



THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
SENTINEL
SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78
NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 6

JUNE 2011



In this Issue:



The Green Beret Foundation
Aaron Anderson's story





The Secret War in Vietnam

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(From left) Nguyen Cong Hiep, team interpreter; Chieu Tuan, granadier; John S. Meyer, One-Dome; Nguyen Van Sai, Zero-One; Cao Son, Douglas L. Lefebvreau, One-Two; Hung and Lyndel H. Black Jr., One-One.)

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In This Issue:

- 3-4 Presidents Page
- 5-6 Editors column
- 7 Veterans Information
- 8-10 Donald Shue; Repatriation
- 11 AFI Film. The Ripple Effect
- 12 Day at the Range
- 13 Shooters Cup
- 14 Meeting Information

The Sentinel is published monthly by Special Forces Association Chapter 78, Southern California. The views., opinions and articles printed in this issue do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Army or the United States Special Operations Command the Special Forces Association or Special Forces Association Chapter 78. Please address any comments to the editor, "Sentinel" to john@tier1.us.com



The Presidents Page



Lonny Holmes
President SFA 78

PRESIDENTS COLUMN June 2011

I am writing for the June issue of the Sentinel; however it is still May as I prepare this article and Memorial Day is rapidly approaching. Memorial Day means a lot to me and I remember as a young child in the late 1940's when my mother would take me down town where I grew up, and on street corners people would be selling the silk poppies to raise money for veterans. I never understood the reason for the poppies but thought the money raised for veterans was a good idea. Like most American families I relatives who had served in our conflicts back to the Civil War.

Moina Michael a professor at the University of Georgia published the poem "We Shall Keep the Faith," which was inspired by Canadian John McCrae's battle-theme poem "In Flanders Fields." Following the war she realized the need to raise funds for servicemen and started the idea of selling silk poppies. In 1948 after her death the U.S. Post Office issued a stamp honoring her life's achievement.

This year I am celebrating Memorial Day by traveling to Washington D.C. to spend 4 days with several of my old Special Forces friends from Fort Bragg and Vietnam. This should prove to be a great celebration since I have only seen one of these SF 'brothers' in 41 years.



Smoke Bomb Hill SF Soldiers, early 60's

The other SF 'brothers' not since before 1970, and a few, way back in the mid 1960's while we lived and worked on "Smoke Bomb Hill," awaiting deployment. As with most members of the old A-Teams, many cannot attend, due to early death, or never having returned from missions. Together on Monday May 30, we will celebrate as a group, among the historic Memorials to all Soldiers of all American Conflicts in our nation's capital, our fallen brothers in arms.

Frank Buckles at the age of 110 years died of natural causes on February 27 this year and was the last American survivor of World War I. He was one of 4,734,991 U.S. Soldiers serving in the war and 1 of 2,171,560 who deployed overseas. One million three hundred ninety thousand served on the Western Front alone. Frank Buckle is the end of an era, but not forgotten.



Continued on next page



The Presidents Page

Continued from page 3

Chapter 78 News

Chapter 78 continues to stride forward on its projects including its webpage's and the up and coming event, Special Forces 78 Challenge Cup. Steve Cowan our dynamic leader in this event has designed a very nice event logo in conjunction with Special Forces Gear. He has ordered two hundred 't' shirts with the cup logo and these will be available for sale to chapter members and the public as a fund raising item. Steve has also applied this very SF logo to a challenge coin design, and we hope to receive an order of 300 shortly. Both items we are on sale for \$15 each. The sales of each item will generate about a \$10 profit. Dave Thomas (SF Chapter 78 member) who owns SF Gear also designed a very nice event banner and donated it to the chapter. John Joyce and Steve are working with several national corporations seeking sponsorship of the Cup event. Presently Springfield has made us an offer and is donating an event package.

Viking Tactics of Fayetteville, NC, has sent an event package which includes a number of Viking Tactics MK1 Slings. Glock also sent a box of event items. The chapter thanks member Monty Gould for these corporate connections. Monty is also coordinating with Steve Cowan for event timing and scoring professionals.

John Joyce has purchased a Glock 17 pistol, which is currently being engraved with SF and event logos, and should be shipped to us by the first week in June. He has ordered 2500 raffle tickets to for us to sell at \$2 each. We ask each member of the chapter to help in the sales of the 3 items that will support in the further development of the Special Forces 78 Challenge Cup Shoot. You may even win the pistol if you purchase a ticket yourself.

