

Neddenriep Military Biography

I enlisted in the Nevada Army National Guard on February 20th, 1990. I had graduated from Bishop Manogue Catholic High school in Reno, Nevada in 1989 and received a Cross Country and Track scholarship at the University of Nevada, Reno. Despite a successful running career in high school that included a 4:24 mile and 9:50 two-mile PR times, my times were not dropping like they needed to in order to compete at the collegiate level. I was consistently running dead last among the UNR team and I could see the writing was on the wall that I would not get my scholarship again the next year. Add in the fact that my father had suffered a heart attack during my junior year in high school so there was no financial support to fall back on, I began weighing my options regarding how I was going to pay for school. I refused to go into debt, but I also knew that it would be nearly impossible to work enough hours to pay for school and still have enough time to study. I had received a post card in the mail about ROTC, so I went and met with the professor of military science. He told me it was too late for me to apply for the 4 year programs, and it was too early for me to apply for the two year programs, so he suggested that I look into the National Guard.

I met with a guard recruiter named Wilson DaSilva and asked him which jobs paid the biggest bonuses and where the most fun. He told me the mechanized infantry unit in Yerington was the most fun and they had the biggest enlistment bonus. I signed up and selected a Fort Benning basic training class that would allow me to finish the spring semester that was underway, and also get me back only two weeks into the fall semester so I wouldn't have to lose the semester as long as my professors worked with me and let me make up the two weeks I would miss. I had my older sister who was also at UNR go to my teachers and asked them not to drop me from the classes for missing the first two weeks, and fortunately every one of them worked with me and I didn't lose the semester.

Since I had three months before leaving for basic training I was told to report to my unit in Yerington for drill in March 1990, which I did. Since I had not been to basic training yet, they assigned me to SPC Paul Kinsey and told me to follow him and do whatever he told me to. SPC Kinsey was a really gung ho soldier that cared deeply about duty and honor and making our unit the best it could be. I'll admit that I felt a little guilty because truthfully I had joined for selfish reasons and not out of a sense of duty or honor that I saw Kinsey and the rest of the unit demonstrating. This was the first point that my attitude and intentions toward the military started to change.

I shipped out to Fort Benning for Infantry Basic training just one week after classes ended that semester and got the nice rude awakening that all new recruits get there. But somehow I seemed to take to military life. I was in great shape from my cross country and track training, so the physical stuff was not so bad, but the humidity was really tough for a kid from Nevada. About two weeks in I was made the Platoon Guide and managed to keep that job for the remaining 11 weeks of the 13 week OSUT and even received the platoon distinguished graduate award. Maybe this was meant to be more than a way to pay for school?

While I was in basic training, Iraq invaded Kuwait and the drums of war could be heard in the not too distant future. The reality that I could go to war was a wakeup call for me and I began to take my service even more seriously. I decided that if I was going to be in the guard and get my college degree I might as well become an officer, so I applied for and received a two year Nevada Guard ROTC scholarship that allowed me to stay in my unit as part of a Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP). The SMP allowed me to serve in my guard unit as a cadet and receive E-5 pay while I completed my two years of ROTC. This was a great experience for me because our unit was short a Lieutenant, so I was the acting 3rd platoon leader for the entire two years that I was a cadet. I learned a lot in those two years, especially to swallow my pride and listen to my experienced Platoon Sergeant. I consulted him a lot in private and he did a great job of not letting me make too many public mistakes, so we made a good team and I learned more than any of my ROTC classes taught me. I left for my ROTC advanced camp in 1992 and was one of the four

ROTC classes taught me. I left for my ROTC advanced camp in 1993 and was one of the four cadets out of the forty in our platoon to earn a coveted evaluation score of 5. I was the only guard cadet in our training battalion to receive a 5, so I took this as another sign that maybe I was meant to serve in this way.

I graduated in 1994 and our unit had just completed a transition to an Armor Battalion, so I received my commission as an armor officer. I went to Armor OBC in Fort Knox and when I returned I was assigned as the Second Platoon leader. One of my Tank Commanders was SSG Paul Kinsey, the same guy I followed around on my first drill.

In 1996 we became a round out squadron for the 11th ACR and the Blackhorse Regiment held a Spur Ride for us . It was tough, but I earned my spurs and Stetson that year and continued to wear them through my retirement in February of 2013. I progressed to Troop Executive Officer, then Troop Commander, then the S3 Air. After that I did a short stint in the State HQ on the advice of the man who would later become the Commander of the Nevada Army Guard and my direct rater during my squadron Command. It was a good learning experience, but I quickly returned to 1-221 CAV as the S3. After about a year and a half I was moved to the Executive Officer position and we received notice that we would mobilize to Afghanistan in a dual role as Battle Space Owners of Laghman Province and provide 13 SECFOR platoons to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams throughout the US controlled sectors. I went on active duty orders on January 1st of 2009 and we mobilized from late March of 2009 until April 2nd of 2010.

I was promoted to LTC in Afghanistan and took command of 1-221 CAV shortly after we returned and came off of post-mob leave. This was truly an honor since I had literally served this unit from E-1 through command. About 9 months into my command I chaired the committee to select the next Squadron CSM. The hands down most qualified person for the job was none other than Paul Kinsey. So the guy I followed around on day one was now my CSM. We were a great team and we could honestly tell every soldier in our command that there is no limit to what they can do if they put their mind to it and perform their best. It was an incredible 23 years and I'm proud of every moment of it, especially the last 17 years affiliated with the 11th ACR Blackhorse. Allons!