



Raider Tales

Stories of Courage & Valor

The combat Marines of "E" Co. 2nd Bn, 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division

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Summer 2022

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Arizona

Remembrance

Greetings to all and welcome to the first edition of the **Raider Tales** newsletter. Terry Dunne came up with the idea and he's put the newsletter together for us.

We intend to publish the newsletter quarterly — Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring — with news about

Echo company members and their families. Also, we will recount some of the combat adventures of Echo company long ago. ([See page 4](#)).



Marshall Croy
Lieutenant
2nd Platoon

Arizona

Echo Raiders Gathered in Prescott Valley, AZ, the first week of May this year. Richard Panichi describes the Gathering with photos ([see page 2](#)).

Those present at this year's Gathering voted to have our Gathering next year in Prescott Valley again. We reserved spaces at the Hampton Inn from 30 Apr – 4 May, 2023, for the Echo Raiders.

Most of us will be arriving Tuesday and departing Friday that week. Plan now to come join us.

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Echo Reunion May, 2022

Seated

(L – R): Tommy Bullock, Richard Panichi, Marshall Croy, Pepe Wise

Standing (L – R):

Gerald Favero, Roger Bachman, Chester Miller, George Hill, Bob Lindgren, Ray Case, Ted Unbehagen, Gary Stucker, Pat Morris, Donovan Cordell, Doc John Weed

Arizona Gathering

2022: The 10th Annual Echo 2/1 Reunion



Richard Panichi
Lieutenant
3rd Platoon

Ignoring the challenges presented by COVID, rising travel costs and— not the least difficulty— advanced maturity, almost an even dozen Marines reported to our reunion base at the **Prescott**

ments, and I know of no more deserving Marines to join our ranks.

Lost Raiders

Since we have been keeping records we have lost 20 Raiders, 11 since the Skipper died, including Barbara Palmquist. Also, a number who have attended previous reunions are now unable due to health issues.

as much a part of Echo Raiders as any of us.

A Complicated Puzzle

As usual, we spent the three days in serious conversation. I am always amazed at how our individual memories of events that occurred over fifty years ago fit together like the pieces of a complicated puzzle. We are a diverse group from many

Valley Hampton Inn on Monday, May 2nd, 2022.

Attending:

Ed Benavidez and his wife, **Pat, “Lurch” Beretta, Tommy Bullock** and **Cathie, Gerry Favero** and **Sue, Bruce King, Bob Lindgren** and **Evelyn, Pat Morris** and **Susan, Richard Panichi, Doc Solon** and **Carmen, Gary Stucker, Ted Unbehagen** and **Phyllis, Doc Weed**, and finally, **Pepe Wise** and the golden-throated **Ramona** were all there.

Honorary

Beretta and Lindgren are not, strictly speaking, rostered Echo Raiders but, speaking for myself only, I count each, as one of us. Considering the number of casualties we have taken in recent years, we are in dire need of replace-



Echo Raiders Gather

(L-R) Ed Benavidez, Doc Ed Solom, Doc John Weed, Joseph “Pepe” Wise, Bob Lindgren, Ted Unbehagen, Bruce King, Richard Panichi, Gary Stucker, James “Pat” Morris, Tommy Bullock

There could be more deaths as every year more people we try to contact do not respond.

Echo Wives

An important part of each of our reunions has been the participation of wives. **Pat, Cathie, Sue, Evelyn, Susan, Carman, Phyllis, and Ramona**, thank you for your friendship and for putting up with your husbands and the rest of us. You are

parts of our country, with differing opinions on politics, religion, and social issues. Once again we proved the bond we share is stronger than our differences by following the Skipper’s injunction to leave our politics at home.

Void Filled

The loss of Gary Lemos’s music left a void that was filled this year by Pepe’s beautiful wife,

Ramona who was kind enough to sing for us several times. Her voice conveys so much emotion we understand the lyrics, whether we speak Spanish or not.

The ten years went fast. Here’s to ten more. Stayed tuned for news on next year’s reunion.

— **Richard Panichi**

Sept 13th – Sept. 17th

2021: Echo Raiders Gathering

In September, 2021, we had our first Gathering since COVID disrupted everything. We had a good turnout in Prescott Valley.

Wednesday that week we dedicated the Skipper’s memorial bench. **Ted Unbehagen** put together his famous **Cajun Feast** Wednesday night and we had a banquet at the **Antelope Club** on Thursday eve-

ning. In 2019 we started a project to place a bench in a local park to honor the Skipper. During



our September 2019 meeting the bench arrived at the hotel and we got to see it.

Arrangements had been made with the local parks authorities to pick up the components at the hotel and install the bench at **American Legion Park** in Prescott Valley.

We delayed the dedication until we could all be together in September 2021. Two of the Skippers daughters were able to attend as well.

