



Miguel de la Peña

February 17, 1919 - September 16, 2012

de la Peña

Lt. Col. ret Miguel Mike de la Peña went to be with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Sep. 16, 2012 at the age of 93. He is now at peace next to his beloved Ruby who died in 2005. Miguel, an American warrior and U. S. Army Special Forces S.F. soldier, was born on Feb. 17, 1919 in San Antonio, TX and was very proud of his heritage and country. After spending his childhood in Mexico, Milwaukee, Peoria, and San Antonio he grew up speaking only Spanish until the 5th grade. "My heritage and my family, I'm proud of them, but I'm an American!" Mike fought in 3 wars, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam and was awarded the coveted and prestigious Combat Infantry Badge three different times, a true feat and honor for any soldier. Speaking about combat Miguel said "I can't describe it, you know that you're in danger but you can't be terrified because then you will be helpless." Having completed jump school as a 36 year old Capt. and veteran of Normandy to Czechoslovakia and Korea, Mike was one of the first Hispanic officers to join S.F. in 1954. He was initially assigned to the 77th S. F. Group for Training and Qualification. Upon completion of the S.F. course, was reassigned as a detachment Commander with the 10th S.F. Grp. in Europe. Returning to Ft. Bragg in 1956, Miguel was assigned as Co. Commander with the 77th S.F. Group and later with the newly formed 7th S.F. Group. He was selected as an element leader for the "White Star" project where he commanded the weapons and demolition

Training center at Pak Se, Laos in 1959-60. Then Major de la Peña served as the Grp. Intelligence Officer, 1st S.F. Group in Okinawa, Japan. He later took command of the Korean Resident "B" detachment and in that capacity served as the Senior Advisor to the Commander of the Korean Special Forces. Then he volunteered for duty in Vietnam and was assigned as Cmdr. of a "C" detachment of the 5th S.F. Group in 1964-65. Miguel was foremost in the organization and concept of the first operational deployment of the "Mike Force" which bore his name! Lt. Col. Miguel de la Peña served his country with distinction and honor until his retirement in 1967. Following his retirement, he joined the U. S. Tank and Automotive Command where as a weapons delivery Specialist, was instrumental in the delivery of special weapons to many foreign governments. Upon returning home to San Antonio, TX, he and Ruby bought a house near Ft. Sam Houston. Miguel joined the S.F.A. Ch. XV The Alamo Chapter and together they hosted the Chapter's Veteran's Day and Memorial activities for 20 years. Miguel provided guidance and leadership to the Chapter and to the S.F. community. Throughout his career Miguel truly embodied the spirit, dignity, and sacrifice to his Country and the United States Army. Miguel and Ruby Anne had a fairy tale adventure and were married for over 60 years. Miguel was preceded in death by his wife, Ruby who also served as an R.N. during WWII in the Army Medical Corps, his mother, father, three brothers, three sisters, and four children. Miguel is survived by his older brother Jim de la Peña and his wife Virginia, and daughter Mary Margaret Wenzel and husband Carl, sons Edward Carlos de la Peña and wife Karen and Aaron de la Peña, six grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to the Wounded Warriors.

Service

Visitation will begin on Wednesday, September 19, 2012, from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North. Graveside services with full US Army Honors will be held Thursday, September 20, 2012 at 10:00 AM at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Tribute Wall



“ <http://aiwa.americanindiansource.com/mike/mike.html>

Michael Caron - October 30, 2025 at 03:07 PM



I served in B55 Mobile Strike Force or Mike Force, in Vietnam in 1968, but did not know until recently my unit was named for Miguel.

Michael Caron - October 30, 2025 at 03:12 PM