



MEMORIAL SERVICES DETACHMENT

Fort Sam Houston Memorial
Services Detachment Honor
Guard (MSD)

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We're on the Web!

See us at:
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COMMANDER'S CORNER



Photo: Manny Mendoza , MSD
Commander (L) and VA Sec-
retary Denis McDonough (R)
at Fort Sam Houston National
Cemetery.

2024 has been a wonderful year for the Fort Sam Houston Memorial Services Detachment (MSD). We have moved into our wonderful new MSD Building. This building will be home to many future generations of MSD Funeral Honor Guards. Veteran Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough must have felt that MSD has played a vital role in honoring our fallen heroes, something expressed to me in a conversation Secretary McDonough and I had at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

It was an extraordinary moment for me when I was told that somebody was wanting to speak to me, I did not know who it was that wanted to speak to me, it turned out it was Secretary of Veteran Affairs Denis McDonough. I was totally taken aback that he would take the time from his busy schedule to speak to me. He expressed his sincere appreciation for what MSD did ensuring our Fallen Heroes were receiving their much deserved Military Honors on the day of their funerals.

On January 22, 2024, MSD Monday Squad performed MSD's 45,000th Funeral Service. Military Honors were rendered to Senior Airman Eracelio "Rocky" Montalvo thus MSD reaching a significant milestone of 45,000 Funeral Services since MSD's inception on December 17, 1991.

Five years ago we implemented a Phase Replacement Program aimed to replacing our current bus with a new one. Through 5 years of fund raising and donations from our supporters, along with an austere attitude toward our funds, a New Bus was purchased. It will be delivered in September 2024. The Bus cost us \$105,000.00. The bus will last MSD a Decade or more.

Now, as I complete my 6th consecutive year as MSD Commander and 55 years of both civilian and military combined service to this wonderful nation, time has come for me to go into a semi-retirement state. I say semi-retirement because I am an MSD Life Member and as such I feel I can still contribute to MSD in a limited capacity.

It has been truly an honor and privilege to have served as the MSD Commander. Thank you for all the support you have given me.

MANNY MENDOZA, MSD, COMMANDER 210-722-2582

MONDAY SQUAD

Monday Squad Life Member Robert Wharton's Retirement and Farewell

On 20 May 2024, Monday Squad bid farewell and happy retirement to Assistant Squad Leader and U.S. Navy Veteran Robert Wharton. Robert served MSD for 8 years and was Assistant Squad Leader for 2 years. Robert also had the distinction of serving MSD with perfect attendance his first 5 years. That is correct, Robert earned 5 year Life Membership without missing a single Monday Duty Day. Robert was a member of the MSD Color Guard performing regularly at various events. Robert was an active Recruiter participating in various MSD Recruiting Events.



(Left) Monday Squad members (L-R) Robert Wharton, Larry Pedersen, Ernest Gamez, Diana Aksztulewicz, Edward Aksztulewicz, and Daniel Chaves. (Right) Chris Powers



(Left) Ernest Gamez

(Right) James Payton and Robert Ramirez



TUESDAY SQUAD

(Right and Below) Lawrence Cabanilla spent July 14th helping distribute food to over 150 families through VFW Post 8397's Food Bank.



(Below) On Wednesday, August 21, Tuesday Squad members gathered for lunch to celebrate this past year's accomplishments, share memories, and just "hang out." Present at the luncheon was: Keith Wall, Jose Reyna, Jackie Jones, George Mozakis, Lisa Wood, Jessie Benavides, Alfred "Al" Lopez, Domingo Prado, Jay Baker and Mark Jordan.



On Saturday, 10 August, in Comfort, Texas, MSD Bugler Jay Baker played Taps at the annual Treue der Union (Loyalty to the Union) remembrance ceremony. This annual event is sponsored by the Comfort Heritage Foundation to honor the Texas men, mostly recent German immigrants, who refused to serve in the Confederate Army, and were attempting to join the Union forces in New Orleans. Most of them were killed in the Nueces Massacre on 10 July 1862, or later hung after surrendering to the Texas CSA forces chasing them. They remained loyal to the Union, and this annual ceremony is held at the Treue der Union Monument that was erected in 1866 to honor their memory. Also, in attendance and participating in the event was Friday Squad's Frank Kebelman.



