

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #318 - Sides A & B & C

Subject: Joe Hardwick - With Video

Place: Hardwick Home, Hines, Oregon

Date: March 27, 1992

Interviewers: Barbara Lofgren & Dorothea Purdy

Release Form: Yes

DOROTHEA PURDY: This is Dorothea Purdy along with Barbara Lofgren, and today we will be talking to Joe Hardwick at his home in Hines, Oregon. The date is March 27th, 1992. We will be visiting with Joe this afternoon and getting some of the history from him, and about his coming to Harney County. Afterwards we hope to be doing a video of Joe, and it will be stored along with this cassette tape at the Harney County Library in the history project. The transcript and video will be #318. What is your name?

JOE HARDWICK: Joe Hardwick. And it's just Joe, it's not Joseph like most people think.

BARBARA LOFGREN: Your parents wanted a short name then, huh?

JOE: Our family is like that. (Laughter)

BARBARA: No frills, just plain, plain Joe.

JOE: I have a brother, whose name is "Rocky", and another one is John and, you know, that's the way it goes, simple.

DOROTHEA: Simple names, not like Mike mine, Dorothea.

JOE: Yeah, no hyphenated things, and all this fancy stuff.

DOROTHEA: And where were you born?

JOE: Born in Baker City on February 2nd, 1934. And I was one of those, what do you call them, a false spring, you know, where everything is beautiful and warm, and all that stuff. Groundhog's Day!

DOROTHEA: Kind of like this year has been.

JOE: So, whenever I see my shadow on Groundhog's Day, you can expect it to be winter the rest of the time.

DOROTHEA: You think you're the Groundhog, huh?

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: And what were your parent's names?

JOE: My mother's name was Edna, and my daddy's, dad's name was Wandell, but they always called him "Rocky".

BARBARA: Wandell, how do you spell that?

JOE: W A N D E L L.

BARBARA: I see, okay. That is a different name; I don't believe I've ever heard that name.

JOE: Yeah, he had, James Wandell, or J. W. and his nickname was "Rocky".

BARBARA: And so is that why they --- then you have, you mentioned that your brother's names, that's why they --- you have a "Rocky", Jr. then?

JOE: No, not junior, just "Rocky".

BARBARA: Just "Rocky", okay. And do you have any sisters?

JOE: Yeah, I have two sisters, Sally Walter who works in Portland. She was born and raised in Baker City. And then I have another younger sister (Johanna Paddack) who lives in Colorado, and she was an airline stewardess who lived in Wichita for a while, and then she and her husband moved to Denver, and they live there now.

BARBARA: So, was your family from Baker City, or did they go there from someplace else?

JOE: Basically, most of our family were born and/or raised in Baker and La Grande primarily.

BARBARA: And what was your father's business, what did he do for a living?

JOE: My dad worked as a mechanic, and worked for the forest service in John Day when we lived in John Day. He also, which I didn't find out until about three years ago, that my brother was going through some of the family items and came up with this annual that the CCC boys put out every year, and he was in charge of a crew that helped build Idlewild Campground.

BARBARA: Oh, wasn't that interesting.

JOE: Out here. And he worked out of John Day at that time, and he was working for the forest service then. And he was in charge of a crew that came in and helped build the Idlewild Campground out there. Fought many forest fires around the area.

BARBARA: I'll be darned.

JOE: Good time.

BARBARA: Yeah. So, did you go to school then in Baker City, your grade school and high school?

JOE: Well, my grade school started in John Day, and of course that's where we lived. And one of the biggest thrills of my life I think, or in my memory, I can remember when one of the forest service Cats got stuck down in the gravel piles, and Dad had to go down and pull it out. So, he came by the house, because the shops were down the street, and he came by and picked me up and put on the Cat and away we went.

BARBARA: All right.

JOE: So, we had a good time down there pulling the other Cat out of the hole. It was very interesting.

DOROTHEA: About how old were you?

JOE: Oh, I was probably seven years old.

DOROTHEA: So that's a real, real, yeah, the kids really like that.

JOE: Yeah. Get to ride up on one of those "clatter bangers" and they go down the road, and turn on a track. Quite interesting. And when we lived in John Day, why I had an uncle also who worked falling trees, and worked as a logger over there, he logged with horses. And that was just -- after the depression a lot of people of course were financially uptight. Dad always seemed to take care of us. And then they moved in with us because they were having a hard time with it. So anyway, that's the way it was. During that period my uncle, historically speaking I guess you might say, he was married to a lady who, her name was Theresa Hardwick, and her dad rode with Geronimo back in the southwest, and they were doing their thing.

BARBARA: Oh, that would be an interesting experience too.

JOE: Yeah. We have a lot of family history back in those areas. My dad was born in Squaw Creek, Idaho, which is just outside of Jackson, Wyoming over there. And then some of my relatives have the Jackson connotation, so we, I'm assuming that we probably had some people that were born and raised in Jackson.

BARBARA: When you went over there a summer or two ago, wasn't it that you and Helen went over there, did you look up some of those places you had heard about?

JOE: Well, we went through most of the area. We didn't look up any of the family backgrounds or anything like that. We just went and had a good time, great time.

And memories of Grant County, on over in that area, we always hiked into Strawberry Lake and High Lake. My dad was also, helped build trails and stuff up in that area.

BARBARA: So as a youngster then you were pretty much --- went to the outdoors, did a lot of outdoor things then with your family.

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: So maybe that's why you kind of like to go hunting and fishing still.

JOE: Well, it was different then, you know. I mean a lot of people used that for subsistence, you know, to help.

BARBARA: Put food on the table.

JOE: Put food on the table. When my dad and mom got married he went to work for the state highway department, and helped build the highway between Ontario and Burns, also. They lived in Harper during that period of time. And from John Day we moved to Baker where my dad was a mechanic. And then the war came along and ---

BARBARA: Is that where you went to high school, in Baker City?

JOE: Yeah. Well from, let's see we went to La Grande first during the war, I guess. We moved from John Day to Baker. We were only there probably four months, or something like that.

And then he had to get into the war effort, so we moved to La Grande where he worked in the railroad as a machinist. And La Grande was, of course what we found out to be the windy city,

very windy city.

BARBARA: Oh, is that right, I hadn't thought about it being a windy place.

JOE: Yeah, it is, yeah. He and my uncle went to work for the railroad over there with their machinist capacity. So ---

DOROTHEA: Does the wind blow yet, you mean, too?

JOE: Oh yeah, still windy.

DOROTHEA: Still windy city, huh?

JOE: As you know when I-84 is closed the wind is blowing, and it will blow you right off the road over there, the same as it does all the way down the gorge.

DOROTHEA: Oh yeah, so that's why they close that so often. I often wondered that.

JOE: I still have two brothers that live in La Grande, and Island City, and they have found their homes over there. "Buck", who is, his nickname is "Buck", he was named after my dad, his name is Wandell James, just reversed, the title is the same. And let's see ---

BARBARA: So, did, when you were in high school, did you start working at Safeway at that time? Were you a box boy or something like that or bagger, or whatever?

JOE: Well, yeah. When we went to La Grande, we went to kind of like a middle school in Baker. Let's see, while there we, Dad worked as a mechanic for Chet Smith Motor Company, and my uncle also had a business downtown which was a fuel and coal distributorship. And we kind of did odd jobs around La Grande and Baker by going around throwing wood in, and stuff like this.

Basically, my brother and I, John, who didn't look much like me now, but we looked very identical at this point in our lives. Anyway, we worked together all the time and we had several places that we would shovel snow off in the wintertime, and take care of the yards. That's how we bought our clothes for school. Kids unfortunately today don't have those opportunities, you know, to keep themselves busy. They don't have to go out, supposedly do the menial tasks or whatever it is, and yet they pay very well.

DOROTHEA: And help support the families in other words, like we used to, yeah.

JOE: Yeah, yeah. You just don't have them. You had one coat.

BARBARA: The wardrobes that some of them have now is really something else.

JOE: Yeah. They weren't, you know, we had to pretty much pay our own way because things were tight.

DOROTHEA: One coat, and I remember one pair of shoes.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Because there is five or six kids in most of the families.

JOE: While we lived in La Grande of course I participated in sports. And gosh I was, you know, we had to go to rummage sales and stuff like that to make ends meet. Rubber of course was hard to come by because it was in the war effort, and so there was --- I can remember there wasn't enough tennis shoes to go around, or you couldn't find the proper tennis shoes, and they would be too expensive for us to buy.

So, I remember going to a rummage sale and ending up with a white pair of tennis shoes, and that embarrassed me to death. Because only girls wore white tennis shoes, you know.

DOROTHEA: In those days, yeah.

JOE: (Laughter) Yeah, I don't know.

BARBARA: Get some black ... and dye them.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Now you can't hardly get them to wear black tennis shoes.

JOE: I don't know whether the times have changed, or we're getting more feminine, I don't know.

(Laughter) But those were grand times, and we --- while I was in La Grande I went to what was called Ackerman Training School, where we had a lot of teachers who were being taught at Eastern Oregon College. And they would come in and substitute teach and they would put on things that really impress you, you know, in your mind. It's an educational process. And at this one point in time, we had two of them come into the classroom, you know, unannounced and just come in there and started slapping the teacher around, and creating quite a ruckus. And then after it all settled down, you know, you thought it was all for real.

BARBARA: Really startled you kids.

JOE: Really, you know, everybody was all shook up. And then all of a sudden, the teacher he just, you know, they left and went out the door because things were getting pretty hairy. So, the teacher he stopped, okay, now he said this was put on by substitute teachers from Eastern Oregon College, and what we would like for you people to do is take a pencil and a paper and write what you can remember about those individuals when they came into the room.

BARBARA: See how observant they were as to what really happened.

JOE: And find out how observant you were, and to see, you know, how your senses react. Can you remember what they did, or what they were dressed like, and things like this, which was very educational.

BARBARA: Yeah.

JOE: And it was great. I got a lot of good memories there. And then we got to watch the college play quite a bit.

