First-Coast Arrow

Newsletter of the Special Forces Association Chapter 88, Northeast Florida -- MAR-APR 2026, Vol 26-2

OFFICERS

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(Vacant)

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(Vacant)

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(Vacant)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Florida Chapter 88 Seeks Leaders
Chapter Faces Possible Deactivation

In January, at the chapter's monthly Saturday meeting, President Dewey Walker tendered his resignation letter to Secretary Thomas Burke with his intent to step down from the office of president. In his letter Walker wrote, *"It is with a heavy heart that I tender my resignation as President, a decision guided by personal and family priorities."* He added, *"Although Lilisa and I will continue to support the Chapter and remain involved in meaningful ways, we will step back from leadership responsibilities for now."* For the past decade, 10-years plus, Walker has tirelessly served, guided, grown and led as Chapter 88's longest president. His leadership helped elevate the Northeast Florida Chapter's reputation, not just locally in the community, but also nationally across the Special Forces Association. I for one will miss Walker's hands-on leadership and daily efforts to administer the chapter. However, age and medical concerns do take a toll and Walker has earned his rest.

As the newsletter editor, I have heard and published for more than a year Walker's bi-monthly *President's Message* with its repeated calls and requests for members to step up, volunteer and take-on leader and staff positions. Sadly, out of a chapter with currently 95 renewed members, just a small number of us are serving to barely keep the chapter functioning. To put it into SF terms, we are half a team short of a full ODA. We are not deployable and not combat effective.

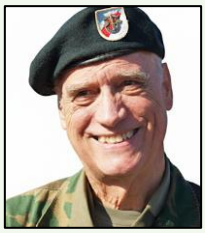
Currently, Chapter VP for Operations David Ware is the acting interim president, but he is already wearing two berets (i.e.. hats) with too much on his plate as both the S3 and golf tournament director. Ware and Secretary Tom Burke are seeking members to fill our vacant leader positions. 2026 is a chapter election year, but it might also be the last year for Chapter 88. Without YOU (yes YOU!) taking an active role, the chapter will continue to decline and pass into history.

Contact information for David Ware and Tom Burke is in the Officer/Staff directory on the left. Please volunteer and fill our ODA positions. Let's make our chapter even stronger in the years ahead.

De Oppresso Liber,

James Bullinger

First Coast Arrow Editor



In Memoriam

SGT Benjamin "Ben" Roland Scoates

Ben Scoates, 84, died on Jan 26, 2026 in Middleburg, Fla. Scoates was born May 2, 1941 in Jacksonville and later enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve at age 21 in 1962 and served with the 13th Special Forces Group (Airborne) through 1963. The 13th SFG(A) was reassigned to the Army National Guard and Scoates continued to serve with the unit from 1965 to 1968. He then transferred to the 20th SFG(A) ARNG, serving from 1973 to 1979. During his Army service he held occupational skills as a communications control specialist, a radio operator and a demolitions specialist. He joined the SFA on Dec. 1, 1997 as a Decade member (D-5713) and was a founding member and past president of Chapter 88.

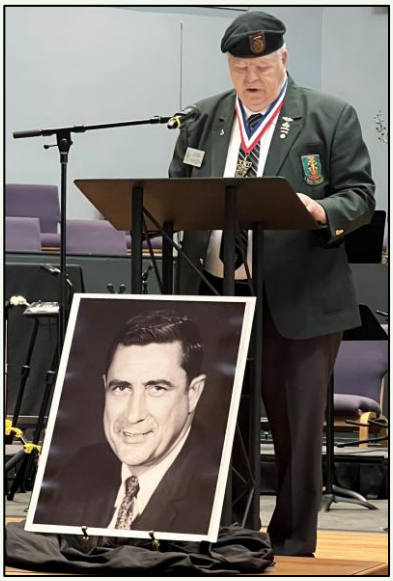
Scoates was a graduate of the University of North Florida, Jacksonville. In civilian life, he was a certified building contractor and the owner and president of Scoates Construction Inc. He loved his family, singing and the Lord, and enjoyed woodworking, reading and sudoku puzzles.

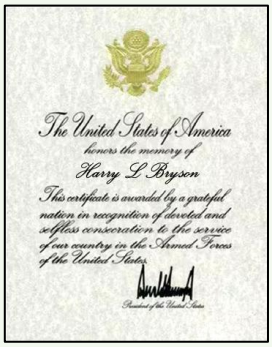
He was preceded in death by his son Ken Scoates. He is survived by his wife Jean Faulker Scoates; children Thomas Scoates, Camie Scoates and Christina Struhar (and Michael); multiple grandchildren; and his brother Wesley Scoates.

Interment service for Scoates is on March 2 at 1 pm in the Jacksonville National Cemetery.

Please keep the Scoates family in your prayers

"Rest in Peace my Warrior Brother, we shall meet again."





