



# Chapter XXXI Dallas/ Fort Worth Special Forces Association



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Billy M Smith  
Memorial Chapter



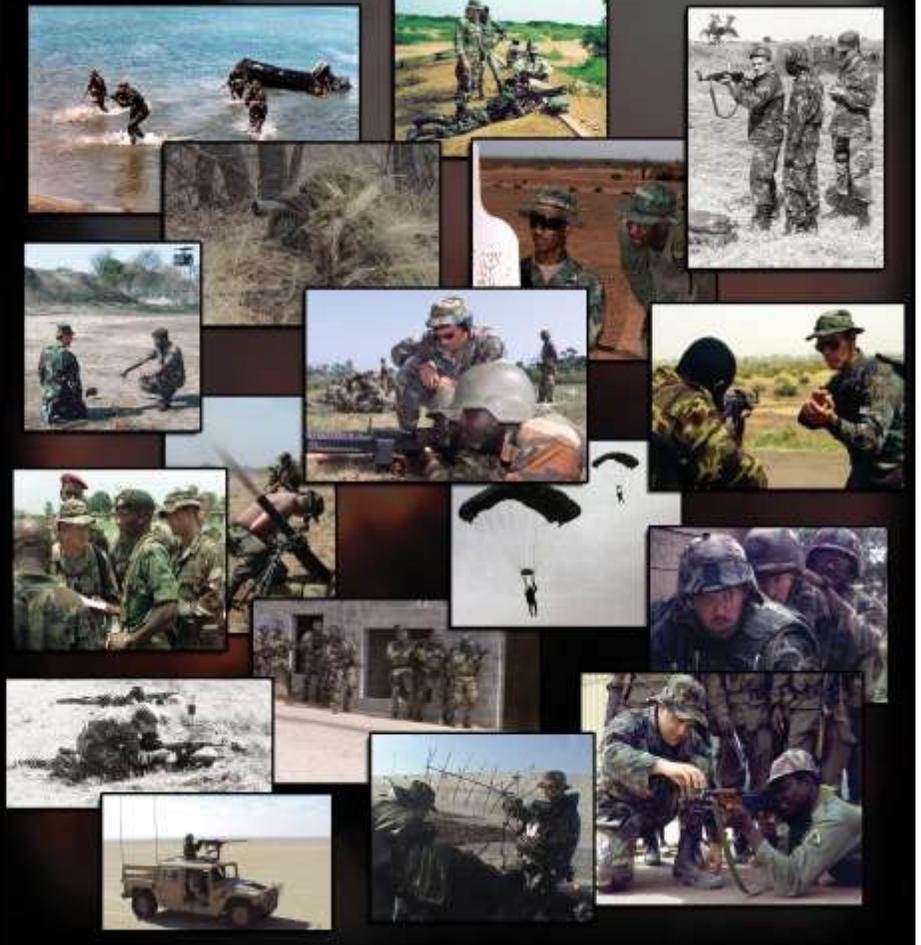
3RD SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (Airborne)



1952



2002



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## A Letter Home

The Military View

By

Jerry Hogan

I have a friend from our area by the name of Patricia Thibodeau whose son has recently returned home from his second tour in Iraq. This is the same son who was involved with our operations in Panama where he earned his first Combat Infantryman Badge. Pat and I sat in the hot sun in the stands of Texas stadium a little over a year ago and watched her 57 year old husband deploy with the Texas **National Guard to Iraq after trying for over two years to volunteer to go back in the service and “do his part for his country.”**

I recently received this email from Pat. It shows in beautiful detail what our service families go through on a daily basis.

**As she says, “Forty years ago today I was sitting home with a Soldier husband overseas. No email back then. I waited each day for the mailman to bring news.**

Bills just went in the mailbox and he was down the porch steps and across the street to continue his appointed rounds. But that thoughtful gentlemen knew my circumstances, and so instead of simply putting my letter from my husband in the little black box attached to the wall, he would knock on the door and hand it to me, a grin on his ex-military face almost as big as the one on mine.

Letter days were celebration days. I would read the letter to myself first, real fast, then aloud to the babies, even though they were too young to understand, and then again later, slowly to myself, when they were tucked and dreaming. Each word was a treasure.

Days without a delivery, I would reread the letters already received and hope for better luck the next day.

Some months I got two letters. Most months I got just one. I kept them all, waiting for him to come home.

A year of my life in one small neatly-blue-ribbon-tied package.

Forty years later, my babies are grown with grown babies of their own. I wait each day for an email **from my Soldier husband, but I don’t read them aloud, for this house is shared with a puppy and kitty who only want to know where’s the grub?**

Days without an email, I read the ones already received, for each is still a treasure.

