

## Biography

### Michael C. Little

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Mike attended St. Mary's high school in Berkeley, California, graduating in 1964. Initially, college was a struggle, so he joined the Army in August of 1966.

Trained as a Military Policeman, Mike arrived in Vietnam a year later, serving his entire tour in the Central Highlands. His camp was located just outside of Pleiku, the largest town in the area.

The unexpected occurred during his time in Vietnam. Despite the War that raged around them, he developed a close, personal relationship with a group of Bahnar Montagnard children, which has lasted to this day. Mike was reunited with these children during a visit in 1994. They are the reason he has returned to Vietnam so many times since, and become a Board member of **FVSO**.

Returning to the States in August, 1968, Mike graduated from Sacramento State College with a degree in English. For awhile, he attempted to teach elementary school, but soon realized it was not his calling. With a "push" from his father, he was hired by the Minute Maid Company in 1978, working as a business analyst, as well as various other roles over a 26-year career. He retired from Minute Maid in 2004.

Mike is married and has two children, a son about to earn his teaching credential and a daughter who works in Orange County. He also has two grandsons.

For many veterans, their Vietnam experience is something in a past they wish to forget. For others, it's an old memory, sometimes good, most often not. Still fewer are men like Mike who cannot "escape" Vietnam. He explains, "for us, Vietnam is 'alive,' a vital part of our daily lives, and staying connected in a positive way gives us a great deal of satisfaction." The internet has been a tremendous asset by providing steady two-way communication that has resulted in renewing relationships that were impossible back in 1968.

Vietnam defines Mike; he can't imagine a life without it. "I'm a better person because of what I learned there so long ago, and continue to discover today." His wife and children have visited Vietnam with him, and hopefully there are more visits in their future. They all now share a strong affection for Vietnam and its people. Whether it's spending time with Montagnard friends in their villages near Pleiku, or bringing cheer to the orphans at Vinh Son Orphanage in Kontum, they always come home enriched.



Mike and Marion Little with Bahnar friends, Vietnam 1998