



# THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SENTINEL

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 78  
NEWSLETTER OF THE QUIET PROFESSIONALS

THE LTC FRANK J. DALLAS CHAPTER

## VOLUME 5 ISSUE 6

## JUNE 2014



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Day at the Range and BBQ**

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**ROTC Cadet's Letter of Appreciation**



**Lonny Holmes**  
Sentinel Editor

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Memorial Day every year brings back memories of the time we served in the U.S. Armed Forces, for members of Chapter 78 that includes our time in Special Forces. Many members served in combat in various theaters of war as well as in numerous countries on SF Missions. On Memorial day we may attend family get-togethers, attend military parades and visit

war memorials or veterans cemeteries to pay our respect of lost comrades.

This year I had the good fortune to attend ceremonies in Washington, D.C. and join with past SF friends who I served with at Fort Bragg and Vietnam. Walking around the D.C. mall by the "WALL," we had the good fortune to meet **CSM Gary Baura** and **CSM Robert "Bobbie" Hall**, both who served in the 10th SFG(A) in 1972 with **Ramon Rodriguez**. Small world of the SF.

The Green Beret Shooters Cup Board of Directors met in May and after a long and detailed discussion voted unanimously to cancel the Fourth Annual GBSC. This vote was based on the analysis of the increasing cost, decreasing amount of funds donated to the Green Beret Foundation because of these operational costs. Critical manpower shortages was also a factor-this includes the men to set up the event, RSO's, scorers, and other personal. It was estimated that we would need nearly forty able bodied men to operate this years event.

**Bruce Long** is leading a committee looking at other fund raising events to continue our support of the Green Beret Foundation. We are very hopeful to achieve this prior to the end of the year.

Chapter 78 wishes to thank all members who supported the 2014 ROTC Awards Program. Chairman **Ed Barrett** organized the teams for the four universities, UCLA, USC, CSUF and Claremont McKenna. In this issue you will see a letter to Ed from UCLA Cadet **Timu Saari**. The letter states it all — why we support these programs. ❖

Lonny Holmes  
Sentinel Editor  
SFA C-78

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**COVER PHOTO:** Gene Williams, Lonny Holmes, Jack Williams Memorial Day 2014, Washington, D.C.

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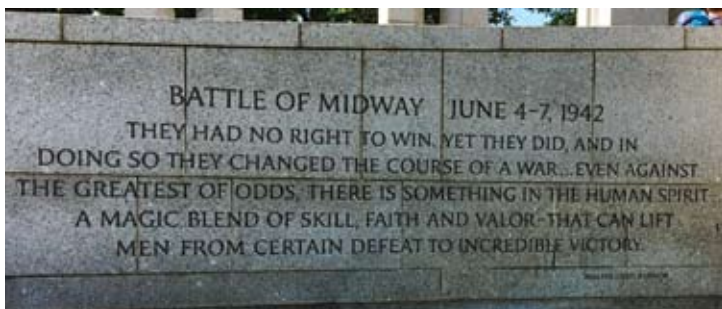


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# THE PRESIDENTS PAGE



**Bruce Long**  
President SFA 78

## PRESIDENTS COLUMN JUNE 2014

We had another GREAT Day at the Range on Saturday May 10th, too bad we had such a small turn out of only five (5) Chapter members.

We did have two (2) guests from Company A, 5th Bn 19th SF Group, who not only shot, but filled out applications for membership to Chapter 78.

Tom (our VP) did a great job of preparing lunch and overall coordination of the shooting event.

GREAT job Tom!

No meeting in June as we are dark for the SF convention in SC.

Our next meeting will be on July 12th 1000 hrs at the Hut (Yacht Club Bldg) located just west of the American Legion Post 291 and inside their parking lot.

Some of you may already know but, Steve Spriggs who was running for Post Commander lost the race but, I have good intelligence that the election will be challenged on legal grounds.

As most of you know the GBSC for 2014 has been cancelled due to expense and manpower. Other avenues are being pursued for fundraising. Further discussions will be held at our July meeting.

## UNCLASSIFIED INTEL

(Continuation from the May 2014 President's Column)

***Theft of passports in Thailand – and particularly in Phuket – is a 'regular occurrence'***

There is, of course, no evidence that [Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370](#), which disappeared Friday 7 March just over an hour into its flight from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to Beijing, was the victim of a terror attack. But news that two of the passengers on the flight were travelling on passports stolen in Thailand – one belonging to Italian Luigi Maraldi, who lost it last August when he left it as collateral for a motorbike rented in Phuket, and the other to Austrian Christian Kozel, who reported his lost in the same area some 18 months earlier – has focused attention on the country's booming trade in stolen and falsified passports.

