

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
PAUL A. KAY
Military Police, Marine Corps, Korean War.

2006

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Kay, Paul A., (1933-). Oral History Interview, 2006.

User Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 57 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 57 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Abstract:

Paul A. Kay, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin native, discusses his service in the Marine Corps during the Korean War. Kay talks about enlisting in the Marines the same day he got a draft notice in the mail. He addresses taking a troop train to California and arriving at San Diego Training Depot. Kay details boot camp: tough drill instructors, re-doing everything, competition with other platoons, writing home, physical training, bringing his rifle everywhere, and rifle training at Camp Matthews. Assigned to be a guard and policeman, he speaks of advanced training, brief assignment to El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, and guard duty at a lighter-than-air Naval base, which trained with dirigibles and Sikorsky helicopters. Transferred to Korea via Japan with the 1st Marines, he discusses training aboard the troop ship, including learning about Korean culture and hygiene. Kay talks about duty as a policeman and rifleman at a small base in Pyongyang (Korea). He touches on living quarters, food, looking for guerillas, and searching for weapons hidden in the "honey bucket" carts. Kay describes the clothing he was issued, living in extreme cold, and the poverty of the local Koreans civilians. He states one of his boot camp friends, Max Masiniak, was killed the first day they were in Korea. Kay mentions the establishment of the DMZ somewhere nearby, being promoted to corporal, and returning to the States. He portrays R&R at Lake Yamanaka Resort (Japan). Kay talks about injuring his leg in a jeep accident and spending a couple weeks at Yokosuka Naval Hospital Station. Recalling his homecoming, he reports he felt welcomed home by the newspapers and the Red Cross. Assigned to Cherry Point (North Carolina) as a sergeant, he tells of once being shot at by a disgruntled Marine and describes his living quarters and travels. After being discharged, Kay describes getting a job with the Milwaukee Sheriff's Department and the reactions of the police to his service record. He reflects on being taken care of by the VA office and hospitals, enjoying returns on his life insurance policy, and seeing his two sons enlist in the Marines. He talks about some of his experiences with the Milwaukee police: serving papers to homeowner to make room for the expressway, being a body guard for Judge John Coffey, and working during the race riots of 1967. Kay discusses his involvement starting the Door County Marine Corps League and performing honor guard duty at funerals.

Biographical Sketch:

Kay (b.1933) served in the Marines from 1952 to 1954. After the war, he worked as a sheriff in Milwaukee for fifteen years, eventually moving to Sturgeon Bay (Wisconsin), where he worked as a bridge operator until 2006.

Interviewed by Terry McDonald, 2006
Transcribed by Becky Berhow, Court Reporter, 2006
Checked and corrected by Joan Bruggink, 2011
Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2011

Transcribed Interview:

Terry: This is an interview with Paul A. Kay, who served with the United States Marines during the Korean War. The interview is being conducted at approximately 9:00 a. m. at [unintelligible] the Michigan Street Bridge in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, on the following date of April 13th, 2006. The interviewer is Terry McDonald.

Paul, can you give us a little bit about your background information, circumstances before you entered the military, where you were born and your family history?

Paul: Certainly. I was born March 7th, 1933 in Milwaukee, in the tough part of Milwaukee. Good part of Milwaukee. I went to school in Milwaukee and we lived in Wauwatosa after a while. And of course, we moved back down to Milwaukee and I went to grade school and high school in Milwaukee. After graduation from high school, the Korean War was already started.

Terry: And what year was that?

Paul: The Korean War started in June of fifty—1950 and this was looming over my head when I graduated from high school in 1951.

In 1951 I went to Wyoming, I was a cowboy, and I stayed in Wyoming until the Korean War started to heat up pretty good and then I got—I went back home to Milwaukee and found out there was a draft notice for me. And the draft notice came in the mail and I went out the back door. I went down to Marines and I enlisted in the Marine Corps. One of the recruiters asked me, he said, “Well, did you get a draft notice?” I said, “No, not yet.” And of course, the next day I came back and I said, “Gee, I got a draft notice here.” And so, “That’s okay we just—we don’t need that. You’re in the Marines now.”

Terry: So what made you pick the Marine Corps versus the Army or any other branch?

Paul: Okay. I had relatives in the Marines and I had talked to them about the Marines and I was fascinated with a lot of the Marine stuff. I was fascinated with the Marines as far as the sea-going Marines, and I thought that would be a good—good way for me to get into the Marines, to get into the sea-going Marines. What you want and what you get are two different things. [laughs]

Terry: What’s the difference between the sea-going Marines and the regular Marines? Is there a difference between the regular Marines and the sea-going Marines, or—

