



GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV

The Alamo Chapter

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

Issue # 06 -18

June 2018

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: Buddy Gee
VGSA Rep: Raul de la Garza
Chaplains: R. Johnson & S. Rindahl

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www.sfa-xv.org



Committee Chairs

By-Laws: Bill Smith
Nominations: Chuck Rose
Motorcycle Challenge: Gordon Lee
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



June 2 — Membership Meeting

VFW Post 8541, 2222 Austin Highway

1200 - Lunch served (BBQ chicken)

1300 – Meeting

June 12-16 — National SFA Convention

El Paso, Texas

Wyndham El Paso Airport Hotel



DON'T FORGET



Bill Beall.

- We return to the old schedule for Membership Meetings: Meal served at noon, with meeting at 1300 hours.
- Sick call and 'choir practice' at noon every Sunday at VFW Post 8541. POC is



- Online registration and online payment are available for the National SFA Convention. Click [here](#) for registration forms and full agenda. POC is co-chairman Bill Snider, 915/667-9527.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

President Sends:

I hope everyone is having a great year and is ready for summer. Our Board meeting is set for 1400 hours on 31 May. Our membership meeting will be Saturday 2 June.

We are going back to our **old hours** of a noon meal followed by the membership meeting at 1300 hrs. Our original intentions of combining the breakfast with the SF/Ranger meal never really took off. Some of our members found themselves getting here at 0900 and not leaving until well after 1600. The volunteers here at the VFW will cook the meal like before and all should be good. If there are any issues, do not hesitate to say something to me.

I cannot thank everyone enough who took part or assisted with the memorial for Major Carr. It was a great memorial and the soldiers from 5th Group were awesome. It was great meeting and talking with Donald Carr Jr. and his family. Our chapter does a lot of good things and I know we will continue.

Thank you to everyone for the quick thinking and flexibility to overcome Murphy and his law with respect to Canyon Lake. A lot was done on the fly in order to salvage the event. Many people came together and good times were still had. The kinks are worked out and Canyon Lake will be back in full swing next year.

Our 8 December Christmas Banquet tickets will be going on sale the end of June. There will be 110 tickets and I will be selling them until they run out. It was a great time last year and will be another great time this year.

The SFA National Convention is coming up the week of 12 June. I hope some of you can make it to El Paso, and if you have not made reservations I suggest doing it quickly. I believe the main event hotel is sold out.

A warm welcome to our newest members, Michele Buratti who recently deployed to Iraq, and Keith King of Broken Arrow, OK.

Sorry for the short input as it has been a very busy couple of months. The cruise was amazing and plans are in the works for a 2nd annual cruise. Karen did an outstanding job with the planning and execution of the cruise. Great Job!

My email is listed below if anyone wants to email me. Until our meeting, stay safe and enjoy your families.

William Smith
Chapter XV President
presidentchapterxv@gmail.com



\$\$\$ DOLLARS AND CENTS

Treasurer's Report, May 2018

The revenue for May did not exceed expenses, but what we did receive helps keep the Chapter solvent. Our newest member, Major Michele Buratti, made a cash donation along with her new-member dues. Longtime member John Rodden made a leaflet drop and Pat Connolly donated a portion of his Canyon Lake cabin refund to the scholarship fund. Huan Le (Robbie), Vietnamese interpreter and friend of the Chapter, donated \$100 IMO Tanya Smith's mother.

