

**THE JOHN WAYNE/BOB SALZMAN MEMORIAL CHAPTER FLORIDA
CHAPTER XXI SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION**

Volume LVIII April 2024 NR 4

Website: <http://specialforceschapter21florida.weebly.com/>



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President's Comments - John Vislosky

Happy (Belated) Easter! I trust everyone is well. This month the Chapter XXI Board focused on meeting locations, recruitment of new members, our ROTC and Jr ROTC and program and ensuring our Chapter is current within the SFA National Technology site - *Team Room*.

- Meetings and location: This continues to be a challenge. More below.
- Recruitment of new members. Richard (Whit) Whitman has done a great job of snagging retired SF Warriors who recently moved to Florida. He has an uncanny ability to convince them to affiliate with Chapter XXI. Moreover, we can now leverage the data in the National SFA site, "Team Room" to find unaffiliated SFA members in Florida and then send Whit in to sign them up with Chapter XXI!
- ROTC and Jr ROTC in Florida. Steve Epkins (Colonel SF Retired) has sent out over 50 SFA Chapter XXI Certificates and Coins in support of their ROTC programs. These Certificates and Coins are presented to the Top ROTC Graduates at each school. Steve and others also attend ceremonies at the Florida Schools to personally present the Certificates. If you are interested in presenting the Certificates at a local Florida school, please contact Steve at EMAIL: sepkins@proton.me .

Donation(s)

We wish to Thank

- Ingrid Luff-Currier for her kind donation of \$150!

Next Meeting(s)

TBD: We continue to be on the lookout for a permanent meeting site. Richard Whitman and I contacted more than 30 hotels. Prices for rooms are outrageous on the eastern coast (Cape Canaveral and Melbourne) of Florida with little to no flexibility in room rates, accommodating our meetings and or having a hospitality room.

BUT.... with a never say "QUIT", SF attitude, we continue to explore creative options. Such as: reducing the frequency of meetings; perhaps adding in a Saturday, one-day, Chapter meeting and luncheon; etc.

Please continue to be patient, we continue to work on this puzzle.....

Health & Welfare

- Judy Drewry sends us an update on Ray: “After Ray's carotid artery surgery on February 1st, he was accepted at Encompass, a high intensity rehab facility in Ocala. Unfortunately, they were having a flu epidemic and after 2 days of therapy, they put him in isolation for 10 days, even though he had no symptoms. He came home Feb 19th and has been regaining his strength since then. I must say that the VA has been wonderful to us. Thank you to all those who have sent cards, called, and even come to visit. And a blessed Resurrection Day on Sunday! “
- Melvin Morris (CMoH): I am happy to announce that Melvin is back home and recovering nicely. He is in good spirits lovingly surrounded by his wife and family.



Melvin's return home with his wife, Maurice.

Special Announcement about a Gulf War Ceremony

Bonnie Cooper who does all social media for the SFA National and SOA and member of SFA Chapter 85 sends out a special announcement:

The Florida Gulf War on Terrorism Memorial dedication ceremony will be 1200 Hours, Saturday, April 20, 2024, at Veterans Park, Rivergate, 2200 SE Veterans Memorial Parkway, Port Saint Lucie, FL 34952

Bonnie said Chapter 85 will be attending in force, and we are sponsoring an active-duty member of the 5th Group so they can attend. Also working on getting an active-duty 7th Group member to come. SOCOM, all members of Congress from Florida and Gold Star family members, etc., have been invited.

Chapter XXI should also make a good showing. Uniform is Berets, Regimental Ties and Hunter Green SF Sports Coat. Ladies wear what you feel appropriate for the ceremony—you always look lovely anyway. So, mark your calendars for 20 April!!!



For more information see:
<https://iawmf.org>

Special Announcement on Vietnam POWs and MIAs

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN
PRISONERS & MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
5673 COLUMBIA PIKE, SUITE 100, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041
PH: 703/465-7432 www.pow-miafamilies.org FAX: 703/465-7433

ABBREVIATED LEAGUE DELEGATION TRIP REPORT

March 27, 2024

Ann Mills-Griffiths, Chairman of the Board

The League Delegation's recent visit to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia took place from February 25 – March 14, 2024. We deeply appreciated the incredible policy and logistics support provided by the Defense Intelligence Agency and their Defense Attachés and Stony Beach Specialists in each country. Especially commendable is Stony Beach Operations Director & Cambodia Specialist Eric Phillips who was with us at every turn, in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

On the heels of upgraded bilateral relations with Vietnam to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, our visit to Hanoi was timely, as was the transition within the League and a new generation of leaders in Cambodia. The atmosphere and environment seemed to fall into place for utilizing League Advisor Dr. Jay Veith's Intelligence Assessment to get the attention of Vietnam and DPAA. It did – positively with Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security (MPS), Minister To Lam, his Deputy LTG Quang, and the Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP).