In Memoriam

MAJ Harry Lee (Zang) Bryson

Retired Major H.L. Bryson, 96, died on Feb. 5, 2026 in Jacksonville. Born on Aug. 12, 1929 in Sparta, Illinois; he moved in 1942 with his family to Jacksonville. He graduated early in 1948 from Robert E Lee High School.

Bryson joined the Florida Army National Guard in April 1948, serving 5-years as an enlisted soldier until May 1953. He was commissioned in June 1953 as an Infantry 2nd Lt. in the Army National Guard and attended the Ordnance Officer Basic Course in 1954. From Sept. 1958 to April 1959, Bryson was a service section officer with Co. A, 748th Armored Ord. Bn., in Jacksonville. Then he served from April 1959 to Feb. 1963 as an ordnance maintenance officer and commander of Co. A (Fwd Spt), 748th Ord. Bn., 48th Armored Div.

Bryson served over 6 years in Special Forces, transferring to Camp Blanding in February 1963 to Company C., 20th SF Group. He was briefly a detachment commander until October, then attended airborne training at Fort Benning and awarded the parachutist badge on Nov. 8, 1963. Afterwards he was the S3 operations officer for Co. C. until August 1964. From Sept. 1964 to Sept. 1965, he was the S2 combat intelligence staff officer for Co. C and attended Jungle Operations training at Fort Sherman, Panama. He also completed the Special Forces operations, Psychological opns and Counterinsurgency opns courses in 1965 and was awarded his SF qualification on Feb. 1, 1966. He then served as the executive officer for Co. C until December. Then he was a B detachment commander for 2.5-years from Dec. 1966 until August 1969. He retired Aug. 24, 1969 after 21 years of enlisted and officer ARNG service.

Bryson was a life member of the Special Forces Association, joining on Aug. 1, 1985 (M-1425).

He was preceded in death by his son, Mark M. Bryson and survived by his wife Hilda; daughter Cynthia and grandson Jason; and his extended family members.

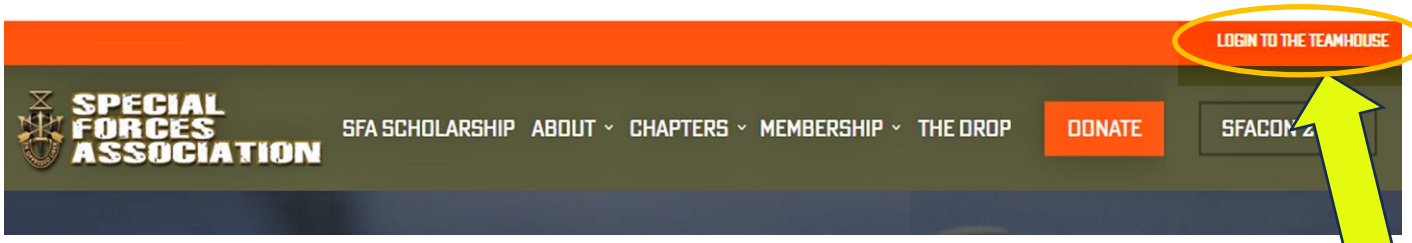
Please keep the Bryson family in your prayers

"Rest in Peace my Warrior Brother, we shall meet again."

Celebrating Bryson

SFA 88 members attended a Feb. 13 graveside interment service for Harry Bryson in the Mandarin Cemetery. Then many also attended the Celebration of Life for Bryson at the Mandarin Presbyterian Church on Feb. 14. Past chapter president Dewey Walker delivered the eulogy at the celebration and interim President David Ware presented Mrs. Hilda Bryson with a Presidential Memorial Certificate from President Trump and with a "Peace Lily" plant on behalf of Chapter 88.

LOGIN TO THE TEAMHOUSE



UPDATE Your Member Profile and Personal Data

Don't Ghost Your Family, Buddies and the SF Community.

