

**THE BOB SALZMAN MEMORIAL CHAPTER FLORIDA
CHAPTER XXI SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION**

Volume LXXVV March 2026 NR 3

Website: <http://specialforceschapter21florida.com>



Chapter XXI Officers, Directors, and Administrative Staff*

(*Officers listed below were elected on 21 February 2026 for 2 Year Term ending on 21 February 2028)

- PRESIDENT:** John Vislosky, M-14010L, Tel: (914) 406-0316, E-mail: JV4@aol.com
- VICE-PRESIDENT:** Richard Whitman, D-6528L, Tel: (407) 482-3817, E-mail: rgwsrw99@aol.com
- TREASURER:** Phil Devon, M-13612, 4313 Tel: (585)739-4785, E-mail: pnjdevon@gmail.com
- SECRETARY:** Suzie Gaspard, Tel: (904) 287-1681, E-mail: gwgsrg@aol.com
- QUARTERMASTER:** Susan Micelli, *Military Presents*, Tel: (386)734-2711, 386-717-8197 (cell) 386-734-5167(fax); E-mail: SusanMicelli@hotmail.com
- DIRECTOR:** Robert J. Schlafke, Jr.; D-8729L, Tel: (321) 616-6798, E-mail: rjscocoa@gmail.com
- WEBMASTER:** Dave Grose, D-3910L, Tel: (315) 573-2014, E-mail: dgrose895@gmail.com

President's Update - John Vislosky

It is March! The Northern States were hammered with snow and winds, while we suffered 30- 40 degree night temps in Florida and 70+ degree days. Except for an occasional hurricane, got to love living in paradise!!!

Lots to highlight in this month's newsletter: our Chapter meeting on 21 February, Officer Elections, VA information, Education Fund Grant Application, etc.

Chapter Meeting/Luncheon

Overview: What a great meeting! 21 February Chapter 21 Luncheon and meeting at River Rocks Restaurant in Rockledge FL. We had 30 total in attendance (both Chapter members and guests). We were there from 1100 hours until 1400 hours in a relaxed private room with great food and restaurant service. Everyone gave the River Rocks Restaurant two thumbs up. Lots of pictures below for those of you who could not attend to enjoy.

Attendees included: Ginny Billingsley with her daughter Lisa & Son in Law, Curtis; Ed Chandler; Richard Comerford; Michael McCrudden; Bonnie Cooper; Jim Day; John & Gayle Erskine; John Fravel & Nancy Furbish; Alex Saunders; Suzie Gaspard; John Goodyear & Hannah Sink; John Haralson; Bill Haskell; Joseph & Lyndsay Hasting; Frederick & Bonnie Irtz, Sue Micelli; Ron and Donna Owens; Bill Schulz; Jim Summerhill, John & Betty Vislosky; and Richard Whitman.

Chapter 21 Election of Officers. The current slate of serving Officers were nominated and unanimously elected to serve an additional 2 years. Terms will end 21 February 2028.

Prior Meeting Minutes and Financials posted: We approved the Minutes from our 17 May 2025 meeting in The Villages. Moreover, Phil Devon, Treasurer provided us with our current Chapter 21 Financial Statement. Because of the generosity of our Chapter Members, we are financially strong and will use our funds judiciously to support Educational Grants and other Chapter business. Both our 17 May 2025 Minutes and 2025 Year-end 2025 Financials will be posted in the Chapter 21 Section of SFA Team House. Should you want a copy of either sent to you contact one of the Chapter Officers.

VA Update: We discussed at length the 17 February 2026 , *VA Rule 2900 AS 49*. I am proud to report that the VA Secretary has rescinded this rule. 2900 AS 49 was a highly controversial rule which essentially stated that if you show improvement based on VA treatment (medications, physical therapy, etc.) then you current Disability Rating can be reduced.

Moreover, you should familiarize yourself with other rules within the VA. Specifically, the VA has in place the *5- 10- & 20 Year Rule*. This rule can protect your Rating, but you should understand its nuances. For more information see:

<https://vaclaimsinsider.com/va-5-10-and-20-year-rules-explained/>

VA Support Option: Chapter member, Joe Hasting, told the attendees about a VA perk. Based on your disabilities, you may be eligible for "Home Aid Assistance". The VA will provide monthly cash assistance for everything from in-home care, to house cleaning, etc. I have attached on *Page 8*, of this newsletter, the application form VA 21-2680. For more information before applying and to check eligibility see: <https://www.va.gov/forms/21-2680/>

Chapter XXI Educational Grant: The Grant fund application is now open, and you must submit your applications to Phil Devon NLT 31 May 2026. Applications can be sent to Phil via mail or email to pdevo@comcast.net or Phil Devon, 4313North Course Land, Avon Park, FL 33825. TA copy of the application criteria and the application form can be found on *Page 9-10* of this newsletter.