- Paul: No, they're all Marines. It's just that, what's your MOS, what's your duty status. Most of the Marines aboard the ship are military police and they're with a guard unit and they are the personal representatives and the kicker for the big captains on the ships. They're the go-fers. Do this, do this, get in uniform, stand up, they—
- Terry: So they're more or less assigned to ships all the time or most of the time?
- Paul: That's right. That's right. Most of the time. So you've got Marines in the sea-going duty. You've got, of course, the divisions. The grunts, the guys that go in first. You've got the air group. They were starting with helicopters at that time. That was the first time that they started with Sikorsky helicopters, those Bell helicopters, the small ones. They used those for evacuation in Korea. And then of course, prior to that, they had—or after that, I should say, then they had the big Sikorsky, bigger ones where you could probably put six guys in a helicopter.
- Terry: So when you went into—did you go into the Marines right away then?
- Paul: Yes. Oh yes. Oh yes.
- Terry: What month was that?
- Paul: That would be like January, '51, '52. I take that back. January, '52.
- Terry: And where did they send you for training?
- Paul: Okay. That's a good thing. Everything done at that time was everything—you were sent anywhere on trains. You didn't go on an airplane, you went on trains. So we jumped on the train in Milwaukee and went to Chicago. Down in Chicago they must have had thousands of guys on a train and they had a train from Chicago all the way to California. About three days.
- Terry: All Marines going to training camp?
- Paul: All Marines going to training camp. This was gonna be a fun time.
- Terry: How many guys went from Milwaukee? Did you know any of them?
- Paul: No. No.
- Terry: Didn't know any of them?
- Paul: No, I would imagine three or four hundred, three hundred. Now, how many of those went in the Marines, I don't know, because they would take a room and of course, if you were enlisted you were put outside, but they took a room and

they said right down the middle here, you step over one side and you step over on the other side. Okay, now you fellows are in the Army and you are in the Marines.

Terry: That was it, huh? No questions asked.

Paul: [laughs] Some of the people were not too happy about being in the Marines. But you couldn't switch any more at that time; we were already pegged for the Marines, and that was a two year tour of duty if you were an enlisted man. I was in three years, but enlisted men it was two years. So whether you were in the Army at that time or the Marines, you were going to be there for two years.

Terry: Okay. And whereabouts in California did they send you then?

Paul: To sunny San Diego. It was wonderful. Don't forget, this was wintertime and I got down there and it was like seventy-five, eighty. Birds were chirping and leaves are nice and green all over. It was like paradise. So we got out of the train station and then, of course, they had like ten buses lined up. I said, "Well, that's pretty nice. They're going to give us transportation right to the base." So, you know, there's a lot of stories about how you get on a bus in the Marines. It's not too gentle. They ask you "please step forward" and your name and you get in the bus and you said, "This is pretty nice." Well, that's the end of the niceness right there, because after that the stuff hits the fan. They make you get out of the bus, line up, stand at attention here, whether you're in formation or not, and when they say "get in that bus" they mean get in that bus! And when you get on that bus, there's no talking, you get in, and not one through the doorway, five through the doorway. So they try it again. [whoosh] "In the bus." Well, there's always somebody who's talking or something. "Get out." This goes on about half a dozen times, so by that time you tear the handles off your little ditty bag and you get on and you shut up and you don't say a word. Then they drive you right to San Diego Training Depot. This is strictly a recruit depot down there, all training, different phases. At that time we were in, like ten weeks of training because of the Korean War. So I would imagine—I don't really know how many troops go through there, how many platoons go through there, but there's always three in one group. Three platoons of sixty men, and they compete against each other *constantly*, which is gonna be the best, which is the toughest, which can outlast everybody, who's the fastest. You always compete whether, whatever, on everything. So that's how we started down there.

Terry: And at that time, were the drill instructors pretty tough?

Paul: They were nasty. They were the nastiest people on God's green earth. We had three of 'em, and they would not let you alone for one second, every day, twenty-four hours a day, and they would switch off. Two of 'em would be on your tail all day long, and at nighttime they slept in the same area that you

slept, in a different room, so when they put you to bed at nighttime, you went to bed. Lights went out, eyes went shut, and—in fact, they’d test you out. They’d put you to bed, teach you how to make a bed, and nothing is ever done in one time; can’t be done. You’ll have to make that bed a half a dozen times, and then they throw sand on it and you have to take all the sand off and redo the bed again. No matter how you clean it up, it’s not good enough and you have to do it over and over and over. Finally you get to sleep. They tell you, when the light goes off here—we lived in Quonset huts at that time. “When the light goes out, your eyes go shut and you sleep.” So he’d test it out. Lights out, you’re sleeping, and then they ask you, “Is everybody sleeping?” And some dummy is going to say, “Yes, sir,” and of course you have to get up, the whole gang gets up, you go outside and they run around, run around, run around, get back in, get into bed. He’ll ask you the same question: “Is everybody sleeping?” No noise, nobody says a thing, and that’s it. Your first night sleeping. When you get up in the morning, they will tell you by the time the electricity gets into that light bulb, you’ll be standing, doing stationary double-time next to your bunk with a sheet in each hand. So, I don’t know what time it was, you don’t have a clock, but I’m gonna guess around 4:30, 5:00. The light goes on, and of course, I couldn’t sleep, you know, I’m worried about that light bulb going on. Jump out of bed, a sheet in each hand, doing stationary double-time. Of course you have to go to the can there, but this makes no difference. And the guy next to you is sleeping. [makes snoring noises] It’s gonna be a bad day. [Terry laughs] It’s gonna be a bad day. So that’s how it starts, and from then on it never stops. They don’t let you alone for one minute. In fact, they’re worried about your parents, so what they’ll do every week is they’ll say, give everybody a piece of paper and a pencil. “Sit down. Write your mother. Dear Mom: I am pretty busy. Haven’t got much time to write. Feeling good. The food is great. Your son. Put it in an envelope. Let’s go.” Run to the mailbox; everybody drops the letter in. At that time it was free mail, there was no stamps on it. You’d just write “free” and [whoosh] that was it. So your mom heard from you at least once or twice during boot camp so she wouldn’t worry about you.