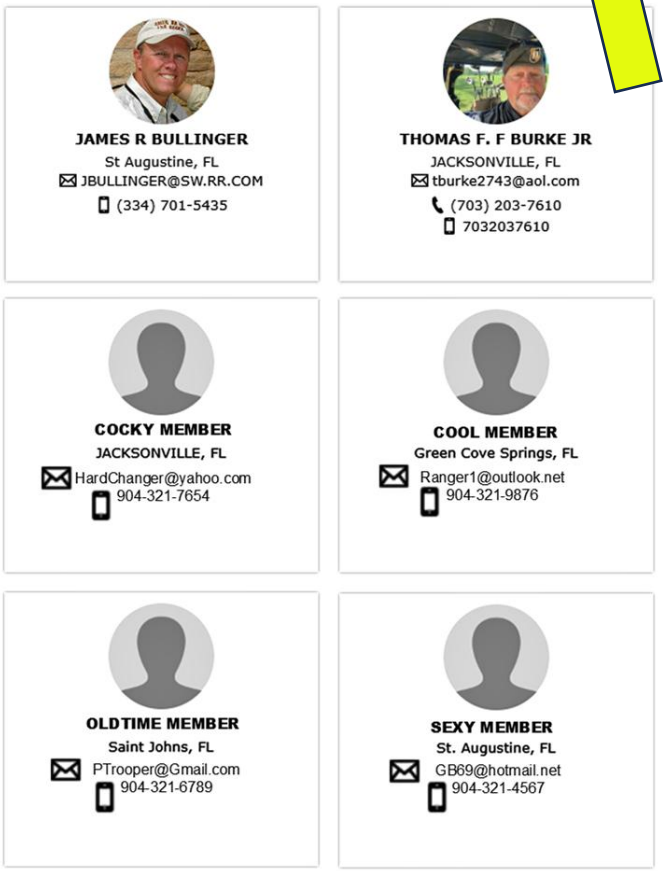
The Membership Directory on the Special Forces Association website serves as a resource to help the National Headquarters, your Chapter and your family and friends to know you, your service, and to help honor you when you are dead. **Yes, dead**! On average, about 30 SFA members die every month. Last year Chapter 88 lost 3 members – ***McRae, Cunningham*** and ***Hebron*** – and this past month 2 more members ***Scoates*** and ***Bryson*** died. All were listed on the SFA directory; however, **none of them** had any service information in their profiles. No current photos. As a result once again, the Chapter had great difficulty in assisting their families in writing quality obituaries for publication.

The vast majority of Chapter 88 members listed on the Teamhouse's Member Directory webpage do **not** have a current photo or any SF military service history. Of our listed members, less than 9 profiles have a photograph and contain some biographical data. Unfortunately, the vast majority of our member profiles have limited, or out-of-date, or no personal contact info (phone or email) or any personal military service or biographical information.

How to Update

From the Special Forces Association homepage, log into the **Teamhouse** in the upper right corner. Once you reach the Teamhouse homepage, click on the **Member Directory** tab. When you are in the directory, scroll to the **Search Criteria** box and click on the **Chapter** menu tab to find the "**Florida**" folder and then click on the **Ch. 88 Northeast Florida Chapter (Jacksonville)** bar; then hit or press the "**Search**" button. A map will appear with chapter member profile listings just below the map. There will be 4 pages of Chapter 88 members, find your profile, click on it, then edit your content and **save** it.

To learn more on how to edit your profile, click on the **Training** tab on the Teamhouse menu bar. There is a step-by-step guide on changing any aspect of your Profile on the Teamhouse Overview webpage. There is a training video and downloadable reference documents. You can also set up the Teamhouse app on a computer device or



Above, an example of how the Membership Directory page looks for Chapter 88.

on a mobile smart phone. If you need help, you can always call into the SFA headquarters and request assistance at (910) 485-5433. Don't be a faceless head. Think of your family. Please take about an hour and update your profile.

Another great place to post and store your military service history is on ***TogetherWeServed.com.*** Like the SFA Member Directory, it is an easy place to write and edit your history, upload and store photos, and research for other veterans from all services to help you reconnect. It is recommended you pay the one-time life membership fee for full access.

A 2025 Airport Holiday Tradition

On a warm, beautiful Christmas Eve (Dec. 24), Santa Claus and his elves visited the Military Lounge at the Jacksonville International Airport. Santa and his helpers spent the day providing Christmas cheer to traveling visitors, which included serving a holiday meal and passing out toys and treats to children.

Santa, played by our chapter member retired Army ***Sgt. Maj. John Page***, is one of many veteran and civilian volunteers who help to run the lounge on a daily basis. As Special Forces Association Chapter 88, we provide annual financial support to the lounge. The local American Legion also provided some of the Holiday Cheer.

In a turn of events, Air Force ***Capt. Vanessa Perez*** traveling through the airport, stopped by the lounge to surprise Santa and the staffers with her own home-baked cookie treats. Perez was flying to Wisconsin to visit her mother. She is an active-duty logistics officer and her husband is a USAF A-10 pilot, while her father served in Army Special Forces. According to Santa, "She made some great cookies!"

Here, Air Force Capt. Vanessa Perez surprises Santa Claus with her own home-baked cookies.

The other SFA Chapter 88 volunteers who serve at the lounge include Tom Meissgeier and Pat Mulvihill.

The Lounge serves active-duty military and family members travelling through airport. It is located in the main terminal hall just outside of TSA security screening and is opened 365 days a year between 8 am to 8 pm. The Lounge is funded by private donations and run with volunteer labor.

Thank you to Margaret Brendle, Military Lounge volunteer, for her contribution to this article.

