

Over several days McMoneagle and another remote viewer were assigned to examine the facility using only their mental remote viewing skills. Given only geographic coordinates as a targeting mechanism, McMoneagle first accurately described an immense manmade structure. Then after being shown a satellite photo of the roof, he was asked to describe the contents of the building. McMoneagle indicated the presence of several submarines. One, which was under development, was portrayed as extremely large and having features previously unknown for the Soviet Navy. He described a missile boat with a double row of 20 launching tubes and a new drive mechanism. The tubes, he noted, were forward of the sail, a position never previously observed on ballistic missile submarines. McMoneagle also detailed an unusual double hull and the use of special welding techniques.

None of the remote viewing material made sense, and the professional intelligence analysts scoffed at the report. The analysts noted that they would have picked up intelligence reports on such a dramatic change in submarine architecture. Besides, U.S. boat builders

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One of twelve drawings made by Joe McMoneagle at Ft Meade, MD. (Photo courtesy John Alexander)



A Typhoon class submarine — our intel completely missed this new class of large Soviet Sub. Clearly noted is that the missiles are forward of the sail, that and many other aspects were identified by CWO McMoneagle before the boat was ever seen. (Photo courtesy John Alexander)



Joe McMoneagle and John Alexander (Photo courtesy John Alexander)



# The Wedding Crashers



Jack Murphy

By Jack Murphy

**Editors Note:** This is an excerpt from Jack Murphy's book *"Murphy's Law: My Journey from Army Ranger and Green Beret to Investigative Journalist"*.

I arrived at 5th Special Forces group in 2007. I got assigned to 4th Battalion. After 9/11, Donald Rumsfeld had issued a directive that Special Forces was to rapidly expand. The Pentagon, Special Forces Command, and

General Parker at the Special Warfare complied with this policy decision but in the process ended up violating what are known as the Special Operations Forces (SOF) Truths, which are as follows:

- Humans are more important than Hardware.
- Quality is better than Quantity.
- Special Operations Forces cannot be mass produced.
- Competent Special Operations Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.
- Most Special Operations require non-SOF assistance.

As I had begun to see in the Q-Course, then more so as a member of Special Forces, we were violating all of these so-called truths and

continue to do so to this day. We mass produce young soldiers for these units while turning a blind eye to the massive retention issues. No one wants to ask why hardly anyone stays in these units.

I tried to get out of the 4th Battalion assignment because it was a brand-new battalion that we had to stand up from scratch, so we would not be deploying any time soon. I was unsuccessful in this endeavor. When I showed up, the Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) teams were filling up with sergeants, but we had no equipment and few officers. We didn't have team rooms and hung out in 5th Group's isolation facility. Our first battalion commander got into trouble and was allowed to quietly retire. He allegedly had classified information on his personal computer and his wife dined him out to Army investigators during the course of a messy divorce. These types of incidents are rarely reported in the press but they happen just about every day.

I had expected to be the youngest, most inexperienced Green Beret on an ODA filled with salty old sergeants. It turned out that I was one of the more experienced guys and was immediately made the senior weapons sergeant on my team. It was kind of a frustrating mess. In time, weapons and gear floated in, and we began training on Fort Campbell. We all tried to make the best of it.

One advantage of standing up a new battalion is that there is no shortage of training to attend. Personally, I enjoyed combat training and liked learning new things and mastering new skills. It was



ODA 5414 team picture in Tal Afar Iraq, 2009 (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)



head and shoulders above garrison life, which was mostly about getting down on your kneepads for the officer class and endless online training modules that are done simply to “check the block” on some spreadsheet that shows you are “T” for trained in some useless administrative task.

I went to the Military Free Fall course, which, of all the classes I attended in the army, was the most fun. We also got to do off-road driving at AM General, urban driving at Gryphon Group, which is a training program run by a private company in Florida, live-tissue medical training, shooting courses at Mid-South, which is a privately run marksmanship school, the Glock armorers’ course, the SOF armorers’ course, and more.

More than once during this period of time, I packed two bags, taking one to a course and leaving the other at my apartment in Clarksville. I would return home from one course, drop my bag, pick up the one I had left behind, and go right back out the door to the next course.

