



GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV

The Alamo Chapter

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

Issue #12-19

December 2019

President: Bill Smith
Vice-President: Juan Lopez
Secretary: J.W. Martin
Asst. Secretary: David Marshall
Treasurer: Buddy Gee
Asst. Treasurer: Mike Pagel
Sgt at Arms: Raul de la Garza
Asst. Sgt at Arms: Gordon Lee
Membership Secy: Marti Scott
Past President: Chuck Rose
Editors: Buddy & Sharon Gee
Webmaster: Jackie Leavitt
VGSA Rep: Raul de la Garza
Chaplains: R. Johnson & S. Rindahl

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Committee Chairs

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
Chapter Annual Cruise: Karen Hermann

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS



December 5— SFA Board Meeting

1400—VFW Post 8541, 2222 Austin Highway

NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING

December 7 — Pearl Harbor Day



December 14 — Chapter XV Christmas Banquet



- ◆ El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel
110 Lexington Ave., San Antonio 78205
- ◆ Hospitality Room, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
- ◆ Social, 5 p.m.
- ◆ Banquet, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (approximate)
- ◆ Dancing to the music of Rick Salinas, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m.
- ◆ Tickets: \$55 each
- ◆ Purchase tickets online with credit card or PayPal. www.sfa-xv.org

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

President Sends:

I hope everyone is having a great year and is ready for 2020. Our Board meeting is set for 1400 hrs on 5 December. Remember, we do not have a general membership meeting this month. Our Christmas Banquet is our meeting, and that takes place on 14 December at El Troicano Hotel. There are still tickets remaining and hope to see everyone there.

I want to welcome the incoming board for 2020-2022, with a special welcome to our new president, John Lopez. John has been the Vice-President for the last five years and has done an outstanding job. I know he will carry this chapter forward and do great things.

Pat Meffert as our new vice-president, Merrill Hall as our new treasurer and Mike Brown as secretary will round out a strong team. Our board and our members are always there to assist and help. It has been an honor being part of the SFA Chapter XV team.

There are many members to thank for all of their hard work. I want to thank Buddy for doing an outstanding job as treasurer. He has put up with a lot from me and has always been there. We may have not always agreed on things, but we worked together. I cannot say enough about the newsletter and the work Buddy and Sharon put into it. Our newsletter is by far the best out there and will continue to be so for the

future.

I am working with the 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg to bring back the Alamo Chapter of the 82nd. If any of our members served in the 82nd it would be awesome to get you in the fold. The plan is to house them here at VFW 8541. This will be a great addition to our VFW and to the other organizations we support.

The packets will start being accepted for the VFW scholarships and the Chapter XV scholarships. Many of our members and their family have benefited from these scholarships. It is amazing how the SF family is motivated and setting the standard for the future.

Again, I have enjoyed the team and what we have done. I cannot deny it will be nice to sit at a round table in January and enjoy a cold beverage during the meeting. I hope to see everyone at the banquet and may your holidays be safe and filled with family.

Until our banquet stay safe and enjoy your families.

Bill Smith
President
presidentchapterxv@gmail.com



\$\$\$ DOLLARS AND CENTS

Treasurer's Report, November 2019

November was a very busy month for your treasurer. Many members renewed their annual memberships and we welcomed Daniel Bell as a new life member to our Chapter. "Robbie" Huang Le, a long time Chapter XV member, renewed his membership for life.

Christmas Banquet ticket sales soared this month and we took in \$133 for the door prize drawing.

Once again, thanks to John Rodden and George Garcia for their automatic payroll cash donations.

Our meeting meal this month was prepared by VFW Post 8541 kitchen staff. The roast turkey with all the traditional Thanksgiving sides and

desserts was awesome. A tip of the beret to Barry Archer and John Lopez for donating this delicious feast.

Other expenses for the month included the purchase of a new margarita machine, membership dues paid to SFA National and web site maintenance.

The chapter budget for 2020 was briefed and adopted by a unanimous vote of approval at the November meeting.

Remember, donations, membership renewal and tickets for Christmas Banquet can be purchased on line at www.sfa-xv.org.