Another year of my life, this latest vigil represented by an electronic file folder, tied with a virtual blue ribbon, maintained while I wait for him to come home.

**Until he comes home.”**

**And that is what our service families look forward to, too their loved one coming home safely. It’s a lonely and tough life without them.**

Jerry Hogan is a retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel who volunteers to write this column. He can be reached at [jerryhogan@s=bcglobal.net](mailto:jerryhogan@s=bcglobal.net) or 214-394-4033. His web site id [www.themilitaryview.com](http://www.themilitaryview.com)

## Afghanistan

12:00 AM CST on Sunday, November 22, 2009

Dexter Filkins, *The New York Times*

ACHIN, Afghanistan – U.S. and Afghan officials have begun helping anti-[Taliban](#) militias that have independently taken up arms against the insurgents in several parts of Afghanistan, prompting hopes of a large-scale tribal rebellion against the Taliban.

The emergence of the militias, which took some leaders in Kabul by surprise, has so encouraged U.S. and Afghan officials that they are planning to spur the growth of similar armed groups across the Taliban heartland in the southern and eastern parts of the country.



U.S. and Afghan officials say they are hoping the plan, called the Community Defense Initiative, will bring together thousands of gunmen to protect their neighborhoods from Taliban insurgents. Already there are hundreds of Afghans who are acting on their own against the Taliban, officials say.

The endeavor represents one of the most ambitious – and one of the riskiest – plans for regaining the initiative against the Taliban, who are fighting more vigorously than at any time since 2001.

By harnessing the militias, U.S. and Afghan officials hope to rapidly increase the number of Afghans fighting the Taliban. That could supplement the U.S. and Afghan forces already here, and whatever number of U.S. troops President [Barack Obama](#) might decide to send. The militias could also help fill the gap while the Afghan army and police forces train and grow – a project that could take years to bear fruit.

The U.S. officials hope the militias will encourage an increasingly demoralized Afghan population to take a stake in the war against the Taliban.

"The idea is to get people to take responsibility for their own security," said a senior U.S. military official in Kabul, speaking on condition of anonymity. "In many places they are already doing that."

The growth of the anti-Taliban militias runs the risk that they could turn on one another, or against the Afghan and U.S. governments, as has happened in the past.

The Americans say they will keep the groups small and will limit the scope of their activities to protecting villages and manning checkpoints. For now, they are not arming the groups because they already have guns. The Americans also say they will tie the groups to the Afghan government and tightly control their activities so they do not create more warlords, who have defied the government's

authority for

years.

The plan echoes a similar movement that unfolded in Iraq, beginning in late 2006, in which Sunni tribes turned against Islamic extremists.

That movement, called the Sunni Awakening, brought tens of thousands of former insurgents into government-supervised militias and helped substantially reduce the violence in Iraq.

Special Forces soldiers have been fanning out across the countryside, descending from helicopters into valleys where the residents have taken up arms against the Taliban and offering their help.

"We are trying to reach out to these groups that have organized themselves," Col. Christopher Kolenda said in Kabul.

One of the most striking examples of a local militia rising up on its own is in Achin, a predominantly Pashtun district in Nangarhar province, on the border with Pakistan. In July, a long-running dispute between local Taliban fighters and elders from the Shinwari tribe flared up. When a local Taliban warlord named Khona brought a more senior commander from Pakistan to help in the confrontation, the elders in the Shinwari tribe rallied villagers, killed the commander and chased Khona away.

"The whole tribe was with me," one of the elders said. "The Taliban came to kill me, and instead we killed them."

Dexter Filkins,



## *St. Petersburg Times Newspaper*

"How Would You Fix the Economy?"

**BEST idea**

**Dear President Obama,.....Patriotic retirement:**

**There's about 40 million people over 50 in the work force; pay them \$1 million apiece severance with stipulations:**

- 1) They leave their jobs. Forty million job openings - Unemployment fixed.**
- 2) They buy NEW American cars. Forty million cars ordered - Auto Industry fixed.**
- 3) They either buy a house or pay off their mortgage - Housing Crisis fixed.**

**They could call this instant relief program the "Fifties Asset Relief Tender"**



From Dennis Sheridan, Chap 31 SFA

Well publicized, there was a terror attack at Fort Hood on Thursday Nov 5th and for many hours the Fort was in "lock down". Immediately after "lock down" the Fort Hood USO moved their small concession trailer to the attack site and provided 24 hour service to the "crime scene" not only coffee and snacks but breakfast, lunch and dinner. The National USO responded by dispatching it's 40 foot mobile canteen to the site. By Sunday night many of the USO volunteers had been serving 15 to 24 hours shifts with minimal breaks. On Monday morning Nov 9th seven volunteers from the DFW USO were dispatched for additional support, I was one of the seven.