It wasn’t all fun and games, though. At the SOP armorers’ course in Indiana I went out for dinner with my junior weapons sergeant. I probably had seven glasses of Johnnie Walker Black Label; I don’t remember what my junior was drinking. A third student drove us back to our hotel, and my junior decided that it was time for me to go to bed. I said, “Yeah, sure, but I need to brush my teeth.” I got up and headed to the sink. My junior was not having it; he had decided that I needed to go to bed right goddamn now! He tackled me from behind, and we both went flying into a corner, wrecking a lamp and a trash can. As we fought each other, he decided to bite down on my shoulder with his teeth. “Ow, you goddamn asshole, what the fuck is wrong with you!” Convinced that I would now go to bed, my junior finally knocked it off and went to his room.

Normally, I would have just shrugged something like that off, but get this: We were done with the course and heading back to Clarksville

the next day. My girlfriend was flying in to meet me, and guess who now had a huge bite mark on his shoulder? You could see individual teeth marks, for Christ’s sake! Yeah, good fucking luck explaining that to your girlfriend: *Oh, yeah, honey, that was my battle buddy. He had a few too many, tackled me into the corner of a hotel room, and bit me.* I wouldn’t believe that shit if someone told me. But by the grace of God, she never noticed the bite mark. This is where being Irish pays off, as it must have blended in with the freckles on my shoulder.

Back at the home station, we got team rooms, and our gear was filtering in, but most important, we got a deployment schedule. We had some great guys on my ODA, but overall, I found 5th Group to be insanely bureaucratic and very conventional in how they did things. The nickname “5th Ranger Battalion” often gets applied to 5th Special Forces Group. It was a sharp contrast from Ranger Battalion, where we had our own compound and did things our own way; 5th Group seemed shackled by Mother Army. Officers and senior NCOs treated it like a conventional unit despite its being organized and equipped for unconventional warfare. This resulted in suboptimal performance, to say the least.

We were also bombarded with asinine online training modules. The modern army has gone completely corporate. Strong leadership has been replaced by statistical analysis and measuring metrics. The sole purpose of soldiers is to provide warm bodies so that officers can claim they command a unit. Their task from day to day is not preparing for war but filling trackers. Soldiers need to be “green” on their tasks at all times. That isn’t to say that they need to be technically and tactically proficient; no one cares about that, no one measures that. What is most important is that they have an up-to-date medical profile, their sexual harassment training, their quarterly information security training, their online SERE refresher (where they run around in a bullshit video game, rubbing sticks together to make a fire), and a hundred other completely worthless require-



The ODA and a few attachments doing a Military Free Fall train up prior to our deployment to Iraq. (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)



The author, manning the .50 Ma Deuce as we head out on a patrol in N. Iraq (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)

ments that do nothing other than help some careerist officer cover his ass. It is a soulless, counterproductive, and cynical approach to leadership that places “qualifications” ahead of readiness.

Dr. Leonard Wong at the U.S. Army War College did a study which found that our soldiers are tasked with so much mandatory training army-wide that leaders don’t have any time to train soldiers on their actual jobs. Furthermore, the army tells us to conduct more mandatory training than there are training days on the calendar. But it gets better, because officers are reporting to higher-ups that yes, they are in fact conducting all mandatory training to standard. This is impossible. Every officer in the U.S. Army is sending up false reports. What the army has done is conditioned entire generations of soldiers to feel that it is okay to compromise their integrity, not once but twice. The first compromise is the criminally negligent act of not preparing their men for combat. The second is lying about it.

Let me explain how this works on a team level. Your team sergeant comes into the team room and lectures you all on how you need to have your trackers up to date and be in the green on all assigned admin tasks. He is saying this because his bosses are holding his feet to the fire. So instead of training, troops are busy sitting behind a computer, mindlessly clicking through an online test module from the bullshit army safety center. No one gives a fuck, and no one

gives a fuck that no one gives a fuck. It is a military culture of not taking pride in your work. You finish your online training, print out a certificate, hand it to your chain of command, they update the tracker, and your team is “trained” up on the whiteboard.

