



SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78

The LTC Frank J. Dallas Chapter

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2022

70 YEARS OF SPECIAL FORCES

1952-2022

Spirit of America
Helping Ukraine Win

A COMBAT FIRST:

Army SF Soldiers
in Korea — Part 2

The Green Berets CAMP ORAL HISTORY

Zoom Meetings Preserve
History and Reunite
Vietnam Vets

5th Special Forces Group Honors Vietnam Fallen

at Annual Gold Star Ceremony





SENTINEL

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2022



US ARMY SPECIAL OPS COMMAND



US ARMY JFK SWCS



1ST SF COMMAND



1ST SF GROUP



3RD SF GROUP



5TH SF GROUP



7TH SF GROUP



10TH SF GROUP



19TH SF GROUP



20TH SF GROUP



8TH SF GROUP



11TH SF GROUP



12TH SF GROUP

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FRONT COVER: A U.S. Army Special Forces Soldier with Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan moves across the rooftop of a compound to identify the location of enemy small-arms fire during a clearance operation in Bahlozi, Maiwand district, Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Jan. 1, 2014. (DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Bertha A. Flores, U.S. Army/Released)



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From the Editor



How Miller
Sentinel Editor

We start with Chapter 78 member Jim Duffy's trip to the graduation of the latest class of new Green Berets. Chapters 78 and 1-18 host a barbeque prior to graduations and encourage future participation in the SFA. While there, Jim took some photos of the Chapter 1-18 clubhouse and the remnants from the old weather-destroyed building.

This issue includes an article retired Green Beret John Friberg wrote for his [SOF.NEWS](https://www.sofnews.com) website about a special charitable group making a difference in "Ukraine — Spirit of America." Spirit of Ukraine is a recipient of a four star (out of four) rating by Charity Navigator website.

Unofficial SF Historian Steve Sherman is at it again. Fresh off completing his 14-book series on the Vietnam War by years, he is getting members of A teams together with Zoom meetings, with very positive results.

Coinciding with the 70th anniversary of 10th SFG (A) being stood up in June, 1952, Chapter 78 member Jim Lockhart has researched and put together a chart of the history of all the SF groups, entitled "U.S. Army Special Forces Lineage & Honors —The Visual History.". It is all on a two page chart, which is something each of us will probably want to refer to now and in the future. It is destined to be a permanent presence at specialforces78.com

This overlaps nicely with Part 2 of the USASOC *Veritas* article about that era when Special Forces were first deployed to a combat zone in Korea. Part 1 was last month.

Chapter 78 member Kenn Miller gives strong kudos in his review of James A Warren's *Year of the Hawk*. Followed by our regular update on ACL's progress with Afghan relocation.

Bob Brown who started *Soldier of Fortune* decades ago is retiring and turning the now online-only version over to a new hand. Bob explains in his own words why you should still pay attention. Next month we hope to have an article about Bob by Jim Morris, a past editor of the *Sentinel*, who worked with Bob.

John Stryker Meyer attended a touching ceremony for 5th SFG Gold Star families and shares photos from the event.

Michael Benge, a senior adviser to the Montagnard Human Rights Organization, recently forwarded an article from Radio Free Asia "[Vietnam ethnic minority activist jailed for 4 years for reporting abuse](https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/y-wo-nie-sentence-05202022165050.html)." (https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/y-wo-nie-sentence-05202022165050.html). Over 1000 Montagnards languish in Thailand. Many have applied for refugee status, but have not yet been approved, and for those that have, the US has not indicated that they would be accepted. ♦

How Miller
Sentinel Editor

From the President | April 2022



Gregory Horton
President SFA Ch. 78

As I sat down to write this month's column, I was interrupted by the news describing another tragic school shooting. I was watching "The Five" and one of the liberal talking heads immediately brought up the NRA and how their convention was next week. Geraldo said, "Why doesn't the NRA and their guest speakers get together and put out a plan to protect our schools," (very derogatorily I might add) implying that they are part of the problem.

Gee, the NRA has had a program in place since 2012 to assist in improving the protection of our schools: <https://www.nraschoolshield.org/>. They assembled various experts in the field of school security on the panel. And guess what? This service is provided FREE to any jurisdiction that requests it and the experts will come to them. I think it is time that all of us fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers get motivated and begin a letter writing campaign to demand that steps be taken for all of our schools to protect the 60 million+ students. If you're not a fan of the NRA there are plenty of school security companies out there, just tell the school boards to make the safety of our children a number one priority. Prayers and condolences to the families.

Our Chapter meeting on the 21st of May was a very informative day. We started off with Chapter member **Aaron Brandenburg**, who went over his career with the 82nd Airborne where he deployed to Africa (2) and Kosovo. He related several experiences and then described his entry into the Special Forces world and his deployments to Iraq (4) with the 10th SFGA. He described some riveting personal experiences. And now as if that wasn't enough, to fill up an excellent resume, upon retiring, he cofounded and became COO of Xiphos Corporation. His company provides strategic service including physical security services, classroom and field training modules, risk management, threat vulnerability assessments, and crisis response solutions for today's complex and dynamic client environments.

Our next speaker was Dana Vilander from VTC Training (<https://www.vtctraining.com/>) for a "Stop the Bleed" class. I urged everyone to attend because in Southern California, based on crime statistics, you have a good chance of encountering a violent incident where traumatic injuries are present. Little did I know that a week later, there would be another mass casualty incident in Texas.