And also, during the war they had the cadets there who were going to be flying airplanes during World War II, and they would always march to school and back, and we'd go down with them and carry their books or whatever. And of course, they were more interested in the college girls than they were probably the classes.

But they had this one, what you would call an outdoor, you know, a residence downtown. And every time they would go by there, why the girls would put some kind of a manikin or something out there on the top of the roof. And the guys would go by and they would always go (whistles) hi Mabel, you know. (Laughter) The girls would wave out the door; it was a lot of fun.

And then of course they had the confidence course built up around training school up there, and it went out across creeks and all this stuff. So, we had the opportunities to do that, and go through them and had a good time.

BARBARA: What kinds of sports did you participate in?

JOE: Everything.

BARBARA: Everything.

JOE: Yeah, yeah.

DOROTHEA: Did you go to college then on a scholarship, or, didn't go to college?

JOE: No, no we, I never went to college, no way. After we moved from La Grande my older brother he stayed in La Grande because he had one year left. He also participated in sports. But anyway, we moved from La Grande back to Baker, and that's when I was in the seventh grade. He stayed in La Grande to finish out his education at high school. And as I say I didn't think that that was the right thing for him to do, I thought that he should come with the family, not realizing that those were the things you did if you went to school with people, you know. You just, you know, it was hard. And my aunt and uncle lived there so it wasn't to bad to arrange for that. And then he met his wife there and married her and he stayed in La Grande.

And then we went back to Baker City; I think it was the seventh grade that I entered Central School, which is a junior high, and so to speak, or a middle school. And we went there until the eighth grade, and after the eighth grade we transferred into high school of course. And it was one of the older buildings in town and it had all kinds of facilities. We had a coach in junior high that was very interested in gymnastics, and of course he was involved with archery and all this other stuff. And he would talk about Canyon Creek and going over there and hunting deer because it was the only archery area open in the state, and it was opened in 1937.

And while there, we enjoyed just growing up, and I participated in sports. My brother didn't do anything in my opinion but (Laughter) we worked together and fought together.

BARBARA: Normal siblings.

JOE: As normal family procedures go. We had a bike, you know, one bike between the two of us. And Mom would always be at home, and Dad would be working at night, and stuff like that. So, we would go do the shopping for home, and stuff like that. I can remember where he would ... the groceries in these big wooden boxes on top of the handlebars, and I'd push the pedals, and he would sit in front of me and we'd take the groceries home. That's just the way we grew up. Mom was pretty busy, and so, raising family and everything, and everybody contributed. You always had a job to do.

DOROTHEA: When did you start working as a grocery store person, or how old were you then?

JOE: Sixteen.

DOROTHEA: Sixteen.

JOE: Yeah, that was, same as it is now because of interstate commerce rules and regulations you can't do it. I had a third cousin, whose name was Jackson, as I was relating to, the Jackson Hole situation. And she was my third cousin removed, and she said, "Joe, would you be interested in going to work at Safeway?" And I said, "Sure." She said, "Well you be sure and be down there as soon as school is out, you know, because I think there is a job open there." So of course, I was all excited and I ran all the way to the store and went in for an interview. What was the first manager, "Twin" Nelson was the guy that I was hired by, and kind of a chubby guy. But he was in charge of the local scout troop, and stuff like that. So, I went in and got interviewed and was hired. And from then on, you know --- I was very shy.

BARBARA: Gee, you would never know it now, would you? (Laughter)

JOE: But as always, I've always remembered how shy I was, and how people would feel when they would come to work. And it was very interesting to try and bring people out of their shell.

BARBARA: It's hard for young people.

JOE: Because they don't know, you know.

BARBARA: Don't know what to expect.

JOE: Older people, they don't know how to relate to.

BARBARA: Yeah, scary.

JOE: And then through the company I was taught, you know, and learned how to deal with people. You always spoke to them, and you know ---

Of course, the young girls would come into the store, you know, and of course give us kind of an advantage over the rest of the guys, they would be out haying or someplace. And of course, all the guys that we ran around with, or that I ran around with we were all single and hell raisers, and whatever else you want to call it. You know it is just part of ---

BARBARA: Part of growing up.

JOE: Sowing the wild oats and growing up. We didn't, I didn't ever drink but the rest of them

drank. So, I was always the designated driver when we would go out. We went to all the grange hall dances from Durkee and Hereford, all the way down to La Grande, the Union County Fair. So, we did a lot of commuting on the weekends.

DOROTHEA: Now was this the Safeway Store that you started working at?

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: And then you just went from the box boy more or less to a produce boy, to a, on up the line?

JOE: Yeah, up the ladder, yeah. Probably after "Twin" Nelson hired myself, and several other people that I will tell later about, as in the industry --- But he was a roly-poly cheery good guy, and then he transferred to another store.

And we had another manager come in and he was kind of one of these types, you know, he would, he was a manager so to speak, but he would nip a little bit on the bottle and he would come down and raise cane with the crew and all this stuff ---

BARBARA: That wasn't too fun.

JOE: --- while he was inebriated. And that wasn't, we just kind of did our thing and let him do his thing, you know. Kind of scary sometimes. But during that period of time it was, a lot of things were going on in Baker City, you know. Like there were guys that were supposedly involved with gangster type operations and stuff like this.

BARBARA: Really?

JOE: Yeah, seriously.

BARBARA: Oh, my goodness.

JOE: And it really got scary sometimes when you were working there. You'd see things going on and you wouldn't realize it and then all of a sudden, you know, we were sitting in a restaurant one night and all of a sudden guys were drawing guns and blowing people away.

BARBARA: Oh, my goodness.

JOE: And on and on it went, you know. And it was exciting.

DOROTHEA: How do you feel, how do you feel when something like that, do you start dodging

for the floor, or do you sit and watch it take place?

JOE: You try and protect yourself and everybody else you can while you're trying.

BARBARA: Be as inconspicuous as possible.

JOE: Yeah. Even at that age, you know, you just have a self-preservation, or you call upon your sixth senses to direct you in what to do.

I remember I was packing groceries out for this one guy, and I looked up and this one guy was pounding the tar out of this guy out behind the store, and slapping his head on the concrete and it sounded like a, you know, a shell that is breaking loose.

BARBARA: Oh my.

JOE: And he said, "I'm going to teach you how they fight where I come from." And the next thing I knew a Cadillac come up and grabbed that guy and threw him in the back and picked him up and away they went.

BARBARA: Well, what kind of dealings were going on? Was it just a gang trying to get hold of booze, or was it businesses, or what was the crime related?

JOE: I don't know. You know at that point in time, a sixteen-year-old or seventeen-year-old, you really don't know what is going on. But in talking to various people, you know, the rest of the guys that I was affiliated with, they said, "Well, Joe don't you know about these things that are going on?" And I said, "No." And they started filling me in.

DOROTHEA: In other words, it was mob-like things happening?

JOE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That were controlled through the gambling and so on and so forth that was still going on, you know. Like, you know, they had the card tables and things like that, and the bars and stuff which were pretty much controlled by individuals in the community that --- quite influential. They drove big cars and everything, but really you didn't know what their business was.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

BARBARA: So, you first started out at age sixteen working after school at Safeway?

JOE: Uh huh.

BARBARA: And then did you then work in the summertime?

JOE: On weekends when I wasn't playing in sports. And then we would work in the summertime.

BARBARA: And then after you got out of high school, did you go to work full time then for them, or did you do something else?

JOE: No, I just stayed with Safeway. I had of course as I advanced in, of course, you know, you have affiliations with various people.

And I started going with this one girl and her mother thought that I should be doing something else other than working for Safeway, and so I went and interviewed for Cal-Pac.

(Telephone rings)

DOROTHEA: Do you need to go answer that?

BARBARA: Let me unhook you (microphone).

JOE: This was where --- I went for an interview with Cal-Pac and I just, you know, the pay wasn't as good as what I was making where I was, and I just didn't want to be cooped up inside. The kids, you know, I had a lot of friends who worked at the store and we pretty well stuck together, you know, during that period of time. And the manager that was there at that time was Everett Zimmerman, and he had family and relatives that lived in the valley out there, and he had a ranch, and he was an ornery old guy. But you learn a lot from those people, and he pretty much let us run the store. In other words, we would spend extra time doing books, and taking care of all the operations of the store. And all he would do was be just a figurehead, you know. He would line out the programs and set it up.

BARBARA: Kind of an overseer.

JOE: He taught us a lot. And we were always, you know, in those days you could work overtime and not get hung up for it. And today you can't do those things. And we played a lot, and threw potatoes and stuff in the back room at each. (Laughter) Threw knives at walls. And, you know, up the walls they have the studs, the wooden studs, and next to the studs they have important pieces of equipment like copper tubing that the refrigerant goes through, and scales that, you know, you take the drum off the scale and they have magnified, and all the drums inside are real small.

And the store that I was in only had four check stands, and of course we were one of the

highest volume stores in the division, because we just really trucked all the time. I'll tell you, we had a lot of fun at night.

And like I say we, the friends that I had made there, why we would always go out on Saturday night, and the boss would say, "I don't care what you guys do Saturday night, if you're scheduled to work the next day, you better be here."

BARBARA: Was the store open on Sundays at that time?

JOE: No, no, that was before that.

BARBARA: Before they started being open on Sundays.

JOE: But that's during the period of time where we were, started open on Sunday. And of course, the ministerial association in Baker they got pretty hot about that. But while there, it was, we really worked hard. I'll tell you it was ---

BARBARA: So, what are the steps, or the different jobs that you had while you were at this first store?

JOE: In Baker?

BARBARA: Uh huh.

JOE: Basically, we just, everything, taking care of the customers and everything came first. And then after that why, after the store closed at 9 o'clock in the evening why then we would go ahead and do the books and stuff like that. There were five of us, there was myself and Hank Cavallo, and Jim Deroest, and Morie Deroest, and Dick Taylor, and Chuck Shelton who all of us were basically about the same age. And having worked under the situation that we did, we all became managers and/or district managers for the company. And so that said a lot for the gentleman we worked for. He gave us our rope, and we took after it, and we did very well. Not only for the company, but for everything else.

