

Daniel Devine Oral History Interview

December 13, 2011

Interviewed by Sherri Kiefner
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Edited by Sherri Kiefner, February, 2012

Devine: My Name is Daniel Devine, and we are at the Pritzker Museum in Chicago, and today is December 13th, 2011

Kiefner: Thank you Sergeant Devine, I wanted to talk to you today about your military career, but first let's start out with when and where you were born.

Devine: I was born in Elmhurst Illinois.

Kiefner: What year?

Devine: 1951, August, I turn 60 this year.

Kiefner: Thank you. Did you grow up in Elmhurst?

Devine: I actually grew up in Lombard, Illinois, which is a couple towns over from Elmhurst.

Kiefner: When did you make the decision to enlist in the Marine Corps?

Devine: It was probably like 1967, early 1968. And, my father had some trepidations about me going in because he was going in and my mother convinced him that that's the thing I wanted to do.

Kiefner: What influenced your decision to enlist?

Devine: I think, partly, I had an awful lot of uncles that were in World War Two and in Korea. My dad's brother was in World War Two and Korea. And my grandfather, on my father's side, was in World War One, so the military was just in my family.

Kiefner: Tell me, you mentioned your father was a marine...

Devine: Mhmm

Kiefner: ... What was it like growing up the son of a marine?

Devine: Well, unfortunately my dad, he had gotten sunstroke when he was at Parris Island [Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina] and they actually flew my grandparents down there to be with him because they weren't sure if he was going to make it or not, but he did obviously make it that's why I'm here. But he was discharged, you know, not too long after he went in because of the sunstroke.

Kiefner: Did you ever consider any other branches of the military?

Devine: No.

Kiefner: And, what was the world like leading up to your enlistment?

Devine: Well, it was the height of Vietnam. I thought I wanted to go to Vietnam, I missed it by about 900 miles when I ended up in the Philippines, but the world was pretty chaotic. In a lot of ways it was very similar to what it is now. I mean you've got conflicts going on all over the world. When I tell people that I saw combat action in the Philippines, they kind of look at me with, you know, this puzzled look and I have to explain to them what was going on. I mean, you know the Cold War was going on, and in a lot of the books that I have read about Vietnam, I am always surprised at some of the things that pop up, that, some of the fighter pilots were actually involved in dog-fights with Russian Pilots, in Vietnam, so I found that kind of fascinating.

Kiefner: So how did your family feel about your decision to enter in 68' as a 17 year

old?

Devine: (Chuckles) Well, you know, I was the oldest of seven, and I had dropped out of high school, and that's what I wanted to do. And I had a cousin that influenced me also, a guy named Bungy, he was a Marine veteran and he saw combat in Vietnam. He and I had this kind of rivalry going on; he was about six years older than I was.

Kiefner: So you enlisted as a 17 year old?

Devine: Yes

Kiefner: You went to basic training; tell me a little about...

Devine: I went to boot camp at San Diego, MCRD [Marine Corps Recruit Depot] in San Diego; it's referred to as the Hollywood boot camp because it's in California. But Hollywood was the furthest thing from anybody's mind. We had four drill instructors who, you know; you'll always remember your drill instructor, or instructors. It was probably one of the highlight accomplishments of my life to get through that because it was very, very tough.

Kiefner: Would you say being a 17 year old, were there any challenges associated with that, what was the age of most of your co-Marines?

Devine: My squad leader in boot camp was 28 years old, so he was 11 years older than I was.

Kiefner: What were your opinions of your drill instructors?

Devine: You know there were some that weren't overly abusive and there were some that were, and that's being diplomatic about it. You know, they're taught

basically to shock and awe you into a mindset that you can do anything. They basically taught you how to kill.

Kiefner: Do you have any specific experiences that stand out in your mind?

Devine: Oh there's one. I got caught talking in the chow line going into chow one day, and the drill instructor reached in and grabbed me by the throat and wanted to know what I was talking about, so my punishment that night was I had to do 5,000 squat-thrusts from the time we went to bed until the morning and my squad leader had to sit there and watch me do them.

Kiefner: What was your occupational specialty?

Devine: I was what we called a "cannon cocker;" I was in the artillery. I ended up going into artillery and I was in artillery for a year at Camp Pendleton California. I was with the Fifth Marine Expeditionary Brigade. It's part of the First Marine Division; it's a very famous Marine division. I was at San Onofre, and I was there about a year before I went to the Philippines.

Kiefner: And how was that Occupational Specialty chosen?

Devine: They base it on your test scores, your entry exams and test scores and that sort of thing.

Kiefner: So you didn't choose it?

Devine: No.

Kiefner: That was chosen for you.

Devine: Yeah.

Kiefner: And then what was your first assignment after training?

Devine: It was to Camp Pendleton California with the Fifth MEB [Marine

Expeditionary Brigade]

Kiefner: And what were your duties in the Fifth?

Devine: We were in an artillery battery and we were assigned to 155 SPs, Self-Propelled Howitzers. That's literally a big cannon on a tank, a tank turret. So we would go on shooting missions and that sort of thing out in Camp Pendleton. Camp Pendleton is a huge, huge military base, it's probably the, it is the biggest, I believe, that the Marine Corps has.