We were in good hands because Dana was a Los Angeles Sheriff Department, Special Enforcement Bureau paramedic with Emergency Services Detail and retired a few years ago. He formed VTC and trains police in rural ops, vertical work and medical. He is one of the most knowledgeable medics in the U.S. It was an excellent class with a lot of updated information on the use of tourniquets and wound packing. I found it interesting that as Dana went over the use of tourniquets from years past, I can remember when I first started, that they were forbidden because the victim would definitely lose their limb. Fast forward to now and all of the real-world experience from

our military, they are a go-to piece of equipment. Overall, it was a very informative session and the Chapter enjoyed it.

Over the past few weeks, I received reports back from our ROTC coordinators that they had each gone out and presented the Certificates of Achievement and SFA ribbon and medal for each top graduate. They are as follows:

ROTC Awards presented:

4/28 USC: Cadet David Gillies — Presenter: Steve Bric

4/22 UCLA: Cadet Paul Ko — Presenter: James Cragg

4/23 CLAREMONT: Cadet Alden Wendt — Presenter: Dave Gibbs

5/13 CSU Fullerton: Cadet Lauren Cully — Presenter: Gary MacNamara

We had the good fortune to have CSM **Si Rangel** join our Chapter. I have known Si since the 70s when we were both assigned to C Co, 12th SFGA, and it is a pleasure to have him join us. In addition, Si will be taking over as the Chapter Chaplain and he is very active in that position. I will be introducing him at the next chapter meeting, but he asked me to let you know that if you ever have a need for a Chaplain, he is ready to serve, anytime anywhere.

And finally, Nimo gave us an update on the status of our Afghan community. They are growing and slowly but surely adapting to their new surroundings. More residents are expected, so please check our [community needs page on our website](#) and make a donation if you can. Thank you.

Our Next Chapter Meeting 18 June 2022

TIME: Breakfast 0800 — Meeting 0830

LOCATION: The Pub at Fiddler's Green

ADDRESS: 4745 Yorktown Ave., Bldg. 19
Los Alamitos, CQ 90720-5176
(Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos)

Greg Horton SGM (Ret)
President
SFA Chapter 78



Chapter member Jim Duffy, at right, presented a chapter coin to **John "TIG" Tiegen**, a member of the CIA contracting team who held the Benghazi attackers at bay on September 11, 2012, as depicted in the movie *13 Hours*. John "TIG" Tiegen was the main presenter at the "Remember our Heroes" fundraiser benefitting United American Defense Force at Artemis Defense Institute on May 19th.

SFQC GRADUATION



CLASS 329

May 12, 2022

**U.S. ARMY JOHN F. KENNEDY
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Chapter 78's Jim Duffy attended the Special Forces Qualification Course graduation held at Fort Bragg North Carolina on May 12, 2022. Soldiers assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School don their green berets for the first time during a Regimental First Formation at the ceremony.

Two days before the men donned their green berets, many attended a BBQ at the Fayetteville, N.C. campus of SFA Chapter 1-18, which co-sponsors the event with SFA Chapter 78. Jim took the opportunity to visit SFA Ch. 1-18's new team house and also the JFK Special Warfare Museum while at Ft. Bragg.

Congratulations graduates! Welcome to the Regiment! ❖



At the SFQC graduation ceremony, the soldiers march in formation behind bagpiper Doug Ellwell during a Regimental First Formation. (U.S. Army photo by K. Kassens)



The commanding general of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, presents a green beret to a SFQC graduate (U.S. Army photo by K. Kassens)



Soldiers don their green berets for the first time. (U.S. Army photo by K. Kassens)



In October, 2017, SFA Chapter 1-18 lost their team house to Hurricane Matthew. Fortunately they were able to save about 70-75% of the memorabilia collected by members over the past 50 years of their existence.

They are currently renting a property from an SF retiree with the option to purchase it outright, which is what they hope to do. They have been hard at work on the property which includes five structures — reassembling their team house, setting up facilities for events, like the SFQC BBQ, and working to expand the capacity and amenities for potential use by the Special Forces Association and its members.

The photos at the left were taken in their meeting building. This room is the home to the largest part of the vast collection of memorabilia they were able to save from damage during the hurricane.

Visit their website at SFA1-18.com, at [Facebook](#) in [SFA Chapter 1-18](#) to learn more and to find out how you can provide support for their effort.





The SFA Chapter 1-18 team house is home to more of their collection of historical artifacts and tribute displays. It is the location for regular social activities, and the perfect place for a cold drink, or perhaps a game of pool, for chapter members after a hard day at work on the property.



Jim took the above photos during his visit to the JFK Special Warfare Museum. The JFK Special Warfare Museum, established in 1963, spotlights the proud history of the U.S. Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operation Regiments. The museum contains many unique items from World War I to current operations — from weapons, to air-

planes, uniforms, and stories. Located on the grounds of Ft. Bragg, it is free to visit and open to the public (guests that do not have a DoD ID card or a Veteran Heath ID card must obtain a visitor's pass). This is a "must see" if you are in the area.

To learn more visit <https://specialwarfaremuseum.org/general-information>.

Spirit of America – Helping Ukraine Win



Pallets of life saving equipment are loaded onto a cargo plane in the U.S. to be sent to Ukraine. (Photo by Nick Davis, freelance photographer, March 16, 2022. All photos and images provided by and used with permission of Spirit of America)

By John Friberg

(2021, February 24, sof.news, <https://sof.news/ukraine/spirit-of-america/>)

The editor of SOF News had the opportunity to speak with the founder and CEO of Spirit of America about the organization's efforts to assist the Ukrainian military and people of Ukraine. Jim Hake provided an enlightening look at the work being done by [Spirit of America](#) to ensure Ukrainian soldiers have the proper protective gear to keep them safe on the battlefield.