The mobile canteen operated constantly until Friday Nov 13. The DFW USO volunteers returned to the Metroplex on Friday afternoon. During our short service, Fort Hood regular volunteers were able to get a



break and the mobile canteen and the Fort Hood USO center were kept open to serve the FBI, CID, guard detail, MP's and other crime scene personnel.

The mobile canteen was in the crime scene area so no photos were allowed during the active investigation time and our instructions were "not to ask any questions".

I took the middle of the night shifts and mostly interacted with the police, MP's and Cav troops of the guard detail during their rest breaks. The mobile canteen had Xbox stations, three big TV's and a place to lie down

for a catnap. Soldiers haven't changed much, as when the guard mount was short a soldier or two the Sgt of the Guard found his soldiers sleeping in the TV room. I had plenty of coffee made but Monster was the most popular drink, the new GI Joe movie the most popular movie only the typical rest break for the guard detail did not allow the soldiers to see the ending of the movie. The local Wal-Mart manager donated the GI Joe movie and the latest Xbox shootem up. A young PFC showed me how to play; first three tries I was dead before I could move; the fourth try I succeeded in killing off my Plt Ldr, Plt Sgt and squad before I was dead; the PFC played and defeated the enemy swiftly.

I have to say I was impressed by our soldiers, the young E-2s, E-3s and the junior NCO's. We can rely on them.

## Guard Retires UH-1 Huey After 50 Years

**October 12, 2009**

Army News Service|by SFC Jon Soucy



FORT MYER, Va. - The UH-1 Iroquois helicopter was officially retired in a ceremony held here, by the Army National Guard, ending a service life of more than 50 years to the Army and close to 40 years in the Army Guard.

The helicopter, known to most simply as the Huey, was first manufactured in 1956 and fielded to the Army by 1959. Its distinctive nickname came from the pronunciation of its first Army designation of HU-1- for helicopter, utility - and later models featured the word Huey emblazoned on the pilot's foot pedals.

More than 15,000 of the aircraft were produced with about half that number having been flown during the Vietnam conflict.

Because of that, for many, the conflict and the aircraft will forever be linked. "The UH-1, more than any other helicopter or any item of equipment, became the symbol of Vietnam," said Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter, the acting director of the Army National Guard.

It was in Vietnam where the aircraft earned the reputation for being rugged, durable, versatile and able to fly even after receiving damage from tremendous enemy fire.

And just as the Jeep became the Soldiers' best friend in World War II, for many aviators and crews there will always be something special about the Huey.

"I can also attest to you that it was not just a machine, it became part of us," said Brig. Gen. Alberto Jimenez, the assistant adjutant general for the Maryland Army National Guard and the Army Guard's senior aviator. "It was our lives. It was our friend. It was the aircraft that took us in and out of Vietnam, and it was also the aircraft that saved many countless lives as we rushed the wounded and the sick out of the battlefield."

The Army Guard first began receiving the aircraft in the early 1970s and at one time the number of UH-1s in the ARNG hovered around 1,500.

"Those were the modern aircraft that replaced the CH-37 (Mojave) and the UH-34 (Choctaw)," said Jimenez.

The Huey was replaced by the UH-60 Black Hawk beginning in the late 1970s.

Though lacking the lift capabilities and speed of the Black Hawk, as well as the advanced electronic cockpit, many aviators were steadfast in their devotion to the Huey.

"The old adage of the UH-1 pilots was that when the last UH-60 (Black Hawk) was flown to the bone yard, the crew would fly back in a UH-1," Carpenter said. "It may still happen, but not likely."



SamanthaUrban

## Special Forces' Vet to Vet program and Poteet JROTC bring light to paralyzed veterans in hospital

When you talk to Retired Lt. Col. Jerry Jochum about the U.S. Army Special Forces, commonly known as the Green Berets, you **walk away with the impression that they're quite an elite group. They are trained in five primary missions: unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, special reconnaissance, direct action and counter terrorism, work with foreign military, know foreign languages and go behind enemy lines.**

Their training is intense, and approximately three percent of individuals who try out make it into the program. Each unit, or **group, is trained for a particular region of the world. They're taught the languages and cultures of that region. The job can be extremely stressful and requires an exceptional individual. They're often called the "quiet professionals."**

But there is another side to the Special Forces. Here in North Texas a group of former and retired U.S. Army Special Forces personnel and their associates make up Special Forces Association Chapter 31.

