



Chapter XXXI Dallas/ Fort Worth Special Forces Association

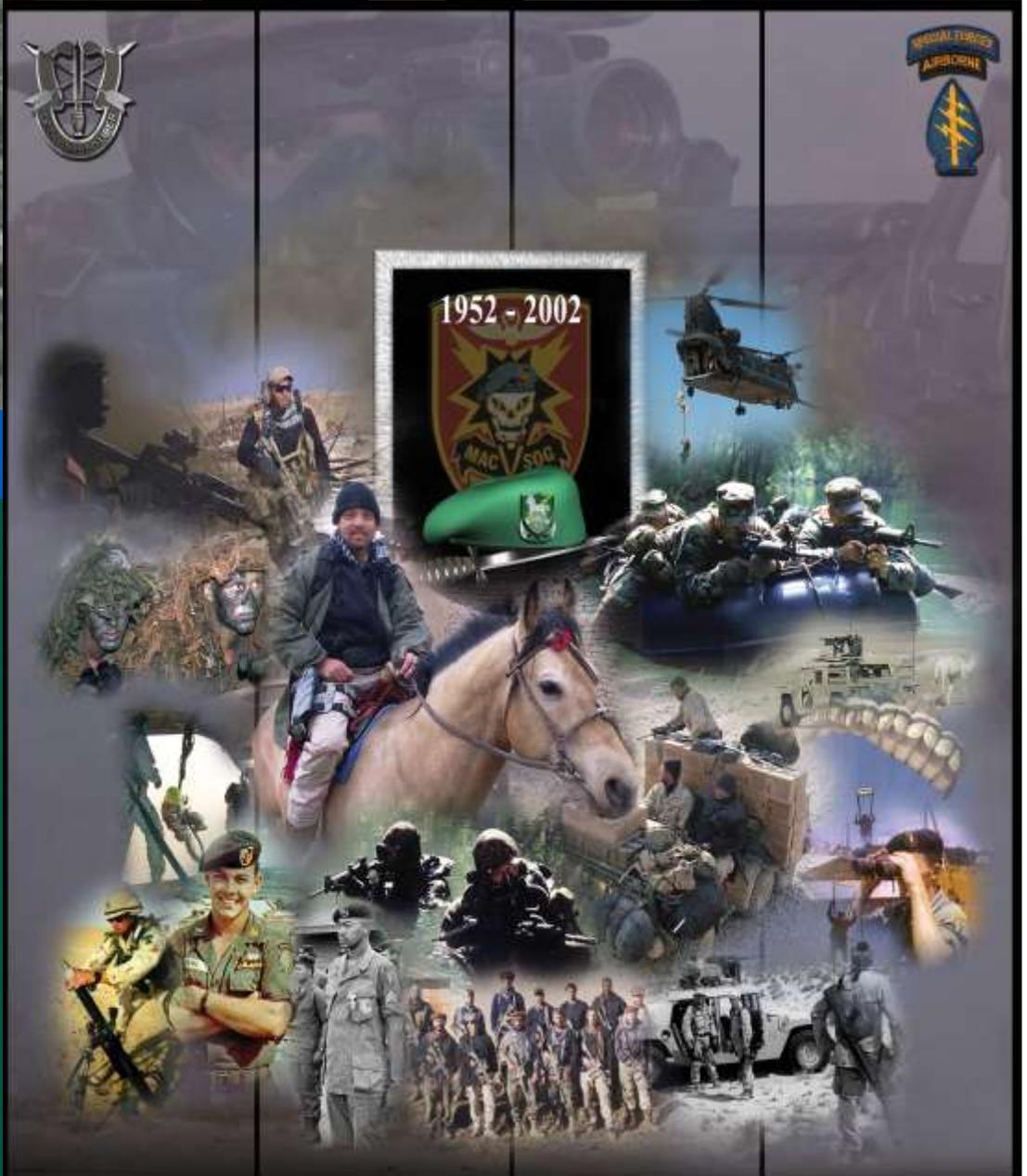


Volume 1 Issue 9

November 2009



Billy M Smith
Memorial Chapter



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5th SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (Airborne)

USASOC POSTER

Celebrate Veterans Day with a Vet!



Special Forces Association Chapter XXXI



www.sfa31.org

Presents

Annual Fundraising Event

When November 11th, 2009

Time 6:30pm - ???

Cost \$25 per person | \$10 with Military ID

Where Dick's Last Resort
2211 N Lamar Dallas, TX 75202 (214) 747-0001



Bid on authentic Special Forces Military Collector's Items!

(e.g. Custom .45 Automatic 1911)

Silent Auction, Autographs, Pictures & More!



Cost includes Buffet Dinner, Open Bar & Live Music
(beer, wine and well drinks)



All proceeds go towards the direct support of our SFA National and Chapter programs.

Special Forces Association Chapter XXXI is a 501(c)(19) veteran's organization. All donations are tax deductible. Visit <http://www.sfa31.org> to purchase tickets or make a contribution. Visa & MC accepted.

SPECIAL FORCES TEAM ODA 092 PRESENTATION AND CAMP FLAG, CAMP ALAMO, BAQUBAH IRAQ. PRESENTED TO SFA CHAPTER 31 FOR OUTSTANDING SUPPORT TO TEAM WHILE DEPLOYED.