Santa's helpers (from left): Diane and David Ovadia, Margaret Brendle; Santa (John Page), John Padget, Nancy Tosca and Russell McMinn.

Albini Takes Reins of the 3-20th SFG(A) at Camp Blanding

Lt. Col. Patrick Heffernan relinquished command of the 3rd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) to ***Lt. Col. Nicholas Albini*** during a change of command ceremony held Jan. 7, 2026, in the post headquarters for the Joint Training Center at Camp Blanding, Florida.

Col. Jason Hunt, commander of the 83rd Troop Command, Florida Army National Guard, presided over the passing of the battalion's colors from Heffernan to Albini, assisted by Command Sgt. Maj. Kyle Harth, the 3rd Bn.'s command senior enlisted leader.

During remarks, Hunt praised Heffernan's leadership of the battalion (he assumed command in the fall of 2023), and awarded him with the Meritorious Service Medal (3rd oakleaf cluster) for his outstanding job. Heffernan, recently promoted to colonel, moves on to an assignment with the U.S. Special Operations Detachment–Central (SOD-C). Hunt also said during his remarks that Albini was well prepared to lead the battalion.

Prior to assuming command, Albini served as the deputy garrison commander for Camp Blanding. He has previously served in a number of assignments with the 3/20th SFG to include as an operational detachment commander, commander of the Battalion Training Company and then Company C. Some of Albini's staff assignments include Joint Future Plans and operations director (J5) with the Special Operations Detachment-Central, strategic planner for the Joint Future Policy and Plans Directorate (J5) for the SOCCENT, director of the Commander's Activities Group for the Joint Task Force–Special Reconnaissance and Enabling Command (JTF-SREC) and as the future operations chief (J35) for the JTF-SREC, U.S. Special Operations Command.

Albini's operational assignments include leading U.S. and coalition soldiers during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and twice in Operation Inherent Resolve, serving during his second tour as the commander of a multinational Joint Special Operations Task Force partnered with the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service.

Albini's education includes a bachelor's degree in criminology from the University of Florida; a post graduate certificate in public sector government leadership from Norwich University, and he is a graduate of the Air Force Command and Staff College and holds a master's degree in Military Operational Arts and Science from the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

The 3rd Battalion has 5 companies, with units at Camp Blanding, Jacksonville and Wauchula in Florida and in Roanoke Rapids, NC.

Lt. Col. Patrick Heffernan gives his final departing remarks to the attendees and battalion members at the change of command.

Lt. Col. Patrick Heffernan receives the battalion's colors from Command Sgt. Maj. Kyle Harth for the last time.

Col. Jason Hunt passes the 3rd Battalion colors and command responsibility to Lt. Col. Nicholas Albini.

OPERATION: "QUIET PROFESSIONALS"

The Special Forces Monument Project Update

Great News! As of Feb. 14, we have raised **$19,332.94** (after *GoFundMe* fees) of our $18,000 objective. We are **107.4** percent of our goal amount. We have received 60 donations from 52 individuals ($16,389.94) and 8 organizations ($2943). Of the 52 individual donors, 22 (1 person twice) are on *GoFundMe* ($7799.94 (after fees)) and 30 are check and cash donors ($8590) to the Chapter. The larger donations include a $5000 gift, then five $1000 donations, followed by seven $500, one $400, two $300+, three $250, seven $200 and many smaller donations. We are thankful for each and every *GoFundMe* contribution and from check and cash donors. Every donation helps!

Two of our brother SF Association Chapters supported us. ***SFA Chapter 76*** (South Florida) in Hollywood and ***SFA Chapter 35*** (Northern Ohio) in Berea gave donations totaling $750. Outstanding! Thank you to all of our donors and repeat donors! We have funded the SF monument costs and future maintenance. You can still mail in donation checks to our chapter treasurer care of: SF Monument, 10539 Inverness Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32257. All donations are tax deductible and our Federal Tax ID is: 56-6148492.

Please plan to join us along with special guests and dignitaries, fellow special operators, families and friends for the unveiling and dedication ceremony on **Saturday, April 11** at **10am** in the Jacksonville National Cemetery, 4083 Lannie Rd, Jacksonville. After the ceremony attendees are invited to a meet & greet social with refreshments to celebrate the 39th Anniversary of the Special Forces branch at the Lannie Road Baptist Church, 5998 Lannie Road. Please contact Padraic Mulvihill for more information, call: (904) 534-0035 or email: pem@axisp.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES

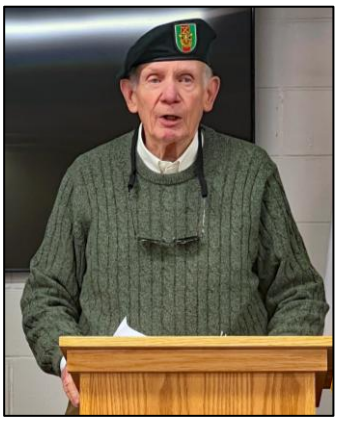
Jim Owens, Rome, GA
COL Reed Barrett, Ashburn, VA
John Arnold, Jacksonville, FL
Thomas J. Dodson, Ponte Vedra, FL
Tim Settles, Green Cove Springs, FL
James Bullinger, St. Augustine, FL
Sean Healy, Unknown
Christobal Munoz, Saint Augustine, FL
Larry & Julie Taylor, Jacksonville, FL
Charles Motsett, Unknown
David E. Beeler, Jacksonville, FL
Michael Bagley, Fleming Island, FL
Bruce Pastorini, Jacksonville, FL
Preston Bradford, East Greenwich, RI
Vernon Perry IV, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
Sandy Darden, Florida
Bonnie Cooper, Boynton Beach, FL
Thomas Burke, Jacksonville, FL
Mark Dickens, Jacksonville, FL
Kim Crenier, Unknown
Steve Mackey, Princeton, WV
Ted Cooley/Ken Longino, Lawtey, FL
Edward Steiner, Campbell, CA
Dewey Walker, Jacksonville, FL
David Ware, Fernandina, FL
Wade Carroll, Jacksonville, FL
John H. Page, Callahan, FL
SFC Andrew Obeso, Monterey, CA
Jan Bullinger, Rio Linda, CA
Chief James Faircloth, Callahan, FL
Richard Spear, Neptune Beach, FL
Leland & Betty Stanford, St. Johns, FL
Carlos Rabren, Notasulga, AL
Thomas Jackson, Orange Park, FL
Henry Luthy, Fayetteville, NC
Kyle Barrington, Woodbine, GA
Ed Beach, Quincy, FL
Padraic Mulvihill, Jacksonville, FL
Wade Carroll, Jacksonville, FL
COL Jason Psaltides, Davie, FL
Ritschl Gustavo, Ponte Verda, FL
Samuel Moore, Unknown
Jimmy Lewis, Saint Augustine, FL
James Hovda, Rice, MN
Theresa Hicks, Unknown
Peter Rossetti, Saugus, MA
Yamil Santiago, Fleming Island, FL
Clifton Watts, Unknown
John Kauffman, Unknown
Gaylene Rose, Unknown
Peter Plumeri, Unknown
Justin Dean, Unknown

ORGANIZATIONS

Carl Smith and Group, Jacksonville Beach, FL
Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Saint Augustine
SFA Chapter 35 Northern Ohio, Berea
National Sojourners Northeast Florida Chapter 435, Jacksonville
SFA Chapter 88 Northeast Florida, Jacksonville
SFA Chapter 76 South Florida, Hollywood
M.A. Steiner Construction Inc., Orangevale, CA
Perry-McCall Construction Inc., Jacksonville, FL

Editor's Note: *Thanks again to Tom Burke for providing this coverage from the January meeting.*

Life of a Warrior Series



Our January Warrior is **Capt. Padraic E. "Pat" Mulvihill**, who serves as the chapter's chairman of the Special Forces Monument Project and the veteran affairs officer.

In 1969 at 27, Mulvihill joined the Army National Guard, attending basic and AIT as a 71L administrative specialist at Fort Jackson, SC. He served as an admin specialist with Co. E, 19th Special Forces Group Airborne of the NY ARNG; attending airborne training in 1970 at Fort Benning, Ga. In 1971, Sgt. Mulvihill attended Officer Candidate School at the Empire State Military Academy at Camp Smith in Peekskill, receiving an Infantry 2nd Lt. commission in the Army Reserve. Then he attended the Infantry Officer Basic Course at Fort Benning in 1971 and later the Infantry Officer Advanced Course in 1973. During 1973-74 he served as the executive officer on ODA-41, Co. C, 3rd Bn., 19th SFG. He completed the reserve component SF Operations course in 1974 at Fort Bragg, NC. During 1974-75, he served as a platoon leader with the Military Police Company of the 42nd Inf. Div., (NY ARNG) in White Plains. Then from 1975-76, he served on Operational Detachment B-121, Co. B, 1st Bn., 11th SFGA (USAR) in Old Tappan, NY. In 1981, Mulvihill moved to Florida, transferring to the 20th SFGA, FL ARNG at Camp Blanding, serving as a detachment executive officer. From 1983-84 he was the detachment commander of ODA-35, Co. A, 3rd Bn. In 1986, Mulvihill was honorably discharged as a Captain from the Army Reserve. His awards include the Fort Jackson "Trainee of the Cycle" certificate of achievement and the Army parachutist badge.