Some, certainly, have ended up in the hands of terrorists. In June

2012, the month that Butt was sentenced to 15 years in jail, the DSI smashed another major counterfeiting syndicate, this one accused of issuing some 3,000 falsified passports and visas over the five years of its existence, two of them to Iranians [convicted of carrying out a series of botched bomb attacks in Bangkok in February 2012, supposedly aimed at Israeli diplomats](#). (The counterfeiting gang's alleged ringleader, Iranian-born Seyed Paknejad, 45, was arrested but jumped bail and fled, on a fake Turkish passport, to Malaysia – where he was re-arrested last year carrying a startling [19 stolen New Zealand passports](#). Thailand has subsequently asked for his extradition.)

The gangs have targeted Thailand mainly because of the very large numbers of European, US and Australian holidaymakers who travel there every year. But the Bangkok Post's interview with an unnamed DSI agent quoted him as saying the country was also attractive because it is relatively easy to enter and leave; "you can negotiate with some law enforcement people"; and – importantly – some local officials have not tended to see the forgery of foreign (as opposed to Thai) passports as a particularly serious offence.

The business [reportedly originated](#) in the early 80s, when Thai criminal gangs employed hotel staff, tour guides and sex workers to steal not just tourists' traveller's cheques but also their passports, without which cheques could not be cashed. Once credit cards started replacing traveller's cheques, the gangs used the expertise they had already gained in the sophisticated techniques of document falsification to become full-service fake document providers, importing passports, driving licences and ID cards from abroad, doctoring them, and selling to anyone prepared to pay.

***Two passengers on Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 were travelling on passports stolen in Thailand***

One DSI agent, Tinawut Siilapat [told Bangkok expat magazine The Big Chilli](#) in 2012 that "around 20" groups, often headed by criminals from south Asia or the Middle East, are currently engaged in various forms of passport fraud in Thailand. They use passports stolen in Thailand but also in countries such as Spain, France and Belgium, add new photographs, data pages and signatures, and sell to customers who either travel to Thailand to buy the documents or send couriers. Almost all the passports are used to commit crimes outside Thailand, Tinawut told the magazine.

He said an undoctored stolen passport – increasingly used by the gangs, who are now dealing in such high volumes that

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## PRESIDENTS PAGE CONTINUED

they can afford simply to wait until a potential client shows up of approximately the right age and appearance – typically sells for between \$1,500 and \$3,000, depending on its condition, nationality, and the number of years it has left to run. Italian, British, Spanish and other European passports fetch about \$1,000, Tinawut said, while Israeli passports cost \$1,500-\$2,000 and Canadian can go for up to \$3,000.

“There is still huge demand for passports, and identity fraud is a tool to support other criminal activities,” Tinawut said. “We are talking about a very lucrative revenue source for criminal organizations.” A Hong Kong-based risk consultant, Steve Vickers, confirmed to the Wall Street Journal that “counterfeiting of all sorts of identifications is very widespread, particularly out of Thailand. So it’s pretty easy to pick up a stolen or a counterfeit passport.”

Visitors to the south-east Asian country would certainly be advised to watch out for their passports. According to the Foreign Office, some 600 British passports were stolen there in 2012-13, making it the seventh most likely country to lose a British passport (revealingly, in light of Butt’s connections, the country that tops the list is Spain, where more than 5,600 British passports were reported missing last year). A former Australian consul, Larry Cunningham, told the South China Morning Post that the theft of passports in Thailand – and particularly in Phuket – is a “regular occurrence”.

Some passports were certainly lost, Cunningham said, “falling out of pockets or being genuinely misplaced. But there were also substantial incidents of passports being stolen.” A quick scroll through travellers’ internet forums, such as [Lonely Planet](#), shows countless anguished stories of passports lost and presumed stolen – often from car and motorbike rental agencies. When Maraldi, who called his family to tell them reports of his death on Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 had been greatly exaggerated, asked the bike shop where he had left it for his passport back, he was told it had already been handed over to an Italian man who “said Mr Maraldi was his husband”.

But a stolen and doctored passport will only work as a travel document if nobody checks it. Both Kozel and Maraldi reported their passports as stolen and the thefts were duly recorded in Interpol’s database of Lost and Stolen Travel Documents (LSTD). Created after the September 11, 2001 terror attack on New York and Washington, the LSTD database now has some 40m entries. The inter-governmental police cooperation organization says [this weekend](#) it is searched more than 800m times a year, mainly by the US, which accessed it 250m times, the UK (120m) and the UAE (50m).

***‘Last year, passengers were able to board planes more than a billion times without having their passports screened against Interpol’s databases’***

Authorities in many other countries, however, appear to search the database far less often, or not at all.