BARBARA: So, you didn't have a specific job then, like maybe the stores do now?

JOE: Yeah, yeah, you know, like you had head clerks and stuff like that.

BARBARA: You did a little bit of everything.

JOE: But basically, all five of us guys, you know, some of them came in later or earlier, but we

would do all the other work, you know, stock shelves and take care of the customers, and check, and all this stuff.

BARBARA: I see.

JOE: And then after that was done why we took care of the books with the assistant.

BARBARA: So how many ---

JOE: And that was how we learned how to take care of a store.

BARBARA: I see. So, you pretty well learned from the ground up then as to really what needed to be done.

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: To run a store.

JOE: And then when I was just, after graduation from high school why, you know, we were sitting there, the manager was on vacation, the assistant manager had to go to Portland for something, and everybody else was sick or on vacation, and so I had the opportunity to run the store for five days over the Fourth of July when I was only eighteen years old.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

BARBARA: That was quite a responsibility.

JOE: Had to write all the orders, and take care of the cash, and everything like that. Our district manager at that time was Pete Neil, who also hired me to come to Burns as a manager later on, was responsible for my coming over here. And while in Baker why one time I came to Burns with an individual who, well actually it was Tommy Wentz's stepson Jack Carroll. And I don't know if you remember him or not?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

JOE: And he had a blue and white Oldsmobile and it was a hot machine. And he was running around with us over in Baker, and we had some interesting times together. When we were hunting, like he would go out and, you know --- we went out and partied a lot Saturday night, and the next day we would go hunting or something like that. So, I can recall he said, "Well, I need to kill a deer." And I said, "Okay." So, he started up this canyon, went up, so I saw this nice four-point buck

running up over the hill and I shot him and came back. And here is Jack; he is all asleep in the car.

DOROTHEA: Laid out. (Laughter)

JOE: Boy I was mad, oh I was mad. He was supposed to be up on the hill, you know, but he wasn't.

And anyway, his pretty blue and white Oldsmobile, he decided one night that he would drive to Burns. He got as far as the first curve coming out of a seven-mile stretch, coming towards Burns, and he just missed the concrete abutment where it went under the highway. He rolled it, totaled it. And he was sitting in the car, and he was talking to himself. We had advised him, you know, we said, "You can't make it to Burns and back in time to go to work Jack." He said, "Sure I can, I got a hot car." And he was half drunk at the time, he just missed it. Boy I'll tell you, and he said, "I was sitting inside the car," and he said, "I took my shoes off so my stocking feet, you know, so my shoes wouldn't hurt the top of the car because I had to come out." He was so proud of that car, and I could understand, it was a hot car. But it wasn't ---

DOROTHEA: There wasn't much left of it.

JOE: No. After you have rolled it, and it is laying on its top in the ditch, there is not much there. But anyway, he got it repaired. And ... went over to Burns one day, and I kind of was coming down through, out by Idlewild there and I thought, you know, how you have a sense of things, you know?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

JOE: Said well geeze, what if I go to Burns, you know, later on as a manager, how would I take that, you know. Because at that time Burns was not too well known for, you know, being a place to move or transfer to, or whatever.

DOROTHEA: It wasn't very popular.

JOE: But anyway, I stayed overnight and we helped stock freight and stuff like that, and played around a little bit and then we went back home.

DOROTHEA: Did Jack work at the store for Tommy or anything like that?

JOE: He did work for Tommy, and then he transferred to Burns, and that's where, he worked in the Baker store with us, over there thinking it would do him some good, you know. Kind of put him

out on his own. We had a lot of good times, a lot of fun.

DOROTHEA: So, during this time, when did you meet your wife?

JOE: I didn't yet.

DOROTHEA: You didn't, not yet, okay.

JOE: You know the lady I was telling you about, the one that wanted me to go to work for somebody else, that was the girl that I was going with at the time then. She went to Stanford University which was one of the first classes that they had girls graduate, you know, allow them to go to Stanford. And so, she thought that was nice.

While in Baker, see that's the time I was drafted and had to go in the service, so that took me out for two years. That was in 1956 to '58, just before the Korean War ended, and I didn't get a chance to go on in the service.

But prior to this we had bought out the store in Madras, and I went to Madras to help open that store when it had its grand opening. And the district manager, I can recall came in, and he said the manager was looking for a car or something and they had to drive to Bend, you know, and they would be gone all afternoon. And here I am, you know, eighteen and a half years old over there in Madras, and wondering, you know, just thinking there would be somebody there all the time. And the assistant was gone someplace and the D.M. walked in and he said, "Well Joe," he says, "we're going to be gone the rest of the afternoon, you can take care of close-up and all that stuff, and we'll see you tomorrow."

BARBARA: Oh, thanks a lot.

DOROTHEA: Goody, goody.

JOE: And so that's very interesting that they would do that, you know. And I never thought anything about it, other than the fact that it just scared the living daylights out of me, you know. But gosh, eighteen years old, and here I am running a store while they are gone.

BARBARA: So where did you serve when you were in the army, was it?

JOE: I spent my service time, we went to Fort Ord in California, where we took, we were put in there and then we spent our basic training time in Colorado at Fort Carson. And of course, the

barracks there were all wooden barracks, and the wind would blow through them and they would wobble back and forth like this when the wind would blow. And we were on the top floor, and many interesting experiences there in the military.

But anyway, I can remember when we went out on bivouac, it was in November, and the temperature was twenty-four and twenty-five below zero, and the wind was blowing, and somebody stole my liner to my jacket, and I didn't have one. And of course, during the daytime it was just hotter than Hades out there, and a lot of the guys had blisters.

And after two weeks of bivouac why then they had competition as to who would be back in camp first, you know, as to which company or whatever. And our cadre came, were just coming out of Germany and they were tough nuts, just tougher than hell. If you couldn't make your pull-ups you didn't eat.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

JOE: And there were those heavy guys that couldn't do it. And it was just an amazing thing. We didn't eat a lot of food, but I sure gained a lot of weight. I weighed as much then as I weigh now. But it was just, we never got off base and we just did that. Anyway, back to the competition as to who would be back in camp first. We left on a forced march at night, and it was --- as I recall I think the temperature was running around forty degrees. And how you would keep warm when you slept at night, you know, you had your down sleeping bags, and you put a candle in your steel helmet to keep your pup tent warm so you wouldn't freeze to death.

DOROTHEA: And that kept it warm?

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Huh.

JOE: Closed it up and sealed it up. And then when we started on the forced march back to camp why it was cold, just colder than you can imagine. And of course, as you were marching you could hear the pots fall, you know. And then in the meantime, we had military maneuvers we were on, pyrotechnics and shooting across various things, and just actual war situations. And by the time we got probably halfway back, why we were still going well, and we went twenty-six miles in four

hours and twenty-three minutes.

DOROTHEA: Oh, you were going well.

BARBARA: Trucking right along.

JOE: And we were going well, and when we got back to the quadrangle they had to have roll call to see how many guys made it. And as we were standing there, you know, they had an instructor that said if you drop your weapon you slept with it. And there was this Filipino behind me and, or a Hawaiian, and we were pretty close and he said, "Joe, grab my weapon." And I grabbed his weapon and he canned out. And you could hear pots falling all over that quadrangle while they were calling roll, the guys were just so tired, and cold, and miserable. And then they took us in and fed us breakfast, those that wanted it. And that was at 2 o'clock in the morning.

DOROTHEA: Let's pause for a moment while we turn this tape over.

JOE: Okay.

SIDE B

DOROTHEA: Okay.

JOE: And then after we got through there we went home for Christmas on two weeks leave, and then they sent us back to Fort Oard. And as they flew us in and out of Fort Carson why we had these DC-8's and they were propeller engine airplanes. When we got to Fort Carson they took us in, in cattle trucks, and they took us out in cattle trucks. Really, you know, that group of people, you know --- then we got to Fort Oard and we took our second eight weeks of basic training.

And so, when they started assigning units as to where you would go, they said well they would call your name out and take you into the room and tell you what you were going to do, you know, based upon your tests and stuff. And of course, I was a Christian Scientist, they said, "Hardwick," and I said, "yeah." And he says, "You got two choices," he says, "you got medic or infantry." And I said, "Great."

DOROTHEA: Great choices.

JOE: I have one choice. So, based upon my religion I had to go with the infantry. So that's where

we spent our time training for the infantry in Fort Oard. And we couldn't walk on the ice plants. And we were in our second eight, and they still had us restricted to camp, not to campus, but to the Fort, for what reason we will never know. But the rest of the guys on post, they were in basic training for nine weeks, or whatever, and they were getting leaves and everything else. Our unit was restricted.

BARBARA: They just didn't want you guys out there roaming around.

JOE: No.

DOROTHEA: No.

JOE: No. The only way you could get out was if you had a special thing in the family, or a death in the family, and that is the only way you got out.

DOROTHEA: Huh.

JOE: Just totally restricted. Finally ---

DOROTHEA: Did you have the chicken pox or something? (Laughter)

JOE: We thought we did. I'll tell you our C.O. and everything, you know, they were just --- here again they were tough, you know, they just really lined us out.

So, we had these various people that were in the group, and I can always remember we would get details and this little guy by the name of Fata, he was an Italian, and the details would take off. And we would watch, and here they would go, and the detail like this, and pretty soon here is Fata, and the detail is going this way, and he is going this way. (Laughter)

BARBARA: Oddball out.

JOE: But that was interesting. And then when we got through with Fort Oard why I was assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington, and that's where I spent the rest of my military time. And we spent it basically in support of the National Guard troops at Yakima Firing Center. We would go over in the summertime and we'd spend time over there on maneuvers with those people. And then we would also complete our maneuvers there.

And then during the wintertime when it got hotsy-totsy in Cairo, Egypt, and over in that area like it is now, you know, same thing was happening there, and we had to be ready to fly at

twenty-four hours notice. And of course, McCord Air Base was right there. We were all equipped with all brand-new equipment. A couple of nights we spent out on the tarmac.

BARBARA: Just waiting to go, huh?