— **Marshall Croy**



Bench Dedication

Kneeling (L to R): Marshall Croy, Pepe Wise, Donovan Cordell, Richard Panichi.
Standing (L to R): Roger Bachman, George Hill, John Doc Weed, Gary Stucker, Bruce Barretta, Tommy Bullock, Chester Miller, Ray Case, Gerald Favero, Pat Morris, Ted Unbehagen, Bob Lindgren



M-16 & M-14.
Echo used both

Continued from p. 1
Remembrance



Marshall Croy
Lieutenant
2nd Platoon

I am writing this Memorial Day weekend. I hope you had a time of remembrance and celebration for all those who have given their life in service to our country.

Those who were perhaps part of your family and especially those men with whom we served. I hope you remembered their faces. I hope you spoke their names.

My mind most often runs to remember the first man lost after I joined 2d Platoon in Echo Co., LCpl Dennis Pike. Then I go on to remember others we lost in Echo. I also think of Sgt. James Tueller. In November 1968 I joined the I&I Staff of the 21st Rifle Company in Salt Lake City, UT as the Casualty Notification Officer. A few days before Christmas I notified Sgt Tueller’s wife that he had been wounded. The following day, I had to return to tell her that his condition had worsened and that the Doctors had amputated a leg. The day before Christmas I again returned. This time to tell his wife that he had died of wounds.

Remember their faces.
Speak their names.

— **Marshall Croy**

1st Person Accounts

Combat Stories

Send in your combat stories. Email them, text them, dictate them. Remembering the exploits of Echo Co — the hair-raising close calls, the brushes with death, the ass-kicking we gave the Viet Cong and NVA — it would be a shame not to record for posterity the things we saw as young men in Vietnam.

All combat stories are welcome. First person accounts of fire fights and booby traps make them come alive. Ambush descriptions, ours and theirs, have great value. Multiple first person accounts shine light on long ago complex events.

Send them in. We'll publish them in **Raider Tales** for the Echo membership to view, discuss, and contribute to. Email/text combat stories to:
tdunne3@tampabay.rr.com • (352) 999-1576



The Old Days **Identify?**

If you can ID any of the Marines in these old photos, email or text your IDs to: tdunne3@tampabay.rr.com or (352) 999-1576
We will add the IDs to the photos and then reissue the newsletter, with all individuals identified by name.

Photo #1



Photo #2



Photo #3

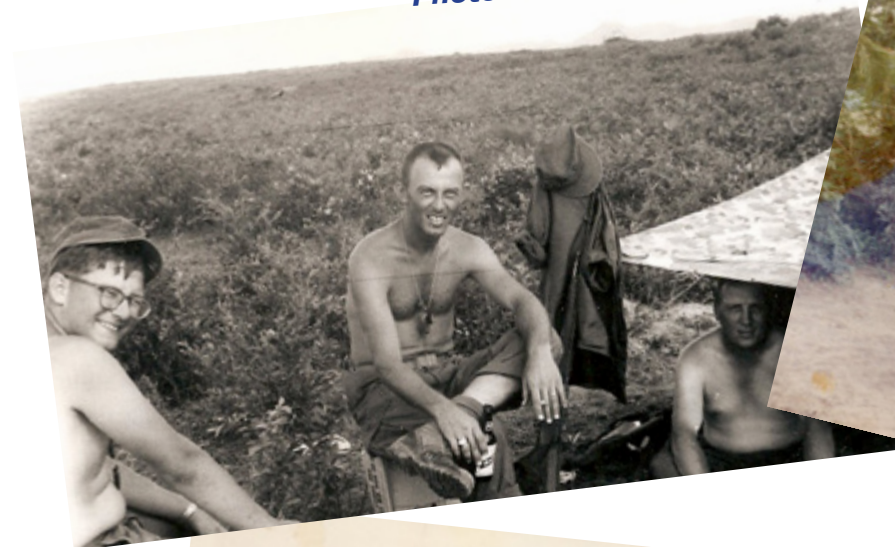


Photo #4



Photo #5



Photo #6



Member News

Seeking Family News

The most important goal of the **Raider Tales** newsletter is to keep track of Echo Co. members and their families.

Wedding anniversaries, family milestones, grandchildren — these are the things we want to hear about.

Send or text your photos to:
tdunne3@tampabay.rr.com • (352) 999-1576



1st Person Account

The Night The NVA Overran Echo



NVA Infantry

We were stretched thin that night, exhausted, two men to a hole, sleeping two hours on, two off. I awakened to parachute flares and gunfire. Green tracers raked the crumpled poncho where a moment ago I'd been sleeping. We didn't shoot back, unsure who was firing. We found out. The NVA, a lot of them, had smashed through our lines at 2:00 am.

Word came to close the breach and surround the NVA. We moved the machine gun over to the next hole where a Marine rifleman lay white and lifeless from a bullet in the neck. He had been a "new man", just 18 years old. The four dead NVA he'd gunned down lay before him.