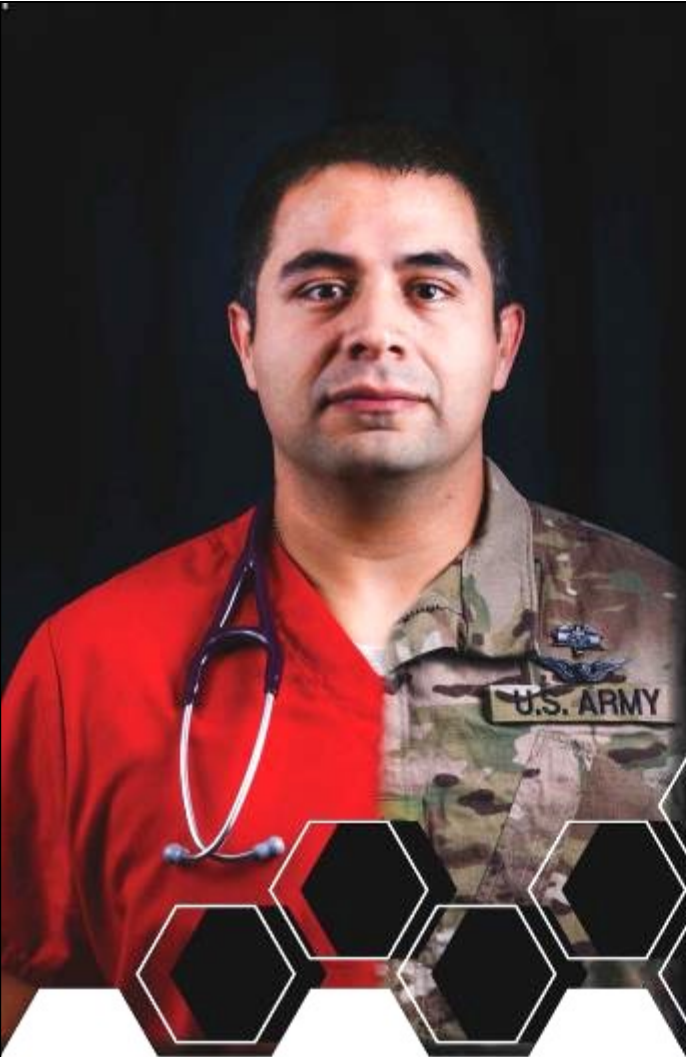
The primary expenses for May were for the annual Canyon Lake weekend and Jack Hogue Picnic. Food and beverages had been purchased before it was known that there was a problem with the reservations. It will take a while longer to get a final figure, but the Chapter budgeted \$2,500 for the weekend and so far, expenses are around \$1,400. Your treasurer is in the process of refunding money to those who paid for cabins through the Chapter.

Other expenses included a plaque for Major Don Carr and a small farewell gathering for Major Michele Buratti, who has departed for deployment to Iraq. Steve Wolverton made a cash donation that will be included in the final accounting of money due us from our fundraising cruise.

Earlier this month there were some issues with bank deposits. The problem has been resolved and for the future, **all checks written to the Chapter should be made payable to Special Forces Association.** For your convenience we now have a stamp and can fill in the "pay to" for you.

See you at the board meeting on 31 May and at the membership meeting 2 June.

Buddy Gee
Chapter XV Treasurer
sgmgee@aol.com



**TAKE PRIDE
IN WHAT YOU DO**

**NO MATTER THE
*uniform***

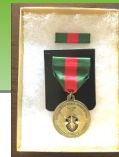
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Member News



JROTC Awards Programs Grows to 34 Schools

Chapter Vice president Juan Lopez, coordinator of the chapter's JROTC Awards program, announced that 34 area high schools were included in this year's presentations. He thanks the following members who presented medals and certificates to outstanding cadets:



At left, Art Medina presents JROTC award to Cadet 1LT Joseph Ramos at Roosevelt High School on May 16.

Jose Campos
J.W. Martin
Chris Marshall
Raul De La Garza
Fred Solis
Bill Smith

Lou Colantoni
Bill Martin
Art Medina
Henry Jimenez
Steve Hermann

Chaplain Rindahl Finds New Friend in France

Steve Rindahl, a member and chaplain of Chapter XV, reports that he met 5th SFGA (A) Medal of Honor recipient Gary M. "Mike" Rose in France while both men were on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. He sent along this photo.

Rose was awarded the MOH in October 2017 for actions during Operation Tailwind in southeastern Laos during the Vietnam War in 1970.

