

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center
for
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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Arkansas Memories Project

B. Alan Sugg

Interviewed by Scott Lunsford

February 13, 2008

Little Rock, Arkansas

Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

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Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
 - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing;
 - annotations for clarification and identification; and
 - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

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**Scott Lunsford interviewed B. Alan Sugg on February 13, 2008,
in Little Rock, Arkansas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Okay. Uh—today is February 13, 2008. We're at the—um—president's residence for the university system—the Sugg residence. We're gonna be talking with B. Alan Sugg—Dr. B. Alan Sugg. I—my name is Scott Lunsford. Um—we're g—um—we're going to—uh—this is a Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History project. This tape is going to be—uh—archived in the Special Collections Department at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville campus, in the Mullins Library. And, Dr. Sugg, I just need to ask you if it's okay that we're videotaping this and—um . . .

Alan Sugg: It's—it's okay. Yes, sir.

[00:00:45] SL: Okay. I appreciate that. Uh—the very first thing we need to do is you need to give us your—say your full name and spell it for us.

AS: Okay. My name is Barney Alan Sugg. *B-A-R-N-E-Y A-L-A-N S-U-G-G.*

SL: And that's not Bernard, but Barney.

AS: Barney.

SL: Okay.

AS: That was my father's name.

SL: Okay. That's great—um . . .

AS: He went by Barney.

[00:01:09] SL: Let me—uh—ooh, exactly where and when were you born?

AS: Well, I was born in—on April the twenty-ninth, 1938. I's actually born in the Helena hospital, but we were living in Barton, Arkansas, which is a community about eight miles from Helena.

SL: Uh-huh. And—um—what—uh—do you need something?

[Tape stopped]

[00:01:35] SL: So the Helena hospital . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . uh—in 1938.

AS: [Nineteen] thirty-eight.

[00:01:39] SL: And—um—what were your parents' occupation at the time of your birth?

AS: Well, they were in the public education business. My father was a superintendent of schools at Barton, Arkansas, and my mother was a schoolteacher.

[00:01:52] SL: And—um—what level of education did they obtain in their careers?

AS: Well, my father—uh—he was raised in Yell County on top of a

mountain—Chickalah Mountain. And they were poor as dirt, and they just didn't have anything. But, fortunately, he got a job—ah—in Fort Smith, and I think he saved enough money to finally get to Fayetteville, and he got a degree in teacher education at Fayetteville in 1925.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:02:22] AS: And that was the same year that Senator Bill Fulbright graduated from the University of Arkansas, so his name's in the same block as Senator Fulbright. So that's kind of exciting to show my grandchildren that, you know, my—my—my father—their grandfather—graduated with Senator Fulbright.

[00:02:37] SL: Did they know each other at all?

AS: They—well, he—I didn't talk to him a lot about his experience at the University of Arkansas, and the only thing I remember him talking about is what a great football player the senator was. And he went to all football games, and he loved the Razorbacks. And he got his baccalaureate degree in teaching and—uh—teacher education, and then from there he moved to—to Helena—uh—to be a teacher.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:03:03] AS: And that's where he met my mother. My mother grew up in Helena, and—um—she—she went to Ouachita for one

year after she graduated from high school. She was very, very bright. I think she—she was the valedictorian of her class.

She . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . went to Ouachita, and she was also very—very poor.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:03:25] AS: And so, she was only able to go to Ouachita for one year, and then she came back to teach. But, really, a person with a one-year education—in, you know, in that time, was—that was good.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:03:37] AS: And—and you could get a teaching certificate or teach with—uh—one year of college education. So she taught her entire life. She's a wonderful teacher. She's got a great reputation. She was also a very talented person. She played the piano, and—uh—and her whole life, she played the piano. Played the organ in the First Baptist Church. But—so that's where they—that's where they met.

[00:03:58] SL: At—was it a church . . .

AS: In Helena.

SL: . . . function that . . .

AS: Well, I don't if it was a church function or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . in school. I really don't know the details of how they met.
And I—I wish that I could ask that question again.

[00:04:06] SL: Let—let's talk about your daddy's side of the
family . . .

AS: Okay.

SL: . . . for a moment. Um—um—raised on a mountain in Yell
County.

AS: Right.

SL: Um—do you know much about his mom and dad?

AS: I know—I know not much, but I do know her name was Priscilla
Sugg. [*Laughs*]

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: And my grandfather was named Sid Sugg.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:04:26] AS: And—uh—they both—I'm not sure really where they
came from. Uh—but, at any rate, they—they lived on Chickalah
Mountain, and later on, they moved down to Belleville. And
Belleville's at the—kinda the bottom of Chickalah Mountain,
really.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:04:39] AS: And that's where they—that's where they lived.

And—and—uh—and as I say, Daddy had a—one brother and two sisters. He was the only person to go to college . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . in his family, and—and he, course, went to the University of Arkansas.

[00:04:54] SL: Uh—did you—um—know your uncles and . . .

AS: I did.

SL: Or you had an uncle and . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . and an aunt.

AS: I did. Right. Uncle Espert.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Yeah. He worked in the newspaper business in—in Fort Smith.

And—uh—Mr. Fred Smith, you know, who is the head of the Don Reynolds Foundation, knew my Uncle Espert and knew him well.

And, in fact, he remembers that Uncle Espert helped him, you know, when he first became a first—an employee of the paper in Fort Smith and wrote me a nice letter once and sent some

information about it after we met the first time. And he said,

"You're"—he said, "You're Espert Sugg's nephew." And I said,

"Yes, sir, I am." And he said, "Well, I knew him well. And I, you know, he was well respected." So I knew him. My mother—I

mean, my Aunt Bernice also lived in Fort Smith, and she worked in a—I think the Boston Store in downtown Fort Smith.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:05:43] AS: And my Uncle Espert—he was a—he drove a candy truck. So it was always fun to go to Uncle Espert's house and—because he'd always give us candy—Baby Ruths, Butterfingers, and those kinds of things. So . . .

[00:05:54] SL: So—uh—you—you visited Fort Smith as a . . .

AS: A lot.

SL: A lot.

AS: Yes, we really did.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Mh-hmm.

[00:06:02] SL: Uh—do you remember much about Fort Smith when you were a little boy?

AS: Well, a little bit. I mean, I had two cousins, Espert and Sidney and—and Joanne—Espert—and Sidney Sugg and Joanne—uh—Goins—I mean—uh—j—that's her married name—Goins. But—uh—Taylor—Joanne Taylor.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:06:17] AS: That was Uncle Leonard Taylor and Aunt Bernice.

And—uh—she—she still lives in Fort Smith.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And—uh—she's—they had four children, and so, we still see her some and her children. And, of course, they're our second cousins, but in my—a—and Aunt Letha—she married a person, they lived in Nashville, ar—uh—Tennessee. And so—uh—we—that was on my father's side, and—uh—the—I—I'm kinda biased, I guess, but I mean [*laughs*] the Sugg family all—all seemed to like each other and love each other, actually, and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:06:54] AS: . . . you know, all the way—that's all the—the only thing I remember about—about my rela—I mean, one thing I remember about my relatives is they cared a lot for each other, and they—they respected each other, and, you know, they always—it was always fun to be around the Sugg family.

[00:07:09] SL: How long were you on Chickalah Mountain?

AS: I—I—I . . .

SL: Oh, you di—you . . .

AS: I was not there.

SL: . . . you—you were not there, but . . .

AS: That was my father. That's where he grew up. Yeah, he . . .

SL: Uh-huh. And did you get to visit that . . .

AS: Chickalah?

SL: Yeah.

AS: I've been on it. Yes.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:07:20] AS: But I—I remember going to my Grandmother and Grandfather Sugg's house there in Belleville. It had a well out in the front.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: But I remember my father used to tell me that he played baseball on Sunday afternoons with "Dizzy" Dean, because, you know, Dizzy Dean is from Belleville, and also, Johnny Sain is from Belleville. Now, Johnny Sain was younger than my grandfather but—than my father. But Dizzy and my father were about the same age, and so . . .

[00:07:47] SL: And they got to play—they played baseball together.

AS: They—they, you know, pick-up games.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Sunday afternoon or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Yeah.

SL: Uh—that's gotta be a really small town. I mean . . .

AS: It's a very small town. But to have Dizzy Dean and Johnny Sain come out of that small town—it's just a miracle, really.

[00:08:01] SL: It is. Um—you know, you—you were born after the Depression. Uh—did . . .

AS: I was.

SL: . . . did your parents ever talk much about the Depression?

AS: Well, mmm, you know, I—we—I guess he was fortunate that he was in the education business. And, of course, teachers still had jobs and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . I do remember at times that members of the family would come to Barton and live with us for short periods of time because they were, you know, really hurting . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . economically. Well, actually, that's not why they came.

They actually came because Uncle Leonard went to the—went to the military, and Aunt—Aunt Bernice and Joanne lived with us for—for some years. But—uh—it was—um—I mean, we grew up—we weren't in the depre—I was not in the Depression, but—uh—you know, people who were growing up in those years—we didn't have much. And—uh—but we w—we were not poor and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:08:53] AS: . . . you know, but—uh, you know, you—you turned

off the lights every time you left the room. [*Laughs*] You know, there was very little—little waste. And—uh . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . there was a—there was a real feeling that you need to—need to appreciate what you have and—and—and be very careful and be a good steward—be a good steward of what you had.

[00:09:11] SL: Uh—you were talking about the—um—uh—well, in your granddaddy's—uh—yard. Um—I'm assuming you had plumbing and—and all of that in Helena.

AS: We—oh, yes, surely we did, and we did in Barton also.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Yeah, it was indoor plumbing and . . .

[00:09:26] SL: Okay. Uh—did they have a—their own little garden plot in . . .

AS: What's that—in—in Barton?

SL: Uh-huh.

 AS: No, but my—my father also had a farm. And he bought a farm in—not far from Barton.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: Between Barton and Marvell, 'bout [about] three-hundred-acre farm, and I think he told me he paid twenty-five dollars an acre for that farm. [*Laughter*] And—and my Grandmother and

Granddaddy Sugg lived in the farmhouse on the farm.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: He had sharecroppers on the farm.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: I think there were about—there were four families that sharecropped the land. And then my father also had a small grocery store. And so my Grandmother and Granddaddy Best, which is my mother's mother and father, lived in the grocery store and ran the grocery store. And Granddaddy Sugg and Grandmother Sugg lived on the farm, and every morning, he would get up and go milk the cow. And—and they had a big garden at the farm.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:10:17] AS: In fact, canning and, you know, harvesting corn and cuttin' [cutting] the corn off on the cob in the washtub and—uh—you know, shellin' [shelling] the beans and pickin' [picking] the tomatoes, and—and the w—you know, several times a year, there was just a big canning—family canning effort.

[00:10:33] SL: So the family would gather to help out with that?

AS: They would.

SL: And you got . . .

AS: Yeah, my grandmothers—yeah.

SL: . . . you got to help, too?

AS: Oh, yes. Yeah, I remember doing that, you know, pickin' the corn. I didn't do much cooking or, you know [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . but—but pickin' corn or pickin' peas or tomatoes or whatever it may be—uh. And then we—we also [*clears throat*], you know, once a year we killed hogs.

[00:10:52] SL: I was gonna ask you about slaughtering a hog.

AS: Yeah, we did, and it was—course, that was the coldest day of the year, you—you know, and they did it all outside. And I was kind of young then, but . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: But I remember—I clearly remember it and—and—uh—you know . . .

SL: And . . .

AS: . . . a big hog hanging up and, you know, and they'd—it was just amazing, you know, the big boiling pots, and—and—uh—so it was a—it was the whole nine yards. And then they had a smokehouse, which they'd put the hams in the smokehouse and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:11:18] AS: . . . and it was a—I had a—I had a wonderful time

growing up, you know. I . . .

Trey Marley: And what time of year was that—um—did—the killing
the hogs?

AS: Well, I—I was—I was born in [19]38, so I imagine it was—I
remember it, you know, when I was probably seven or eight,
nine years old.

TM: But what time of year did they . . .

AS: Oh. Winter.

TM: Oh, wintertime.

AS: Yeah, yeah. The hog—yes.

TM: So February—around now or . . .

AS: I don't remember, but I'm sure it was January or February.

TM: Yeah.

AS: But it had to be very, very cold, because you had to be careful,
you know, not to do anything that would cause it to be diseased.

[00:11:49] SL: Right. And they also—uh—um—they used every
bit . . .

AS: Every bit.

SL: . . . of a hog.

AS: That's exactly right.

SL: And that—uh—when it got smoked, that pretty much was the—
um—that was the source for the whole year, right?

AS: It was.

SL: Until the next winter.

AS: Right. It was.

SL: Um . . .

AS: And, of course, you had a lot, you know, the canning—with
the . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . canning of the beans and the peas and the tomatoes and
everything else that you canned—that was all done with, you
know, pressure cookers, and didn't . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: I remember in the old—in the hou—the house we always lived in
always had rows built up, so you could put the canned products
up there.

[00:12:27] SL: Um—how long—well, wait a minute. Let's talk about
your—uh—mother's side of the family.

AS: Okay.

SL: The Bests. Um—where were they from?

AS: Well, my father and—and—my Grandmother and Grandfather
Best were from—uh—north Arkansas, really, or—no, midnorth—it
was—uh—uh—my grandfather was—was raised in McCrory, and
my grandmother was in Judsonia, which is . . .

SL: Okay.

AS: . . . they're very close together.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: And there was a—my grandfather's brother had a drugstore there, and—and that name is still there, Best Drugs. They're still the drugstore in McCrory, and it's—uh—it's—it's dres—it's Best Drugs and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:13:09] AS: I remember the, you know, we used to visit there also to see their relatives. And—uh—we'd go to Uncle Porter Best's drugstore, and I remember the, you know, the—the counter and—and sitting at the counter and eating ice cream, and it was—that was fun, too. Yeah.

Joy Endicott: I'm sorry, is that Best—*B-E-S-T* or *B-E-S-S*?

AS: *B-E-S-T*. Best.

SL: Um—so—um—a soda fountain?

AS: Soda fountain.

SL: The grocery store had a soda fountain.

AS: That's exactly right. Mh-hmm.

SL: And—and—uh—um . . .

AS: The—the store's moved out now—downtown.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: You know, it just—they just kept the Best's names. It's . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . kind of interesting.

[00:13:49] SL: And—uh—so now your—um—your mom's family—
um—how did—um—your mom get over to—um . . .