As part of their Vet to Vet program, on the last Wednesday of every month, Chapter 31 visits the Spinal Cord Injury Unit of the Dallas VA Medical Center on 4500 South Lancaster Road in Dallas.

**"I've never seen a group of guys with a bigger heart for the downtrodden," said Lt. Col. Jochum, who is senior vice president of the chapter. "We don't hold ourselves above anyone else, but you won't find a more giving group."**

Lt. Col. Jochum is also Senior Army Instructor of the Poteet High School JROTC. While SFA 31 has been visiting the hospital for the past 12 years, Jochum has brought along students from his JROTC for the past three years.

The group arrives in high spirits, bringing fried chicken, drinks and baked goods for the veterans.

**After a hearty meal, they all play bingo from their rooms as the numbers are called out over an intercom system. "The veterans tell us that they enjoy our visits for the camaraderie they feel while we're there," Jochum said.**

Justin Baehler, a freshman private in the Poteet JROTC who plans to join the military after his junior year, has visited the hospital twice since the school year began.

**"I've enjoyed being in the ROTC, especially since I get to meet people like these veterans," he said. "I feel honored to meet them."**

Lt. Col. Jochum emphasized that the students enjoy the monthly visits.

**"Once they do it, they come back every time," he said. "They love doing it. We bring a little light and entertainment to some vets who desperately need it."**

Mike Simmons is a Marine Corps veteran who has been in the Spinal Cord Injury Unit for seven weeks.

**“This place is rich with human interest stories,” he said. “What the Green Berets do is out of this world. Great food and great fellowship.”**

Chapter 31 of the Special Forces Association also has an annual fundraiser on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, from 6:30 p.m. until closing time at Dick’s Last Resort in downtown Dallas. The SFA sells tickets to the event, which includes a buffet dinner, open bar and live music. There will also be an auction of items donated by various local businesses, individuals and sports organizations as well as collectable military memorabilia.

Anyone is invited to attend. Tickets are available by visiting [sfa31.org](http://sfa31.org) or at the door for \$25.

If you cannot attend the event but would like to make a donation, you can contribute using PayPal, Visa or MasterCard on the [Web site](#). The money raised goes to support the Vet to Vet program as well as provide scholarships for veterans’ families.



Senior Vice President Jerry Jochum

## 1st SFG History

### The History of

1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne), First Special Service Force

The Global War on Terrorism (2001 – 2009)

Part 2



of reconnaissance capabilities. This was initiated at all ODA locations and is one of the single most significant shortfalls in the AFP. The AFP relies too heavily on informants and agents as they search for the elusive tip that will bring them the location of hostages or ASG leadership. There was a complete lack of emphasis on military reconnaissance and small unit patrolling that all ODAs worked to remedy. Additionally, all ODAs conducted aggressive medical training to

provide adequate self and buddy aid capabilities as well as developing medics capable of providing combat medical care.

**During one of the MEDEVAC's conducted by US aircraft at night it was an AFP medic who stabilized the patient and got him back to the Battalion TAC CP for treatment by the SF Medic prior to evacuation. The AFP medic had recently completed a training course run by the ODA and was credited with saving the AFP soldier's life. The teams also**

worked hard on the tactical decision making process with particular emphasis on intelligence preparation of the battlefield and predictive intelligence. The goal is always to fuse operations with good intelligence and develop plans to anticipate enemy actions rather than react to spotty, unreliable HUMINT. Another key aspect of training was marksmanship combined with weapons maintenance. The AFP provided training ammunition that turned out to be of generally poor quality. Also, the state of weapons repair is perhaps fair at best and in many cases there were weapons that were no longer serviceable. It was recommended that all weapons be replaced which is an ongoing project with the AFP and JUSMAG. One of the highlights of training was the LRC full mission profile (2d iteration) that involved a raid on a suspected and simulated ASG meeting in a remote area, live fire actions on the objective, CASEVAC via HH-60 of three casualties, an air assault by a scout ranger via MH-47Es company to secure a PZ and an exfiltration of the sniper observers at daylight by PAF UH-1s. The entire operation was viewed real time in the JOC via P3 and UAV imagery.