Assisting Ukraine Since 2014. Spirit of America has been providing help to Ukraine since the Russian invasion of 2014 when that country invaded and then occupied Crimea and some areas in eastern Ukraine along the Russian border. That early assistance provided eight years ago consisted of equipment that would protect Ukrainian soldiers such as [Individual First Aid Kits](#) or IFAKs. Another example of assistance provided after 2014 was, in collaboration with the U.S. embassy country team, the standup of an organization to counter Russian propaganda. This included the provision of a transmitter, equipment for a radio studio, and more. The Ukrainian-run station, initially known as 'Army FM', was up and running within three months. The station is still running today.

Staff Supporting Ukraine. The number of Spirit of America employees in Ukraine and neighboring countries is minimal usually 2 to 4 people. The nature of the assistance the organization provides is the provision of material and equipment — much of the coordination done by the organization's staff in Arlington, Virginia. After being flown to Europe, to a location outside Ukraine, the material and

equipment is immediately received by the Ukrainian military and well-established Ukrainian partner organizations that have worked with Spirit of America for several years. The organization does not have staff involved in the fighting or providing training.

Supplies Sent. As of April 27, 2022, Spirit of America has sent three fully-loaded cargo planes to Europe with protective equipment. The material is quickly transloaded onto trucks and moved into Ukraine and to the troops on the frontlines. The cost of the aircraft as well as the equipment flown to Europe is paid by donations made by Americans to Spirit of America. The equipment includes first aid kits, helmets, body armor, communications radios, and more. All equipment goes to members of the Ukrainian military as well as the Ukrainian civilians and former Ukrainian soldiers who have joined the Territorial Defense Forces. Spirit of America does not provide equipment to the International Legion of Ukraine.

"Need Driven" Operations. Spirit of America is a unique organization with an operational model different from many volunteer and humanitarian organizations. It collaborates directly with the U.S. Department of Defense to determine where it can assist. This usually involves filling 'gaps' where the DoD can't satisfy a need. Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are well established believe they know what assistance has to be provided and have an organizational structure and process set up to provide the services — something Jim Hake calls "supply driven". Spirit of America reaches out to embassy personnel or military leaders and asks what they need — something Jim refers to as "need driven".



These Ukrainian soldiers had just returned from fighting in the Donbas region. They immediately loaded IFACs provided by Spirit of America onto their trucks and took them back to Donbas for their fellow soldiers on the front line. (Courtesy Spirit of America, photo by Colleen Denny, April 10, 2022)

History of Spirit of America. The organization has been busy around the world for a few decades. It has been active in the Philippines, Africa, Middle East, Europe, and in many conflict zones. It first began operations in 2003 and became formally established in 2004. One of the first efforts was assisting the 1st Marine Division in Anbar Province, Iraq in 2003. Working with Marine Civil Affairs personnel Spirit of America provided schools supplies and 'relationship building' material to the Marines that could be distributed to the Iraqi people. It also assisted in the establishment of an Iraqi-run TV station in Anbar Province which helped counter the anti-US narrative advanced by other media outlets in the region.

Afghan Evac. The defeat of the Afghan security forces and Taliban capture of Kabul led to the non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) at the Kabul airport in August 2021. Many Afghans flew on transport planes to US bases in the Middle East and Europe. Other countries and private volunteer organizations assisted in the evacuation of Afghans as well. Spirit of America provided assistance to Afghan refugees in Qatar, Albania, and other locations around the world.

How to Help Spirit of America? The organization does not have a need for personnel to serve as paid staff or as unpaid volunteers in Ukraine. It is tightly aligned with the Ukrainian military and partner organizations. Bringing in volunteers would disrupt those long-standing relationships. The best way to assist Spirit of America in its work is to donate money to the organization so it can purchase more life saving protective equipment and charter aircraft to send to Europe and subsequent ground transport to the Ukrainian soldiers.

"100% Promise." A donation to Spirit of America for the Ukrainian effort goes entirely for the gear and other assistance provided to the Ukrainian military. The operations and administrative costs of Spirit of America are covered by other financial mechanisms.

Board of Advisors – a Distinguished Group. Spirit of America has a number of well-known people on its Board of Advisors, many from the SOF community. Some very recognizable names from across a wide spectrum of the defense and diplomatic community include Ambassador Rick Barton, Colonel Stu Bradin, General Phil Breedlove, Lt. General Charles Cleveland, Ambassador Ryan

HOW MUCH IT COSTS TO PROTECT A UKRAINIAN SOLDIER



Crocker, General Joseph Dunford, Hon. Joseph Felter, Michele Flournoy, Maj. General Marcus Hicks, Colonel Dave Maxwell, General James Mattis, General Jack Keane, Dr. John Nagl, Admiral Eric Olson, Dr. Kori Schake, and many other notable people.

How Long? The war in Ukraine may last a long time – perhaps years. Jim Hake says that Spirit of America will continue to assist Ukraine:

"For as long as it takes. For as long as Ukraine needs help. As long as Ukraine is a friend of America." —Jim Hake, April 27, 2022.

The Future? What is Spirit of America trying to accomplish in Ukraine? Jim says that the organization is providing material and equipment "on a scale that matters." The people of Spirit of America want to save Ukrainian lives and help Ukraine win its war against Russia. ❖

You can help Spirit of America achieve its goals:

[Make a donation to Spirit of America](#)

Visit [Spirit of America's website](#).