MINIMUM BID: \$350.00



5 TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE)

SERVED IN VIETNAM FROM 1964 TO 1972.

**FRAMED AND MATTED PHOTO OF 5TH SFG(A) BERET WITH
PATCHES, FLASH AND SF CREST.**

MINIMUM BID: \$200.00



**FRAMED AND MATTED PHOTO OF OMAHA BEACH
JUNE 6 TH 1944.**

**INCLUDES PATCHES OF ARMY UNITS THAT LANDED ON D-
DAY; 29 TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 1 ST INFANTRY DIVISION,
RANGER PATCH AND COMBAT INFANTRY BADGE**

MINIMUM BID: \$275.00



.45 AUTOMATIC PISTOL 1911-COLLECTOR EDITION

COMMEMORATING WORLD WAR II PACIFIC THEATER CAMPAIGNS

MINIMUM BID: \$1,000.00



**D-DAY COMMEMORATIVE FRAMED AND MATTED.
INCLUDES PHOTOS AND SAND FROM NORMANDY BEACH.**

MINIMUM BID. \$200.00



“RANGERS LEAD THE WAY”

SHADOW BOX WITH RANGER KNIFE, AND HISTORICAL COLLECTION OF RANGERS PATCHES

MINIMUM BID: \$250.00



SHADOW BOX

“THE GREEN BERETS”

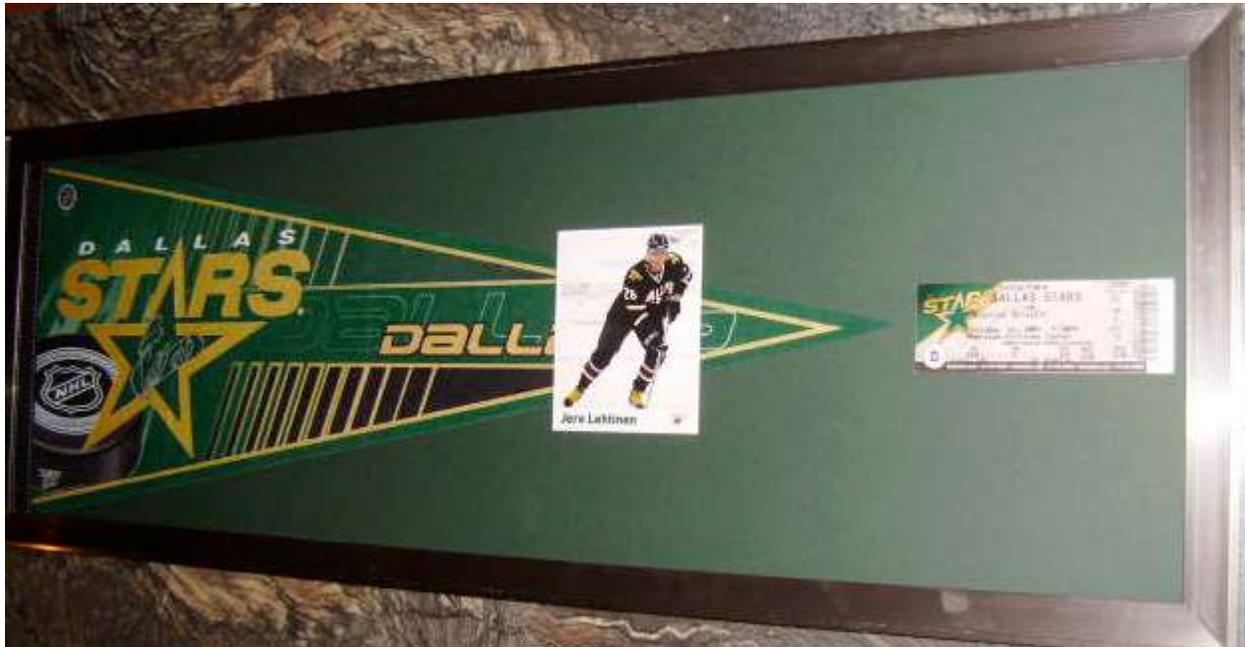
**SF KNIFE, PATCHES AND CRESTS CELEBRATING THE HISTORY OF THE U S
ARMY SPECIAL FORCES**