AS: I—I—I—they had moved. My—my . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . Grandmother and Grandfather Best had moved to Helena.
For what reason, I don't know.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: He's always been a salesman.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And he's been a salesman. He was a traveling salesman. He
had a—all—that's the last I remember him and his working. He
had a, you know, you'd have all—blankets—blankets and towels
and other kinds of materials like that in the back of his car, and
he would go around the county.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:14:28] AS: And, you know, somebody would buy a towel or buy
some sheets, and—and they would pay twenty-five cents a
week. And he would go back every week and collect the twenty-
five cents. And he had a little note, you know, I remember

seeing his little notes that he did that on. And my grandmother always worked downtown and—sell—selling in the—in one of the—uh—stores on Cherry Street in Helena. And so it was a—and then they lived with my m—well, I'm sorry. After my grandparents—uh—got older—really older—uh—and they—we—he sold—grand—Daddy sold the house and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . and then we moved Grandmother and Granddaddy Best to Helena, and they lived with us. We had a two-story house, and they had a little apartment upstairs. And—uh—they lived—I don't know—for several years with us, and then Grandmother and Granddaddy be—Sugg lived on the farm, but then Mother—they—Mother—Grandmother Sugg died, and then, actually, my Grandmother Best died, and so for the last years of their lives, my grandfather and grand—both my grandfathers lived with us, you know, the family. But there was no Social Security back then. I mean, you—that's the way you took care of the grandparents, you know. And it was a—it was—it was—it was, you know, a lot of pressure on my mother and, you know, and my father. I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed, you know, havin' [having] the opportunity to get to know my grandfathers.

SL: I was just gonna ask you.

AS: Mh-hmm.

[00:15:52] SL: Did your grandfathers give you much attention?

AS: Yeah, they did. Now they—uh, you know, back in those days—I think in modern days, you know, we—kinda the family evolves around the children, you know.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: But it didn't back then. [*Laughs*] I mean, when we had a—when we had a big Christmas dinner or Sunday dinner, well, then, you know, there was—the adults all sat at a table . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . and then the children all sat at a table, you know, in the—in the kitchen or in someplace else. And . . .

SL: Right.

[00:16:19] AS: But we were—we were loved, and we were appreciated, and I, you know, I wouldn't change a thing about how I grew up. I mean, I—I—I feel so fortunate that I had my grandparents and my parents and my uncles and aunts and my cousins, and—it was just—just a—I—it—it was the be—it couldn't have been better. I'm sure that other people have had the same quality of life, but it . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . couldn't have been better for me.

[00:16:43] SL: Were your—uh—granddaddies storytellers?

AS: Uh—no, not really. No. My grand—Grandfather Best was—well, first of all, we—we grew up at Helena, and—and when the First Baptist Church was open, we were there.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: I mean, we were there [*laughs*] on Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, revivals—and I thought it was just a way of life, you know. I didn't—I didn't—I—I—we just did it, you know, and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: . . . it was good. And we sang in the choirs, and we joined the youth organizations, like the, you know, RAs and the Sunbeams and whatever it may have been. And—and my mother played the piano, and—and it was—uh—we were just there. And my Grandfather and grand—Grandmother and Granddaddy Best, after they moved with us, well, then they always went to church. And he—Granddaddy Best, I think, had about a third-grade education.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:17:36] AS: And—but he read a lot, and he was really interested in reading the Bible and, you know, reference books of the Bible and—and, you know, he—he did that every night just about.

[00:17:47] SL: So church was a big part of the household.

AS: It wa—it was a big part of the household.

SL: Maybe even—uh—uh—uh—really—uh—it sounds like to me, the home life was kinda centered around—uh—what the church . . .

AS: It was.

SL: . . . churches had to offer.

AS: It was. And—and—uh—now—but [*clears throat*], you know, they—we—we could—we could still play cards. [*Laughs*] We could still dance. We didn't drink. I mean . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . there was—no, I don't ever remember any alcohol in our house.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: But I—and I never, you know, I—I never was tempted to even think about drinking alcohol, you know. Course, there . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . were no drugs or anything like that at that particular time. But it was a, you know, I had—I had such respect for my mother—my mother and my father that, you know, if—I—I just did what they did, you know. [*Laughs*] I liked it.

[00:18:35] SL: So y'all would gather for—um—um—who—you know, and both your parents were working, right? So . . .

AS: They were, all the time.

SL: And . . .

AS: Mother worked teaching. Father worked. Well, my father—when he was in Barton, he was the superintendent of schools.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: When I was six, he got—he got—he was named the s—county superintendent of schools.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: And that's where there were a lot of those small schools throughout the county, and he was the superintendent of all those small rural schools collectively. And there was a—a—a school board for the county, but there were also little local boards for each one of the schools.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:19:08] AS: And—uh—one of the schools that was his at that particular time was Lake View.

SL: Is that right?

AS: You know . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . and then, course . . .

SL: Wow.

AS: . . . Senator Jimmie Wilson, you know, and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: . . . the lawyer, Jimmie Wilson—that's where that lawsuit all started.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:19:20] AS: And so my father's name's mentioned when you go back in history in terms of the Lake View situation. But I actually remember going with him to Lake View. I was small.

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: And I would sit over in the corner, and he would have the board meeting, and then I—we'd drive back—back home that night. And don't remember much about it, except Lake View was a—uh—there's a great fishing lake right across from the—the school, and we—Daddy and I would—had been fishing there several times.

[00:19:45] SL: That's interesting that you—uh—as a child, you were involved—you—you got to see the administrative process . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . on the education side of things.

AS: Yeah.

[00:19:54] SL: Um—so—um—who would fix the meals? Who was at home?

AS: Oh, we . . .

SL: Who did all the cooking?

AS: We always had a maid.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And it was an African American maid.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And—and Maddie Ellis was her name.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And she lived with us in Barton.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: And then we moved to Helena; she moved to Helena with us.

SL: Uh-huh.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:14] AS: And, you know, I have to say that carefully because

I don't want to be—for anybody to be offended about this,

but . . .

SL: Well, I mean, these were times.

AS: . . . but . . .

SL: These were the times. But go ahead.

AS: . . . but I honestly—basically, I had a—I had two mothers

[*laughs*], you know.

SL: Well . . .

AS: And I tell you what, I respected and appreciated it, and you

know, I think she—we loved her, and she loved us, you know. And I—that's—it was just a—it was a way of life, as you said, then. And, you know, and so we, you know, later she got too old to work, and we hired a—Daddy hired another person, Floree Martin. And she's still alive, actually, in Helena, and I was pretty much grown when Floree came to work for us, but she's—she had that same role with my younger brothers, Joe and Jim. And it was, you know, I, you know, well, I'll always remember and appreciate and love both Maddie and Floree for what they were, and I, you know, I hope it's mutual, you know.

[00:21:24] SL: I'm sure it was. It—so the—did the help have family in the area, too? Did they kinda move—did the—their . . .

AS: Well . . .

SL: . . . families move . . .

AS: . . . well, Maddie did not have a family, and—but Floree did have a family there in Helena. Yes. And fact, one of her daughters is a faculty member at the University of Arkansas—I mean, Phillips Community College, which is now part of the University of Arkansas.

SL: Right, right.

AS: And I see her on occasion, and I remember when her daughters were—when the children were growing up, and you know,

Father, he—my father helped them in terms of going to college, and so they—they've—they're a wonderful family.

[00:22:07] SL: So, now you had a couple of brothers?

AS: I did. I had two younger brothers.

SL: Uh-huh. And . . .

AS: Older sister.

SL: And an older sister. So what was the spread as far as the ages go?

AS: Well, Ann.

SL: How close in age were you?

AS: Ann was the oldest, and then I was three years younger than Ann. I had a brother six years younger than I am, and a brother twelve years younger than I am. So it was kinda spread out.

SL: Spread out.

AS: Yeah.

[00:22:33] SL: Uh-huh. So do you remember—tell me how life was with your older sister when you were growing up then.

AS: Well, we . . .

SL: You had a—you had someone to look up to.

AS: Yes, right. Course, I was—I mean—Ann was a very talented—she also played the piano. In fact—she went to Baylor and majored in music, and she still plays the piano and the organ at

Jonesboro in a Methodist church there. [00:23:02] And she's a wonderful person—a lady. And she married Don Stone, and Don Stone was the son of Wayne Stone, who is—who was the—he was a banker in Helena, and then he moved over to head up the Simmons First National Bank organization. So Don was a banker for all of his life, and he—his—they moved to Jonesboro, where he—Simmons Bank bought the bank in Jonesboro, and he was the president there. He died about four years ago.

[00:23:35] SL: Now that—that's not Donnie Stone, the . . .

AS: Football player. No.

SL: No. Okay.

AS: But that is—yeah.

SL: Well . . .

AS: But we had a good relationship, but I was always, you know, I was probably—I mean, I loved to play tackle football and loved everything about athletics, and, you know, every—I just lived for it. I mean, that's what I did. And, course, I would come home a lotta times with my tirt—shirt torn and, you know, and Mother would tell me every day not to get—tear any more clothes. [*SL laughs*] And so I would usually get a spanking. [*Laughter*] So I woulda go back. But it—back then, though, I mean, we didn't play touch f—we played tackle football at school. I mean, we—

we'd choose up sides and play every day. And we had street teams. [00:24:21] You know, and we'd play on Saturdays, and we'd start playing about eight o'clock in the morning and play till five o'clock in the afternoon, and it'd be two hundred to, you know, a hundred and seventy-five—the score would be.

[*Laughs*] I mean, but I—that's—I mean, I—that's—I loved every second of that.

[00:24:38] SL: So let's talk a little bit about Helena. Helena was—I mean, it was a port, wasn't it? I mean . . .

AS: Oh . . .

SL: . . . kind—I mean there were . . .

AS: . . . it was a port.

SL: There was river traffic.

AS: There was—oh, a lot—there was river traffic. But it was really an agricultural community. You know, and just like I said, I had—my father had three hundred acres, and there were four families living on that farm sharecropping.

SL: Yeah.

AS: And so you had a—just a lotta, lotta people involved in agriculture, you know. And they were poor, but they did work, and they had garden—they had, you know, they had usually a cow and chickens and things like that. But—so that was really—

that's what Helena was. [00:25:28] They had a—did have a saw mill or two, and you know, on Saturday—I mean, the—Cherry Street would just be full of people, you know.

SL: It was a thriving community.

AS: A very thriving community. Right.

[00:25:41] SL: Now you were growing up there at the time of World War II.

AS: Yeah, I—well, yes, I was. The World War II was just ending when I was about six or seven. And I remember the day that, you know, that the—that victory was declared.

SL: Right.

AS: Right.

[00:26:04] SL: Do you remember any of the boys coming home?

AS: I do. I do. And, of course, I remember that we, you know, lots of food products were rationed, and so it was—I didn't really suffer, you know, by any of that rationing because, you know, you just lived with it, you know. But it's—but I remember that. I remember that clearly.

[00:26:29] SL: Did they—I would guess they came home by train mostly, I would guess.

AS: They did. Mh-hmm. I don't remember going down to the train to watch them get off the train. But I remember there were a

lot of soldiers in the First Baptist Church that were—that came back. They had their uniforms on, and they, you know, there was a real appreciation and a service of thanks for them returning home, and I remember a lotta that.

[00:26:58] SL: Well, you talked about playing football all the time.

Did you ever entertain basketball or baseball?

AS: We played basketball. Baseball—we—there was no organized baseball. It was just sandlot baseball. But football was—it was—my mother—I had to really beg my mother to let me go out for football, but she did let me go out for football. I went out in the eighth grade in junior high school, and I played, you know, football throughout.

SL: Were the . . .

[00:27:24] AS: And played basketball, too, and then I—then, also, when I was in the eighth grade—this is the story about my track experience.

SL: Okay.

AS: You know, it was a small—Helena was totally segregated, you know. The African Americans—blacks went to one school and had a school district, and the whites went to another. So there was not a—it was—the whites did not have a big school, and the blacks didn't have a big school. Together, it would've been a,



you know, pretty size—pretty large school. But when I was in the eighth grade, I played football. I made the team. I played basketball. I made the team. And then it was time for track. We had three sports in school. And so I just had to make the track team. You know, it was a badge of honor to be on the team.

SL: Sure.

AS: And, you know, and I was—I loved athletics. That's what I lived for. That's before I met Jeannie, you know. [*Laughter*] But—so I went out there, and I couldn't run fast enough in the hundred-yard dash, and I couldn't high-jump enough—high enough or broad jump or—the distance—I tried that. I nearly killed myself, you know. [*SL laughs*] [00:28:32] But I couldn't shoot—do the shot or the discus, and there was a pole-vault pit. So I went over to the pole-vault pit, and they gave me a pole and said, "Now, this is the way you do it," and showed me a little bit. Nobody knew much about what they were doing, you know. [00:28:45] So I tried it, and I nearly hurt myself, you know, trying—and I'd try it. So I was really discouraged, but I went home.

SL: Yeah.

AS: And in my backyard, I put two standards up in the ground and—

you know, when you're doing the pole, you have to stick it in a hole, you know.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Well, I dug a hole, you know, and I got a sapling, really. I mean, this—and this is a really true story. I mean, I'm not embellishing the truth here—that I taught myself how to pole-vault. And then three days later, I went out, and I said, "Coach," I said, "I know how to pole-vault." So he said, "Well, let me see you." So he took me over there, and I pole-vaulted. You know, not very high, but I pole-vaulted. And he said, "Okay." He says, "Well, you just keep tryin', and we'll work on it." And by the district meet that year, I pole-vaulted seven feet six inches . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . and I won [*laughs*] third place. [*Laughter*] And I still have that ribbon. [00:29:43] So—[*laughs*] and that's my—that's how my pole-vaulting started out. I just—what I did is, I just lucked into doin' something that nobody else knew how to do very much.

SL: Right.

AS: And so I started pole-vaulting, and I started winning. And I won the state championship, and I went up to high school. Well,

then, you know, I just kept pole-vaulting, and then I got a scholarship to the University of Arkansas as a pole-vaulter. And so, I—and, you know, I would've loved to have gone to the University of Arkansas as a quarterback . . .

SL: Right.

[00:30:09] AS: . . . but I was too small and too slow, and, you know, and—because that's what I played in high school. But I really—I mean, I was so proud to be going to the University of Arkansas on athletic scholarship.

[00:30:22] SL: So who—did you finally—did you get a coach that ever knew anything about pole-vaulting?

AS: Well, actually, I was lucky in that regard too, because the band director in Helena was a pole-vaulter, and he was—came from Louisiana. I think he pole-vaulted at LSU, so he knew something about it. [00:30:42] So he helped me with pole-vaulting. And I, you know, I was just fortunate. As I say, I was doing something that, you know, other people hadn't done much of. And so then we had a coach—track coach. In fact, we won the state championship—the track championship in—I guess it was spring of 1956.

SL: That's a pretty big deal.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Helena . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . winning that . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . instead of Little Rock or . . .

AS: Right. Well . . .

SL: . . . Fort Smith or . . .

AS: . . . there were different . . .

SL: . . . Hot Springs or . . .

AS: . . . there were different, you know, categories.

SL: Yeah.