Steve is organizing another pilgrimage for combat veterans to walk the Way of St. James in Spain later this year. The 180-mile trek is called Warriors on the Way and will provide transportation, gear and lodging for the 12 veterans to be selected. The pilgrimage is intended to help put those with PTSD or moral injury on the path to healing. To receive more information, or to donate toward the project, email warriorsontheway@gmail.com or see Website at warriorsontheway.org.



Farewell, Michele

Chapter XV's newest member, Army Maj. Michele Buratti (3rd from left) celebrates with other members and friends before her deployment to Iraq. From left: Joe Pedrotti, Vito Cellini, Michele, Bill Smith, Buddy Gee, Becky and Raul de la Garza, Pat Meffert.



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12/2017

A TALE OF TWO PICNICS



Musician Rick Salinas (in cowboy hat) poses with members of Chapter XV during picnic at the Poteet home of Dion and Delia Popoy. Back row (left to right): Bruce Hoffman, Steve Hermann, Buddy Gee, Rick Salinas, Bill Smith, Don Iverson, Keith King, Vito Cellini, Mike Pagel, Arnulfo Vasquez, Mike Hurst. Front row (l to r): Pat Connolly, Merrill Hall and Juan Lopez.



Left: Juan and Chris join singer Rick Salinas for a song. Top right: Karen and Steve Hermann chopping chicken. Far right: Carle and Mike Hurst of Killeen, Sharon and Buddy Gee enjoy the music.

A Tale of Two Picnics (cont.)

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

It was a tale of two picnics – one that had been planned for a year but did not happen, another that was put together by Chapter XV members in one very hectic afternoon.

In case you missed it, that second two-part picnic was smaller in size but loads of fun. Here's what happened:

1. **Raul de la Garza** and Juan Lopez loaded pickup trucks and trailer and arrived at Canyon Lake before noon Friday to set up for the traditional Chapter XV Canyon Lake Weekend and Jack Hogue Picnic. Juan unloaded coolers, supplies and groceries while Raul checked in at the office.
2. **Big surprise!** The people in charge of the Armed Forces Recreation Center had no record of our reservations for 16 cabins and the main picnic pavilion. They had changed personnel, and they had rented the facilities to other people.
3. **Panic!** Raul and Juan made a few frantic phone calls, then reloaded the trucks and trailer. Meanwhile, some chapter members were already arriving at the lake or well on their way. Others scrambled to find another location for the big weekend, and still others tried (in vain) to convince the Air Force brass to “do something.” Much texting and phone calling and wringing of hands.
4. **Raul offered** his back yard in South San Antonio for Friday night's fajitas and margaritas. Dion Popoy offered his 25-acre spread in Poteet for Saturday's

picnic events. Many more phone calls and emails.

5. **Fortunately,** news travels fast these days. Two dozen people showed up Friday evening for Raul's “garden party,” including margarita maker Pat Connolly and fajita cooker Don Iverson. Out-of-town people rented hotel rooms for the night and the party was on!
6. **Saturday turned out** perfect picnic weather as folks made their way to Poteet with salads and sides. Mike Pagel brought delicious deer sausage and grilled it for lunch, while Merrill Hall warmed the tortillas. The keg was brought out, Buddy made his Bloodies, and of course, Vito shared his grappa. By mid-afternoon, Steve and Karen Hermann were cooking three fabulous kinds of chicken, along with fresh corn and potatoes. Rick Salinas was a one-man band whose country-western tunes got people up and dancing under the pecan trees. (And he performed a fine version of ‘*Ballad of the Green Beret.*’)

For the first time in at least 35 years, Chapter XV did not spend their traditional May weekend at Canyon Lake. (Actually, Ron and Marlys Burkett and Don Blue had reserved space for their private RVs and did spend the weekend there.)

Chapter officers wish to apologize to people who did not get the message in time to avoid an unnecessary trip. But thanks to Raul and the Popoys (who were not even at home!) we did have our picnic. And yes, it was the best of times.