Social Media Accounts for Spirit of America:

<https://www.facebook.com/SpiritAmerica/>

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/spirit-of-america-non-profit>

<https://www.instagram.com/spiritamerica/>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/SpiritofAmerica>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Friberg is the Editor and Publisher of SOF News. He is a retired Command Chief Warrant Officer (CW5 180A) with 40 years service in the U.S. Army Special Forces with active duty and reserve components. He holds a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree (ALB) from Harvard University, concentrating in International Relations.

The Green Berets

CAMP ORAL HISTORY

SF/Vietnam War Historian Steve Sherman preserves history and reunites Vietnam veterans with his new series of Zoom meetings

By How Miller

Steve Sherman has helped many Vietnam era Green Berets and others find each other through his websites, writings, and individual contacts by email or phone. He is a wealth of knowledge and an enthusiastic helper.

His latest project, starting around October of 2021, is to contact the members of A camps and invite them to a Zoom meeting with team members from each individual camp. Right now he is working his way through the III corps camps. I was a team member at Duc Hue, which started out under B35 in Duc Hoa and was turned over to B32 in Tay Ninh. So it went on paper and leadership from A351 to A325.

On 5.18.22 several of us (10 or 12) were able to meet, most of us for the first time. It was fascinating hearing about the earlier history (in my case because I was there from Sep 69 to Aug 70), and others heard of later camp exploits. We intend to keep in touch by email or more, as well as work on methods to centralize the pictures we have put on line in various places. I had an added contribution to make, since as the editor of the *Sentinel* I felt emboldened to write about Duc Hue's participation in the Cambodian Incursion from May



Above left, Jack Blake, left, and Chapter 78's How Miller, right, reconnected on Steve Sherman's May 18th Zoom session, which led to meeting in person at Chapter 78's May meeting.



Above right, Steve Sherman with his wife at the SFA Convention in Oct. 2021.

through June of 1970. So I sent out PDF's of those stories to all and mentioned how to reach more at specialforces78.com, our website.

Others will come up with other ways to stay in touch and renew old acquaintances. One of our team lives in Orange County and ended up attending our next chapter meeting. Such were the types of outcomes that Steve had envisioned when he started. There were learning experiences. For example, he thought he might be able to get members from an entire B team together. That turned out to be unwieldy and he switched to individual A teams. That has been more work and better results.

He has posted some of the recorded Zoom sessions and they are available on his website: specialforcesbooks.com. There is a link located in the upper right area of the page to reach the recordings that looks like this: [CLICK HERE FOR CAMP ORAL HISTORY VIDEOS](#). Bonnie Cooper, long time super volunteer for SOA and SFA, and expert at most IT matters, has edited many of the recordings though she hasn't been able to get to all of them yet.

Steve is enthused by the successes he has achieved, but his biggest surprise in starting this project was how reluctant people are to answer the phone to talk with him and to also get on Zoom. He understands there are so many scammers out there that answering the phone can be a hazardous environment, like being outside the wire alone at night. So he tries to say Special Forces as soon as he can to break through the resistance. He also mentioned that our loved ones often have Zoom skills and would love to hear about what you did "back in the day" as a reward for helping you negotiate the process.

Steve has finished I Corps and still has more to do in III Corps, and then IV Corps. After that he will go back to do some individual A teams from II C corps that he felt deserved their own attention due to the crowded B team attempts.

So, don't miss this singular opportunity, and give Steve a break by answering the phone.

If you don't have the Green Beret magazine reprints from 5th Group, they are available at:

<https://www.specialforcesbooks.com/GBMdetail.htm>

If you don't have Steve's new 14 volume series on the Second Indochina War, go to:

<https://www.specialforcesbooks.com/specialoffer.htm> ❖

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70 YEARS OF SPECIAL FORCES

1952-2022



D E O P P R E S S O L I B E R

On June 19, 1952 the 10th Special Forces Group was formed under Col. Aaron Bank, a former OSS member, and activated at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The United States Army Special Forces have joined the ranks of the most respected, professional and capable organizations in our Army. We celebrate the generations of Special Forces Soldiers who have served our Nation with honor, loyalty and courage in peace and war for 70 years.

The United States Army Special Forces have been involved in every major Army operation over the last 70 years. From the jungles of Vietnam, to Grenada, Panama, Haiti, the Balkans, on horseback in Afghanistan, and across the sands of Iraq. They are legendary for taking on the most sensitive missions in the Army—from sabotaging enemy communications and supply lines to infiltrating enemy lines through quiet, guerrilla war-style tactics.

On the following pages a chart, created by Chapter 78 member James Lockhart, displays the lineage of the United States Special Forces from its inception to today and the honors received by the Groups and subordinate units. ♦



A COMBAT FIRST

Army SF Soldiers in Korea, 1953-1955 — Part 2

Above, 8007th personnel, left to right, 1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, 1LT Warren E. Parker, CPT Francis W. Dawson, 2LT Earl L. Thieme and 1LT Leo F. Siefert at Camp Drake, Japan. The men are graduates of Class #3 of the Special Forces Course. (U.S. Army)

Part I — A Combat First

In “A Combat First” Kenneth Finlayson for ARSOF’s *Veritas* magazine, brings out the details of that inception of PSYOP and SF as enduring institutions within the army. Ultimately, 99 Special Forces men, (77 officers and 22 enlisted soldiers) deployed from Fort Bragg in five groups between February and September 1953. Thus SF began its first combat roles under that name.

