

Paul Karl Arthur Kell



Paul Karl Arthur Kell (born March 1, 1976) is a Cloud Security Engineer and author. A veteran of the pre-internet age of the 1980's and pioneer of the internet revolution of the 1990's and 2000's, he became interested in early computer technology from his father, who worked for IBM. The first computer Kell was known to have programmed on was a Texas Instruments' TI-99/4A, in an early form of BASIC and using cassette tape as a storage medium. Kell was also involved in making hardware modifications to the IBM PCjr platform to provide additional memory and streamline power requirements.

In 1991, Kell began programming using Microsoft QBasic. While he had been involved in the dial-up Bulletin Board Systems (BBSes) culture for years, it was around this time he first began as a SysOp of his own systems. Through the 90's he experimented with several BBS software versions including: Excalibur BBS, Mystic BBS, Opus-CBCS, Renegade, Synchronet, Wildcat, and WWIV. He was particularly fascinated with BBSes which provided the capability of synchronizing message forums with other remote systems, forming a "ring network" which brought together people from all over the world on the same message threads.

Over time, Kell's interest in technology waxed and waned, often in direct proportion to other events in his life. However, a critical decision occurred in 1998, when he made the choice to leave a full-time position working at a local factory to go back to school at Lexington Community College (LCC), which at the time was part of the University of Kentucky.

Early Life and Education

Paul Karl Arthur Kell was born on March 1, 1976, in Cudahy, WI, as the only son of James Paul Kell (1943-2013) and his wife, Mary Gail Kell (1947-). His ancestry includes German, English, and Irish. His father was a computer technician for IBM and his mother was a Registered Nurse. Kell also has an older sister, Laura. Kell grew up in a widely homogeneous population of Caucasian, Lutheran, midwesterners attending a local parochial school and had little exposure outside that bubble. The family lived in rural North Prairie, Wisconsin until 1984 when his father was temporarily transferred

to a project at IBM's Research Triangle Park Headquarters in Raleigh, North Carolina. It was during his time in North Carolina he was identified as "gifted" by Duke University. When his father's project was moved to Lexington, Kentucky a year later, Kell and his family moved to Versailles, Kentucky where he spent his adolescence.

From 1984 forward, Kell's childhood was often in a state of flux. He was unable to establish the lifelong friendships, unlike many children, due to the repeated moves. Both his father and mother were functional alcoholics and his father often became violent when under the influence. To this day, he still suffers some physical effects of the early childhood abuse. He also lost his sister, as she was sent to a private boarding school in Wisconsin shortly after moving to Kentucky. This focused all the attention of his parent's anger and expectations solely on him.

In 1990, Kell entered Woodford County High School. As a typical "gifted" underachiever he easily grew bored and did not do well in restrictive class structures. Teachers who were less rigid found him often doing far more work than was required and he did his best when allowed to engage in independent study of his courses. He was active in several sports, earning varsity letters in competitive swimming, and football. He was also active in other clubs and activities including Mock Trial and theater. Kell spent several summers as a lifeguard at the local Big Springs public pool and worked several other retail and fast food jobs.

Kell had many acquaintances from many walks of life in high school, however he had very few close friends. He often felt like an outsider and suffered from impostor syndrome, choosing to often sabotage himself when finding social or academic success. To complicate matters, the abuse he suffered at home intensified during this period due to his rebellious teen angst.

In the fall of 1994, Kell enrolled in classes at LCC. He has often been quoted saying he lacked the maturity at the time for college and was suspended after two semesters due to a GPA violation. He spent the next 5 years working several jobs (and often more than one at a time) around Kentucky and southern Indiana.

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