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Donald Neudecker

Army, Military Police

2 Years in service

Interview Date 2018

Donald Neudecker

Donald Neudecker took part in the Vietnam war by working his way up the ranks by being a sergeant for the U.S. Army military police. Donald Neudecker was born in January of 1948 in South Gate California. Donald spent his young years growing up as a surfer guy between Huntington beach and Buena park. Donald was a highschool graduate at Marina high school which is a private school located in Huntington Beach California. After his time at Marina High School he went off to college and continued his studies at Orange Coast College which is located in Costa Mesa California. Here he studied being a police officer.

When the Vietnam war started to be intensified the draft had begun this meant that young men would be drafted and forced to serve in the military being aware that young Donald would soon be drafted regardless of wanting to join or not, he decided to enlist instead of being forced to join that way he could choose what he wanted to do in service. Since Donald was already studying to become a police officer he thought that he may as well sign up to be military police for the U.S. Army so that this way when he came home to the states he would be able to join the force as a

police officer. Prior to joining the Army Donald had been pretty torn up about a heartbreak from his highschool girlfriend that had broke up with him when he was still in college. Donalds family was well aware of the dangers of war and the things that could happen to you in service. But his family was accepting of it and all though they didn't want him to go to war and didn't fully agree with his choice his family did not attempt to stop him. Donald had grown up in a family that had served this country as well. His father was in service during world war II, and his grandfather in world war I.

Them serving made them aware of the dangers but they as well did not attempt to stop him. Donald's first days in service were recalled to be surprisingly welcoming and not as harsh as he and his fellow service mens would have thought. But very shortly after he had sworn into service officially everyone within the staff had begun to treat all the recruits very differently than they did from the first days of joining up. The staff was constantly yelling and was very harsh to the newly recruits. After swearing into service him and his fellow recruits were sent over to Ford Ord to continue their military training but in a more intense way.

In training recruits were required to follow orders and do what was told. Some had problems following orders, one experience that Donald vividly remembers was of a young recruit that went by the name of Hollywood since he was from the Hollywood area. He was enlisted but not because he wanted to be there, he was known for causing some trouble back home and his parents signed him up hoping to straighten him up. During gas training hollywood took off his gas mask and the gas began to burn his lungs so he ran out of the room due to the gas burning his face and the staff caught him and made him dig a six by six hole underneath the barracks. After this experience it caused Hollywood and other men to realize that they meant

business. Being military police Donald's job was to settle disputes amongst the people, and to make sure the streets were safe and clear for troops to pass through. After he was complete with his training at Fort Ord he was sent to Saigon in Vietnam for his time in war Saigon was a place in South Vietnam that was heavily guarded by Vietnamese troops. Donald described his time in Saigon as very humid and and constantly raining and very uncomfortable living quarters. Donald and the other men had to constantly be on their toes and aware of what was around them and there was constantly missile strikes from the vietnam forces bombing his base around the surrounding jungle. Donalds biggest war experience was in the battle known as "tet offensive. This took place on January 30, in the year 1968. The vietnamese had worked their way into the U.S. Embassy and outnumbered the U.S. by roughly eighteen to one. The first two vietnamese troops who ran into the Embassy turned out to be the vietnamese commanders and they were gunned down right away by U.S. troops and this left the Vietnamese forces confused and unaware of what to do. The American troops soon took back over the Embassy. Till this day Donald believes that god was on his side that night and he made it through safely.

Donald was discharged in the year 1969. After he was discharged Donald went back to marry his now wife who was living in Vietnam.