By Kenneth Finlayson

From the ARSOF publication, [Veritas](#), Vol. 9, No. 1, 2013

The lack of quality equipment did not significantly affect UW operations. At this late stage of the war (mid-summer 1953), the interest in fighting was rapidly waning. The Special Forces soldiers focused on training the PIRs. The large guerrilla presence on the islands figured prominently in the Armistice negotiations. The presence of anti-Communist elements on islands off their coastline particularly rankled the North Koreans. Post-Armistice control of these islands was a contentious issue. Consequently, the U.S and South Korea continued to keep a military presence on the off-shore islands during the discussions.

The Special Forces personnel in the first three rotations experienced a higher operational tempo and a greater threat from the Communist forces. Two Special Forces soldiers in the early cycles became casualties during operations in 1953. Infantry 2LT Joseph M. Castro with WOLFPACK 8 was killed on 17 May 1953 while crossing a rice paddy dike during a daylight operation on the mainland. Infantry CPT Douglas W. Payne died on 21 July 1953

when his base on Sui-do was attacked and overrun by North Korean forces. These were the first two Special Forces soldiers to die in combat and the only fatalities among the SF deployed from Fort Bragg. After their deaths, guerrilla command directed American advisors to “use judgment and caution” if accompanying their guerrilla elements during operations on the mainland.³²

Those SF who came in the final two levies from Fort Bragg experienced the war’s drawdown. The guerrillas were not interested in being the last casualties of the war. In the months before the signing of the Armistice on 27 July 1953, the number of raids on the mainland declined dramatically. While working with the guerrilla units on the islands was the primary SF mission, not all the Special Forces soldiers ended up as advisors.

A number of the SF soldiers were assigned to the guerrilla command Tactical Liaison Office (TLO). Small U.S. Army intelligence teams inserted North Korean and Chinese defectors and some South Koreans on foot through the frontline infantry divisions to collect battlefield intelligence about the enemy in front of the UN units. The experiences of the Special Forces soldiers performing TLO duties were explained in *Veritas* Vol. 8 No. 2.³³ A few SF troops were assigned to the 8007th AU, whose varied missions included the recovery of downed UN pilots, the gathering of information on UN POWs, and the collection of general battlefield intelligence.



2LT Joseph M. Castro was killed while on operations with WOLFPACK 8. He was the first Special Forces soldier killed in combat.



Above left, 2LT Earl L. Thieme (foreground) and an unidentified enlisted man check their map during a reconnaissance north of Seoul in the winter of 1954. Center, 1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, commander of Detachment #1, 8112th. He was responsible for the establishment of escape and evasion networks and the rescue of downed airmen. At right, landing on many of the rugged islands could be a dangerous operation. The recovery of downed pilots by the 8007th AU often meant landing on island without a prepared dock area. (U.S. Army)



1LT Reuben L. Mooradian received two weeks of training at the Far East Command Intelligence School before joining the 1st Partisan Infantry Regiment on Yo-do. (U.S. Army)



8112th AU Recovery Command Patch

“There was very little done to prepare to go; no special training, no advance briefings. Once we were on orders, we got some leave and then reported to Camp Stoneman.”

— 1LT Earl L. Thieme

1LT Earl L. Thieme was part of the third group of SF soldiers levied for Korea in March 1953. Trained in the 10th SFG at Fort Bragg, Thieme recalls that “there was very little done to prepare to go; no special training, no advance briefings. Once we were on orders, we got some leave and then reported to Camp Stoneman.”³⁴ When 1LT Thieme got to Camp Drake, Japan, he discovered that he was being assigned to the 8007th AU Recovery Command. Their mission was to gather information on Prisoner-of-War camps in North Korea where Americans might be held. Four other Special Forces soldiers, CPT Francis W. Dawson, 1LT Warren E. Parker, 1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, and 1LT Leo F. Siefert also served with Thieme in the 8007th. “The FEC G-2 gave us the mission. He told us it was Top Secret and to get over there ASAP,” said Thieme.³⁵ At the 8007th headquarters in Seoul, the men got their assignments. The unit conducted agent insertions on both coasts to find and verify Communist POW camps in North Korea.

1LT Sam Sarkesian commanded the 8007th AU Recovery Command Team #1. He was sent to Cho-do (West Coast) with a sergeant and two enlisted men.³⁶ His mission was two-fold: to establish escape and evasion nets for downed U.S. and UN pilots, and to gather intelligence on camp locations. Confiscated Korean junks were used to insert agents on the mainland. They were to return to a pre-arranged point after a specific number of days for pick-up. After recovery, the information they gathered would be collected and processed. Most of Sarkesian's agents failed to return for extraction.³⁷ His area of operations changed after the Armistice, when all friendly troops were evacuated to new sites south of the 38th Parallel.

1LT Reuben Mooradian had to move his guerrillas from Yo-do south to Yuk-do. There he assisted with the training of 1st PIR until leaving for the 77th SFG at Fort Bragg in July 1954.³⁸ As the guerrillas left the South Korean islands, they were replaced by ROK Marine and Army units.

With the signing of the Armistice, 1LT Sarkesian moved his unit south from Cho-do to Paengnyŏng-do. From there he continued to insert agents until leaving Korea in March, 1954. “We learned a lot of lessons, but we did not accomplish very much. Unfortunately, the lessons learned were not put into any official documents,” Sarkesian said. “We expended a lot of energy for little result. I wish we had better briefings and training before we went. There was a total lack of coordination.”³⁹ Similar missions were run on the East Coast by other elements of the 8007th.