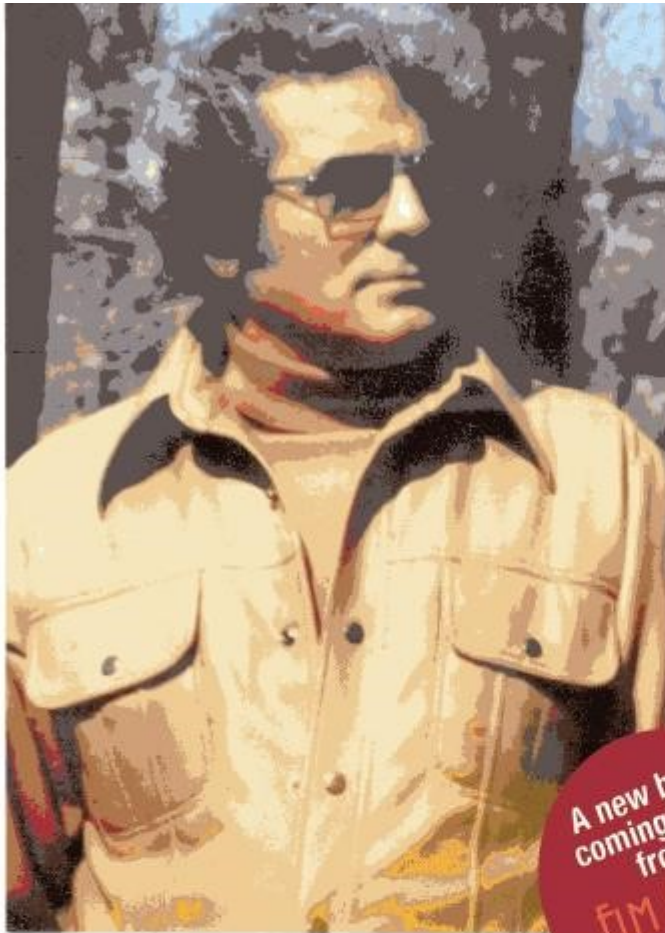
FRIDAY NIGHT: Left, the makeshift chow line for fajitas and beans. Center: Vito, Arnulfo and Don relax at Raul's garden party. Right: Merrill Hall, Keith King and Mike Hurst have a brew. Raul welcomes Pat and Arlene Connolly to his back yard.

A Tale of Two Picnics (cont.)

THIS YEAR'S CANYON LAKE WEEKEND was not at Canyon Lake, but for those who made it to the alternate sites, it was still a hoot. From live country music to grilled sausage and chicken, and from visiting canines to a pot-bellied pig, there was something for everyone. Next year, we'll be back at Canyon Lake for sure, so mark your calendars for May 17-19, 2019.

—Thanks to Ben Scott and Chris Marshall for picnic photos.





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

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CELLINI

FREEDOM FIGHTER

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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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REMEMBERING DON CARR

Chapter XV was honored to help with final arrangements for Maj. Don Carr 47 years after his aircraft failed to return from a mission over Laos. Soldiers from 5th SFG(A) arrived from Fort Campbell to serve as pall bearers. In center photo, his son Donald Carr Jr. (right) with Chapter member Toby Todd holding his dad's shadow box. Below, Carr Jr. poses with members of the Alamo Chapter after service at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.





Serving those who served America.

America's veterans have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country, and we believe it is never too late to acknowledge their heroic service. That's why our hospice is taking part in the We Honor Veterans program, a collaboration between the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

We are prepared to help veterans and their families meet the challenges they may face at the end of life. Our staff and volunteers understand the unique issues veterans face and can assist in making sure they get the support and resources they need.

We have embraced our mission to serve America's veterans. It's our way of saying thank you for the sacrifices they have made in serving us.