Not so with DPAA, though the League had requested such a study for years! Further, in-country DPAA personnel assigned to Detachments 1, 2 and 3 were instructed not to attend any League-scheduled meetings in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia. This DPAA leadership decision undermined priority and visibility on the accounting mission, consistently recognized as foundational by the Vietnamese, and denied our on-the-ground DPAA personnel the opportunity to meet senior officials.

From MPS and VNOSMP, we obtained specific pledges of cooperation, including on our proposal of a three-man team (one each Stony Beach, VNOSMP and DPAA) working year-round to expand the planned quarterly Joint Field Activities (JFAs). This longtime DIA/League objective now has potential. During our very positive meeting on March 13th with MPS, Minister To Lam arrived unexpectedly and reinforced the positive pledges made. Until MPS's pledge to consider our proposal, cooperation by Vietnam had been disappointing despite their known control of 85-90% of loss sites of all still missing and unaccounted-for Vietnam War Veterans.

In Cambodia, new Prime Minister Hun Manet indicated full cooperation will continue, as will direction by long-time POW/MIA Committee Chairman General Pol Saroeun, aided by another old friend and supporter, H.E. Sieng Lapresse. We couldn't ask for more in Cambodia, including an ongoing underwater partnership recovery. We passed along our best wishes to PM Hun Manet's father, former PM Hun Sen, and the other familiar fathers whose sons are now also designated Ministers.

A cordial, productive meeting on March 4th with Lao Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Saleumxay Kommasith brought his pledge to quickly issue a simple legal document to protect our DPAA and DIA/Stony Beach POW/MIA accounting specialists. This small corrective step has yet to be taken, likely due to too low-level staff policy attention, but we're cautiously optimistic about positive results coming soon. New US Ambassador to Laos Heather Variava has meetings this week with Deputy Minister Saleumxay and the Lao Deputy Minister of Defense. Laos already has set ongoing Stony Beach investigations year-round to take advantage of opportunities that arise during DPAA-scheduled Joint Field Activities.

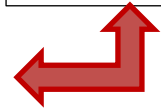
A fuller, more descriptive League Delegation Trip Report will be completed soon, posted on-line, and distributed by USPS mail to all League members.

SF/Ranger Luncheons

Cape Canaveral SF/Ranger: Held monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at 1130 Hours ET at Grills Seafood Deck and Tiki Bar, 500 Glen Cheek Drive, Cape Canaveral, FL. The next one is 30 April.



Richard Whitman
Chapter XXI VP -
hard at work
recruiting members.



St Petersburg SF/Ranger: Held Monthly on the 1st Saturday of every month at The Harbor Master @ Bay Pines Marina, 4999 Harbor Lights Drive, Seminole FL 33706. The next one is 6 April.

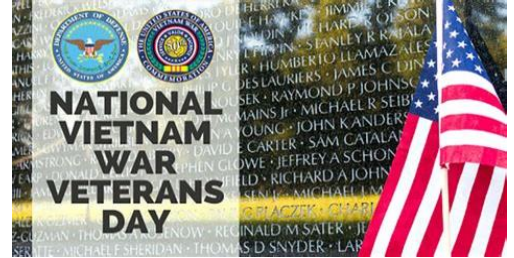
 Tampa, Clearwater,
St. Petersburg Area 
RANGERS SPECIAL FORCES
Saturday, March 2, 2024
@ 11:30 am
The Harbor Master
@ Bay Pines Marina
4999 Harbor Lights Dr.
Seminole, FL 33706
Fresh Seafood / Craft Beers / Music /
Waterfront Dig / Boat Docking
727-256-3383
www.theharbormaster.com
RLTW DOL

Upcoming SFA & SOA Events 2024



Annually the 25th of March has been designated National Medal of Honor Day



Annually the 29th of March has been designated National Vietnam War Veterans Day

April:

- 5 April: Gold Star Wives Day
- 9 April: National Former POW Recognition Day
- 10 April, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Roger Donlon *Celebration of Life* will be held on April 10, 2024, beginning at 1300 hours at the Frontier Conference Center, 350 Biddle Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, KS. Burial service to follow at Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery.
- 12-14 Apr: Best Ranger Competition. [Learn More](#).
- 11-14 April: Air Commando Association Reunion Banquet Fort Walton Beach, FL. [Learn More](#)
- 15 April: Deadline for submission to the SOA Scholarship program
- **20 April: Gulf War on Terrorism Memorial dedication, Port St Lucie FL (see above)**
- 20 April: B/3/20th SFG(A) Annual Reunion
- 25 or 26 April: DMOR inductee ceremony, Fort Liberty, (formally known as Fort Bragg)

