



# GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV

*The Alamo Chapter*

P.O. BOX 33782 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78265-3782

Issue #6-19

June 2019

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**By-Laws:** Bill Smith  
**Nominations:** Chuck Rose  
**JROTC Awards:** Juan Lopez  
**Scholarships:** Pat Connolly  
**Wounded Warriors:** J.W. Martin  
**FSH Cemetery Events:** Raul de la Garza  
**Canyon Lake Picnic:** Raul de la Garza  
**Dick's Fund Raiser:** Fred Solis  
**Christmas Banquet:** Bill Smith  
**Budget Committee:** Buddy Gee  
**Chapter Memorial Svc:** J.W. Martin

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS



**May 30 — SFA June Board Meeting**

1400—VFW Post 8541, 2222 Austin Highway

**June 1 — Membership Meeting**

1200 — noon meal served

1300 — Business meeting

**June 14 — Flag Day & Army Birthday**

JROTC award presentations continue this month



## DON'T FORGET



• Full registration fee for the SFA National Convention will increase from \$125 to \$150 on June 1. The convention is set for 13-18 August in Charleston, W.V., with a theme honoring Gold Star families. Details at SFA website.

• The new Chapter website is now live online. See Page 4 to learn about the improvements, including your ability to pay online for member dues, Christmas Banquet tickets, etc.

• Sick call every Sunday, 1300 hours at VFW Post 8541. POC is Bill Beall.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### President Sends:

I hope everyone is having a great year. Our Board Meeting will be Thursday 30 May at 1400 hrs. Our member meeting will be Saturday 1 June. I know there will be a lot to cover, as we have not had a meeting in over a month. Lunch will be at 1200 with the meeting beginning at 1300.

I cannot thank Buddy enough for all his hard work with the new website. There are many new features and great additions to assist the chapter with its mission. If you have not already seen the website, I encourage you to go on to the page and check it out.

Canyon Lake was another great success. I want to thank everyone for his or her hard work and effort with the event. Raul with the coordination of the event and Don, Karen, Steve as well as Dion with the cooking.

Our Christmas party is locked in for 14 December. I will have the tickets for sale at our July meeting. Rick Salinas agreed to be the entertainment again this year.

I truly appreciate the team effort of our chapter. Chapter XV is a great chapter due to its members.

I hope everyone stays safe and enjoys their family.



William Smith  
Chapter XV President

*presidentchapterxv@gmail.com*

## \$\$\$ DOLLARS AND CENTS

### Treasurer's Report, May 2019

One of Chapter XV's biggest annual events is the weekend at Canyon Lake. Once again, Raul de la Garza and his team planned and executed a great event that came in under budget. See details in this newsletter.

The final report for Fiesta medal sales is still pending. We have not yet received an accounting of sales at the Fiesta Store.

Congratulations to Gary Waggoner for signing up for life membership. David Leonhardt was the first to renew his membership online in the Chapter's new website. Ted Heckerman also renewed his membership and joined Chapter XV. Thank you both and welcome back into the SFA.

We appreciate the donations from John Rodden and George Garcia, who have standing monthly auto bank

transfers. Bill Smith was the first to test donating online. Thanks for your continued financial support.

A tip of the beret goes to Texas Tech University for renewing their newsletter ad for another year and to Bob Jenkins Pest Control for subscribing to a full page ad. The Chapter officers encourage members and readers to support our advertisers.

This month's expenses were for Canyon Lake, security deposit for the Christmas Banquet at El Tropicano Hotel and website maintenance.

At the June meeting we will vote to approve the Treasurer's reports for April and May. Your vote is appreciated.

Buddy Gee  
Treasurer  
*sgmgee@aol.com*

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# Chapter News



Vice President John Lopez presents award to Cadet 1st Lt. Sam Adame at Reagan High School.



Jose Campos presents award to Cadet 1st Sgt. Aaron Hernandez at Wagner High School.



Navy Cadet Logan Dean accepts award of excellence from Pat Meffert at Smithson Valley High School.



Marine Cadet 1st Lt. Nathan Stroud receives award from Lou Colantoni at New Braunfels High School.