JOE: But nothing ever happened. And we had cadre in the, I went into C Company, and then they needed typists. So, I went into the headquarters company as a clerk typist. And our cadre, I was a special orders clerk, and they had, already one of them cracked up and they sent him home after six months. And the guy before him he found some way to maneuver out of it, and they were taking bets on how long I would last as a special orders clerk. And I said, "Oh, I'll do alright," I said, "don't worry about me."

Boy those guys just raised cane with us all the time. They had us out on the quadrangle and doing all kinds of stuff after duty, and carrying chairs and our typewriters, and just really giving us a bad time. They didn't have enough cadre to keep up with us, because we always went down to the gym where the swimming pool, or the handball courts, and we stayed in good physical shape, they couldn't do it. We played the fourth division basketball team, just our battle group, just together, and we beat them when we played them. We had a pretty good team.

But then after the service I went back to work for Safeway. I didn't lose any time, and they reinstated me in the same store.

BARBARA: So where did you --- did you return back to Baker City then?

JOE: Yeah, yeah.

BARBARA: And how long did you stay there before you were transferred to another store?

JOE: Well, they put me in charge of the produce department. And when I went over there, there was, you know, it's like you get, what I call tacky shoes. In other words, the floor was filthy. You couldn't put your foot down without taking your shoe off to get your foot up. Anyway, I was only there six months and then I was transferred to Bend, where I met my wife, bless her heart.

BARBARA: And was your wife Helen, I can't remember her maiden name, I'm sorry.

JOE: Helen Elster.

BARBARA: Elster, okay.

JOE: At that time. Actually, it was Helen Cullison, because she had been married before.

BARBARA: And Helen was teaching school there in Bend at that time?

JOE: She was teaching at Reed School, which was two blocks away from the Safeway Store when it was there.

BARBARA: And did somebody set you up with a date there?

JOE: Well I went, you know, I was going to church, so everybody of course figured that I was single, and she was looking for a husband. (Laughter) You know how that all works, it's called entrapment. Of course, I was at that time twenty-five years old and I just figured well, you know, it was time to start looking for somebody to settle down with. And in regards to --- one other thing, I'll back up a minute.

While I was in the military, the girl that I was, had, you know, was pretty close to at the time was going to Stanford still. And the company clerk at this one place asked me, he said, "Well I understand you have a girlfriend down in San Francisco, or going to Stanford, and maybe you would like to go down to the Presidio and be an honor guard down there because they have an open position down there." He said, "You give me a hundred bucks and I'll see you get there."

DOROTHEA: Did you have a hundred dollars?

JOE: And I told him no. I said, "I think I'll just ride it out. She is there and going to school, and I'll just let her ride." And so that's how that came about that I, you know ---

BARBARA: Kind of ended there.

JOE: We were still ---

BARBARA: Still friends.

JOE: --- communicating and stuff when I was still in Bend. She would write me and I would write her back quite frequently. Didn't know how that would end up, but she kept asking me to go to California and I wouldn't transfer to California, I didn't like the atmosphere down there. So, it was just one of those things that went by the wayside. And then Helen was in church and I thought, you know, how it goes. And I said, "My gosh you know, that is a good-looking woman." (Laughter)

BARBARA: Maybe I had better ask this lady out, huh?

JOE: Yeah. And I didn't know that she had had a child at that time, which Liz, which is my adopted daughter. And we just, you know, I started going out with her. And of course, I had been there what, six months or something like that, working day and night to get the store straightened out and squared away. Because ---

BARBARA: Did you go in as manager, or assistant manager?

JOE: I went in as an assistant. The manager, the assistant manager in Baker and I transferred at the same time. His name was Cal Vernon and he went to Madras, and I went to Bend all in the same week. Because we had enough depth at the store there, that they wouldn't miss either one of us, so to speak. (Laughter) Because like I say those five guys that I named earlier, we were all good at what we did, and we knew how to do it. And there was that much confidence in us, and so anyway ---

DOROTHEA: And so how many years were you in the store in Bend before you came to Burns, or where did you go from Bend?

JOE: I was there for four years, exactly.

DOROTHEA: Four years.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Then did you transfer to Burns?

JOE: And then I was --- had a half a day off. Let's see I met Helen, and we got married in Bend. And as it worked out I think we had a weekend honeymoon. I think we left Friday night. We had to leave Friday to get into the courthouse in Washington so we could pick up our marriage license. Then I had some friends I had met when I was in the service, and they stood up for us at our wedding in Olympia. And we spent our honeymoon up in Hood Canal and driving around Washington up there, and then came back and went to work on Tuesday.

BARBARA: That was a quick one. So how long did you know Helen before you got married? When did you get married?

JOE: I think we went together, it wasn't, gosh I met her in May and we got married that fall I believe.

BARBARA: Six months maybe?

JOE: Yeah, something like that.

BARBARA: And so, you got married ---

JOE: Yeah, bless her heart she ---

BARBARA: What year was it that you got married?

JOE: I don't know.

BARBARA: Oh, you're supposed to know these things Joe. (Laughter)

JOE: You know when you're "twitter patted", and you know, you're working hard and trying to ---

DOROTHEA: The date doesn't mean anything.

JOE: --- the date doesn't account for anything. I got married yesterday, you know!! (Laughter)

But, bless her heart; I think I had known her about probably five or six months when we got married.

BARBARA: So, she continued to teach then the next three and a half years or whatever while you were in Bend, is that right?

JOE: No, no, she substituted.

BARBARA: She didn't. She just substituted.

JOE: Yeah. And I always give her heck, you know, for going up to the school and teaching, staying late at night when it was dark and she was in the school all by herself, you know.

BARBARA: You didn't think that was too safe, huh? You don't know?

JOE: Well, there were things going on in Bend that, you know, people ending up under bridges, and finding body parts in the river.

BARBARA: The dark side.

JOE: Yeah. It always bothered me, you know.

DOROTHEA: That was about the time when the park was having all those strange accidents.

JOE: Yeah, yeah, you remember that.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

JOE: Yeah, terrible, scary. And I remember one instance where a young girl was at home and she

saw this face at the window. And the lights went out, and the guy was outside and he came in the house, and went all through the house. And the only way she got out of it was she, they had some old rugs that were rolled up in the closet and she crawled inside one of those rolled rugs.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, yeah scary.

JOE: But anyway, that's where I met her. And then we got married, and I told her, you know, she told me what had happened with her husband. He was in the service in Germany and he started playing around, and so she decided it was best to divorce. So, I came along about the right time.

BARBARA: How old was Liz at that time?

JOE: Liz was about; well she was born in '57, so that, you know, was just while I was in the service, and I got out in '58, got married in ---

BARBARA: She was a couple years old?

JOE: Pardon?

BARBARA: So, she was a couple years old?

JOE: Two years old, yeah, eighteen months, something like that.

DOROTHEA: You must have got married in about '59?

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: Something like that.

JOE: Yeah, just right after we got over --- But anyway we lived in a little apartment, I think it was probably about as big as this room.

BARBARA: Like we all start out in.

JOE: Yeah. You know you don't have anything. I had four hundred dollars in the bank, and I think Helen had a little bit of reserve, and she was of course staying with her parents there in Bend.

While there, why there was a manager there that was messing around with the funds. He would always count the safe when the district manager would come in to audit. And so, I went over to my manager in Baker and I told him, I said, "There is some stuff going on back there, you better tell Pete about, and get him to straighten it out. Because it is not healthy, you know." Company funds were being handled the wrong way. And so anyway he lost his job.

And at that time Dolph Ellingsen who I ran that store from the time he was terminated in, right after the Fourth of July until October of that year until they found a manager to go into Bend. And Dolph Ellingsen was the manager that was selected at that time, so he came over there.

And I was never late for work; I was always an hour early or so. And then I decided one time I would go hunting, and I went up in Swampy Lakes. And I hunt with a bow and arrow and so we, I got up there by myself, and got turned around chasing coyotes and deer and got off on the wrong trail. I knew where I was, but yet I didn't know how far I was away from the car, and consequently I ended up walking a little further than I really should have, and I was late getting back. And Helen was worried, and Dolph was worried, and they were ready to call the rescue squadron out to come and find me.

BARBARA: Just wasn't like you.

JOE: And it wasn't like me to do that, so --- but anyway I got home an hour late, so to speak. And everybody was shook, and I was shook too, because I knew I was late and I didn't want to do that. But that's the way it went.

BARBARA: Okay so now ---

JOE: And we're in Bend.

BARBARA: After you worked there for four years you came to Burns as the manager?

JOE: As the manager.

BARBARA: As the manager. So, this was a big promotion for you to get, to be a manager.

JOE: Well to me it was, because I was only twenty-nine years old. That's not very old to be a manager of a store.

BARBARA: Not to be in charge, right.

JOE: And I just, it was interesting times. I was supposed to take my half-day off, and I was in the barbershop and here come the manager running down the street. And I thought, oh my God, what did I do now. You know, what's going on, what's he doing down here? And he said, "Joe," he says, "Mr. Neil called and he said you've got three hours to be in Burns."

BARBARA: Whoa.

JOE: I said, "Three hours?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Okay, what other miracle do you want done right now?"

BARBARA: Why the hurry, why three hours?

JOE: I have no idea.

DOROTHEA: Well, was Tommy still working here at that time?

JOE: Yeah, yeah.

DOROTHEA: He hadn't retired yet?

JOE: Well that was the afternoon that they came in and told him that he was going to retire.

DOROTHEA: He was retiring, huh?

JOE: Yeah, whether he wanted to or not. And so, he said, "Yeah Mr. McRae, and the retail operation manager, and Mr. Neil were in Burns, and that I had to be there before they left." And so, I took off.

And I got out of the barber chair, I couldn't make up my mind whether I had time to get a haircut or not, because I had just sat down. So, I said, "Well go ahead and finish the haircut and then I'll go." I told Dolph to call Helen and tell her to pack my bag and get me ready to go. And so that's where I went. I threw it in the car and away I went. Came across the desert ---

BARBARA: Wondering what was going to happen, huh?