Kiefner: You were training for, did you know what was coming next or?

Devine: Well obviously we had some people that were back from Vietnam already and they were training us in case we needed to be activated and sent back to, you know somewhere in the Philippines.

Kiefner: Did they share stories with you at that time?

Devine: Oh sure. Sure, I remember one in particular, a Sergeant, I asked him what it was like in Vietnam he said "First night I thought I was going to die because we were being shelled constantly and I came out of the bunker to go to the gun for a fire mission and I got hit with shrapnel in the face, that was my first purple heart," pretty impressionable on a 17 year old.

Kiefner: Absolutely. Your next assignment then from Camp Pendleton...

Devine: Was to the Philippines around Subic Bay. And I was assigned to a separate guard company, and when I arrived there, I was a Corporal. I was a Corporal exactly 16 weeks and I was promoted to Sergeant at not quite 22 months in the Marine Corps, which was pretty quick and I had to be a quick study. I had people in my unit that were assigned to me that were 28, 30 years old and here

I am 18 years old and I'm a Sergeant. They were, some of them were, Vietnam vets already back, and it was difficult.

Kiefner: What were some of the challenges of being so young?

Devine: Well, you know, obviously I didn't know anything, but I've always been a persuasive type of leader, not authoritarian, I mean I can be if I have to be, but most of the time I had to be persuasive because people were so much older than me and, you know, so mature. Yet on the other end of it, I'm the one that's responsible, and I'm the one that gets called into the old man's office when things don't go right.

Kiefner: How did you feel about going to the Philippines?

Devine: Well, they asked for volunteers and you know I didn't want to spend my career in Camp Pendleton so a bunch of us went over there. My buddy that I went over there with, Richard Saunders, he made Sergeant also about the same time I did. I remember him and I walking guard duty in the naval magazine, but the naval magazine. I'll give you a little explanation on that. It was at the time the largest supply point for Vietnam and ships would come in, naval ships and supply ships, and they would pick up supplies, ammunition, whatever they needed to go back to Vietnam. It was only a few hundred miles away. The first night, or the first week, we were there on guard duty at the naval magazine which is huge, it's like 50 square miles and it's all in the jungle, he... (Chuckles) he wasn't too happy with me and he was kind of giving me a hard time about "You talked me into coming here, volunteering, to this place".

Kiefner: But, as I understand it, not everyone was able to go work at the magazine.
There were clearances?

Devine: Yeah, you had to have a top-secret clearance, and if you didn't have a top-secret clearance, you couldn't work at the naval magazine because we had, well I can say it now, we had nuclear warheads there that were actually set up and ready to go.

Kiefner: So that was the secrecy and confidentiality surrounding that?

Devine: Yeah.

Kiefner: So how did you feel then, about being chosen, was that an honor in itself?

Devine: Oh sure, I mean you had to have very high fitness scores. You had to be in excellent physical condition constantly, you had to survive on very little sleep. At one point, when I was over there, we were down about 50 people due to some investigations of drugs and that sort of thing, drug use by people, and they wiped out about 50 people out of our outfit and sent them back to the states, and so we were 50 people down. So we were doing about three days on and then 18 hours off, and going right back on, and yeah, it wears on you after a while because you're not only in the jungle, but you're out on jungle patrols you're on ambushes.

Kiefner: What were the duties then, of the Marine Barracks' Separate Guard Company?

Devine: It was primarily security for the US Naval Magazine.

Kiefner: So how would you describe the relationship between the Marines and Navy at Cubi Point? What was that relationship like?

Devine: It was pretty good, you know, you always had a bit of an undertone service

rivalry, but yeah I ran into a naval officer that was on a secret training mission along the fence line one night. He called me over to the fence line and I was, you know, I was poised; I was locked and loaded with my rifle because I didn't know who it was. Turns when we talked for a while he was a Lieutenant Commander, a pilot, and he was training what they called Negritos, which were Philippine natives and they had Marine utilities on, and hats, and they had shotguns and handguns, and they were being training to seek out and destroy the insurgents over there that were on the base, on and around the base, and they were constantly trying to penetrate our fence line and our perimeter to come in and either kill Marines, or shoot at us, or steal the munitions.

Kiefner: How would you describe Subic Bay itself, the climate the ecology? Describe Subic Bay.

Devine: Well, Olongapo City, which was right outside Subic Bay, was an extremely poor city, so they rely on the naval base for a lot of their revenue, income, and a lot of the people that were in Olongapo worked on the base. The climate was just like in Vietnam, very hot, very humid, it was usually 100% humidity. We had to wear (chuckle) starch utilities all the time, so I had a rash from my neck down to my waste constantly, on my back, because of all the starch going into my system. Rain, you know we were out there in the monsoons all the time. You were constantly, when the monsoon season was upon you, you know you were in the rain for 24 or 36 hours constantly. So that's why every time it rains, I think about the Philippines.

Kiefner: Was it what you expected -- when you left the states?