In civilian life, Mulvihill holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting from Manhattan University of NYC and received his certified public accounting (CPA) accreditation from the University of the State of NY. He has held leadership positions in various international companies, including KPMG Peat Warwick, EY Arthur Young; Celanese; New England Petroleum-Charter Company; and with AXIOUN Strategic Planning, a boutique merger-acquisition group. He is active in Jacksonville as a leader with the Rotary Club, a key ambassador for the JAX Airport Military Lounge, serves as the information officer for the VA National Cemetery, and on the leadership team of the National POW-MIA Memorial & Museum. Mulvihill and his wife Mati reside in Jacksonville.

Get Ready for May Golf Tourney

Save the date and support the chapter! The 11th Annual Green Beret Charity Golf Tournament and fundraiser is coming on **Friday, May 8**. Hosted by Chapter 88, it is being led by ***David Ware*** and ***Wade Carroll***. This year the location is changing to the Eagle Landing Golf Club at Oakleaf Plantation in Orange Park. The goal is 120 golfers, but this also means we need chapter member support – both for golfers and worker bees. Putting on a big tournament requires people to work many of the supporting roles before, during and after the golfers compete. Not a golfer? Please consider being a volunteer. It is a fun day with a great Taco dinner. Proceeds from the tournament provide funds for our 501(c)(19) chapter administrative, charity and support services. We also need sponsors and silent auction item donations. To sign up as a golfer, a sponsor or to volunteer, visit the Chapter 88 or Perfect Golf websites or contact golf Chairman David Ware at weerware@comcast.net or call (904) 861-5062; or Wade at wdcarroll9@comcast.net or (904) 868-3861.

GREEN BERET CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

May 8, 2026

Eagle Landing Golf Course at Oakleaf Plantation

3989 Eagle Landing Parkway

Orange Park, FL

For Golfer and Sponsor Info:

David Ware

weerware@comcast.net (904) 861-5062

Or ***Wade Carroll***

wdcarroll9@comcast.net (904) 868-3861

For Info and Golfer Forms: Scan the QR Code or go to: *www.sfa88.org/golf-event/*

To Register Online: Scan the QR Code or go to: *greenberetcharitygolf.com*

Department of the Army General Order No. 35 officially established the

Special Forces Branch

as a combat arms branch of the United States Army on

April 9, 1987

Happy 39th Anniversary
to the Quiet Professionals!

"De Oppresso Liber"

Thank You for Your Service

Soldiers Receive New

Army Mountaineering Badge

Graduates from the opening class of 2026 at the Army Mountain Warfare School (AMWS) became the first to receive the newly authorized Army Mountaineering Badge. During a recent January 23 graduation from the school's basic and advanced courses, 58 graduates were pinned with the new badge. Of those graduates, about 40-percent were active-duty Soldiers.

The AMWS was established in 1983 by the Vermont National Guard at the Ethan Allen Training Site in Jericho. The new redesigned badge replaces the older iconic Ram's Head badge previously restricted only for wear by Army National Guard graduates.

In March 2025, the Army established the new Army Mountaineering Badge allowing all qualified, Army-wide personnel to wear it in the regular Army, National Guard and Reserve, who graduate from the challenging school. The distinctive badge is authorized for wear on Army uniforms.

Dress Uniform Badge and Subdued Cloth Badge

The Army Mountaineering Badge recognizes proficiency in military mountaineering skills and specialized advanced winter operations training to effectively fight in hazardous, high-altitude terrain. The badge includes a ram's head (representing the original device) with golden horns (symbolizing knowledge and experience), and an ice axe (readiness and safety) crossed with a bayonet (combat readiness). It is categorized as a Group 4 badge similar to Pathfinder or Parachutist badges.

At the ceremony, retired Col. Dave Freeman, the first AMWS commander, pinned the first device on the honor graduate. Freeman was joined by Herbert Schneider, the great-grandson of Hannes Schneider, a foundational figure in modern military ski and mountain operations. Hannes played a critical role during World War II in training the Army's 10th Mountain Division.

The Army Mountain Warfare School serves as the U.S. Army Infantry School's national schoolhouse and subject-matter experts in mountaineering training and education. Since 1983, the school has trained tens of thousands of students from all military branches and components, and numerous civilian and foreign agencies.

(Edited from Army and AUSA news stories)

Correcting the Record on Special Forces History – The Green Beret

In **1951**, Maj. Gen. Robert A. McClure chose former OSS member Col. Aaron Bank as Operations Branch Chief of the Special Operations Division of the Psychological Warfare Staff in the Pentagon. Later that year, Col. Bank was directed to establish an "unconventional warfare" action unit.