TUESDAY SQUAD

While in California, visiting family and traveling, Jackie Jones found VFW post 10110 from Aptos, CA, working at the Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey County. The post prepared over 250 breakfasts and lunches, for each of the three days of racing. These meals fed the volunteer workers, and anyone who stopped in and donated.

Jackie and her brother, Monte, volunteered from 0530 until lunch was served- helping prep the food for Saturday's lunch, Sunday's breakfast, and Sunday's lunch!

It was a great fundraising opportunity for their post and a chance to meet some amazing veterans! LoisRae is the Vice Commander for her post, essentially running the whole operation at the tracks, at the amazingly young age of 96!!



Monte, LoisRae, and Jackie



Post 10110 members and volunteers



On July 4th, Jesse Benavides and his wife performed in the Mueller County Parade in Austin, Texas, representing the American Heritage Fife and Drum Corp.



TUESDAY SQUAD



This Quarter, Tuesday Squad welcomed new member, Fred Mittlestedt. Fred was born and raised in a small town on the North-South Dakota border. He enlisted in the U.S. Army after graduating high school in 1973. After completing combat medic and combat stress technical training at Fort Sam Houston, he was assigned to the hospital at Fort Polk, Louisiana where he was promoted to psychiatric unit until his discharge in May of 1976. He immediately attended and undergraduate program at North Dakota State University in Fargo where he received an ROTC scholarship. In 1980, he graduated with a degree in business and hospital administration as a Distinguished Military Graduate and a commission into the U.S. Army. He attended paratrooper school and Medical Service Corp Officer Basic Training. His first assignment was as a medical platoon leader in the 2nd Infantry Division where he earned the Expert Combat medic Badge and Republic of Korea Ranger Badge.

Follow on assignments included Operations Officer at Camp Bullis, Texas, and TAC Officer for the Officer Basic Course on Fort Sam Houston. Following the completion of the Officer Advanced Course, Medical Logistics Course, and Special Forces Qualification Course, he was assigned to the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and later served as S-4 for 36th Medical Battalion and Medical Company Commander at JTF-Bravo in Honduras.



Fred was then selected for graduate school and earned a master's degree in Logistics management, which led him to assignment in Panama, in the SOUTHCOM Surgeon's Office. Upon completion of this assignment, he returned state-side to the Combat Development Directorate at the AMEDD Center, until receiving orders, deploying to Europe in support of the peace keeping contingent for the Bosnia Conflict. He returned stateside once more, to find his personal life in shambles, leading to his decision to retire, in-lieu of promoting to LTC and Battalion Commander. He began his civilian career as a defense contractor for seven years, before being hired as a civil servant for the Army Medical Command, where he again retired as a GS-13 Quality Assurance Analyst. He settled near Corpus Christi, Texas, and served as an Honor Guard Chaplain for the local VFW. He relocated to the San Antonio area in March of this year and joined the Fort Sam Houston MSD.

WEDNESDAY SQUAD

During the months of Jun to Aug 2024, our squad proudly provided honors to 78 veterans and logged a total of 1,620 combined volunteer hours. As patriots, we deeply cherish the opportunity to serve those who have selflessly served our nation, ensuring that their sacrifices are recognized and respected. It is an honor to stand beside our veterans, embodying the spirit of patriotism and gratitude that defines our great nation.



Our squad is totally committed to giving our fallen Veterans the respect they deserve. We truly believe that each veteran should be honored with dignity and reverence, and we feel incredibly humbled to be able to do that. Big thanks to all our veterans for everything they've done. We owe them big time.