Devine: I didn't know what to expect. But you know it sure is an eye opener when you fly into the Philippines at that time to go to Subic, you fly into Clark Air Force Base, and they would tell you, "Don't leave the base, tomorrow morning you'll be leaving. You're going to be billeted up here tonight, don't leave the base service members have been kidnapped and killed and assassinated." So that kind of put you on your guard. On the bus ride to Subic, which is about an hour, hour and a half, I think, it's the first time I ever saw a woman nursing a baby out in public and went "Oh! Ok!" Seventeen years old I'm "Oh! Alright!" (Chuckles)

Kiefner: Did you feel that your training that you got back at Camp Pendleton prepared you for the responsibilities you were assigned to?

Devine: Well, you know, it's like anything else, you have to go into it with the idea of working it up from the ground up, and I actually rotated. I went through a lot of old letters not too long ago that I sent to my mother, and I actually went and rotated through every platoon in the company when I was there, so I was in first, second, and third platoon, and they had various levels of responsibility and they were assigned to, there were three sectors. We'll call them A, B, and C sectors in the magazine, and that's how, you know, you kind of worked your way up. With each sector you went into, there was more responsibility. I ended up being a Sergeant of the Guard, and then I was supervising probably about 35 or 40 people.

Kiefner: Describe the first time you came under fire.

Devine: Actually the first time, the one I remember is, it was a Marine who put out a distress call on the radio that he was engaged in a firefight, which didn't happen all that often, but it did. I raced from my sector to his sector where he was at. I knew where he was at, and I got there while he was still engaged and I drove my vehicle in between him and the insurgents, there was at least two of them on the inside of the fence line. They had black, silky pajamas on with headbands and AK-47s, and at the time our sentries were only allowed to carry one magazine with 20 rounds. That's all they were allowed to carry, which to me, you know when you're 18 what do I know? But you would think that maybe a couple more might help, but he was pretty terrified, and I just thought it best to put the vehicle between him and the two insurgents, and they knew then that the alert had been put out because at that time we had rapid response trucks, where the off shifts in the barracks that were in the magazine, would respond. When they say respond, a bell goes off, there was an actual big fire bell in your guard house, and they would just, boots and pants, rifle and go. Luckily he didn't get wounded, and he missed the insurgents unfortunately, or fortunately, for you can look at it a lot of ways but that was the one occasion. And then we were out on a company-wide patrol one time, because we actually had several Americans that had turned away from the military and actually were working with some of the insurgents around the base, and we ended up trying to hunt them down, and we had some distant machine-gun fire and stuff.

Kiefner: What was your opinion of the enemy at that time?

Devine: Well a lot of people that I've talked to thought that they were just more like bandits or things like that, and the truth of it is, the insurgents had been going against the Philippine government for hundreds of years. They were called the Hucks [Hukbalahap - military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines], at one point and then what they usually do is they just tag on a different name. You had the NPA, the National People's Army, and that's a communist organization to overthrow the government of the Philippines. There's several others that just don't come to mind right now, but the NPA was one of the big ones when I was there. And they have Abu Sayyaf, which is the current type of insurgency.

Kiefner: What did you do during your down time in the Philippines?

Devine: (Chuckles) You know there's a lot of stuff to do on the base. There's a lot of drinking, a lot of drinking, there was uh, you know, you'd go out in town and blow off some steam and then come back. When we were down to 18 hours off, we rarely ever went out to town, because there was no time to do anything. You were back at the main barracks getting your uniforms and gear ready and taking head counts for people, and by that time it was time to go back. It wasn't even 24 hours, 18 hours is not a lot of time to write letters and do whatever you've got to do.

Kiefner: What were your living conditions like at Subic Bay or Cubi Point?

Devine: Cubi Point was, it was nice. It was a barracks. It was a cinderblock building. It wasn't luxury, but it wasn't bad. The worst time was when you were out in the magazine, because you were out in the jungle for eight, ten hours at a time,

normally by yourself on a post, all by yourself.

Kiefner: Any concerns with the wildlife in the jungle while you were out there?

Devine: Well yeah, you had mongooses out there, you had monkeys, they called them rock apes, you had pythons, you know, being in the jungle all the time, you kind of lose your inhibitions and just kind of do things to kill time, sometimes it's boredom, sometimes it's fear, but I remember catching a python in the rear wheels of my squad car and killing it, and then throwing it in the back of the truck, and then took it in the guard house, and another Sergeant was asleep on the top bunk, his name was Garcia, and he hated snakes, so I woke him up and had the snake's head, and I was moving the mouth back and forth, and he wasn't too happy with me. He chased me for a while.

Kiefner: (Chuckles) What were some of your experiences during leave? Did you have leave while you were stationed at Cubi Point?

Devine: No, I was there for 15 months straight.

Kiefner: What about time off the base? What were things like off the base versus on base?

Devine: Believe it or not, I did so many things over there; it was a mixed bag of things. We actually took up collection. We supplied a washer and a dryer for an orphanage out in town. A big thing to us was, I rode on the back of a motorcycle, a buddy and I, all the way to Clark Air Force Base, because their enlisted man's club had better steaks and that kind of stuff. So we took off one day during the Monsoon season to do that, and then on the way back, we ran into a company of Hucks that, fortunately for us, the monsoon rain had

started, so they couldn't tell if we were Americans and we just cruised right by them and they were all armed and had their ponchos on and stuff, and they were going from one jungle from the next, down the side of the road.

