



Special Forces Association

SFC Allen C. Johnson Memorial Chapter – LXXXIX (89)

Northern California • Southwestern Oregon • Northwestern Nevada

www.sfachapter89.com

Summer Newsletter–2011

Chapter President's Column

This Chapter is dedicated and named in honor of Sergeant First Class Allen C. Johnson from Los Molinos, California, his wife, children and parents. Allen was an SF Medic serving with the 7th Special Forces Group in Afghanistan, when he gave "The Last Full Measure of Devotion" on 26 April 2005. SFC Johnson was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" device for Valor for his heroic actions on that date.

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Summer is on us and everyone is busy working and doing chores around home. The members of Chapter 89 are on a summer break but not idle during that break. At our last meeting we decided that we could not afford to maintain the web site due to the cost. **Mark King** however didn't see it that way and has volunteered to take over as the webmaster. I don't know where he gets the time but thanks to him we won't have to drop the website.

Bob Maraviov is made of the same kind of stuff. He approached me with an offer from the "Hot O-Rama Car Show" at the Anderson Fair Grounds. They offered the Chapter a table during the car show to put the Chapter on display and possibly recruit some new members. This left us with a problem, gathering the manpower to staff the table for the four days of the show.

E-mails were sent and the members volunteered. Although there is no guarantee that we will find a new recruit, the opportunity is clearly there as well as the needed exposure. That exposure is important as our newest member clearly demonstrates. **John Cleckner** and I presented a wreath at the Memorial Day ceremony at the Igo Cemetery and were observed by Dan Christensen. He did some research and found our Website and made contact with us. On the 29th of June, National approved his membership application and he is now an SFA member and a member of Chapter 89. He is also one of the members that volunteered to staff the table at the Car Show. He will be attending the Sept. meeting so everyone can meet him then.

This Chapter is one of the busiest in the organization and one of the smallest. That is quite a distinction and it is all due to the high quality of its members. I know of much larger Chapters that have a much harder time getting members to participate in projects or even to attend meetings. That doesn't seem that unique until you realize that back east



Post meeting 'fun & frolicking' at "Cool Hand Luke's" in Redding.

these chapter members live in very close proximity to the meeting place. This chapter is so spread out we have members driving as much as four to five hours just to attend a meeting and doing it regularly.

I'm pointing this out because I think the members of this chapter deserve the recognition. Their willingness to participate and work as a team for the completion of the Chapter projects is commendable. I'm not just speaking of those members that regularly attend meetings. Some of our very involved and active members have never made a meeting, but that doesn't stop them from participating in their own areas. We have several members in Northwestern Nevada that are regularly representing this chapter in our ROTC and JROTC awards program.

This Chapter has a few members who are deeply involved in the Chapter and its projects but almost all of its members participate to some degree. If not close to the flag pole they develop something in their own areas and represent this Chapter there. Every one of you deserves a tip of the beret and a good pat on the back. I hope this note brings that to your attention and will serve as that pat. It is well deserved.

Scott Masterson
President, Chapter 89
Special Forces Association

Chapter 89 Activities and events for the last Quarter:

GM&B Meeting – May 2011:

Held at the **Maraviov Team House** in the City of Shasta Lake, California. Eighteen folks in attendance: Eleven Chapter members and seven spouses and/or family members. In response to **Bryan Furman's** recently heard refrain of "Where's The Fun?" Chapter

president **Scott Masterson** and thirteen others later reconvened at "Cool Hand Luke's Steakhouse Saloon" for some post meeting camaraderie. All went very well except for the constant need for **Kathy** to try to keep "Static" under control and out of mischief.



"Da Mayor", Ken Delfino presenting a "Distinguished Service Award" to Doris Cleckner.



Ken and Scott display the "Distinguished Service Award" to be presented to Linda Poling... Veteran supporter... extraordinaire!



Scott Masterson presents a commemorative plaque to outgoing Chapter President, John Cleckner.



VP Max Heping, the "Raffle Man" extraordinaire



Still smiling and happy!!