1LT Warren E. Parker commanded a detachment on the East Coast at Sokch'o-ri. His mission was to gather battlefield intelligence. He coordinated with the Navy to escort his motorized junks during insertions and extractions.⁴⁰ Parker's detachment did not train the personnel being inserted. The agents were dropped off shortly before they left on their mission. The 8007th provided security, some supplies, and transported the agents to their insertion point. Some material supplied to the agents was quite valuable.

1LT Earl Thieme remembered several trips to Tokyo to collect gold and wristwatches for the agents going on missions.⁴¹ Thieme was assigned through two unit designation changes; 8007th to 8112th on 24 September 1953 and then 8112th to 8157th on 5 January 1955.⁴² Although airdropping agents behind the lines was discontinued after the Armistice, the ground and sea insertions continued until 1955. The majority of the Special Forces personnel continued working with the guerrillas.

By summer 1953, the Armistice negotiations were almost done. The ranks of North Korean partisans, some of whom had been on the islands since 1950, had been greatly reduced by losses and desertions. Many of the newcomers were South Korean. "The leadership was still people who came out of the north," noted 1LT Charley Norton, "but the replacements were made up of guys from Seoul and Inch'on who were dodging the ROK Army [draft]. The partisans were a lot better deal."⁴³ MAJ Richard M. Ripley recalled that, "things were locked in as far as the war went. The guerrillas knew the country was going to be divided in the end, so it was tough to ask them to sacrifice too much."⁴⁴ Still, unauthorized raids on the mainland continued after the Armistice, because a handful of Americans could not prevent them.

"When we got there, there wasn't much of the war left," noted 1LT Charley Norton. "The Koreans could sense it was winding down. Still, we continued to run operations against the mainland. Usually about ninety partisans would go. This number was dictated by the number that could fit on a fishing [sailing] junk. Usually thirty per junk, with one motor junk pulling three fishing junks. We gave the fisherman rice to use their boats."⁴⁵ The raids were against the North Korean Army and Border Constabulary units manning the coast. The advisory mission after the Armistice entailed demobilizing the armed guerrillas, a delicate, complex and sensitive mission.

With the cessation of hostilities, the South Korean government faced the dilemma of assimilating large, well-armed, American-trained guerrilla units composed primarily of North Koreans as well as displaced civilians. The South Korean solution was to assimilate the guerrillas units into the ROKA, an action that involved relocation. 1LT Charley Norton recalled, "The transition was a very messy thing. The ROKs needed to get control, but it took from July 1953 to April 1954 to process the partisans for the transition. They did not replace the U.S. forces [advisors] so we stayed with the partisans, keeping them supplied and trained until the spring of 1954."⁴⁶ Some of the guerrilla leaders were given commissions in the ROK Army, which helped maintain order within the units during demobilization and movement off the islands. It was a lengthy and painstaking process that tested the mettle of the American advisors.



Roll call for a guerrilla unit. As 2LT Maurice H. Price found out, the guerrillas would attempt to pad the numbers in formation to get a larger share of the food resupply. (U.S. Army)



Towing a sailing *junk*. Often one motorized *junk* would tow three sailing junks on an operation. (U.S. Army)

2LT Maurice H. Price, a Regular Army officer who later served in Special Forces, was assigned in September 1953 as a company advisor in the 2nd PIR on Kyo dong-do. Specifics about the demobilization process were lacking. "Initially, all we had were rumors [about demobilization]," Price said. "Every day one of the NCOs would go to Kangwha-do [2nd PIR headquarters] but there was nothing official at first."⁴⁷ The two principal tasks involved getting an accurate headcount for each guerrilla unit and collecting crew-served weapons, pyrotechnics and ammunition before leaving the islands. Neither was easy.

"The distribution of rice was the rationale for the weekly headcounts. It was clear that we were getting inflated numbers," Price recalled. "Early one morning, one of my NCOs went out with an interpreter while we were holding formation in my company. From a hilltop they watched as one hundred guerrillas double-timed across the island after our formation ended to join the other company before we went over to count them."⁴⁸ Accounting for weapons and ammunition proved just as difficult.

“The island [Kyo dong-do] once had gold mines and there were small caves all over the place to hide weapons and pyro,” Price remembered. “It took a while to find the stuff and collect it. We had ordnance [weapons maintenance] teams come out and the storyline was that they were there to inspect the machineguns and mortars. In reality, we were getting it under our control.”⁴⁹ For Price, the advisor role was a mixed blessing. “The training was valuable, but the isolation could be tough,” he said. “Demobilizing the guerrillas was a brutal business. At times you had to be a bald-faced liar.”⁵⁰ The preparation began in January 1954 and picked up speed until March.

1LT Norton along with Wolfpack 1, (some five hundred guerrillas and families), and the 2nd PIR (eight hundred plus dependents) were shipped by LST to Cheju-do, the primary reception and processing point for partisans transitioning into the ROK Army.⁵¹ 2LT Maurice Price likewise accompanied his guerrillas south.

“The movement was done in one day from Kangwha-do. It was a contract deal; the [WWII-era] Navy LST had a Japanese crew. Charley Norton and I were the only Caucasians on the boat,” Price remembered. “When we arrived, the ROK Army and Navy were waiting for us. The Good Samaritan stuff ended at that point. Most of the guerrillas were strip-searched when they came ashore.”⁵² After this mission, 2LT Price finished up his tour as a rifle company executive officer with the 2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division. He left Korea for Fort Bragg, where he was assigned to the 77th SFG. His experience as a guerrilla advisor contributed to his later assignments in Special Forces. What was missing was a formal program to collect and use the experiences gained by the advisors.