“Last year,” the agency said, “passengers were able to board planes more than a billion times without having their passports screened against Interpol’s databases ... Unfortunately, few member countries systematically search these databases to determine whether a passenger is using a stolen or lost travel document to board a plane.” Interpol said that in the case of Flight MH370: “No checks of the stolen Austrian and Italian passports were made by any country between the time they were entered into Interpol’s database and the departure of the flight.”

International border control authorities were last reminded to tighten up procedures in 2010, when an Air India Express flight crashed on landing in Mangalore and it transpired that 10 of the 158 passengers and crew on board – all of whom were killed – had been travelling on forged or stolen documents, leading to serious concerns about security checks in Dubai, where the flight originated. Ronald Noble, Interpol’s secretary general, was scathing this weekend about the evident lack of any such checks when passengers boarded Flight MH370.

“Whilst it is too soon to speculate about any connection between these stolen passports and the missing plane, it is clearly of great concern that any passenger was able to board an international flight using a stolen passport listed in Interpol’s databases,” Noble said.

“For years, Interpol has asked why countries should wait for a tragedy to put prudent security measures in place at borders and boarding gates. Now we have a real case where the world is speculating whether the stolen passport holders were terrorists, while Interpol is asking why only a handful of countries are taking care to make sure that persons possessing stolen passports are not boarding international flights.

“If Malaysia Airlines and all airlines worldwide were able to check the passport details of prospective passengers against Interpol’s database, we would not have to speculate.”

Bruce D Long  
President  
SGM, SF (Ret)  
SFA Chapter 78

# SF Chapter 78 5th Annual Day at the Range and BBQ at the Burbank Revolver and Rifle Club

A special thanks to Tom Redfern, a long standing Chapter member (and a mighty fine BBQ chef!). Tom has made all the arrangements for the event for the past five years.



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- 1 Tom Redfern, Day at the Range sponsor
- 2 SFC Boodaghian of the 19th SFG (A) and Terry Cagnolatti
- 3 Ed Barrett
- 4 Juliette Cagnolatti
- 5 Cora Keele firing a Glock. Cora took lessons and is good!
- 6 Thomas Tringali of Grid 35
- 7 Terry Cagnolatti, friend, Brad Welker and Gary McNamara
- 8 Bruce Long, Dewy, Mike and Cora Keele
- 9 Brad Welker, on left, and friends



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# TIGER THE LURP DOG

## KENN MILLER'S NOVEL OF THE VIETNAM WAR

By Major Jim Morris

This cannot properly be called a review. A review is a description of and verdict on an assigned volume by an anonymous drone. This is not that. Kenn Miller may or may not be my best friend, but he is certainly in the top five, and has been for twenty-four years. But, you should know, Tiger the Lurp Dog was my favorite Vietnam novel for quite a while before we met, and now it's available again, as an ebook.

I was originally turned on to it by Bob McNeely, who was for six years Bill Clinton's chief photographer in the White House, but before that was an Army Ranger in Vietnam. He, being an avid reader of the New York Times literary supplement, which gave Tiger a favorable, though somewhat clueless review, told me about the book shortly after it was released. He said it was good, and I read it and it was not only good, it blew me away.

It's fairly short, pretty simple. It's primarily about two young guys, Mopar and Marvel Kim, about nineteen, members of a LRRP team in a unit that is not identified, but which bears a remarkable resemblance to the LRRP platoon of the 1st Bde, 101st Airborne Division, before the rest of the division came to Vietnam and the platoon turned into a company.

At the start of the book, Mopar and Marvel Kim are the only members of team 2-4, the others being recently deceased. The book opens as their new team leader, a SSG Wolverine, transfers over from Special Forces, much to Mopar's disgust. He thought he was going to pick up another stripe and become team leader. Mopar is easily disgusted, and not shy about it.

The structure of the book is simple. It consists of two operations separated by an interlude. On the first, 2-4, operating as a four-man team, having picked up a fervently anti-comunista Cuban named Gonzales, runs a no-contact patrol, but get to listen to their friend J.D.'s team get wiped out on the radio, unable to do anything about it.

One of the wonderful things about Tiger is that it's pretty realistic, but not exactly. There is a subtle edge of satire about it. The chaplain, for instance, hits every cliché in his funeral oration for J.D.'s team and the survivors of the platoon have no hesitance in calling bullshit on him. Then Mopar goes home on extension leave, Marvel Kim goes off to the MACV Recondo School, where he is honor graduate and wins the commando dagger, thought by Mopar to be bad luck, but by Marvel to be good luck for Koreans; he is Korean and a connoisseur of luck. And the general sends the Bde MPs to kill all the units' pets because he is afraid of rabies. Pappy Stagg, the LRRP platoon sergeant spirits Tiger away

to a nearby Special Forces camp, and the longest sequence in the book is of Tiger working his way through a very well-plotted defensive perimeter to go home, bets being taken the whole time by the SF team, the Vietnamese, and Nung strikers as to whether he makes it or not.