Chapter 89 Activities and events for the last Quarter:

SFA/ROTC & JROTC Presentations:

Eleven JROTC presentations were made in Washoe County, Nevada. One Senior ROTC presentation was inaugurated at Simpson University in Redding, California by **Scott Masterson**.

A great Chapter program that continues to be very popular and well appreciated.

SFC Allen C. Johnson Scholarship presentations at Los Molinos High School:

The 7th of June found seven members of Chapter 89 at Los Molinos High School, again presenting the **SFC Allen C. Johnson Memorial Scholarships** to deserving students. Chapter president **Scott Masterson** accompanied by VP, **Max Hempting**, **John & Doris Cleckner**, **Bob "Static" Maravirov**, **Mrs. Jenny Johnson**, and the then, prospective chapter member, **Dan Christensen** make three scholarship presentations. Of special note was the presence and participation of **Allen's** oldest daughter. During the presentations, **Scott** announced the names of the recipients and **Allen's** oldest daughter, **Stacy** made the presentations.

Three \$500.00 scholarships were presented to Los Molinos High School students. Selected to receive the scholarships were graduating seniors: **Gaumel Murrillo**; **Michael Kling** and **Bryer Whetstone**.

Scott reported in his AAR that all went smoothly and the students seem very pleased with their scholarships. Scott further shared that although Jenny attempted to hide on the sidelines this time, he did manage to introduce her to the audience...Much to **Jenny's** chagrin. **Scott** offered **Stacy** a big "Tip of the Beret" for her cheerful participation.



Dan, Max, "Static", Jenny, John and Doris at the scholarships presentation-Los Molinos HS.



Jenny Johnson, "tough" taskmaster, oversees the committee.



The Chapter scholarship committee in action selecting the recipients.



Scott Masterson, Stacy Johnson and the three SFC Allen C. Johnson Scholarship recipients.

Allen Johnson's Annual Memorial Services:

Despite ever threatening weather, **Max**, **Carmen** and family were able to put together and pull off an exceptionally memorable Chapter event; First, at the Los Molinos cemetery and later at their home in Richfield, California.

When Chapter members and friends arrived at the cemetery they found the venue well prepared by **Max**, **Max Jr**, and nephew **A.J.** Ten Chapter members, families and friends gathered and honored the memory of and celebrated the life of the Chapter's namesake... **Allen Johnson**. There were more than 25 participants in all.

This year the Chapter was especially pleased to be graced with the presence and participation of Allen's oldest daughter, **Stacy D. Johnson**. Allen's bio-father and his wife also joined with the Chapter in the annual memorial to Allen.



Max Hemping with son, Max, Jr. and nephew, "JC" waiting to present the flowers.



Chapter Chaplain, the Reverend Don Mangrum presides over the memorial.

Past Chapter President **John Cleckner** welcomed and thanked those present for being there and sharing in remembering and honoring Allen. Then the Chapter Chaplain, the **Reverend Don Mangrum**, presided over the annual memorial services with very moving and heartfelt words which seemed to be well received and appropriate to the occasion. During the service Max presented a bouquet of flowers to **Jenny Johnson** as well as placing flowers upon Allen's gravesite.

After the memorial services those present adjourned and travelled to the Hemping's home a few miles distant. Very close as the crow flies, however, due to the Sacramento River and some flooding, a rather roundabout trip. Thanks for a GPS.

Upon arriving at the **Hemping's Rancho**, we were first welcomed by the tantalizing and tempting aromas of a great variety of BBQ'd delights awaiting us. **Javier**, **Carmen's** brother, and his sons had evidently been busy all morning (perhaps all night??) preparing this genuine Mexican banquet.

After a very genuine and warm welcome by **Carmen**, and a reminder of the significance of the occasion, we all set out to attempt to do justice to the feast which had been prepared.



Chapter 89 remembering and honoring SFC Allen C. Johnson.

Of special note, and caution, I discovered, after the fiesta, a very special secret ingredient concoction created by **Carmen**. Although she called it Sangria, I have since learned from some of my Cherokee relatives (unfortunately too late) that they (the Cherokee) know it better as "SUKA" (Sneaks Up- Kicks Ass!!) and try to avoid it all costs. But, was it good!!!