I understand that running a team is about more than what you see in the recruitment commercials. There are logistics and administrative tasks that need to be handled. Guys need to go to the dentist, soldiers need to understand the Geneva Convention, but at some point, this shit has gotten completely out of control. I really can’t begin to explain how dehumanizing and demoralizing the cynical corporate culture is. More so when, on a daily basis, you hear about our troops being killed fighting our war overseas. Some of us joined the army and took this war seriously. We wanted to win. I never gave a fuck about having a “career” and would have been happy to just be a senior weapons sergeant forever. I mean, when you look at your senior NCOs and see that they are emasculated secretaries for some colonel, you have to ask why the hell would you want to get promoted in the first place?

As an ODA, we were now going into our pre-deployment workup in 2007. We did a HALO/HAHO train-up in Las Vegas and then a few weeks of pre-mission training (PMT) at Fort Knox. HALO and HAHO are both forms of military free-fall parachuting. High-altitude



Low-opening is when you jump from an airplane at high altitude, up to thirty thousand feet, and deploy your parachute around four thousand feet. In a high-altitude high-opening jump, you deploy your parachute immediately after exiting the aircraft and glide under canopy for long distances, perhaps even across an international border. These are clandestine infiltration techniques designed to insert Special Forces teams into denied areas.

The parachute riggers were good to go, but most of the group support personnel were about as lethargic as you could possibly imagine, supporting no one but themselves. They seemed to expect a bribe of a bottle of whiskey just to get them out of their chairs. Talk about frustrating. At the end of the day, it is the ODA itself that pulls together, works as a team, and ultimately bends if not breaks the rules in order to complete their mission, out of necessity.

A new team sergeant who came to our team before our HALO train-up asked that I refer to him as Michael Bluth, the name of the main character in *Arrested Development*, which he got me watching on DVD while we were in Iraq. He told us that no one can be trusted outside our team room doors. He wasn't mistaken.

Finally, our deployment date rolled around. Guess where we were heading? My old stomping grounds: Tal Afar.

ODA 5414 deployed to Iraq in the winter of 2009. It was our first operational deployment. We hit the ground at FOB Sykes and conducted a relief in place with the ODA that was on the way out. The outgoing 18B (weapons sergeant) walked me through the situation, taking me to the arms room, the conex containers full of ammo, and then introduced me to the Tal Afar SWAT team.

The Iraqi SWAT team members were living in some old Saddam-era bunkers on the FOB, alternating between two shifts, each consisting of a platoon-sized element. One platoon would be at home while the other was in the bunkers, training and waiting for missions. These guys had been selected and trained by U.S. Special Forces, and frankly, I was just the latest cock on the block to take them under my wing. Inside the bunker, we met the SWAT team leaders, smoked cigarettes, and played get-to-know-you. Iraqis will ask you what your birthday is and be impressed when you tell them the month and day. They usually only know what year they were born, such are the medical records in that part of the world. I met Salem, the SWAT commander, and his right-hand men, Qasim, Faisal, and Shahab. They turned out to be great partners and friends. Unfortunately, the other platoon turned out to be subpar.

My ODA's compound consisted of a series of CHUs, or containerized housing units, set on cinder blocks in long rows; two CHUs could be welded together, and this was the case for our arms room, our loadout room, the operations center (OPCEN), and a couple other structures. The mechanics had a large tent where they could work on vehicles, and we had a small fleet of Humvees and MRAPs and some civilian cars and trucks for driving around the base and to the chow hall. We also had a fire pit, around which many a party was had.

On our initial ride through Tal Afar that deployment, I recognized many sights, even though it was my first time being there in daylight. The city was transformed. Four years prior, you could not set foot



Doing some recon for a training exercise near our FOB. (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)



Walking around Dohuk, Kurdistan in civilians. (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)

in Tal Afar without getting into a firefight; now we could walk around the market without body armor and just a pistol on our hip. Finally, a positive counterinsurgency story!

Sure, five years later, the American presence would no longer exist, and the entire city would be taken over by ISIS and its population enslaved by jihadists, but that's another story. Let's bask in our successes for a few moments, shall we?