JOE: Got to Burns, and I think I was about just this side of Hampton when I saw the division manager, and the retail O.P. drive by, and I figured well that's two of them gone, and Pete is there so I'll have to talk to him when I get there. So, I got into Burns that afternoon, about three in the afternoon. We sat there and visited with Tommy, and of course he was going to spend five days at the store to indoctrinate me.

BARBARA: Tommy who?

JOE: Tommy Wentz.

DOROTHEA: Wentz.

BARBARA: Wentz, okay.

JOE: And I think Tommy was sixty-three years old at that time, not quite early enough to retire.

DOROTHEA: Is that all?

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: What is the procedure in Safeway for going up the ladder so to speak? Do you put in for assistant manager job, or manager? Or do they just say that you are ---

JOE: It's changed a lot. In other words, they just, you know, if they felt that you were capable they would send you.

BARBARA: They didn't ask you or discuss things?

JOE: They would call you up and ask you, you know. They were just, you know; basically, assume that you were going to take that position. But now it's different, they don't do that anymore. You have a choice of if you want to go, or if you don't want to go. So, and of course when I came to Burns it was the understanding that Burns was not the place you wanted to be, because it is so far distant from anywhere, and nobody would want to live here.

DOROTHEA: And how did you find the people? They always tell me that the people in Burns are hard to get to know. Is this true, or are they more friendly than ---

JOE: No way, no.

DOROTHEA: Well strangers ---

JOE: Bend was the hardest place to get to know people.

DOROTHEA: Was it?

JOE: Really it was, it was difficult. You had to get out, and you had to participate in activities, and you had to deal with the people, you know. And that's where I learned that, you know, your business is not based upon being, working within four walls. You got to get out and meet the public, and play with them, and do things like that. Like bowling leagues, and civic activities, Jaycees, things like that that you have to get out and you have to associate with those people.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

JOE: And that way, that's how you build your business. And when I came to Burns we didn't have that relationship in town. Tommy of course was active at one time, but then he kind of backed out. There were certain things that were going on that weren't conducive to good management.

So, I welcomed coming to Burns. I was just sitting in the barber chair and I said, "Well you got to make one step at a time, and you won't be there forever." And so, we came to Burns. I told Helen we would be here five years.

BARBARA: And you lied!

JOE: That's the goal I set, you know, for myself. And then of course I didn't talk about it too much. I'm not one to say, you know, a lot about what I'm doing, or anything like that. And then I can remember when ---

BARBARA: Where was the store located when you came to Burns?

JOE: The store was located where Dan's Domestics is on the corner there.

DOROTHEA: Where the Home Drug used to be.

JOE: And Kemp has his law offices in the back. And the floors were wooden, and if you took a load of freight out on the floor the dolly would rock, and the floor would rock, and the freezer cases would kind of tilt a little bit on the floor. And we had a service meat case; Jack Garland was the meat cutter. And Roy Hollingsworth was here in the meat department. There was myself, and I forget who was the assistant manager. Glen Chandler who retired here, he was, worked with me in Baker. And he was kind of a, I guess what you want to call horny old toad. When I was in Baker why the checkers up front would always, every once in awhile you had a squeal or something, and damn you Glen! (Laughter)

BARBARA: A little frisky, huh?

JOE: Yeah, yeah, frisky old guy. So anyway, I knew him. What did we have, two check stands, three check stands. One, two, three, three I think. Two ---

DOROTHEA: Two.

JOE: Two check stands, and I think there was a full contingent of --- I think we had ten employees.

BARBARA: Ten employees.

DOROTHEA: That was one of my questions, as how many employees did the store have when you first came there.

JOE: Yeah, in ---

DOROTHEA: I know one of them was Mrs. Carlson, and Adelaide Steven ---

JOE: No, she wasn't.

DOROTHEA: She wasn't there yet?

JOE: No, she just retired, or ---

DOROTHEA: Oh, she had just retired.

JOE: Yeah. And Adeline Stephenson.

DOROTHEA: No not Stephenson, what was her name?

JOE: Adeline Randt.

DOROTHEA: Randt, Randt, right.

JOE: And gosh, I can't remember her name.

BARBARA: This was 1963 when you came to Burns?

JOE: 1963, October 10th. And the store had just gone through hunting season; they did \$9,000 worth of business in one week.

BARBARA: Oh gosh.

JOE: And times have really changed, I'll tell you.

DOROTHEA: So, have prices.

JOE: Interesting. Yeah, you bet.

DOROTHEA: When you first came to the store I think I, we had just moved to Silvie's. And I used to come down to the store once a week and do my weekly groceries for \$150.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: It would take me, not weekly, I mean monthly groceries.

JOE: Monthly, yeah.

DOROTHEA: \$150, and it would carry us through for a whole month, year, or a month --- I'm getting really --- but it would get us through for a whole month. Now it's about that a week.

JOE: Yeah. Or a day, or whatever.

DOROTHEA: Right, however you want to spend it.

JOE: But Adeline Randt and gosh, I can't think of her name.

DOROTHEA: Was Colleen working there at that time, at Safeway?

JOE: Colleen who?

DOROTHEA: Clemens.

BARBARA: Colleen Clemens.

JOE: No, I hired her when I --- after I had been here. Anyway, I'll think of her name pretty soon and I'll come back to it.

But anyway, I can remember Walt McEwen; this was a major decision that I had to do one time. There was Polly, their house got, they lived out in the country out here, red headed crusty lady as I recall. Anyway, Polly came in to me, and I was standing back by the meat department, and she come in and she --- I, she was really ---

DOROTHEA: She was sizing you up.

JOE: Really sizing me up. But she looked up and down me like this, and she said, "Huh," you know, she says, "you have got a big pair of shoes to fill. And right now, I don't think you can do it."

(Laughter)

BARBARA: Welcome to Burns.

JOE: Yeah. Bless her heart, I tell you, she was --- I thought man, what is coming off, you know. Then the next, wasn't very long and then Walt McEwen came in and he said, "Joe," he says, "we bought a fifty-pound bag of flour and it was full of bugs." And of course, at that time I thought geeze, that's a lot of money, you know, what do I do? And I said, "Well, tell you what Walt," I says, "just to assure you that, you know, the flour is alright," I said, "you go ahead and burn that stuff up you got at home, clean out your bins." And I said, "I'll order some new product in, and then I'll give you the bag of flour. But I can't help you out on anything else, you know." So that's how Walt McEwen and I got acquainted. That's how you make business in Burns, Oregon, you know. You have to sometimes think about what you're doing and how it's going to happen.

BARBARA: Can't always be just the straight rules, you have to bend once in awhile to take care of your customer.

JOE: How you take care of your people. You can't, you can't go with the flow, you know, you got

to go with the flow. You bite the bullet and get on down the road. That's the way it works.

I was there for, in the store here locally for two years and they decided, at the time I took it over we did \$10,000, and that was just after hunting season. And after two years of being in the store, and I kept hearing the merchandiser would come in the store and they'd say well you're selling more groceries per square foot than any store in the division. Of course, the problem was it was probably the smallest store in the division because there was only 5,000 square feet in the store itself. (Laughter)

You know they would try and build me up. And of course, when I came here I knew I had a, you know, before I sized up the town, gosh everywhere I looked there was a Tiller's Furniture, there is, you know, on the ---

DOROTHEA: Tiller's Grocery.

JOE: Tiller's Grocery Store, there is Tillers in the courthouse

DOROTHEA: Tiller's Tire Store.

JOE: Everywhere I looked there were Tillers, you know, and here I am, you know. And of course, Safeway was a Skaggs Store in Burns, Oregon, one of the oldest stores as far as Safeway was concerned, and we still are. And I think in 1928 they were Skaggs, and I think at that time Pluribus Tiller was the manager of the store.

And so here I am twenty-nine years old and not even wet behind the ears yet, and I was one of the youngest store managers put out by the company. And here I am trying to figure out well how in the world, you know, are you going to compete in this town, you know. And after eighteen months, or two years I guess, we were doing \$18,000 a week, which, you know, almost doubled the business. I guess they put me over here to find out if they could make any more money. And that was when the grocery rows in the store were one item per row, one can, you know. You had one row of cans, and one row of cereal. There wasn't enough room in there to even whip a cat in.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, uh huh.

JOE: And then of course the Radar Base on the hill was going full bore and I had to analyze that

out too, because a lot of people locally were friends at the cadre and the people up on the hill. And they would be going out of town to Mountain Home Air Base over there, and they would be buying groceries and stuff and bringing it back. But the Tiller family, I'll tell you that was tough.

DOROTHEA: At the same time, I think they had Tiller's Furniture, Tiller's Market, they were in the courthouse. They had Tiller's Dairy Queen, or Drive In.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: A Tiller's Tire Shop.

JOE: The whole community was Tillers.

DOROTHEA: What else was it?

JOE: So, you know, I just ---

DOROTHEA: Yeah, it was.

BARBARA: How did you go about winning them away from the other store then into Safeway?

DOROTHEA: Didn't.

JOE: It was tough, I'll tell you, it was tough. It wasn't as tough then as it got later, as to the company's expectations. But anyway ---

DOROTHEA: And Tiller kept building bigger, and Safeway ---

JOE: Here we are, and then Tiller moved down on Egan and Monroe and built the store down there. Right on that corner, and he was

--- Eben Ray was across the street in that store over there ---

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

JOE: --- from me. And Corbett's of course was right across the corner. But it was, I became involved with every activity I could become involved with. I was, I joined the Chamber of Commerce, the Elks Club, Jaycees, every civic organization I could come up with, the Rotary Club, and got involved with the community. And I was also on school boards, out in the public all the time. And attended, you know, major funerals, anything to become acquainted in the community. Worked on projects, things like that. Then they decided that they would build the new store. And then we had to fight about that because some of the local fathers didn't want Safeway to build

bigger, and also to close the street off. Like Edward Hines, they didn't feel that Edward Hines had any right coming in, because they had the cattle industry and stuff like that. So, they built their own city. Basically, the same thing was here but, you know, it's pretty tough.