## JROTC Awards presented at 36 high schools

Vice President John Lopez reports that Chapter members have delivered awards to outstanding JROTC cadets from 36 local and area high schools, two more than last year. It's a new record!

John says: "I would like to thank everyone who helped present and/or deliver awards to the schools:

- Bill Martin (Floresville)
- Juan Moya (McAllen)
- Jose Campos (Schertz & Cibolo)
- Raul De La Garza (San Antonio)
- Chris Marshall (San Antonio)
- J.W. Martin (San Antonio)
- Pat Meffert (Spring Branch)
- Lou Colantoni (New Braunfels & Canyon Lake)
- Steve Hermann (Fort Sam Houston)
- Kim Phillips (delivered awards to many local and area schools)

## Five students to receive Chapter scholarship grants

Pat Connolly, chairman of the Scholarship Committee, announced that five applicants have been selected to receive scholarship awards from the Chapter:

- **Antonio J. Dawson** of Helotes, son of Joel Dawson, attending Northwest Vista College.
- Rachel Jimenez** of Clovis NM, granddaughter of Enrique Jimenez Jr., New Mexico University.
- Juan A. Lopez** of San Antonio, a Chapter XV member, attending St. Phillips College.

**Daniel Kremer** of Gladstone MO, grandson of Barry Archer, attending Missouri Western State University  
**Natalia James** of San Antonio, granddaughter of Jose Campos, attending The University of Texas at San Antonio.

The committee recommended \$600 grants to first-time recipients Dawson, Jimenez and Lopez, and \$250 grants to previous recipients Kremer and James. The scholarships will be awarded at the July meeting.

**Bob Jenkins**

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**BOB JENKINS (Ret)**

# Chapter News



**REMEMBERING HEROES:** Once again, members of Chapter XV proudly present the military service flags during Memorial Day ceremony at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Volunteers for the duty were (from left) John Tippy, Bill Smith, Raul de la Garza, John Lopez and Chuck Rose. Other Chapter members attending to lend support included Jose Campos and Edgar Morales. Good job, Guys!  
—Photo by Kim Phillips

## Chapter website is live online

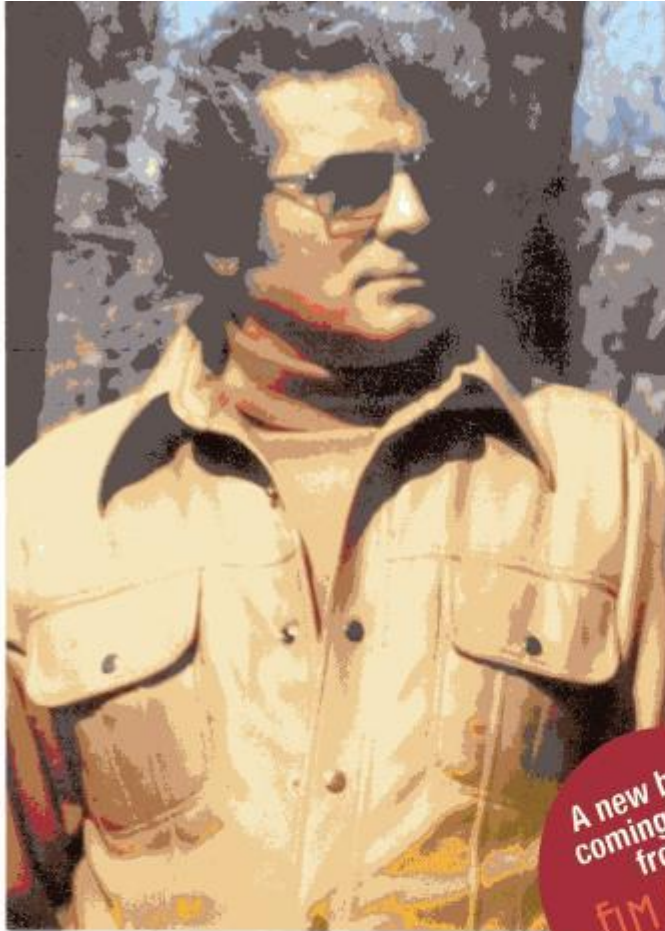
Check it out: [www.sfa-xv.org](http://www.sfa-xv.org).

