



# GOLF COMPANY 2ND BATTALION 5TH MARINES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



CHU LAI – AN HOA – PHU BAI – HUE CITY

Vol. 11, Issue 2

May, 2002

## REUNION—2002!

Greetings fellow Marines! As announced in the January newsletter, the reunion site decided upon is **Branson, Missouri**. Plans have been proceeding and the motel site has been chosen. The name of the motel is **LEISURE COUNTRY INN** and they've agreed to hold a block of 30 rooms for us at a reduced rate. The regular room rate is \$60 a night but they will give us a room rate of \$50 per night.

The toll free number to call to make your reservation is **800-655-7330** and identify yourself as part of the "**Golf Co. Reunion**" to receive the special rate. The motel has agreed to hold our block of rooms for our group only through July 15<sup>th</sup> after which time, they will have to open them up to the general public—so make your reservations as soon as possible.

In case you've forgotten, the dates chosen for the reunion are **19 through 21 September 2002**. My wife and I plan on arriving on the 18<sup>th</sup>. If any of you also plan on arriving on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the motel will give you the reduced rate on that date as well. Unfortunately the nearest airport of any size is Springfield, MO. The Springfield/Branson Regional Airport is approximately one hour northwest of Branson. This regional hub airport offers 70 arrivals and departures daily with five carriers: American, Northwest, TWA, United and US Airways.

For more information about flights, log onto: [www.sgf-branson.com](http://www.sgf-branson.com) or call 417-869-0300.

Shuttle services from the Springfield/Branson Regional Airport are available for groups and individuals. The companies that offer this service are: A-OK Shuttle and Tours, Inc. Branson/Springfield Gray Line. Of course there are several car rental places available at the Springfield airport for any that desire to have their own transportation.

As far as activities planned, the only group activity planned is a group dinner on Friday night, Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. We decided on Friday night to allow everyone the opportunity to take advantage of the many shows and entertainment that Branson has become famous for on Saturday night. The motel does not have a restaurant but there are several nice one's within walking distance (I am told). As far as our group dinner is concerned, we have the option of having it catered at the motel, or arranging it at one of the Branson restaurants. I want to have that arranged as soon as possible so if any of you have opinions on this, please let me know.

The motel also provides a complimentary continental breakfast in the morning until 10:00AM. The complimentary breakfast includes cold cereals, coffee, tea and juices—and hot oatmeal, grits (for you southern boys) and biscuits and gravy. After the breakfast room has been cleared and cleaned up, the

room will be reserved as our hospitality room. We'll arrange for refreshments to be available and it should be a large enough room to socialize and talk about old times in *the Nam*.

There are also several golf courses in the area so all you golfers bring your clubs. If those golfers out there are interested in playing a round or two, please let me know and I'll see about getting some tee times on either Friday or Saturday—or both days.

Here's what to expect for weather conditions:

	Highs	Lows	Rain Avg.	Temp.
September	76-85	52-62	4.62"	69°

After the last reunion in San Diego in August, 2000, it finally became apparent to many of us *grunts*, that our spouses have felt a *little* left out at our reunions. I know I've been guilty of being so excited about seeing friends I haven't seen in many years that Melba has felt kind of like a "third wheel." And after a late night impromptu conversation the last night of the San Diego reunion with a few grunts, Melba and Danny's lady friend, it became even more apparent that our spouses struggle with their own Nam issues as a result of being married to us. So, for any spouses that hopefully will attend, we are going to set up the hospitality room on Friday, Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>, after the breakfast serving is over and the room cleaned, for a "Spouse's only" meeting/get together. There is no agenda—just an opportunity to get to know one another a little better and share your experiences as the wife, girl-friend, significant other, of a Nam vet—if you choose to do so.

I hope that as many of our Golf 2/5 vets as possible plan on attending the reunion. I've been to almost all the reunions since the mid-80's and I can't express how much they've meant to me and how it's helped to get together with the guys we were with in *the Nam* who went through the same experience. I also can't express how much these reunions have helped me deal with the effects of our experience and I think it's been a help to all those that have attended. We hope to see you there!