AS: We won it in our classification. [00:31:16] But I remember coming to Central High School in Little Rock and pole-vaulting . . .

SL: In [19]56?

AS: Well, junior—when I was in high school. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Fifty—[19]54, [19]55, [19]56.

[00:31:28] SL: Uh-huh. Well, let's talk about the segregation and the—and the race relations. I—was there only one movie theater in town, or did you have a movie theater in Helena?



AS: There—actually, we had two movie theaters in town. And there

was one in West Helena. And, you know, the whites would sit downstairs, and the African Americans would sit in the balcony. And on our—on the buses—we had a bus system, you know, when you rode the bus. I didn't ride the bus much. But when you rode the bus, the whites would sit in the front of the bus, and the blacks would have to go to the back of the bus. Course, the water fountains were—you know, I think it—mostly it said "colored" and "white" and . . .

SL: Right.

AS: And that was the—a word that was utilized a lot then.

[00:32:20] And that's the way it was. And I, you know, but we would—we—and many afternoons, you know, I told you about my football-playing. I'd just, you know, we would go over and play football with, you know, the young blacks, and we'd—they'd—we'd help choose up, you know, we'd choose up sides and play there. And because it was in the way—on my way home from school, so it was a . . .

SL: You know . . .

AS: . . . little bit of that. I mean, I, you know, I kind of—I really have a sense of guilt that—now—that I didn't feel more guilty about the situation when I was growing up, you know.

[00:32:59] SL: Well, no—it was what was handed to you.

AS: Well, it was.

SL: And . . .

AS: But at the same time . . .

SL: . . . really, the—most of the folks I've talked to—everyone was kinda comfortable with it. I mean, both sides were given that. And there wasn't any real animosity. Usually, there wasn't any big conflicts going on.

[00:33:19] AS: Mh-hmm. Well, I just can't say that from a black perspective. I can . . .

SL: Right.

AS: . . . say it from a white that I just thought it was the way it was, you know. I—and I didn't—it—as I say, I do have some guilt, though, that I didn't feel more guilt about it when I was at that particular age. But . . .

SL: Well, that you were . . .

AS: . . . I look back, and I think it was a tragedy that it—that's the way it was. And I'm glad we're, you know, I'm glad as we as the country and as a nation have improved the situation a whole lot whe—than when I grew up.

[00:33:58] SL: But when you'd be goin' home from school and you'd do the pick-up football games, and it—there'd be African Americans and whites playing together, there wasn't any—I

mean, it sounds like it was all very friendly and . . .

AS: I did not experience, you know, I've never—I did not experience any bad situations by growing up black and whites segregated. Yeah.

[00:34:23] SL: And like most fam—like a lot of white families, they did have African American help. And they did kind of become surrogate family members. I mean, they were totally involved with the family activities and supported them, and everyone loved each other.

AS: Yeah.

SL: It was a—I mean, real attachment to each other.

AS: I felt that way, you know.

[00:34:53] SL: Was there any—did you ever see any indication of Klan activity or . . .

AS: No. No. Never did.

SL: . . . big segregationists . . .

AS: And, of course, that—no, I didn't.

SL: . . . brouhaha?

AS: And I never heard my mother nor my father ever say a disparaging work—word about a black or blacks. Never. My grandparents—I didn't hear that. [00:35:19] I didn't hear 'em ever talk about racism or, you know, I just—because there was a

lotta blacks that—who worked on the farm as sharecroppers—several—and I worked right with 'em, you know, when we were baling hay or, you know, we were plowin' cotton. And I didn't—we had mules when I first, I remember, but then we got a small tractor. [*Siren wails*] Or—but, you know, picking corn and everybody, you know, everybody worked together in terms of all that.

JE: Can we stop for a second?

SL: There's some kind of siren . . .

[00:35:51] SL: Helena has a rich cultural history and . . .

AS: It does.

SL: You know, your—let's talk a little bit about the music in the household. Now, I know that your mom and your sister were both . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . pianists and played organ as well, and the church was a big influence in the house. So I'm assuming that you had a piano in the house . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . and you would hear that growing up. And I'm also assuming that most of the music that was played on that instrument was probably hymns and . . .

AS: It was.

SL: . . . church music. Is . . .

AS: It was.

SL: Do you remember that?

[00:36:29] AS: Yes, I do. And, of course, I took piano lessons. It

didn't work, but [*laughter*] I took piano lessons. And then I—

you know, my mother's—you know, the arts were really

important in our lives. And I have an uncle who was an—

actually, a professional artist, and he was a faculty member at

Purdue University and other universities. And a lot of the

paintings on the walls here are his. And—as a—that's his piano

originally. And he was killed in an automobile accident and so.

[00:36:57] But at any rate—but, yes, you know, I don't even

remember the—I don't think we had—we may have had a record

player, but I don't believe we did, you know. I—we just—it

was . . .

SL: Did the . . .

AS: We heard music at church, you know. It was—oh, there were

hymns and . . .

SL: For family gatherings or even neighborhood gatherings, did

people gather around the piano and sing? Do you remember

singing in your household?

AS: No, not really.

SL: Okay.

AS: But, yeah, we—yeah, we had a lotta family gatherings, and we had a lotta meals, and—but on Sundays, we always had a big meal, you know. We always went to church, and Mother and Daddy would—we would—a lotta times, the minister would come eat with us. [*Laughter*] A lotta times, we'd bring widows that we knew to—for home for lunch. And we all—I think we always had fried chicken for lunch, Sunday noon. [*Laughs*] And, of course, Maddie or either Floree, they were there. They were—you know, they had cooked the chicken and taken care of everything.

[00:38:06] SL: You say you'd bring widows home. Are those World War II widows?

AS: No, I don't think so. I think they were . . .

SL: The older ladies.

AS: . . . just older ladies. Mh-hmm.

SL: And so you don't remember havin' a record player, but you probably had a radio.

AS: Oh, yeah, we had a radio. Yeah.

[00:38:24] SL: Do you remember what kinda stuff y'all listened to on the radio growing up?

AS: Well, I remember, when I was growin' up, my father always listened to Gabriel Heatter. [*Laughs*]

SL: And what is that? I'm . . .

AS: Y'all don't know that? He was a newscaster. Yeah. And when that—when—when Gabriel Heatter came on the radio, we were quiet, you know—we—because he had to listen to the news. And that was the earliest part I remember. And—but then on, you know, every afternoon after you get home from school, you would listen to the radio and the *B-Bar-B Riders* or, you know . . .

SL: Be-Bop B Riders?

AS: B-Bar—B-Bobby Riders or somebody. [00:39:02] I don't know, but, you know, there was the *Shadow*, and there were some other kind of things on the radio that you listened to. And that was interesting. But I didn't do much of that because I was always . . .

SL: Out playing . . .

AS: . . . playin' athletics or doin' something and—and like that. I mean, we were busy. And then the—as early as I can remember, I always had a job, you know.

[00:39:24] SL: What was your first job?

AS: My first job was delivering groceries for a little, small grocery

store in our neighborhood. And I had a bicycle with a great big basket on it, and, you know, people would call in and order milk and cheese and whatever it may be, and I'd deliver that—those groceries. I've had numerous jobs. I mean, I—we—my mother and my father did make—you know, they were in the education business, but back then there was not a lotta money in the education business. And you know, well, there were four children, and so, if we wanted any money, we had to work for it. [00:39:59] And so I did that. I delivered papers. I worked in the cotton compress. I worked in the store that my grandmother worked in—a dry goods store. And later on, when I got—there was a—Mohawk Rubber Company came into town, and—when I was in high school and I could get a job there, I worked in the—making tires. And I worked as many hours as they would let me work, and I worked—and then when somebody was on vacation or holidays, and—I could've worked all the time, and I made really good money.

[00:40:36] SL: Well, let's talk about how much money you were makin'.

AS: I don't . . .

SL: What—when you were deliverin' groceries, what was your pay?

AS: Oh, I don't know. It was not very much then. [Laughs] It was

not much, but it was, you know, I did have some money
and . . .

[00:40:49] JE: Well, how old was the grocery [*unclear words*]?

AS: My grocery store? I think—I probably was nine or ten years old,
and you could work then. There were no laws against children
working. And so—and I didn't work a lot, but I worked on
weekends and worked after school some.

[00:41:07] SL: Were—was—do you remember ice delivery or
was . . .

AS: I remember the icehouse. Yes, I do. And I didn't ever work—I
never worked at the icehouse, but I been in—I been at the ice
house. Now, we didn't—we had electrical appliances, so we did
not use ice. But the icehouse was still very active when I was a,
you know, when I was in grade school. We—it was fun to go to
the icehouse and watch 'em make ice and put these ice on these
ice wagons and—you know.

[00:41:36] SL: Uh-huh. So you're saying ice wagons.

AS: Well, not—I'm—ice trucks.

SL: Ice trucks.

AS: Yeah, they'd—not with—mules and et cetera. But they were
still—a lotta people were still using ice when I was in grade
school.

[00:41:50] SL: Uh-huh. And the—were the streets in Helena
paved . . .

AS: They were.

SL: . . . when you were there?

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And most of it . . .

AS: Mostly brick.

SL: . . . was automobile . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Brick. And most of it was automobile traffic?

AS: It—well, a lotta bicycle traffic. Yeah.

SL: Bicycles, too.

AS: Yeah.

[00:42:05] SL: Now, you mentioned something about a cotton
facility that you worked in?

AS: A compress.

SL: A compress.

AS: Yeah.

SL: Now tell me what happens at a cotton compress.

AS: Well, what happens is people—the compress brings in the bales
of cotton from the gins. And they're big bales. You know, they
weighed about five hundred pounds each, but they were large

bales. And what the compress did is, they would take those bales and squeeze 'em down to smaller bales—compress 'em more. And then I—then we'd—you drove these little trucks that, you know, picked up the bale and loaded it into the railcars. And Mr. Choate—Mr. Jimmy Choate, who was the head of the compress—he was also a member of the Baptist church—his son and I worked at the compress several summers. And it was a hot, dirty job, but we worked in there and, you know, mostly hourly work for most of the people that worked in the compress. But that was good experience and . . .

[00:43:08] SL: Do you remember how much you got paid doing that?

AS: I don't. I don't.

SL: So was cotton pretty much the agricul—the biggest agricultural product?

AS: Cotton was king, yes.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Yeah, right. There was very little rice production. Some soybean production. A lotta row crops, but they were mostly for—but cotton was king.

[00:43:28] SL: Do you remember how often the trains came through town?

AS: Well, we—quite a bit. I mean, we had a lotta train traffic. We had passenger train traffic as well as freight train. But the Delta Eagle that ran from Helena to Memphis—and I've ridden that train several times. And then we had a little passenger train that'd run from Helena out to Marvell. That was called the "doodlebug," you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: The doodlebug.

AS: Doodlebug. Ran right by my father's farm. Mh-hmm.

[00:44:00] SL: Well, you know, of course, Helena is very rich with music . . .

AS: It is.

SL: . . . history.

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: And you keep mentioning Marvell.

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: And, of course, that's out there where Levon Helm . . .

AS: That's exactly right.

SL: . . . grew up.

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: And he—maybe Turkey Scratch. Is there a place called Turkey Scratch out there?

AS: I believe there is. Uh-huh.

SL: And he talks about that area in his book. Do you remember much of the music scene in Helena when you were growing up?

AS: Well, you know, I remember the . . .

SL: *King Biscuit Flower Hour*?

AS: . . . King Biscuit—*King Biscuit Flower Hour*. Yeah, there was the *King Biscuit Flower Hour*, and there were—they—KFFA was the radio station and that was on the radio a lot. But, once again, I don't remember a whole lot about that, because I just didn't—at the time, I didn't seem to have any interest in it, you know. And you just can't be interested in everything, I guess. And I was working, and—but there was—I do remember the *King Biscuit Hour*. And it was a big deal on KFFA. I mean, every day.

[00:45:17] SL: What about traveling minstrels and traveling music shows? Did you ever see any . . .

AS: Well . . .

SL: . . . of that happen?

AS: [*Laughs*] Well, you know, this is—I mean, you know, my mother and my interest in the arts—they had the civic music concerts.

You ever heard of civic music concerts?

SL: No, tell me about 'em.

AS: And these were traveling cultural kinds of events. And there would either be—you know, they'd be playing Beethoven or

Brahms or, you know, there would be a small orchestra there. And every time the civic music concert came to town, we were sitting there at the civic music concert. [*Laughs*] So that's the—that's mostly the kinda music that I listened to, and then church music.

SL: That, you know, that—that's a great program.

AS: Yeah, and wonderful. Yeah.

[00:46:06] SL: And that's so interesting because, you know, Helena's so known for blues and the minstrel shows on flatbed trucks and . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . rambles and kind of two shows a night on . . .

AS: Didn't see that.

SL: . . . on the weekend. Didn't ever see that?

AS: That's a different . . .

SL: You were—you got caught up in the classical music . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that was traveling through town.

AS: And church. [*Laughs*] I mean . . .

SL: And church.

AS: I tell you, when you would—you go to church every time the First Baptist Church was open that occupied a whole lotta time.

And then plus, I was always involved in, you know, after-school activities. And I was in the band and played the trombone. And, you know, it was a—so it was—I had a—I have great appreciation for music, and . . .

[00:46:51] SL: So you were in the choir. You said you were . . .

AS: . . . I was . . .

SL: . . . in the choir.

AS: . . . always in the choir. Sang bass.

SL: Sang bass.

AS: Mh-hmm.

[00:46:58] SL: Well, did they have—were the dances church dances? Probably not.

AS: No. No, not church—not Baptist church.

SL: Yeah.

AS: No, no, no, no, no, no . . .

SL: That's what I was thinking. And I know there was . . .

AS: . . . but, my mother—once again, you know, there was a dance class for young people, and she—I attended the dance classes, you know. And ballroom dancing, and we learned to, you know, slow dance and the jitterbug and then all those things. And you went to these functions, and, you know, you had—you'd have your little dance card, and you'd get somebody to dance with

you for the first dance or second dance, third dance or fourth dance. And, you know—and so that—I participated in that, you know. And it was just—I mean, I couldn't have had—as I said, I'm repeating myself—but I could not have had a better growing-up period. I mean, I loved every second of it, you know, except for the times I got the spankings. And I did get a lotta spankings.

[00:47:56] SL: Well, let's talk about the [*AS laughs*] spankings. You know, spankings and having a switch taken to you and all that stuff—I mean, I—even I got a little bit of that in my time. But was it your father that did most of the . . .

AS: They both . . .

SL: . . . discipline?

AS: They both did.

SL: They both did.

AS: [*Laughs*] They both did.

SL: And what . . .