Members can now renew membership online and pay with a debit or credit card. Events such as Canyon Lake cabins or Christmas Banquet tickets can be paid online. People can make donations online. A Chapter PayPal account has been set up to handle the online transactions, but you don't have to have a PayPal account to use this

service. At checkout, customers are given a choice of how to pay – debit card, credit card or Pay Pal.

We have already received a membership reinstatement and a donation via PayPal.





In World War II he fought with the armies of three different countries.

After that things *really* start to get complicated.

Soldier, resistance fighter, secret agent, inventor and American patriot.

This is his true life story.

# CELLINI

## FREEDOM FIGHTER

BIOGRAPHY of an AMERICAN PATRIOT  
MICK J. PRODGER with TUTUC CELLINI

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Born in New York and raised in Italy, Vito "Tutuc" Cellini went from street gangster to soldier to resistance fighter to secret agent – all before he was twenty-one years of age.

Drafted into the fascist Italian army against his will and sent to the front line, he deserted and joined Tito's Yugoslavian Partisans fighting the Nazis, returning to Italy to join the Allies amid one of the biggest cover-ups of the European war.

He ended the war working covertly with the American OSS (forerunner of the CIA) hunting down criminals and undesirables.

Sailing home to New York in 1948 with a forged Italian passport and just 12 cents in his pocket, he was arrested at Ellis Island. Since then, Cellini's inventiveness, reputation and irrepressible sense of adventure have taken him all over the world, often putting his life in great peril.

Respected by the New York Mafia, Cellini later negotiated with some of the most feared organized crime syndicates in Italy. Nicaragua's President Somoza sought his advice on guerilla warfare and weapons tactics, and while in Nicaragua he was embroiled in the assassination of a high profile journalist and had

to flee for his life.

Cellini has kept Federal Agents informed of credible plots to assassinate known enemies of the United States. He even served for a short time, albeit inadvertently, as bodyguard for a notorious drug lord in Mexico.

He has never been afraid of taking the law into his own hands because, he says, sometimes that is the only way to survive.

His inventions, including the *Cellini Muzzle Brake*, have earned him 19 patents and the undying respect and gratitude of members of the U.S. Special Forces and Law Enforcement. He has been privileged to count some of America's most revered and decorated military heroes among his closest friends.

Cellini is, more than anything, a patriot; a man who puts honor above all. And while some of his adventures make fictional spies and secret agents pale by comparison, unlike his fictitious counterparts, Cellini always remained faithful to one woman.

Now at the age of 94, he finally feels comfortable talking about his life, and he isn't pulling any punches.

The good. The bad. The ugly. The truth.



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Cellini: Freedom Fighter

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# CANYON LAKE WEEKEND 2019

May 17-19, 2019

## WE'RE BAACK!

Chapter XV returned to Canyon Lake for a fun weekend that featured lots of cooking, eating, drinking, boating, singing, dancing and general fooling around.

In right photo, Buddy Gee, Pat Meffert, Merrill Hall and Mike Brown pose with singer Rick Salinas (cowboy hat) in front of main pavilion. Below, Dana Lee arrives on her customized scooter. Card players (l to r) Chris Marshall, Laura Brown, Roger Gee, Karen Hermann and Melissa Alderman while away the afternoon. Bottom left, Tony and Ruth Ann Aquinngoc, Lucy and Jose Campos enjoy each other's company. Bottom right, old-timers Vito Cellini (center), Denyse and Robert Simpson.





# CANYON LAKE (cooking, eating)

May 18, 2019



Chef Don Iverson with apprentice/helper Mandy Terrazas

Steve Hermann grilling chicken



Nguyt Sherman (left) and friends

## THE FOOD WAS EPIC!

On Friday night, we enjoyed our usual fajitas and margaritas. On Saturday, from Nguyt Sherman's eggroll appetizers to Don Iverson's delicious pulled pork sandwiches, grilled pork chops, dogs and burgers — plus awesome sides and desserts brought by the members — it was a picnic for the ages. Later Saturday, Steve Hermann grilled fabulous Thai chicken wings and Dana Lee made sinful loaded mashed potatoes. Then, for the first time on Sunday morning, Chef Don treated us to a full breakfast with eggs cooked-to-order, biscuits and SOS, sweet rolls and coffee. John Lopez even made menudo!