Larry S. Ortiz, *The editor*

### Sec./Treas. Report

A hearty thank you to all those who have sent in their 2002 dues and a slight reminder to those that haven't yet. The Treasury is once again looking good.

For those of you who don't know, your Association sent flowers to General Cheatham after the death of his wife. I received this note from Chuck Meadows after the funeral:

*"Hi Lance,*

Attended the interment ceremony at Quantico National Cemetery on Thursday afternoon. Visited with General Cheatham and passed along the condolences from Golf Company. Also had the chance to talk with his son and daughters. The ceremony was simple, short but meaningful. The Commandant, General Jim Jones was in attendance as was General Carl Mundy, former Commandant, and many retired general officers. Had a nice talk with Ron Christmas. Mike Downs and General Pete Pace did not make the ceremony ... Mike was out of the area and Pete was the acting Chairman and couldn't leave the Pentagon. General Cheatham passes along his thank you and God Bless to all.

*Semper Fi ..... Chuck"*

I want to state again, if you have never been to a reunion, try to make this next one. They are one of the best times you will ever have seeing old friends and making new ones. Ones that understand what you have been through and don't have to ask the "dumb ass" questions. I understand the importance of going while you can, as I am not able to travel much anymore and unless they have one in Southern California, I won't be in attendance.

Semper Fi, Marines,  
Lance

*We'd like to again encourage our vets who haven't joined the association to please do so. Attached to the newsletter is a membership form—the editor.*

#### **USS HUE CITY Memorial**

The Hue City Memorial was held in January—a little earlier than usual due to the possibility that the ship may be deployed to the Arabian Sea to participate in our war on those terrorists. Our Hue City Memorial Correspondent, Barney Barnes, has sent in the following report:

This was easily the least attended of all the Memorial Weekends that I have been to. This can be attributed to 9-11 and the readiness alert of our armed forces. We did not know when we received our RSVP's in November if the ship would be in port or not.



**L to R Standing: Tony Cartlidge, Ben Gerow, Lester Tully  
Joe Snead  
Kneeling: Barney Barnes and Mike Ervin**

Note: Thanks to Tony Cartlidge for the above photo.

Those that did make it down were as follows: Lester & Cheryl Tully, Joe & Kathy Snead, Mike & Pat Ervin, Ron & Ellen Rawlings (Ron was General Cheatham's radioman in Hue) Buck & Sheila Dyer, Tony Cartlidge, Ben Gerow, Ron Powers, and Barney & Mona Barnes.

A great time was had by all and the weather was very nice as well. It was the first time for Mike Ervin, Ron Rawlings and Ben Gerow to attend anything or see anyone since their tours in Nam, with the exception of Mike and I who saw each other back at LeJune in 69. It was also nice to see Commander Ron Boxhall again, he was the USS HUE CITY'S XO at one time before doing a tour of duty at Millington, outside of Memphis. He was in Mayport that week to take command of his ship.

At "BOGYS," the base Country Club, on Friday night, the skipper of the ship promised that we would continue to have these weekends as long as the ship was available. While at Bogy's that night, Mike presented me with a framed poem and his Purple Heart, in the original box, that he received for wounds incurred. I would like to share that with you at this time. It reads as such:

#### ***FOR WOUNDS ENDURED***

*The box is old and tattered  
Like the memories stored within.  
But o'er the years I've kept both close  
Like those of you, my dear friend.*

*We took different paths  
As we left the past behind  
But those enduring memories  
Play out clearly in our minds.*

*I got this box for wounds received:  
A mere scratch at the very best.  
But what about all the other boxes  
Sent home and laid to rest??*

*The WALL stores all the names  
But we shelter those we knew:  
CHUBBY, WITT, ROWDEN, and THREET...  
Just to name a few.*

*Yes, this box is old and spattered  
It's memories well worn and stored.  
The HEART inside is for you, my friend  
For many wounds endured.*

I was speechless. I know that there is a bond between all of us in the Corps, heck, our very own Motto suggests that and believe me, at PI as well as Diego, I imagine, it was DRILLED into us from day one.