A big "Tip of the Beret" and an extremely heartfelt Chapter THANK YOU is certainly due **Max**, **Carmen** and their family for a very

special and memorable event. A special thanks to **Chef Javier** and his sons for the tremendous BBQ. All in all, despite the ever threatening weather, it was a very memorable and enjoyable gathering sponsored by the Hemping's and family. It certainly ranks among the best which the Chapter has enjoyed.

For those who did not participate... you certainly missed a great one!! Thanks again, **Max & Carmen**.

Allen Johnson's Annual Memorial Services (Cont.):



Our very gracious hosts- Carmen and Max Heping.



(l-r) Jim S., Janet, Jack and Doug "cooling it" at the Heping's.



Scott, Max and Jim W. kicking back and enjoying the day.





Javier (left- Carmen's brother) oversees his sons who are preparing the fantastic "fiesta" at the Hemping's

Chapter Membership :

This last quarter found the Chapter with membership adjustments for the first time in about two years. In the "Gain column", we were pleased to have local Redding resident, **Dan Christensen** join the Chapter. Dan is an SF Veteran of the late '80's-... mid-'90's. We are looking forward to having Dan and wife, **Shannon** joins us at the September meeting. Dan has already been active and supportive of the Chapter.

In the "Loss column", the Chapter was very disappointed to lose Charter Member, **LK Stevenson** and **Chris Martin**. Steve has relocated from the area, and having zero intention of ever living in the Pacific Standard Time Zone again, has chosen to become a "Member@ Large". Perhaps, to later join SFA Chapter 4-24 in Colorado Springs, CO. That would be a natural for Steve as he is a 10th GP Veteran.

The circumstances surrounding **Chris Martin's** departure are not as clear. We were notified last week by national that Chris was being carried on the rolls of SFA Chapter 78. Since email and phone attempts to Chris have not been unsuccessful, I visited the Chapter 78 website. He is a member of Chapter 78.

So, the membership balance is a net loss of one for Chapter 89. The SFA member stat's now stand at 29. Obviously, tis time to begin beating the bushes once again... Primarily, for local SF veterans.

With that goal in mind, **Scott**, "**Static**", and **Gary Maraviov** manned a table at the "Old Navy" Store in the Shasta Mall on 1 July. "Static" and Scott have organized another SF veteran search effort at the upcoming "Hot-O-Rama" in Anderson, California from 14-17 July 2011. The call for volunteers to assist during the effort has already gone forth. By the time this newsletter is in your hands, that effort will have been completed.

SFA "Best Quarterly Newsletter Award":

We have been notified that SFA Chapter 89 has been selected to receive the "Best Quarterly Newsletter for The year-2011". That's

two consecutive years/awards. In addition to a very nice certificate, the Chapter receives a \$100.00 cash prize. Thank you...Mark!!

Chapter members "Happenings & Other News" this past quarter:



The "Keystone Kowboy". Some zealots just never give it up !

As you will surmise from a couple of the photos included in this newsletter, **John ("Keystone Kowboy") Cleckner** continues to campaign in behalf of that vile drink masquerading as a beer. "Static" has shared that prayers for John's enlightenment and redemption are encouraged and welcomed. "Static" reports that he is accepting contributions in order to schedule some very necessary counseling for John.

"Da Mayor", the Honorable... **Ken Delfino** presented a Distinguished Service Award Plaque to **Doris Cleckner** for her outstanding service as the photographer/videographer at last fall's U.S. Navy River Patrol Force's 44th Anniversary reunion in Suisun City, California. Of special note was a representation of Ken's vessel, Boat 152. Congratulations, Doris!

Bryan Furman has reported that his long anticipated fishing expedition after the May meeting did not go quite as well as planned. Although the three days in snow storms between Susanville and Lassen was fun, it was not very conducive to camping out. Well, there were motels. Catching an 8" German Brown Trout (caught & released) in Butte Creek, in the snow, both on the ground and in the air, freezing his digits so bad that they ached for a day, was probably some consolation. All worth it, he wrote. On Tuesday after setting out from Susanville and encountering snow with 10 minutes, by the time he reached Old Station, he finally decided that it was time for "next trip" and returned to the coast.