WEDNESDAY SQUAD

4 May 2024 - Team Building

During our quarterly social event, we took the time to recognize and thank our veterans and volunteers for their dedicated service to our military community and the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery during FY 2023. We extend our sincere thanks to Sarita's Mexican Restaurant and Ms. Martha Hinojosa for hosting this event and making it even more special!



Ms. Linda Jackson (left), COL Lola Olsmith (center) and Deb Neubauer (right) are commended for their selfless service as volunteers at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery Public Information Center (PIC). The PIC provides information on the daily internment schedule, grave locations, and other points of interest. Our Wednesday Squad PIC volunteers also assist visitors by providing insights into cemetery services, historical context, and memorial activities. This ensures that every visitor has a meaningful and informative experience at the cemetery. Thank you to our great volunteers!



USAF vet SMSgt John Francis is presented with the MSD Life Membership Award for five years of faithful service. Congratulations John! Special note-Carolyn Dalmolin recruited John to join the MSD five years ago! Thank you Carol for making a wise choice in bringing such a great man and professional to our squad.

26 June 2024 – Team Building

Joe Casas, Carolyn Casas, and their niece Elsa, along with her husband Ron Gilder, treated us to breakfast tacos. Ron and Elsa are visiting us from California. It was wonderful to spend a delightful morning with family and friends, enjoying good food and great company.

Joe, a former MSD Commander, Adjutant, Squad Leader, and Wed Squad Advisor, has dedicated numerous years of service. Carolyn has also made significant contributions by volunteering at the Public Information Center for a long time. Despite being in their early 90s, Joe and Carolyn continue to support our military community. Thank you, Joe, Carolyn, Elsa, and Ron!



(far left) Group picture with Joe & Carolyn Casas, and their niece and her husband, Ron & Elsa. (left) USA vet CSM Luis Gonzalez with Ron & Elsa from California. (above left) Joe Casas, USAF vet Richard Puente, & Carolyn Casas. (above) Joe Casas, USN vet CPO Manny Ibero, & Carolyn Casas



WEDNESDAY SQUAD

24 July 2024 - No Veteran Should Die Alone!

The Unaccompanied Veterans Program, implemented in January 2015, ensures eligible Veterans with no known next-of-kin, or those with next-of-kin unable to attend, receive standard interment procedures with military honors at Texas State Veterans Cemeteries. Before this program, Veterans received "direct no witness" burials, meaning their remains were brought to the cemetery and buried or interred without honors or recognition of their military service.

These services are scheduled quarterly at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. On 24 July 2024, our squad provided military honors to remember the lives and sacrifices of seven Veterans



USMC Vet MSG Raul Marroquin and USN Vet CP3 John Brown folded the US flag, Wednesday Squad rendered honors, and USAF vet MSgt Porfirio Montellano played Taps.

Hot Day - 111°

8 Aug 2024 was a tough day for us. We performed honors for four veterans at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, where the real feel temperature at the 1400 hrs service reached 111°F! Despite the heat, we remain unwavering in our commitment to honor our fallen heroes, regardless of the weather. We always have a plan in place to protect our veterans from the elements. We've performed honors in temperatures ranging from 10°F to 111°F, and we've stood in rain and snow. Our dedication to serving is as steadfast as our love for our country.



WEDNESDAY SQUAD

17 Aug 2024 Remembering George Ybarra

Our squad suffered a great loss with the passing of George Ybarra on August 17, 2024, in San Antonio, Texas. His death was sudden and unexpected. George was a Navy veteran, arson investigator, police detective, and lieutenant with the San Antonio Fire Department.

Born on July 26, 1942, in Saginaw, Michigan, George graduated from Brackenridge High School in San Antonio in 1961. He earned an associate degree in criminal justice and fire suppression from San Antonio College and received specialized training at the FBI Academy and Fort Sam Houston Bomb School. He served as an arson investigator and detective for the San Antonio Fire Department and joined the Memorial Services Detachment in 2015.