Buddy Gee
Treasurer

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Minutes of November Meeting

Chapter Meeting Date: 2 November 2019

The meeting was called to order at 1305 hours by President Bill Smith, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Steve Rindahl gave the invocation. The President then welcomed new members/associate members and guests to the Chapter: Dennis Sanders, Dave Eckenride, Daniel Bell, Richard Quichocho were recognized as new members. It was nice to see Mark Goode back.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **Budget & Treasurer's Report:** Buddy Gee presented the monthly report and it was accepted as read. He also presented the 2020 Budget and it was accepted as presented.
- b. **Minutes:** October Minutes as published in the newsletter were accepted by the membership.
- c. **Membership report, Marti Scott:** We currently have 214 members, and 58 were present.
- d. **Dick's Last Resort, Fred Solis:** Was a success, with the silent auction being the highlight. Plans are going forward for next year.
- e. **Christmas Banquet:** Tickets are now on sale (\$55) for the event which is 14 December.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Father Steve announced there will be a Chapel

- b. Service at the VFW on 10 November.
- b. The City of San Antonio will be conducting its annual Veterans Day Parade on 9 November.
- c. The Chapter is supporting Ft Sam Cemetery for their Veterans Day Ceremony, and 5 flag bearers are needed.
- d. VFW cooks Sharon and Colin were recognized for the meal.
- e. Cotulla Hog Cookoff will be 2nd weekend in March.
- f. Election result were given with the following results:
Term of office: January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2022

President: Juan A. Lopez

Vice President: Richard P. Meffert

Secretary: Michael E. Brown

Treasurer: Merrill G. Hall

Sgt At Arms: Gordon Lee

Assistant Secretary: Eldon A. Gee

Assistant Treasurer: Joel Dawson

Asst Sgt At Arms: Raul de la Garza

The meeting was adjourned at 1420.

Respectfully submitted,
JW Martin, D2041L
Chapter Secretary



Left: Enjoying a beverage during the break are (from left) David Benavidez, JW Martin and Vince Trevino. Center, new member Richard Quichocho and new life member Daniel Bell. Right, Bobby Walker with ballots from the November officer election.

Chapter News

Special Forces Association Chapter XV 2020 Escape to Secrets Akumal!

Enjoy Unlimited Luxury* – An all-inclusive experience that exceeds expectations!

Secrets Akumal Riviera Maya - Idyllic. Striking. Nature. Nestled in the heart of the Riviera Maya, bask on white-sand beaches and relax in calm, clear waters. This adult-only paradise fuses elegant and original design with nature's elements. Akumal means "place of the turtle" in Mayan and is renowned for its beautiful beaches and green sea turtles

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E: sgreen@dreamvacations.com



*Prices are per person, based on double occupancy, land only, space is limited. Rates include a \$45 per person markup donation to SFA Chapter XV. Mark-up will not be waived. Other restrictions may apply. © 2020 Dream Vacations.

Chapter News

The New Chapter Officers



Juan Lopez
President



Pat Meffert
Vice President



Mike Brown
Secretary



Merrill Hall
Treasurer



Gordon Lee
Sergeant at Arms



A Gentle Reminder...

From Marsha 'Marti' Scott,
Membership Secretary

Happy Holidays!

This is a busy season for everyone, so with all the upcoming festivities with family and friends, this is just a gentle reminder that Annual Dues must be paid for this new year of 2020. There is a small grace period, but dues will need to be paid in order for you to continue getting electronic information from the Chapter and National, plus receiving the Quarterly DROP. So, please ensure that you do not get 'dropped' from the active roster and get your annual dues paid.

We (the Chapter) have been blessed this past year with reaching our Goal of having over 200 members. We are now at 214 members and looking forward to the coming year and adding new members into SFA and Chapter XV! Thank you all for helping us in our growth!

You may pay your dues online through our Chapter website, through the mail, or at our monthly Chapter meetings. We will not be having a meeting in December due to our Annual Christmas Banquet and swearing-in of New Chapter Officers. May you all have a wonderful Christmas Holiday and good health!