“At the [initial] selection process at Camp Drake, we were told not to expect publicity. It led to the ‘silent professional’ mentality,” Price recalled. “When we were debriefed on leaving the 8240th, we were told not to talk about the tour. They placed heavy emphasis on our not drawing any attention to our experiences.”⁵³ Consequently, the knowledge and lessons learned by these first SF advisors were not disseminated to the 10th and 77th SFGs.

The Korean War was the first employment of Special Forces to a combat theater. All SF soldiers sent to Korea were individual replacements working with other Army personnel detailed to guerrilla elements. No SFOD-Alphas (ODA) deployed to Korea for the war. “There was never any plan to run twelve-man teams,” recalled 1LT Charley Norton. “We could have effectively employed one ODA per regiment, but the teams were all back at Fort Bragg [77th SFG] or enroute to Germany [10th SFG].”⁵⁴ This was due in large part because, throughout its existence, guerrilla command was never configured along doctrinal lines established in the Army’s Field Manual 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* where the ODAs could have been properly employed.⁵⁵

The late arrival of Special Forces-trained personnel in the last months of the war makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the SF training programs. Their commitment to FEC demonstrated that the partisan advisory mission was a valid UW skill. It showed the Army that SF could train indigenous forces to support conventional forces. These same skills form the cornerstone of the Special Forces UW mission today. ❖

The author would like to thank the many veterans who gave generously of their time for interviews and provided the photographs incorporated into this article.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Kenneth Finlayson is the USASOC Deputy Command Historian. He earned his PhD from the University of Maine, and is a retired Army officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, special operations aviation, and World War II special operations units.

Endnotes

- 32 FEC stopped sending American or British soldiers on deep airborne insertions after the failure of Operations SPITIFRE and VIRGINIA ONE. After the deaths of 1LT Castro and CPT Payne, the number of raids on the mainland had dropped off precipitously as the signing of the Armistice approached. ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64 and 74-76.
- 33 Eugene G. Piasecki, “TLO: Line-Crosses, Special Forces, and the ‘Forgotten War,’” *Veritas: the Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 8, No. 2, 2012, 38-48.
- 34 Earl L. Thieme, 8007th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Richard Kiper, 11 August 2003, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 35 Earl L. Thieme, 8007th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 November 2005, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 36 Sam C. Sarkesian, 8007/8112th AU, interview by Dr. Richard Kiper, 8 October 2003, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC. In *Sarkesian's recollection there was no Team #2. 8007th AU worked for the FEC G-2.*
- 37 Sarkesian interview, 8 October 2003.
- 38 Mooradian interview, 21 November 2005.
- 39 Sarkesian interview, 8 October 2003.
- 40 Thieme interview, 11 August 2003.
- 41 Thieme interview, 11 August 2003.
- 42 Thieme interview, 21 November 2005.
- 43 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 44 Ripley interview, 31 January 2013.
- 45 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 46 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 47 Maurice H. Price, 8240th AU, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 12 December 2012, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 48 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 49 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 50 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 51 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 52 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 53 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 54 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 55 Department of the Army, FM 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare*, October 1951, copy in USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC. The principal author of FM-31-21 was LTC Russell W. Volckmann who led the Philippine guerrillas on northern Luzon in World War II. Volckmann visited with COL John H. McGee in Korea in late 1950 and incorporated McGee’s assessment of the guerrilla situation in Korea into the field manual.

Book Review

YEAR OF THE HAWK: America's Descent Into Vietnam, 1965

by James A. Warren



Kenn Miller

The year of "Year of the Hawk" is 1965, and 1965 is regularly and widely considered the beginning year of the Vietnam War. What happened in 1965 continued on for a decade. There are many books about how and why the United States joined into what was a Vietnamese civil war. Every book about our American leaders during that period shows the same arrogance, eagerness for war, ignorance about Vietnam and its military history, and disregard for the welfare of the

United States of America and its people. As a book reviewer who has read many books about that piece of American history, I can't say that Mr. Warren's *YEAR OF THE HAWK* is absolutely the best of those books, but it sure is one of the best. And of those books, *YEAR OF THE HAWK* may be the shortest, least biased, most objective, and easiest read of them.

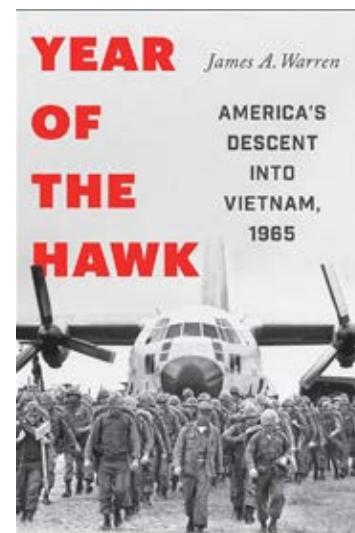
James A. Warren, the author of this book, is a historian — and very much a military historian, as well as a foreign policy expert. The number and quality of his books and contributions to other journals is very impressive, and his military writing is outstanding. If you can find a bookstore or a public library that still offers books,

YEAR OF THE HAWK: America's Descent Into Vietnam, 1965 is also does a good job of covering the first combats of the war. This book is well worth reading!