All ODAs undertook numerous local small-scale civic action projects. These took many forms. Examples included repairing a Mosque, repairing schools, repairing small bridges, establishing a water supply. ODAs worked with the main **NGO on the island, the Christian Children's Fund (CCF – head by Ms Lisa Del Puerto who is known as the "Mother of Basilan")**. **All the ODA's attended the school graduations in March with many SF soldiers serving as keynote speakers.** One of the most rewarding and beneficial CMO projects was participation in MEDCAPs. All ODAs, ODBs, and the FOB held daily sick calls for the AFP and their dependents. In addition many people from the local Barangays showed **up seeking help. Together with AFP doctors and medics US SF medics, physician's assistant, and doctors treated literally thousands of patients throughout the island.** As an example, a two-day MEDCAP held ICW NGOs, Philippine civilian doctors, and US SF and AFP medical personnel treated 1920 patients during the Isabela anniversary celebration. There were numerous heart wrenching medical problems ranging from severe skin infections, diabetes requiring limb amputations, cancer (various types), glaucoma, gunshot and knife wounds and such. The medical programs were vital in gaining the confidence of local people as well as enhancing force protection as the local residents would often provide information about potentially dangerous areas.

Engineers Arrival. The Naval Construction Task Group conducted an initial survey in March 2002 and confirmed much of what the ODAs were reporting as infrastructure problems. The engineers came away with a plan, briefed it and then returned with a 340-man task group and heavy equipment. SF and the

**engineers established an excellent working relationship and worked hard to support each other's efforts.** The work that the Engineers conducted significantly improved military capabilities in terms of road mobility (roads and bridges), logistics support (Port Holland and Basilan Airfield), as well as day-to-day operations with improved water sources. Virtually all projects benefited the local civilian communities as well. An important aspect of supporting this operation was the employment of ARSOF CA personnel to interface with the local governments and the community. The CA personnel were instrumental in getting local support.

The Unconventional Warfare skills found in Advanced Special Operations (ASO) was instrumental in the conduct of this mission. Every ODA and ODB had to employ ASO techniques. Through routine contact with a wide variety of AFP and local personnel a tremendous amount of information was gathered that was extremely valuable to the development of plans and operations at every level of command and with other government agencies.

#### Rotation of FOB 11 and FOB 13 (May 2002)

Prior to the RIP/TOA of FOB 11, being replaced by FOB 13 (MAY 2002), a number of Distinguished Persons visited various locations on Basilan. MG Lambert, CG, USASFC spent a day in March at FOB 11, AOB 120 and ODA 125 and 126; AOB 150 with ODAs 143 and 163, and AOB 180, with ODAs 183, 184, and 186. CINCPAC and the US Ambassador spent an afternoon in April at FOB 11 and ODA 125 and 126. CJSOC and the US Ambassador (again) visited FOB 11 in April. In addition, the US Embassy Pol-Mil officer, the DOS CT officer, and the DEP Chief of JUSMAG spent 2 days at FOB 11 visiting local officials such as the Governor and mayors of Isabela and Maluso and the vice Mayor of Lamitan. They also met the former governor of Basilan, Louis Alano.

The local governments and citizens of Basilan embraced the US presence. They passed unanimous resolutions initially supporting the presence of US forces and then later requesting an extension to their presence past the original 6 months in the terms of reference. Before his tour of duty on Basilan Island ended, LTC Dave Maxwell **was named the "Honored Son of Basilan" by civic leaders on the small island.** No non-Filipino had ever earned that title before and no soldier had ever been given that exalted title; once again demonstrating the close ties developed between the US and Filipino people, all working towards a common goal of peace. Many officials and citizens described how peace and order has returned to most areas. Evidence can be seen in such events as the return of civilians to Upper and Lower Mahayhay (a usual ASG stronghold), the return of 1000 displaced civilians in the Sumisip area, and the conduct of celebrations such as the 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Basilan and the First Anniversary of Isabela as an incorporated city. Numerous outdoor events supposedly could not have been conducted just months ago but now are conducted with confidence. School graduation ceremonies in Sumisip had been suspended for 5 years but were held again this March with AFP and US presence. These are indicators that the combined US and AFP presence had improved the lives of the citizens of Basilan.

#### U.S. Citizens are Rescued in the Philippines

US-trained elements scored initial military successes in June 2002 when they helped rescue US hostage Gracia Burnham and recover the remains of her husband Martin Burnham; two weeks later they provided assistance during the operation that eventually killed senior ASG leader Abu Sabaya.