Kiefner: The living conditions for the local Filipinos, what was that like?

Devine: Shanties, a lot of shanties, a lot of clapboard type homes. You had first and second floor apartments that you would call an apartment, one family would live in two rooms; another family would live in the rooms downstairs. So it wasn't ... no indoor plumbing, no showers.

Kiefner: Were you aware at the time of the political situation in the Philippines? Outside of Cubi Point, what was going on in their world?

Devine: No, because, you know, I mean I'm 18 or 19 years old, what do I care about what's going on politically; I'm there to do the job at hand. In hindsight, I probably should have been a little more up on it, but now that I read about it, now I understand a lot more of what was going on, especially with President Marcos at the time; you know, he was still trying to hang onto his power. I was there, I think I was, yeah I think I was there when he declared martial law, so we were kind of restricted from going off-base, and things were really locked down tight then.

Kiefner: What were your opinions of those that were serving with you at Cubi Point, your fellow Marines, Navy-men?

Devine: Well, you know, I had a lot of good friends. I had some people that, you look back on it now, and you know, they were trying to drown some things that they had seen in Vietnam through drugs or liquor, and that was a big problem

over there, was the liquor and the drugs. I remember one American Indian, his name was Yellow Elk, he was AWOL for about three or four days, and the first sergeant came in and asked me to come into his office, and I came in, and you always knew you were in trouble, or someone else was in trouble when he didn't call you by your rank; he called you by your last name. He told me that Yellow Elk was supposedly out in town someplace, in the outskirts of Olangapo living with a couple gals. So I had to go out there with a guy in a jeep, and I had a .45, and I had to go in and get him. We found where he was at, so we convinced him to come out, and we put him in handcuffs; put him in the back of the jeep. And he had a very severe drinking problem, and he wanted to know if we could stop for one beer before we put him in, because he was going right to the brig; so yeah we did. I told him, I said, "If you run on me, you know what I've got to do?" And he says, "Yeah, I know Sarge, I know." So that was one of my stories.

Kiefner: How aware were you of the current events going on back in the United States while you were in the Philippines, how in touch were you with...?

Devine: Well you learn most of what was going on. We had limited, obviously, TV. Stars and Stripes Newspapers was basically one of the staples, in regard to how you get your information about what's going on in the states and letters from home, that sort of thing. In fact, I got in trouble once for not writing enough, and my mom contacted the Red Cross, and the first sergeant called me into his office, and I had to write a letter, give it to him, and then he mailed it off.

Kiefner: So your family, at this time, was it a challenge for them as well?

Devine: Oh yeah, yeah. I understand that when I left I would call home every once in a while, and my mom wasn't around, and I understood that she apparently had a little breakdown when I left to go into the service.

Kiefner: So when did you decide to leave the Philippines? How was it decided?

Devine: They told me! (Chuckles)

Kiefner: Okay

Devine: No, at that time, you did 15 months, and then you were rotated back to the states, or you were assigned, or if you requested to go to Vietnam. In fact, I re-enlisted when I was in the Philippines. And I requested to be stationed at, they put three duty stations down. Actually, one was Great Lakes, the other one was drill instructor school, and the other one was Vietnam; and they sent me back to Great Lakes.

Kiefner: So what factors led to your decision to re-enlist?

Devine: I liked the Marine Corps. I love the Marine Corps. I re-enlisted because, you know, I was moving up pretty quick. At 18, an E-5 Sergeant, but then Vietnam slowed down, and promotions almost came to a frozen standstill, so that's when I decided to get out; just because, you know, promotions aren't plentiful unless there's a war going on, unfortunately.

Kiefner: Right, so your next assignment that you got was?

Devine: I was stationed at Great Lakes, Marine Barracks, Great Lakes, and I was stationed there from 1971 until 1975 when I got out. I was the duty warden at the correctional facility, and I was also assigned to a special unit called the run

platoon, which was prison escort; cross country chasers they're called. So we went out in a 13 state area, the 9th Naval District to pick up AWOL prisoners in the service that were in the hands of civilian authorities.

Kiefner: What was the Marine Barracks Correctional Facility like that you worked at?

Devine: It was pretty tough, pretty intense, very dangerous all the time. You had to watch your back all the time. You never wanted to turn your back on any of these people, because they were pretty desperate. They either wanted to get out of the military, or do harm to people, just because. So we had a special unit within the compound, and that was isolation, or solitary confinement; that was a place that you really had to watch yourself.

Kiefner: This was all military?

Devine: Yeah. There was a lot of Navy personnel working in the brig with us, in the correctional facility. The Marines ran it, and then the Navy supplemented with medical. We had Corpsmen there, and people that ran the kitchen, and that kind of stuff, the chow hall.

Kiefner: So describe the relationship between the Naval Academy, or the Naval...

Devine: Well again, we had, you know, we always had rivalry going on; there was always a strong rivalry, but we had mutual respect for each other. They obviously didn't want to do what we did, and we didn't want to do what they did. I actually ran into an old(??) corpsman from the Philippines. He got stationed at Great Lakes, and I was walking down the street one day to go to the main barracks, over in main-side at Great Lakes, and all the sudden, this window flies up and he start's yelling, and I says, "Oh hey!" LaCrosse was his

name.