AS: My father would use his belt, and my mother would use a switch, you know. And I—they didn't harm me or anything like that. But I was a typical boy. I mean, I was all boy, and you know, I—and I—my mother wanted me to come straight home from school to the house. And I didn't do that all the time, and so

when I didn't do that—course she was concerned that I would get involved in something that I shouldn't have been involved in and, you know. But, you know, I just got the spanking.

[*Laughter*] So . . .

[00:48:48] SL: Was it a—you know, some of the folks I've interviewed have said that even the neighbors in the neighborhood community would—you know, a lotta times, they'd be—the parents would know what you had done before you even got home . . .

AS: That's true.

SL: . . . because the neighbors had reported it.

AS: That's exactly right.

SL: And so . . .

AS: That's true.

SL: . . . there was some of that . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . disciplining going on by the community as well.

AS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

[00:49:17] SL: So did you—is that what—the way it was in Helena?

AS: It—exactly right. Yes. I mean—yes. Yes, we had a, you know, we had—the people who lived in the neighborhood—we—they'd lived there forever, and we knew everybody, and we you know,

everybody—didn't bother anybody, but you're right. I mean, we had the chief of police that lived across the street. You know, Mr. Bounds. And so, you know, I—there—I was careful.

[*Laughs*]

[00:49:41] SL: Well, you know, in those times, a lotta times the pol—the chief would know the kids.

AS: Oh, yeah. Sure.

SL: Not only know the parents and the . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . but they would know the kids.

AS: Right.

SL: And they [*laughs*] . . .

AS: Right.

SL: They'd keep track of you.

AS: That's right.

[00:49:54] SL: And, really, probably happy to do so. Those were simpler times back then. What about—well, give me an example of what's the worst trouble you ever got into?

AS: Worst?

SL: This is kind of a confession now. [*Laughs*]

AS: You mean as a kid? As . . .

SL: Yeah, as a kid.

AS: You know, I can't remember any worst situation I ever got, you know. I do remember that, you know, you're, you know, you—when you played football, they'd grab your shirt, you know, and it'd tear the button through the deal, and you couldn't button it. And that's what my mother would—she would tell me that. She said, "I've sewed those buttonholes up so many times. I'm not gonna sew those buttonholes up anymore," you know. "Be careful." And I did that. But I really was—I was an—all boy, but at the same time, you know, I knew the limit, I guess, in terms of what I could do or couldn't do. And I don't ever remember in—getting in any really serious trouble with my parents. And I . . .

[00:51:04] SL: You didn't, like, ever steal anything from a store . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . or a . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . neighbor or . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . use something that you shouldn't have used . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . or . . .

AS: I honestly cannot. And I'm not—I wasn't a goody two-shoes,

but, you know, as I said, I got plenty of spankings. But in terms of any serious trouble that I ever got in, I don't ever remember that.

[00:51:25] SL: What about smokin'? Did you ever get . . .

AS: Didn't smoke.

SL: Didn't ever got caught [*AS laughs*] smoking or . . .

AS: I didn't smoke. I didn't drink. I mean, [*laughs*] I didn't do anything. [00:51:33] I never, you know, I never—just didn't. I don't know why, but—yeah, but I remember when I got to be a little older and, you know—you—I honestly could drive a car when you were fourteen back then, and I had a car. I had a little Jeep.

SL: Is that right?

AS: And I'd—but, you know, so every time I would go out, and I would come back—and my parents were really—they let me—they gave me a lotta room to do whatever I, you know, did. But if I were out at night and I would come in, my mother just made me kiss her goodnight, you know. And, of course, I thought she just loved me, you know, but she wanted to see, I guess, if I was drinkin' anything. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's right. Uh-huh.

AS: Or smoking or et cetera. But I didn't. I didn't do any of that.

SL: Well, let's talk a little . . .

TM: Hey, Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay, great. [00:52:19] We are—we're still in Helena.

AS: Right.

SL: And, you know, let's kinda get back to Maddie a little bit. I—in those days, and even in my time growing up, we had African American help that was around the house. And they were as much a part of the family and still kinda just removed just because of the way things were back time—back then. But in a lotta ways, they had as much authority as the parents did in looking after the kids and stuff. Do you remember any particular instances with her that, you know, are imprinted in your . . .



AS: I do. I do. And Maddie really did have a lot of authority in the family, and you know, when she said something, we were supposed to do it. And, you know, she was very wise and was very helpful in terms—and I think she was an important part of my life and my growing up. And one incident that I remember is that, you know, you had to wash your hands, first of all, before every meal, before breakfast, before lunch, before dinner.

[00:53:32] And that was just—that was, once again, a way of life that we did. And—but there was one rule—that you could not wash your hands in the dining room—I mean, in the living

room sink, and you could not use her dish towels to dry your hands. And that was just—that was a rule. You just did not do that. [00:53:50] And one day, I decided that I was going to wash my hands in the sink—kitchen sink—and I was gonna dry my hands on the dish towel, and I did that. And Maddie said—and she called me Mr. Alan—that's just the way she called everybody. She said, "Mr. Alan," she says, "you know I did not want you to do that." And I said, "Maddie, you know, this is not your house, and those are not your dish towels. And if I decide I wanna wash my hands in the kitchen sink and use your dish towel, you know, that's—I have that right to do that." And she said, "Well, I guess you do." Says, "And I think it's time for me to go home." And so she walked outta the house, and she walked home. And it was several miles to her—the place she lived. And Daddy came home that afternoon, and he said, "Where's Maddie?" because he always took her home.

[00:54:42] I said, "Well, she left." And she said, "Why did she leave?" And I said, "Well, she left because she said she was mad that I washed my hands in the kitchen sink and dried my hands on the dish towel." And she said, "She left? She left?" I said, "She did leave. I mean, it was—she just said she couldn't tolerate that kind of behavior." And so she said, "Well, young

man"—and I think he popped me on the rear as we walked out the door. He said, "Get in the car. We're gonna go see Maddie." So we went to see Maddie. And he said, "And you're gonna apologize to Maddie." And so I did. I went to Maddie's house. He took me up there. I apologized to her, and I said, "I wish you would come back to work," and she gave me a hug and said, "I'll be back to work." And so—[*laughs*] and I don't think it was because it was Maddie. [00:55:33] I think if I'd treated any person that way, my father's reaction would've been the same, because he really did believe in treating everybody with dignity and respect. And I understand that, and I think that's very, very important. And I do everything I can to try to remember that.

[00:56:00] SL: That's a great story. I love that story. But, you know, Maddie didn't have any kind of—I mean, she would never—did she ever take part in disciplining or—I mean, could she give you a spankin' or . . .

AS: Well, I guess she could, but she—I don't remember her ever spanking me. But, at the same time, she could have, and she may have. I just don't remember that. But I followed her directions, and [SL *laughs*], you know, I knew that she was an authority figure.

[00:56:37] SL: What kind of grades were you making when . . .

AS: In high school?

SL: . . . you were going . . .

AS: In public schools?

SL: Well, in . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . grade school and . . .

AS: I did—I made good grades.

SL: Yeah.

AS: I was not the valedictorian. I was not at the top of the class, but I was, you know, pretty high up.

[00:56:53] SL: Were your parents—did your parents kinda hang over your shoulder or—what was the routine? Just give me a day in . . .

AS: At school?

SL: . . . your life on—you'd get up in the morning. There'd be—would there be breakfast on the table?

AS: There would be. Mh-hmm.

SL: Would you bathe in the morning or had you bathed the night before or [AS *laughs*]—how'd that work?

AS: I think we bathed the night before. Yeah, and we would have breakfast, and we always had our meals together—the family.

[00:57:21] Any meal that—when we were all at the house, we

had breakfast together. We were there for lunch. We would have lunch and then for dinner. We'd have dinner together.

SL: So you'd . . .

AS: And we'd all . . .

SL: . . . come home from school and . . .

AS: Right.

SL: How far was the school from your house?

AS: It was not far. I had a bicycle, and I rode the bike.

[00:57:38] SL: And you were supposed to come straight home from school.

AS: Yes.

SL: And you probably did most of the time.

AS: I did.

SL: And then . . .

AS: But sometimes I didn't. [*Laughter*]

[00:57:49] SL: Well, where would you go when you didn't come straight home from . . .

AS: I would—I'd—we'd stay after school and play football or play baseball or ride our bikes someplace or something. And, you know, I was—I disobeyed my mother, and I did not come straight home to—from school, and so I—sometimes I would be rewarded with a[*SL laughs*] spanking.

[00:58:13] SL: When you got home from school, did you do your homework right then?

AS: Not usually. I'd usually play outside. Now this was in grade school and . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . you know. And then I would do any homework at night.

SL: After dinner?

AS: After dinner.

[00:55:32] SL: You talked—you had a Jeep . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . I guess when you were in high school?

AS: My first . . .

SL: At fourteen? You were fourteen . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . years old.

AS: First vehicle.

SL: That was kind of unusual, wasn't it, for—I mean, not everybody had their own car.

AS: No, but you know, I—as I said, I worked, and really, I bought that Jeep and bought my other cars. And so, any rate, I—they let me have a car. And I had a Jeep, and you know, several people would drive—ride to school with me every morning.

Sometimes they'd help pay the gasoline. But gasoline was probably ten cents a gallon then, so it really didn't—[laughs] it didn't take much gas.

[00:59:08] SL: Do you remember how much your Jeep cost you?

AS: Oh, I—it was not very much. Three or four hundred dollars maybe.

[00:59:18] SL: Yeah. That had to impact your social life, didn't it? Having your own vehicle?

AS: It did. It did.

SL: You'd pick up kids going to school and give 'em rides home and . . .

AS: Right. We did.

[00:59:33] SL: How—what was the—how about the girls, growing up? What—when did you first become interested in girls?

AS: You mean to date girls?

SL: Yeah.

AS: Or things like—okay. I mean, I, you know—we always—I mean, I always had girl friends. You know, I didn't know what that meant when I was in junior high or high—elementary school, et cetera. But, you know, there were—I had association with girls, but mostly with boys. I mean . . .

SL: Yeah.

[01:00:06] AS: . . . I—but my real first girlfriend was Jeannie, and we—she was in West Helena, and I was in Helena. But we had a consolidated high school called Central High School. And—but I really met her at junior high school band, really. She was in the band, and I was in the band, and so that's where we met. And I think she was in the ninth grade—or eighth grade. I can't exactly remember, but that's when we first met. And then we started seeing each other—dating somewhat. And junior high school—I was the captain of the football team, and she was the homecoming queen, so we—you know, it just kinda all fell together, [*laughs*] and it just seemed like it was supposed to happen. And so we started going together, I guess, in about—in the ninth grade and, you know, in junior high school and then in high school and then in college, and then we got married after we both graduated from the University of Arkansas.

[01:01:04] SL: That's unusual . . .

AS: Well, yeah.

SL: . . . I mean, that you have that history—that length of a relationship, and that y'all stuck together through all that.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: I assume that she was probably a good student—made good grades . . .

AS: She was very good.

SL: . . . and . . .

AS: Yeah, she made very good grades. Mh-hmm.

SL: And let's see, her maiden name was . . .

AS: Bussell.

SL: Bussell.

AS: *B-U-S-S-E-L-L*.

[01:01:29] SL: Uh-huh. And what were her parents? What were their jobs? What'd they do?

AS: Well, her father died when she was young. He had leukemia. He was in the navy. And he died, and her mother later remarried. And her stepfather owned a grocery store and a dry goods store in West Helena on the main street, and that's what he did. And Mrs. Simpson—his name was Simpson—Mrs. Simpson did not work. She was a mother and a wonderful cook, and Jeannie learned how to be a good cook from her mother.

[01:02:08] SL: Well, let's—tell me about the first time that you ever met her.

AS: First time I ever met her?

SL: Yeah.

AS: Well, we—the first time I ever saw her was that we were—the junior high school bands were—came to the high school to

practice together in preparation to be in the high school band.

And that's where I saw her and just thought, you know, she was just a beautiful young lady. [*Laughs*] I mean, it . . .

SL: What instrument did she play?

AS: She played saxophone. Mh-hmm.

[01:02:40] SL: Saxophone. So when did you first ask her out?

AS: Ooh—well, the first date I had with her—it was to a—I think it was to some dance or something, but then I was too young to drive then. So I—my father drove and we'd go to her—went to her house, picked her up, and went to the dance. And then they came back to pick us up—took us home. And then not long after that, well, then, I was—had my own Jeep. [*Laughs*] And then I had that for a while, and then I had another Ford coupe. And so we started dating and went—she went to church with us a lot and movies and dances. So we just dated pretty constantly through high school.

[01:03:37] SL: I guess I can quiz her on . . .

AS: Okay.

SL: . . . her household and all that stuff. I—but I—it's such a romantic story that y'all got together so early, and you're still together to this day. That's just a—it's kind of an anomaly in today's society. You just don't . . .

AS: Well, I . . .

SL: . . . see a whole lotta that.

AS: Yeah.

[01:03:56] SL: So I guess y'all—did—she followed you a year later to college, I guess.

AS: She did. She went to the—Memphis State University—it was called at the time.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: Several of her friends were going there, and I was going to the University of Arkansas, and I think we thought it would—might be a good idea for us to . . .

SL: Have some time.

AS: . . . you know, go separate ways. But then she went to Memphis State, and she knew that, I think at the time, that she'd probably be transferring to the University of Arkansas. So she did not join a sorority there or, you know. But then she came on—came to Arkansas her sophomore year and then went through rush and became a Kappa, and we dated through the university years, and we did not—we waited till we graduated, and we got married shortly after graduation.

[01:04:47] SL: So growin' up in Helena, did you always know you wanted to go to the University of Arkansas?

AS: Oh, I did.

SL: And . . .

AS: I mean, I wanted to. I really did want to because my father had gone there, and my father and I listened to every Razorback football game that we could. And I remember—I think it was—I don't—well, I can't—Wally Ingalls . . .

SL: You bet.

AS: . . . I think was—he worked in the registrar's office, and he was the announcer, and it was—I still remember him. And I—when I went up to the university and I met him and I was—he was—I was so happy to meet him, and he was a good announcer. And so we'd sit there and listen to those football games, and I—that's where I wanted to go to school. And I didn't know if I would be able to afford to or not, but then I got a track scholarship. And so, that was—I went to the University of Arkansas, and I was so happy.

[01:05:41] SL: So you had been to Fayetteville before you . . .

AS: Never.

SL: Oh, you had never been to Fayetteville?

AS: Never been to the University of Arkansas.

SL: Oh, my gosh! It had to be a . . .

AS: I went up in my senior high school—when I was a senior in high

school—because Coach Bidwell, who was the track coach, invited me to come up to look at the university. And so my father drove another person from Helena, Frank Peters, and me up there because he was also thinking about a track—going to the university and—on a track scholarship. He was a year behind me, but he still would like, you know, wanted to do that.

