

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4  
JAMES "JIMMY" SPOO**

Inducted 28 March 2013



Chief Warrant Officer 4 James F. ("Jimmy") Spoo was born in Lancaster, Penn., on July 11, 1947. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in October 1965, earning the rank of sergeant in his first 20 months of service. He served in the Republic of South Vietnam from December 1966 until June 1969.

Mr. Spoo entered the United States Army in January 1973. After graduating from the Special Forces Qualification Course, he was assigned to the 3d Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Devens, Mass., where he served as a light weapons leader on Operational Detachment Alpha-322 from 1973 to 1977, and as the intelligence sergeant on ODA-312 from 1977 to 1981. In 1981, Spoo was assigned to Detachment "A", Berlin Brigade, serving as the intelligence sergeant and Sniper on Team Four until 1984.

In 1984, Spoo was selected for attendance to the first Special Forces Warrant Officer Course at Fort Rucker, Ala. He graduated as the Distinguished Honor Graduate of his class, assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 10th SFG(A) at Fort Devens, Mass. In 1986, while on assignment to the Nigerian Army School of Infantry in Jaji, Nigeria, ODA-093 and another team from C/3/10 SFG (A) established the Nigerian Army's Airborne School. He served as the commander of the NASI's Pathfinder Department and was in charge of the Airborne School's physical training program. Upon the completion of his assignment, a small monument was erected naming the Nigerian Army's Airborne Training Area in his honor.

In 1987, then-CW2 Spoo transferred to 1st Battalion, 10th SFG(A) at Flint Kaserne in Bad Toelz, Germany, where he served as the executive officer of ODA-032, then as the executive officer of ODA-034 and senior sniper of the Military Free-Fall Detachment, part of the newly formed Commander's In-Extremis Force.

In 1991, Spoo deployed to Operation Desert Storm where he served as the commander of a Special Reconnaissance and Combat Search and Rescue element. Returning in support of Operation Provide Comfort, then-CW3 Spoo and his ODA deployed to northern Iraq where they conducted reconnaissance missions to pinpoint Kurdish refugees and to establish a refugee camp for more than 10,000 Kurds. The team remained with the refugees until they were safely escorted back to their homeland.

In 1992, as part of Operation Silver Anvil, Spoo served as a member of a five-man advance team that inserted into Lungi International Airport in Freetown, Sierra Leone, preparing the way for the successful evacuation of more than 500 American citizens from the war-torn country. The same year, Spoo led a second evacuation team to Tajikistan as part of Operation Silver Fox. He also served as the deputy commander of a Joint U.S. Force in Tajikistan. CW3 Spoo's element, with members of a Russian Airborne unit, successfully evacuated the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe during a period of extreme violence throughout the Tajikistan capital.

In 1994, CW3 Spoo participated in joint and combined operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Then, after serving more than 20 consecutive years on a Special Forces ODA, CW3 Spoo assumed the post of the commander of the Special Operations Command Europe regional survey team before transferring, a year later, to the Pentagon, where he served as the special operations adviser to the director of International Operations for the Diplomatic Security Service at the U.S. Department of State. Promoted to CW4, Spoo remained with DSS until his retirement in June 1999.

Mr. Spoo is the Chief of Special Operations for the Diplomatic Security Service. During his career with DSS, he has travelled to more than 100 countries and he has received U.S. Department of State Superior Honor Awards for his service in Afghanistan, Albania, Bosnia, Iraq, Kosovo, Liberia and Somalia. Mr. Spoo has continued his lifetime of Service to the 1st Special Forces Regiment by regularly participating in training Special Forces officers during their interagency training with the Department of State.

Additionally, he has dedicated a significant amount of time to working with the Special Forces Association and the Boy Scouts of America. Spoo and both of his sons are Eagle Scouts. His wife, the former Mary (Missy) Rynier, who was an elementary school teacher for Special Forces children in Bad Toelz and Stuttgart, passed away in 1995 after a three-year battle with breast cancer.