In the U.S. Navy, George achieved the rank of Petty Officer and received several awards, including the Navy Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Sea Service Ribbon, U.S. Army Commander's Award, and Cuban Missile Crisis Cold War Service Medal. He was also a member of American Legion Post 245.

George passed away unexpectedly while enjoying a meal at one of his favorite restaurants. He is survived by his daughters, Lisa and Jennifer; his brother, Roy; his sister, Beatriz; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his wife, Gloria.



THURSDAY SQUAD

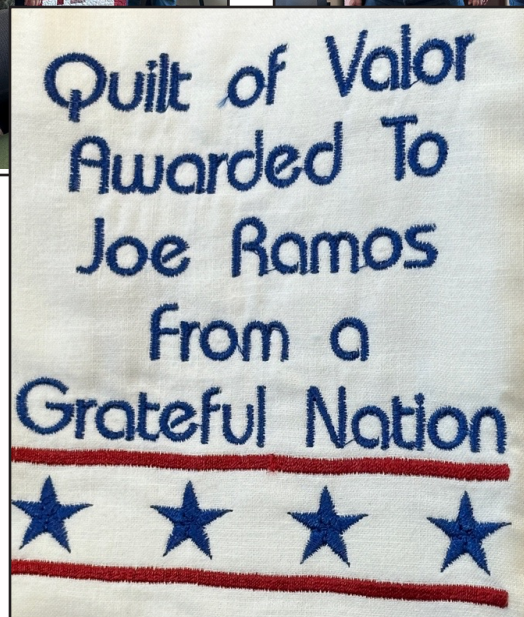
On June 15, 2024, Mr. Ramos and his wife Brenda, visited to MSD. He was very informative and had a few stories about National Cemetery's and MSD. He also had a copy of the National Cemetery Regulations Book from the 1800's.

1. Confederate soldiers wanted a pointed headstones so union soldiers wouldn't sit on the headstones.
2. The cemeteries were under The Department of Defense. At the time there were designated sections for officers, enlisted, babies, black soldiers, and Medal of Honor winners.
3. 1976, President Reagan established The Department of Veterans Affairs.
4. Flat markers Sections 8A and 14A. Families had a choice to remain in flat markers or re-bury them at their expense.
5. MSD started with Tuesday Squad, as it was the least busy day of the week at the time.

After his talk, Mr. Ramos was awarded the Quilt of Valor by Barbara and Jack Steers. There has been 3,940 Quilt of Valor presentations to date. His wife Brenda was also awarded a quilt.



Joe Ramos, Fort Sam National Cemetery, Assistant Cemetery and Cemetery Director, 1987-1993.



FRIDAY SQUAD

Memorial Day 2024

Memorial Day is special for many reasons, but for Friday Squad it is an opportunity to share our patriotic enthusiasm and to commemorate our Veterans who have passed with the residents of the Towers Community.

Squad member Billie Reilly and his lovely wife Suzie were our gracious hosts as we gathered for the second year in a row to participate in the Memorial Day ceremony at the Towers.

The Towers Choral group serenaded us as the participants and residents took their seats prior to the beginning of the ceremony. We were welcomed by the executive director and the staff, along with numerous guest speakers noting our military history and the creation of Memorial Day. They also addressed why it so vitally important for us as United States Citizens (and Veterans) to continue to celebrate Memorial Day and work to instill in our younger generations the pride and respect to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

MSD members were called upon to present the service flags as each service song was played. Mike Hoffman and Randy Brown performed the ceremonial folding of the flag with Billie Reilly narrating the 13 folds. Afterward Dale Taylor played Taps to close the ceremony.

At the end of the ceremony, the squad was invited to share a wonderful lunch and visit with the residents, many of whom are Veterans. The day was even more special as we had a chance to visit with retired Friday Squad member David Lake.