[01:06:14] And we went up there, and they had the Southwest Conference track meet there, and so I got to see the Southwest Conference track meet and watch the University of Texas—at that time, they were winning everything in track, and you know, Arkansas had a track team, but we weren't winning a whole lot. But I got—we got to see that. And that's—he offered me the scholarship and so . . .

SL: Back then the track was part of the stadium . . .

AS: It was. It was in . . .

SL: . . . or the football . . .

AS: It was in the Razorback Stadium. Right.

[01:06:40] SL: . . . field, really. Yeah. So it had to be vastly different than Helena.

AS: Oh, yes. We had a dirt track. We didn't have a cinder track. We had—we ran on raw dirt. And, you know, it was—we didn't have very many—very good athletic facilities at Helena at that

particular time.

[01:07:08] SL: Well, and—but the athletic program—it was kind of
in its infancy then, wasn't it? I mean, there were . . .

AS: At the university?

SL: . . . facilities there and, of course . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . there were great Razorback fans.

AS: Yeah.

SL: Was Barnhill the football coach then?

AS: Barnhill had just opened. It was brand new.

SL: Oh, I see.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And—but was Coach Barnhill the football coach when you came
or . . .

AS: No, Jack Mitchell was.

SL: Jack Mitchell.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Yeah.

[01:07:37] AS: Uh-huh. I remember Jack being the coach, and
then, in my junior year, Frank Broyles was hired to be the coach.
And that started a tremendous era of winning football for the
University of Arkansas.

[01:07:53] SL: Did you have—well, first of all, in high school, did you have any favorite subjects that you were attracted to? Was there . . .

AS: Not that I remember. I mean, I—you had math and, of course, science and English. And I had a great English teacher and . . .

[01:08:13] SL: Let's talk about your teachers for a moment in high school.

AS: Oh, I had a very good . . .

SL: You had a great English teacher.

AS: Great English—great teachers. I mean, Mrs. Anderson was my English teacher. Mrs. Faulkner was—taught Latin, and Mr. Duran taught French, and Mr. Hastings taught, you know, the sciences, and Mrs. Chorley was the home, you know, the study room teacher. This was in—study hall teacher. This was when I was in high school. And her husband, actually, was one of my junior high school teachers. And we really had—we had excellent teachers. And, you know, Helena-West Helena had a very, very strong school, and you know, we—then who would've thought that Helena-West Helena would be teaching Latin and English and, course, physics. You would expect that. But good math teachers. And, you know, they had a Thespian Society and the yearbook, and it was the whole nine yards.

[01:09:17] SL: Did you belong to any school organizations in high school?

AS: No—I mean, except athletics, you know. I spent so much time playing football and basketball—running track.

[01:09:34] SL: You mentioned Thespians. Were you in—on this . . .

AS: No, I was not.

SL: You were not?

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: No drama department stuff?

AS: No. Hm-hm.

[01:09:46] SL: Okay. So you get to Fayetteville, Arkansas, on a track scholarship—big, big coup for you. Big . . .

AS: Yeah, I was really proud of it.

SL: Were there any other pole-vaulters on the team that were under. . .

AS: There was one there already. Mh-hmm.

SL: And he was on scholarship, too, or . . .

AS: I think so. Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh-huh. Do you remember his name?

AS: Jerry Burns from Camden.

SL: From Camden.

AS: Mh-hmm. Senator Pryor, I'm sure, knows him well.

[01:10:12] SL: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So how did y'all compare in your abilities?

AS: Well, it was okay. He was—when he was a senior when I was a freshman—and then freshmen did not compete at the senior level. You know, we just vaulted against other freshmen. And he did well as—I think he graduated, and then I moved up, and then I competed the next year at the senior level. But we were good friends, and I don't remember 'cause we didn't pole-vault against each other. I think we were about the same pole-vault—about the same height.

[01:10:48] SL: Well, now the last number I had from you on your pole-vaulting ability [*AS laughs*] was about seven and a half feet with a sapling. And so where did you end up on your . . .

AS: Well, now . . .

SL: . . . college career?

AS: Well, now, the sapling was—that was just—to—learning to vault, but they—actually, I used a real pole when I went back out to the track team. The—my highest was, I think, thirteen feet ten inches, which is not very high now. But, of course, there's, you know, they're—people are using the fiberglass pole, which bends a lot, and it's kind of a slingshot shooting you up, and I'm sure if I had the fiberglass pole, I coulda probably jumped, you know,

eighteen feet. [*Laughter*]

[01:11:29] SL: What kinda pole were you—what were the poles?

AS: It was just called a steel pole, but it was very thin stee—I mean, it was very light. But it was still—it had no—almost no flexibility whatsoever, so . . .

[01:11:41] SL: So how did you rank, you know, among Southwest Conference athletes?

AS: I didn't—at the freshman, I won the freshman pole-vault meet, and this was at the University of Texas—actually, in Longhorn Stadium. But in the—my junior and senior and my fresh—my sophomore, junior, and senior year, I always scored in the Southwest Conference, but I—the best I did was second.

SL: Well, tell me about—talk a little bit about the Fayetteville campus.

[01:12:14] TM: Scott, can we go back to Helena just for a second?

SL: Yeah.

TM: The river and any elements that might have?

SL: We talked a little bit about the river . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . in Helena and its role. But, you know, I got the impression—I thought that barges and stuff stopped at Helena quite a bit. Did they—I mean, did you see much commerce . . .

AS: Well, only . . .

SL: . . . actually stopping . . .

AS: Stop at Helena?

SL: Yeah.

AS: No. Well, they had a big, big rice dryer there, and, of course, the barges would stop there at the—it was wheat and rice in terms of what they loaded there. But there was not a—the barge traffic stopping at Helena—it was not a big port as I recall.

[01:12:56] SL: What about—were there any—oh, you know, the—there used to be paddle-wheel boats . . .

AS: Well . . .

SL: . . . that had bars on 'em and you could . . .

AS: No, we . . .

SL: . . . travel . . .

AS: I never experienced any of that, but we did have a ferry that ran from Helena over to Mississippi. And it was—it had a paddle wheel. I mean that was the way it had its power. And this ferry was for cars. [01:13:26] There was no bridge at Helena at that particular time, and you could either take the—Pelican was the name of that—was the name of that ferry. And you could—you'd ride the Pelican over and then go up to Memphis on the Mississippi side or go through Forrest City. And it was a lot

shorter to go through Mississippi than it was to Helena. And Memphis really was—all—you know, just about all the towns along the eastern part of Arkansas—that was their big city, because it was closer than Little Rock. [01:13:58] And so I'd been to Memphis many times before the first time I ever came to Little Rock. And that's, you know, the *Commercial Appeal* was the big paper in eastern Arkansas.

[01:14:11] SL: Well, talk to me a little bit about Memphis. What do you remember about going to Memphis?

AS: Oh, I—it was mostly on school trips or other things like that—going to the zoo, or a lotta people went shopping in Memphis. We never went shopping [*laughs*] in Memphis, but we—I—once again, I had a—my mother's brother lived in Memphis, and so we went to Memphis to visit, you know, her brother and her cousins. And so we were there several times. But I didn't really know a whole lot about Memphis at that particular time.

[01:14:43] SL: What kinda place did your mom's brother have in Memphis?

AS: A home? It was a modest home, but it was a nice home.

SL: I mean, a house with a yard and . . .

AS: Yes.

SL: And so . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . was it kind of on the outskirts of Memphis?

AS: No, it was in—it was . . .

SL: Downtown?

AS: . . . pretty close—it was not downtown, but it was in Memphis proper.

SL: Uh-huh. That's a big city.

AS: It's—it was. Mh-hmm.

[01:15:11] SL: So what did you all do when you went to visit in Memphis?

AS: Well, we would go to the zoo or, you know, just play in the yard or go to movies or—I guess what young people do at that particular time.

SL: Yeah. Did you ever—was there ever any kind of road trip to Memphis as far as growing up in high school? Did you and the guys jump in your Jeep and go to Memphis or . . .

AS: We didn't jump in the Jeep. I don't think I would've trusted the Jeep to go to Memphis. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

AS: But, yeah, we did—we took a couple of day trips to Memphis, and I think Jeannie and I drove over to Memphis once to watch *Gone with the Wind*. I think that's where we saw *Gone with the*

Wind for the first time. So that was fun.

[01:16:02] SL: Did that river ever flood?

AS: No, it did not flood when I was living there. Course, they had a big ferry there, but in the 1920s, when they had the big flood, it completely flooded Helena. And I remember my mother talking a lotta about the Great Flood.

SL: What did she have to say about it? Do you remember?

AS: Well, she just said it was just an awful experience, and that, you know, their house was under water, and there was a lotta suffering and a lotta deaths because of the flood. But Helena really took a big hit with the—with that Great Flood.

[01:16:38] SL: Lotta people moved away after that flood.

AS: They did. Mh-hmm.

SL: And there was a huge exodus of blacks after that flood as I remember. They went—everyone went north.

AS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: And then—I mean, that changed a lotta things about that region politically. There was a—what about—I guess—the economy completely changed after that flood there. That—all that's before your time.

AS: That's before my time. Right. When—because when I was there, it was a strong agricultural community. Course, those

floods over years, you know, helped build up that rich soil. And that is Delta soil, and so it helped out. But I'm sure it was a—I know it was an awful time for Helena and West Helena—oh, all communities up and down the Mississippi River. [01:17:36]

And it—but by the time I remember Helena, I think all that had been repaired, and there was a good, strong levee system, and I think, you know, the dams and the levees were reinforced constantly. And that was a big part of—a lotta people worked on the levees in terms of continuing to strengthen the levees when I was there, and I'm sure they still do.

SL: Full-time job just maintaining those things.

AS: Right.

SL: Yeah. Okay. Is that . . .

TM: Yeah, that . . .

SL: Okay, that's good.

TM: . . . was good.

[01:18:15] SL: The—so we're at the University of Arkansas. You're on a track scholarship. You're traveling with the track team.

AS: Right.

SL: So now you're gettin' to see a little bit more of the country than . . .

AS: Yeah, right.

SL: . . . than you had. You're taking classes. Were you okay in your classes . . .

AS: I . . .

SL: . . . making good grades?

AS: I made good grades.

SL: Never any problems there.

AS: Not great grades, but I made good grades. [*Laughs*]

SL: Good grades. And did you have a—were you—what were you—did you ever—what did your declared major become?

AS: Well, at the time, I was just general business when I first started. [01:18:49] And I really did not know what I wanted to major in. And I took business courses and finance courses, and I really liked accounting. I took more of those courses, but I graduated with a degree in finance.

SL: That's interesting. So rather than education . . .

AS: At the—yeah, at the time, I honestly did not know what I wanted to do. [01:19:09] Of course, when I was at the university, we were required to take ROTC, you know, for two years—freshman and sophomore years. And we drilled out in front of the—Old Main on the field out there, and once a week, we did that. And we each had a rifle. We had to keep the rifle. We had to go clean it at least once a week and took military subject courses.

And so after two years of ROTC, I decided I wanted to just do advanced ROTC. So I took ROTC at my junior and senior levels, and I received a commission. And, you know, everybody had to go to the military at that—all the males had to go to the military—either air force or army or—for six months or two years or whatever it may be. And so I was in advanced ROTC. I did pretty well. They offered me what they call a Regular Army commission, which is the same commission that the West Point graduates receive. That means that if—you know, that you're kinda looking at the army as a career. Well, I really didn't think I wanted to do that, but the head of ROTC said if I would accept that Regular Army commission, I could have my first duty assignment. And so Jeannie and I knew we were going to be married, and so, we said, "Well, let's go to Europe," you know. So I said, "Okay, I'll take the Regular Army commission, and I want Germany as my first assignment." [01:20:38] So after graduation, then went in the military and went to infantry school and airborne school, and then we—Jeannie and I went—lived—we lived in Germany for three years, which was a wonderful experience.

[01:20:49] SL: So was that a three- or four-year commitment for . . .

AS: It was . . .

SL: . . . you to do that?

AS: Well, it turned out to be almost a four-year commitment because you went through a lotta training before you went to Germany, and then Germany was a three-year requirement. So we were in Germany for three full years, and we traveled a lot around Europe, and, you know, I thought the sun rose and set on Arkansas. I, you know, so I learned a whole lot about [*laughs*]—when we lived in Germany. And it was a wonderful experience. And we had a daughter who was born there in Heidelberg.

[01:21:21] SL: So what years were you in the . . .

AS: We went to Germany in January of [19]61, and we came home from Germany in December of [19]63.

SL: So that would've been Kennedy.

AS: It was. That's when Kennedy, you know, went to Berlin, and said, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*," you know.

SL: Yeah.

[01:21:44] AS: [*Laughs*] And we lived in Worms, Germany—*W-O-R-M-S*—Worms. And, of course, its great claim to fame was it's one of the oldest cities, first of all, in Europe. But that's where Martin Luther King had his trial. Not Martin Luther King. [*Laughs*] That's were Martin Luther had his trial.

SL: Martin Luther. Yeah.

AS: [*Laughs*] Martin Luther had his trial. And the—this . . .

SL: That's all right.

AS: Can you erase? [*Laughs*]

SL: No, no, we're gonna keep that. [*Laughter*]

AS: That's where Martin Luther had his trial. As a matter of fact, I would mention about the, you know, the lady who worked for us named Floree, and when I came back from Germany and had all the slides and everything, and we—I was showing her all these slides of Germany and, you know, and Holland and Berlin, et cetera. And she really, you know, didn't—she was enjoying it, and the pictures were pretty, et cetera, but I'm not sure that she followed it at all. But then I said, "Now Worms, Germany"—and I said, "Now that's where Martin Luther had his trial." And she said, "Oh, you mean Martin Luther King's?" [*Laughter*] She was excited to know, but I said, "Well, that's really where he got his name. Martin Luther got . . . "

[01:22:49] SL: It is. So that was kinda Cold War stuff.

AS: It was—we were—we seriously trained because the idea was that the Russians, if they came into Europe, would come through the Fulda Gap. And so, we all had battle stations somewhere in that Fulda Gap—our battalion. [01:23:14] And we were in Germany

when they closed the Berlin Wall, or they closed Berlin, and I know our sister battalion road-marked across eastern Europe, and we were at the—we were on standby to load airplanes to fly into Berlin to help reinforce Berlin. So about three or four days there, it was a—really a interesting situation, and we couldn't—I couldn't tell Jeannie anything about it, and we were standing ready and—to go. And we thought we probably would go, but we did not go. Fortunately, the Germans didn't—East Germans didn't cause any problems with that road march.

[01:23:54] SL: Mh-hmm. Well, what was your—tell me what you did in the military when you were in Germany. What was your job?

AS: Well, I was the infantry officer. Had a—I was a second lieutenant. I had a platoon, and then later on, I was executive officer. And I had a staff officer job, and we were serious about training. I mean, we were a mechanized infantry battalion.