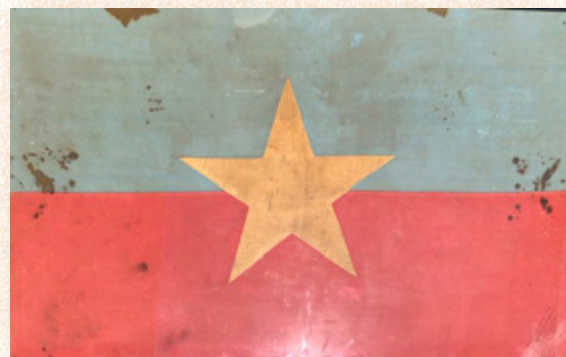
In front of me I saw movement, shot, and dropped an NVA sol-

dier. He fell behind a paddy dike but, within 10 minutes, his head popped up so I shot again and dropped him for good.

Under the moving shadows of parachute flares, all night we fought the NVA, some hand-to-hand, and by morning there were only pockets of them left in the ditches and tree lines around us. At that time I saw what Echo Co. was made of. Without orders, lone Echo riflemen with fight

in their eyes formed into two-to-three-man man fire teams and, with M-16s blazing, assaulted the remaining NVA. Soon all was peaceful.

I went through the backpack of the NVA I'd shot. Inside were a few



Viet Cong flag captured by Echo Co. Operation Union, Summer '67. NVA blood adorns the flag.



Terry Dunne
Corporal
Machine Gun Squad Leader
1st Platoon

hundred dollars in greenbacks, five-or-six U.S. Marine ID cards, and a formal photo of this dead NVA officer in full dress uniform. He was standing proud, his hand on a podium, his wife and little boy alongside. Also in the pack was a Viet Cong flag, stained with this fallen officer's blood (see caption on VC Flag photo below).

NVA resistance was broken. We had just enough time to cook breakfast before moving out. We lost maybe a third of Echo that night, including Gunny Joyce the company Gunny (Gunnery Sgt Daniel Joyce, 35 years old.).

No NVA survived. — **Terry Dunne**

As related in the 2nd Bn, 1st Marine's Vietnam memoir, We Remember, page 89:



"A little later there was a noise at the stream like people filling their canteens. Someone said, "Hey, Marine, hold down the noise." Then all hell broke loose. A platoon or company of NVA was inside our lines. The CP group was shot up. The Gunny was wounded and later died. The only way we could tell who was who was that the NVA had all different colored tracers (red, blue, green, and I think even white). Ours were red, but sometimes theirs were red, too.

Obituary

Lester Newell 1946 – 2021

Major Lester K. Newell, United States Marine Corps (Ret), 75, passed peacefully on December 23, 2021, at **Fairfax Hospital in Fairfax, VA** surrounded by family.

Information Officer. Les retired from NASA in December, 2018. After retirement, Les purchased a business with his son, Brian, serving as the **President of Pegasus**

Les loved "lake life" at Lake Anna, VA, where he spent much time with family and friends. Les also enjoyed spending time supporting veterans and speaking at veterans' events around the country. Additionally, he was actively engaged in humanitarian efforts in South Vietnam. He supported Project RENEW Vietnam which is focused on restoring the environment and neutralizing the effects of the Vietnam War, with finding unexploded ordnance.

He is survived by his wife, Martha; three children: Brian, Brent (Kathy), and Leslie (Brandon); 8 grandchildren; and two brothers, Jeff (Joan) and Bill (Joyce) and many nieces and nephews.

A visitation was held January 5, 2022, from 6-8:00 PM at **Pierce Funeral Home** (9609 Center St. Manassas, VA 20110).

A memorial service was held January 6, 2022, at **The Marine Corps Museum Chapel** (18900 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Triangle, VA 22172). **Marshall & Connie Croy & Bill & Mary Pearson** attended.

Les was born May 12, 1946, in **Tyler, Minnesota** to the late **Kenneth and Yvonne (Nomeland) Newell**. Les grew up on a working farm where he learned the values that he carried with him throughout life, including work ethic, sacrifice, commitment, and love of God.

Les enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1965 and retired in 1988. During his **23-year military career**, he served **two tours in Vietnam** and was afforded the opportunity to obtain a degree from the **University of Maryland in Computer Science**. Les was awarded a **Purple Heart** in 1966 and later became a **Marine Mustang**, working his way through the enlisted ranks to become an officer in 1973.

Following his military career, Les worked in leadership roles in the private sector as well as the public sector at **TSA** and **NASA** where he served as **Headquarters Chief**

Support Services, LLC.

Les lived a "life well lived". He was loved by all that met him, people and animals alike. His favorite activities included long walks, time with his wife and kids, and spending time with his beloved grandchildren.



Les Newell, Gary Stucker, Carroll Roberts, Tommy Bullock