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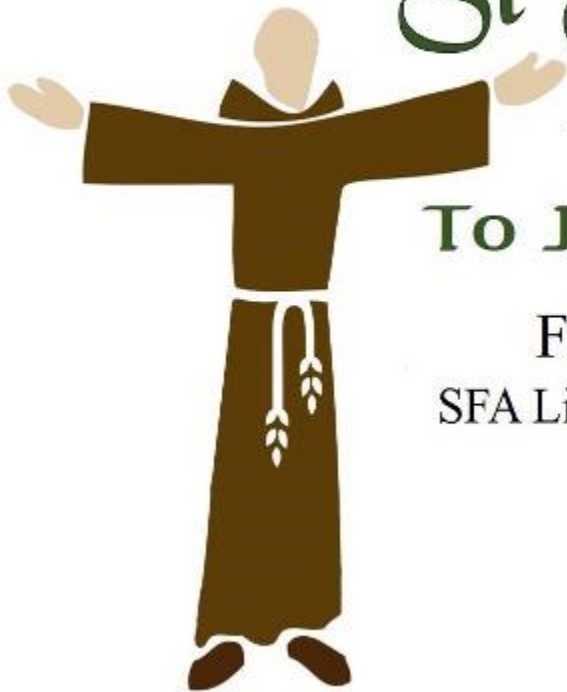


7/7/18



New Riverwalk location at 223 Losoya St .

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8/4/18

GREEN BERET CHAPTER XV 2018 CALENDAR

<p><u>JANUARY</u></p> <p>4 Board Meeting 1400 6 Membership Meeting 1100</p>	<p><u>FEBRUARY</u></p> <p>1 Board Meeting 1400 3 Membership Meeting 1100 15 Drop Input Due</p>	<p><u>MARCH</u></p> <p>1 Board Meeting 1400 3 Membership Meeting 1100 9-11 Cotulla Wild Hog Cookoff</p>
<p><u>APRIL</u></p> <p>5 Board Meeting 1400 7 Chapter Memorial Service 0900 7 Membership Meeting 1030 15-22 Ch. XV Cruise/fundraiser TBD JROTC Presentations</p>	<p><u>MAY</u></p> <p>3 Board Meeting 1400 NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING 15 Drop Input Due 18-20 Canyon Lake Picnic 28 Memorial Day Serv 0930 TBD - JROTC Presentations 31 June Board Meeting 1400</p>	<p><u>JUNE</u></p> <p>2 Membership Meeting 1100 12-16 National SFA Conference TBD JROTC Presentations</p>
<p><u>JULY</u></p> <p>4 Fourth of July Parade TBD 5 Board Meeting 1400 7 Membership Meeting 1100</p>	<p><u>AUGUST</u></p> <p>2 Board Meeting 1400 4 Membership Meeting 1100 15 Drop Input Due</p>	<p><u>SEPTEMBER</u></p> <p>6 Board Meeting 1400 8 Membership Meeting 1100 TBD Budget Committee meeting Scholarship Applications</p>
<p><u>OCTOBER</u></p> <p>4 Board Meeting 1400 6 Membership Meeting 1100 TBD Motorcycle Ride</p>	<p><u>NOVEMBER</u></p> <p>1 Board Meeting 1400 3 Membership Meeting 1100 9 Budget Approval 11 Veterans Day Cerem 1000 15 Drop Input Due 28 Scholarship Results</p>	<p><u>DECEMBER</u></p> <p>6 Board Meeting 1400 8 Christmas Banquet 2018 NO MEMBERSHIP MEETING</p>

All Chapter Meetings, unless announced otherwise, will be held at VFW Post 8541. Membership Meetings begin at 1100 hrs on the first Saturday of the month (unless otherwise noted in the calendar.) A breakfast meal will be served from 0930 to 1100 hrs prior to each Membership Meeting. Board Meetings will be held the Thursday prior to the Membership Meeting at 1400 hours unless announced otherwise.

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:

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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



Calendar of Significant Special Forces Events

- 12-16 JUNE 2018 Special Forces Association International Conference 2018
Wyndham Airport Hotel, El Paso, TX
POC: <http://sfa2018elpaso.blogspot.com>
- 19-22 SEPT 2018 57th annual Fifth Group Reunion
Country Inn & Suites, Clarksville, TN
(931) 645-1400 or cx_clrk@countryinns.com

Thanks to Ben Scott and Chris Marshall 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 sgmgee@aol.com, or mail them to Chapter President Bill Smith at SFA Chapter XV, P.O. Box 33782, San Antonio, TX 78265.

The Editors



“Carry on!”