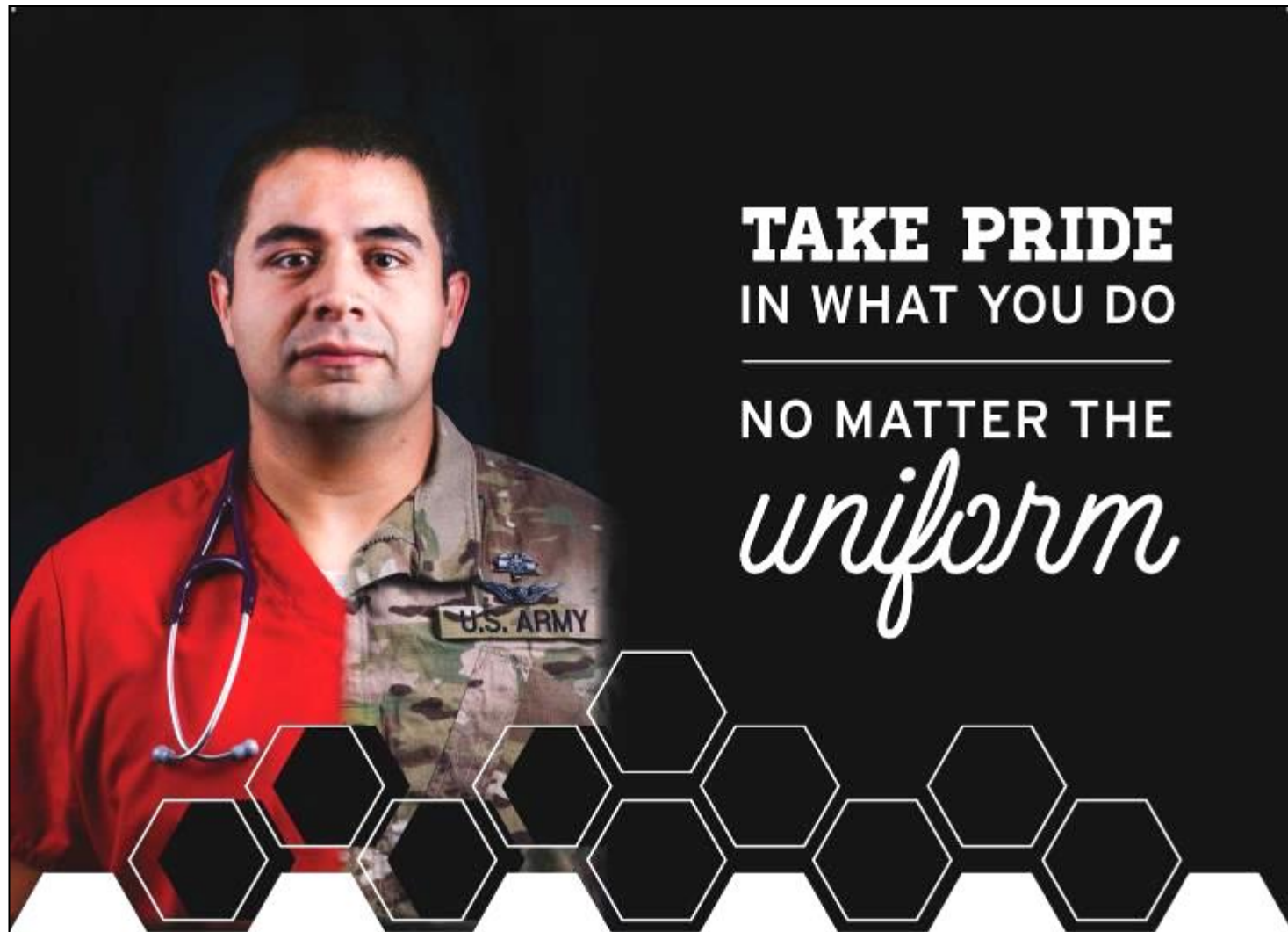
An extraordinary South Texas hunt

Tommy Shook has returned from a very successful South Texas hunt, killing an axis deer, a fallow deer and a 11-point white-tail deer. He was being filmed by a TV crew from "The Ultimate Hunt" on the Pursuit Channel; they were so pleased with this hunt they want to do more shows with Tommy. He says this 30-minute segment will air on the Pursuit "We Deliver the Outdoors" channel during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020. In fact, he says, the producers are contacting Oliver Stone about a possible movie based on his exploits!



The Ultimate Hunt is dedicated to telling the stories of veterans while raising funds for OATH Inc. and enjoying the great outdoors. OATH is a 501c3 nonprofit which works with youth ages 10-21 through hunting and wilderness experiences, along with positive character development.

As to his future screen career, Tommy says "We shall see." Here is a link to his Facebook page, which has more pictures from the hunt. [Shook.](#)



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*uniform***

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Chapter News

Chapter XV salutes fellow veterans

From Raul de la Garza:

On November 11, we showed up at the assembly area at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery for the Veterans Day ceremonies and presentation of the colors. We were short one person so we asked Jack Branson, the president of the 101st Airborne chapter, for help. He joined us and we really appreciated his helping us carry out our tradition of presenting the five service flags.

Right photo: Preparing to present the flags are, from left, Bill Smith, Henry Jimenez, Jack Branson, Juan Lopez and Raul de la Garza. Below left, Juan with Jack. At right, our guys stand with members of the Memorial Service Detachment.