Barry Archer



Mike Brown and Simpson

# CANYON LAKE (singing, dancing, etc.)

## MUSIC!

It was great to have Rick Salinas, the talented country-western performer, provide live music Saturday night. Of course, John Lopez and Chris Marshall couldn't let him sing alone! Members did get into the spirit of the music and danced the night away.

When Rick wasn't playing, we had our own deejays running the virtual juke box — John, Chris and Mario Guerra.

Below, the dancers are Dion and Delia Popoy, John Lopez and Kim Phillips, Susan and Chris Marshall, Barry and Iris Archer. Bottom row: The music gets Denyse and Sharon to their feet; anonymous dancers give us a rear view.



# CANYON LAKE

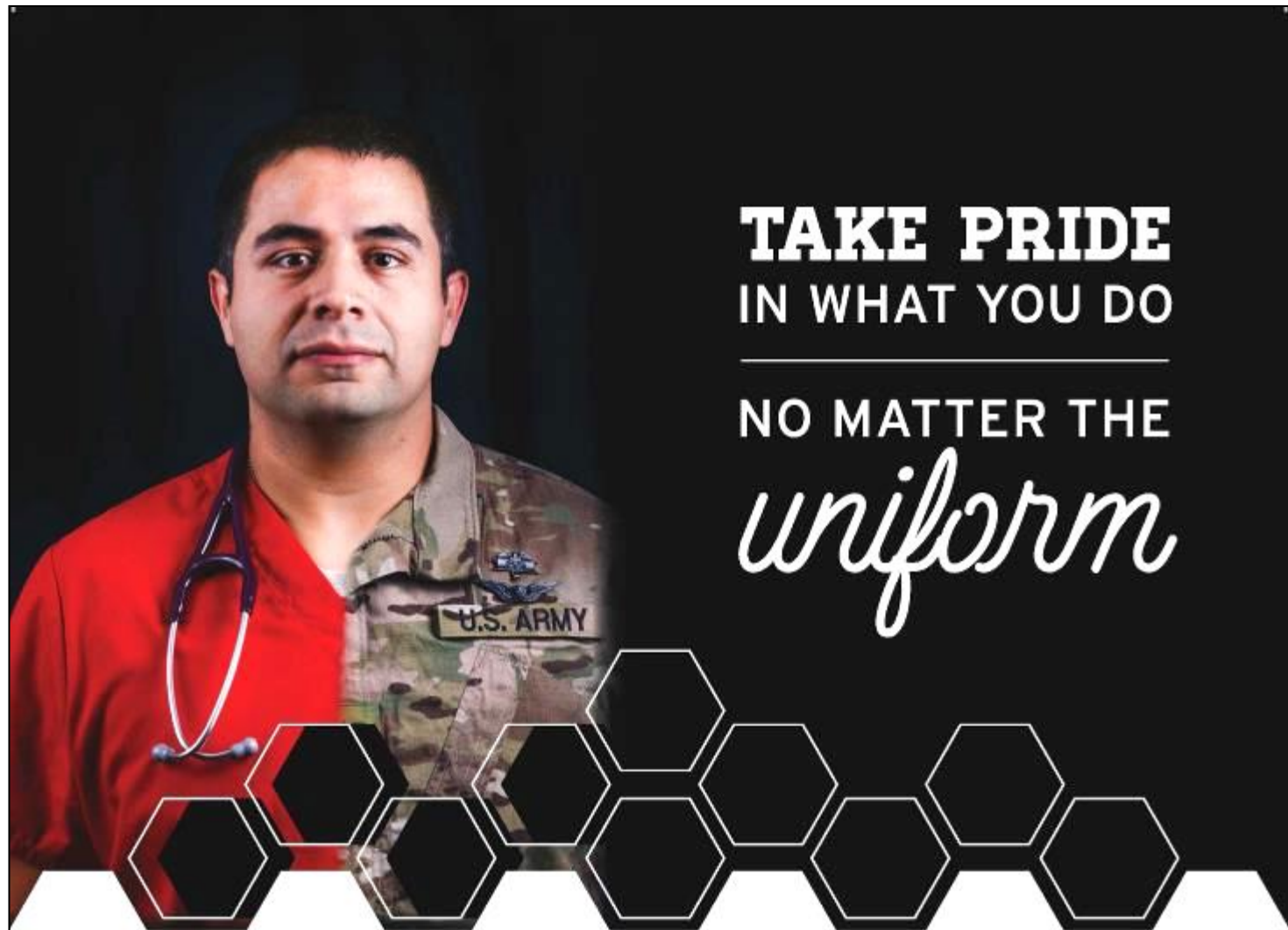
## JUST FOOLIN' AROUND

Dion Popoy brought his bicycle and his spooky mask (we hear he got it in Belize.) Several members brought their well-behaved dogs and even better-behaved kids. John Lopez rented a boat and took us out for a ride. (That's him and Denyse Simpson in right photo. At left is Canyon Lake coordinator Raul de la Garza.)

Mike Brown donated an extra keg. Pat Connolly secured a cutout board of Budweiser astronauts, so everybody mugged for the cameras.

Raul and John and Merrill Hall did a great job getting everything ready for the weekend. After missing Canyon Lake last year, we more than made up for it in 2019. Good weather, good people, good times!





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**NO MATTER THE  
*uniform***

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## 2ND ANNUAL CHAPTER CRUISE



**BEACH TIME:** Above, Karen & Steve Hermann and Mary Meffert relaxing on a Cozumel beach. At left, John wears his new sombrero at Señor Frog's in downtown Cozumel; Kim models her new T-shirt at Gilhooly's Oyster Bar in San Leon.

Speaking of tees, all the members of the group below signed a Chapter XV shirt to add to the impressive collection at Rasta's Jamaican-theme beach bar, which is located on the "wild side" of the island of Cozumel. At right, Merrill and John pin up the shirt in a highly visible spot upstairs.

If you go to Rasta's, sign the shirt!



# 2ND ANNUAL CHAPTER CRUISE

## Our Special Forces guys were really ‘special’

By SHARON GEE