May 8-11, 2024: Special Operations Forces (SOF Week); Tampa FL

September 17-22, 2024: 5th SFG(A) Reunion; Clarksville, TN

October 16-19, 2024: Special Operations Association Reunion (SOAR 60th Anniversary); Orleans Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, NV

October 22-25, 2024

[SFA Caribbean Cruise and Annual Convention](#)

Special Forces Association – Tampa, Florida

Chapter XXI Quartermaster

Some great items available through our Chapter XXI Quartermaster. This month's specials are:



SF Zipper Pull
\$7.00 plus \$5.00 postage



SF Eyeglasses Cleaning Cloth
\$7.00 plus \$5.00 postage



SF Black License Plate Frame
\$7.00 plus \$6.00 postage



SF Hat
\$10.00 plus \$8.00 postage



SF Letter Opener
\$20.00 plus \$6.00 postage



SF Crest Pin
\$7.00 plus \$5.00 postage

Make checks payable to SFA Chapter 21
Mail checks to:
Susan Micelli
4243 McCorvey Rd
Deland, FL 32724

Chapter XXI Education Grant Program

Chapter XXI has created a program to provide limited financial aid to direct dependents of current active members, in good standing, who are attending accredited educational institutions. The Board of Directors has formed the Education Grant Committee which has finalized the Grant process, will oversee the deployment of the program, and manage the application and awarding process.

Attached to this Newsletter are two documents: 1) Overview of the Education Grant Program and 2) a Blank Application form. All active Chapter members, in good standing, are encouraged to forward the application to their descendants who meet the Program requirements. After the applicant completes their portion of the form, it is then returned to their sponsor who would then complete the sponsor endorsement section. Please note that Chapter members are required to complete their portion of the application and forward it to the Chapter no later than the stated **deadline, 31 May 2024**. Completed applications should be mailed to: Philip Devon, Treasurer, SFA Chapter 21, 4313 North Course LN, Avon Park, FL 33825.

If you have any questions regarding the Education Grant Program, please email your questions to: Philip Devon, email address: pnjdevon@gmail.com

For more information, please see the Educational Grant Objective, Criteria and Application below:

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER XXI EDUCATION GRANT

Objective of the Education Grant-

Create a source of contributing funds to the achievement of academic goals for members of Chapter XXI, SFA and their descendants. Amount of Education Grant should be calculated to cover the expense for textbooks and related items necessary for one year of college education.

Program Overview-

1. Funding - Use Chapter XXI existing General Fund plus any funds raised/donated specifically for the Education Grant.
2. Budget - \$500 per recipient, target of at least 2 recipients per year.
3. Criteria - Candidates for the Grant must be active members or direct descendants (children, stepchildren, grandchildren, great-grandchildren) of existing active members of Chapter XXI. Education Grants will be awarded based upon merit (grades), need (income), and evidence of leadership and participation in school, community, and volunteer activities.
4. Application - Candidates must provide the completed application form by the stated annual deadline of 31 May.
5. Selection of Awardees – Current elected Chapter Board of Directors will appoint an Education Grant Committee to review applications received and select the annual winners using an established grading evaluation criterion (i.e., points for grades, points for need, points for participation in leadership and activities).
6. Winners of the Education Grant will be announced and awarded by the first week in August and recipients will receive a formal announcement and check via mail.

Special Forces Association Chapter XXI Education Grant Application

Section 1: Applicant Information (Please print)

Date _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Day Phone # _____ Email _____

FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025

School Currently Attending _____ Current GPA _____ When will you Graduate? _____

School You Plan to Attend _____ Anticipated Start Date _____

Intended Major or Area of Interest _____

What is Your Long-Term Career Goal? _____

Your Most Important Personal Achievements **Last 12 Months** (Leadership Positions, Community Service, Awards, Scholarships, etc.) _____

What Else Should We know About You? _____

If You are Awarded a Grant, How Will You Use the Money? _____

Signature of Applicant _____

Section 2: Chapter XXI Member Sponsor for the Applicant

Name _____ SFA Member # _____ Member Relationship to Applicant _____

Why Do You Believe that the Applicant Should Receive the Chapter XXI Education Grant? –

(attach additional sheets if necessary)

Signature of Member Sponsor _____