PS: One of our SFA Chapter 78 members (guess who) was severely wounded in Vietnam combat, the first of his Purple Hearts, before 1965, back when JFK was still alive and president. He went ahead and collected a number of more Purple Hearts. That was back in the days that soldiers might say a Purple Heart and a dime could buy a man a cup of coffee. ♦

[YEAR OF THE HAWK:](#)
[America's Descent Into](#)
[Vietnam, 1965](#)

By James A. Warren
Scribner (November 16, 2021)
320 pages



affordablecommunityliving

ACL Afghan Refugee Community Update

By Debra Holm

In the past month, four new families have moved into the community located in Mojave, California. Since the project was launched in November, 2021, a total of eight families have been housed, a total of 46 members.

The initial plan was to move families into parks. Once they were settled job training began for these first families. Those members are now currently full-time employees of Santiago Communities. They have been working at Santiago's Desert View Estates located in Barstow, CA. Additionally, the established, fully trained community members now provide job training for the newly arrivals.

Project Manager Nimo and his wife Nadia keep very busy helping community members with questions and concerns as the community members become accustomed their new environment, and the differences in cultures and basic day-to-day business.

Nadia now goes to school with the communities children on alternate days, rather than ever day. Her work with the women in the com-

munity continues, with English language classes being held in the afternoons. Often the older children attend these classes as well, occasionally seeking clarification for instructions on the homework they've brought home from school. Nadia's help in this area has been a great help — their teachers are very pleased at how well they have been doing.

Project Manager Nimo attended the Chapter 78 May chapter meeting. He again passed along the community's gratitude for donations made by SFA Chapter 23 and also Chapter 78's Richard Simonian, which helped families to help purchase food.

Families continue to be brought in, and so the basic needs of the community listed on our website have not changed. There is still a need for baby supplies, school supplies, toys, rugs, tools, and sewing machines. Cash donations and gift cards (VISA, Target, Walmart) are also a huge help. For details visit the website page shown below.♦

A full list of community needs and contact information is available at:

<https://www.specialforces78.com/acl-afghan-refugee-housing-project/>

5th Special Forces Group Honors Vietnam Fallen at Annual Gold Star Ceremony

The annual 5th SFG(A) Gold Star Ceremony, on Gabriel Field at Ft. Campbell, KY, was held on May 21, 2022. The remembrance ceremony honors the lives and sacrifices of our fallen heroes and their families. Along with Gold Star family members, Chapter 78 member John Stryker Meyer was in attendance, along with SOA/SFA members George "The Troll" Sternberg and Doug Godshall, who is SOA President. The ceremony included the unveiling of the 5th SFG Vietnam Memorial.

The trees surrounding Gabriel Field, a parade ground represent a 5th Group soldier who has died in combat. Bronze plaques at the base of each tree are inscribed with the name, date and place of death.

At the ceremony, 5th SFG(A) commander Col. Brent Lindeman made a moving speech, which we hope to be able to post on the Chapter 78 website at a later date. CSM Joshua King spoke and included mention of the Vietnam memorial in his speech. Meyer, Sternberg, and Godshall all participated in the portion of the ceremony related to the presentation of the Vietnam Memorial. ❖



George Sternberg, Doug Godshall, and John Stryker Meyer saluting the newly unveiled 5th SFG Vietnam Memorial at 5th Grp HQ on Gabriel Field.



John Stryker Meyer with fellow SOG recon men and SOA/SFA members George "The Troll" Sternberg and SOA President Doug Godshall.



Roses were placed on the memorial by Sternberg, Godshall, and Meyer during the ceremony for the 5th SFG Vietnam Memorial.



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SFA Chapter 78 May 2022 Chapter Meeting

Photos by Rick Carter, Dennis DeRosia, and How Miller



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1. Aaron Brandenburg spoke about his career with the 82nd Airborne deployments to Africa and Kosovo, and his SF deployments to Iraq with the 10th SFGA
2. Nimo updated the chapter on the Afghan community.
3. Dana Vilander from VTC Training facilitated a "Stop the Bleed" class.
4. Jim Cragg, a long time friend of Dana Vilander, was responsible for bringing the "Stop the Bleed" class to Chapter 78
5. Chapter President Greg Horton and MSG Si Rangel.
6. Chapter Treasurer Richard Simonian
7. Left to right, Ramon Rodriguez, Kenn Miller, and Don Gonneville
8. In the foreground, from left to right, Aaron Brandenburg, Nick Blau, Ramon Rodriguez, and Mark Miller.
9. Dana passed out single-handed tourniquets, shown at left, to try out. A Vietnam era tourniquet, at right, is from Dennis DeRosia's med kit.
10. Dave Thomas and Mike Jameson practice using a tourniquet.
11. Jim Duffy getting ready to apply the tourniquet.
12. Dana demonstrates how to pack a wound while Jim Duffy, James Light, and Kenn Miller
13. A close up of the wound packing demonstration tool.
14. Nick Barbara, retired LAPD and guest of Gary Macnamara, Sal Sanders, and Dana Vilander
15. Dana, How Miller, James Light, and Jim Lockhart discussed patches they had used for sucking chest wounds, which had no adhesive, and had to be secured with copious adhesive tape, or constant pressure. Dana showed them a modern patch, with a heavy "plastic" layer, impermeable to air, and a gel type adhesive which would contribute to a better seal while adhering the barrier.
16. Members were treated to the site of a Cub Scout Jamboree-type campout being held a JFTB near the parade field, which they passed on their way to the chapter meeting.