MINIMUM BID: \$250.00



DALLAS STARS AUTOGRAPHED PENNANT – JERE LEHTINEN, 2009-2010 SEASON

MINIMUM BID: \$100.00



GREEN BERET KNIFE WITH CASE

CUSTOM DESIGNED AND MADE BY LEGENDARY KNIFE MAKER CHRIS REEVE

MINIMUM BID \$500.00



**REUNION OVER HANOI
BY PHILIP WEST**

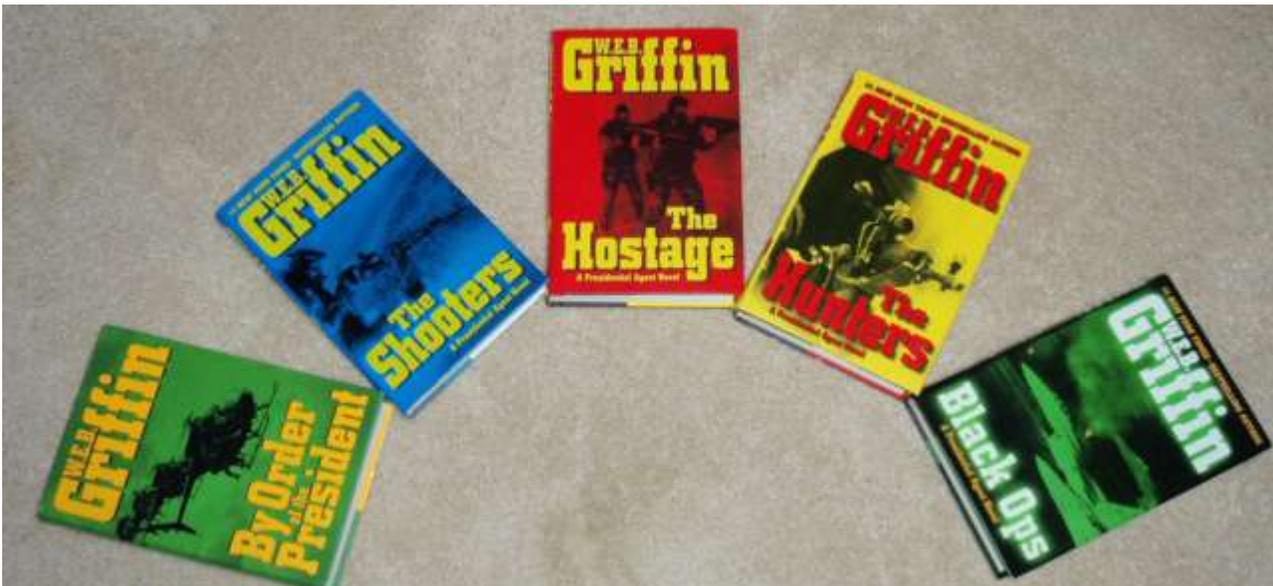
**DRAMATIC FRAMED AND MATTED PRINT OF AIR ACTION OVER HANOI
AUTOGRAPHED BY KEN CORDIER, FORMER POW AT HANOI HILTON FOR
OVER SIX YEARS**

MINIMUM BID \$300.00





**CARVED WOOD MODEL UH1 HUEY HELICOPTER
CARVED WOOD MODEL HELICOPTER UH 60 BLACKHAWK
CARVED WOOD MODEL H3-OH6 HELICOPTER
CARVED WOOD MODEL COBRA HELICOPTER
CARVED WOOD MODEL A-10 AIRCRAFT MINIMUM BID \$50.00 each**



**W.E.B. GRIFFIN SET OF 5 BOOKS
AUTOGRAPHED BY AUTHOR
MINIMUM BID \$ 150.00**

1st SFG History

The History of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), First Special Service Force The Global War on Terrorism (2001 – 2009) Part 1



The Global War on Terrorism. 1st SFG(A) found itself already preparing for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) in the Pacific with their focus on developing Host Nation and Partner Nation militaries to create secure environments for good governance and the rule of law. These skills, developed over decades of engagement with Pacific Rim countries, were developed while aiding these countries through several local crisis. The fall of the Pol Pot government and the **Kemer Ruge in Cambodia, the fall of the Soviet backed government in Laos, Sri Lanka's struggle with the Tamil Tigers, Counter Drug operations in the Golden Triangle and throughout the region, are all examples of operations that did not make the headlines, but were instrumental in setting the conditions for**

The unit continued operations in Asia well into the year 2003 working to defeat terrorist elements in the region. Once again, the First Special Forces Group (Airborne) proudly serves its country's interests throughout Asia and the Pacific Basin, performing its role as teachers, soldiers, and ambassadors. Since its activation in July 1957, the 1st Special Forces Group has maintained a close association with the Philippines.

The 1st SF Group has conducted numerous missions, ranging from humanitarian assistance and foreign. internal defense to the ongoing unconventional-warfare operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. No matter which mission they have been assigned, the soldiers of the 1st SF Group have always stood "balikatan" (shoulder to shoulder) with their counterparts in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, or AFP.

Even after the Philippine government signed peace treaties with Islamic nationalist groups, and even after communist insurgencies had almost ceased to exist in the Philippines, a new menace emerged. Bandit groups in the southern provinces were kidnapping and killing Filipinos and foreigners. These groups were not only destroying the Philippine tourist industry, they were spreading fear and discontent among the people. In the depths of the Asian economic crisis, the Philippine government sought a military solution to help deal with the problem.

After a careful analysis of the possible courses of action and after consultation with the U.S. State Department, the Philippine government decided to establish the light-reaction company, or LRC. The unit consists of a company of AFP soldiers from the Philippine special-operations command, armed with the latest equipment and trained by the 1st SF Group. Accompanied by soldiers of the 1st SF Group, the LRC is currently conducting a variety of operations throughout the Philippines.

Almost immediately after the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, the president of the Philippines offered to assist the U.S. in the global war on terrorism. After definite confirmation of links between Philippine bandit groups and terrorist cells, the Philippine people once again welcomed the soldiers of the 1st SF Group to train, advise and assist the APP in destroying those organizations. Today soldiers of the two countries are once again standing shoulder-to-shoulder, helping to rid the world of the terrorist plague.