On 24 June 2002, COL David Fridovich relinquished command of 1<sup>st</sup> SFG (A) and the ARSOTF to COL Joseph Smith in a ceremony held at the Armed Forces of the Philippines SOUTHCOM parade field at Camp Don Basilio Navarro, Zamboanga City, Republic of the Philippines. This was the first known 1<sup>st</sup> SFG (A) change of command to occur on foreign soil in time of war. The reviewing officer for the ceremony was BG David Burford, Deputy Commanding General, USASFC. Special Guests included,

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GEN Roy Cimatu, Chief of Staff of the AFP, and SOUTHCOM Commander, LTGEN Ernesto Carolina, and BGEN Donald Wurster, Commanding General, JTF-510 as well as countless other civilian and military guests.

Most of the initial aims for JTF-510 were met by JUL 2002, the ASG had fled the island of Basilan, one of the two American hostages survived the rescued operation, and as importantly, enhanced security and public infrastructure (wells, roads, bridges, etc.) had improved the economic and social conditions. It was time to re-evaluate the mission, reorganize forces, and move on to the next phase of the operation.

**On 31 July 2002, closing ceremonies for “Exercise Balikatan 02-2” were held at the Mansion House on Camp Navarro, Zamboanga.** With a large media contingent present, Commander, USPACOM, Adm Thomas Fargo and Philippine Chief of Staff, GEN Roy Cimatu jointly closed the exercise with a resounding label of EXERCISE COMPLETE. JTF-510 departed Zamboanga and returned to Camp Smith Hawaii leaving in place a JSOTF headquarters (JSOTF-P), stationed in Manila, and a SOUTHCOM Liaison Element (SLE) to continue advising and assisting the **AFP’s efforts to deny sanctuary to terrorists on Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.** The AFP gradually reasigned its forces leaving only two battalions on Basilan by 2006 compared with the 15 employed there only four years earlier.

### HCA Projects

Special Forces soldiers helped transform Basilan from a bastion for terrorists into a thriving island province once more; 55,000 citizens returned to the island; units conducted a series of MEDCAPS where some 31,000 citizens from Zamboanga and Basilan were treated by the doctors, dentists, and unit medics and civilian medical supporters, and large blocks of training were prepared to professionalize the AFP.

### Security Assistance Program (Jan – Dec 2003)

LIB training (Camp Enrile, Malagutay)

LRC training (Fort Magsaysay)

### Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P)

By September 2002 JTF-510 had transitioned command of US forces to a Joint Special Operations Task Force, known as JSOTF-P (Philippines), initially commanded by the First Group Commander, COL Joseph Smith. JSOTF-P continued to advise and assist the AFP while providing operations and intelligence fusion support, oversee the conduct of large-scale Humanitarian Civic Action projects in the continuing fight against terrorists in the Philippines. The JSOTF-P element also supported emerging missions in the archipelago including the conduct of a humanitarian survey on the island of Tawi Tawi in September 2002.

The forced deportation of thousands of undocumented Filipino workers from Sabah, Malaysia in late August 2002 began to create a large humanitarian problem in the Southern Philippines. JSOTF-P responding to a tasking from the Pacific Command prepared an assessment team for deployment from Mindanao to the Island of Tawi Tawi. The team conducted a comprehensive examination of conditions on the island and provided a solid report that was used by the Secretary of State and the US Country team in Manila to formulate the US National response to the crisis including humanitarian aid and advice.

Simultaneous to conduct of the Tawi Tawi assessment, elements of FOB 13 began a schedule withdrawal of forces from the Island of Basilan. With pinpoint precision FOB 13 and its subordinate elements

## 1st SFG History

successfully closed 15 military camps, retrograded tons of supplies, and moved all US forces on Basilan safely to Mindanao where they prepared for air movement to the United States.

### ODA 145 Mission

On 2 OCT 2002, SFC Mark W. Jackson was killed and CPT Michael L. Hummel was severely wounded when a motor cycle exploded (VBIED) in front of the open-air café near the front grate of Camp Malagutay, Zamboanga where they were having lunch with their AFP counterparts. A pattern of frequenting the same café had been **established by USSF soldiers stationed on Camp Malagutay and unfortunately CPT Hummel's detachment scheduled a lunch with their new counterparts at the café.** The detachment continued their ORF mission while **CPT Hummel was MEDEVAC'd to Madagan Army Medical Hospital, Fort Lewis where he fully recovered. Memorial services were held for SFC Jackson and the HQ for Company A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) on the 1<sup>st</sup> SFG (A) Compound, Fort Lewis, WA was designated JACKSON HALL in his honor.**

In 2003-2004, SOCPAC supported the AFP by training larger number Filipino forces. Again, 1<sup>st</sup> SFG(A) deployed two successive force packages, consisting of one ODB and five ODAs, to conduct Security Assistance during 2003, and a third force package in 2004 of one ODB and three ODAs. All told, the ODAs trained five AFP army and one AFP marine battalions. During the same period 1-1 SFG(A) continued training the Filipino CT force, preparing and outfitting an additional two LRCs. ODAs from 1-1SFG(A) also assisted in the design of a Joint Special Operations Group (JSOG), including AFP air force rotary wing lift assets.