Kiefner: What special training did you receive for that assignment? Did you receive training prior to that assignment?

Devine: You know, I actually went to Fort Gordon, Georgia twice. It was an Army school for correctional supervisors. I went there in, I think it was 72', and then I went again in 74', and the first time I went, I swore I'd never go back there, because it reminded me. Fort Gordon Georgia at the time; it was so hot. The paint would just peel off the barracks; you could see it, you know? I think the second time I was down there; they had a freak snowstorm in Georgia. The whole base was just shut down, completely shut down. It almost ran out of food, because they couldn't get anything in! They had no plows; they didn't have snow shovels! They never get snow in Georgia, but they did!

Kiefner: What kind of skills did they teach you while you were down there?

Devine: They taught us processing skills, supervision skills, taking people into custody, how to deal with problem prisoners, that sort of thing.

Kiefner: Anything stand out in your mind from your training?

Devine: No, a lot of it was administrative, but then it was also on the job training, and then also, when we were in training, I remember they took us to a state prison in Georgia, and I commented to one of the instructors; we were on the bus, we were pulling into the Prison. I said, "I thought they outlawed chain gangs." Because these guys, they had, like you see in the movies, the striped uniforms; they were chained at the ankles. He says, "They're not chain gangs; they're road improvement gangs." That's what they called them. Ok ... (Chuckles)

Kiefner: So tell me a little more about your duties back at Great Lakes, what was a typical day like?

Devine: Oh, you'd get there in formation about 7:30, and then it was typically like going to a regular job. I lived off-base, and I would get there, and I would go to, into the brig, and go to my assigned. If I was duty warden, that meant I was on duty for 24 hours. I literally ran the brig for 24 hours, and you had to do head counts every hour, not every hour, every two hours, head counts. You had to go from post to post to post, and do head counts, and check with the sentries, and make sure they're okay; make sure there's no problems with the prisoners. On post one, which was indoctrination post, that's where, after you get put into the correctional facility, that's where you get processed, and you learn the do's and don'ts, and the rules and regulations. Every time you would step on post, anybody E-4 or above, they would have to call attention on deck, and everybody had to come to attention; so that's a way of hopefully trying to instill discipline back in them, and keep discipline, because you needed to keep discipline. We had a few riotous situations there, on a couple occasions. On post two it was strictly Marines that were in transit back to their unit, and I remember one time, I had to go in there, because they had actually rebelled, and were holding the sentry hostage; So I convinced them to let me come in and talk to them, and sent him on his way, and then I just sat there and talked to them, and wrote down their concerns and their complaints. Another time, at post one, I was duty warden; I don't know why it always happened when I was on, but this kid had actually stood up from a desk, and

they had those big floor fans that you would try to keep cool with, and for whatever reason, as he stood up, the angle of the way he stood up, caught his side with the blade, and filleted him completely open. And his side, when I got there, he wasn't bleeding. Because he didn't realize he was cut, because his pulse was fairly normal, his heart rate; by the time I got him over to the corpsman, which is where I crossed the courtyard, he was starting to bleed. It was pretty scary, because you could see all his tendons and ligaments and bones.

Kiefner: You mentioned the 13 state...

Devine: Mmhmm (yes)

Kiefner: So, you were not on base all of the time?

Devine: When I was with run platoon; when I was with cross country chasers, that was on the main barracks, on main-side, at Great Lakes. And we would get our assignments late in the week, and normally, what we would do, we would either be assigned to the east coast or the west coast, and you had two-man teams that would go out and get somebody, like at a remote facility, like an Indian reservation, or some remote jail in Arizona; or you would go to the east coast, and you would pick up prisoners at various locations and drop them off at Cherry Point [Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Havelock, NC], when you flew them out at the end of the end of the week. The bust weeks were usually four or five-man sweeps, and you would be out for three or four days, and every night, you would pull into ... we'll say Columbus, Ohio, which they called the "Columbus Workhouse," and you would drop them off for the

night there. The government obviously would pay for everything, and then you would go get a hotel room until the next day, get back on the bus, go back over to the county jail, pick them all up, do the head count, sign the paperwork with the county jail, and head off to the next two or three stops before you ended up back at Great Lakes. That was pretty intense. We had a lot of problems with people. My wife doesn't like me to tell this story; there was one guy that got out of line with one of my Corporals, and he punched him in the face in the back of the bus, and I had to run back there and get him, and I grabbed him by the throat and pulled him back up to the front, handcuffed him behind the back, and, we used to call it "mummified," you know, we had to mummify him. We had these ACE wrap bandages, and we would wrap him up, and just leave his nose sticking out so he couldn't talk, and incite the others. I was busy doing paper work, and about four hours later, he was still kind of slumped over, and I was, "Oh boy, I might be going to Leavenworth [United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth], if this guy's dead", but he was fine. He just had marks all over his face from the ... he was the one that we dropped off at the Columbus Workhouse too, that had given us a problem, and they didn't -- they didn't really hold anything back; when you found somebody that was a trouble maker, you got to know some of the correctional facility people, and this particular guy that I had to pull off my sentry, my escort, I told the correctional facility guy about him and he says, "Stick your arm out for me son," and he stuck his arm out like that (extends arm), and he hit him across the forearm with a blackjack, and the guy fell on the floor, spinning

around, and then they put him in the hole. And the hole was, it was a piece of sewer tile, and it was embedded in the ground, and had a lid on it with a, you know, you put a padlock on it at night; and that's where he was, in all night, and he couldn't sit or stand straight up. He was meek as a lamb when he came out the next day.