Light Reaction Company (LRC). Evolving requirements to enhance the capabilities of regional counter terrorist forces from allied foreign nations in Asia led to the deployment of members from the 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (A) to the Republic of the Philippines in February 2001 with a mission to train the National Counter Terrorism (CT) force for the Philippines. Between March and August 2001 Special Forces trainers executed an in-depth program of activities designed to train a world-class CT force designated **“Light Reaction Company (LRC).”** Organized as a **90-man squadron with assault and sniper “troops,” LRC I was a stand-alone** response force designed to lead assaults against a growing number of insurgents and terrorists conducting kidnap for ransom activities. During the execution of the training it became more and more apparent to all concerned that the LRC 1 element was an extremely competent and motivated element; with US weapons, night vision systems, and communications, the LRC was a very capable force. Assessments conducted identified significant shortfalls in the Philippine CT capabilities; full-fledged CT capabilities required development of command and control and logistical support. A planning team was preparing to conduct an in-depth assessment of Philippine CT capabilities on September 11th, 2001; these plans would soon be altered as the Pentagon began to review its options to engage terrorists throughout the world as President Bush declared a Global War on Terrorism.

9/11

The Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)

From 1984 through 2001, the primary effort in Asia was the engagement of friendly Nations supporting regional deterrence efforts in hot spots like the Korean Peninsula, and the maintenance of alliances and treaties within the region. The events of September 11th, 2001 would alter the unit focus for many years to come.

On the day of that murderous event, First Group members were poised to begin an assessment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to facilitate enhancing their of the counter terrorist operations in the Philippines in response to a growing Muslim insurgency linked to Al Qaeda.

The Pentagon

On that bloody morning on 11 September 2001, MAJ Wallace “Cole” Hogan had just settled in to his new desk in the Pentagon. He was one of 125 service members, employees, and contractors that were killed at the Pentagon when American Airlines Flight 77 slammed into the western side of the Pentagon. A member of the 1st SFG (A) until his assignment to the Pentagon, Cole had served in the 3rd Battalion as an ODA commander.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

OEF-PHILIPPINES (OEF-P). Even before 11 SEP 2001 (9/11), the Commander, Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) had identified the Al Qaeda-affiliated Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), operating in the Philippines, as a significant threat to Filipino and American interests. The Philippines was and still is experiencing several on-going insurgencies, some related to Islamic extremist groups. The ASG – with ties to Al Qaeda, Jemiah Islamiya, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) – was infamous for its hostage for ransom and bombing for extortion activities. In response to a request from the Filipino government, SOCPAC deployed a mobile training team (MTT) from 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), under the command of LTC David S. Maxwell, between March and July 2001 to develop a counter-terrorist capability in the form of a Light Reaction Company (LRC).

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The timing proved fortuitous. While the Special Forces detachments from 1st Battalion trained the Filipino company, the ASG kidnapped two Americans on 27 May 2002 and held them on the island of Basilan. Upon completion of its training, the LRC deployed to Basilan in July 2001 to assist conventional Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) battalions in destroying the ASG and in rescuing the American and other foreign hostages.

US planning for this operation began immediately after 9-11 though the roots of the advisory assistance mission began during the Light Reaction Company MTT that took place from March through July 2001. During this time 1-1 personnel recognized that the LRC could not be effectively employed because there was no command and control structure designed to employ and support it. Plans were made at CINCPAC, SOCPAC, and 1st SFG (A) to conduct an assessment for follow-on training requirements to allow for effective employment of the LRC and to enhance additional conventional AFP forces to conduct operations against terrorist organizations and in particular the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). When 9-11 occurred planning for this assessment was actually taking place in Hawaii. An initial deployment to Zamboanga via Manila by the FOB 11 Cdr and the ODA Cdr, who trained the LRC, was scheduled for 12 SEP 2001 but was postponed and subsequently conducted on 19 SEP 2001. This visit provided initial insights into employment of the LRC and operations conducted between JUL and SEP. Following the Burnham hostage taking on 27 May 2002 1st Battalion provided intelligence support and LRC subject matter experts (SME) to the CINC's SOCPAC led Pacific Situational Awareness Team (PSAT) located at the US Embassy in Manila. (Note: This later evolved into the Counter-Terrorism LNO cell). 1st SFG (A) personnel continuously provided manning for this cell since May 2001 until its closure in late 2002.

Members of the 1st SFG (A) deployed to Hawaii following the 9-11 attacks to begin contingency planning. A planning cell from the Group HQ deployed; FOB 11 deployed two planners/LNOs to SOCPAC HQ during the week of 9-11. One officer remained at SOCPAC for the duration of the planning effort through JAN 2002. These planners allowed SOCPAC to have immediate advice and input on 1st SFG(A) capabilities and limitations and to allow the SOCPAC planners to plan with the most current information. In OCT-NOV 2001, PACOM and the AFP's Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) conducted a combined assessment of troubled areas in the southern Philippines. The Group Commander, the FOB 11 Cdr and ODA 134 Cdr participated as members of the CINCPAC directed, 1st SFG(A) led Terrorism Coordination Assistance Visit (TCAV). Members included subject matter experts from 1st SFG (A), SOCPAC J2, NSWTU-PAC, and 353d SOG. The TCAV conducted meetings and discussions with the national level in Manila, SOUTHCOM HQ in Zamboanga, and JTF Comet staff and tactical units on Basilan. This assessment provided the foundation for the employment of Special Operations Forces to the island of Basilan.