—Photos by Kim Phillips



Member News

Bexar County judges working to help veterans



ALL RISE... Members of Chapter XV met with district judges on Veterans Day to promote Sound Off, a nonprofit organization working to reform the way veterans and service members receive mental health support.

Chapter members in the photo are (back row) Bobby Walker, Chuck Rose, Bill Smith and (2nd from left) Gen. Fred Valenzuela. Judges attending the event are (from left) Norma Gonzales; Lori Valenzuela, judge of the Felony Veterans Treatment Court; Angelica Jimenez, judge of Pearls, a special court for young troubled women; Laura Salinas; and Cathy Torres-Stahl, judge of the Esperanza Court , a felony prostitution court. At right is Justo Travieso, Army vet and uncle of Laura Salinas.

Felony Veterans Treatment Court is a specialty court that addresses alcohol, substance abuse, TBI and military sexual assault victims who have pending felony cases. The court is structured to provide counseling, assistance with personal needs, and treatment through five phases for high-risk, high-need veterans so that they do not return to the criminal justice system.

Presiding over the court are Judge Jefferson Moore and Judge Lori I. Valenzuela, daughter of Chapter XV member Fred Valenzuela. She is also judge of the 437th District Court.

Bob Jenkins

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Bob Jenkins, U.S. Army (Retired)



06/20



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James B Sprague Memorial Post 8541

2222 Austin Highway

San Antonio, Texas 78218

Post Phone: (210) 655-2944

Email: commander@vfwpost8541.org

VFW Post 8541 2020 Educational Scholarship

The VFW Post 8541 Educational Scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance through an annual scholarship of \$4,000. There will be two scholarships awarded. Recipients will be announced on 15 April each year.

Eligibility:

1. Applicant must be a current member in good standing of VFW Post 8541, its Auxiliary, or an immediate family member of such VFW/Auxiliary member.
2. Qualified applicants must be:
 - A. A high school senior who will graduate in the Spring and has a current letter of acceptance, or
 - B. Currently attending or accepted by an accredited college, university, or vocational institution.
 - C. Applicant must have a 2.5 GPA or better at the time of application.

Procedure: Eligible applicants must submit the following:

- a. A personal letter detailing the applicant's affiliation with VFW Post 8541, education plans, summary of achievements, career aspirations, and name of school they plan to attend.
- b. Contact name of the recipient institution's financial office to receive funds on behalf of the student.
- c. Copies of applicant's most recent academic transcripts or, if awaiting high school graduation, SAT/ACT scores, along with transcripts.
- d. Two letters of reference from a professor, instructor, teacher or administrator from current or former educational institution.

Applications must be received by VFW Post 8541 no later than 31 March 2020. Send to

Commander William Smith, VFW Post 8541

Attn: Scholarship Committee

2222 Austin Highway – San Antonio TX 78218

- Packets that are not complete will not be considered for the scholarship.

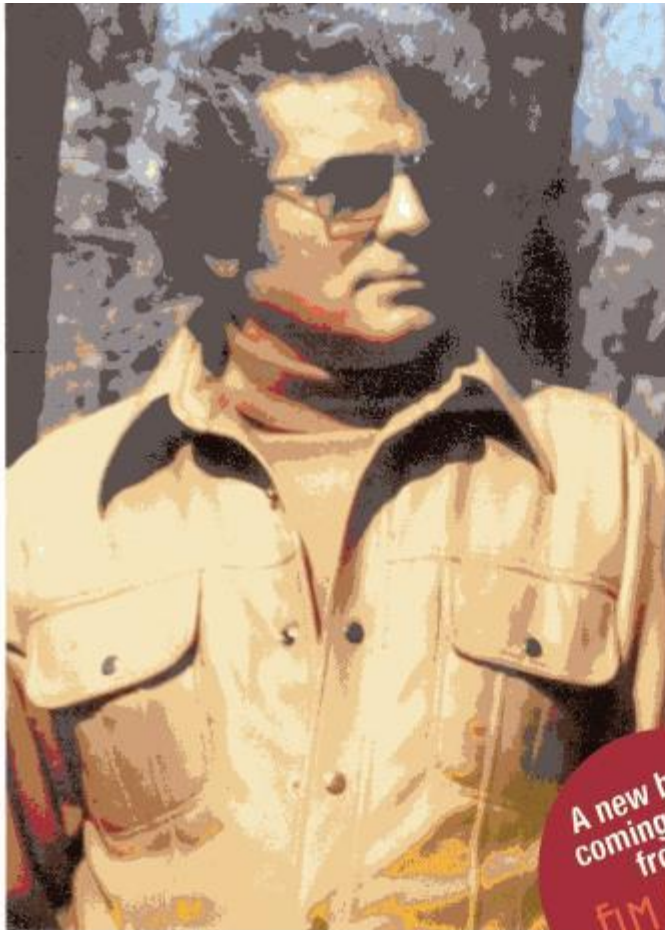
- If selected, applicant should be prepared to submit a photo for use in the Post newsletter and other publications.