As already reported, **LK "Steve" Stevenson** has relocated and is now surveying the oilfields of Wyoming. Not planning to ever return to this area, he will probably affiliate with the Chapter in Colorado Springs, CO. Steve, an SFA Chapter 89 Charter Member, and 10th GP (Bad Toelz) veteran will be missed.

Bob "Static" & Kathy Maraviov will soon be flying to the east coast. As Casey is soon to be deployed to Iraq with the Navy, Bob & Kathy will be picking up their 'kid's' vehicle and driving it back cross

country. "Static" says that they plan to stop and visit with an SOA friend in Colorado and then for a while with friends in Nevada. Hmmm Guess that I had better shovel out the guest bedroom. The questions that go begging are: How long will it take them to get back to the left coast at 62 MPH; and, will Kathy finally be able to drive one of the vehicles!!

Northern Nevada Chapter member **Ken Holmes** has shared that his son, **ISG Eric Holmes** an Airborne Ranger, recently attended "Jump Master" School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Eric, still stationed at Fort Polk, Louisiana, has been transferred across post to become the First Sergeant of "Alpha" Company- 1/509th PIR. Eric is a third generation paratrooper. He is a veteran of the Bosnia mission and multiple iterations in Iraq. Ken is a 101st Airborne Division and MACV-SOG Veteran. At one time, Ken, his brother (USMC-"Force Recon") and their father were all serving in RVN at the same time. Editor's note: Ken was the 101st Airborne Division's "Trooper of The Year" at Fort Campbell, Kentucky in the early '70's. I was the Battalion S-3 of the 2/320th FA (Abn) at the same time.



Carmen Hemping (back row, 4th from left) THE Tehama County Substitute Teacher of the Year-2011.

Earlier this year substitute teachers across the nation were honored during what is termed SubWeek (the National Substitute Teacher Recognition Week). **Carmen Hemping** was one of 18 nominated for consideration within Tehama County, California. In late May Carmen was notified that she had been selected as *THE Substitute Teacher of the Year for Tehama County for 2011*. In a news release honoring Carmen, it was reported that approximately 270,000 men and women fill in for absent permanent teachers every day in the United States. It was further reported that research indicates that about one full year of a child's K-12 education is taught by substitute teachers. Wow... Who would have thunk it!!?? Way to go Carmen !!!!

Jim W. (the Secretary/Treasurer of the CNAA) is looking forward to having an "old" 82nd and 5th SF friend spend about two weeks with him in and around the convention. The friend, **Gene Medley**, of Pinehurst, NC, is a retired SF SGM. Yes... There will be some fishing and probably a whole lot of beer testing/tasting. However, never fear... absolutely NO Keystone!!

Chapter members "Happenings & Other News" this past quarter:



Mark King and son, Colin, touching up at the CNAA Airborne Memorial at the NNVC, Fernley, NV.

In early May **Mark & Colin King** and **Jim Wipf** assisted the Cal-Nevada All Airborne Chapter with the annual repainting and cleaning up of the Chapter's Airborne Memorial at the Northern Nevada Veterans Cemetery in Fernley, Nevada. Earlier, Jim had the honor and pleasure of sharing in Mark's being "raised" to the Master Mason degree at Washoe Lodge Number 35.

Mark King, not having enough to do already, has been very busy assisting the Cal-Nevada All Airborne Chapter of the 82nd Airborne Division Association with the forthcoming national convention in Reno, Nevada (3-6 August). For those who might be in the Reno area on the 4th of August, be sure to be at Stead Airfield (site of the Reno Air Races). Sometime early morning the 505th PIR will be conducting a mass parachute drop. The size of the "drop" is forecast to 200 paratroopers. (Exact size will be a function of aircraft availability) They will now be air delivered via C-17's.

The long discussed and anticipated relocation of **Bull Navarro** and family is now a done deal. According to reports to **John Cleckner**, on 31 May the family CSMO'd from Fayetteville, NC and trekked south to the land of sun, "gators" and hurricanes. The new contact information was provided to the Chapter membership in late May. It is also included in the latest Chapter roster update (6 July 2011).