Kiefner: How many prisoners would you be holding at Great Lakes, and at one time, when you were back at Great Lakes?

Devine: 300, 400. On the bus, we would have anywhere from 45 to 55. That was a situation. I mean, there were times when we would have intelligence come back to us, you know, this was before cell phones, so we would have to stop the bus, go out and get on the phone, and call ahead, and sometimes there'd be messages from our commanding officer at Great Lakes that so-and-so's family was waiting outside the county jail. They're going to try and bust him out and blah-blah-blah-blah, so we had to come out with our .45s in hand, and you know, persuade people not to try and take him.

Kiefner: These were all military people? Was it limited to marines?

Devine: No, Navy, Marines, but mostly Marines, there were some Navy people. We had a few Army sprinkled in there, and Air Force.

Kiefner: Is there intermingling of the correctional facilities, with like the Federal and the military? Do they keep them separate?

Devine: No they're separate.

Kiefner: Ok, so, whatever their time, they were going to serve, they were going to serve it in the Great Lakes facility, or?

Devine: Well, it depends on what the outcome was of their court-martial, and if they were sentenced to hard time, they would go to Leavenworth. After I was off that detail, one of our buses got hijacked by a prisoner, and it all went down on TV. It was right outside of Detroit, and we all sat there in the rec room, watching it at Great Lakes Correctional Facility, and he had gotten a .45 out of somebody's briefcase, and was holding the bus, had all the occupants, and all the prisoners, and all the escorts, hostage, and they finally talked him out of it. He went to Leavenworth for a long time, but he also assaulted another sentry in the correctional facility on that post five that I told you about, the isolation area. He pulled the handle off of the mop squeegee, and hit him in the head.

Kiefner: What would you say your biggest challenge was, related to that occupation?

Devine: Staying safe. Staying safe and -- you know, trying to be fair, firm and impartial, but a lot of times they didn't give you an option, so you had to go in there, and force, and make them understand; this is our facility, not yours.

Kiefner: Right. Were there any rewarding experiences during that assignment?

Devine: For me personally?

Kiefner: Yeah.

Devine: Well, you know, I got recommended, and they awarded me Marine of the Quarter, which is a big honor. I got Sentry of the Month, Marine of the Quarter. I was put in for an accelerated promotion to Staff Sergeant, but it didn't come about, because I got out. I was given an award by the Navy League of Lake County; I was also put up for Marine of the Year, but a civilian at Glenview got it. I don't know how that happened, but that's the way

it was. I don't know if it was politics or what. You know, it was rewarding, because I did run into one or two people that I was with in the Philippines that actually, (Chuckles), came through the process at Great Lakes, or when they saw me show up by the county jail, and they were being escorted out, and given their rights, and then escorted onto the bus, you know?

Kiefner: How well, would you say, the military prepared you for a civilian career?

Devine: Well, not well. I went through a series of jobs when I got out. I didn't know that I had PTSD [Posttraumatic stress disorder] until two years ago. So, at that time, they, you know, Vietnam was still very, very fresh. That was the big show then, you know?

Kiefner: Right.

Devine: But -- I had seen a therapist for eight years. He was a Vietnam vet; he was a corpsman in the Navy. He suspected that I might have PTSD, so he recommended I get evaluated at Hines [Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital], and sure enough.

Kiefner: And other than the PTSD, did you sustain any other injuries?

Devine: I have 5% hearing loss in my right ear, and that was probably from the artillery.

Kiefner: Back at Camp Pendleton?

Devine: Camp Pendleton. And then I have an ankle injury, that, ironically, the VA [Veterans Affairs] actually called me; the evaluator was looking over my file and said, "Do you remember getting hurt, and having your ankle in a cast?" And I said, "Well yeah, I do remember that now," and he says, "Do you want

me to put you in for that, because there's some, probably, um," I said "Sure!" So they gave me 10% on that. I'm actually 80% disabled pay wise, but they rate me 90% disabled.

Kiefner: And, tell me a little more about the awards that you received during your military career.

Devine: I received the National Defense Medal, the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation. At that point, when we got it, we were the first unit to get it since World War Two, and to me, I think it was a combination of things. It was supposed to be for disaster relief, but I think it was just a combination of everything. When I was in the Philippines, we ended up rescuing people off of rooftops and stuff by helicopter during a typhoon. Obviously, the insurgents, with the security on the base, we did a lot of search and rescue. There was an earthquake when I was there, and that was the same day that the truck was going down to the gun range, and the earthquake hit, and the truck overturned, and all the Marines were thrown out of the truck, down into the jungle, down into the ravine, so we had to go down with ropes, and get them. It was a massive triage-type situation, to get everybody to the hospital. There were some pretty severely injured Marines. But the earthquake was, it's something you never forget, when you go through an earthquake. Up on the second floor of the barracks, getting ready, and all of the sudden, the lockers and the racks start shaking and bouncing around on the floor, and said, "Oh! I'm out of here!" So everybody ran down the steps to get out of there; it was over in a few seconds, but...