The TCAV results were briefed to the CINC in NOV and a CINCPAC plan was developed in December.

PACOM's Commander then requested and received authority to deploy a training and advisory package to Basilan Island to assist SOUTCOM in its efforts to defeat terrorism. Phase I of the plan was approved in JAN 2002. In the meantime SOCPAC deployed an intelligence fusion cell to the Armed Forces of the Philippines Southern Command (AFP SOUTHCOM) HQ in Zamboanga City, Mindanao in DEC 2001. 1st Battalion personnel included one 18E communications sergeant and one 18D medical sergeant. These two personnel had trained the LRC, had deployed on the TCAV and would later advise the LRC.

FOB 11 conducted ODB and ODA training focused on preparing for the Philippines mission while FOB's 12 and 13 began to prepare forces for deployment into the Philippines. Due to 9-11, force protection issues, and the loss of airlift support, FOB 11 Exercise White Tiger, scheduled for OCT-NOV in Korea was cancelled. Instead Exercise White Dragon was conducted on Okinawa with a focus on UW operations, combat skills, infiltration and exfiltration incorporating Special Operations support elements including E/160th MH-47Es, Para Rescue and STS elements from the 353rd Special Operations Group (SOG). This training was conducted in the jungle environments of the Northern Training Area on

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Okinawa. Initial mission analysis by all elements identified a need for additional ASOT skills and training using the in-house Snap-Shot and Broken Axle courses as developed by 1st SFG (A) to better prepare SF soldiers for the counter terrorist operations that SOCPAC was planning.

Brig Gen Donald Wurster, Commander, SOCPAC, commanded the resulting operation known as Balikatan 02-1 to the Filipinos, but as OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM – PHILIPPINES (OEF-P) to the United States. SOCPAC deployed Joint Task Force (JTF) 510 to Zamboanga City on Mindanao, Philippines in JAN 2002 to prepare for the introduction of forces onto Basilan.

Upon approval of the Phase I concept of operations by the Joint Staff, 1st SFG (A) personnel and operational detachments from Fort Lewis deployed to Torii Station, Okinawa to establish the ARSOF intermediate staging base (ISB) and to conduct mission preparation. Below Joint Task Force 510 the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) was organized under an Army Special Operations Task Force (ARSOTF) which was commanded by the 1st Special Forces Group (A) Commander, COL David Fridovich. ARSOTF elements included FOB 11, with slices from the 112th Signal Battalion, 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, 528th Special Operations Support Battalion and various individual augmentee personnel. Support elements operated from Edwin Andrews Air Base (EAAB), Zamboanga. Additional JTF components included the Joint Special Operations Air Component Command (JSOACC) which commanded MC-130, P-3 Orion, HH-60, MH-47E, and MH-60L aircraft during the deployment, and the Naval Construction Task Group (NCTG) activated to control SEABEES and Marine Security Element forces. The task organization for FOB 11 included AOB 150 with ODAs 143, 153, and 163; AOB 180 with ODAs 183, 184, and 186, and AOB 120 with ODAs 114, 125, and 125. ODA 112 was CHOPPED to the ARSOTF to advise and assist TF Zamboanga, and **ODA 134 was OPCON to FOB 11 advising the LRC. FOB 11's organic SOT-A** supported the ARSOTF MID and subsequently deployed with FOB 11 to Basilan. It was determined at this time that a personal security detachment was required for CJTF 510 so a split team of ODA 132 was deployed to execute this mission. The approved mission statement for 1st SFG (A) was:

MISSION: On order, ARSOTF conducts Unconventional Warfare Operations in the Southern Philippines through, by, and with the Armed Forces of the Philippines to assist the Government of the Philippines in the destruction of terrorist organizations and the separation of the population from the terrorist organizations.

From FEB – JUL 2002, ten Operational Detachments Alpha (ODAs) and three Operational Detachments Bravo (ODBs) of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) from both 1st Battalion in Okinawa and 1st SFG(A) at Ft. Lewis, Washington, provided training, advice and assistance to 15 AFP Infantry Battalions. Their mission on Basilan, as directed by FOB 11, was to work through, by, and with AFP units to destroy the ASG organization on the island. Prohibited from conducting combat operations and performing advisory tasks below battalion level, the ODAs focused on denying ASG sanctuary by preparing the AFP to improve security operations by controlling lines of communication, improving infrastructure for the local populace through civil affairs, and bolstering the government in the eyes of citizens through information operations (IO). Both 96th Civil Affairs Battalion and 4th Psychological Operations Battalion (POB) deployed forces to facilitate these efforts.

During mission preparation at Torii Station, Ft Lewis ODBs and ODAs integrated with FOB 11 and focused training on combat skills, communications, rules of engagement (ROE), and intensive Public Affairs training. Due to delays in Philippine approval of a Terms of Reference (TOR) the time at the ISB was extended from the planned 14-days to nearly 4 weeks. Initial deployment of ADVON personnel (including ODA 112 and ODA 134 as well as the FOB S4 occurred in January; however, they were not allowed to spend more than a few hours on Basilan to prepare for the arrival of the main body. The JTF and ARSOTF also deployed in January to establish the conditions for the deployment of forces to Basilan.