William E. Smith

William E. Smith

Commander

12/19



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

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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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Remember the 'why' of the Christmas season

Merry Christmas – How are you preparing for this festive season? Spending time with friends and family, the exchanging of gifts, and the wearing of ugly sweaters are all common to the season (well, maybe not as many sweaters here in sunny San Antonio).

I suspect that we will each, in one way or another, give our thoughts and say words of prayer for those who are currently in harm's way that they may return soon and safely. We also give special consideration for those who will be spending their first Christmas without a family member – whether taken from us by hostile action in a faraway land or simply the realities of advancing age. But for all of us here, there will be plenty of opportunities to celebrate.

There are parties to attend, meals to share, events throughout our towns and communities (including our own SFA Banquet – so if you have not gotten your tickets, the time is now). In preparing for all of these celebrations and parties and all the other activities of the season, I ask you to ask yourself: What are we celebrating? Why now and why the way we do? I invite you, in all of the rush,

the hustle and bustle, the crowded calendar of the season, to take a moment to consider how it all got started.

God giving Himself to us, making a family where there was none; wise men bringing gifts to the King that they did not understand, and the simplest of shepherders being the first to hear the news when the angel did say, Peace on Earth and Good Will to All. In all of your celebrations with friends, family, feasts, and even ugly sweaters, may you be ever aware of the Christmas message – Peace and Good Will.

Before closing – let me invite you to Chapel here at VFW 8541. Sundays at 1030, we have "Swordbearer Chapel – "A Veteran Faith Community" open to everybody with a special emphasis on serving those who have served and their families.

Buen Camino,
Fr Steve
CH (MAJ-Ret) Steven G Rindahl, DMin
A-663 (Life)



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1/20

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GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV 2020 CALENDAR

<u>JANUARY</u>	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>MARCH</u>
2 Board Meeting 1400 4 Membership Meeting 1300 30 February Board Meeting	1 Membership Meeting 1300 15 Drop Input Due 26 Ch. XV 43nd anniversary 27 March Board Meeting 1400	7 Membership Meeting 1300 13-15 Cotulla Wild Hog Cookoff 29 Vietnam Veterans Day
<u>APRIL</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>
2 Board Meeting 1400 4 Chapter Memorial Service 0900 4 Membership Meeting 1100 30 Scholarship applications due TBD JROTC Presentations 30 May Board Meeting 1400	NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING 15 Drop Input Due 15-17 Canyon Lake Picnic TBD Memorial Day Service TBD - JROTC Presentations	4 Board Meeting 1400 6 Membership Meeting 1300 14 Flag Day & Army Birthday
<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
4 Independence Day 9 Board Meeting 1400 11 Membership Meeting 1300	6 Board Meeting 1400 8 Membership Meeting 1300 TBD SFA National Convention 15 Drop Input Due 18-23 Escape to 'Secrets Akumal'	3 Board Meeting 1400 5 Membership Meeting 1300 20 POW/MIA Day
<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>DECEMBER</u>
1 Board Meeting 1400 3 Membership Meeting 1300 TBC Dick's Last Resort fundraiser TBD Oktoberfest at FSH	5 Board meeting 01400 7 Membership Meeting 1300 8 11 Veterans Day 15 Drop Input Due	3 Board Meeting 1400 7 Pearl Harbor Day NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING TBD Christmas Banquet
<p>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.</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*

1/9/17/18

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:

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This is a quarter-page ad (vertical)

3 3/4" x 5"

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These are business-card ads

3 3/4" x 2"

\$25



Chapter XV, Special Forces Association

P.O. Box 33782

San Antonio, Texas 78265-3782

President: William E. Smith

presidentchapterxv@gmail.com



Calendar of Significant Special Forces Events

22-25 OCT 2021 Special Forces Association Convention
The Orleans Hotel, Las Vegas, NV.
(Date of 2020 Convention in Destin, FL, still to be announced)

Thanks to Ben Scott, Kim Phillips, Tommy Shook and Bill Smith 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, or mail them to Chapter President Bill Smith at SFA Chapter XV, P.O. Box 33782, San Antonio, TX 78265.

The Editors



“Carry on!”