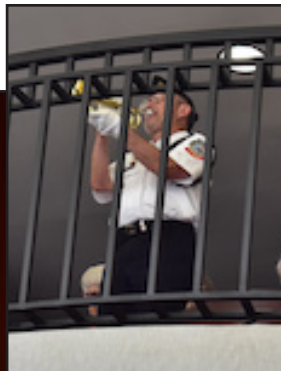
We are honored to be invited to share Memorial Day with the residents and staff of the Towers.



(Top) Friday Squad Members

(Above) Tom Earnest, Randy Brown, Mike Hoffman and Richard Garcia participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony at The Towers.

(Below) Residents packed the atrium for the 2024 Memorial Day Ceremony.



FRIDAY SQUAD



MSD's New Home

A very special day; May 18, 2024 will always be remembered as the day MSD moved into their new "home". After an excruciating wait we finally took possession of our building dedicated solely to MSD. Friday Squad was fortunate to be the first squad to officially occupy our new building. Commander Mendoza joined us to celebrate this momentous occasion. While the move has had hiccups, the wait and minor problems have been worth it for us to have our own building.

MSD has provided an invaluable service honoring our departed Veterans for over 32 years. It speaks volumes that FSNC leadership recognizes our many years of hard work and dedication by providing a building dedicated to MSD.

Donations to Commemorate MSD

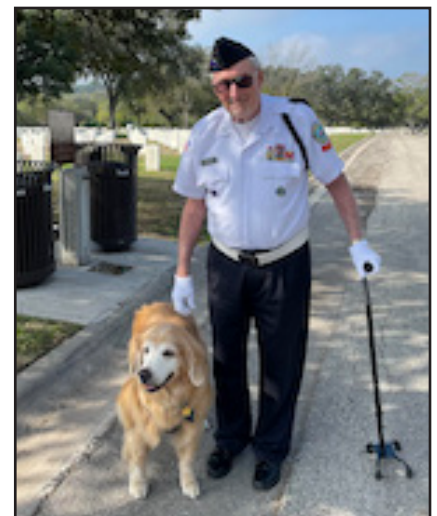
I am sure everyone has noticed the new wooden flag and plaque in the office. We owe George Mozakis from Tuesday Squad and Martin Urrutia from Friday Squad a big thanks for their thoughtfulness and generosity.



Deb Parsons celebrates her birthday with a squad favorite, cherry cheesecake!



Mike Mills, Ron Larson and Wayne Parsons enjoy their August Birthday cheesecake!



Tom Earnest with Max! Max is a very loyal and beloved member of our squad!

Chaplain's Corner

Greetings to all MSD Members, Family's and Friends of MSD.

I would just like to remind everyone, what an Honor it is to be a member of MSD, We should all be filled with Pride for what we do, giving final Honors to our deceased Military Members. We give the Family members Solace, this for when they most need the comfort we provide. They will also retain the memories that MSD and the Military did for them on that most painful day.

We lost two members from MSD this past quarter.

Arthur Cser, a long time member from Thursday Squad,

George Ybarra just recently passed away, George was with Wednesday Squad.

May the Good Lord, Bless them both and receive them into heavenly rest.

We have been through a very hot Summer and there is more to go, before the fall season comes around. So take care out there and be sure to drink plenty of fluid. The new bus will be coming soon, so it's been said.

My wife Rosy and Wednesday Squad member John Francis both volunteer at the Christian Assistance Ministries, where food and clothing is distributed to the poor and the needy, with winter coming soon, Coats and other warm will be needed, if you can donated any of these items you can drop them off to John Francis (Wednesday Squad) or too myself (Thursday Squad)

I would like to end this News Letter with a Prayer I say every Thursday before Services.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let Perpetual light shine upon them, May their soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God rest in Peace, Amen.

Thank you all and May the Good Lord look after you and your Families.

I remain your Servant in the Name of our Lord.

Francis "Mike" Giglio
Memorial Services Detachment
Chaplain



Kevin Martin Scott Obituary

Kevin M. Scott, a cherished husband, father, brother, and grandfather (and former Thursday Squad Member) passed away peacefully on July 14, 2024, in San Antonio, TX. Born on October 9, 1950, in Yokohama, Japan, Kevin's adventurous spirit and compassionate heart touched the lives of all who knew him. He was 73 years old.

