

Name: Rick Parpan
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- 1) What branch and unit were you in? *Marine Corps*
- 2) What was your highest rank? *Lance Corporal*
- 3) Are you still enlisted as a reservist or National Guard? *1976-1979*
- 4) Why did you join the service? *I needed some direction, couple of friends joined, seemed like the right thing to do at the time. It was one of the best decisions I made in my life. I matured and now that I'm wiser, I do know these things.*
- 5) What did you like the most about being in? *Physical challenges in boot camp, travel, got to see Okinawa, took some school there.*
- 6) What did you like the least? *Being a cook. Understaffed in Okinawa, so really brutal hours.*
- 7) What moment most defined your military experience? *Not killing sand fleas at Parris Island going through boot camp. DI's would make you stand at attention while these sand fleas were biting us on the legs. They told us that the sand fleas were fellow Marines and that we couldn't kill them. I still remember a DI ordering some unlucky Marine to dig through the sand trying to find the body of a sand flea he'd killed. I learned early on NOT to kill sand fleas!*
- 8) What made you choose firefighting as a career? *I was a volunteer firefighter back in Chicago. My mom actually died in a house fire. I became an EMT in Marine Corps, then a paramedic.*
- 9) What do you like the most about firefighting? *Probably the most fun I had was working as a paramedic. I've been doing this for over 25 years now and I still enjoy helping people. We get to do that on a daily basis. I'm not sure you could ask for anything better than that.*
- 10) What do you like least about firefighting? *Being solo now, not having the camaraderie you have when you're part of a crew.*