The National Special Forces Association 2011 Convention will be held in Orlando, Florida from June 22 thru June 28 at the Orlando Marriott World Center Resort. Member and past president Jim Duffy will be Chapter 78 official representative and attend the Presidents Meeting and other formalities.

In this issue for the first time you will notice some advertisements. The editor, John Joyce, has contacted a number of the major advertisers in the SF Journal, "The Drop." We hope to attract some of their corporate sponsors as paid advertisers in the "Sentinel." These funds will help support chapter activities.

**Lonny Holmes, President
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Editors Page:

The Green Beret Foundation

Aaron Anderson: The Green Beret Foundation

Seated between an actual green beret and the iconic “beams of light” photo depicting where the World Trade Center stood, Aaron Anderson talks about the day he survived a land mine explosion.

He smiles when he mentions that the weapon designed to destroy tanks shot him 20 feet in the air.



As a song about “fighting soldiers from the sky” once reminded, Anderson’s demeanor comes from being one of America’s best.

It was Feb. 28, 2006. His Army Green Beret unit was on patrol in southern Afghanistan’s Helmand province, an unforgiving land of rocks, rugged villages and Taliban. Staff Sgt. Anderson, now 29, manned the machine gun in the turret of a light-armored Humvee bristling with weapons. Special Forces soldiers call them “gun trucks.”

His gun truck was fourth in a convoy. But the electronic jammer that was supposed to stop remote-controlled improvised explosive devices was on the fritz, so his truck kept close to another gun truck to stay within its protective bubble.

BOOM.

In a fraction of a second, Anderson’s gun truck disappeared inside a mushroom cloud that rose some 60 feet into the sky.

When asked, Anderson said he knew Pat Tillman, the professional football player killed in Afghanistan. The fraternity of elite warriors is a small one.

Lantern-jawed and physically and mentally tough, both grew up with strong mothers, played high school football in California and loved the roughness of the outdoors.

Both also volunteered for military duty after 9/11.

Anderson and Tillman met during airborne school. Anderson also knew Tillman’s brother Kevin, who also attended airborne school.

In a laundry room in Fort Benning, Ga., Tillman and Anderson traded names of guys they both knew who played high school ball. Tillman went on to become a ranger. Anderson joined the Army’s Special Forces.

On being a Green Beret, Anderson explains, “It’s a lifestyle.”

To understand Anderson’s modest, matter-of-fact demeanor, it helps to know the Special Forces motto, *De oppresso liber*, or “free the oppressed.” It’s also worth knowing that Special Forces soldiers call themselves “quiet professionals.”

When he tells you that the explosion of Feb. 28, 2006, killed his brother in arms, Master Sgt. Emigdio Elizarraras, 37, a 19-year veteran from Pico Rivera, Calif., Anderson speaks softly.

When Anderson landed in the blast’s burning hot crater, his left leg was twisted at a 90-degree angle; a bone stuck through his boot.

The Green Beret said to himself: “Damn, that’s not good.”



Aaron Anderson stands near the boot he wore for 7 months while recuperating from injuries suffered while fighting in Afghanistan in 2006.

To stop from bleeding out, Anderson unpacked a tourniquet and wound it tightly around his thigh. A man of faith, he quietly said, “Thank you, God. I’m still alive.”

The explosion shredded muscles in Anderson’s chest, damaged his hearing, detached a retina, ripped into his face and sent shrapnel through his body.

Then the firefight started. From a nearby ridge, Taliban fighters sprayed bullets. A teammate jumped into the crater to help. Anderson waved him away to join the battle



Aaron Anderson; Continued



The gun truck's remains after the 2006 blast that killed Master Sgt. Emigdio Elizarraras, inset, and wounded Anderson.

[Click here to listen to Aaron talk about the Green Beret Foundation](#)

Ninety minutes later, a Blackhawk helicopter swooped in to evacuate Anderson. “Am I gonna lose my leg?” Anderson asked a medic. “We don’t know.”

At his security company’s office in Santa Ana, Calif., Anderson was asked what he’d do if he met the person who set the mine. “I’d probably shake his hand,” Anderson replies. “I have no ill will against what they did.”

Such is the warrior way.

His mother, Lori, saw her son through seven months and 24 surgeries at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Then Anderson did what Green Berets do.