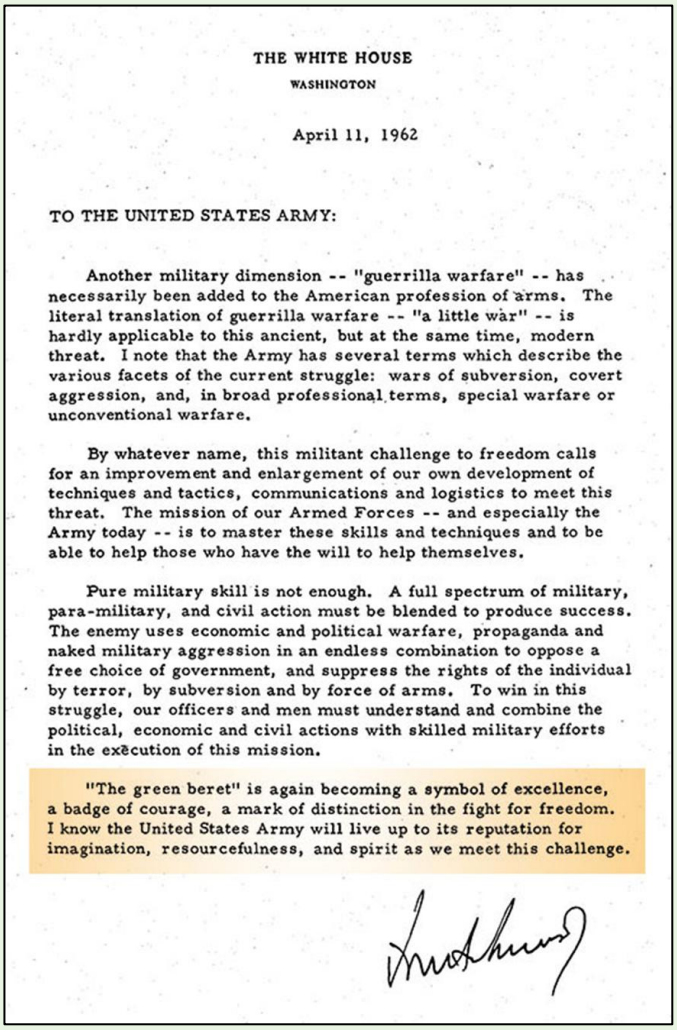
The 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) was activated on **May 19, 1952** and the 10th SF Group was activated on **June 19, 1952**, at Fort Bragg, NC, under the command of Col. Bank. The 10th SFG(A) was split with the cadre that kept the 10th SFG(A) designation deployed in September 1953 to Bad Tölz, Germany. The remaining cadre at Fort Bragg then formed the 77th SF Group, which in May 1960 was reorganized and designated as today's 7th SFG(A).

In **1954**, Special Forces leadership adopted the iconic ***green beret*** as a means to distinguish themselves from the conventional Army. The US Army officially designated the *green beret* as the exclusive headgear of Special Forces through Department of the Army Message 578636 on **Sept. 25, 1961**. The DA Message reversed a 1956 ban on the beret, which had been worn unofficially since 1954. The September DA Message marks the official recognition date of the beret for Special Forces personnel.

Contrary to a false misconception, President John F. Kennedy, who was a strong supporter of SF, did not establish or direct the beret as the headgear for Special Forces. After a visit on **Oct. 12, 1961** to the Army's Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, Kennedy later penned an official White House memorandum on **April 11, 1962**, to the US Army. This memo was an encouragement to Army leadership to pursue a full spectrum military and "guerrilla warfare." Kennedy's memo is often misquoted and he did not direct the beret for SF personnel, he actually wrote, "*"The green beret" is again becoming a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom."*

The White House memo, dated nearly 7 months after the US Army officially approved the Green Beret headgear, was not an authorization or a directive making the green beret the headgear of Army Special Forces. The Army had approved the Green Beret headgear by a DA message 17 days before Kennedy's visit to Fort Bragg. (See actual WH memo)

The Special Forces branch was officially established as a combat arms branch of the U.S. Army on **April 9, 1987** by Department of the Army General Order No. 35. This year marks the 39th anniversary of the branch.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 11, 1962

TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY:

Another military dimension -- "guerrilla warfare" -- has necessarily been added to the American profession of arms. The literal translation of guerrilla warfare -- "a little war" -- is hardly applicable to this ancient, but at the same time, modern threat. I note that the Army has several terms which describe the various facets of the current struggle: wars of subversion, covert aggression, and, in broad professional terms, special warfare or unconventional warfare.

By whatever name, this militant challenge to freedom calls for an improvement and enlargement of our own development of techniques and tactics, communications and logistics to meet this threat. The mission of our Armed Forces -- and especially the Army today -- is to master these skills and techniques and to be able to help those who have the will to help themselves.

Pure military skill is not enough. A full spectrum of military, para-military, and civil action must be blended to produce success. The enemy uses economic and political warfare, propaganda and naked military aggression in an endless combination to oppose a free choice of government, and suppress the rights of the individual by terror, by subversion and by force of arms. To win in this struggle, our officers and men must understand and combine the political, economic and civil actions with skilled military efforts in the execution of this mission.