Mona of course, wanted to know what I had done to deserve such an honor. So I had to explain that it was a bond that we shared, and I'm talking all of us here now. That unless you were there, unless you walked where we walked, you just cannot comprehend it at all. One of the ways that the Marine Corps, in general, and the Nam, in particular changed my life the most is in the area of compassion, kindness, and caring—deeply human concern. I witnessed in Combat (remember what we used to say...War is Hell but COMBAT is a real...feel free to add your favorite #@\*%) in Nam, among us GRUNTS, more capacity for understanding, for sensitivity, and for love than I had ever experienced in my life. It was the type of care and concern that led a young L/Cpl to cry like a baby on 02/10/68 when TROY TONY THREET & JOHN WAYNE ROWDEN, two men from another squad, tried to help his squad out of an ambush and lost their lives in the process. These were Cpl. Tully's men and it hurt me to no end that they lost their lives. (I was taught as a Squad Leader to always take care of your men and they will take care of you.) To this very day, I feel as I failed those two young Marines.

I think of the places I've been, all the things that I have experienced and done that they will never be able to go to, experience, or to do. Who knows what they might have accomplished, the lives they might have led, the families they might have had. I think of that February day and what they taught me with their dying and I know, I know deep down within, but for the Grace of God . . . .

NAM, as I've said often before, above all else was a time of depending on one another. It was a time of friendship...I mean the deepest friendships, that did not recognize the many differences of background, race, religion, education, or beliefs. White, Black and every other ethnic group members could and I must say did, warmly call one another, "CHUCK DUDES," "CRACKERS," "SPLIB," "SPEAR CHUCKERS," "CHIEFS," "WOPS," "BEAN BANDITS," or "BEANERS" without a trace of racism intended or detected. (Something that is all but impossible in today's "POLITICALLY CORRECT" world that we live in) I miss those days, I must confess. For me, as well as most of you, I surmise, NAM is and will always be as if it were only YESTERDAY.

Barney Barnes

***Lest We Forget. . .!***

<b><i>1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert F. Conti</i></b>	<b><i>KIA 11/24/69</i></b>
<b><i>Pvt. Davis Fisher</i></b>	<b><i>KIA 12/4/67</i></b>
<b><i>PFC Troy T. Threet</i></b>	<b><i>KIA 2/10/68</i></b>

**Sit Reps**

Vet Newsbriefs:

- Our membership rolls are continuing to increase as we find more Golf Co vets. We want to welcome the following new members: Tom Mallett (aka "Stump") from Webster, Mass, Steve Jameson from Phoenix, AZ, Bill Harvey from Rochester, VT and Ron Richardson from Tallahassee, FL. WELCOME to the organization and we hope all of you can make the upcoming reunion and get reacquainted with many of your friends.

- Larry Ortiz and Ben Gerow were able to get together for an afternoon and evening of reminiscing in March. Larry was on a business trip to Warner Robins, GA and contacted Ben before his trip and Ben drove for 3 hrs. (each way) from his home near Savannah to meet Larry. Ben and Larry were both in guns in 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon although never met in Nam as Ben arrived in Hue City after Larry was hit. As it turned out, Ben was wounded a couple of weeks after he got to Hue City, so by the time Larry got back to the company, Ben was already gone. Larry took his Nam photos and Ben remembered quite a few of the guys. Ben came in as a replacement in Larry's gun team and was an "ammo humper" for both Larry's A-gunner, Pache Camarillo, (who became the gunner after Larry was hit) and Danny Cholewa's team. Because he was the FNG, Ben got to go out on ambushes every night; one night with Pache and the next with Danny (lucky Ben). Ben has 4 children; 3 boys and a girl. Two of his sons and his daughter are in the Marine Corps—and Ben is one proud father and former Marine. His daughter, Sgt. Katherine Gerow (2nd. Mar. Div. HQ) of Statesboro, GA, was married in April to SSgt. Celestino Vargas Jr. (8<sup>th</sup> Marines) of San Antonio, TX in a full-blown Marine Corps wedding. Ben sent in this great photo of his daughter's wedding:



**USMC Sgt. Katherine Gerow and new husband, SSgt. Celestino Vargas Jr.**

*Congratulations to the happy couple from G 2/5.*

- Jim Lewis is also the proud parent of Cpl. Brent Lewis. Jim writes, "It was a very nice surprise and my son gets an attaboy for seeking out Golf 2/5 in the desert and paying his respects from all us. It was, as you read, (below) very well received. Golf 2/5 carries on the tradition, and in a phone conversation with my son Brent, he said the Lt.Col. had every young Lt. that they had in attendance and listening closely. I was really touched that this officer would take the time to write to me."  
*Jim—thanks for sharing with the membership—the editor.*

*Mr. Jim Lewis,*

Sir, I'm LtCol Jim Lukeman, the current CO of 2/5, and it was great to see your son, Cpl Brent Lewis, last week out in the field. He found our modest command post and sent us your best wishes. He said you were currently laid up, and I wish you a speedy and full recovery. I am tremendously honored and glad that you and he took the time to get in touch with us. It is a humbling experience to be a member of the Corps' most decorated battalion, made so by Marines like you. We truly feel that anyone who has ever served with 2/5 is part of the family, and I love to hear from former 2/5 Marines.

This is the fourth battalion I have served with, and I have never served in a unit with such an active following from WWII, Korea, and Viet Nam. I've run into some other members of the Golf 2/5 Association at changes of command and the Division reunion here at Camp Pendleton. The names escape me right now, but it is great to talk to them and learn more about the history and legacy of 2/5. I just recently read part of Col (Ret) Walter Moore's memoirs from August 1966 (We got part of a draft copy of what looks like a book he is writing.) I've passed copies out to the commanders to read and pass on. Later this month I'll be going to a ceremony in Michigan to dedicate a memorial to Cpl Duane Dewey who won the Medal of Honor with 2/5 in Korea in 1952. I've exchanged e-mail with Maj Graham, son of Capt James Graham who won the Medal of Honor (posthumously) as CO of Fox 2/5 in June 1967.

Every time I meet someone new I learn more about 2/5's legacy. The heroic deeds of Marines like yourself are not lost on today's Marines. You, and others like you, have made more of an impact on today's Marines than you can ever know. It is the knowledge of past deeds that grows the pride and selflessness inside each of the current members of 2/5, and keeps them going when the going gets tough. They know that they are part of a special unit, and that they can't let that unit down. Like I said, it is tremendously humbling for me to a part of 2/5.

You should know that today's Marines are ready to do whatever the nation asks of them. 2/5 is ready to go, and our ranks are full of great Marines, tomorrow's heroes.

Semper Fi,  
LtCol Jim Lukeman

#### **Missing In Action**

We have lost touch with the following G 2/5 vets. Their last known city of residence is also provided below. If anyone knows their current address, please forward that information to me—the editor.

- Baker, Ferrall L.— Laguna Niguel, CA
- Dillenburg, Clyde – St. Joseph, MN
- Dima, G. E. – Spokane, WA
- Graham, James M. – Gibsonia, PA
- **Hammons, Wayne – Memphis, TN**
- **Huber, Jim – Charleston, MD**
- **Lippencott, Jeffery – Wilmington, DE**
- **Lucas, Larry – Beattyville, KY**
- McColloch, James H. – Charleston, SC
- **McGuinness, John C. – Anthony, FL**
- Moore, Dave H. – Herndon, VA

- Moore, John H. – Payson, AZ
- Tant, William – Tuscaloosa, AL
- **Woggin, John A. – Hilton Head, NC**
- Zachary, Reid B. – Sultan, WA

Note: Our MIA list is, unfortunately, growing. New MIAs have been added as a result of the Jan. 2002 newsletter mailing and are listed in **bold**. I've also received notice that John Grunner, previously listed as MIA, has passed away. John was the CO of G 2/5 in 1966. The Golf Co. 2/5 Association extends its deepest sympathies to the family and friends of John. *the editor*

#### **Welcome Home to Our Heroes**, by Larry S. Ortiz

On April 17th, Melba and I had the honor to be a part of a group from the Navy League and a select few from my company, Raytheon, who were invited to go on a cruise aboard the USS PELELIU (LHA-5) from San Diego to San Pedro, CA. The USS PELELIU is an Amphibious Assault Ship which I would describe as an Aircraft Carrier for helicopters. The deck is 800 ft. long so it's a pretty big ship. (To give you an idea how big it is, the new nuclear carrier USS RONALD REAGAN, is 1021 ft. long). The ship's crew is around 1,000 sailors and officers. The ship can also transport up to 2,000 Marines—which it did after Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>. At the time of the terrorist attacks, the PELELIU was making a port call in Australia and got orders to head for the Arabian Sea. The ship deployed the 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) in Pakistan. These Marines were some of the first into Afghanistan and captured the Kandahar Airport.