Kiefner: And what about the typhoon, you mention a typhoon?

Devine: Yeah, the typhoon came through, and we had to do a lot of rescuing off the base. I wasn't personally on the helicopters, but a lot of the guys went out on helicopters to pluck people off of roof tops, and that kind of stuff, and gave aid to, you know, I think they flew them into the airstrip there at Cubi, to give them some sort of shelter until the storm passed.

Kiefner: Going back to the awards, do any of the awards you received hold more meaning for you?

Devine: (Sigh) Actually, the MUC, the Meritorious Unit Citation, that is the equivalent of the Bronze Star, but it's on a unit level. If it's on an individual basis, it would be the equivalent of a Bronze Star. That to me, because that was specifically for all of the patrols we were on, the jungle patrols, the insurgents we captured, the ambushes we set up, and that kind of stuff. There was one, I think I left you, I gave you a copy of the one email that I got from a lieutenant named Bruce Brunn, and we didn't know each other. He was there after I left, but to show you how intense and tense it was there, he was with a recon unit from, in the Marines, and he was in Vietnam to Great Lakes ... he was brought back to Subic Bay twice to flush out the insurgents around the base. So if they're bringing these guys in from Vietnam to do that, you know it's pretty intense.

Kiefner: Right.

Devine: Yeah, I mean, that stunned me. I never knew that, and I mean, that happened, I think right after I left. I did have a conversation with several guys at the

reunion we just went to. My wife and I went to, in August, and one guy was telling me that he was there in 72', when these three naval officers were killed in an ambush, right on the base, by the insurgents. They were pretty nasty. They killed them, beheaded them, castrated them, and it was pretty nasty. Those three navy officers, they failed to get a Marine escort to go with them, which was required.

Kiefner: Right.

Devine: And that was when I heard about that, I was really kind of, it kind of punches you in the gut, because you don't expect that, from the standpoint that, when you were there, you did everything you could to protect people, and then naturally, these guys, unfortunately, didn't heed the warnings.

Kiefner: Right. What did you take away from your experience as a Marine that have helped you in your post military career?

Devine: Probably my ability to lead and manage people. And -- probably, it just gives you an experience, and a confidence that a lot of people will never have, and you'll look at life a lot differently. You'll look at things a lot differently. When you go through something like that, you just kind of shrug your shoulders when you get with other stuff. You know, it'll pass, this'll work itself out, you know what I mean? I always tell my security people, that's the line of work that I'm in. I always tell them, "Look, there's three things to worry about: People are bleeding, people are shooting at you, and the place is on fire, other than that, it'll work out."

Kiefner: Do you maintain any friendships that you formed while you were in the

Marine Corps?

Devine: Yeah, I have Rene Hernandez, in fact, I put a statement in there from him. I helped him. I've been pushing, at helping some of the guys out with buddy statements and that kind of stuff. The things that went on there, because we were exposed to Agent Orange over there, because we stored it, and shipped it from there to Vietnam. So, he's in a bad way. He's got back, kidney problems, diabetes. He's going blind, so he finally got his 100% disability from the VA, so he's at least got a decent pension coming in now.

Kiefner: And you mentioned reunions?

Devine: Yeah that was the first reunion I went to, is the Subic Bay, Subic Bay Marines is an organization that I belong to, and it's, you can only join if you were at Subic Bay. They're probably about 250, 300 strong. They have reunions every year. I think the next one is going to be in Washington State, probably around September, 2012.

Kiefner: When you go to these, do you run into people that actually were serving at the same time as you were?

Devine: Oh yeah, we had a table, when my wife and I walked in, there was a table already set up, with a little flag at the top, with, you know, Separate Guard Company, that's what we were known as then, Separate Guard Company up there. There were some people there. In fact, Don Smart was there, and I had been corresponding with him in emails, and phone calls, and stuff; we'd been talking. And our executive officer, Terry Engle, who was a Vietnam vet. He had a hard time over there, and I was kind of tasked with taking care of him.

When I left, I don't remember this, but Don was assigned, he was a Corporal, and he says, "Yeah, you know you're the one who broke me in, how to take care of Lieutenant Engle, because you were leaving and you broke me in, and, this is what you've got to do; you gotta do this, this, and this," and I said, "Ok! Alright." Like I said, my social work therapist, who's a former Navy Corpsman, he said a lot of times, "When you get PTSD, you just stop encoding in your mind. You just stop encoding a lot of stuff, stories, and things that happened, traumatic events, so I just kind of touched the ice, just kind of touched on a little bit of the traumatic things that went on over there.

Kiefner: Do you belong to any other Veterans groups?