Terry: So was the boot camp pretty physical?

Paul: Extremely physical. In fact, it was just like a concentration camp. I felt that I think I made a mistake, that this is not the way I wanted to be living.

Terry: Were you in pretty good physical shape? I mean, if you were a cowboy, you must have been in pretty good physical shape when you went in.

Paul: Luckily I was. I was about one hundred-fifty pounds, six feet. Six feet and one hundred-fifty pounds, you’re kind of skinny. But that’s the way—you were okay. If you were a little on the chubby side you were in for some exercise that’ll shed pounds. You’ll get in there.

- Terry: So they kept you busy all the time? You never had much time to do anything else?
- Paul: You never had any time for yourself. It was a scheduled deal where you got up in the morning and did physical, what do you call it, PT. You did that first thing in the morning. You went back in, went to the bathroom and then [whoosh] you were back outside within five minutes and you run to the mess hall. And you eat, and they tell you when you eat; as soon as you get done you're back out here. Standing. You always make mistakes the first time or two. You're done early and you want to be a good guy and you get out there first; that's bad. You want to get there when the last guy gets out there, because when three-quarters of the group is there, they'd say, "Right face, forward march" and they're marching without the rest of the guys that are still in the—that's another trouble. That's trouble. And of course, every place you go in the Marines, once they issue your rifle you *never* go without your rifle. Your rifle is with you twenty-four hours a day. Go to the bathroom; take your rifle. You take a shower; take your rifle.
- Terry: Was it like an M-1?
- Paul: M-1 is exactly right. M-1, and I still have it today because I'm in a Marine Corps League now and I'm on the honor guard and we take care of funerals here for deceased Marines. I'm still wearing a uniform.
- Terry: Were you much of a sportsman with a rifle prior to entering the Marine Corps?
- Paul: No.
- Terry: So this was fairly new to you then, right?
- Paul: All new. No, I wasn't a shooter. I wasn't a hunter because I lived in the city, and there wasn't really much opportunity for hunting in the city. My dad wasn't an outside guy. And you basically had to be yourself.
- Terry: So how do you do when you got issued the rifle?
- Paul: Rifle training was—at that time, I believe it was a two week period. And the two weeks was up in what they call Camp Matthews, which is not there any more. It was probably, I'm gonna guess, twenty, thirty miles away from San Diego. They would bus you in there, and it was mountain training rifle range; that's all you did. All day long. And the first week you go through the whole—in addition to your rifle that you're always carrying is field stripping it and cleaning it and cleaning it and carrying it. In addition, the first week is just what they call snap in. You dry fire for a whole week. You cannot flinch and they teach you how to breathe, how to shoot. They also feed you a special diet with no sugar. No sugar will drizzle over your eyes and you'll see lines like

that. No sugar. And I think they even give you some saltpeter and it spices up the food nice for you. That was cold; that was cold there. We lived in tents, all tents, and you started with the M-1 but you also fired M-1, we had the carbine, 45. I can't remember, that's over fifty years ago and I can't remember exactly what we did, but it was, I believe it was two solid weeks of concentrated shooting.

Terry: They were preparing you for a war, then?

Paul: Yes. And the big thing was when you qualify, it was at a thousand yards. That's a long way. You had to qualify, and they would keep you there until you qualified. If you didn't qualify, you were schooled extra and you were going to qualify. It was very, very intense training, but the whole thing was still Marine Corps boot camp stuff. It was all the same thing. You know, how you sit in toilets where there's twenty in a row and you're kind of embarrassed and you'd kind of—you'd get over that after a while.

Terry: Pretty quick.

Paul: You're all guys there. And you always had to have a cover on, even if you went to the can at 2:00 in the morning, to the head, you had to have your hat on, your cap, your cover on. And some of the guys if they lost a cover, they would run through the bathroom at 2:00 in the morning and grab somebody's hat and run and who was it, who knows? It was fast.

Terry: So you survived the ten weeks of boot camp then?

Paul: Yes. We always competed with three platoons. I happened to be in the honor platoon, which was the best of the three. Now how we compared with anybody else, I have no idea.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: But Saturdays was always a marching band and always competition, whether you were watching somebody or you were participating. So—but ten weeks, it seems like ten years in a concentration camp and basically that's what it is.

Terry: At the end did they give a pretty big ceremony when you graduated?

Paul: They did, but at that time, you know, who would be there? All of our guys were from the Midwest. Parents weren't there. I mean, it was graduation but what was it? Graduation was you march and you—that was done, then you got your orders and my next orders were I was in advanced training back in the mountains.

Terry: Advanced training, like advanced infantry training?

Paul: Yes, yes.

Terry: And did you go right away or they give you some time off?