Some particulars of the USS PELELIU:

- **Ship's Motto:** *Peace Through Power!*
- **Aircraft:** (Actual mix depends upon mission)  
Nine [CH-53 Sea Stallion](#) helicopters  
Twelve [CH-46 Sea Knight](#) helicopters
- Six [AV-8B Harrier](#) attack planes
- **Description:** Primary landing ships, resembling small aircraft carriers, designed to put troops on hostile shores.
- **Features:** Modern U.S. Navy amphibious assault ships are called upon to perform as primary landing ships for assault operations of Marine expeditionary units. These ships use [Landing Craft Air Cushion \(LCAC\)](#), conventional landing craft and helicopters to move Marine assault forces ashore.



### Sailors In "U" of USA Formation

We drove from our home in Santa Barbara on Tuesday night after work and arrived at our hotel in San Pedro about 9:00 PM. We got up at 1:30 AM (4 ½ hrs. later) to catch a bus at 3:00 AM that drove our group from San Pedro to San Diego—it was a short night and an awfully early morning. We got to board the ship in San Diego about 7:00 AM and were welcomed by the Ship's Captain in the large hangar under the deck of the ship. After our greeting by the Captain, we were invited to have breakfast with the ship's crew in the mess hall which consisted of cold cereal and coffee (it sure wasn't Starbuck's).

We had complete freedom to roam the ship including the bridge. The ship's crew was very friendly and respectful addressing all the civilians as "Sir" or "Mam." There was only a small contingent of Marines on board; probably about platoon size. It was a pretty cold day for California—probably in the high 50's. We certainly didn't dress warmly enough and together with being out on the ocean and a strong sea breeze, we pretty much froze standing on the bridge for a good part of the 8 hr. cruise to San Pedro.

We sailed out of San Diego about 8:30 AM and passed by the carrier the USS NIMITZ that was in dry-dock for overhaul and repair. It's a different time now after Sept. 11 as there were several gunboats out on patrol in a perimeter around the carrier. One of the highlights as we left the harbor in San Diego is we passed a California Grey whale on its yearly migration from the warm waters of Mexico where they spend their winters to Alaska where they spend their summers.

During the course of the cruise, several Marine CH46s and Apache helicopters practiced landings and takeoffs from the deck of the ship—very exciting to watch. There were several female sailors and a couple of female officers as part of the crew. I'm still not sure this is a wise decision on the part of the military. But as we watched the chopper landings and takeoffs, it was obvious that no women were part of the navy crew that guided the choppers down onto the deck, anchored them down with heavy chains and carried the heavy hoses to refuel them. Male sailors performed all of these jobs.

During the Captain's welcoming comments, he informed us that one of the three "Ground Zero Flags" was also on board. The Navy League provided the following information about the 3<sup>rd</sup> flag: "After 11 Sept. 2001, Detective Peter J. Conlin of the NYPD Emergency Service's Unit was on duty at Ground Zero. As Detective Conlin was in the vicinity of Tower 2, he noticed a flag that was flying astray from a pole of 2 World Financial Center. The flag was in danger of coming loose as it was hanging by only one grommet. Taking the initiative, Detective Conlin retrieved the flag and took it to the Emergency Services Headquarters.

Over the next few days, families and friends of the victims started sporadically signing the flag with messages to their lost loved ones. The flag became covered with emotional remembrances and became a respectful and honorable memorial.

The next decision was to decide what to do with the flag. With a large amount of former U.S. Marines in the ESU and the U.S. Marines being currently engaged in combat with hostile

forces in Afghanistan, it was agreed that the flag would be turned over to the U.S. Marines to be carried into Combat.