And then in Jaycees I think that was basically the best thing I could do, because a lot of the younger people then, Gene Timms and Cork Corbett, all those people I got associated with. We had some good parties, some good things, you know, to do. But I really wasn't home very much. I think I was out of the house every night but Friday night. And Saturday night I had assistants that couldn't count money, so I had to go back down to the store and count money. And I got to working in church and teaching Sunday school, on the board of directors there, and school boards at night.

BARBARA: So, your name and face became familiar with the people in town, and they knew that you were here working for them, not just the store, but you were interested in the community and what happened to it too. So maybe it made the store a little more pleasing for them to come into then.

JOE: Right. Well, I became known, and I'm not a drinker, you know, and I thought geeze and besides that I said, the consumption of alcohol is number one in the state per capita, and I don't drink! So, I wasn't at the bars, you know, doing anything there.

But I tried to --- and the ranching community, they were real good to me. I think we had most of the ranching business. Although, and then Tiller was in the ranching business too, weren't they?

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, uh huh.

JOE: In fact, Bob Smith's foreman I think was Earl.

DOROTHEA: Earl.

JOE: So, all the cards were stacked against me. And then we built the new store where it is located now. Half the size it was and ---

BARBARA: What year was this, do you recall?

JOE: 19 ---

DOROTHEA: You said '66.

JOE: '66, that's about right. '66 or '67 we opened it. Anyway, we had to fight the city fathers about that one because they didn't want the street closed off. Had to get out and go to council meetings and talk about it and see what I could do to help it out.

Anyway we sat there in the new store, 23,000 square feet, and the volume was, you know our highest volume in the old store was \$18,000, and we were sitting around \$21,000 to \$23,000 sales a week. And every month or six weeks or whatever the division manager would be flying in to find out what was going on, or they would be at a meeting, and my D.M. would be driving over and they would pop in either by plane or whatever, and kind of nervous time, you know, where the volume wasn't what it should be.

And then Hank Cavallo, who I had mentioned earlier, had just been put into a position in the division office where he was in charge of going around and checking out, and helping stores where they needed help. And he came over, and instead of staying at the store, why we were pretty close, so he says, "Come on Joe, let's go fishing." (Laughter) And we went fishing. We talked about it awhile and he said, "Well," he says, "I don't think you've got a problem," but he says, "people up higher are concerned." And I said, "That's fine." I said, "I'm not worried about it. How does Pete feel about it?" He said, "Well, Pete is of the same mind I am," he says, "you're just not one of those guys that come in and are going to turn things around overnight and shake the balls and rattle them and all that stuff." He says, "You are very solid, you don't get nervous." And so ---

DOROTHEA: About that time wasn't it when we were starting to lose some of the population because of the Air Force was beginning to phase out.

JOE: Close it down.

DOROTHEA: Close it down.

JOE: Yeah.

DOROTHEA: So, our population was diminishing, and I think that's probably a lot of the problem where ---

JOE: Yeah. Well then too a lot of the problem was that, you know, those people really weren't

spending all their money in Burns, Oregon.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh, uh huh, right.

JOE: But I felt that, you know, we were trying to give the best service that we could, and be in the community, and taking part in the community, and becoming known as people to be reckoned with. And also one of my goals that I set out when I first came here was that, you know, everybody said that Safeway is, you know, Burns is not the place to go if you want to work for Safeway. And nobody would transfer in.

DOROTHEA: Do you still have that problem?

JOE: No.

DOROTHEA: They don't.

JOE: No. And that was one of my major goals was to get people to come to Burns and have them accepted on the outside areas, of being capable of handling anything that came along, and I accomplished that. In other words, people would accept people from Burns hands down, without even questioning it, you know, whether they were good or not, because I had trained them pretty well.

And they, you know, as assistants I have also trained a lot of people that are out working in the division in other stores. In fact, Renee Madarieta is one of the earlier women managers in the division, and she came from our store here.

DOROTHEA: And where is she at now?

JOE: She is in Portland, and I don't know which store she is at. But she is doing very well down there, making lots of money for Safeway. But ---

BARBARA: How many assistant managers have you trained over the years, would you guess?

JOE: Here in this store?

BARBARA: Uh huh.

JOE: Well, I haven't got too many out there right now that stayed with the company, they have went other places.

BARBARA: I see.

JOE: Ron Yee was one of them, and he went to the restaurant business with his brother.

DOROTHEA: And he is in Eugene? Where is he at?

JOE: He was an assistant in Newport. But he now is in Caldwell, Idaho with his brother in the restaurant business.

DOROTHEA: Oh, he is? I thought he was in Eugene.

JOE: Yeah. And a lot of people that --- one of them is, and I can't remember his name. See when you get old you forget names. This has been many years ago.

BARBARA: We all have that problem.

JOE: But he went to ... and he became a buyer in ...

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BARBARA: So, when, you say you built the new store and opened in '66 or thereabouts.

JOE: Right.

BARBARA: And how many times since then have you remodeled and expanded?

JOE: Well, we remodeled four more times since that time. First major expansion came when we doubled the size of the building. And unbeknownst to me there was a gentleman, who is on the board of directors, who had a ranch out here at Post, and he was, he had a lot of ranches around. He had one in Argentina and one in Australia, and he was on the board of directors for Safeway. And whether he took care of me, or I was taking care of him, I don't know. But every time it came time to remodel and expand, I always got expanded and other stores would sit there and wonder why.

BARBARA: Why not me, huh?

JOE: I was being blessed, and they weren't. Whether it is that, or whether it's my, you know, I am a strong believer in God and his direction. And I use that, because very much it's the strength that builds a person inside and builds character. Whereas otherwise you certainly don't have a lot of material background or individuals that will help you. You just have to wait patiently and God will provide what you need, even though you may not think so. And that's the way I have ran my business. And that's where I feel a lot of my strength and a lot of direction has come over the years

through my belief in him, that I've been blessed.

And every time we turn around, Helen and I, and we think we had a financial problem we always received probably twice what was coming down the road. Like I say, when I first started, when I met Helen, and we were coming through when I was an assistant --- a lot of people probably don't believe this but our treat for the week was to go have coffee and a donut at the donut shop in Bend and go to the Laundromat.

BARBARA: Yeah. I can remember going, when E.B. and I were in college, and once a week when we would have to go do our laundry we went out and had a hamburger, and boy that was our treat for the week. The night we went out to do the laundry and we had a hamburger out, boy that was something else.

JOE: And that was the excitement for the week.

BARBARA: That's about it.

JOE: And everything else, you know, we worked as hard as we could at it. And then Helen got involved with substitute teaching, and I think she will be a teacher all her life. In fact, she even tried to teach me a few things.

BARBARA: Well she really enjoys it, and the kids benefit from her expertise.

JOE: But finally, she decided after five years, after fifteen years, that she probably wasn't going to leave Burns. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: So how many children do you have?

JOE: We have three.

DOROTHEA: And were they born in Burns?

JOE: David was born in Bend. My mother-in-law really didn't understand, you know, I told her that I had some Indian blood in me. And she went up there and she looked at her grandson, and she said, "Helen, is that your baby?" And she says, "Yeah, that's him." And I have some Indian blood in me, and he was just as red as an Indian. (Laughter) Oh gosh.

DOROTHEA: It comes out once in awhile, doesn't it?

JOE: Yeah, it shows up, you know, it's the nigger in the woodpile.

DOROTHEA: My youngest daughter is that way.

BARBARA: And then Lori was born here in Burns?

JOE: And Lori was born in Burns. Bless her heart, she was a mistake, but that's the way it is.

BARBARA: Children are never mistakes.

DOROTHEA: Those are the most fun anyway.

JOE: Yeah. And we at least, you know, we was just, really were blessed with her. She is a joy to us. But ---

BARBARA: Lori works in politics in Salem now, is that right?

JOE: Yeah. She is, I don't know what the title is, Republican Party, anyway she takes care of the funds and stuff for the campaigns, and directs people when they are having problems with campaigns. She travels all over the state now. She helped Senator Timms with his campaign, and she started out --- well let's back up as far as the children are concerned.

Liz went to school at the University of Oregon in architecture. And having graduated from Burns High School she was --- Henry Slater wanted to move her up a grade, which to Helen and I figured was a mistake. But anyway, we went along with the program, and she really wasn't mature enough when she went to college. And she was seventeen years old when she went into the school of architecture, and anyone else who was in the school of architecture was twenty-six or twenty-eight years old. And she was one of the girls in the school of architecture. Whether it was the fact that she was a female or not I don't know, but other people were waiting to get into the school, and yet she was accepted, which is a credit to the schooling in Burns. And a lot of people criticize it, but I know that three members of my family never had a problem.

DOROTHEA: Well now in this school, you were also on the board of directors or something of the school board and helping with the unification of the districts. Can you tell us something about that?

JOE: Well, see I was on the Hines board at first. And during that period of time I also was working at the Hines City Council on their finance committee. But anyway, I was on the Hines School Board first with Jim Red, and that's where I first basically was introduced to school boards.

And then while on that, several of us in the community felt it was a good idea that we

should join the school districts, unify the districts. And nobody seemed to want to chair it, so I was selected as chairman of the unified school districts. And I would coordinate, because to me it was ridiculous to have one school board paying one salary, and another one another salary, and days were not coordinated off. And families were, you know, going here and going there, and it just wasn't a good program as far as I was concerned in this area.

So, in that interim period there where we were trying to come together I was chairman of the unified districts in which I coordinated the, or tried to coordinate the programs from the various, the three districts, the Burns District, Hines District, and the High School District and tried to work together with them so we would stay as close as possible.

And also, at that time we hired Red Bailey as the superintendent of the unified districts, which was the only way I knew how to go, because without somebody there to work on it and help establish it, why that's --- when he came to Burns. And he also was a coach in Baker High School when I was --- knew him.

DOROTHEA: So, you knew him previously.

BARBARA: Knew him.

JOE: Knew him. But I really didn't know that I had known him, but we got acquainted, and got to talking about it. And he says, "Yeah, I remember you." So, it was very interesting.