Paul: No. Nope. I was assigned to be a guard and a policeman, and my first assignment was to El Toro. El Toro was a Marine air base which took care of all the prisoners, all the guys in the brig, and manned all the gates and did all the guard duties for every building on the base, twenty-four hours a day. I wasn't there too long and all of a sudden I was transferred to LTA, that was Lighter Than Air. That was a Navy base, and I think the base might still be there, but I doubt it. They used to have dirigibles. Huge, great big, Quonset hut-type things, five, six stories high. Unbelievable. And they had like two of those dirigibles in there, and the Navy was using those to train some of their young men, recruits, to the tune of—what do they call those? I think they were Reserves. They'd come in like every weekend or whatever it was, they'd take these dirigibles out. That was good duty for me because I was on a Navy base, I was a policeman, and we were at the gates and guarding everything there. The best food ever. And you're not the best liked, but you had the best quarters there. And then I wasn't there too long and they started bringing these Sikorsky helicopters and the bigger Sikorsky helicopter. Well, first was the Bell helicopter.

Terry: The Bell being the two passengers?

Paul: That's right. Two passenger with litters on the outside.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: And then there was the Sikorsky helicopter which was bigger. I was there maybe a month and I was transferred back to San Diego.

Terry: Did you have anything to do with the Sikorsky? Where you—

Paul: No, no. Nothing. I know nothing about airplanes. We had—it didn't make any difference what was in the warehouses or who was coming in and out, you had your orders and that was it, whether you were on an air base or a grunt base or whatever. You did your job. Then I got transferred to Korea.

Terry: You went back to San Diego first?

Paul: San Diego.

Terry: And were you assigned to an outfit?

Paul: The whole group. The whole group; I was assigned with the 1st Marines.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: As a policeman. And I remember six blocks long, all these guys are waiting in line to get aboard the ship. I had no idea that they were all gonna fit in there.

Terry: A transport ship?

Paul: Transport ship. They were Merchant Marine ships.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: I think it was five or six high that you slept in there. It wasn't like the Navy where they have two bunks; this was like six, where you had that much, two feet, between them. And hot, hot aboard ship in the Pacific at that time of the year. Hot. Fourteen days to get there aboard ship.

Terry: So what did you do all this time?

Paul: Trained constantly.

Terry: Training by what, breaking your rifle down, field maintenance on your rifles, PT?

Paul: Start with PT in the morning and stomping on those decks up there it would shake that whole ship. And that never stopped. All day long what we had to do was how to be accepted into Korea, what to look for, what not to eat, what to eat. Always eat things that are cooked so you don't wind up with some kind of bacterial infection. How the women are treated over there and their hygiene habits that you were aware of it, that's what they do. Things were a little bit different then. We never were taught this kind of stuff. We had C-rations. C-rations. You know, not what they have today. They have meals ready to eat stuff.

Terry: [laughs] That wasn't the same thing.

Paul: These were cans. And it was just constant training. I wound up in Yokohama, Japan—

Terry: Okay.

Paul: —after two weeks aboard ship, and then they took us on a train from Yokohama to—by golly, Itami Air Force Base, and from Itami Air Force Base they flew us to Korea. That was the first time I had ever been on an airplane.

Terry: Oh, okay. A cargo plane, a C-47?

Paul: I don't know. You sit on the side with a barf bag and, that's how you got there at that time. They were sending other Marines on cargo ships to Inchon, but I was lucky I got on an Air Force base.

Terry: Now you said the 1st Marine Division. Were you assigned to any other company or battalion or anything in that division?

Paul: If I did, I didn't know where I was.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: I didn't know exactly where—I was in what they call Pyongyang, Korea. I tried to find it on a map; I don't even know where it is. It's in the middle of nowhere, and I thought it was pretty close to one of the coasts, and I'm guessing that it might have been on the east coast of Korea, but I'm not sure. But I was transported in Korea to different bases and we were, that was our job as a policeman or a guard, in addition to being a rifleman. I was under combat for like ten months, something like that—ten months, eleven months.

Terry: What kind of living conditions was it in Korea?

Paul: Very good. Our living conditions were pretty nice. We had bunkers and we had tents and everything was bunkered up and sandbagged, so if we took any incoming we would at least have some protection to get out into the bunkers. We had food. They had mess food there and you'd get there with your utensils.

Terry: So you were assigned to a pretty good-sized base, is that correct?

Paul: No, it wasn't a very big base at all.

Terry: Not very big?

Paul: No. Um-um. No. In fact, I don't even know [unintelligible] in there. I was with a guard detachment and what we were doing, we were interviewing and corralling these people who were natives. We were looking for guerillas, is what we were doing. And they used to hide weapons in a honey bucket, if you know what a honey bucket is. They'd wrap 'em in plastic and stick 'em in a honey bucket. Honey buckets were dragged by these—what were they, great big bulls or oxen? On the side they had two big tanks and we were supposed to find that stuff in there. I don't know.

Terry: Hmm. Were you there during the wintertime in Korea?

Paul: Oh, yes. That was unbelievable. You know, we didn't have decent clothes; the Marines didn't send us over there with nice clothes until the following year after the Korean War was going, then the new Marines coming in they had parkas and nice boots and everything. We had World War II Army-style Army clothes that they gave us to keep warm, and the only good thing that I had that I—thank God that I did, and that was they used to call the Mickey Mouse boot, that black insulated boot that was rubber-lined and you put 'em on, you never take 'em off. If you'd take 'em off, you'd go in the shower with 'em and you'd wash with 'em and take 'em off and dry 'em and get new socks and new clothes and put 'em on and you're ready to go again for the next time.