While we drove down the streets on that initial ride-along, I was up in the gun turret behind the .50-cal. I silently observed several collapsed houses where the roof and individual floors had pancaked on top of one another, concrete left crumbling under the hot Iraqi sun. These were the houses we had called in AC-130 strikes on four years ago. There was no reconstruction for Iraq, and this became even more evident when we began making trips in Mosul.

The enemy situation had changed drastically. By this time AQI had been brought to their knees. The special operations task force had

pushed their shit in, but that's something you won't hear much about in the press. The task force I'd been a part of had in fact helped quell the insurgency, and now there was a great opportunity to consolidate gains, build infrastructure, and enable good governance in Iraq. Sadly, none of this was to happen. Before we left, our commanders had told us that our mission success would be based on how few combat operations we'd done, because now we were to transition authority over to the Iraqis, especially with a new Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) being signed. This opinion changed when we hit the ground, and our chain of command began pushing us to submit CONOPs (concept of the operations) plans for combat missions.

Everyone knew that Obama would have us withdraw from the country. In the end, the administration uprooted the entire infrastructure that had been built in-country, including vast intelligence networks, something that had never been done before. I and many others quickly deduced that this was a bad idea. Yes, the Iraqis needed to step up, and none of us wanted to be their colonial masters, but the reality is that the country wasn't ready. The government did not function and was rife with corruption. However, orders were orders, and during this time, the army put in a diligent effort to make it look like things were good in Iraq.

Commanders on the ground were being actively encouraged to send up false reports to higher, making the situation on the ground look much rosier than it was. A policy decision had been made from up high, and now the foot soldiers in this war had to make reality fit into the bubble that our politicians had created back stateside.

When I mentioned to my team leader that if we left, Iraq would become a terrorist state like Afghanistan in 2001, my captain said, "Well, that is just stating the obvious."

We all knew.

While AQI had been all but put out of business, another enemy was beginning to rear its head. They called themselves the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and were based out of Syria, where we couldn't touch them. The group consisted of former Baath Party members like Al-Douri and Saddam Hussein's daughter, visions of the old regime dancing in front of their eyes like sugarplum fairies. Their primary tactic was to attack only coalition forces in Iraq, rather than alienating the locals, like AQI, which was basically a glorified death cult. The enemy was learning.

So, we came up with a training schedule for the SWAT team, getting them out on the range shooting, running through the shoot house, doing medical classes, and all of that good army training, while we put together targeting packets. Soon the intel that the previous team had developed on a terrorist in Mosul named Abu Gaini began to come together.

If you want to catch a terrorist, you have to locate him first, and the one place where you know he will be is at his own wedding.

By 2009, insurgents and terrorists in Iraq had gotten fairly wily. The enemy had learned from their engagements with U.S. Special Operations Forces, and they were taking increasingly sophisticated measures to try to trip us up and avoid our raids. So, when we found out that a big-name terrorist was getting married, and where the



The two 18B (weapons sergeants) including myself and my junior bravo standing with Iraqi SWAT partners at the castle in the middle of Tal Afar. The castle was later dismantled by ISIS as a part of their ethnic cleansing of the area. (Photo courtesy Jack Murphy)

marriage would be held, a lot of uncertainty was taken out of the equation. This moron *had* to be at his own damn wedding.

Once we had solid intel on the date and location of the wedding, we rolled into Mosul that afternoon in our Humvees, heading toward the target house. One difference between my time with the Ranger regiment and my new job was that, as a Special Forces team, we were always partnered with our Iraqi counterparts, in this case a SWAT team from Tal Afar. With a platoon-sized element of Iraqis, our ODA snaked the vehicles through the flooded back alleys of Mosul.

The city had taken a beating since I was there four years before. Mosul had looked like Beirut back in the eighties, with a number of collapsed buildings and structures covered in bullet pockmarks. Mosul had always been one of the most violent cities in Iraq, and now the enemy was building bigger IEDs to defeat the armor packages that coalition forces had put on vehicles to protect us from the previous IEDs. Like I said, the enemy was learning and adapting.