He flew to Fort Bragg, N.C., and returned to his unit. Doctors saved the leg, but it was a mess of rods, screws and scars. The warrior couldn’t run and was unable to hump the 100 pounds of gear that Green Berets sometimes carry. After six months, Anderson decided he was taking up the slot of someone who might be better suited for combat. “The thing I miss the most is the guys,” Anderson tells me. The men he fought with, side by side, are among the most motivated guys you’ll meet — yet they remain humble, he says. “You see the spirit of America in them. It’s what our country is still made of.”

Members of the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) are in the process of moving from Fort Bragg to their new cantonment on Eglin Air Force Base reservation lands, south of Crestview.

Since returning to civilian life, Anderson launched a security company called Archangel and returned to school. He’ll attend the University of California-Irvine in the spring.

But he also heard another calling: help his brothers. With the assistance of his then fiance, Alexandra (they were married last year), and a board of directors of veterans Anderson created the Green Beret Foundation in July 2009.

Why a foundation? “To assist our wounded, ill and injured Special Forces soldiers, and their families.” Anderson, who lives in Huntington Beach, Calif., explains the foundation fills gaps between what is provided by existing organizations and what is needed by Special Forces veterans. Services include, for example, advanced rehabilitation and transportation for a family with a wounded relative.

Once the foundation is better established, Anderson intends to step back and let it run like the military — with a constant stream of new people. Already, Anderson says, the foundation has raised \$150,000 and used that money to help 24 men. “There are so many people willing to help, it’s so American,” Anderson says. “It makes me feel great every day.”

A lyric by Staff Sgt. Barry Sadler comes to mind:

“Men who mean just what they say, the brave men of the Green Beret.”

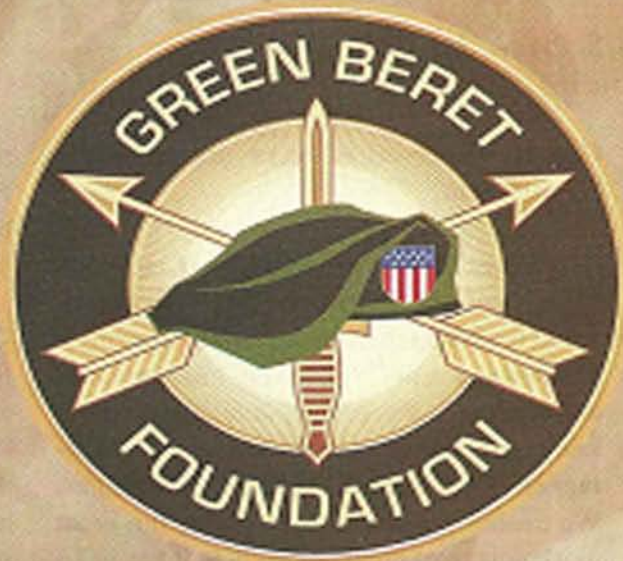
Aaron Anderson is a member of Special Forces Association Chapter 78. Chapter 78 is hosting a fundraising event for the GBF, the Chapter 78 Shooters cup on October 8th, 2011. www.sfa78cup.com

This article was reprinted from an article By David Whiting | Freedom News Service





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The United States Army Special Forces, commonly known as the Green Berets, produces some of our nation's finest and most elite warriors. They fight across a broad spectrum of missions in the pursuit of freedom for those oppressed and to protect our nation from those who seek to do us harm. They are known as our country's quiet professionals. The Green Berets have been defending our nation against its enemies throughout the last 5 decades in times of peace and war.

The liberties we enjoy as Americans don't come without a cost. The Special Forces bear the burden of having the highest number of wounded personnel of any other U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) proponent. The Green Beret Foundation serves these quiet professionals who bravely serve the American people and its freedoms.

In an effort to fill the gaps in support left by the boundaries of other organizations, the GBF facilitates assistance to our wounded, ill and injured Special Forces soldiers and their families. We do this by providing resources to ease the burdens of some of the financial hardships that arise in their time of need as well as improving the quality of life for the soldier and the family.

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Filing a VA Claim: My Experience



After discussions with many of my Vietnam era friends I found out that several have filed Veterans Administrations Claims for disability compensation for Agent Orange, PTSD and war related injuries that resulted in long term problems. In recent years Agent Orange (the toxic herbicide used in RVN) has come to include a broad spectrum of medical problems Vietnam Vets are facing today , a few of which are Ischemic Heart Disease, Diabetes (Type 2) Prostate Cancer and Parkinson's Disease.