The purpose of the JSOG is to employ CT forces to capture or kill terrorists. Members of the 6<sup>th</sup> SOS from Hurlburt Field provided NVG training, helping to create a night infiltration capability to insert and support the LRCs when employed.

Recognizing the need to provide a maritime interdiction capability, SOCPAC tasked NAV-SOF elements from Guam to conduct Security Assistance MTT to train Filipino navel units from SOUTHCOM on maritime patrolling and interdiction tasks during 2004. In 2005, NAV-SOF shifted to a permanent Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) effort on Mindanao and on Tawi-Tawi, an island at the southern end of the Sulu Archipelago.

SOCPAC also introduced operations and intelligence fusion teams (O/IFTs) to work with various organizations in SOUTHCOM. The O/IFTs provided advice and assistance on collection priorities and force employment at division and brigade. Beginning in 2004, 1-1SFG(A) provided two ODAs continuously to serve as O/IFTs, both to the newly created JSOG and to 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Central Mindanao. Additionally, NSW TU-1 provided small boat unit and SEAL O/IFTs to the Philippine Navy in Zamboanga and on Tawi-Tawi. The NAVSOF elements provided similar type advisory assistance to NAVSOU in southeastern Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

### CAFGU Trainers Course

### NCO Leaders Course

### Start of MEDCAPS

## 1st SFG History

In 2005, SOCPAC and SOUTHCOM pushed for a significant expansion of American assistance to the Filipino CT effort. In the summer of 2005, terrorists from the ASG and JI had moved from Mindanao to the islands of Sulu where they sought refuge. Sulu was predominantly inhabited by Muslims and is the site where Islam was introduced to the Philippines. Many members of both the Philippine and American governments believed that introducing American forces onto Jolo island in the Sulu Archipelago would have been met with intense resistance. Events in Sulu have thus far dispelled both fears.

Based on a PACOM assessment recommending such a deployment, the SECDEF approved a second iteration of OEF-P to combat terrorism in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR), specifically on the islands of the Sulu Archipelago. SOCPAC established a larger JSOTF in Zamboanga and deployed a force package to the island of Jolo, conducting operations based on the Basilan model. Using that template, SOCPAC deployed on ODB, five ODAs, and elements of the NSW TU to Sulu to advise and assist AFP units in their effort to capture key terrorists. The JSOTF developed three main lines of operation: capacity building, targeted civil military operations (CMO), and information operations. SOCPAC had wisely requested a number of combat multipliers: a CAT-B, MIST, PAO, EOD specialists, and even a Special Operations Surgical Team (SOS-T) from Hurlburt.

Like operations on the island of Basilan, JSOTF-P force conducted advisory assistance and SMEEs down to the battalion level. The goal remained to conduct all operations through, with, and by AFP forces.

From OCT 2005 – JUL 2006, JSOTF-P units assisted Task Force Comet, the AFP command on Sulu, in setting conditions to deny terrorist sanctuary. ODAs advised their partner army and marine infantry battalions in route and area security to facilitate Filipino sponsored medical, veterinary, and engineer civilian action programs, along with various population engagement activities. These combined efforts succeeded in separating the terrorists from the population. The NSW TU rehearsed Filipino units in maritime interdiction. AFSOC personnel continued working with the Filipino aviation units. Special Forces detachments trained and rehearsed select units within the Filipino army and maritime battalions in collective patrolling tasks.

On 1 AUG 2006, TF Comet launched Operation ULTIMATUM to capture the ASG and JI leadership on Sulu. Filipino Army, Marine, and Special Operations units succeeded in driving the terrorists from their sanctuaries on the island. Filipino naval units effectively cordoned Jolo Island so that the terrorists could not escape. Most impressively, TF Comet synchronized joint operations for more than 90-days, supplying logistics in the field and maintaining continuous pressure on the terrorists, all without losing the support of the local population. Unfortunately, some of the ASG leaders and their JI advisors were able to flee the island and dispersed to the islands north of Jolo and to Mindanao.