We navigated our way through the labyrinth of back roads on the north side of the city. The streets were partially flooded with brown water; rocks and pebbles gathered in clusters on the roadsides. Kids looked at us with a mix of curiosity and shock as we slow-rolled past them, searching for the target building.

As silently as possible, we pulled up in front of the objective building and unassed the vehicles. We quietly opened doors and crept down the street in broad daylight.

I was an assault team leader, taking four Iraqi SWAT troops through the front door. We quickly pushed through the open front gate into the inner courtyard. It was all over in a flash, fairly anticlimatic, which is the way it should be. If the enemy has time to react to your raid, then you've lost the element of surprise and, with it, the advantage. Special Forces soldiers like to engage the enemy at a place and time of their choosing, rather than letting the enemy dictate the terms of the fight.



We flooded the compound with assaulters, clearing rooms, sending men scurrying up ladders to the roof, locking down every doorway and potential avenue of escape. The fighting-age men had guns trained on them and were flex-cuffed in short order.

Abu Gaini, the terrorist we were after, was in the courtyard with the other men. The wedding ceremony was complete, and at this point the men would have begun drinking. The dowry (a lethargic goat that sat panting in the courtyard for the duration of our stay on the objective) would have been killed and a meal cooked. Instead, Abu Gaini was put on the ground; a Glock 19 pistol was found tucked into the waistband of his suit.

In the back room, the women were holding court separately. A lone Iraqi SWAT team member stood sentry in the doorway but wasn't interacting with the women in any way. The SWAT guys were scared to death of women, it seemed, but I suppose that was better than the opposite — we never had to deal with them acting inappropriately toward women on target.

The bride broke out in tears as we secured the home, and the Iraqi women began screaming at us. As we soon found out, the bride was only sixteen years old. We left the women alone and didn't put our hands on any of them — we prefer not to, and it is additionally offensive to the culture, so we avoid it.

But it gets better. We'd crashed the wedding at the eleventh hour. Had we delayed any longer — had we gotten lost down one of the side streets, for example — the terrorist would have consummated the marriage. We crashed the wedding just in time to save a teenage girl's virginity from this terrorist asshole. This was how our ODA got the name "The Wedding Crashers."

While one of our ODA members questioned the terrorist, the bad guy said to him through an interpreter that if we knew who he was, then we knew what he had done — killing people and setting off IEDs for cash and for his terrorist cause. "Just put a bullet in my head now," he begged. No dice. Under the recently signed Status of Forces Agreement, he would be sent directly to an Iraqi prison. After flex-cuffing the terrorist, we decided to haul in his old man as well. His father was involved in his son's criminal enterprise on some level, though we weren't sure exactly how.

I grabbed the father under his arm, helped him up, and led him through the gate and out into the street where our vehicles were waiting. Our source sat in one of the Humvees, wearing a scarf around his face. When I led the old man in front of the source, he silently nodded. This was the guy. The old man just laughed; he looked back at me and chuckled. I stood him next to a wall while we prepared to load all of the detainees on our vehicles. Abu Gaini's father was totally nonchalant about the whole affair, as if it were all a joke. I couldn't figure him out.

Back at our base, FOB Sykes in Tal Afar, I sat down in the bunker where our ISWAT team was quartered. We were just sitting around, smoking cigarettes and generally shooting the shit. One of them mentioned to me that the "old man," the terrorist's father, had killed his cousin, who had been a police officer. This piqued my interest, and I asked him what he was talking about.

Back in 2005, Tal Afar had been a straight-up terrorist sanctuary. Recall my previous experiences in Tal Afar, when I was in Ranger Battalion. Back during the bad old days of Tal Afar, which in 2009 was fairly peaceful, the father had been issuing fatwahs on people and was known as an accomplished insurgent sniper. One guy told me that the old man could take the cherry off of a cigarette from a thousand meters away. Surely an exaggeration, but it showed how afraid of him they were. Abu Gaini's father had murdered a lot of people, including policemen, and the citizens of Tal Afar had no sympathy for this guy.