But I felt that at that time we needed to do something to get things together so we would have a curriculum and everything together. And of course, I had a neighbor right over here that was opposed to unification. Eben Ray was opposed to unification, and we couldn't guarantee the country schools that their little schools wouldn't be done away with under the unification program, and that we would, you know, be messing with the younger kids, kindergarten and so on and so forth. Like Double O and Suntex, and those that were in our district at that time, we couldn't guarantee them from one year to the next whether they would be there.

And another thing, couldn't guarantee that it would save any money. And I just never got any help from the state saying that you would save money through a unified district. They were walking the middle of the fence.

DOROTHEA: So how many years did it take to become one district?

JOE: We tried it twice before it went. And then when ---

DOROTHEA: And this is, tried it twice, is a school board elections, or I mean school elections?

JOE: Yeah, yeah. And we lost by four votes one time, and six votes the other time.

BARBARA: It has been just several years ago then that it finally became a unified district.

JOE: Well when, yeah, they unified under Rich Adair.

BARBARA: Of course, this is now become a state thing too, where they have the small communities unified.

JOE: I just couldn't see the waste of the manpower on school boards when we needed more of those people in the community to do other things. Just, it takes so much time.

BARBARA: So, this was an ongoing thing for a number of years before it finally became a reality then?

JOE: Yeah. And it was just, you know, it was just hard for me to take. But that was, where some of the defeats it was just narrow margins, but it just didn't fly. We weren't ready for it I guess.

BARBARA: Well before we go into some of the other organizations that, and contributions you've made, we didn't say anything about David, what he is doing. He lives in Seattle now.

JOE: Oh, David?

BARBARA: We don't want to leave David out here, he might get mad at us. He is in Seattle and married now, is that right?

JOE: Yeah. He married a girl from Mercer Island. He went to college at Lewis and Clark, and kids, you know, go to college why then they start sewing a little wilder oats than they normally do, and I guess he was starting to drink pretty heavily. And this little sweetheart, she is not as beautiful as she looks, but I'll tell you she just took him under her arm and straightened him out.

BARBARA: Straightened him out.

JOE: Bless her heart. Best thing that ever happened to him.

BARBARA: And what is David doing now?

JOE: She just loves him. And he is working for a computer, what is it called, a software company

in Seattle. And he is taking more classes to keep up with the programming and things like that. And they have offices back in Massachusetts and down in California. And so that is what he is planned to do. And he plans to eventually go into the business by himself. He is right now not too happy with the people he is working for. But ---

BARBARA: But during recession times, it's not too good an idea to branch out just yet.

JOE: He is just going to hang in there.

BARBARA: For a little while longer.

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: And Liz is back in New York, is that right?

JOE: And Liz is in New York.

BARBARA: She has her own company now, at this time?

JOE: No, she is ---

BARBARA: She is working for someone again?

JOE: She is working on her own. She is a freelance architect. She is taking her AIA, which is a test, and if they pass it, she has taken it once; she has taken it the second time. It takes them about a year to go back through the tests, and then they let them know if they made it or not. And, so that she can become her own architect. But she free lances, and she gets the money she wants. Like if she goes to a firm they will, she will tell them, and she is well known that, you know, so they need something done, and done right now, that she is the one to go see, and she will do it.

BARBARA: Well, that's great.

JOE: And her husband (Petar Jevremov) is a metal sculpture, and he has fifteen working for him. And he is from Yugoslavia, and his parents are still in Yugoslavia. And with the conditions over there, they are not in any danger, or won't be. He is quite a nice gentleman. He is good for her, and I think it's one of those situations that it's working out very well. But she has worked on various projects, like for the Rolling Stones she built their office place. And she has worked in the Rockefeller Center on several projects, and doing very well.

BARBARA: Well let's hop back again here now, and you were president of the Chamber of

Commerce at one time. Served on the Chamber Board, and during that time, was it during your term that you brought the Fiddlers in, or started the Steens Mountain Days, and the Waterfowl Festival? Tell us about some of those things that you were involved with.

JOE: These things, when I joined the Rotary Club I was in Burns for six months, and no service clubs came to talk to me or anything like that. And finally, Dwight Hinshaw from down at the newspaper he, you know, we would meet and talk ads and stuff like that. He says, "Would you be interested in joining the Rotary Club?" And I said, "Well, you know, Dwight I'm up to my neck with every other service club, and whatever else is going on in town," and I said, "how much time is it going to take?" And he said, "It won't take any time, you've got to eat anyway, so ---"

BARBARA: Famous last words.

JOE: Luncheon is, we'll go to lunch together. And so, I'd been, you know, I went with Dwight.

And of course, my, Helen's step dad was a founder of the Rotary Club in Bend, so I just made up my mind I was going to go with the Rotary Club as a service club because of the family affiliation. And they were low on membership at the time.

And of course, all the mill representatives were going to the Rotary Club, and the educational people were going to the Kiwanis Club or the Lions Club. And I always have been of the philosophy that, you know, you need to spread the wealth around. You don't want them all in one group.

Whereas all the educators, most of them, except for Brian Metke, bless his heart, belonged to the Lions Club. And they just kind of would select them when they all came in. That's the way it worked, and I just felt that three clubs are better than two. (Laughter) And you need all three of them to work within the community and do these service things.

And the Chamber of Commerce, of course I was on the Board with Chamber for several years. And after a Jaycee experience most people, that's disappointing to me that we don't have a Jaycee Club in town. Because your younger people that don't go to college have the opportunity to work in this civic area. Otherwise they don't have a so-called vehicle.

DOROTHEA: Well what do you feel happened to the Jaycees? Did they just finally get to a point

where ---

JOE: It's just like everything else. Everybody is apathetic, you know, they just don't realize what they can do. They are interested in their own little world, you know. They don't want to go vote, they don't want to do anything other than just work at the job they are doing. They don't want to broaden their experience. It's just like a horse with blinders; they can't see anything out one side or the other, ostrich with his head in the ground.

DOROTHEA: Yeah.

JOE: And they can't see the end of the tunnel.

DOROTHEA: Well are they trying to get that started again? I heard some younger boys talking, or guys talking about, you have to be what, younger than thirty-six?

JOE: Thirty-five.

DOROTHEA: Thirty-five.

JOE: Thirty-sixth birthday you become an exhausted rooster, so to speak.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, and I heard somebody talking about they were trying to get that started again.

JOE: Jim Arntz has been working on it very hard, and very diligently. And it just doesn't want to stick, unfortunately. Because it would take these twenty-one and twenty-two year old kids off the streets.

DOROTHEA: And make them do something for the community.

JOE: And make them do something for the community. And that's where you learn a lot. That's how Bob Smith, Gene Timms, you know, you learn about politics in that organization.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, yeah.

JOE: You learn about politics, and you learn how to handle people, how to deal with people, and how to speak, get in front of people and think on your feet, and use both ---

DOROTHEA: Well, how did you come about getting the fiddlers started in here?

JOE: Okay, during my term as president of the Chamber of Commerce, Edward Hines closed down.

BARBARA: Oh.

JOE: So, we had two years of negative business, people moving out. And at that time, they had over nine hundred employees out at Edward Hines alone. And when they revamped --- let's back up a little bit. When they, when Hines revamped the mill, they cut their work force almost in half by automation, so you're looking at four hundred and fifty people. Plus, they had the loggers that they were, had hired, and no gypos. They had gypos, but Edward Hines also had a logging force. So, they still had around six hundred people working for them after they remodeled the mill and put in all the electronics and stuff. And then the board of directors decided to close it down.

So that left Burns without an economy, and I was president of the Chamber of Commerce, and all this all started coming together at that time. So, everybody was saying, "Well what are we going to do?" And I said, "Well, the Chamber of Commerce doesn't have any money, nobody else has it. So, the only thing we can do is, if we got a few bucks, if we can, we can advertise and promote tourism, you know."

And Ruel Teague, of course he is a businessman and he knows what is going on, and he had the fiddlers organized at that time, and he had the idea we could probably take the Weiser National Fiddler's Contest from them. And of course, that didn't materialize, but by the same token it did have potential for bringing people to town, which wasn't quite as successful as we thought it was going to be. But by the same token it was an activity that did bring some people. So, we started the Fiddler's Contest, which the Chamber decided that we would go with it and support it. Because there were hotel/motel tax funds available, which would be, supposed to be utilized for Chamber activity. I think forty percent of that was to go. But anyway, this is where we got the Fiddler's Contest started.

And also, this is where, during that period of time, the Diamond Community Club was looking for another means of supporting their people and bringing them together out there. And they used to put on plays and stuff in the area. And then they, that went by the wayside and they were looking for some other activity.

So, we were aware of the fact that the BLM would always have a big blast down there, you know, when the --- they had the hot springs and everything down there, and the BLM would go

down there and have their big blast before the end of the year.

BARBARA: The summer people left.

JOE: Before the summer people left, the younger generation. So, they wanted to do something down there. And then I said, "Well we have no money, but we'll advertise, you know, and promote the thing if you guys want to put forth the effort."

And the same thing was true of the Fiddler's Contest, that we would support the Fiddler's Contest through advertising and stuff like that, and whatever financing we could get from the City of Burns, and the City of Hines for tourist promotion.

DOROTHEA: Now is that how you got started also with John Scharff's --- it isn't called Waterfowl Festival anymore?

JOE: Well, the John Scharff Migratory Bird Festival came in just a little bit ahead of that. Because John Scharff had been here for twenty-five years and tried to ask Chamber if they would do it. And of course, I invited John to the Rotary Club, because no other club wanted to undertake the project. And I said, "You need a vehicle John, and we'll do it for you." And we started out with the first Waterfowl Festival, and I think this is the 13th annual one. Somebody said the eleventh the other day. But anyway, John and I put it together, and the first one we had was out at the Poison Creek Grange Hall. And I can remember when we did put it on, the weather was terrible, it wasn't like it is now. And water was up to the door of the Grange Hall, and we didn't know whether we'd have any place for anybody to park. We were serving breakfast outside and the temperature was I think eighteen degrees, and the snow was snowing, and we were serving hot cakes and eggs and I think by the time the hot cakes and the eggs got on the plate why they were cold.