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On 16 February 2002 the initial deployment of unit personnel began via military air from Kadena Air Base to Edwin Andrews Air Base (EAAB) in Zamboanga. The deployment was phased with key leaders from the AR-SOTF, FOB, AOBs, and ODAs followed by the remainder of the force over the period of a week. While at **Zamboanga all personnel were required to attend “cultural sensitivity training.” This was a requirement based on an agreement made during negotiations for the TOR.** The training consisted of a seminar with various local officials, Muslim clerics, and academics. Initial seminars were heavily observed by the press anxious to learn **about the Americans now in their country and ready to seize upon any misstep as a “newsworthy event”.** The seminar was topical in nature and although some information was new, the SF soldiers deploying were already well prepared to deal with the culture in the Southern Philippines and on Basilan Island.

Due to extensive media scrutiny and political considerations of US forces conducting operations in the Philippines, **the deployment of US troops to the Philippines would be designated as part of a JCS exercise “Balikatan.”** As such, opening ceremonies were held for Exercise Balikatan on XXXXX February 2002.

The first elements to deploy to Basilan traveled via MH-47 in daylight into LZ X-Ray at Camp Tabiawan, HQ for the AFP 103d Infantry Brigade (TG Thunder). Two days prior ODAs 134 and 112 deployed and surveyed routes to each AOB location and provided initial LZ security and convoy escorts for movement from X-Ray to the AOB locations. Due to delays in constructing adequate landing pads for the MH-47s the aircraft were initially billeted at Benito Ebuena Mactan Air Base in Cebu, some 300 miles north of the ARSOTF base. This arrangement meant that infiltrations lasted many hours as aircraft transited from Cebu to Zamboanga loaded, flew to Basilan, deposited cargo and pax at night onto small HLZs and then returned over water to Cebu.

Deployment of the last SF element (35 pax, plus cargo) aboard two MH-47E helos was marred by the loss of one aircraft on XX February 2002. The second MH-47E (WILD 42) crashed enroute back to its base at Mactan with a loss of 10 pax; 8 members of E/160th SOAR and 2 PJs from the 353rd Special Operations Group (SOG) perished during the crash. Following a planned course turn, both pilots aboard WILD 42 experienced difficulties regaining the proper attitude and within a short moment the helicopter moving low over the water and at high-speed crashed into the Sulu Sea near the Bohol Strait some 150 miles north of Zamboanga. An hour prior, some 35 ARSOF members flew aboard the same helicopter enroute to Basilan Island. A search and recovery operation **was only successful in recovering aircraft wreckage and many of the crew’s remains.**

During late February into early March 2002, 1st SFG (A) tactical elements began deploying to initial operating locations on Basilan Island and linking up with host nation forces. FOB 11 (Alaska) was established at Camp Tabiawan near the town of Isabela. AOB 150 (Florida) deployed to Campo Uno approximately 9 KM south of Lamitan at the 18th Infantry Bn HQ. Co-located there was ODA 143 (Tampa) which was responsible for CAFGU training, ODA 163 (Orlando) which advised the 18th IB Cdr. ODA 153 (Miami) deployed to Tipo-Tipo to advise the 32d IB. AOB 120 (Texas) deployed to Maluso to advise the 2d Phil Marine Bde (TG Tornado commanded by the infamous COL Miranda). ODA 114 (Austin) deployed to Geon to advise the 1st Marine Bn Landing Team (MBLT) while ODA 125 (Dallas) deployed to Upper Mahayhay to advise the 5th MBLT and ODA 126 (Houston) deployed to Lower Mahayhay to advise the Marine Force Recon Battalion (FRBN). AOB 180 remained at Camp Tabiawan to advise the 103d Infantry Brigade (TG Thunder commanded by COL Alexander Aleo) while ODA 183 (Seattle) deployed to advise the 1st Scout Ranger Bn, ODA 184 (Spokane) deployed to advise the 10th IB, and ODA 186 (Tacoma) deployed to advise the 55th IB. ODA 134 (Kodiak) deployed to advise the LRC in Tabuk (Isabela). The TF Comet J3 was semi-permanently located at Camp Tabiawan and became the de facto FOB 11 counterpart.

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Initial actions by all elements were to immediately establish rapport both with military counterparts and civic leaders in the local communities. The reception by the citizens on Basilan was generally excellent. Although at first very apprehensive and wary, the local citizens quickly warmed to the presence of US forces. All elements began immediately coordinating and contracting for local support and services for meals, laundry, local area construction, and other goods and services necessary for long term operations. Some units were able to occupy previously constructed facilities but the majority of personnel had no billets or areas in which to establish operations and communications centers. This was quickly solved for most by negotiations with the local units who were very willing to accommodate US needs temporarily until structures could be completed. Many soldiers slept in poncho hooches and on hammocks for about the first month of the deployment. Reception by AFP units was generally very good though there was some friction in the AFP Marine areas at the higher levels. Because of the force cap there were some significant limitations on personnel. FOB and AOB HQ were limited to 11-14 personnel initially. A key to communications success was the deployment of a detachment of 10 personnel from the 112th Signal Bn who **provided DSN phone access, SIPRNET, and NIPRNET connectivity. FOB II operated a "paperless" FOB using a secure TACLAN that linked the FOB staff with the SIGCEN that linked all other deployed elements using SATCOM PDC via PSC 5 radios.** This provided an excellent means to communicate with all AOBs and when necessary ODAs at their base camps.