John Cleckner ("Keystone Kowboy") reports that he and **Doris** received a great surprise while celebrating Memorial Day in Redding. John reports that as he was standing there... minding his own business and longing for a Keystone, he was accosted by a very attractive and incredible lady wearing a 'T-shirt' that read-"My Son is a Special Forces Soldier"!! Once his pulse slowed down and Doris quit glaring at him wondering just who this female was... They were both extremely pleased to be introduced to **Molly**. Molly is the mother of "**Bull**" Navarro. They were later introduced to "Skinny" (her beau), **Bob Skinner**, the head of the "Clan" that plays the bagpipes for all of the functions. Molly and Bob (Skinny) have been invited to our future functions and activities'.

Jim Wipf reports that he recently enjoyed an unexpected two day visit from Oregon Chapter member, and brother, **John "JW" Wipf**. JW rode his "Iron Pony", accompanying some friends who were headed to the Dakotas on motorcycles, as far as Reno. JW shared that that segment of the ride was enough fun for him, especially after having made similar trips a number of times before. JW who has ridden "Iron Ponies" for more than 45 years claims that it's just not as pleasurable as it once was... The old body does not take it as well!! Anyone in the market for a butt kicking Harley "Fat Boy"... BTW- John wanted me to make certain that you knew he meant the motorcycle, not him.



"JW" and Jim Wipf during a recent visit to Reno.



Scott Masterson, Molly (the "Bull's" mother), Doris and John Cleckner, Memorial Day.

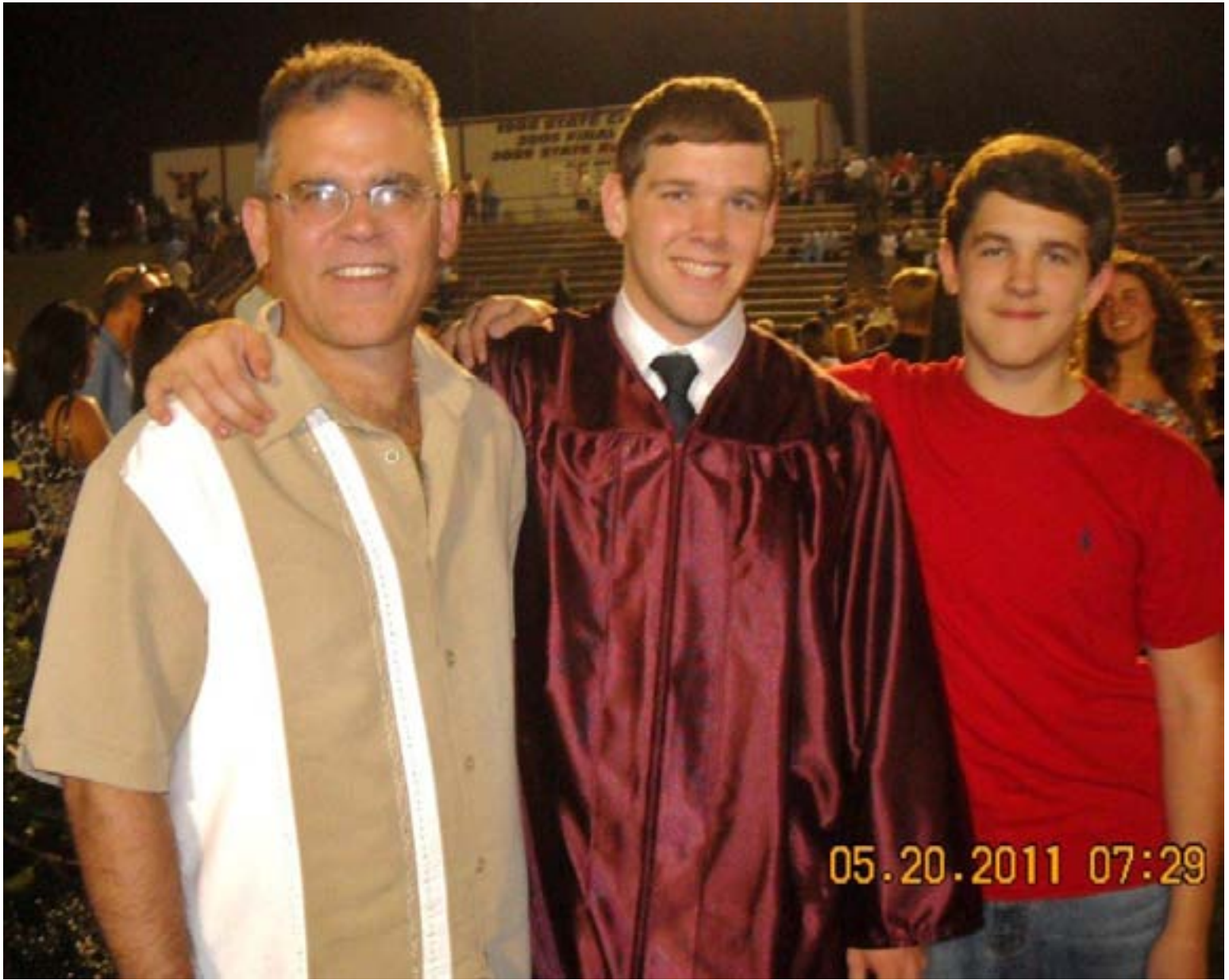
Away From The Flagpole:

ChapterWebsite:

Readers will no doubt recall from the minutes of the May GM&B Business meeting minutes that the decision had been made to discontinue the Chapter website. That decision was based on Chapter 89 economic conditions. Well, since that announcement was published, Mark King has once again stood up and volunteered to take the lead for the Chapter. Mark has volunteered to serve as the webmaster. Coordination and preparations are now underway between Mark, Bryan and Hans to make a smooth transition to Chapter management of the website in October. Many thanks, Mark and Bryan.

"Honor Flights" from Iowa:

As many will remember from an earlier report by his child bride, Louise, Iowa Chapter member, **John Nieland** continues to be very active in Veteran activities. John continues supporting Honor Flights, the Legion Riders and the MIAP. Louise had earlier shared her and John's observations to the latest, the third Honor Flight, out of Iowa. A big "Tip of the Beret" is certainly due John and Louise's efforts and commitments to our Veterans.



"Cleck" with sons, Neil and Eric, at Neil's high school graduation.

Chapter Member Birth Date & Wedding Anniversaries:

Note that the dates are now reconfigured and included to insure that the newsletter is received (when possible) before the anniversaries.

Wedding Anniversaries

9 Sep Ken & Melba Delfino
10 Sep Jim & Jan Sorensen
1 Sep John & Doris Cleckner

Birthdays

AUGUST

4th Sandra Fowler
4th Doug Davenport
7th Jim Sorensen
8th Kelly Cleckner
12th Carrie Walker
19th Vanessa Johnson
21st Mark King
24th John Wipf

SEPTEMBER

3rd Susan Houston
6th Carolyn Furman
8th John "Cleck" Cleckner
8th Matt Houston
18th Scott Masterson
25th Sally King
28th Bob "Static" Maraviov

OCTOBER

1st Louise Nieland
1st Bryan Furman
22nd Manuela Davenport
25th Jim Wipf
26th Mike Walker
30th Marlie Byrd

Upcoming Chapter Events & Activities:

11 Sep 2011:

"Reading of the Names" Memorial Project: "Da Mayor" of Colfax, California and the President of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Colfax, Ken Delfino, has invited members of SFA Chapter 89 to participate in a special program remembering and commemorating the 10th

anniversary of one of the darkest days in our country's history. A memo has already been circulated by the Chapter president Scott Masterson. More, no doubt, to follow.

8 Oct 2011:

"Pig in The Pit": GM&B Business meeting @ Scott's in Montague, California. (BTW-Scott is still in need of instructions for defrosting meat... BEFORE attempting to grill.

5 Nov 2011:

Shasta County Veteran's Day Parade @ Shasta Lake, California.