Former U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant, Lt. John P. Durkin, NYPD ESU, then delivered the flag to Major David C. Andersen, USMC, of the NY City Marine Corps Public Affairs Office. Major Andersen then had the flag transported to the 26<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard the USS BATAAN commanded by Col. Andrew P. Frick, USMC.

The flag was then raised on the USS BATAAN and then carried ashore by the U.S. Marines. It was flown at a flag-raising ceremony where it was hoisted over the captured Kandahar airport."

The flag was brought out during the cruise and hung in the hangar of the ship where we all got a chance to see and touch it—quite an emotional sight.

We had chow with the sailors and Marines at lunch and the sailors then busied themselves with all the ship cleaning details and then cleaned themselves up and dressed in their "whites" for the landing in San Pedro. The Marines also changed from their utilities into their green wool trousers, tropical shirt and "piss cutter" covers (if anyone can tell me why a "piss cutter" is called "piss cutter", please enlighten me). About an hour and a half before we entered port in San Pedro, the sailors were ordered on deck and stood a couple of arms lengths apart around the whole perimeter of the ships deck. A group of sailors also stood in a formation spelling out "USA" on the deck. The Marines were also on deck and a group of 20 Marines held the "Ground Zero Flag" next to the formation of sailors spelling out "USA"—WOW! We were all choked up.



**Marines Holding World Trade Center Flag  
Aboard USS PELELIU**

Also during the cruise, word spread amongst all the civilian guests that the "American Taliban", John Walker, had been on board the ship until he was returned to the States. My blood boiled when I heard that and I have to give a lot of credit to the sailors and Marines aboard ship for not executing that worthless traitor, which is what he deserves, while he was on board.

About an hour before we anchored in San Pedro, the Capt. came on the PA system and ordered all the Sailors and Marines on deck to attention. I have to add that it was still extremely windy and very cold and the Sailors and Marines were dressed in short-sleeved shirts. It was a long time to stand at attention under cold and windy conditions. It didn't take long before the Sailors started fidgeting and moving around—guess they never quite learned what standing at “attention” really means. Later, Melba commented that it was quite a contrast between the Marines “that didn't even bat an eyelash” during the hour long maneuvering into San Pedro and the Sailors that couldn't maintain standing at attention for more than five minutes after receiving the order.

As the tug boats helped maneuver the ship along the pier, a high school marching band greeted the ship along with several television news crews and a small group of people. I was very gratified to see the ship's crew receive a “proper” welcome. It was a great experience and both Melba and I were very proud to be on board—but there was more to come.

On Friday night, April 19<sup>th</sup>, we attended a welcome home dinner for the Sailors and Marines on board the USS PELELIU sponsored by the Navy league at Fort MacArthur there in San Pedro. All the ship's crew and Marines were invited (although all did not attend). The World Trade Center Flag was on display in the main lobby of the reception hall. There was also a banner strung across the lobby saying “Welcome Home to Our Heroes”. There was a dance band (whose average age must have been about 85) who played during the dinner. Among the invited guests was John W. Finn, WWII Medal of Honor Recipient for heroism during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He got up to say a few words and was quite a character and received a standing ovation before and after he spoke. The Captain of the PELELIU made some comments also and thanked the Navy League for the welcome home.

After dinner Melba and I walked over to one of the other tables where four Marine Sergeants were seated. We shook all their hands and I made it a point to thank them for their service to our country and to welcome them home. It was all I could do to keep from crying while I said this but I know my eyes reddened and filled with tears anyway. Before we walked over to the Marines, I had decided I was not going to tell them I was a Nam vet because this welcoming was all about them—as it should have been. While I was off talking to a couple of the Sgts., Melba was talking to the other two and unbeknownst to me, she mentioned to them that I was a Nam vet. She told them what an honor it was to meet them and Sgt. Joe Flores, from San Antonio, told Melba that that it was an honor for them to meet a Vietnam Vet. The other Sgt. she was talking to, Sgt. Juan Delgado, told her that to them, meeting a Vietnam Vet was like meeting a movie star. After a few more minutes Melba and I returned to our table and we could see that Sgt. Flores was talking to the other 3 Sgts. and then they all got up and walked over to our table. They all shook my hand again and said they were proud to meet me. I was overwhelmed. We talked more about Nam and the fact that I was also a Hue City Vet which raised me even more in their eyes. The group of Sgts. were in 81s and I got more details about their experience in Afghanistan. After I told them I was in Hue City, one of the Sgts. told me that the

Corps uses footage from Hue City for training in house-to-house fighting—really surprised me. They told me that the 2/5 is at Camp Horno at Camp Pendleton and said that if I was ever in the area, to please stop by as they knew 2/5 would give me a warm welcome and would really like to meet and talk to Hue City/Nam vets.