BARBARA: They were cold, huh?

JOE: I can remember John Scharff asking for his eggs cooked. And if you've ever seen anybody eat eggs like John Scharff does, well you just as well have the hen lay them, and crack them, and put them on a piece of toast.

BARBARA: Oh dear.

JOE: But that's the way he likes his eggs. But anyway, that's where we got that started.

BARBARA: So that has really blossomed into a full-scale project now, and lots of people come in.

JOE: Right, the whole community. And back to the Diamond Community Club why they decided, you know, we got to talking to those people, and they said well let's have a jamboree, you know, dance down at Frenchglen as an offshoot from the BLM activity.

BARBARA: Have this big barbecue now.

JOE: Sagebrush roping, and buggy rides, and ---

DOROTHEA: Isn't that about the Fourth of July or something now?

BARBARA: In August, isn't it?

JOE: That's the first week in August.

DOROTHEA: Oh, is August?

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: And then they have the --- how many years have they had the Rim Run connected with that?

JOE: Same time.

BARBARA: They both started at the same time?

JOE: I think the Rim Run came in about a year after the deal.

BARBARA: After.

JOE: But we got that idea from the fact that Harlan Yriarte has that summer camp up there for runners, because of the high altitude. And that helped bring that all together where we had the 10K run up on top of the hill, and we had the jamboree down at Frenchglen and the barbecue. And the Frenchglen Community Club put that barbecue on down there. We also were going to have a pony express run between Crane and --- (telephone rings).

BARBARA: That's your phone again. (Pause)

JOE: I just want to get through this French ---

BARBARA: Okay, Frenchglen.

DOROTHEA: Frenchglen, yeah.

JOE: Okay. Anyway, we got involved with that, and we were talking about having a pony express

run between the wild horses and the domestic horses. And kind of like a pony express, you know, where we'd stamp letters from one place to the other.

BARBARA: Oh, yeah.

JOE: And see if a little competition between the wild horses that were put out and brought back, you know, into domestic horses, and see which ones would win. (Laughter)

DOROTHEA: You haven't got that accomplished yet.

JOE: Well, we had a little problem with that because Pielstick, the veterinarian, said that --- and the temperature was hot, you know, it always is hot in August.

DOROTHEA: Uh huh.

JOE: And he said he would be conducive to believe that, you know, the horses out there would not make it, they would become over-heated too quick, and we'd lose some.

BARBARA: That would not look good.

JOE: The obligation would not be good.

DOROTHEA: Yeah, that wouldn't look good in today's world, anyway.

JOE: And so, we decided to bail out of that one, and that's where that stands now. And these activities are still going on at this point in time. And anything we could get for tourists, or whatever

BARBARA: So much the better.

JOE: So much the better. And at the end of my term as president of the Chamber why we were just welcoming into Burns, Snow Mountain Pine. Ray Feichtmeir and all the people involved with that, was going pretty well. So that was the end of my year as Chamber, and at that point in time I was not only president of the Chamber, but I was also selected as Man of the Year, that year.

BARBARA: And was that a surprise to you?

JOE: Yeah.

BARBARA: Not to others, but to you.

JOE: I couldn't believe it. It's nothing that nobody, you know, anybody else should do for their community, where they are involved with a business or whatever. I feel that's just the way it is,

you've got to contribute to get, and if you don't contribute, being in business, it won't come. And that's, was another one of my philosophies as far as being in the community and doing business, you contribute to the business.

BARBARA: And I understand this year you were recognized as Senior Man of the Year at the Chamber Banquet.

JOE: That was a surprise to me when I found out about it. Because I really don't feel that I am senior man. (Laughter)

BARBARA: You're still just a young kid.

JOE: Really. But I think it was a recognition somebody felt that I deserved, because of my efforts in the community. I worked in the community for Safeway, or with Safeway for forty years, and every time I turned around this year I had a party of some sort, you know.

BARBARA: Yeah, wasn't it October they had the social for you at the Senior Center?

JOE: Yeah, yeah.

BARBARA: And different people came around for that.

JOE: Yeah, for forty years with Safeway.

BARBARA: That was a nice affair. Nice ice cream and cake and visiting with all these people.

JOE: Little social. And my boss decided --- he just, you know, felt that I deserved it.

BARBARA: Pop on down. Yeah. And so, you then retired in November, is that right?

JOE: December.

BARBARA: December.

JOE: I had been to a meeting and I decided that it was time to let the younger people get involved with the business, and that it was time for me to retire.

BARBARA: You were tired of traveling back and forth?

JOE: Been doing a lot of traveling, and a lot of beating the pavement at the store, and so on and so forth, so I just decided it was time to retire the first of January.

BARBARA: So that's what you did.

JOE: And that's where I left it.

BARBARA: And you started out with ten employees when you came in here, and how many employees did you have when you retired?

JOE: Sixty-five.

DOROTHEA: Oh.

BARBARA: Sixty-five, so that's quite a bump up. And now that you have retired and relaxed a little, a few months, what are your plans for the future?

JOE: Well, I'm still trying to slow down, you know.

BARBARA: Besides cooking dinner for Helen.

JOE: Get organized again, and try and find something else I can bring into the community, or help them out with as far as economy is concerned with the lumber industry being in the situation it is. I started to get involved with a futon manufacturing plant, but when I put it down on a spreadsheet it wouldn't compete with the southern market in the lumber industry, nor the labor. They're only paying \$4.50 an hour, and I can't see paying a person for a job, less than \$5.00 an hour because that's hardly a living wage. So, I have had connections, everything was set up, but the people back in New York wanted me to put forth all the --- and put together the financing for it, and it would cost around a million bucks, and I just don't have a million bucks.

BARBARA: Nor do the rest of us here. So, do you have any ideas of any other little project you might get involved with?

JOE: Well, the only thing I can say at this point is that I planted a seed for that factory, and hopefully somebody will grab it and go with it, and come in on a smaller scale ---

BARBARA: Maybe somebody else?

JOE: --- and go for it. Because I feel right now that lodge pole pine in the area is a viable source of lumber for the type of product these would take. And we're still in the process of pursuing it with the prototypes, which we are going to send back to American Futon Incorporated in New York, and let them look at it to see if what we put out would be comparable to what they want for their product. Reason I'm still interested in it, and would still promote it, is the fact that the fall of the Communist regime in the European market. And the economists say that within five years the

European market is going to be where a lot of bucks are going to go. And these futon beds and mattresses are the ideal thing, because they're portable, they're not expensive, and they don't take up a lot of room. And so, I'm still interested in being involved in the community and helping them out where I can.

BARBARA: So, if somebody needs somebody to do something, just come and call on Joe, and he'll help you?

JOE: Well, I'll give them some information.

BARBARA: Right. Is there any other little stories that you might like to share with us as we kind of close down this afternoon --- come to mind?

JOE: No, other than, you know, it's been --- I've lived in Burns for twenty-eight years, and I've had --- it's been very rewarding. We have, I think I've attained my goals as far as Safeway is concerned.

BARBARA: I would imagine.

JOE: As far as my personal life, in church life, I'm still strong in that. I don't, you know, we have a small church, and not very many people, it's hard to compete against the medical profession, and the social activities that other religions have. But I might mention that Mary Baker Eddy was way ahead of her time in the fact our religion is based upon spiritual, the application of Christ's spiritual identity, and not a physical presentation of man's identity on the earth. And man is capable, as Jesus said, you know, greater things than I have done, you will be able to do in your time if you practice the Christ idea. And that hasn't come about yet. But I feel that the religion that I belong to has achieved that, and is accomplishing that goal. So ---

BARBARA: What are some of the things that you have seen happen in Burns from the time that you arrived here in '63, until now? In a broad scope how has life changed in Burns? And what do you see as being the future for Burns, where are we going?

JOE: Well as I drive across, and from the experience I have had with people coming to Burns --- (Helen arrives home) (My wife needs to call Sheila, can you tell her?)

Burns has a bright future ahead of it, but they need to make plans now for population to come from the east. Because as you go across the desert you can see more and more of that area out

there becoming cultivated.

DOROTHEA: And populated.

JOE: There is a tremendous amount of area out there that is ideal for ranching if they can get the water on it. And they're getting the water to it. And I feel that Burns has, you know, we need to plan now, and we can't sit back on our laurels and expect the government agency or somebody to come in and do it for us. And if it weren't for the government agencies we wouldn't be existing as we are now. Because that's where most of our income comes from. And governmental agencies are where it is. But also, little private industries, like bicycle shop or whatever, you see the start, and it isn't very long until the next thing, you know, we're going to have a larger community here. And people are looking for a place to come which is, I think Dick Deming said it well, he said, "This is undiscovered Oregon." He said, "This is the pioneering place of the west, whereas other areas don't have this."

BARBARA: Like Brian Metke is always saying, education is the best-kept secret here too.

JOE: Yeah, it's like people in Bend, when I was working at the store, they said, "Well, if we could get our wives to move to Burns, we'd be here."

BARBARA: Yeah, right.

JOE: But instead of that, why they have to come and do their recreation over here, because it's too crowded over there. And I feel Burns has a good tourist base, tourist foundation, but we need to get involved in the community, each and everyone of us. And we need to keep it neat and tidy as we can, and not become despondent or, you know, based upon the economy. The resiliency of the people of Burns comes forward when things really get tough.

BARBARA: Well, I see our little red light is blinking, which means our tape is about to run out. So, I think we'll thank you very much Joe for this afternoon, and for telling us about the many things that have happened to you while you have been here in Burns. And we'll thank you again, and pause and do a little short video of you, and call it an afternoon.

JOE: Okay.

BARBARA: And we thank you very much.

JOE: Well one other comment, a P.S., I might put down at the bottom is that when we first came here, most all the streets in Burns were unpaved. I think the highway in and out of Burns, and two streets on east and west of the main street were the only streets paved in Burns when I came.

BARBARA: So, we have progressed.

JOE: And I say its progress.

BARBARA: Right.

DOROTHEA: A little bit of progress. So, we thank you again Joe for this afternoon.

JOE: Well I thank you.

(END OF TAPE)

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