Terry: So it's pretty rough in the winter over there with the—

Paul: Extremely cold. They have what they call the Manchurian wind come down there off of China and it was cold. Those poor people had nothing. I don't know how they really survived. And those poor natives, I really felt sorry for them. They had nothing. Nothing. There was no roads, there was no electricity, they didn't have food. I found two starving boys one night. I had some oranges, I gave 'em the oranges. They didn't know what they were. I said, "Chop, chop, chop, eat, eat, eat." They ate the whole orange, everything, peelings and—and then of course you'll get sick, you know, if that's all you have to eat, just oranges. So they weren't ready for that kind of food and I don't really know what they had, but we used to get in between the natives and we would have to look at the stuff that they're eating. A lot of fish, fish heads, um, onions, garlic, all packed in a nice little box like that. Good-smelling stuff, too.

Terry: That's wonderful. [laughs]

Paul: But anyway, that's how those people lived and I could never understand it. At one point I was stationed on a road in the middle of nowhere and it was a checkpoint where the Army trucks would be coming in and we had to check in each Army truck and what they were bringing and see that they weren't being coerced into coming into this area, and it was a very tight lid on. I don't know which way I was facing there, either. I don't know, facing north or south or east or west. Then they finally established it, the DMZ line. I wasn't that far from the DMZ line, but I didn't know exactly where it was. And then, of course, I was there about eleven months and I did lose some friends there.

Terry: So you were actually in the combat zone?

Paul: Yes.

Terry: Basically all of Korea was a combat zone.

- Paul: Yes. Well, the northern part was. If you were out in Pusan you probably weren't, but that's where a lot of supplies were coming up on a train and the trains were pillaged, whatever they call that, where they were taking, stealing from the trains. But I wasn't down there. I was up near the DMZ. One of my closest friends I went to boot camp with, Max Masiniak, first day in Korea he was killed.—[End of Tape 1, Side A]
- Terry: Tape 1, Side B, Paul Kay. And Paul is describing his experiences in Korea at this time.
- Paul: Okay. When we were cut off here in the last—
- Terry: You were talking about you lost a good friend of yours.
- Paul: Yes, Max Masiniak. The first one, the first day, he was killed. We've had other skirmishes and napalm explosions and, you know, that kind of stuff, but that's Korea and that's a war zone. I was fortunate enough to have battle ribbons with four stars on them and I think each season or each quarter of the year you got one star.
- Terry: Okay.
- Paul: I didn't even know what I got until I got back.
- Terry: Um-hmm.
- Paul: You weren't privileged with all that stuff, and you weren't interested. You wanted to get the heck out.
- Terry: What was your rank?
- Paul: I went in there as a PFC and I wound up being a Corporal over there. And I come back as a Corporal. I was very glad to get out of there. The war was still going on. We were put back onto a transport back in Yokohama for return to the United States, and that was about June, May of '53.
- Terry: Now did your whole outfit come back as a group, or did just individuals, or how did that work?
- Paul: I can't remember, because some of the guys never came back, and who took their place at what time and how long they had to stay there—at that time it was like an eleven month or a twelve month rotation basis, and that was not our worry as to who was coming in and how long they were there and where they were coming from and how long they had to stay. We didn't know any of that stuff, you just were working with a group of guys. When it was time for you to leave you just disappeared.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: You were gone. And then it was back to the United States. My orders were at that time, just go with this group [laughs], so we got aboard a ship in Yokohama and wound up with seventeen days coming back from Japan. Japan was very good. I traveled in Japan, I was sent back three times R&R, and I did a lot of traveling at that time and I was in some very, very exclusive places that the Army Special Services hotels had. One was at the base of Mount Fuji, Lake Yamanaka. Wonderful. And you know, I hadn't been sleeping in a bed or anything and I was very, very impressed with being there. And it was a free service that they gave us. In fact, I happened to get there at nighttime, aboard a bus, which I didn't know—I trusted they knew where they were going. Up the mountain, and we finally got near this Lake Yamanaka Mount Fuji hotel and the bus driver said, "Marine, Marine, over there, over there, over there." There was a white light way in the background so, okay, here we are, and it was snowing in the middle of the mountain, with a little bag, and we started walking. Well, we no sooner got maybe a couple of hundred yards when a couple of Japanese boys came up there all dressed up in fancy suits and shirt and tie, took our suitcases and put us in a bed and nice room, good food. I couldn't eat much at the time; your stomach and your system regulates to where you are in, and when you have to go back to meat and potatoes and a lot of stuff like that it's a little hard on your system, but, you know, your eyes are bigger than your stomach.

We got into this Lake Yamanaka Resort and I really didn't know where Mount Fuji was; I had really no idea. I'd heard of it but I—I woke up at 5 o'clock in the morning and out that window there's Mount Fuji, right in our window! I mean, like you could grab it. Unbelievable. I spent probably a week there, I'm guessing. Three or four days. And then it was back to Korea again. I also wound up in—they sent me back from Korea to Yokosuka Naval Hospital Station in Yokosuka, which was at the base of the—east of that area. That was a base where you had lots of doctors and hospitals and I had a slight accident over there and I was there for about a week or two, and again, good food. I kind of liked it there. [laughs]

Terry: What kind of accidents did you have that required hospitalization?