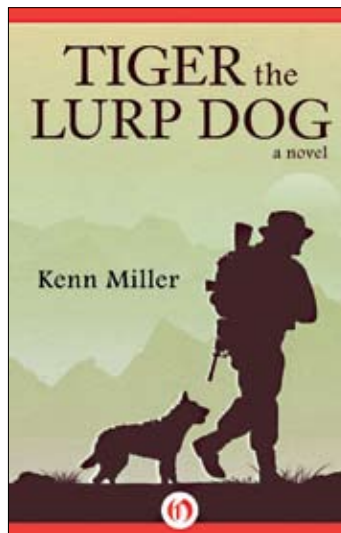
Things at home are not hunky-dory and Mopar comes back early, just in time to catch the patrol into J.D.'s AO to see if they can find some evidence that the team is dead and not captured, so the families can have peace and the insurance money. Oh, and to see if the NVA are still there, which they are.

I'm not going to describe that patrol, except that the ending breaks my heart, every time.

Some months after I read Tiger, Miller and I became phone buddies when he submitted a piece to an adventure magazine I edited in New York, and I asked him if he had written Tiger. Kenn Miller is a common name, but the two-n spelling is not. He had. He then inquired if I was the Jim Morris who had written War Story, and I confessed that I was. A few years later I moved to LA and called him, and the rest, as they say, is a lot of lunch and beer.

For a time I thought Tiger might be replaced as my favorite Vietnam novel by one Miller recommended, The Sorrow of War by Bao Ninh, which is a very good book. But I finally realized

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Kenn Miller, LRRP, LRP Ranger, SF 101st on right

# MEMORIAL DAY 2014

CHAPTER 78 MEMBERS ATTEND CEREMONIES IN WASHINGTON DC



1 Gene Williams, Lonny Holmes, Jack Williams

2 Participant of the 27th Annual Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Rally.

3 Washington Monument on the National Mall on Memorial Day

4 Rolling Thunder motorcycle

5 Lonny Holmes, SF CSM Gary L. Baura, Gene Williams, SF CSM Robert "Bobbie" Hall, Jack Williams

Photo below: Sunrise on Memorial Day 2014



# ROTC CADET'S LETTER OF APPRECIATION



Mark Miller, UCLA ROTC Cadet Saari and Kenn Miller

Dear Mr. Ed Barrett

I want to thank you for the immense honor of receiving the Certificate of Excellence from the Chapter 78 Special Forces Association. I carry my challenge coin around with me everywhere to remind me to strive for excellence in every situation. Thank you for the medal as well. I received it yesterday. And thank you for the inspiring words! I hope to become a Special Operations Doctor.

I consider it such a privilege, being a part of UCLA ROTC, to be able to go to college now and one day serve my country as an Officer. I will continue to work hard to be a better leader each day as I represent the US ARMY in whatever way I can, to the best of my ability. May God be with you and your family.

Very Respectfully,  
Cadet Corporal Timu Saari

Reprinted with the Permission of Ed Barrett

## No June Chapter Meeting

**Next meeting scheduled  
July 12th 1000 hrs  
at the Hut (Yacht Club Bldg)**

**Located just west of the  
American Legion Post 291  
and inside their parking lot.**

## TIGER THE LURP DOG CONTINUED

that it is not as good as Tiger. I had been seduced by the novelty of a good book from an NVA perspective. But it has wonderful moments.

My favorite is near the end when the protagonist is going back to Hanoi on a train and cadres come down the aisle explaining to the returning heroes the party line on the war. One of them remarks (and I'm paraphrasing) "If the Americans are such lousy soldiers, where's my fucking leg?"

And I can't end this without mentioning that Miller is also an author of my favorite non-fiction work (that I did not write myself) on the Vietnam War, Six Silent Men. It's a three volume history of the three incarnations of the 101st LRRPs, one volume on the 1/101 LRRP by Rey Martinez, Miller's second volume on F/58 LRP, and Gary Linderer's volume on L/75 Rangers. I know of no other work of military history like it. No self-serving general's memoir here. None of these guys were more than an E-6. If something was good they say so. If something, or somebody, sucked, they say so. It's terrific.

But Tiger is the best. Tiger is great.

PERMISSION TO REPRINT: Granted from Major Jim Morris. March 7, 2014. Jim Morris retired as a major from the U.S. Army Special Forces having served three tours in Vietnam earning four Purple Hearts. After retiring from the Army he became a journalist and covered wars in Cambodia, Thailand, El Salvador, Lebanon and Israel for Rolling Stone, Soldier of Fortune, Esquire and the Saturday Evening Post. Major Morris books include; War Story, The Devil's Secret Name and Fighting Men.