My approach was to go directly to the local source of information and care; The United States Department of Veteran Affairs-VA Long Beach Health Care System. To start with you must register at the Patient Business Office (Building 126) to obtain a VA ID Card (which will be mailed to you). You are required to provide a DD-214, private health care insurance documents (if you have private health care insurance), the previous year's financial information and dependent information (i.e., spouse DOB, SSN and marriage info, plus any dependent child info). This process including an ID photo took less than 30 minutes. The VA will place you in a category of Priority Groups from 1 to 8 based on service connection and ability to pay.

The next steps require appointments which are very easily obtained. I started with 3 concurrently, making the appointments myself by walking in to the clinics; The Agent Orange Registry, Mental Health Clinic and a Primary Care Provider. Other specific medical specialty appointments will be via the primary care physician and the VA depending on what you file in your claim.

To facilitate all the necessary paper work for the claim the VA has a local staff of outside agencies to assist us and they include veteran's organizations such as The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Veterans (AMVETS). After speaking with Jack Eckles I choose AMVETS and their service officer Michael Ginther, who is a true professional. He processed VA FORM 21-526EZ and other necessary documents in a very timely manner. To file the claim for specific diagnoses you are required to provide military medical records and or civilian medical records to include hospital records and your private doctor to complete specific VA Forms.

The Agent Orange Registry will complete a very detailed interview regarding your health, service in the Republic of Vietnam and disabilities. This 3 stage process is begun by the registrar, then a series of laboratory tests and chest x-ray, and then detailed health history and physical exam by a health care provider. The registrar completes the necessary VA forms and forwards the Agent Orange Claim. The health care provider reviews all your current historical, physical and lab findings which form a part of the claim. This date is forwarded to your primary care provider for review in providing your current health care.

I approached the Mental Health Clinic on my first visit and requested a PTSD evaluation. Since it was early in the day and the clinic was not busy it proceeded smoothly and I received and eval by a staff psychiatrist. The interview took about 1 hour and I was then referred for further consultation and orientation.

Finally I was assigned a primary care provider (M.D.) who reviewed all previous labs and health evaluation of my case and then completed a more detailed exam himself. He ordered further laboratory tests and subsequently gave me prescriptions for my medications. The medication cost was less than 1/3 of what I was paying in the private market. He also established follow-up visits and referred me to Orthopedics and x-ray of my knees (paratrooper knees).

In the course of six weeks I completed all the preliminary VA evaluations, saw my private physician and did specific testing he required prior to completing the VA Forms and collected several hospital records. The AMVETS rep put all this "package" together and thus the preliminary "VA Claim" was filled. Within two weeks of filing I received a letter from the Los Angeles Veterans Administration that my claim was in process of review. This review process can take as little as 90 days, or require nearly one year. Depending on your situation and medical condition they may require outside physicians to examine you and review your specific diagnosis; this is what prolongs the case review. Personally I found the Long Beach VA facility to be modern with some areas under construction which will enhance certain departments. All personnel were very courteous, helpful, and truly cared for you individually.

About the Author:

Lonny Holmes is a former Special Forces Soldier and retired medical professional.





April 30, 2011: Members of the Rolling Thunder and Patriot Guard Riders pause for a prayer during a ceremony for Sergeant First Class Donnie Shue whose remains were returned from Laos after being killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Donald Munroe Shue

By J. Stryker Meyer

Thousands of people in the quiet towns of Concord and Kannapolis, N. Carolina will remember the weekend of April 30 and May 1 for a long time.

Yes, they shared the obvious jubilation on Sunday May 1 with the rest of the country when it news that Navy SEALs had killed international terrorist Osama bin Laden with a round to his head.

But, in these boroughs a short distance from Charlotte, N.C., many residents will remember it as the weekend that native son Donald Monroe Shue's remains were returned to the Tar Heel State after he and two fellow Special Forces soldiers went missing in action during a highly classified mission in Laos on Nov. 3, 1969, in the secret war in Vietnam.

Forty-two years later, on May 1, SFC Shue's remains were put to rest in Carolina Memorial Park in Kannapolis, formally ending four decades of agonizing pain and uncertainty for his sisters Betty Jones and Peggy Hinson, nephew Micky Jones and a handful of Special Forces men who served in Shue's unit.