Fraud: We also discussed the growing threat of fraud. Both the Chapter Website and our email distribution list has been attacked by Fraudsters. Dave Gross, our webmaster and I are working on further securing both. A few critical reminders:

(1) No one in our Chapter will send you a personal text message or email requesting that you purchase gift cards, transfer of moneys through Bitcoin, Venmo, or other on-line banking applications. The Chapter newsletter will always broadcast any fund-raising efforts by the Chapter. When in doubt contact one of the Chapter officers at any time. If you receive one of the fraudulent requests for gift cards or money, forward the email or copy of the text to John Vislosky (JV4@aol.com or 914-406-0316). Or contact me if you want to confirm anything you have received from the Chapter that looks suspect.

(2) Invest in both a VPN (I personally like Express VPN) and Malware protection. And...never open any email or respond to any text that is suspect. Some of your friends do you an injustice by forwarding humorous or political items that are loaded with viruses and other fraud related software. Never give any personal information like your Social Security Number, birthdate and especially passwords to anyone that calls, email or ands by text a request for that information that you are not 100% they are legitimate.

Follow these simple rules above and we will all be protected from fraud.

Next Chapter Meeting

Post the meeting, I refreshed my knowledge of SFA Chapter rules by re-reading the SFA Constitution Specially, the number of meetings required by Chapters in the SFA. According to the SFA Constitution, we are required to meet formally one time per year. In that meeting we are required to discuss, the minutes for the last meeting and formally present the Chapter's financials. We satisfied that requirement for this year in our 21 February 2026.

However..... everyone really enjoyed getting together and the following requests were made that the Officers are exploring.

1. It was requested to meet at least 3 times each year. February or March meeting, Summer Meeting and a late November December Meeting (with the gift exchange at this Holiday meeting).
2. Since our Chapter extends across Florida from Sarasota to Cocoa Beach, we should rotate the locations for each meeting. It was suggested that we consider: Early year on the East Coast (River Rocks in Cocoa), Summer meeting in Central Florida (The Villages or somewhere near Orlando) and Holiday Meeting in Western Florida (Lakeland). We will be working on the next meeting location and date...Stay tuned.

What's Happening

- Congratulations to Chapter 21 Member Colonel (R) John Erskine who is being inducted in April into the *Marion County Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame*. John is being recognized for his extensive work assisting other Veterans. Unfortunately, attendance for the ceremony is restricted. Otherwise, we would be there to cheer John on (which we do in absentia). John and Gayle Erskine pictured below:



Pictures from our 21 February Meeting & Luncheon:





Health & Welfare

- **Ray and Judy Drewry:** Please continue prayers for them.
- **Sheila Whitman (and Richard):** We continue our prayers for Sheila Whitman who is in assisted care.
- **Sharon Haralson** who is recovering from the flu and could not attend our meeting. Feel better! You were missed at the meeting.
- **Shirley Bath:** I heard from JD. Shirley is recovering from her 2nd back surgery. The last surgery went well, and she is in recovery. We wish her a speedy recovery. JD said they will try and make our next meeting.
- **Phil Devon:** We all missed you and Jo at the meeting and wish you both the very best. Fight on Brother!

SF/Ranger Luncheons

- **St Petersburg SF/Ranger:** *The Harbor Master* at Bay Pines Marina, 4999 Harbor Lights Drive, Seminole FL 33706, on the 1st Saturday of the month. The next get together is 7 March 2026 @ 1130 Hours ET.
- **Cape Canaveral (GBTs) SF/Ranger:** Held monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at *Grills Seafood Deck and Tiki Bar*, 500 Glen Cheek Drive, Cape Canaveral, FL. The next get together is 31 March 2026 @ 1130 Hours ET.

