



## **The Unofficial SF-88 Newsletter**

### **News and Happenings at SF-88 – August 2025**

#### **Last Month's Events**

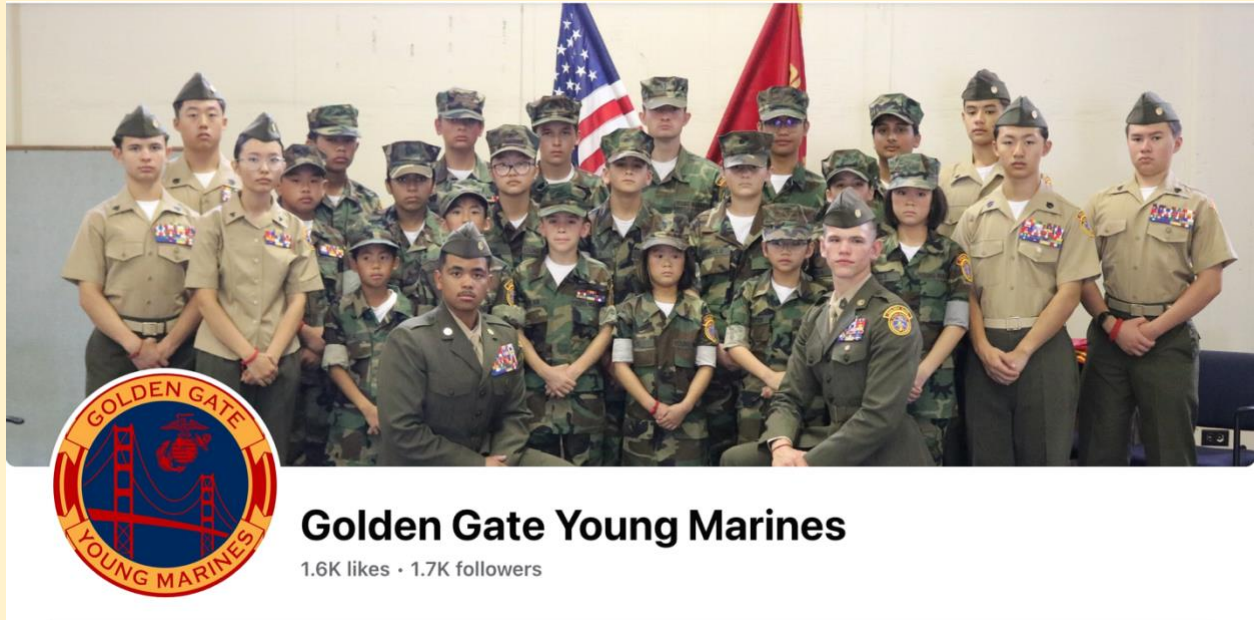
7/24 & 7/25 US Army FA Proponent Team Ft. Belvoir

7/26 Golden Gate Young Marines Group Nike tour

#### **August Events Scheduled**

No tours or events scheduled

## The Golden Gate Young Marines from Hayward California



The Young Marines unit is located at the Hayward Airport. The Hayward Airport was the home of the 144<sup>th</sup> Air National Guard up until 1957.

The Young Marines are a national *youth* program for boys and girls, ages eight through high school, focused on leadership, citizenship through community service, self-discipline, and living a healthy drug free lifestyle.

We were happy to host this fine group of Young Marines at SF-88



Golden Gate Young Marines SF-88, July 26 2025



Golden Gate Young Marines SF-88 July 26 2025



**US Army Ft. Belvoir, FA52 Proponent Team  
U.S. Army Nuclear and CWMD Agency**

**On July 24 and 25<sup>th</sup> we hosted groups from the US Army FA52 Team  
All were officers who were in training for their nuclear weapons  
program.**





U.S. Army Nuclear and CWMD Agency - July 25th 2025



## SF-88 Executive Office Susan P. Cheney



Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives, Marin Headlands and Angel Island Study Collection, GOGA-2881

### Lt. Susan P. Cheney

The Nike Missile Site SF-88, located in the Marin Headlands, served as San Francisco's last line of defense during the Cold War. The site operated around the clock to maintain nuclear anti-aircraft missiles that could be fired within a five minute's notice.

The site was characterized by a certain level of alertness – missileers had to be ready for the unexpected, and the dawn of World War 3, at any moment.



Susan P. Cheney was the first female Air Defense Artillery (ADA) officer to train at Fort Bliss, Texas and to serve at the line unit level. Fort Bliss, Texas was generally where every person in the Nike Program received their training.

She arrived at Nike Site SF-88 in 1974 to serve as its last battery executive officer – two years before service academies like West Point would admit women for the first time.

She saw the Nike Site through its closure, as the Nike program was deemed obsolescent when ICBMs began to rise to prominence. From there, she went on to navigate a successful career, even though there was not a clearly defined role for women in the military and it was difficult to rise to leadership positions.

For example, when Army leadership decided to prohibit women from serving in the Air Defense Artillery even though she had already held a leadership position at Nike, Cheney was forced to transferred to the Ordnance Corps and served with ADA units only as a support officer.