The SEALs successful mission in Pakistan continued the tradition of conducting special operations missions in foreign lands that Shue was involved with as a Green Beret during a deadly eight-year secret war that was hidden from the public.



April 30, 2011: The hearse carrying the remains of former Concord and Kannapolis resident Donnie Shue, accompanied by the Rolling Thunder and Patriot Guard Motorcycle clubs, travels north on Highway 49 past Harrisburg to a ceremony honoring Sergeant First Class Donnie Shue whose remains were returned from Laos after being killed in action during the Vietnam War. Photo Credit: Sean Meyers



Donald Shue Continued

Like the SEALs, Shue and his fellow teammates prepared for their mission in a secret compound, training, conducting mission preparations and finally flying in helicopters from a secure base deep into enemy territory. And, like the SEALs, Shue's team's fate remained shrouded in a blanket of secrecy until command and control staff deemed it safe to reveal the mission.

The SEALs success was only announced upon completion of their mission. Once the special operators were safe and the president was briefed, the nature of their mission was reported to the country. Because Shue's team could not be recovered from Laos, only fellow operators knew that his team was overrun by sappers – highly trained N. Vietnam Army soldiers who hunted reconnaissance teams such as the one where Shue was the radio operator of the team. The fate of that team, Reconnaissance Team Maryland, was reported through the chain of command to the White House, but there was no report to the public.



April 30, 2011: Donald Shue's sisters, Betty Jones and Peggy Hinson look over plaques received during a ceremony honoring Sergeant First Class Donnie Shue whose remains were returned from Laos after being killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Instead, Shue's family was only told that he was missing in action during combat in South Vietnam. Ten years later – after Shue's father had died, officials told the Shue family that the young warrior's status was changed from missing in action to presumed killed in action. Thirty years later – after Shue's mother had died, a farmer in Laos found some remains which JPAC officials determined were the three Americans from RT Maryland: Shue, Gunther Wald and William Brown.

Fast forward to the end of April, when a flag-draped casket rolled down a cargo roller underneath the Delta Airlines jet that flew Shue's remains from Hawaii to Charlotte. The casket was greeted by a Special Forces honor guard and Shue's family members.

Finally, Shue was home.

Finally, his sisters and family members had closure.

And, finally, several Special Forces soldiers who served with Shue were relieved that one of their own was finally returned to loved ones.

During two memorial services in Concord and Kannapolis, and the funeral on Sunday, Shue's two sisters cried a river of tears. Thousands of spectators attended the events. Thousands more lined the roads holding flags, most with mournful, curious faces as Shue's procession passed by, escorted by more than 4000 motorcyclists from the Special Forces Association, the Patriot Guard, Rolling Thunder, Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club and Combat Veterans Association.

That thunderous procession was lead by a few former Green Berets who served with Shue, members of the Special Operations Association, an organization formed by men who served in the deadly secret war. <http://www.specialoperations.org/>. SOA members traveled from California, Louisiana, Maine and Florida to attend the Shue service.

The public outpouring of support and emotion during the events were heartwarming and healing to family and soldiers who served with Shue. Peggy Hinson, Shue's sister said, "I've never seen anything like, ...never," as she wiped tears from her eyes.

To the men who participated in the secret war, we were all grateful that Shue was home but quietly reflected on the fact that 51 Green Berets who fought in the secret war remain listed as missing in action as the men and women of JPAC continue to search for clues and remains in Southeast Asia to bring them home some day.

The 51 remaining MIAs are a grim reminder of the deadly secret war that was waged for eight years, where the casualty rate exceeded 100 percent. And, due to the secret nature of that war, a Presidential Unit Citation – the equivalent of a Distinguished Service Cross -- was awarded April 4, 2001 at a small ceremony at Ft. Bragg, N.C. http://www.macvsog.cc/presidential_unit_citation.htm#SO%20Awarded%20Presidential%20Unit%20Citation. A copy of that citation was presented to Jones and Hinson.

Last, but not least Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland, Jr., the commanding general of the Army's Special Operations Command, attended the funeral service on May 1 where he personally knelt to present Betty Jones and Peggy Hinson tightly folded flags "...on behalf of a grateful nation..."

