



John N. La Chica (1934 – 1969)

Sergeant First Class John N. La Chica of Chula Vista died on May 31, 1969 while serving in Chu Lai, Vietnam with the Americal Division. Sgt La Chica was an artilleryman and had served in Germany for six years prior to his starting his second tour in Vietnam in January 1969.

At age 35, Sgt. La Chica left his widow Rosario E. La Chica behind and four children from this marriage, John, Theresa, Antoinette, and Mary La Chica. In addition, he was survived by mother, Mrs. Ruth La Chica, and three sisters and brothers, all of San Diego. He lived at 29 East Oxford Street, Chula Vista and attended San Diego High School.

His widow, Rosaria E. La Chica, said she had a letter dated from May 28. She also said the Defense Department did not explain the cause of death other than to say that it was not from enemy action and that La Chica died last Saturday. His body was recovered in Phu Yen, South Vietnam. This active Roman Catholic served in the service for sixteen years.


John's granddaughter, Angela La Chica (San Diego, CA), was devastated at the death of her grandfather. She visited "The Wall" in the summer of 1998 with her father, and was amazed at her water-filled eyes while rubbing his name. She says that part of her great sadness was because of the fact that he died innocently in Vietnam along with thousands of other men, leaving four young children behind. Also it was due to the guilt she felt that she was able to share that moment with her own father.

Donald Cox, a friend of John N. La Chica (Lawton, OK), was stationed with John at Hanau, Germany. They were both assigned with the 2nd Bn, 73rd Artillery that later became 6th Bn, 40th Artillery. John was for a time Donald's Section Chief of a M109 Howitzer. John left in 1964, and Donald took over as Section Chief until 1966. Donald left for Vietnam and arrived with the 4th Inf. Division on October 6, 1966. Donald says that John taught him a lot of things, but mostly not to take anything for granted and to take care of the men.

Along with many of the Vietnam War, John's name is placed on The Wall. His name is placed on the wall at location Panel 23W, Line 28.

Sgt La Chica was the eighth South Bay serviceman to die in Vietnam in 1969. Services were held on June 16, 1969 at the Humphrey Mortuary in Chula Vista, and were followed by a mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in San Diego. He was buried with honors at the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery at Pt. Loma. His gravestone is located at Plot: O 3599- E. He was buried on June 16, 1969. His name appears at the Vietnam Veterans Peace Memorial in Balboa Park, San Diego, CA. A street in the Sunbow community of Chula Vista honors his name. His name was also added to the Stardust

Spacecraft in a NASA microchip as an outreach program. Further information can be found at: <http://stardust.jpl.nasa.gov/overview/microchip/faq.html>

<p>John N. La Chica</p> <p>California SFC Btry C 16 Arty Americal Div Vietnam May 16 1934 May 31, 1969 SM – BSM - ARCOM</p>	
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