Paul: I had a Jeep accident and I was pinned under a Jeep and it ruined my right leg. And from what I remember, they did a good job. I was walking around and back on the lines again. But then, to make a long story short, we were back in, going back to America on the Pacific. In seventeen days we got to Frisco and there were so many boats waiting to get in they kept us—

Terry: So many troops coming back?

- Paul: So many coming back, still a rotation business. And I don't know how many boats there are; you know, how long does it take to unload a boat? I don't know. Of all guys. Probably doesn't take long. You get off pretty quick. They move fast. So we got back and we got back at I think they call it Fort Mason and they always made a great big newspaper "troops are back from Korea." We were treated very well. Very well.
- Terry: Okay.
- Paul: The Red Cross was there. You always hear about the Red Cross bringing coffee and donuts. Yeah, they were there. The USO was there. Everybody was there and we felt accepted.
- Terry: So they welcomed you home?
- Paul: Yes. We were welcomed home at that time. I don't think it was a very well organized deal as far as—I don't think a lot of people were happy that we were over there. It was like the Vietnam War where you weren't congratulated when you came back. But anyway, I got orders at that time at Fort Mason, and I don't know what Fort Mason is, if that was an Army base or what; didn't care. Got my orders to report to Cherry Point, North Carolina. I didn't even know where Cherry Point was; I had no idea. And of course I had to make reservations to get there.
- Terry: Did you travel by train?
- Paul: Train. Train. I got back to Milwaukee and I went to, I set out to get to Cherry Point; they had never heard of it. They had to look it up on the map. The closest place was New Bern, North Carolina. So, okay. How did we get there? Well the only thing to do is to fly in there, so that's what we did. We flew in there in some dinky little airplane into an airport that was a windsock, that was it. In between I think it was patches of corn or cotton, whatever was in there, and there you were. Three of us. I was an MP at that time and back from Korea in Cherry Point, North Carolina for the rest of my time. It was probably about a year and a half.
- Terry: Um-hmm.
- Paul: I had a very good job there. I was a Sergeant at that time and I was on duty one night and I was checking posts and I was shot at—
- Terry: Really?
- Paul: —by another Marine who was disgruntled down in North Carolina and he blew the windshield out and luckily I didn't get hurt at all. Of course, what's another shot, huh? But at that time in the United States that might scare you a

little bit. This fellow went a little bit goofy and he had to be discharged. So—but I had a real good job down there. Not used to that type of a climate either; that was extremely warm down there. Holy cripes. Hot. And that's where I stayed the rest of my time.

Terry: And what was the barracks like? A little bit better?

Paul: Oh, I was in the barracks, but as a Sergeant I had my own room.

Terry: There you go.

Paul: Private. They also gave that to you because you also had to take care of all the rest of the Marines in there at that time, and I didn't have much work because they all knew what they were doing and I knew what I was doing and they took care of their quarters, I take care of mine, and it was altogether different than—

Terry: It was no boot camp?

Paul: No, no, no. These fellows—I don't know, I can't remember any of them, where they were coming from or where they were going, or just hiding out. It was at a time when the Korean War was now over with in '53 and a lot of guys were being discharged. The guys that I went in, if they were two years they were already gone. I had to stay in another year, of course.

Terry: And you stayed down there because you enlisted for three years?

Paul: That's right. So I had to stay in. And it was a nice duty station. And luckily while I was on the East coast I had a chance of travel. I was up at Quantico. I was up to New York. I was up in D.C. I went south to the Carolinas and I did as much traveling as I could and that time without a car. I don't know how you do it, but—you go with a buddy and split the expenses and that kind of stuff. So that was good for me. And I got out, that was the end of '54, and I came back home to Milwaukee.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: And I tried to get a job, and jobs weren't that easy to come by. And here I am a former policeman, you know. Here I was a Sergeant. Well, that doesn't mean much in civilian life. So I went down to the Sheriff's Department in Milwaukee and I went to talk to the big administrator and he said, "You'll have to go the courthouse and talk to the personnel director over there." I went over and talked to her, I said I was a Marine just back from Korea, I'm looking for a job. I used to be a policeman. She said, "Report to the Milwaukee County Jail." I went right back to the jail, I raised my hand, they pinned the badge on me and I was ready to work. Then, of course, I had to take the test when the test came up. I already had the experience of being accepted and knew the job

and I took the test and I forget how many men—it was a competitive test, running, jumping and all that kind of stuff. I got to be number one. So I was hired right off the bat. And—

Terry: How were you accepted, coming right out of the Marine Corps? The general public, did they accept you?

Paul: Yeah. They kind of ignored the fact that—if you were in the service, they didn't care. I mean, you were a serviceman; ah, so what. I mean, they didn't get down and kiss the ground. They didn't say, "Yay, yay, you're a good guy; here's a drink." No. You're back in the community and you went through the war, that was it. No big deal. That didn't phase me much. What made me feel very, very welcomed and important was the fact that I was treated by the VA and I was accepted with—they gave you credit points for participating in the examination on the Sheriff's Department. I was given extra points because I had the experience of being military and being a police officer in the Marine Corps.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: So, um, that I thought was pretty good. At that time, I had a ten thousand dollar policy, US government life insurance policy. That was a lot of money at that time, ten thousand dollars. Most of the guys didn't keep their policy; I kept mine. It cost me, what did I have here, seventy-seven, fifty-eight, carry one: one hundred thirty-five dollars a year. A year. A year. I kept that policy; today it's worth forty thousand. And they send me a thousand dollars, just about a thousand dollars, every year.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: And it's still active.

