

Ralph Ianneillo Interview

Veteran Voices

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Sadie Levinson and Sydney Ellis had the honor of interviewing Ralph Ianneillo about his time in the US Marine Corps. At just age 19 he volunteered to serve this country. His career in the Marines lasted from 1950–1954. He first attended college and realized it wasn't the right fit for him so he entered the Marines. In addition, while he was on the Med cruise he was promoted to meritorious corporal and got a sea service deployment ribbon.

Ralph was first employed because his father was a former Marine from 1950 to 1954. His father served in the Korean War as a purple hawk. When Ralph first started training in boot camps he expressed it as, “the toughest and most rewarding experience in life,” which shaped him into who he is today.

Ralph Ianneillo is still in contact with his lieutenant and some noncommissioned officers. They meet up once a year and get together annually. For example, two of them attended Ralph’s wedding.

Ralph had many memories throughout this experience. He said his best memory was when he attended the Med cruise. This cruise lasted six months on a Navy ship. He got to travel all over the world. With experiences in different sports, food, and overall environment.

Sadly in 1982 as Ralph was leaving the tour to come back Ben Lebanon broke down. His worst experience occurred in 1983 when his unit was sent again to Beirut. Ralph had gotten into an accident so he was not able to go. On October 23, 1983 the terrorists bombed this building in Beirut and all the people in his unit (friends) were in that building and sadly died. Three days later Ralph received a letter from his best friend who passed away and all he could do was mourn over the loss of his friend.

A normal day in Ralph's life as a Marine was getting up, getting dressed, having breakfast, forming the flag, and then starting training. Each training could be something different, for example, cleaning weapons, exercising, or combat training. When there were breaks or vacation time he would go to his home in New York. A bunch of guys would meet at this circle called "soup circle" and would all chip in for gas and drive nonstop to New York.

A good luck charm that Mr. Ianneillo carried a price tag that his mother gave him, it had diamonds and used to be worn all the time and never took off. When he adjusted back to life coming out of the Military he went to work right away, working at an Italian Restaurant waiting to get on the police force. He explained that he would always work two to three jobs.

Ralph wants future generations to realize and know that he and others sacrifice their lives and freedom just to better the country. They want to keep the country great. He says, "That's why it kills me at football games when they don't want to stand for the Pledge." Based on that he thinks those people shouldn't even play and that if they don't respect our country then they shouldn't be living in it. He has a very strong sense of nationality and wants people to know it.

To future generations, Ralphs says "to love and respect family, country, and god." He joined the military knowing he could possibly die yet he would do it all just for this country and its people.