Afterwards, Mulholland returned to Ft. Bragg, where he too received the good news about the SEALs in Pakistan.

Donald Shue Continued



April 30, 2011: Veterans and citizens stand for the Pledge of Allegiance during a ceremony honoring Sergeant First Class Donnie Shue.

As the top general in Special Forces efforts against terrorists today, Mulholland was a highly visible link between the men who participated in the secret war that raged for eight years in Southeast Asia and was privy to the latest successes against America's enemies in Southwest Asia.



The motorcycle procession travels through Main Street in Kannapolis.



About the Author:

J. Stryker Meyer served two tours of duty with Special Forces during the secret war in Southeast Asia. His Website is: <http://sogchronicles.com/>



Mr & Mrs Lonny Holmes



Chapter 78 Members Terry Cagnolatti, Steve Cowan, Lonny Holmes and Brad Welker with Director Velvet Smith



Ripple Effect Cast



Terry Cagnolatti with Director Velvet Smith



Lonny Holmes talks with Cast Member

THE RIPPLE EFFECT PREMIERS

One year after Chapter 78 was called to help on the production of Velvet Andrew Smith's movie, *Ripple Effect*, we attended the Premier at the Newport Beach Film Festival on Friday April 29, 2011. This film was included with a series of 5 War Shorts at Triangle Square. Members who attended the premier included John and Mrs. Joyce, Bruce and Jeri Long and Lonny Holmes. All five War Shorts revolved around war in the Middle East or Africa. Immediately following the viewing there was a question and answer session of the directors moderated by a Film Festival speaker. In my opinion the *Ripple Effect* was heads and shoulders above the other films in content, direction, special effects and music. It speaks truly to the American Way, the Special Forces, 18D (medic) and our effort in Afghanistan.

The American Film Institute Directors Workshop for Women has been a major training force for women in film making since 1974. Over 250 women graduates have had the opportunity to participate in this program. Velvet A. Smith, director of the "*Ripple Effect*", was one of 8 chosen to participate in 2010. The films of these eight women premiered on Monday night May 9, 2011 at the Directors Guild of American on Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA. Their content varied from comedy, romance, and tragedy to the Afghan War of the *Ripple Effect*. The DGA Theater is recognized as one of the "preeminent screening facilities, private reception, and film premiere facilities in the United States."

Brad Welker, Steve Cowan, Terry and Juliette Cagnolatti and Lonny and Nilda Holmes were invited to attend the American Film Institute Premier along with the Cast of the *Ripple Effect*. Again, our impression was that the *Ripple Effect* was the outstanding film of the evening. Immediately following the 8 movies there was a reception hosted by the AFI. Thus offered the opportunity we took many pictures with members of the cast, Velvet and her husband Kirk (film editor), and other participants in the film. After the reception we adjourned to the Chateau Marmont with Velvet, Kirk, Patrick Quinlan and others for drinks and a late dinner.

Reflection on the making of the movie, *Ripple Effect*, it is very interesting to view the final product, to observe how the film changes in post production with the addition of music, editing, special effects and all the Hollywood Magic.

Lonny Holmes





Chapter 78 Annual DAY AT THE RANGE



On May 7th, Chapter Secretary Tom Redfern hosted Chapter 78 Members for the 2nd annual Day at the Range. Everyone had a good time at the shoot. The common phrase going around was - "this is nice - I need to get one". the operative word being Need. Ramon donated some 9mm ammo - which everyone enjoyed? Weather wise the day was perfect. Lots of food and great company. Most all had a chance to use the high power line with targets from 200yds to 1000yds.



Special Forces Association Chapter 78

Shooters Cup

08OCT2011

Please view our website for complete details
www.sfa78cup.com



Click the image for a preview

Chapter 78 event organizers have been busy this month. Springfield Arms just signed on with us as a sponsor and we will be having tables at several local gun shows June-August to promote our event and sell raffle tickets for the Glock 19, event T shirts and coins. Please contact a Steve Cowan, Lonny Holmes or John Joyce to purchase any of these items. October is rapidly approaching and we need your help to raise money.