Terry: Well, that paid off, didn't it?

Paul: And so I even asked my boys—I have two boys in the Marines also. I told them not to go into the Marines. They went in the Marines. I think young people do that just to antagonize the parents, so I should have said, "Go in the Marines," they would have gone somewhere else. But they both were in the Marines and they both saw some action where they were. But that insurance policy even today, I kind of laugh, because the VA still takes care of me. I still belong to the VA in Milwaukee, they treat me down there, and I also belong to the VA in Appleton, they treat me over in Appleton. So I'm pretty fortunate.

Terry: So how long did you remain in the Sheriff's Department?

Paul: I was down there fifteen years.

Terry: Oh. In the Jail Division, or where you a Deputy?

Paul: No. When I first got in there I was in the Jail Division, but that was on a temporary basis, then it was a matter of serving papers, if you know what that is.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: Serving papers and then I also, of course, went to the Academy, went to school, and after school I was assigned to a squad. And at that time, this was before expressways. You're not going to believe me, but that was before expressways. There were no expressways in Milwaukee at that time. Ah, we had two guys in a car and I took care of Granville area, which was 60th Street west and from Silver Spring or from the county road to the county line. We had one squad there and one squad east, and then of course we had squads to the south. We had about six squads, six areas to take care of. And at that time, the Sheriff's Department was serving papers on a proposed area for expressway. They had to go right through the VA, right through the cemetery. They had to move graves. They had to take down houses. And at that time I had the good job of getting back on serving papers and we had to serve papers on people that had been in their house for a hundred years and said you're gonna have to get out of here. They weren't too happy, but to make a long story short, that's what happened. Most of the houses were moved. Very few demolition areas, and they all were moved. They were moved at nighttime and transported to different areas. And now, of course, they're rebuilding the expressway downtown, what they call the Marquette interchange. When I was back on the Sheriff's Department, when I was back on the expressway, we started with one mile. One mile. One of my jobs on the expressway was to handle the Marquette interchange; that was one beat, just that interchange. And it wasn't complete yet. So it's kinda funny when I go down there today, I see that's all tore apart, they're gonna redo it and I have no idea what it's gonna look like, but that was before expressways.

Terry: So after your time in the Milwaukee Sheriff's Department, what happened then?

Paul: Okay, I was on the riot squad. I also worked for a criminal judge by the name of Judge Coffey. Judge Coffey was a criminal judge and all we handled was felons and nasty felons. Very busy court, and I was his bodyguard. A couple times I was in the paper; I had taken loaded guns away from a guy in the court.

Terry: Wow.

Paul: At that time they were on bail, and if they were on bail, they just appeared before the judge and, of course, I think they stopped that business now. I think

they remand them into custody, Sheriff, you take 'em in the back, check 'em out, but I don't think today that you can get into a courthouse with loaded guns any more. I mean, they've got these detectors now.

Terry: Yeah. Security.

Paul: So things are better. But again, my Marine training helped me do a lot of that stuff, and I had that job for quite a few years. And then I decided I wanted to get back out on the expressway again, so I went back out on the expressway and I was in the riots. There were two riots. Actually, two or three. That was a time when Father Groppi was stirring up the local people.

Terry: So this would be the late '60s?

Paul: Oh, yeah.

Terry: During the Vietnam era?

Paul: No, this is early '60s. Because the first riots were like in '67.

Terry: Okay.

Paul: We were warned that this was gonna be happening and we were in riot training two years prior to that or so, never thinking that we would probably be in a riot, not in Milwaukee. Nahhh. So we were training for riot control and that was a deal where Father Groppi was helping the black population, he was a white Catholic priest, and there was a lot of inequities in there among the black community which you kinda feel sorry for the people. They were really discriminated against in every matter, shape or form. So—but civil unrest is civil unrest, and after the riots, we were first started in front of Judge Cannon's home because Judge Cannon was a member of the Eagles and the Eagles didn't allow blacks into their organization, it was some sort of a fraternal organization, and that's how it started. And after that it just kept on getting bigger and bigger and finally, I can't remember exactly when, but it was sometime in '67 in the summer that I was working at the airport. We had an air show out there and tons of people. We had like eight lanes of traffic going one way. Moving a lot of cars, and they didn't want to let us go home that night—this was like 5, 6 o'clock—and I petitioned to my Captain if we could go home and take a little rest because, you know, we don't want to go into the riot now, and they didn't know. They didn't have a full-blown riot yet. So we went home and I got a call a couple hours later that Milwaukee was in a full-blown riot, upper Third Street was ablaze, and we had to come in. So I lived in an area of Wauwatosa, a nice area, not fancy but nice. Well-built homes, beautiful English colonial homes, and other fellow officers lived in that same area with me, and we went down to the Sheriff's Department and, of course, you were kept there for days, you know. It was a lockdown where you

couldn't be on the street, you were picked up, where four guys were in a car, taped windows. You weren't allowed on the street. Stores were closed, gasoline stores were all closed. You couldn't buy any gasoline, you had to get out of the area to buy gasoline, which I thought was kinda dumb, huh? You [unintelligible], you go outside and pick up gasoline and come back in, but you were restricted in coming back in.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: So they had everything covered, all your expressways and all your entrances coming in were blocked. You couldn't get in, couldn't get out. I could, you know, police officer, but that's—after the riots, in 1969, I figured there's gotta be a better way to make a living, and I came up here.