[01:24:25] And so once a month, we had a alert, and then about two or three times a year, we'd go off and train at some location for a thirty-day period of time—live in the field, and you know, it was serious. We trained with the German Army—West German Army—and with the British and with the French. It was a—it was really, really a great learning

experience for me to understand and at least learn about other cultures and, you know, just working with military people and with, you know, with the enlisted people in terms of bein' a commander or bein' a leader of those—of the troops. It was a good learning experience for me, and I learned a whole lot.

[01:25:15] SL: Did you develop any long-term relationships with any of your fellow army folks?

AS: Well, we did. Mh-hmm. When I—when Jeannie and I went to Germany, there were other brand-new second lieutenants also, who were assigned to the same post. And so we have friends from universities and West Point, and we still maintain some contact with those friends.

SL: Well, y'all were combat ready, weren't you?

AS: We were combat ready. We were.

[01:25:49] SL: So maybe we should talk a little bit about some of your travels in Europe at that time. Did you have a favorite place that y'all liked?

AS: Well, we traveled a lot. We didn't have any money. You know, I was making two hundred and twenty dollars as second lieutenant pay, but we traveled to Italy and Berlin and Switzerland and France and England and, you know, the—I mean, the—Amsterdam in Holland.

SL: You went everywhere.

AS: We went pretty much all over. Yeah.

[01:26:27] SL: And in those days—I mean, did you travel in uniform
or did you . . .

AS: No, no, no. You travel—mh-hmm.

SL: And as Americans on the road—let's say, in Europe, did you . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

[01:26:40] SL: . . . how were—did each—how did Europe treat
Americans back then?

AS: Very good. Very good. We . . .

SL: They were still very appreciative of all the efforts . . .

AS: They were.

SL: . . . in World War II.

AS: They were.

SL: And they saw the role that you all were doing and providing at
that time. [01:26:57] So did you ever sense any danger . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . when you were out . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . traveling?

AS: Not at all.

SL: It was . . .

AS: Fact, a couple times, we camped, and they had these camp plots, and you would go into these camp places and put everything in your tent. You'd just drive off and not worry about anybody takin' anything or—that was just the—that's the way it was then. And you wouldn't think about doin' that today, I don't believe. [01:27:22] But—got some deutsche mark—marks when we were there. There were about five—I think five deutsche marks to a dollar. Now I think it's less than a deutsche mark to a dollar now. So it was very inexpensive at that time also, so that helped us out.

[01:27:42] SL: I guess you probably did museums—art . . .

AS: We did. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . galleries?

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: What about music? Did—what was the music . . .

AS: Well . . .

SL: What kinda music did y'all listen to [AS *laughs*] on the radio when you were in Germany?

AS: Well, we had, you know, the—they had the American stations, you know, through the military. We did go to Frankfurt, Germany, and see Louie Armstrong. That was kind of exciting, so—went to a lot of the community—small communities, you

know, for the—for festivals and restaurants, et cetera. We traveled out in the hinterland, so to speak, a whole lot with our friends.

[01:28:22] SL: Was there any particular—was there a favorite place y'all kept goin' back to or . . .

AS: You mean in . . .

SL: . . . in Europe?

AS: . . . Europe? We really liked Italy. Mh-hmm.

SL: Florence.

AS: Yes, we went to Florence and Venice and Rome, and we went all over—we were—we had—we took two separate trips to Italy when we were there.

[01:28:48] SL: So you were there—you spent about three years there.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: But your military commitment ended up being about four years. You . . .

AS: Well, by the time we were in the service and by the end of the service, I'd decided I wanted to go back to the University of Arkansas to go to graduate school. [01:29:05] I thought I really did want to be a part of higher education then. I was—when I was in—at the university—when I was at the university,

Dr. "Whit" Halliday was the dean of students at the University of Arkansas. And I was involved in student government. I was—ended up running and winning—being—the student body presidency, so I was president of the student body. I was active in the fraternity. I had a lotta lives. I mean, I had the athletic world life, and then I had the fraternity world life, and those are two different worlds at the University . . .

SL: You bet.

AS: . . . [*laughs*] of Arkansas.

SL: You bet.

AS: But they're both great worlds, you know. And so I had those kinds of experiences, and I really had good feelings about Dr. Halliday, and so when I was in Germany, I wrote and said that I was coming—wanted to come back to go to graduate school and be in higher education. And he had talked to me about that before I left to go into the military. [01:30:00] And so he offered me a job. And I worked as a graduate assistant, sort of, working in the union and—for a year. And then I left that job and went to work for Mr. Pomfret, who was the vice president for finance. And I was his assistant for a couple of years and finished my work, my degree work. Then Dr. Halliday had moved to Texas to be president of East Texas State University,

and when I finished my master's degree, he asked me to come to Texas to be his assistant to the president. And so I—that's how I got to Texas.

[01:30:35] SL: You mentioned the student union. Back then, that was the one over there on Maple Street—the—and I remember it had a ballroom . . .

AS: It did.

[01:30:45] SL: . . . in it upstairs. Do you remember whether—did they have dances there and . . .

AS: Well, they did when we were undergraduates. Yes. Mh-hmm. They still did, I guess. Mh-hmm.

SL: Uh-huh. And I remember that as being a really nice ballroom.

AS: Yes. Seems like it was—I remember it as being very large, but it probably was not that large. But it was . . .

SL: It was pretty large.

AS: Yeah.

SL: And then down below that was the cafeteria.

AS: Right. Good food.

SL: Great food and the gathering place on the campus.

AS: Oh, yeah, particularly the patio. Mh-hmm.

[01:31:20] SL: So you were student body president?

AS: I was.

SL: Who helped you with that?

AS: Who helped me?

SL: Yeah.

AS: You mean who helped me become president or . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . helped me . . .

SL: I mean, you probably had somebody—maybe—I don't know if you had a campaign manager, but you had someone that was . . .

[01:31:38] AS: I just decided to run for it. I just [*laughs*] campaigned for it.

SL: Yeah.

AS: I didn't know anything—I didn't know what I was doing. But, any rate, I went all over the campus and campaigned. And I did have some people who were helping me. Yes. Mh-hmm.

SL: Fraternity brothers and . . .

AS: Yeah, primarily.

SL: You know, back then, fraternities—they played a pretty important role as far as keeping kids focused on the—on their schoolwork 'cause . . .

AS: They did.

SL: . . . that—was it true . . .

AS: They did.

SL: . . . for you then?

[01:32:05] AS: Yeah. Course, I lived in the athletic dormitory, and I was a pledge during that period of time, so I didn't—I wasn't real active in the fraternity as much, and I had a—I lived there. But it was a—but I was there a lot, and I think when I was a sophomore, I lived half the year at the fraternity house, and so, I got to know it well. And then later on, I became, actually, the president of the fraternity. [01:32:34] And so that was—but that was a good experience—made a lotta good friends and Sigma Chis and—you know, we had five thousand people at the university at that time, so everybody pretty much knew everybody. And even though you were in a fraternity, you knew of people in other fraternities, and it was not—and the sororities were the same kinda situation. I had a lotta good friends who were not in the fraternity or sorority because I was in, you know, an athletic dorm and met some people, so . . .

[01:33:02] SL: What—did you have any good friends in the athletic dorm?

AS: Oh, yeah.

SL: Who? Give me some of your [AS *laughs*] best friends in athletics.

AS: Well, I was a—Freddy Akers and I—Freddy, you know, was the coach at University of Texas. We knew each other in high school because we had competed against each other, but he was up there. Barry Switzer was a sophomore. George Walker, who was quarterback—he was there. Don Christian was there. Billy Ray Smith was on the football team at that particular time. Jim Mooty, Lance Alworth—I mean, there were some biggies that I knew—Billy Kyser from Camden.

SL: Yeah.

[01:33:39] AS: Bill Trantum—Dr. Bill Trantum now. So I had—Jim Gaston—I had a lotta friends who were football players and basketball players, and it was a good experience. I—when I was a freshman, we moved into Wilson Sharp House, which was a brand new dormitory . . .

SL: Yep.

AS: . . . at the time. And so it was . . .

[01:34:02] SL: There was George McKinney.

AS: George McKinney, the quarterback, was there.

SL: Yeah. And . . .

AS: James Monroe.

SL: . . . Dick Cunningham was there at that time, and what about—oh, Lloyd Phillips? Wasn't he—he was around . . .

AS: Right. He was. Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . about then. I remember all those guys 'cause they used to come up to my parents' house to eat.

AS: Okay. [*Laughs*]

SL: I'm not sure you didn't either. I . . .

AS: [*Laughs*] I don't think so.

SL: I—you probably—I remember the football team always . . .

AS: Yeah, they did.

[01:34:27] SL: . . . bein' up there, but—now what about the social life in Fayetteville? I mean, were you—did you have any Dickson Street experiences at all?

AS: No—well, no. I—we used to eat pizza at George's. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

AS: And that was—actually, that was my first experience in eating pizza. So that was a memorable event and . . .

[01:34:51] SL: Well, back then they—it was an Italian that owned George's, wasn't it?

AS: I don't know.

SL: Or Greek or . . .

AS: I don't know.

SL: I can't remember who . . .

AS: I don't know.

SL: . . . who he was.

AS: Yeah.

SL: But I do remember early on, you could get pizza there.

AS: Mh-hmm.

[01:35:03] SL: And what about Jug Wheeler's?

AS: Now, Jug—I've eat a lotta meals at Jug Wheeler's. Yeah. You know, we would go there in the car, and then you—course, you would order, you know, Sunday nights, they didn't have cafeteria—so we would order—in the athletic dorm—we'd order Jug's, and they would—they delivered. I've eaten a lotta, lotta meals at Jug Wheeler's. [*Laughs*]

SL: It was, like, fifteen cents for delivery, wasn't it, or some . . .

AS: I believe so, or something like that.

[01:35:26] SL: Now, back in those days, he also—Jug also delivered beer.

AS: Yeah, well, I . . .

SL: You never did that.

AS: [*Laughs*] I didn't do that.

SL: I know. I know. But . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: I'm trying to think what other—you know, I guess, Shipley Baking was . . .

AS: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . was there. Did you—you probably didn't know Curtis at that time.

AS: I did not. Hm-hm.

SL: He was a little older.

AS: Uh-huh.

[01:35:47] SL: And then had the Coca-Cola bottling plant on Dickson Street.

AS: Yeah, I worked for Vickers Laundry.

SL: For which one?

AS: Vickers.

SL: Vickers. Uh-huh.

AS: Yeah. Picked up clothes and, you know, and collected money. And that was a good—I made some money doin' that.

SL: They did the laundry for a lot of the campus, didn't they?

AS: Oh, yeah. They were big.

SL: They'd go around and pick up everyone's clothes and deliver 'em back.

AS: Right.

[01:36:18] SL: What other jobs did you have in Fayetteville while you were in school?

AS: Well, Vickers is what—I worked there for several years. Of

course, I was on a scholarship—ROTC—there was—got some money from ROTC. So, actually, I probably had more money at the University of Arkansas than I ever had in my life, you know. [Laughs] And Jeannie and I were dating. We spent a lotta money, too. You know, there are some . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . good restaurants, and Hunt's Steak House was—up in Springdale was fabulous.

SL: Heinie's.

AS: Heinie's. Yeah, that's really good.

SL: And let's see—I'm trying to think who . . .

AS: In fact, I think it's Heinie's I was thinking about.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And then I guess . . .

[01:36:56] AS: AQ Chicken was really, really good, you know, at that particular time.

SL: Mary Maestri's.

AS: Mary Maestri's. Mh-hmm.

[01:37:05] SL: Let's see, back then it was called the [pause]—oh, I can't remember the name of the place there on Dickson Street. Oh, I'll think of it. I'll think of it later. What about the train

depot back then? It was active back then, wasn't it?

AS: Not much, I don't think.

SL: Not much.

AS: Not much. Hm-hm.

SL: It had kinda lost its . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . passenger service?

AS: I think so.

[01:37:36] SL: And the Fayetteville Square—do you remember
much about the Fayetteville Square?

AS: No. I mean, I remember it, but I don't know, you know, there
was some—a lotta businesses around there, and—what was the
clothing store there—the . . .

SL: Well, there was Hunt's.

AS: Hunt's. Right.

SL: Hunt's Men's Store.

AS: Right.

SL: There was Campbell-Bell.

AS: Campbell-Bell. That's the . . .

SL: I think the Boston Store . . .

AS: Yeah, it was . . .

SL: There was a Boston Store there.

AS: Yeah, Campbell-Bell was the store, though, I think is the one I remember.

[01:38:01] SL: Course, the old McIlroy Bank . . .

AS: Yes. Right.

SL: . . . was there.

AS: Penney's.

SL: J.C. Penney's. Woolworth was up there.

AS: Yeah.

SL: Do you remember the homecoming parades?

AS: I do. Mh-hmm. We used to always have to decorate a float for the homecoming parade and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

AS: Yeah.

SL: I remember them being staged. They'd start on Washington Avenue.

AS: Right.

SL: Go down Dickson Street, I believe . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . and then go up around the square and back.

AS: Right.

[01:38:39] SL: You know, you were talking about fishing earlier at a lake. Weren't you—didn't you—there was someplace where

you . . .

AS: I spoke about Lake View.

SL: Lake View.

AS: Lake View. Mh-hmm.

SL: Yeah. Did you . . .

AS: Old Town Lake, it's called. Old Town Lake.

SL: Uh-huh.

AS: But it was across the road—the highway from Lake View, the school district.

[01:39:02] SL: Did you continue with your fishing at . . .

AS: Not much. No.

SL: Not much?

AS: Hm-hm. I'm not—I hunted a lot when I was—and fished a lot when I was in Helena, but I don't—I didn't—I don't hunt now, and I—we fish somewhat, but not much.

[01:39:16] SL: Mh-hmm. Let's see—what about professors at the university? Did you have any favorite professors?

AS: I had some good ones. Yes, I sure did.

SL: Which ones did you like the most?

AS: Well, Dr. Kennedy—Robert Kennedy was a finance professor.

Doris Cook was an accounting professor. She was really outstanding. Dr. Richards in psychology was very good. Dr. Van

Scyoc in history was excellent. Those are the ones I recall right now. But we—I really had some very good faculty members.

[01:39:55] SL: So with your degree, did you ever feel like you were unprepared once you left the university?

AS: No.

SL: You went to East Texas to work for your . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: What was his name again?

AS: Whit Halliday.

SL: Whit Halliday. Tell me a little bit about Whit Halliday.

AS: Well, he was in student affairs work. And he was—I thought he was a very impressive person. He was also in the military. I mean, he was a reserve officer in the military, and I just liked him very much. And I thought I'd like to do what he was doing in terms of my life's work, and that's bein' involved in higher education.

[01:40:45] SL: How long were you with him over in East Texas?

