From the Editor | July 2026

How Miller
Sentinel Editor

This issue begins with Chapter 78 President James McLanahan's **"A Long Beach Stalwart, The American Gold Star Manor,"** in which he reports on his visit to the American Gold Star Manor for their Memorial Day/National Poppy Day ceremony. James explores this unique Long Beach community, dedicated to serving Gold Star families, veterans, and seniors and preserving the memory of America's fallen service members. James discusses the Manor's history and its mission.

In **"Eight Reasons Military Veterans Should Write," Robert Adolph**, who had significant careers with both SF and the State Dept, including during the Beirut embassy bombing, makes a convincing case for why we should write about our Vietnam and other experiences. Among other things, he says that it is the best form of self-improvement for the mind, while doing worthwhile work, getting your experiences out there to be shared by new generations.

Aaron Bank is referred to as the Father of SF. He used his experience as a Jedburgh team leader with the OSS in WWII to stand up the initial Special Forces group in June of 1952 – named the 10th SFG (A)- to fool the Soviets.

The book he wrote, ***From OSS to Green Berets: The Birth of Special Forces***, was reviewed by **MAJ John Byrnes** in the *Special Warfare Journal*. He calls it entertaining and informative, covering his Jedburgh days, through working with Ho Chi Minh in Indochina, and more.

"The Evolution of the Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha," A-teams, as we Vietnam vets called them, now known as ODA Alphas, are the basic unit of SF. They were 12-man teams, sometimes with additional members such as a Psyops Lieutenant. They evolved through time from 15-man OSS OG teams, 12 man + A-teams, to, for example, ODA 595, popularized as the Horse Soldiers, who opened the ground war in Afghanistan and added two USAF Combat Controllers to great effect.

In October of 1997, SF was called upon to assist in the emergency evacuation of US civilians and those of many countries from Sierra Leone. **John Friberg** published in his *SOF.News* online magazine his rendition of what was called **Operation Noble Obelisk**.

From **USASOC's *Tip of the Spear***, **Lt. Cdr. Joshua Belk** gives us a sitrep of SOF efforts in Africa presently and describes what is being done to accomplish the mission going forward.

We were informed of the recent passing of **Jim Montano**, an original member of the 1st Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry (part of what became the modern 75th Ranger Regiment). Although not a chapter member, he had attended our chapter meetings from time to time before moving to Delaware and was held in high regard by many members of Chapter 78. New member **Richard Negrete** has kindly provided photos, and we've received permission to print a poem written about Jim by a fellow Ranger.

Lastly, read about our chapter meeting with guest speaker **William B. (Bill) Scott**, who spoke about Brigadier General Robert F. Titus, the topic of his book, ***EARTHQUAKE.***

So please follow Robert Adolph's advice and write about your SF experiences! And then send them to me at the Sentinel. We've been very fortunate to have received some outstanding stories this year, and we'd love to publish yours too. ❖

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