Terry: Came up to Door County then?

Paul: Door County. I brought all my children up here, the whole family, and I remember Grandma and Grandpa saying, "Why are you going to Door County?" And I said, "Well, because I like it up here." They said, "There's nothing up there." I said, "I know, that's why I like it." And of course, two years later they came up here. [laughs] And I've never been sorry that I left a very good job, nice home, friends, neighbors, relatives, everything down there. Just cut the cord and came up here, and I'm very happy that I did. Now, of course, I've got a very good job here and I'm gonna be retiring from the State at the end of June of '06 and at 73 I figured, well, maybe it's time.

Terry: And how many years were you on the bridge?

Paul: I started here in '78 when they built a new bridge. I was a relief bridge operator for the Bay View bridge and the Michigan Street bridge, and in 1982 I was assigned to the Michigan Street bridge and in 1992 I was assigned to Chief Bridge Operator, so I've been fortunate. And that takes us up until April 13th, 2006.

Terry: Well, we want to talk a little bit about—I know you just briefly mentioned that you were in the Marine Corps League?

Paul: Yes.

Terry: That just formed a few years ago here in Door County?

Paul: Yes and no. A number of us, including Bob Schulz, which you know, and some of the other fellows or course who are dead, in about 19—what the heck was that? '75 maybe? Before that, '72. Mid-70s, early 70s, we decided that the Marines are gonna get together and we're going to have, we'll make it the Marines of Door County and we're gonna celebrate the birthday every

November 10th; of course you know November 10th is the Marine Corps birthday. And we're gonna celebrate that at least once a year and be happy with that. And we did that, and most of those people are dead now, but Will Jenkord was the fellow that brought the Marine Corps League up here, and he was a member of the Marine Corps League in Manitowoc, and he thought that would be a good idea to start a Marine Corps League up here. So two or three years ago he canvassed the whole Door County and we did start a Marine Corps League, so we've been fairly active since—we're not that strong, we don't have many members, but we take care of what we can take care of.

Terry: You said you'd performed military funeral honors—

Paul: Yes. Yes.

Terry: —and different things, and Toys for Kids and—

Paul: Yes. Toys for Tots we've been doing for a long time, but it wasn't with the Marine Corps League, it was just the Marines, you know, whatever. We attached ourselves to the Marines doing that and it worked out fine.

Terry: And you said you still use the VA system, you're happy with the VA?

Paul: Oh, yes. The best deal I ever got was going to the VA because I think the VA saved my life. A doctor in Appleton, a female doctor, she examined me and one day she said, "I want you to go to Milwaukee because of your history, your family history, there's two things I want you to do. I want you to have a colonoscopy and I don't like what I see on your skin." So I went down to Dermatology in Milwaukee and I stayed down there for a few days and they discovered I had melanoma, and still have it, and it was aggressive until they got a hold of it. They basically saved my life down there.

Terry: Yeah.

Paul: And I've been on the table for a number of times where they cut and cut and cut and they cut out some good chunks and sent it in for biopsy and all the biopsies are coming back negative, which thank God for that. But I still go down there every three months and the doctors don't want to kick you loose down there yet, so. And it's a teaching hospital now, hooked up with um, what's the County General Hospital now? What do they call it? Froedtert, they call it Froedtert, and the Medical College of Wisconsin and the VA, that's all tied together, so we get young doctors working at the VA that are part of that program, so they have expertise on the stuff that they do down there.

Terry: Okay, one final question, Paul, as to what do you think your military and war experience had impact on your lifetime?

Paul: One-hundred percent on everything that I do and my way of thinking, although I dreaded it when I went in. Remember I said it was like a concentration camp? It was, but from there you really learn how to take care of yourself and what to expect and count on your fellow Marines and your fellow officers to cover your back. You get in some pretty tight situations and even 'til this day I'm very aware of where I go and what I do and who I—I talk to a lot of people and I'm not afraid to talk to anybody, but I always have in the back of my mind a reserve, what would happen if? And I think the people in this area, because it's a very good area, they're not aware of the trouble that could happen at any time here. We're kinda blinded up here, and hopefully that my children will learn and other children will learn by getting out of this area at least for a temporary time and they will learn that it isn't all peaches and cream like it is up here.

Terry: Um-hmm.

Paul: Your big cities are very tough, but that could happen anywhere. Anywhere. And so, getting back to your original question, yes, the military has been probably the most important part of my life and I've always been proud to be a Marine, but I'm proud to be a vet on top of everything else, to be associated with our VA office here, our Veteran's Service Officer here who's a wonderful man now. We always had some pretty good guys here the last few years that have done a very good job. [tape ends abruptly]

[End of Interview]