**Larry & Melba Ortiz with Three  
Of America's USMC Heroes**

I felt very honored to be one of those on the USS PELELIU cruise and to attend the reception. I've often wondered if the Corps was still turning out Marines of the caliber that we were. I guess I've had my doubts given the way that the military has been so politicized. Any doubts or concerns I may have had about that were forever removed from my mind by this experience. As LtCol Jim Lukeman, the current CO of 2/5 said in his letter (above) to Jim Lewis, today's Marines are every bit as competent as any in our proud Marine Corps history. It was inspirational to see that they are every bit as professional, dedicated to the protection of our freedom and our way of life and to the Corps as we were. It was an honor to meet them and to be in their presence.

God bless and protect all our Service men and women and God Bless the USA!

Semper Fi – Larry S. Ortiz

#### **In Our Thoughts and Prayers**

- As previously mentioned we were advised by Col. Chuck Meadows that JoAnn Cheatham, wife of LtGen Ernie Cheatham, died the morning of April 21. “She passed away peacefully and Ernie and their children were with her.” Internment was at Quantico National Cemetery. On behalf of the Golf Co. 2/5 Association, we offer our deepest sympathies to LtGen. Cheatham and his family—the editor.
- I talked to Mario Muniz shortly after the beginning of the year—one of our Golf Co., 3<sup>rd</sup> Plt. Vets. Mario has worked for the Postal Service since he was discharged carrying a heavy mail bag on his shoulder for over 30 years. That has

taken a toll and he had a serious operation on some vertebrae in his neck. It involved bone grafts from a cadaver and other grisly procedures but he's recovering. We wish him a speedy and complete recovery—the editor.

### Recall Update

In the January 2002 newsletter, I reported about an incident at a Board of Supervisors meeting here in Santa Barbara, CA. The meeting occurred shortly after Sept. 11 and one of the supervisors began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The chairperson (a woman) reprimanded this man for doing this. She not only reprimanded the man, but fired him on the spot saying that he had no authority to do what he did and it was insensitive and divisive to recite the Pledge of Allegiance as it may be offensive to some members.

That action angered county residents to the point of calling for a recall election to oust this woman. Since I wrote about that incident, I've gotten a couple of inquiries from vets as to what has happened since then. To have a recall election, petitions were necessary and 8,000 signatures were required. Close to 14,000 signatures were collected and submitted for the recall. Unfortunately, there have been legal maneuvers by this stupid woman's supporters and they have filed a legal challenge due to the fact that some of the people who circulated the petition and collected the signatures were being paid. They assert the petition signatures are unallowable. This whole mess is still in the courts but indications are that the petition signatures will be accepted and the recall will proceed. I will provide another update in the next newsletter—the editor.

### **Golf 2/5 Website Address**

Sign on at <http://www.2ndbn5thmarines.com>

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**Another great Photo from the  
SSgt. & Mrs. Celestino Vargas Jr. Wedding**

**Golf 2/5 Association Membership Form: (New Members Only)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ AKA \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Years Served \_\_\_\_\_ Platoon/Squad \_\_\_\_\_ MOS \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional: Wounded / Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_**

Dues: \$25.00 first year; \$10.00 per year thereafter. If you are on 50% or more disability, just send \$10.00 first year and \$10.00 per year thereafter. If these amounts are a financial hardship, contact Lance. We want everyone to be a part of the Association.

Mail New Membership Forms to: **G 2/5 Association, c/o Lance K. Machamer, 4 Lighthouse Street, #10, Marina del Rey, CA 90292**

**Golf 2/5 Association  
c/o Larry S. Ortiz  
7064 Scripps Crescent  
Goleta, CA 93117**

**Address Correction Requested**

**First Class**