



**Darwin Lee Richards Co C-1**

*When Punky arrived at West Point, he didn't really know what to expect. After the initial shock, however, he found plenty of time to play handball, along with his studying. His sense of humor, ability, and easy going attitude will make him a success in the outside world, as they did here.*

**Born** – 31 Dec. 1939, in South Norfolk, VA.

**To USMA** – From South Norfolk, VA. Nickname – “Punky”. He was offered a full ride to UNC on a football scholarship, but his mother told him he was to go to West Point.

**Died** – 13 June 2022 (age 83) at Greenville, NC. Buried at Pinewood Memorial Park, Greenville, NC.

**Military Awards** – National Defense Service Medal.

**Schooling** – Civilian technical and management courses.

**Family** - Wife – Dolly Richards (almost 61 years) – 8 children (Darla, Brett, Bartt, Randa, Sharla, Bryon, Brandon, Kristal) – 13 grandchildren, one great-grandchild.

**Contact** – Dolly Richards, Address 1953 Cherry Stone Lane, Greenville, NC 27858, Phone unknown, Email unknown.

Punky served on active duty in the Army (Corps of Engineers) for 3 years, resigning in 1964, with the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. His first assignment was with the 326<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Platoon Leader, Company Commander, & Training Officer of the Advanced Airborne School) attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. From Punky – “As Classmates / friends began deployments to Vietnam, there were occasions when I seriously considered a return to service.”



After leaving active duty in the Army, Punky had a successful career in manufacturing engineering and management. He worked for the Ford Motor Company (Industrial Engineer, assembly plants in Norfolk, VA & St. Louis, MO), Fiber Industries (Training Manager and Division Planning Manager, polyester plant in Piedmont, NC), Tuscarora Yarns (Personnel Director, polyester plant in Eastern, NC), Collins & Aikman (Division Personnel Manager, Auto Production Manager, Division Planning Manager), Gerber Children's Wear (Corporate Planning Manager), Independent Management Consultant, North Carolina State University Industrial Extension Service (Regional Manufacturing Consultant), Janus Development Group (President, Chief Operating Officer and Senior Advisor – manufacturing and selling “SpeechEasy”, an electronic in the ear anti-stutter device – Punky's proudest accomplishment). Punky passed away on 13 June 2022, from Parkinson's disease.

Footnote from Punky – “A ‘life-changing event’ struck in 87 (age 48). I was flipped on my head while body surfing and bruised my spinal cord resulting in paralysis from the neck down. I was floating face-down in the wash, unable to catch a breath. Our 10 year old son spotted me and got help from a couple of beach strollers. Ten years in recovery.”