I walked into the back of the bunker where the old man was sitting on the floor under guard by the Iraqi SWAT team members. He was looking around and smiling at everyone with not a care in the world. I asked him some questions through our interpreter about his past activities. I told him that I had heard he was a pretty good sniper. He just laughed and threw up his handcuffed hands. "No, no, mister, you got it all wrong." He was like a serial killer. A psychopath.

We used to visit the prison in Tal Afar every so often to see what was up. The terrorist we'd captured in Mosul was always there, even months later, still wearing his wedding suit. The Iraqi warden kept him handcuffed to the bars of his cell in the standing position so he could never sit down. Don't blame Americans for this sort of mistreatment — we were completely hands-off due to that Status of Forces Agreement I mentioned previously. We would have imprisoned him humanely, but what the Iraqis did to each other was their business. As American soldiers, we could express disagreement to our host nation counterparts, but we had no power to do anything about it.

Sadly, the prison warden was himself killed by an Al-Qaeda suicide bomber who showed up at his front door one night during this same six-month deployment. Took the warden's entire family in the blast, everyone except a second cousin. The cousin felt that the attack had been directed against his family by Shias because they were Sunni. To get revenge, he went into the market with an AK-47 and started gunning down Shias in cold blood until the Iraqi military showed up and wasted him.

This is the insanity that is Iraq.

Now, how about the terrorist's father, the old man? He had murdered too many innocent people in Tal Afar to be allowed to live. I never saw him again after we dropped him off at the prison that first time. I later heard through the grapevine that the Iraqis disappeared him out in the desert somewhere.

In 2009, the situation on the ground in Iraq was getting increasingly convoluted. The amount of bureaucracy you had to go through to get anything done was off the charts. Giving the Iraqis medical training in a classroom on our base required a memo from a colonel; the conventional American troops did not like interacting with my ISWAT team; every colonel in the country had a big idea about how they were going to win the war. One unfortunate statement from our high headquarters was that we needed to get them all the information they needed to win the war. How the hell was a Special Forces staff office going to win a war? We needed their support, but from their perspective, we (the maneuver element) had to support them (the staff element) in their effort to achieve total victory in Iraq. Man, this shit was getting weird. ♦

## *Murphy's Law: My Journey from Army Ranger and Green Beret to Investigative Journalist* by Jack Murphy



Kenn Miller

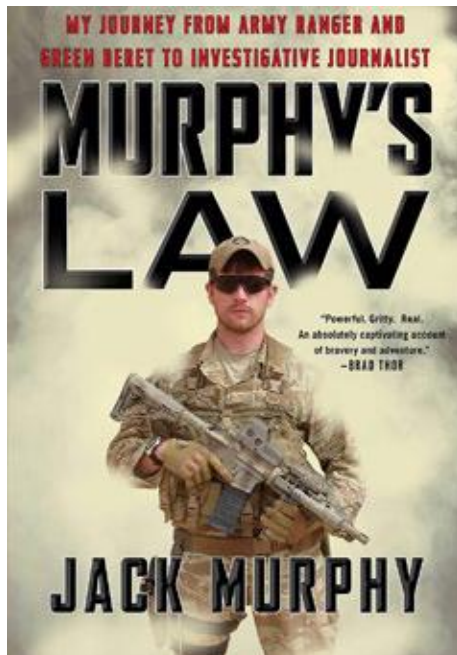
Reviewed by Kenn Miller

A year or so ago, when the infamous John Stryker Meyer was president of SFA Chapter 78, among the guest speakers to come to a chapter meeting was Jack Murphy, an eight year special operations veteran of the U.S. Army's 3rd Ranger Battalion and 5th Special Forces Group. Jack Murphy was one

of our most popular speakers, but it was his young daughter, patiently enduring her father's talk to the other old men while waiting for a promised trip to Sea World who really won our hearts.

After eight years in the U.S. Army — all of which seems to have been in the Ranger Regiment and in Special Forces, and is well covered in this book — Jack Murphy realized that about all the Army held for him was a comparatively dull life as a senior NCO, passing time until retirement, so he left the Army and finally went to college and earned some impressive scholarly credentials from Columbia University.