Kevin's life was marked by his dedication to his family and his country. He is survived by Barbara, his loving wife of nearly 53 years, with whom he shared a beautiful and enduring partnership. He was a proud father to his son Phillip and daughter-in-law Ann Marie, and was especially fond of the times he got to spend with his grandsons Logan, Bradley, and Brandon. He is also survived by his oldest brother Wilbur, nephew Matthew, niece Melanie, and his older brother Mark.

A man of intellect and passion, Kevin graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from St. John's University in Collegeville, MN and went on to a career as a US Army Officer. Throughout his service, he exemplified leadership and commitment, values that he carried with him into retirement.

Kevin and Barbara settled in San Antonio nearly 33 years ago and eventually they became an integral part of the Army Residence Community (ARC). He served as the editor of The Eagle, the community's newsletter, and was the creative force behind many monthly luncheons that brought together residents for engaging discussions and camaraderie. His ability to curate topics and speakers made these events highly anticipated among his peers.

Kevin's zest for life extended beyond his work and service. He was an avid reader and writer, often found with a book in hand or penning his thoughts and stories. His love for planning and participating in parties and other special events was evident in the joy and laughter that filled the room wherever he went. Kevin believed in celebrating life's milestones and simple pleasures with equal enthusiasm.

Travel was another of Kevin's passions. He seized every opportunity to explore new places and cultures, instilling a sense of wanderlust and curiosity in his family. These journeys were not just vacations but learning experiences that Kevin cherished and shared with those around him.

Kevin's legacy is one of love, service, and joy. His presence will be profoundly missed, but his spirit will continue to inspire those who were fortunate enough to have known him. His family takes comfort in the memories they have and the knowledge that Kevin lived a life full of purpose and happiness.

As we bid farewell to Kevin M. Scott, we celebrate a life well-lived. His story is a tapestry woven with threads of devotion, adventure, and kindness—a tapes try that will be cherished and honored by all who were part of it.



Retired Army Major and former MSD Thursday Squad Member Kevin Scott, second from the left.

MSD Happenings



MSD Commander Manny Mendoza receives a generous donation from DAV Chapter 5 Alamo Commander Kathy Kaberides.



MSD Commander Manny Mendoza receives a generous donation from Northside Lions Club member Leonilo "Leon" Portillo.



MSD Wednesday Squad Bugler Monty and MSD Commander Manny provided Military Honors at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on behalf of the Magnolia Hospice Company San Antonio on Saturday August 3, 2024. The ceremony was for the Magnolia Hospice Company's annual Celebration of Life and Remembrance Ceremony at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church on Wurzbach Road, San Antonio.

Members of MSD volunteered at a veteran Mobile food distribution at VA Audie Murphy Hospital on Saturday, June 22nd, sorting perishable and non-perishable food items and loading them into vehicles of veterans that needed the food!





**INVITATION TO
ALL ACTIVE MSD MEMBERS + 1 GUEST
TO 2024 23rd ANNUAL MSD BANQUET**

Date: Saturday, November 2, 2024

Time: 12:00 Noon to 4:00 P.m.

**Place: Mikulski Hall, 509 Schertz
Parkway, Schertz, Tx**

**This Banquet is Sponsored by Senator Jose Menendez and Rep.
Barbara Gervin-Hawkins for the benefit of all the MSD Honor Gurads
and their families for their devotion and Faithful Service to Military
Veterans and the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.**

**BBQ will be Catered by Ray Harmon's Barbecue, 3 Meat Plate, 2 Sides,
Fixings, Sweet or Unsweeten Tea, MSD will provide Water, Coffee and
Chocolate and White Cake.**

Photography: Melendrez Entertainment, Digital Images+ 200 Prints.

RSVP your Squad Leader by August 15, 24

Manny Mendoza, MSD, Commander 210-722-2582