The Army then reversed its decision on women in 1978, and Cheney was able to resume the leadership positions she held before. She became a colonel in 1991. When asked to describe what would happen if a missile was launched at a Nike site, Cheney responded:

*“By the time we launched everything, you were going to be gone. All what we were going to do was slow them down. Life expectancy, and that is one of the things I have thought for many years, when they talk about women in combat, and I laugh because Air Defense is safe in combat. Our life expectancy when we were lieutenants, and I still remember this, sitting in the Nike-Hercules class, we were told our life expectancy was five minutes from the time the balloon went up to the time that it was time to do it. We were told that every Air Defense site worldwide that we were their number one target. Command and control and us.”*

The Nike Missile Sites were all that stood between life as we know it, and a completely new society and landscape that would be altered by mutually assured destruction.

Cheney was a pioneer for women in the military, even though she encountered obstacles regarding the role of women in military leadership.

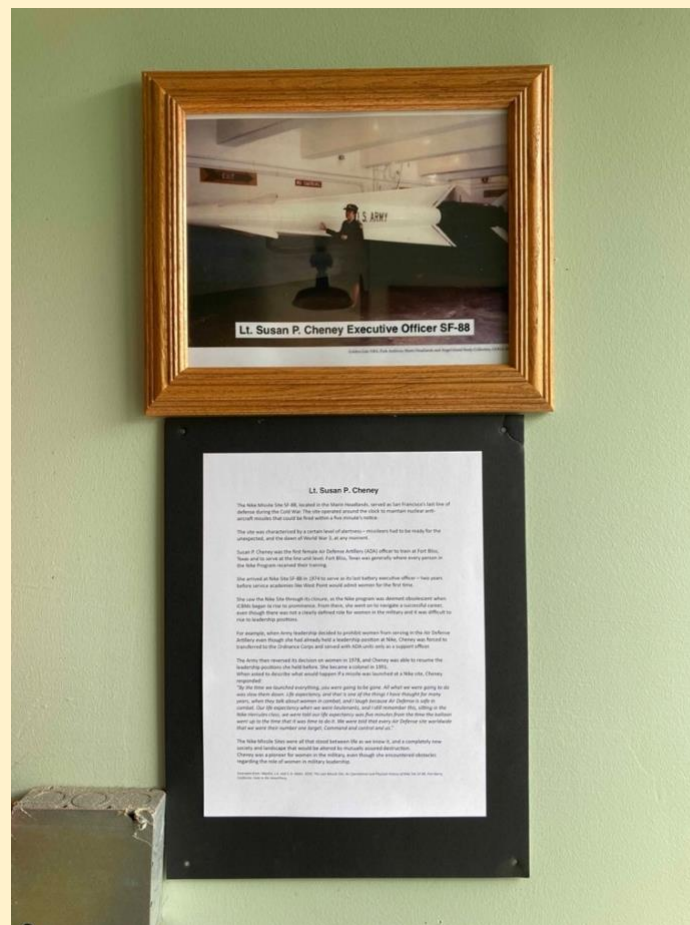
My special thanks to Battery Townsley volunteers and retired NPS Rangers **John Martini** and **Steve Haller** for documenting this amazing story of the first women officers in the Nike Missile System of the US Army.

Excerpted from: Martini, J.A. and S. A. Haller. 2010. The Last Missile Site: An Operational and Physical History of Nike Site SF-88, Fort Barry, California. Hole in the Head Press.

I put up this picture at SF-88 and story to honor her trailblazing story for women's rights, and breaking the Army's glass ceiling here at the Marin Headlands.

Susan's story can be viewed on the NPS Archives,

[https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/women-at-marin-headlands-coastal-defense-sites.htm?utm\\_source=article&utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_campaign=experience\\_more&utm\\_content=small](https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/women-at-marin-headlands-coastal-defense-sites.htm?utm_source=article&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=experience_more&utm_content=small)





**Thanks to NPS Maintenance Department**

**Creighton Geigle's crew who removed all the damaged items and trash from our recent break-in.**



**PS, there was a lot more junk than shown in this picture !**

**Thanks for your help in keeping SF-88 and the Headlands tidy !**

## **NPS Volunteer Maintenance**

SF-88 Volunteer Al Kellogg is replenishing the string mower to mow the outer edges of the pavement at SF-88.

Al has also been keeping the weeds and fennel plants mowed with the weed wacker.





**SF-88 Gate Guard – from the GOGA Collection  
1970-71**



Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives, Chuck Dyson Nike Photograph Collection, c. 1970-71, GOGA 18483.001



**Ranger Vassar Terry raising the flag at Saturday open house**



At the Historic Nike Missile SF-88 Museum, we host tours for the public, Veterans and active-duty military personnel from all over the country, and the world.

This Un-Official Newsletter is published as a means to communicate the news of the site between volunteers and staff.

Please let me know any news or upcoming events at SF-88, questions or comments, or if something needs repair.

Together, we all help to tell the story of our Nation's First-Generation Missile Defense System.

Greg Brown NPS-SF-88 Volunteer, I can be reached at;

[Starryflounder51@gmail.com](mailto:Starryflounder51@gmail.com)

If you wish to not receive the Unofficial SF-88 Newsletter, please let me know and I will remove you from the mailing list.