A fundraiser for The Green Beret Foundation
sponsored by Special Forces Association Chapter 78





Special Forces Association Chapter 78

Next meeting

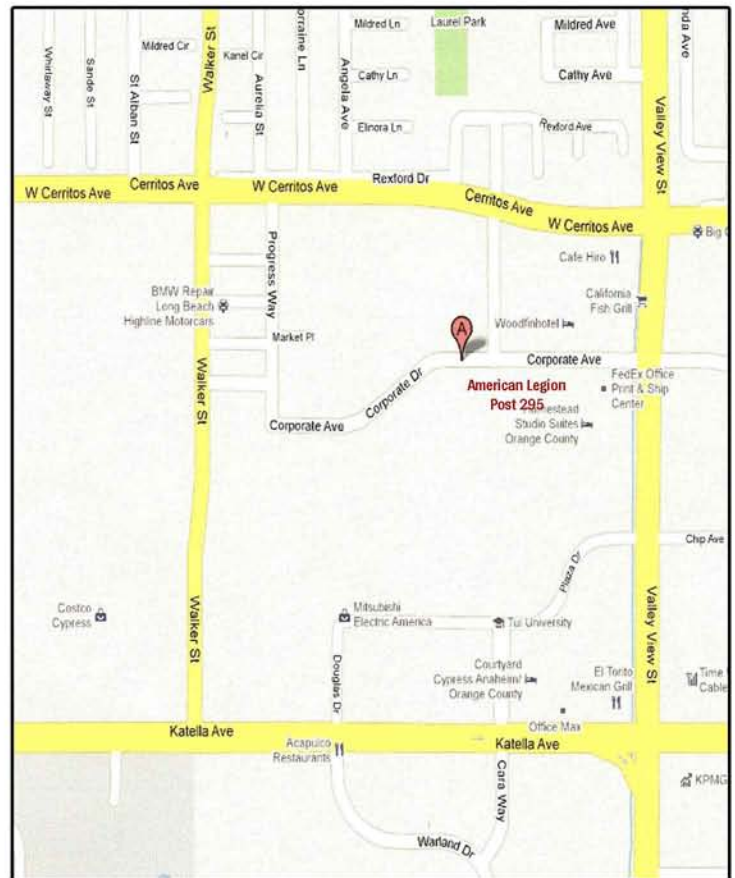
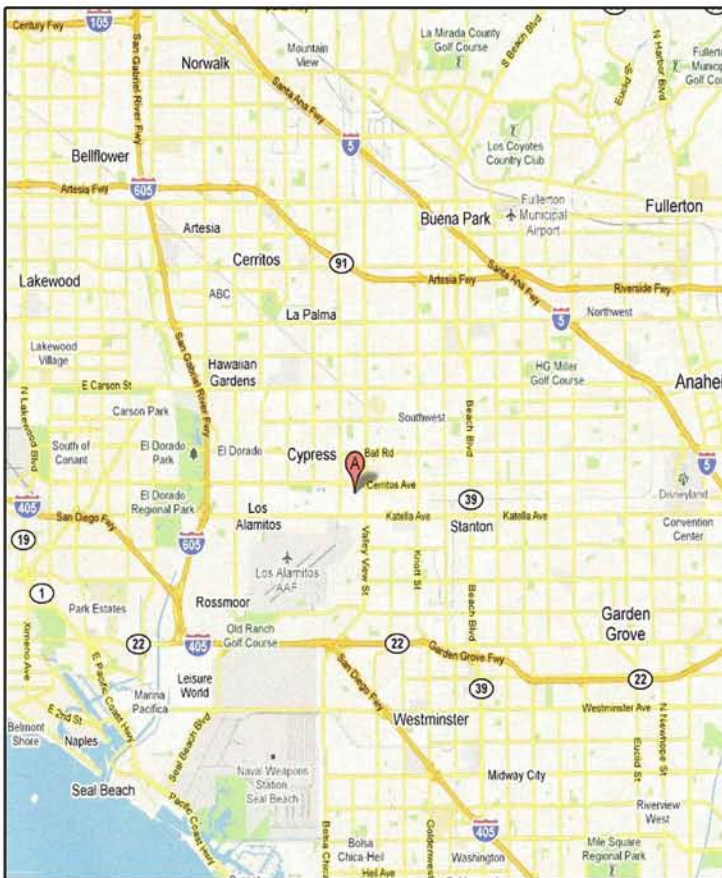
Saturday June 11th, 2011

0900hrs

GENERAL MEETING

5646 Corporate Way Cypress, CA 90630

Map to the Post 295



Raffle, guest speakers, breakfast and more.

American Legion Post 295