Upcoming SFA & SOA Events

- **13-14 March 2026 Medal of Honor Valor 5k Run/Walk and Car Show**

Home | Brevard Veterans Memorial Center, Inc. <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/>

400 Sykes Creek Pkws. Merritt Island, FL. 32927 <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/upcoming-veterans-events/>

13 March — Welcome Dinner for Medal of Honor Day 5K Sponsors including four special guests who received the Congressional Medal of Honor (1600-2100) BVMC Gray Hall. For more info on how to attend the dinner go to: <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/medal-of-honor-5k/>

14 March — 5k and Car Show to Recognize National Medal of Honor Day. 5K in Park (0800-1000); Car Show also included in Park, 0900-1500. Register and pay here: <https://veteransmemorialcenter.org/medal-of-honor-5k/>

Four Medal of Honor Recipients expected to attend with proceeds going to support local veterans in need, veteran 501c3 projects and cadet youth of Brevard County. Contact BVMC Vice President Don Pearsall for more information or to help sponsor in the meantime on 321-453-1776, ext 1.

14 March — JROTC District Championships Drill Meet, BVMC Park 1000-1300 after Medal of Honor 5K Fundraiser. Support more than 200 cadets from at least 10 schools as they compete in Color Guard, Squad and Platoon Drills as well as Rifle Demonstration. The JROTC will also support and be engaged in the MOH 5K, including several runners from 14 JROTC programs. Courageous Division Sea Cadets also to assist MOH 5K. Best time to see all JROTC Action and help award trophies is 1200 – 1330. Contact Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for any questions.

- **SFACON 2026:** 8-12 June 2026, Destin FL. Hosted by 7th SFG (A): Registration for the Convention is “coming soon”

SFA Chapter 7, the hosts of SFACON 2026, Arrival date of Sunday, June 7th suggested. There will be a Welcome social gathering 1700-2000. The closing banquet is Thursday, June 11th. Below are the booking links for two of the hotels holding rooms for the convention. These are direct links to SFACON rooms. The hotels below are a 2-minute walk apart, and the *Home2 Suites* is the "primary hotel" where the hospitality room will be located. The contract with a 3rd hotel near the beach in Destin should be signed soon. Several events at the nearby Ridgon Center on Eglin AFB. Pack flip flops. Hotel information below and embedded with the Conference room code.

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Fort Walton Beach Eglin Area:

<https://www.ihg.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=EX&localeCode=en®ionCode=1&hotelCode=VPSFN&checkInDate=05&checkInMonthYear=052026&checkOutDate=14&checkOutMonthYear=052026&PMID=99801505&GPC=SFC&cn=no&adjustMonth=false&showApp=true&monthIndex=00>

Home2 Suites Fort Walton Beach Eglin Air Force Base:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=VPSWBHT&groupCode=CHT90L&arrivaldate=2026-06-07&departuredate=2026-06-12&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

- **SOAR 2026:** 12-15 October 2026, Orleans Hotel, Las Vegas NV

Chapter XXI Quartermaster March 2026 Sale Items

Make checks payable to *SFA Chapter 21*
Mail your order and checks to: *Susan Micelli, 4243 McCorvey Rd, Deland, FL 32724*



SF License Plate Frame
\$7.00
plus
\$8.00 postage



DOL Crest Shaving Kit Bag
\$18.00 each
plus
\$8.00 postage



New SFA Chapter 21 Challenge Coin
\$15.00 each
plus
\$8.00 postage



Special Forces Regimental Flag
\$35.00 each
plus
\$8.00 postage



Department of Veterans Affairs

VA DATE STAMP
 (DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE)

EXAMINATION FOR HOUSEBOUND STATUS OR PERMANENT NEED FOR REGULAR AID AND ATTENDANCE

INSTRUCTIONS: Before completing this form, read the Privacy Act and Respondent Burden on page 4. Use this form to determine eligibility for aid and attendance or housebound benefits. For more information, you can contact us online through Ask VA: <https://ask.va.gov/>. Ask us a question online or call us toll-free at 1-800-827-1000 (TTY: 711). VA forms are available at www.va.gov/vaforms.

SECTION I: VETERAN'S IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

NOTE: You may complete the form online or by hand. If completing by hand, print neatly and legibly in ink, and completely fill in each applicable check box to help expedite processing of the form.