On both Basilan and Sulu, OEF-P has demonstrated the efficacy of a population-based counterinsurgency fight. Such campaigns can and will work when the local and national governments and security forces of a partner nation remain committed to eradicating conditions for terrorist sanctuaries. By building the capability of host nation forces, developing a combined Information Operations campaign which promotes government legitimacy, and refurbishing physical and human infrastructure, SOF have helped provide options to the Filipino populace and to sever its ties to terrorist ideology. OEF-P currently provides an example where a small SOF footprint has combined with collective resolve to defeat terrorism. [SOCOM History 1987-2007, 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition]

Continued in two more parts.

## Chapter Chaplain

## STAR OF WONDER

*A true story written by my wife about Christmas Eve 2008*

It was Christmas Eve 2008 ... my sister had asked me, the week prior to Christmas Eve, what plan we could come up with that would bring a meaningful touch to the evening. My response was to suggest that we do what Michael and I did with two of our own grandchildren the year before ... **let's have the children read the *Luke 2* Christmas story aloud prior to our time of gift opening. In this way we would have the children's attention and the adults would certainly be listening to the sound of their small voices. The real wonder of this was the fact we would do it at all. Our family gatherings have never been centered around open spirituality ... it was simply understood this was the time of year we celebrate Jesus Christ's birth.**

The four children were assigned 5 verses each. Noah, 11, started out followed by Carter, 8. Kaylee, 8, was a little shy in front of the entire family, so Noah willingly read his little sister's part. Taylor, 6, read the final verses. The entire family was captivated by the children as **they read the story of Jesus' birth. I was personally captivated by the spirit of God that filled the room and the hearts of our family like I have never seen before. More than likely, that was the case with the others, if truth was to be known!** Perhaps 30 minutes later the 3 boys, who had made their way outside into the cold night to **run off some of their Christmas Eve energy in my sister's front yard, came barreling into the house to find me. Noah, our oldest grandson, led the troop and excitedly ran to me asking, "Grandma, you have got to come outside! We have found the star that was over Bethlehem when Jesus was born!!" What Grandmother wouldn't venture out in the cold to see a sight like this at the urging of 3 young cousins who had made such a discovery?**

Out on the front sidewalk the 3 arms pointed up above to the brightest star in the sky as Noah announced the position of the very star that led to baby Jesus many years ago!!! The two other boys ran back into the house to get my sister, their own grandmother. As she came outside and responded to the sight in the sky the same as I did ... with wonder and amazement to match the same that was spilling out of the boys ... the youngest, Taylor, declared the very words that would pierce into the deepest place in the heart of my sister who has been alone for the past twenty years ... **"Gamma!! The star is over your house!!! You are the goodest one of God!!"**

## Chapter Chaplain

Taylor shouted the same words over and over again!! He was convinced that his Gamma was indeed the "goodest one of God"! Taylor then told his Gamma that her house was "going to Heaven" (because the star was right over her house), so she asked Taylor where she was going to sleep. He replied, "In your house - you will be in Heaven too". Gamma's quick response to him was she was NOT ready to go just yet!!



Those words, the celestial sighting, and that evening would be remembered forever in the hearts of my family. Perhaps a new tradition has been established ... to honor the ONE whom honor is due ... by celebrating JESUS CHRIST and the wonder of God's signs in the sky ... the star that led my family to HIM!

May the Lord bless each of you and your families this year and may He lead you to bring in a new tradition as well ... "to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas" with your families. God bless you one and Merry Christmas to one and all.

Your Chaplain,

Mike Edwards

## Chapter Calendar

**Vet-to-Vet is at The Transitions Unit 1100 hours on December 23rd . Avoids Christmas/ New Year**

Active Duty Children December 6th Noon until 1400 Hrs.

**Montagnard Children at Ben's December 13th at Noon.**

SFA Convention is 7 thru 13 June 2010.



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Folks,

As the Holiday Season approaches and we plan the Christmas outing for our children of deployed parents as well as the children of our Montangard community. Lets remember the spirit of giving and helping where we can.

As most of you know I have been battling cancer and as a result of this medical condition, Jerry Jochum has assumed the duties of interim President.

So UFN any questions on the day to day operations should be directed to Jerry at [jerry.jochum@us.army.mil](mailto:jerry.jochum@us.army.mil)...Thank you for your support...

On a sadder note, the chapter lost long time friend and member Tillman Cooper. Please keep the Cooper family in your prayers.

George Petrie will be inducted as the Distinguished Member of the Regiment on Jan 13, 2010 at Ft. Bragg, NC. I hope some of you will be able to attend.

Please take care of yourselves and your families during this busy holiday season. Wishing you all the very Happiest of Holiday Seasons and a very Happy New Year...

Until next time...De Oppresso Liber Ron

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