With a United States Army Special Operations education, and Ivy League academic credentials — Jack Murphy set off on a career as an investigative journalist. He was apparently aware that such a career might earn a man both friends and enemies.



[Murphy's Law: My Journey from Army Ranger and Green Beret to Investigative Journalist](#)

by Jack Murphy

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271 pages

And while the strictly military parts of the book are interesting and well told, the post-military part of *MURPHY'S LAW* just might be the most interesting (and somewhat shocking) part of this very readable and informative book.

As a journalist Murphy goes back to some of the places he knew from previous combat deployments, and that is good exciting reporting about a less than peaceful and perfect part of the world. That's not a surprise, and not much of a shocker. It is also no surprise to discover that like every other large institution, the U.S. military also has its share of scandal and corruption. Murphy tells of sexual and power corruption, and abuses that have been uncovered, and he does so knowing that telling the truth can make a man a lot of enemies.

Jack Murphy may well become the "Robert Woodward" of military investigative journalism, and we need such journalism. It takes a lot of courage to serve as an Army Ranger, a Green Beret, and as an honest investigative journalist. Jack Murphy has shown this courage, and I look forward to reading everything he writes.

Buy *MURPHY'S LAW*, read *MURPHY'S LAW*, and tell your friends about it. And keep your eyes open, because Jack Murphy still has a lot more to write about. ❖

## SFA National President, Kevin L. Harry Biography continued

five Army Achievement Medals, three Army Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Bronze Hourglass and Mobilization Device Number 2, the Humanitarian Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon with Numeral 4, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon, the United Nations Mission in Haiti, the WV Distinguished Service Medal, the

WV Commendation Medal, two WV Achievement Ribbons, two WV Emergency Service Ribbons, three WV State Service Ribbons, the District of Columbia Community Service Ribbon, two Army Superior Unit Awards, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Expert Field Medical Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, the Military Freefall Jumpmaster Badge, Aircraft Crewmember Badge, the Special Operations Dive Supervisor Badge, German Parachutist Badge, Portuguese Parachutist Badge, the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge — Gold and the Noble Patron of Armor Award. ❖



## The Army Gets Weird continued

had determined that a submarine of that size would be crushed when diving. Over a series of sessions, McMoneagle provided 12 sketches. Not only did he accurately describe the exterior and interior of the building in question but also predicted the general timeframe when the submarine would be launched. Again his predictions were rejected since conventional wisdom suggested that the Soviets were constructing their first full-size aircraft carrier.

On McMoneagle's predicted schedule, dynamiting and excavation began. An artificial channel was created and the submarine was floated to the sea. When the cameras came on again, a massive boat appeared, nested next to an Oscar class attack submarine; that boat would become known as lead ship Typhoon class. McMoneagle had been right. The new double-hulled titanium boat exceeded everyone's expectations, and it did not crush as the experts had predicted.

There were other successes, often generating fear in those making the requests. From the hovel at Ft. Meade team members unmasked the F-117 Stealth fighter before it was publicly acknowledged during Operation Just Cause, the invasion of Panama in December, 1989. Even freakier, it seems they also spotted the development of the B-2 which was to be Top Secret for much longer.

At SRI, International, Dr. Hal Puthoff and Russell Targ, using skilled civilian psychics, conducted the basic research and development aspects for the project. One of those, an established artist, Ingo Swann, in a blind test reported rings around Jupiter. Ingo was not told anything about the target, let alone that it was not on Earth. The test was conducted long before Voyager passed by the planet and transmitted the photos of rings back. At the time of the experiment, Ingo's information was rejected as astronomers knew it was Saturn, not Jupiter, that sported rings. Just as the Navy experts rejected Joe's data because it didn't fit, so too experts were proven wrong by remote viewing.

Despite being a *program of record*, demise was brought about from several factors. Budget cuts inflicted fatal damage in 1995. Overclassification meant there were few high-level officials read onto the program, thus willing to provide support. Then too, there were religious opponents. They acknowledged the possibilities afforded by remote viewing but claimed it was "the work of the devil."