TBD:

Annual Fund Raising Campaign



"Back in the Day" photos for this edition of the Chapter newsletter were provided by Iowa Chapter member, John B. Nieland and Ervin Harpole of Gold Beach, Oregon... Thank you both very much for the material provided.

John Nieland, a long time friend of mine, is also a retired "Mustang" Officer (Major) and the past mayor of Marion, Iowa. John replaced me on the "D" Company -7th SFGA Demonstration Team in 1966. I only performed at Disneyland-East (Gabriel Demonstration Area) Brother John travelled the country, made TV appearances and partied with the socially elite while I was on a one year tour of Southeast Asia with the 5th SFGA. However, John had already completed his first tour with the 1st SFGA in Viet Nam. Where, by the way, he

received the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

Ervin Harpole (MSG/ret) is a recent acquaintance of mine, however, a very long time friend of Wes Fowler. Ervin is one of the 'Originals' who travelled to Bad Toelz with the 10th SFGA in October 1953. The individual in the photo with Ervin is Col/ret Bergstrom who was the adjutant of the 10th SFGA when they made the relocation from Fort Bragg, NC to Bad Toelz, Germany in October 1953.

Editor's note: When I served with the SF Det (Abn) Europe ("A" Company-10th SFGA) in '68 & '69, Ervin had already returned to CONUS. However, Wes Fowler was still there at Bad Toelz when I was there.



D COMPANY
7th SPECIAL FORCES
GROUP
(Abn)

FORT BRAGG, N.C.



ILLINOIS STATE FAIR Aug. 1966

John Nieland (3rd from left-bottom row). Back row, center- LTC Baldwin...to his right, the infamous SGM McGuire



The 7th SFG Demonstration Team at the Kennedy Compound, Hyannis Port, MA (Jul '66). (John Nieland--1st row- far left.)

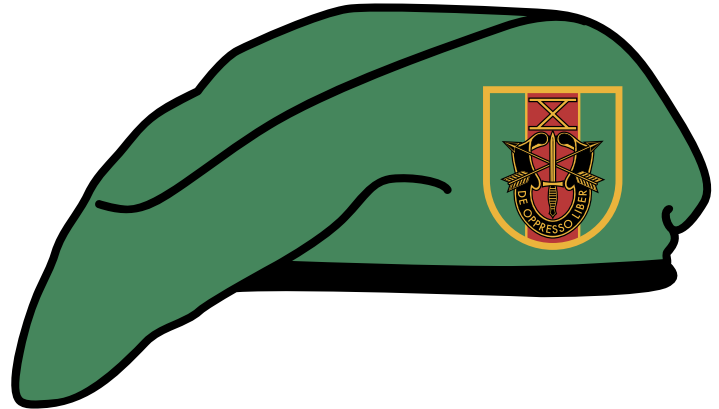


The USS Greely at Wilmington, NC (Oct '53) loading 10th SFG personnel for transport to Bad Toelz.

Back in the Day:



COL (R) Bergstrom, (a former 10th GP Adjutant) and MSG (R) Ervin Harpole ("Originals") a couple of years ago.



Editor's Notes:

Final thoughts to ponder: These "words of wisdom" to ponder are proffered by past Chapter president, John Cleckner. Although I have been unable to locate and verify the Latin quote, I am comfortable in reporting that the sentiment and philosophy expressed is no doubt accurate... Except for the accolades and credit accorded Keystone.

*"In caelum cerevisiae est nullum,
Itaque hic bibemus illum!"*

(In heaven there's no beer, that's why we drink it here.... especially KEYSTONE! "

John ("Vincit omnia veritas")

Editor's note: The "Keystone Kowboy" just never gives up!! John, a factoid of life.... Keystone is a street in Reno, NOT a beer!!

May God, the Creator, The Great Spirit, or whomever you place your faith and trust look over all the warriors, SF and others, yet serving in harm's way.

DE OPPRESSO LIBER and *Fratres Aeterni*

For the Chapter President
Jim Wipf (M-1645-L)
SFA Chapter 89 Secretary

This will be mailed as a "hard copy" to all Chapter members and to SFA National.

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Scott Masterson Chapter President
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