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I was stationed in Germany when the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989. This was about two weeks after President Ronald Regan addressed the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to open the Berlin Wall. The unit I was assigned to went on a tour that included Checkpoint Charlie, the Berlin Wall and into East Germany. During my time there, I was able to take a hammer and chisel to the wall and chip a few pieces off for myself.



Why was it significant to you?

My time in Berlin was very early in my career and it gave me a deeper understanding of the country's history, why there was an East and West Berlin and who controlled each side.

What was the lasting impression or changing moment for you?

Being able to see the culture firsthand and learn how communism permeated through this part of Germany really ingrained in me why the military is important to our country.

Any details of struggle or impossibility that were overcome?

Initially I struggled with the structure and rules of being in the military and in another country at such a young age. But once I witnessed the hardships of war and how communism strips individuals of personal freedoms, I was truly humbled and realized that I didn't have valid reason to feel the way I did.

Anything else you would like to share?

I was also stationed in South Korea and had a chance to tour the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the border of North Korea. I saw firsthand just how lucky we are as American citizens to enjoy the freedoms we're granted.



In this picture, my wife and I are in South Korea, at the border city of Panmunjom where the DMZ is located. This building is in North Korea and is just a façade, only a few feet deep, representing their attempt at showing power and strength.

Military History

What/who/where is the subject of history?

9/11 is an important piece of American history to me. It impacted the whole country, and we continue to see it in our daily lives from travel to security in buildings.



Why is it significant to you?

While my now wife and I were dating, she was deployed to Iraq for 15 months. During that time her convoy was hit with an IED (improvised explosive device), and while thankfully she wasn't injured, waiting to receive confirmation that she was okay was one of the most emotionally stressful experience I endured during my 20 years of active service.

How has it impacted the future of our military?

9/11 changed our tactics and how we conduct combat operations. We went from being on an open battlefield or protecting a base to conducting military operations in urban terrain.

Any details of adversity that were overcome?

9/11 really changed how we train for combat in the military and as leaders we became more flexible and agile to overcome new doctrines that were sent down from the Department of Defense.