Our second annual Chapter Cruise was a blast. Everyone had a great time on the splendid beaches of Cozumel and Belize. Our group of 43 people took full advantage of the *Carnival Vista’s* many amenities, including an on-board brewpub. (Chuck Rose, John Lopez, you are karaoke superstars!) Karen Hermann ran interference for us on all manner of issues, proving herself a treasure in the world of cruising.

**But this report is really for the people who were NOT on the cruise. It is about the Military Appreciation Day hosted by the ship and attended by around 500 people. In that large auditorium on the high seas, Chapter XV did itself proud!**

**T**he ship’s cruise director led us in singing the National Anthem and all the military service songs. Then he opened the floor to an “open forum” in which people from all walks of life expressed their appreciation for service members – sons, daughters, fathers or brothers, friends or patients who had served in Afghanistan, Iran, Vietnam. These were short but heartfelt stories of injury, death and near-death, love and sacrifice at home.

Then the microphone came around to the area where our Chapter members were seated. First, Chuck Rose gave an extemporaneous introduction of Chapter XV and our oldest member, Vito Cellini. In a few well-chosen words, he brought



Chapter members Vito Cellini (left) and Huong “Robbie” Le

the audience to its feet with a standing ovation for Vito, the only World War II veteran in the crowd.

**N**ext, Buddy Gee introduced Chapter member Huong Le, who was a combat interpreter for the Special Forces in Vietnam and, after four years in a North Vietnamese prison camp, made his way to Dallas and a successful career. Another big ovation.

Finally, Merrill Hall took the mic and asked for Korean War veterans to stand (The only one, Air Force veteran Elliott Johnson, was a member of our cruise group), and then gave all Vietnam veterans in the audience a chance to stand and be appreciated.

It was a situation where anyone could see that Special Forces are truly “special.” For sure, we all were proud to be part of that group in that auditorium on that day.