AS: East Texas? Oh, I think it was four years at East Texas, and then he left there to go down to Corpus Christi to be president of a university. And then I followed him down there. And so, then he was president, and I was the executive vice president, and then he moved on to be the head of the system of south Texas,

and then I was made president. And so then that—so I rode his coattail for a number of years. He was my mentor.

SL: And . . .

[01:41:24] JE: What was your graduate degree in—your post-graduate?

AS: Graduate?

JE: Uh-huh.

AS: It was at the University of Arkansas. It was in higher education administration—a master's. And then I went to the University of Oklahoma and received a Ph.D. degree in higher education administration.

[01:41:43] SL: Now when did you squeeze that in? When did that happen?

AS: Well, when I was at East Texas, I took a leave of absence to go up to the University of Oklahoma. And Jeannie and our two little girls went with me, and we lived up there for a year. And I did my residency work, and then I came back. And then I drove back and forth from Commerce to Norman for another year and then wrote the dissertation.

[01:42:06] SL: What was Oklahoma State like?

AS: It was . . .

SL: Oh . . .

AS: It was good. Yeah, we enjoyed Norman. Norman's really a fine place. And Barry Switzer was the football coach at that particular time, so it was a—those were the glory days for the Sooners.

[01:42:23] SL: Yeah. So you went to those games and . . .

AS: I—actually, I did not. [*Laughs*]

SL: You did not?

AS: I didn't have any tickets. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

AS: I was just—yeah. Uh-huh.

[01:42:32] SL: Did you get to visit with . . .

AS: Oh, yeah.

SL: . . . Coach Switzer at all?

AS: Oh, yeah, I visited. Right. Mh-hmm.

SL: Just . . .

AS: Yes.

SL: You know, it is amazing how many great coaches came out of Arkansas.

AS: That's true. Mh-hmm. That's a tribute to Frank Broyles, I think.

SL: Mh-hmm. Did you get to know Frank at all while you were a student?

AS: I did not. No.

SL: No?

AS: I did not. You know, I've gotten to know him very well since I've been back.

[01:43:05] SL: So, let's see, you all lived in Norman and you lived— and where is East Texas?

AS: Commerce.

SL: Commerce. You lived in Commerce. Where else have y'all lived as a family?

AS: Corpus Christi.

[01:43:21] SL: Corpus Christi. Now tell me about Corpus Christi. What was that like?

AS: Well, it's on the Gulf Coast.

SL: Yeah.

AS: It's in the middle of oil and gas country. It's—the population of Corpus Christi is probably about 50 percent Hispanic and 50 percent Anglo, and for those who don't know what Anglo— know—who do not know what an Anglo is, that's a white person.

[Laughs]

SL: Right. Right.

AS: And I didn't know what an Anglo was when I first moved to Corpus Christi. But I, you know, but that's the way we are referred to in south Texas. But—and, you know, I really—it's a

very diverse community, and I really, really learned to respect and like the Hispanic culture.

[01:44:12] SL: Did you . . .

AS: It's a wonderful culture.

SL: . . . pick up a second language there?

AS: Well, I did for a while, and I, you know, was—and I went to—they had a community college there, and I went for two years to the community college to learn to speak Spanish, mainly, to be able pronounce Hispanic proper names correctly. [01:45:47] Because, you know, a person's name's very valuable to the person, and it's important, I think, for us to be able to speak those names properly. And then I did—I was fairly fluent in Spanish. Pretty much lost it all now because I don't use it anymore. But . . .

[01:44:48] SL: Yeah. How long were you there?

AS: We were there for eighteen years.

SL: Eighteen years.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Okay, now, you move there, and what was your first job there? What . . .

AS: I was—it was—actually, it was the creation of a new university. A new state university. And Texas had done this in several

locations. [01:45:09] And I—we moved there in 1972, and I was the executive vice president.

SL: And you eventually became president . . .

AS: I did.

SL : . . . of that university.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: And your mentor went on to become a system's president.

AS: Yeah, he was the chancellor, which is—the titles in Texas between systems and the campuses are different than in Arkansas. The chancellor is the system person, and the presidents were the campus people. And in Arkansas, it's just the reverse. The—I'm the president of the system, and, you know, John White is the chancellor at the University of Arkansas.

SL: How big a campus was it?

AS: Well, it was a new campus.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Brand new. Yeah, and we—it got—I think it's about a ten-thousand-student campus right now.

[01:45:53] SL: Mh-hmm. So you were right there on the Gulf.

AS: Right on the Gulf.

SL: That's a different culture. I mean, that's a different lifestyle, isn't it?

AS: Oh, it is. It's flat.

SL: Very humid.

AS: Very humid, very flat. The wind blows all the time. Good—but that's where our daughters grew up, in Corpus Christi, basically. And they graduated from high school there. [01:46:12] And so we had a wonderful time living in Corpus Christi, Texas. And I, you know, I guess I thought we'd probably be there for the rest of my professional career, you know, but then one day, I got a phone call, so . . .

[01:46:24] SL: We'll talk about that phone call in a second. The— did you do any sailing or any . . .

AS: No.

SL: . . . anything . . .

AS: No sailing.

SL: . . . Gulf related?

AS: But we went to the beach . . .

SL: Went to the beach.

AS: . . . a lot. Mh-hmm.

SL: Had a lot of seafood, I would guess.

AS: Oh, yes. Good shrimp. [*SL laughs*] Good redfish. Mh-hmm.

[01:46:42] SL: It's just amazing to me, you didn't do any fishin' when you were out there.

AS: No, but—we didn't. [*Laughs*] It's, you know, fishin' in the—
now, fishin' in the Gulf—that's serious business, now. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's game fishin'.

AS: I mean, it is.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Yeah.

[01:46:54] SL: Well, what did you do to relax? What did you do for,
you know . . .

AS: Well, I played a lotta golf. Our daughters—we had two
daughters—we have two daughters, and then it was—and I
don't—there's nobody in—no father that has—who has ever lived
who enjoyed their daughters more than I enjoyed my daughters
and my children. And they were very involved in—as they grew
up and got older—junior high school—with horses. [01:47:25]
And so we were in the horse business for about six years.

SL: Now, what do you mean by horse business? What . . .

AS: Well, both of 'em rode horses, and one of 'em was involved in
the show horse business, and the other was actually a cowgirl. I
mean, she ran the poles and ran the barrels, and rodeoing in
Texas, as you know, is big, big business. And Katie did not do
the rodeoing part, but Jenifer did. [01:47:55] And we would go
to rodeos on Saturday night or for a weekend. And, you know,

on Saturday night, they have the ten finalists. Well, there may be a hundred and twenty-five people trying to become one of those ten finalists. So you'd go to the rodeo on Thursdays, and they'd start running eliminations, and sometimes they'd run almost all night long, you know. So you'd have to wake your daughter at three o'clock in the morning and say, "Okay, Jenifer, it's time to run the—run your poles," you know. And so then you got down to the final ten. But Jeannie and Jenifer and Katie and—we went to a lotta rodeos—lotta horse shows. So that took up a lotta time, but I lo—I enjoyed every minute of it.

[01:48:40] SL: So that meant that you owned horses.

AS: Oh, we did.

SL: And did you have your own ranch or did you rent . . .

AS: No, we rented.

SL: You rented . . .

AS: Yeah, we—mh-hmm.

SL: And you . . .

AS: We leased a stable.

SL: Did you have your own horse trailer and . . .

AS: We did. Mh-hmm.

SL: Pulled that with a pickup truck or . . .

AS: We had a station wagon.

SL: Station wagon.

AS: Yeah.

[01:48:57] SL: So that was kinda your family vacations, wasn't it?

AS: It was. It . . .

SL: Took that . . .

AS: That's where all our money went, too. [*Laughter*]

SL: But you loved doing it.

AS: Oh, yeah. And Jeannie liked it more than I did, so we—yeah.

[01:49:11] SL: And so, how well did the girls do?

AS: It—well, they did really well. Yeah. Jenifer has a—has saddles and the belt buckles and a lot of other stuff. Katie has a lotta trophies that we didn't bring with us when we came to Little Rock. But it was fun. It was good.

[01:49:31] SL: Do they still have interest in horses or . . .

AS: Well, I think . . .

SL: . . . riding?

AS: No, Jenifer would, I think, someday probably will have a horse. She doesn't now because she's got boys who are racing race cars, and you know, it takes a lotta time doing that.

SL: Race cars?

AS: Yeah, drag racing.

[01:49:48] SL: Wow. That's interesting. So what was it like being

president of the University of Texas, Corpus Christi?

AS: Well, then it was called Corpus Christi State University.

SL: Okay.

AS: And there was a—there were three universities in that system: Corpus Christi, Texas A&I University in Kingsville, and then Laredo State University over in Laredo. And then we had a big citrus research center down in the valley. Oranges and grapefruit. And it was a good experience. We had a lotta—private support. Corpus Christi was a large community, about two hundred fifty thousand, and it was—they had not had a public university, and they were proud of it. And they supported generously, and it was a good experience.

[01:50:48] SL: What was the most difficult part of that job?

AS: Oh, the difficult—most difficult part of any job is, you know, being sure that you have enough resources to do what you need to do. And I—that's where I learned, you know, and spent a lotta time in Austin at the State Capitol working with the legislature and working with the leadership of Texas about funding for higher education. [01:51:12] And that's just part of the—that's part of the job of being a university president or a university chancellor. And then we raised a lotta private dollars and—it was—if you were looking for a place to start a new

university, a community of two hundred and fifty thousand people that did not have a public university, that's a good place.

[01:51:34] SL: Yeah. Were your experiences with the Texas Legislature—are legislatures pretty much the same? I mean, are . . .

AS: Different names and different faces, but, yes, they're pretty much the same. Right. And, for the most part, I have a high regard for legislators and people who work in state government, because they're—they want to do what's best for the people they represent, and they work very hard. And . . .

[01:52:07] SL: Well, maybe let's talk about the phone call now.

AS: The what?

SL: The phone call.

AS: Phone calling?

SL: Yeah. You got a phone call . . .

AS: Oh.

SL: . . . while you were at . . .

AS: Okay. That's [*laughs*] . . .

SL: . . . Corpus Christi.

AS: Right.

[01:52:19] SL: Who was that phone call from?

AS: Well, actually, it was from Sykes Harris, and Sykes Harris just

died not, you know, six months ago. But he was chairman of the board of the University of Arkansas—of the Board of Trustees. And he called me and said that I had—several people had recommended me as a possible candidate to be the system president of the University of Arkansas, and would I have an interest in it. And he didn't offer me the job. I mean, he just wanted to know if I'd be interested in throwing my hat in the ring, so to speak. And so it caught me kinda off guard, and—because I hadn't thought anything about this. And so I talked to Jeannie about it, and we discussed it, and our daughters had both graduated from the University of Texas [*laughs*], and they were working in Houston. [01:53:04] And so it just seemed like, "Well, yeah, I'll—we'll look at it." But I told Sykes, and they did have a headhunter. I said, "Now, I just—I'm just putting my toe in the water right now. I'd just like to find out a little bit more about it, because I have a very good situation here in Corpus Christi, and I just, you know, want to know what you're looking for and when you would want this person to accept the job," and all these kinda things. So I had some conversations. And then at some point in time, you have to decide that "Yes, I'm goin' for it" or "I'm not goin' for it." And so Jeannie and I said, "Well, we're gonna go for it," you know. And so

fortunately, it worked out and that was in, probably, the fall of—
I mean, the—yeah, the fall of [19]89, and then it, you know,
went over to the spring. And then later that spring, the Board of
Trustees offered me the job. And so I came to work at the
University of Arkansas on June the first here in Little Rock as the
system president.

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay.

[01:54:12] SL: So you started playing golf in Commerce in—at East
Texas State.

AS: There was a little nine-hole golf course there, and Jeannie and I
started playing golf in Commerce. We liked it. Neither one of us
were very good, but we all—we enjoyed being on the golf
course. [*SL laughs*] And so it's a . . .

SL: It is great.

AS: It's fun. It's a—it's an escape, and it's . . .

SL: It can be frustrating.

AS: It can be, but you know, we don't—we just go out there because
we like to be on a golf course. It's a—usually a pretty nice place
to be. And we both enjoy golf, so we play nine holes; eighteen
holes, sometimes.

[01:54:48] SL: Mh-hmm. So let's talk about your mentor and all the

things that you learned from him.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: His name was Halliday.

AS: Whit Halliday.

SL: Whit Halliday. Where was he from?

AS: He was actually from California. Mh-hmm.

SL: How'd he end up at Arkansas?

AS: I think Dr. Caldwell hired him. John Tyler Caldwell.

[01:55:08] SL: Yeah. And it sounds like he kinda took a personal interest in you, and . . .

AS: He did.

SL: . . . he—you had similar backgrounds. He was from—he had a military background. You were going into the military.

AS: Right. Mh-hmm.

SL: Y'all kept in touch with other . . .

AS: We did.

SL: . . . while you were serving, and he asked you to come back and you did—or you wanted to come back . . .

AS: I—yeah, right, and he . . .

SL: . . . to pick up a degree and he . . .

AS: . . . he helped me get—yeah.

[01:55:31] SL: Yeah. And so you followed him to Commerce, Texas.

He asked you to come with him.

AS: Right.

SL: What was that—what was he like working with? Tell me a little bit about . . .

AS: Well, he was a strong leader. He had a lotta self-confidence. He believed in—not that I was one of them, but he believed in surroundin' himself with good people, and he supported his—the people who worked for him. He gave them a lotta room for them to use their, you know, their intelligence and their imagination to do their jobs. He didn't micromanage. He treated other people with dignity and respect. He—I think he had the—all the marks of a—that a good leader should have, and I respected that, and I—you know, he was in education. I grew up in an educational family, and I just thought that's what I wanted to do, and, fortunately, it's worked out.

[01:56:37] SL: What kind of challenges did he have in front of him in his position that you watched him overcome? I mean, it sounds like to me that he was probably pretty good at what he was doin' and . . .

AS: He was very good. I mean . . .

[01:56:55] SL: What do you think you learned from him?

AS: Well, he [*laughs*] was a very hard worker. He related well with

people. He was able to get strong support from outside the university to support the university. He was excellent with legislators and related well with governors, and I learned a lot from him in learning how to work with, you know, the general assembly of the legislature, and he had good friends. He respected those legislators. He appreciated 'em, so therefore, they appreciated him. I mean, it's just—but it's human relations. He had great human relations skills.

[01:57:44] SL: Is there—do you remember—is there a story that you can tell us about him that kind of illustrates the kinda guy he was?

AS: Hmm—I can't think of any.

SL: What about any particular issue that he was trying to get addressed in the legislature? Was there—were there ever millages or bonds or standards or . . .

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: What kinda stuff did he run through the legislature that he'd shepherd through or help shepherd through or . . .