Various SF units have explored variations of many of these capabilities for decades. Some operators possess innate skills that are often critical during intense situations. Sensing danger can be a life-saving skill and stories abound of such incidents. Others have personally developed them and found them to be life-saving. Experience shows that everyone has some level of psychic capability (though it often is well-hidden). Operating in small teams, we have not been good at documenting successes and passing the lessons on to others. The lesson is that the universe is more complex than we imagine.

And then there are UFOs. ❖

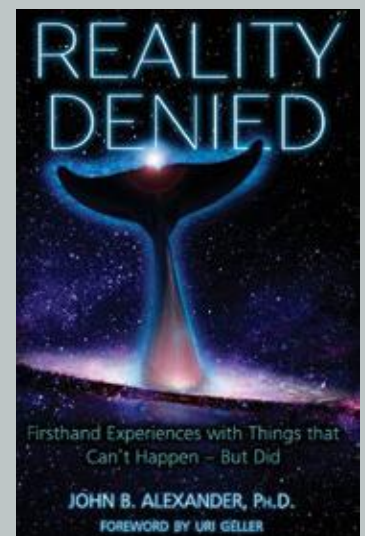
### About the Author

John Alexander entered the U.S. Army as a private in 1956 and rose through the ranks to SFC, attended OCS, and was a colonel of Infantry in 1988 when he retired. During his varied career, he held key positions in special operations, intelligence, and research and development. From 1966 through early 1969 he commanded Special Forces "A" Teams in Vietnam and Thailand. His last military assignment was as Director, Advanced Systems Concepts Office, U.S. Army Laboratory Command. After retiring from the Army, Dr. Alexander joined Los Alamos National Laboratory where he was instrumental in developing the concepts of Non-Lethal Warfare (NLW).

Dr. Alexander organized and chaired six major conferences on NLW and served as a US delegate to four NATO studies on the topic. As a member of the Council on Foreign Relations NLW study, he was instrumental in influencing the report that caused the DoD to create the Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Directorate in July 1996. He was a member of the National Research Council Committee for Assessment of Non-Lethal Weapons Science and Technology, later served with the Army Science Board. An advisor to USSOCOM and CIA, in 2003 he served as a mentor to top MOD officials in Kabul, Afghanistan then he became a Senior Fellow of Joint Special Operations University.

In addition to many military awards for valor and service, *Aviation Week & Space Technology* selected him in 1993 as an Aerospace Laureate and in 1997 inducted him into the Hall of Fame at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington. In 1994 he received a Department of Energy Award of Excellence for the Nuclear Weapons Program and is listed in *Who's Who in Science and Engineering*, *American Men and Women of Science*, and in 2001 was named to the OCS Hall of Fame at Ft. Benning, Georgia.

His nonfiction books include, [\*The Warrior's Edge\*](#) (Wm. Morrow), [\*Future War\*](#) with foreword by Tom Clancy (St. Martin's Press), the sequel, [\*Winning the War\*](#) and most recently [\*Reality Denied\*](#). ❖



# SFA Chapter 78 November 2020 Meeting (Photos by How and Nancy Miller)



- ❶ New Chapter member Jim Lockheart receives a Chapter coin from Chapter President Bruce Long.
- ❷ New Chapter member Jon Knea receiving his chapter coin.
- ❸ Chapter President Bruce Long and Chapter Vice President Don Gonneville enjoying breakfast prior to the meeting.
- ❹ Chapter member SFC Ken Atkinson
- ❺ New Chapter member Charlie Gage
- ❻ Roland Ramirez and James Light hold the old C/3/12 SFG(A) sign.

- ❼ Chapter member Hamm Salley
- ❽ Chapter members Jim Suber and SFC Dave Dougherty
- ❾ Left to right, How Miller, incoming *Sentinel* Editor, Debra Holm, *Sentinel* Designer/Art Director, and Jim Morris, outgoing *Sentinel* Editor
- ❿ Chapter members Mark Miller and Mike Keele share a laugh.
- ⓫ Several SF guests introduced themselves.
- ⓬ Chapter members and guests enjoying breakfast and conversation.