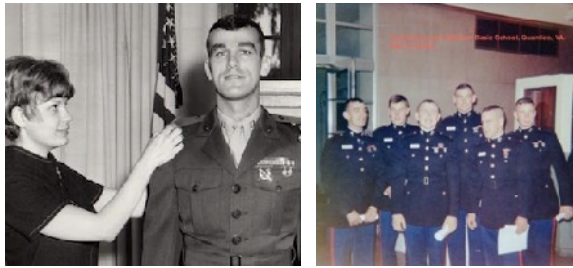


Pfeiffer, George Martin Jr. (George), 4th Platoon

25 June 1943 - 14 November 1998

Plano Mutual Cemetery, Plano, TX



The Basic School at Quantico was George Pfeiffer's second go-round with Marine-tough obstacle courses and endless training days. He had been through Marine Corps Recruit Basic Training at Parris Island four years earlier. Perhaps it was being twice trained that made Corps physical standards stay with him. Even after USMC days, he ran a fast mile and bench pressed far beyond what his weight would predict, until his final run—in brand new running shoes—on a warm November Saturday, 1998, when an unknown circulatory condition felled him.

George graduated near the top of Delaware's Harrington High School class of '61, earning letters in five sports and setting track records that would remain unbroken through the 1980's. However, having grown up in a foster family, he possibly lacked financial resources for college. He left the University of Delaware after one year and joined the Marine Corps.

Post-MCRD, he was onboard ship at the Bay of Pigs crisis and then had a very short Mediterranean cruise that ended when he was selected for the Naval Enlisted Scientific Education Program (NESEP). He reported to the University of Missouri in the fall of 1963, met and married Mary Ennis, June 3, 1966, and graduated at the top of his NESEP class in 1967 with a BS in Electrical Engineering.

Next stop: Commissioning as a 2nd Lieutenant and on to Quantico for TBS and Communications School. Near the end of Comm school and test time for the memorized in-use and in-reserve codes, North Koreans seized the *USS Pueblo* with those codes on board. Without knowing which or how many codes were compromised, the new Communications Officers were forced to start all over on the next set of codes.

George left Quantico for deployment to Vietnam on the same day in 1968 that Marines from Quantico were called up to guard Washington, D.C. against riots and fires, following MLK's assassination. Even the possibility of serious violence erupting within the United States didn't change immediate orders for Vietnam.

Letters home from Vietnam reported Communications duties in Da Nang, Khe Sahn, and Phu Bi (*that are remembered*).

Weeks in a vault studying secret codes must have been a foreshadowing of his future assignments in and out of the Marines. From Vietnam he went—with wife and baby daughter #1—to a "secret" Naval

Communications Station in Morocco where uniforms were worn only on base. In spite of heavy security restrictions, it was quiet duty—until the final Saturday before his rotation back to the States. Moroccan dissidents attempted a coup against the King. Driving near the King's palace in Rabat, George and his wife met a convoy that George noted was carrying live ammo (and that turned out to be the perpetrators). The soldiers allowed them to pass and turn in a different direction. George's colonel happened to be at the palace and was caught in the fracas but released unharmed. The Pfeiffer's farewell dinner at the Colonel's home, scheduled for that evening, was necessarily cancelled.

Their family of four—a second daughter was born in Morocco—returned to the states the next week, July 1971, and George resigned from the Marine Corps. He had decided the civilian world offered the “pure science” that he declared early in his college studies was his goal.

With engineers “a dime a dozen” at that time, he grabbed the only position available. Then in July 1972 a letter arrived from Dallas's Texas Instruments; it had been mailed a year earlier. Postmarks indicated at least 2 trips across the Atlantic and postings to several countries in Europe and Africa before it reached him. The company wanted an ex-Marine design engineer in their Defense Systems. George jumped at the offer. During his 26 years at TI and TI Raytheon, he earned the coveted designation, *Member, Group Technical Staff*. His work included the “terrain-following radar” for F-111's and the Stealth's anti-detection system. The only way his family learned the nature of his projects was from after-the-fact news reports of TI's role when it became public information.

As much as George loved “guy things,” he was a devoted husband and father. Mary's large extended family took him in as their own, giving him the family he missed growing up. He located in Plano, TX, where Mary taught school and he avoided talking about his job by listening to his house full of women. He was uninhibited about emergency runs to stores for whatever “personal item” one of his daughters might require. One prom night found him replacing ruined pantyhose at the same Park Lane franchise where Marine Colonel Oliver North (infamously) picked up ballet tights for his daughter. George lived to see both daughters married and two granddaughters born. His legacy: each of his, now three, granddaughters is a talented runner.

USMC Resume:

MCRD, Parris Island, June 1962

BS in Electrical Engineering, University of Missouri, June 1967, 1st in NESEP class;

Commissioned a 2nd LT USMC

TBS Class 1-68 Alpha Company 4th Platoon

Basic Communications Officers Course 3-68, Quantico, April 1967, Class Honorman

Vietnam, 7th Comm. Bn FMF and Sub Unit #1 (CEO) Service Co., Hdqt 1st MarDiv, FMF, 1968-June 1969

Sidi Yahia, Morocco, Naval Communications Station, July 1968-July 1971

Resigned August 1971 with rank of Captain

Personal Reflections about George Pfeiffer:

From Robert Newlin, 13 Apr 2015: I recall that he had a wonderful sense of humor and a 1000-watt smile.