Immediately upon arrival all units began interaction with the local governments, from provincial to Barangay (village). Many municipalities including the Basilan Provincial Council passed unanimous resolutions supporting the deployment of US troops under the auspices of Exercise Balikatan. Many SF personnel were able to speak at various democratic forums to answer questions about the US mission and intentions. These meetings were instrumental in putting the local government officials as well as the local citizens at ease and turned their opposition or apprehension to support.

After the first week as US forces were becoming integrated with their AFP counterparts' continuous and ongoing facilities and base camp defense improvements the ARSOF Commander and DCO deployed to Basilan and briefed all ODA and AOB commanders at each AOB location. The teams were briefed on the plan to conduct detailed Barangay assessments in their local areas and were provided with a detailed assessment tool and directed to assess a representative sample of Barangays. Of the 263 Barangays on Basilan 30 were selected for assessment. A total of 28 surveys were completed in the time allotted which provided the ODAs with a great deal of access to the local communities and provided them with a tremendous understanding of the unique problems at the grass roots level. The information gathered provided the ARSOTF with a data base that was used to develop follow-on Phase II Civic Action plans and led to the deployment of an Engineering Task Force that conducted infrastructure improvement to support deployed ODAs, AFP units and military operations with the secondary benefit of improving local community infrastructure in the areas of roads, bridges, port facilities, and water sources.

The Barangay assessments were not initially completed because the AFP embarked on a series of operations known as Operation Liberty. These operations lasted through most of March and into April 2002 and were concentrated initially in the Maluso, northern Sumisip areas and then later in the Lantawan municipalities. Because the operation was in Phase I ODA advisors could only deploy to Battalion TAC CPs to provide advice and assistance to the Battalion Commander and his staff. No operations below battalion level were authorized under the TOR and although the LRC deployed on a number of operations in the Maluso and Lantawan areas no US advisors were authorized to accompany them to advise and assist them since they were company level operations.

Operation Liberty consisted of a number of operations by Army and Marine units that were focused on reacting to HUMINT (usually from local informants whose information was generally uncorroborated and not timely). Units **would conduct operations generally known as "scouring" where multiple companies would deploy into an operational area (usually given something like a 9 km square box using the actual**

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map grid lines as boundaries). During these operations ODAs provided advice and assistance, communications support, MEDEVAC support, and medical assistance at casualty collection points at the Bn TAC CPs. In addition to providing advice and assistance these operations gave ODAs an opportunity to assess Bn level operations and in close coordination with the Bn Cdr design unit specific training programs to focus on developing the tactical capabilities necessary for successful operations against the ASG. Over the month and a half of operations ODAs and ODBs advised the AFP to improve operations by: confirm objectives through utilizing initial reconnaissance, implementing control measures, using boundaries based on identifiable terrain features rather than grid lines, conducting lateral coordination and communication (though mostly through ODA to ODA coordination), and conducting rehearsals for tactical actions.

There were other significant operations conducted as well that were not considered part of Operation Liberty. **These included the raid on the Mayor of Tuburan's house who was allegedly harboring Abu Sabaya in Lamitan, the Dassalan Island raid, the movement to contact against Amir Mingkong in Tipo – Tipo and most significantly the exfiltration of 19 ASG who surrendered (1 via air and 18 via sea). The raid on the Mayor's house did not accomplish its specific objective of apprehending Abu Sabaya (most likely because of mission compromise when the AFP obtained the warrant through the civil justice system). They did receive a number of weapons that are believed to be tied to a previous operation in which 21 AFP Marines were killed. However, the raid was characterized by good tactical planning and most importantly rehearsals which were a result of the influence of the ODA advisors. Also, there was the treatment of friendly and 1 enemy casualty in the action by US personnel that demonstrated to the opposition the positive influence US forces had on the AFP. Gov Akbar himself stated, "had it not been for US forces the AFP would not have treated the injured person" (who was a relative of the Mayor).**

