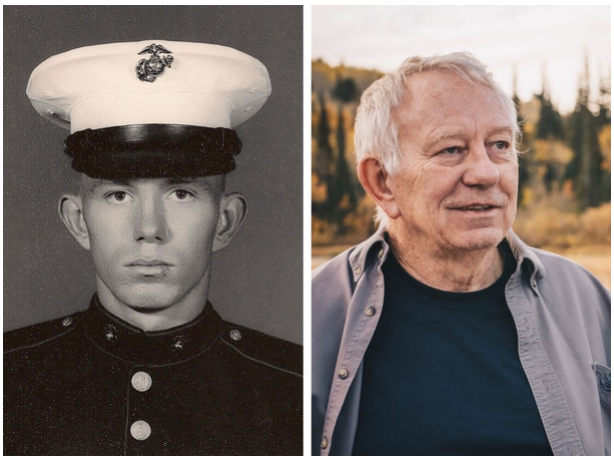

Michael (Mike) Douglas Bell

January 8, 1947 ~ May 10, 2025

Michael (Mike) Douglas Bell of Sandy, Utah, devoted son, husband, father, grandfather, friend, and veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps – 1st Force Recon, passed away peacefully in his sleep on May 10, 2025, at the age of 78 after a brief battle with gastroesophageal cancer. The family is deeply saddened and shocked by his sudden death and will greatly miss him. Michael was born on January 8, 1947.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents, George and Geneva; sisters, Elizabeth (Clyde) Haslam, Donna (Dean) Johnson, Joan (Bill) Nienke; and brother, Ronald (Nikki), and many friends and brothers in arms.

Mike is survived by his wife Leslie (Werner) of 54 years; and their children, Addam (Jennifer), and Aimee (Jason) McDaniel. Forever cherished and remembered by his seven grandchildren, Shawn, Dimitri, Annabella, Jackson, Sophie, William, Pepper, his many nieces and nephews, as well as lifelong friends Lynn Clark, Jerry Maroney, Jerry Westenskow, Bill Woodier, David “Stick” Nelson, and David “Gertie” Gugich, and many others.

During his senior year at Bountiful High School, he also attended TradeTech (which is now Salt Lake Community College) and worked at night at Litton Industries making guidance systems for military aircraft. After his graduation in 1965, Mike enlisted in the Marine Corps, having always wanted to be a Marine and serve his country. While he ultimately went to Radio School, he had first attended Flight School and never lost his love of flying.

While in Radio School, Mike volunteered for Force Recon and was assigned to the 1st Recon Battalion upon graduating. He served in Vietnam from 1966 – 1967 with a Top-Secret clearance. During his time in Vietnam he participated in 7 different Operations, performed 36 documented long range combat reconnaissance patrols and an additional 18 undocumented ones as he was often asked for by name due to his expertise and skills. He received numerous awards and medals, was wounded multiple times, and took over 200 hours of Marine Corps Institute (MCI) courses before being honorably discharged in 1971.

After the Marines, Mike worked nights at Albertson’s where he met his wife (he really liked her mini skirt). He married her 7 months later on February 11, 1971. She convinced him to go back to school and attended Weber State University and graduated with Honors as a machinist and later received a degree with Honors in Manufacturing Engineering Technology.

Some of his greatest joys came from spending time with his family and his cats. He loved traveling to Air/Car Shows, Marine Corps reunions, or anywhere his wife wanted to on vacation. Those who knew Mike will remember him for his outgoing personality, joyful storytelling, incredible generosity, infectious smile, and roaring laugh. He was always the mother hen and was quick to reach out and check up on those he loved – which included a regular “nose count” of his cats at least once a day. He loved to be needed and was quick to serve and give of his time, talents and money.

He took an active role in the lives of his children, their friends and spouses, and his grandchildren by celebrating their accomplishments and teaching them important life skills or sharing advice. He was extremely proud when his son Addam followed in his footsteps and joined the Marine Corps and even taught his daughter-in-law, Jennifer, how to weld a stinger they designed together for her Jeep. He was always quietly proud of Aimee’s artistic accomplishments and when she learned how to fix things around her own house. He was especially impressed with her recently when she even fixed her microwave! He loved Jason as his own and could never stay in a grumpy mood when Jason was around.

Mike had many interests throughout his life and had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, often spending his spare time researching topics of interest, reading books, designing and/or building things like a Cobra sports car, an airplane and helicopter parts, and many other projects, including some with his various jobs which were, at times, top secret. He had a lifelong love of music and regretted never learning to read music and when he lost his ability to sing late in life.

A graveside service with full military honors will be held in his honor at the Larkin Sunset Gardens Cemetery in Sandy, Utah, on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. and a Celebration of Life afterwards (details to be provided day of). In lieu of flowers, funeral expense donations are greatly appreciated. Monetary donations can be made directly to Mike's wife, Leslie Bell.