1. VETERAN/BENEFICIARY'S NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last)

2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

— —

3. VA FILE NUMBER (If applicable)

4. VETERAN'S SERVICE NUMBER (If applicable)

5. DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)

— —

SECTION II: CLAIMANT'S IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

6. CLAIMANT'S NAME (First, Middle Initial, Last)

7. CLAIMANT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

— —

8. RELATIONSHIP OF CLAIMANT TO VETERAN

- SELF PARENT
 SPOUSE CHILD

9. CLAIMANT'S DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)

— —

10. MAILING ADDRESS (Number and street or rural route, P. O. Box, City, State, ZIP Code and Country)

No. & Street

Apt./Unit Number

City

State/Province

Country

ZIP Code/Postal Code

—

11. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Optional) (Include Area Code)

— —

Enter International Phone Number (If applicable)

12. EMAIL ADDRESS (Optional) I agree to receive electronic correspondence from VA in regards to my claim.

SECTION III: CLAIM INFORMATION

13. SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS (Choose one)

Special Monthly Compensation (SMC) - Veterans and surviving spouses or parents who are eligible to receive VA compensation due to a service-related disability or death and require aid and attendance of another person to perform personal functions required in everyday living such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting oneself from the hazards of the daily environment may be eligible for Special Monthly Compensation. A veteran or a deceased veteran's surviving spouse may also be eligible for Special Monthly Compensation based on being housebound (substantially confined to the immediate premises because of permanent disability). For a veteran, the disability causing the need for aid and attendance or housebound status must be related to service. These benefits are paid in addition to monthly compensation or Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC). They are not paid without eligibility to compensation.

Special Monthly Pension (SMP) - Veterans and survivors who are eligible for Veteran's Pension and/or Survivors benefits and require the aid and attendance of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting them from the hazards of their daily environment, or are housebound (substantially confined to their immediate premises because of permanent disability), may be eligible for Special Monthly Pension (SMP). This benefit is an increased monthly amount paid to a veteran or survivor who is eligible for Veterans Pension or Survivors benefits.

Chapter XXI Education Grant Program

Chapter XXI has created a program to provide limited financial aid to direct dependents of current active members, in good standing, who are attending accredited educational institutions. The Board of Directors has formed the Education Grant Committee which has finalized the Grant process, will oversee the deployment of the program, and manage the application and awarding process.

Attached to this Newsletter are two documents: 1) Overview of the Education Grant Program and 2) a Blank Application form. All active Chapter members, in good standing, are encouraged to forward the application to their descendants who meet the Program requirements. After the applicant completes their portion of the form, it is then returned to their sponsor who would then complete the sponsor endorsement section. Please note that Chapter members are required to complete their portion of the application and forward it to the Chapter no later than the **stated deadline, 31 May 2026**. Completed applications should be mailed to: Philip Devon, Treasurer, SFA Chapter 21, 4313 North Course LN, Avon Park, FL 33825.

If you have any questions regarding the Education Grant Program, please email your questions to: Philip Devon, email address: pnjdevon@gmail.com

For more information, please see the Educational Grant Objective, Criteria and Application below:

SPECIAL FORCES ASSOCIATION CHAPTER XXI EDUCATION GRANT

Objective of the Education Grant-

Create a source of contributing funds to the achievement of academic goals for members of Chapter XXI, SFA and their descendants. Amount of Education Grant should be calculated to cover the expense for textbooks and related items necessary for one year of college education.

Program Overview-

1. Funding - Use Chapter XXI existing General Fund plus any funds raised/donated specifically for the Education Grant.
2. Budget - \$500 per recipient, target of at least 2 recipients per year.
3. Criteria - Candidates for the Grant must be active members or direct descendants (children, stepchildren, grandchildren, great-grandchildren) of existing active members of Chapter XXI. Education Grants will be awarded based upon merit (grades), need (income), and evidence of leadership and participation in school, community, and volunteer activities.
4. Application - Candidates must provide the completed application form by the stated annual **deadline of 31 May**.
5. Selection of Awardees – Current elected Chapter Board of Directors will appoint an Education Grant Committee to review applications received and select the annual winners using an established grading evaluation criterion (i.e., points for grades, points for need, points for participation in leadership and activities).
6. Winners of the Education Grant will be announced and awarded by the first week in August and recipients will receive a formal announcement and check via mail.

Special Forces Association Chapter XXI Education Grant Application

Section 1: Applicant Information (Please print)

Date _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Day Phone # _____ Email _____

FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2027

School Currently Attending _____ Current GPA _____ When will you Graduate?

School You Plan to Attend _____ Anticipated Start Date _____

Intended Major or Area of Interest _____

What is Your Long-Term Career Goal?

Your Most Important Personal Achievements **Last 12 Months** (Leadership Positions, Community Service, Awards, Scholarships, etc.) _____

What Else Should We know About You? _____

If You are Awarded a Grant, How Will You Use the Money? _____

Signature of Applicant _____

Section 2: Chapter XXI Member Sponsor for the Applicant

Name _____ SFA Member # _____ Member Relationship to Applicant _____

Why Do You Believe that the Applicant Should Receive the Chapter XXI Education Grant? –