**Bloody Mary Morning aboard Carnival Vista (from left): Leida Wurst, Chris Wurst, Jeff Dahlby, JR and Ann Jones, Monica Dahlby, Claudia Flores, Lisa Estrada and Mo, Delia Popoy, John Lopez and Dion Popoy.**



# Will you answer the call again?

June has a few holidays and remembrances that are important to the American veteran. The US Army Birthday is June 14, which also happens to be Flag Day. The other is D-Day on June 6, which seems to get the majority of the public's attention when it comes to World War II. So much so that one could not blame the average person on the street if he or she believed that D-Day was the start of the war.

Of course the War – regarding direct US Combat action – began with the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. U.S. forces almost immediately entered into combat in the Pacific Theater. U.S. forces entered into direct combat against the Axis powers in North Africa almost one year later. Shortly thereafter, in July of 1943, the ground campaign in Italy began. The United States had been fighting incredible battles for over two and a half years before D-Day, but D-Day is what has captured the public's imagination.

We know, however, it is not the one who gets the most attention that necessarily gets the job done. Without taking anything away from the importance of those who took part in the Normandy Invasion, they would not have won the war by themselves. The reality of German and Italian forces already weakened by the campaigns in Africa and Italy played a part. The coordinated efforts of the many different Resistance factions and the OSS were a critical part of winning the war in general and that of D-Day in specific. These and other factors which contributed to the mission of defeating the Axis were all vital

parts of the effort and the victory – even when their contributions were not (or could not be) openly recognized.

There is a similar situation within the Kingdom of God. People often dismiss their own importance as a non-contributor. The focus is on priests, pastors and preachers. The missionaries and the particularly prayerful also get some attention. But the reality is the Kingdom needs all people to make many different contributions in the mission to redeem the world. Jesus declared His mission when He stated that God the Father had anointed Him "to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).

Those alive today are called to continue this mission of Christ, and you have an important part of this mission. "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... For the body does not consist of one member but of many... If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). You answered the call to Liberate the Oppressed before. Will you answer the call again?

Buen Camino,

Fr Steve

CH (MAJ-Ret) Steven G Rindahl, DMin  
A-663 (Life)



## Warriors on the Way

[www.WarriorsOnTheWay.org](http://www.WarriorsOnTheWay.org)

Combat Veterans on the  
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32310 Flat Rock View

Bulverde, Texas 78163

johnnaterrazas@gmail.com

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# GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV 2019 CALENDAR

<u>JANUARY</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>MARCH</u>
10 Board Meeting 1400 12 Membership Meeting 31 February Board Meeting	2 Membership Meeting 15 Drop Input Due 26 Ch. XV 42nd anniversary 28 March Board Meeting	2 Membership Meeting 8-10 Cotulla Wild Hog Cookoff 29 Vietnam Veterans Day
<u>APRIL</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>
4 Board Meeting 1400 6 Chapter Memorial Service 0900 6 Membership Meeting 1100 28-5 Ch. XV Cruise/fundraiser 30 Scholarship applications due TBD JROTC Presentations	2 Board Meeting 1400 <b>NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b> 15 Drop Input Due 17-19 Canyon Lake Picnic 27 Memorial Day Serv 0930 TBD - JROTC Presentations 30 June Board Meeting 1400	1 Membership Meeting 14 Flag Day & Army Birthday
<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
4 Independence Day 11 Board Meeting 1400 13 Membership Meeting	1 Board Meeting 1400 3 Membership Meeting 13-18 SFA National Convention 15 Drop Input Due	5 Board Meeting 1400 7 Membership Meeting 20 POW/MIA Day TBD Scholarship Applications Due
<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>
3 Board Meeting 1400 5 Membership Meeting 31 November Board meeting	2 Membership Meeting Officer Elections 11 Veterans Day Ceremony 1000 15 Drop Input Due	5 Board Meeting 1400 7 Pearl Harbor Day <b>NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b> 14 Christmas Banquet
<p><b>All Chapter Meetings, unless announced otherwise, will be held at VFW Post 8541. Membership Meetings begin at 1300 hrs on the first Saturday of the month (unless otherwise noted in the calendar.) A lunch meal will be served from 1200 to 1300 hrs prior to each Membership Meeting. Board Meetings will be held the Thursday prior to the Membership Meeting at 1400 hours unless announced otherwise.</b></p>		