Devine: I belong to the Veterans of Foreign War in Villa Park. I belong to the American Legion, Post 556. I'm on the board of advisors for the Midwest Homeless Shelter in Wheaton for Veterans, which is also run by Mr. Bob (Adams?), my therapist, and what else, oh, and I'm now involved in "Welcome Home Vets." It's an organization out of Villa Park. It's affiliated with VFW but it's not sponsored by the VFW. It's a separate organization; and I'm the Chairperson now in Cantigny, which is my American Legion Post and I'm the chair connection for Cantigny. We're going to do a veterans fair in September of 2012, on September 29th, and it's going to be, probably anywhere from three to five thousand people they expect in Cantigny; and they're going to have tents put up and displays and guests, a stage, it's you know, welcome home vets and they even have tents set up with computers and people from the Veterans Administration, and they can actually make a

decision on your case if it's pending, or if you have an appeal going, get you upgraded right there on the spot. So it's a big, big veterans fair that's coming out in September.

Kiefner: What sort of role do these veterans groups play in providing support and camaraderie?

Devine: I found that a lot of it you have to really push to get any results; you have to push it on your own. If you have the wherewithal, and you have the means to write a decent letter, or solicit buddy statements, and that kind of stuff. A lot of the organizations can give you the raw tools, or the steps, but you're the one that still has to go out and get the information and put it together. The Veterans Administration for as well as they are doing now, and the way they're treating vets, they won't supply you with a lot of stuff; you have to supply them, and you have to build the case, and you have to, you know, I've got a couple appeals in right now on the Agent Orange, and an increase in PTSD, and if I get it denied this time, then I'm going to turn it over to a lawyer, a law firm in Florida, or out in Oak Park that actually does that kind of work, and they strictly work with veterans.

Kiefner: On a personal level, the support that the veterans give one another, how would you describe the benefits of that?

Devine: Well, I think that's probably more so. The camaraderie, no matter what branch of the service you were in, for instance, this past Saturday, we had a Christmas Lunch for the post at Cantigny, and our post is like 120, and we had like 65 people out there for the Christmas lunch, which was a lot, and it spans

the gambit: World War Two, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, the current conflict, and they gave me my ten-year pin. I didn't even know I'd been in there for ten years. I was the last one that they called up there, and I just couldn't believe it. I looked at my wife, ten years? Time flies when you're having fun. My brother was there too, my brother was in the Marines; I forgot to mention that, my brother Bruce.

Kiefner: Ok.

Devine: He was in the Marines. He was in infantry, and we'd call him ground-pounder; and he was in for four years, and he was in, in the early 80s, and he's a member of the American Legion where I'm at.

Kiefner: Nice. What's your understanding of what it means to be a citizen soldier?

Devine: (Sigh) Well -- you know, being a citizen soldier to me, is when you get discharged, and your obligation is up, and you take the uniform off, and you go to work in whatever industry you go into; your commitment to the country, and your commitment to your fellow man doesn't stop there. That's something that you go on forever, because you have a whole different appreciation for this country, no matter how screwed up it is at times. Whether you like the person that's in the White House or not, running the government, or people in Congress. When you go and put your blood, sweat and tears, and life on the line day after day after day after day, and ultimately come home, quote-unquote, in one piece, and you know, you are able to really appreciate what this country has to offer.

Kiefner: Reflecting back on yourself as 17 year old, what do you think now, of your

decision to join the Marine Corps at that age?

Devine: Well, here's the thing. You know, I can't go back and, you know, I can't turn the clock back, but to me -- for as petrified [as] I was during boot camp, and training, and in the jungles of the Philippines, I mean, I wouldn't have traded anything for it, because you talk about a shy kid from the suburbs that gets thrown into boot camp and gets to go to various climates, and see the world, and lead people, especially a high school drop-out that got his GED before he got out, and got an Associate's Degree, and a Bachelor's Degree, I mean that kind of says it all when you think about it; because a lot of people would say, "Oh gosh, 17 years old, didn't graduate high school, you're going to be a bum." Here I am.

Kiefner: Absolutely. Is there anything else that you'd like to share with me today, or are there any questions that you expected me to ask that I didn't?

Devine: I just had a conversation at the Corner Bakery here, before I came over. Somebody saw a book that I was carrying around, and it's about this Marine Lieutenant in Vietnam, and we were having a discussion, philosophical, about the current conflicts that were going on, and I said, "Well, I think we were right on both counts to go into Iraq and Afghanistan, unfortunately, I've seen this in the past with the US. I think, eventually, we'll probably end up going back to Iraq if we have to, and Afghanistan, probably the same thing," and I expressed to him, I think our next major conflict is going to be with Iran, and you know, that will be probably a collaborative effort through NATO to probably go in and take out the nuclear reactors, because we definitely cannot

have that lunatic over there be in possession of nuclear weapons. But -- I think that, with veterans, the Veterans Administration is now starting to get that this whole generation of this latest conflict, they are much more, obviously, computer savvy. They are more educated and the people in power at the VA and other governmental agencies, they can't just slough it off; because you've got some of these young folks now running for congress, running for senate. They are going to be a voice to be heard, especially when it comes to veterans affairs and benefits.

Kiefner: Definitely. Well thank you so much Sergeant Devine...

Devine: (Chuckles)

Kiefner ...It has been a pleasure; I thank you for sharing your stories with us today.

Devine: No problem, glad to do it.