"The green beret" is again becoming a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom. I know the United States Army will live up to its reputation for imagination, resourcefulness, and spirit as we meet this challenge.

The White House memorandum by President John F. Kennedy, signed and dated April 11, 1961. It did not approve or direct the Army to authorize Special Forces personnel to wear the Green Beret, only acknowledged the importance of Special Forces in future warfare.

The Special Forces Tab was authorized by Army Chief of Staff Gen. John Wickham on **June 17, 1983** and is a service school qualification tab awarded to Soldiers who complete the Special Forces Qualification Course.

The metal replica SF tab was approved by the Army on **November 25, 1984**. Unlike the green beret, Soldiers who are awarded the Special Forces Tab are authorized to wear it for the remainder of their military careers, even when not serving with an Army Special Forces unit.

Today, only Special Forces-qualified Soldiers wear the green beret while assigned to a SF unit, with support Soldiers wearing maroon berets. Once a SF qualified Soldier departs from a Special Forces unit, they are no longer authorized to wear the green beret headgear.

Editor's Note: *This information is compiled from multiple Department of the Army and White House sources.*

Chapter 88 Readies to Support Annual JROTC Awards

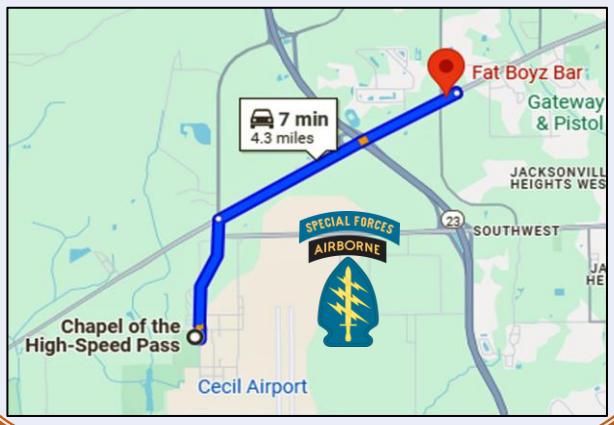
John Page and ***Scott Eder*** lead our chapter efforts to connect with and support the high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in the greater Jacksonville area.

If you have not had an opportunity to be a chapter presenter, please consider volunteering in March, April and May. Past presenters will vouch it is a worthwhile and rewarding experience to engage with these young outstanding future leaders. Chapter 88 awards SFA Award of Excellence certificate and medal sets to 26 area JROTC cadets, along with a number of designated scholarship awards.

Please contact John Page to learn when, where or how you can serve.

After the Monthly Meeting…

Come join members rallying for a post-meeting drink at ***Fat Boyz Bar*** located at 11137 Normandy Blvd, Jacksonville. From the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass, it's an easy 4.2 mile or 7-minute drive. Chapter 88 members receive free coffee. Find "Fat Boyz Bar" on *Facebook*.



SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION NEWS

2026 SFA Scholarships It's time to apply for the annual SFA Scholarships. The application window opens on April 1 and closes May 15. The new scholarship page (Scholarships - Special Forces Association) on the Teamhouse website provides information and instructions on submitting applications. Last year, the SFA awarded $55,000 in vocational and educational scholarships to family members.

Annual Gathering SFACON 2026 will be hosted by Chapter 7 in Fort Walton Beach and the Eglin AFB area of the Florida panhandle during June 7-11. Preliminary information is on the Teamhouse SFACON page (SFA Convention 2026 - Special Forces Association), more info to follow.

The DROP A change is coming. The current publisher informed SFA they can no longer produce the quarterly ***Drop*** magazine. A volunteer group evaluated several alternatives with an eye towards modernizing the ***Drop*** while maintaining the features members find most valuable. SFA Chief Data Officer Frank Roberts will bring the layout and design in-house to save costs and produce a digital version. We are still looking for a printer to print and mail the paper copies at an affordable price. More information will be provided as it becomes available. New information is being sent to Chapter Presidents on Chapter News submissions.

Chapter Meetings are held on the first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. in the *Chapel of the High-Speed Pass,* 6112 POW-MIA Parkway on *Cecil Field.*

MAR 7 – APR 4 – MAY 2

First-Coast Arrow is published bi-monthly by Chapter 88 and is an un-official publication of the Special Forces Association. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Special Forces Association or the U.S. Department of Defense. If you have news, suggestions or ideas you think would be useful, email us at jamesbullinger@outlook.com.
SFA Chapter 88, P.O. Box 7452, Jacksonville, FL 32238

Newsletter Submission Deadlines 2026

- May-Jun = *Apr 15*
- Jul-Aug = *Jun 15*
- Sep-Oct = *Aug 15*
- Nov-Dec = *Oct 15*
- Jan-Feb = *Dec 15*