### **Special Forces Creed**

*I am an American Special Forces Soldier. A professional!  
I will do all that my nation requires of me.  
I am a volunteer, knowing well the hazards of my profession.  
I serve with the memory of those who have gone before me:  
Roger's Rangers, Francis Marion, Mosby's Rangers,  
the 1st Special Service Force, the Jedburghs, Detachment 101,  
and the Special Forces Soldiers of the Vietnam War,  
Who were awarded 17 Medals of Honor and 90 Distinguished Service Crosses.  
I pledge to uphold the honor and integrity of all these,  
In all That I am, all I do.  
I am a professional soldier.  
I will teach and fight whatever my nation requires,  
To liberate the oppressed.  
I will strive always, to excel in every art and artifice of war.  
I know that I will be called upon to perform tasks in isolation  
Far from familiar faces and voices.  
With the help and guidance of my God,  
I will conquer my fears and succeed.  
I will keep my mind and body clean, alert and strong, for this is my debt  
to those who depend upon me.  
I will not fail those with whom I serve, I will not bring shame upon myself or the  
Forces. I will maintain myself, my arms, and my equipment  
In an immaculate state as befits a Special Forces Soldier.  
My goal is to succeed in any mission—and live to succeed again.  
I may not be found wanting, that I will not fail in this sacred trust*

### **Special Forces Poem**

*By P.A. White*

*I've lifted my glass and drank my fill, Of the wine that's known as pride.  
I've walked among some gallant men,  
And watched them stride for stride. I've crammed my head with devious ways  
To defeat the enemy's goal. And kept inside for loyalty's sake,  
The tales that can't be told. The need is gone for my service now,  
I'll hang up my green beret and sip no more the wine of pride,  
Till called again someday.  
The strength and character of an organization are measured by its members.  
Bob and Vicki Walker*

## **RECUERDO (REMEMBRANCE)**

**I sing of one who would remain unsung,  
whose name would fade like tracks upon the  
sand. For him no bells were ordered to be  
rung; no banners lowered by a grieving  
land. No bugles blew the moment that he  
expired; no clock was stopped to fix the final  
hour; no doors were draped in black, no  
cannons fired. These are the rites of men of  
rank and power.**

**But still I sing of him with mounting pride,  
who seized the challenge with uncommon  
heart then ran the course with firm  
unfaltering stride to reach the mark  
determined from the start.**

**The measure of a man who runs the race —  
lies in his distance from the starting place.**

**Anonymous**



Notice to members and friends of SFA Chapter XV, The Alamo Chapter:

A FULL-PAGE AD in this Newsletter is only \$100 for 12 issues.

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These are business-card ads

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**Chapter XV, Special Forces Association**

**P.O. Box 33782**

**San Antonio, Texas 78265-3782**

**President: William E. Smith**

[presidentchapterxv@gmail.com](mailto:presidentchapterxv@gmail.com)



## Calendar of Significant Special Forces Events

13-18 AUG 2019 SFA International Convention, Charleston, WV.  
Charleston Marriott Town Center  
POC Kevin Harry, [divemedic@yahoo.com](mailto:divemedic@yahoo.com)  
<https://www.sfanationalconvention.com/>

16-21 SEPT 2019 5th Special Forces Group Reunion, Clarksville, TN  
Country Inn & Suites  
POC: [www.sfa38.org](http://www.sfa38.org)

13-17 OCT 2019 1st Special Forces Group Reunion, Las Vegas, NV.  
The Plaza Hotel & Casino  
POC Phil Grounds, [steppingwild@gmail.com](mailto:steppingwild@gmail.com)

**Thanks to Kim Philips, Tanya Van, Chris Marshall, Barry Archer and Denyse Simpson for photos in this issue.**

When submitting articles or photos for the newsletter please enter "SFA newsletter input" in the subject line of your email. Please submit articles and pictures (copies only) for the newsletter to Buddy Gee at [editor@sfa-xv.org](mailto:editor@sfa-xv.org), or mail them to Chapter President Bill Smith at SFA Chapter XV, P.O. Box 33782, San Antonio, TX 78265.

**The Editors**



**"Carry on!"**