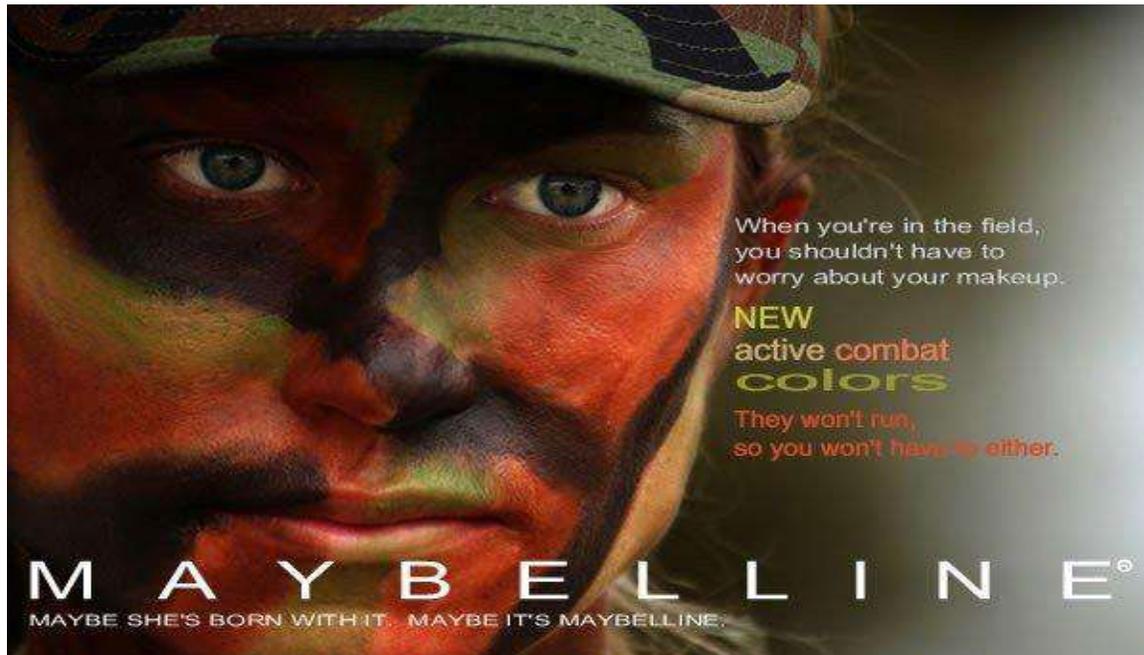
The Dassalan Island raid conducted by the 2d Marine Brigade was a hastily planned and executed operation involving Philippine Marines and Philippine Navy personnel. Three possible ASG were killed when the AFP Navy destroyed the boat in which they were traveling after it apparently took evasive maneuvers in response to AFP Navy warnings and warning shots. The Marines did recover weapons on the island though this has proved to be controversial as they apparently belonged to CAFGU who are support by AFP SF (37th SF Riverine Company). As it turns out the Marines were reacting to HUMINT reports but Dassalan Island was in the 103d Brigade (Army) area of responsibility.

No US forces were involved in the Amir Mingkong operation as he is an MILF Bn Cdr and US forces are prohibited from supporting operations against MILF. However, Mingkong is a known ASG supporter. This operation was ill-conceived and resulted in a stand-off between the AFP and the defending forces leading to the AFP using unobserved artillery fire. The only known casualty from this was the informant/guide who led the AFP forces to the suspected location of Amir Mingkong.

The final significant support to operations provided by SF, during this period, was the exfiltration of surrendering **ASG personnel. An initial surrenderee who turned out to be a "test case" wanted to surrender to US personnel but agreed to surrender to AFP personnel in return for a guarantee that he would not be turned over to civilian authorities on Basilan. The night air exfiltration via MH-47E resulted in a coordinated operation taking the surrenderee from the LZ in Sumisip (Tumahumabong) to Zamboanga (EAAB) and then via MC-130 to Manila and turned over to AFP authorities there. The surrenderee was secured by US SF personnel through a handover in Manila. Following this, 18 additional ASG members turned themselves in to the same Marine unit and were subsequently exfiltrated over the beach to AFP Navy craft for evacuation to Zamboanga. Surrendering personnel stated they wanted to be evacuated from Basilan due to fears of retribution from Governor Akbar if they were jailed on the island.**

ODAs initiated aggressive training programs for their battalions in preparation for follow-on operations now awaiting approval as part of Phase II. The most important training conducted was the development

Life can be and is difficult. Our existence is in the hands of God. We act as though we are in control and indeed we should since we should not tempt our Father the only and Almighty God. A soldier handles life the best he can; sometimes with humor and sometimes with a reassuring hand for those about him. The following photos both struck me as an illustration of both. The Editor.



Chapter Calendar

Vet-to-Vet is at VA Spinal Injury Ward 1800 hours on November 18th . Avoids Thanksgiving
 November 11th is the annual fundraiser at Dick's Last Resort 1830 hours: until ???
 November 11th Is Veteran's Day Parade . Details later
 SFA Convention is 7 thru 13 June 2010



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Ladies and Gentlemen of Chapter 31..

We are closing in on our November 11th fund raiser and again I appeal to the membership to come out and help us not only make this our best fundraiser ever, but spend Veterans day in the company of those that they walked into the valley of the shadow death with. Phil and his team have done a more than an outstanding job with the preparations and you will not be able to truly visualize the work they put into this unless you attend. I hope to see you all there.

I have been notified that nominations for the upcoming national elections have been extended until November 30, 2009. This extension is based on the late mailing of the DROP. Time lines established for mailing of nominations and acceptance letters remained unchanged. Petition nominations also remained unchanged. Extension for nominations insures all Chapters have the opportunity to nominate candidates. As a reminder all ballots (once determined) must include membership number and signature of members to be valid. Again, Folks, this is your Association, so please vote when the time comes.

I wish you all a very safe and Happy Thanksgiving Holiday...

Until next month...

De Oppresso Liber
Ron

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