AS: Well, I can think of one. He was very interested in having a doctoral degree program at East Texas State University, and he convinced members of the legislature to support—enlarge—expanded graduate program, including doctoral degree

programs. And that was a big, big issue for the faculty and for the staff and for the community. And I saw the way that he did that. And he worked well with people, and he did his homework. And, you know, people felt good about the university because they felt good about Whit Halliday. And, you know, presidents are the university when they go outside the university to represent the university. And we have to present a good image and have to present a degree of confidence, and the idea that we know what we're doing and that we have the best interest of the university in mind when we're asking for these funds to support the university. And he did extremely well.

[01:59:16] SL: A doctoral program really elevates a university, doesn't it?

AS: It does. And it does if you're—you know, if it's appropriate and if you have the faculty and the support to do that—it's a very expensive program, but it helps. Yes.

[01:59:34] SL: It's probably something that needs to be fed regularly to maintain . . .

AS: That's true. Right.

SL: . . . an excellent level.

AS: Right. If you're gonna do it, you need to do it well.

[01:59:44] SL: Mh-hmm. And so when you say a doctoral program,

you're talking about more than just one area with—where you can earn a Ph.D.—you're talking about a number of areas?

AS: Well, no, I'm—at East Texas, it was primarily in education because that was basically, to begin with, a teacher education program. But there was—in counseling and guidance and, you know, administrators' programs in higher education. But it was focused primarily in education.

[02:00:17] SL: Once you get one started, is it a little bit easier to add to that?

AS: Well, it depends. You know, if you—but the main thing is, if you're gonna have a doctoral degree program—a Ph.D.—an Ed.D. program—well, then, you need to be sure that you have the kind of resources to support that program and that there are enough students interested in that program to come, because you can't have a doctoral program, have two students. You've got to have a critical mass of students in order for it to be economically feasible. And so, you know, offering doctoral-level work is serious business, and you need to be sure that the university can support it and maintain it.

[02:01:01] SL: I guess the first thing you need to do is have a good teacher—good teachers . . .

AS: You do.

SL: . . . in the program. And the salaries have to be competitive.

AS: That's right.

SL: The facilities have to be adequate.

AS: True.

SL: What else are the elements that . . .

AS: You've gotta have good library resources. You've got—and, course, in this day and time, you have to have technological support. But it—it's a total package. You know, you just don't say you're gonna offer a doctoral degree program. [*Laughs*] You've got to be sure that you have the—once again, the most important thing is to have the faculty. And then the faculty—you have to have the resources to be able to attract those faculty members and to support those faculty members in terms of helping the students be successful researchers and be serious about their academic work.

[02:01:54] SL: How long does it take to put a program like that together, generally?

AS: It—I, you know, it probably takes a couple—three years to get it off the ground. Mh-hmm.

SL: That's a lotta work when you don't know if [*laughs*] you're gonna get it through. I mean, I guess there has to be a willingness . . .

AS: Sure.

SL: . . . and encouragement to keep working . . .

AS: Sure.

SL: . . . toward that goal.

AS: Right.

SL: You have to be able to read the indicators that these guys are gonna, "You put it together; they'll come through for you" . . .

AS: Sure.

[02:02:27] SL: . . . kinda deal. Do you remember any particularly poignant conversations you had with him that kind of turned a [*snaps fingers*] light on for you or . . .

AS: Well, yeah. I mean, he was really committed in terms of what he was doing, and he wanted the best for the university. He wanted to be sure that we—he was very student-oriented. You know, he was very concerned about students, and that once—when you bring a student into the university, that you need to do everything you can to help that student be successful.

[02:03:06] And that we, you know, a lotta students come—students come to the university—to a university from different—very many different sources. Some come from homes that, you know, they sit around the dinner table at night talking about the importance of education. A lotta students come from homes that they never sit around the table—dinner table talking about

anything, much less the value of education. Some people have the financial resources to do it. Others don't, you know. So we really have to take a student like the student is when they come in and do everything we can, I think, to help students be successful. Because, you know, if you don't do that and if we're—if a student comes to the university and the student is not successful, well then, that student's had a bad experience, you know, and he's gonna—he or she's gonna leave the university not feeling that kind of self-confidence that a person needs to have in life and probably has a big debt over his or her head because he borrowed a lotta money.

SL: Yeah.

[02:04:04] AS: And now he's got—that student's got to go out—that ex-student's got to go out and get a job and try to pay out—pay back those, you know, those big financial aid bills, and at the same time, not have the earning power if that person had been successful. So I think we need an attitude of helping students be successful if they're coming into the university.

[02:04:32] SL: Was there any particular achievements that you had in Commerce that you're—that happened under your administration that you're particularly proud of?

AS: Well, one of my responsibilities was to seek federal dollars, and

so, I was in Washington a lot with the National Science Foundation and the Office of Education and other federal entities. And we did get a lotta money and, you know, that was very helpful. There was a lot more money to be had for higher education then because they had the Higher Education Facilities Act and other programs under the LBJ, you know, administration. But—so while we got a lotta money, there was—it was easier picking then than now. And then I worked with the members of Congress and the legislative delegation from Washington, DC, for East Texas, and they were helpful.

[02:05:29] SL: So let me think. Was LBJ in the White House when you were in Commerce?

AS: He did . . .

SL: He was probably . . .

AS: . . . become—uh-huh.

SL: . . . leaving the White House about that time or . . .

AS: Probably so. But it was—yeah. But it—but the higher education acts had been developed.

SL: Mh-hmm. [02:05:49] So do you think that your success with that and the time that you spent in Washington—do you think that was an attractive thing to the Board of Trustees at the University of Arkansas? I mean, what do you think tipped the

scale . . .

AS: Oh . . .

SL: . . . for your hiring?

AS: . . . I don't know. [*Laughs*] I don't know. I don't know. I was—course, I'd been the president at—in Corpus Christi for about eleven years when they asked if I would be interested. And at the time, I was—became president when I was about thirty-six, I think. And so . . .

SL: That's pretty young.

[02:06:23] AS: . . . I was about—I'm sorry. That's not true. I became president when I was about forty. [*Laughs*] I came to the University of Arkansas in 1990. Now we'll go backwards, and I was—if I go backwards, I was—I guess I was about forty years old when I became—forty-two when I was president. And then I was president for about twelve years, so that was way, way—that's what it would've been. Yes. I think probably that my ability to work with the legislature and my ability to work in a, you know, diverse environment. [02:07:10] The success that the university had at—in Corpus Christi. I—and then I had a good—lotta friends in Arkansas who knew me, and I stayed in contact with, and they said good things about me, and I don't know the reasons, really. [*Laughs*] I'm just glad they hired me.

[02:07:26] SL: Well, I think everyone's glad they hired you. So when you got here, what did you see the biggest challenge was for the system?

 AS: Well, I think, once again, it was a resource challenge. We'd—there was a great need to have a lot of new facilities. And you'd—if you think back in 1990, the university, you know, the university's an entirely different university now than it was in nineteen—not that I had that much to do with it. But at the same time, it's just—there's been a major, major amount of construction—academic facilities, athletic facilities, dormitories—just unbelievable. Hundreds of millions of dollars of construction. And when I got here, there was talk in the legislature about a college savings bond program, you know, and this would be a three-hundred-million-dollar program to help higher education. [02:08:21] And there was a lot of people who were saying, "Yeah, that's a good thing" or "not a good thing." I mean, and I got in and I said, "That is a great thing." I said, "We need to do that. We need to get behind that. We need to be sure that the people of Arkansas support that." This was in 1990. There was to be a vote on it at the end of that year. [2:08:39] So I got very involved in flyin' all over the state of Arkansas and encouraging people to vote for that bond

issue. And it passed overwhelmingly. And I think that was the jump-start for a lotta of the major construction programs at many universities—all the universities—public universities in Arkansas. Three hundred million dollars back in 1990 is a lotta money.

[02:09:02] SL: Now when you got here, the university system consisted of what campuses?

AS: Well, it was UAMS, of course, Fayetteville, UALR, Pine Bluff, and Monticello, and the Division of Agriculture.

[02:09:17] SL: There were lots of other schools—universities—two-year colleges and lots of 'em in Arkansas.

AS: There . . .

SL: And that— isn't that—that's kind of—that's cumbersome to have different systems within the state competing for the same legislative dollars, isn't it?

AS: It is. It is. It's—it—I mean, that—just there's a lot of—lotta institutions goin' to the trough, so to speak. Right.

[02:09:48] SL: So under your tenure, hasn't the system grown—incorporated more . . .

AS: Well, it's grown. We—the, you know, it's a—we now have five community colleges as a part of the system, and then u—Fort Smith became a university—evolved from a two-year to a four-

year institution, and now that's part of the system. And then we have the school of math and science, we have the Clinton School; and so it, you know, it's expanded somewhat.

[02:10:15] SL: Mh-hmm. That's an interesting thing to bring in the two-year colleges into the system. That—has that always been discussed or did that just kinda . . .

AS: It evolved.

SL: Evolved.

AS: Yeah, few people realize—don't realize this, but the University of Arkansas, when it first opened its doors to students in Fayetteville, it also opened up a two-year college in Pine Bluff. Did you know that?

SL: I [*AS laughs*—there—because the idea was to educate everyone, right?

AS: The idea was to really provide educational experience for African Americans.

SL: Yes.

AS: Because it was a normal school. And then that two-year school evolved into a AM&N. [02:11:03] And then it came back, actually, to the University of Arkansas . . .

SL: System.

AS: . . . at a later time. So it came full circle. So, therefore, you

know, community colleges—and I think community colleges are very valuable to Arkansas, and I think they are to any state. And when I was living in Texas in Corpus Christi, they had Del Mar College, which was an outstanding community college—technical, vocational, college-transfer program. [02:11:28] And so, the first school that came to us and talked to us about joining the system was the community college in Helena. And Ernest Cunningham, who's a member of the legislature, approached me about—could it become part of the University of Arkansas, and I said, "Well, I hadn't thought about that, but, you know, we'll talk to the board." And the board said they thought they would like to do that, and so it became a part of the university. Then the institution in Batesville and Morrilton and Hope and De Queen—they are now also part of the University of Arkansas System.

[02:12:00] SL: Now—let's see, now—Batesville—is that Lyon College or is that—that's different.

AS: No. No, no, it's a community college.

SL: It's a community college.

AS: It's a college there.

[02:12:12] JE: I have a question. What's a "normal" school?

SL: A normal school—normal meant a teacher program—teacher

education. That's just—that was the terminology used for teacher-education program. But it was—and that's basically as it started, but then it evolved into the university for African American students. And UAPB, you know, at AM&N, UAPB—at one time it was the only university—public university in Arkansas that African Americans could attend.

[02:12:43] SL: Well, up until that point, they had to go somewhere else. They had to go to what—I forget what the other—more popular universities were for the black community. But they left the state.

AS: Yeah. Uh-huh.

SL: There was no place else to go.

AS: Uh-huh.

[02:12:59] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about some of the things that you've faced as system president. You know, each campus has its own chancellor, I guess. And you really try to avoid micromanaging those guys. They—they're on the ground. They're where the rubber meets the road. They—it's their responsibility to know what's going on with their campus. But it seems to me—I—maybe I'm way off on this, but it seems to me, there's a lot of energy spent on athletic issues within the system. There's always been controversy about University of Arkansas

and Arkansas State playing or, you know, those campuses playing each other. And then, of course, there's the, you know, coming from Fayetteville, I've always heard, you know, the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, is the flagship campus.

[02:14:03] And it's up there in the northwest corner. It's not—you know, Washington County successfully bid for that and got it in the old days, and there it is. So talk to me a little bit about the things that you have to do to make this thing work. I mean . . .

AS: [*Laughs*] Well, the first thing I have to do—and if I don't do this, it's not gonna work.

SL: Yeah.

AS: I've got to be sure there's strong leadership on each of our campuses. Leadership is everything. I mean, there's nothing even a close second. And if you don't hire the right person to be the leader—the chancellor—of a campus, well, then, I've got a lotta problems. If I hire the right people—person or other person—well, then, I don't have a lotta problems on a particular campus. And I think in the case of John White, he's done an outstanding job as the chancellor at the University of Arkansas. Dodd Wilson has done an outstanding job as the chancellor at UAMS. Joel Anderson is doing an outstanding job at UALR. S—

and I think we have good leadership across the board.

[02:15:09] That's by far my most important job—by far. A close second would—I don't know if it's not close, but the second is to be sure that I can do everything to—that I can to secure the resources necessary to support the universities and our colleges. And so those are really the two big jobs. But the first is to be sure I have good leadership, because if you do not have good leadership, well, then it doesn't make any difference how many resources you have. So we work hard at that. And, fortunately, at the University of Arkansas now, John White was the chancellor. I think Dan Ferritor did a very good job as chancellor. [02:15:51] And I think Dan took the university when it was—it was really in trouble. I mean, it was—it'd lost enrollment. There was a fence around Old Main. You know, there—it was sad. Dan became the chancellor. He provided twelve years of strong, strong service—started the upward movement of the university. John White came in and took it. I think Dave Gearhart, our new chancellor, is gonna do the—continue the same kinda situation. And what you really need in an organization to be highly successful is good, long-term leadership. You have to have a good succession program. I think Dodd—Harry Ward provided that leadership at UAMS.

[02:16:35] And Dodd Wilson's followed him. And now, we're looking for a new [*laughs*] chancellor at UAMS. And we need to find the right person to step in after Dodd. So that's the big job. And then, you know, to seek the resources. Now, at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, it is the big-time athletic program in the state of Arkansas. It's really the only big-time athletic program. No professional degree program, et cetera.



So in a lotta ways, the University of Arkansas—the Razorbacks, you know, they're the national team of Arkansas. And there's a passion about the Razorbacks. I mean, they just—I mean, people live and die on the Razorbacks. And some people say it shouldn't be that—they should not be that way. And they tell me, you know, they feel sorry for me that [*SL laughs*], you know, we have so much passion about the Razorbacks. And I say that's a good problem. You'd really have a problem if nobody cared. And people care, so it gets—it—it's a big responsibility for us to do everything we can to be sure we have, once again, the right leadership, the right coaches in place to have a successful program. Now in the SEC, you're not going to win all the time. I mean, but people have to have the feeling that when they go to a football game or a basketball game or the soccer meet or whatever it is, is that there's a chance to win.

You know, I think we've had that, and I think we have that today. And that's, you know—and you have to—I don't call it a monster. Some people have called it that, but you have to feed the program. I mean, you have to have the resources to be able to do it. And to be successful in seeking those resources, you have to have a competitive program.

[02:18:31] SL: Athletic program in Fayetteville's—isn't it all—there's not any state money involved with that, is there?

AS: No state money. Hm-hm.

SL: And is—that's a template—that's a paradigm that Coach Broyles put in place, isn't it?

AS: It is. It is. It . . .

SL: I guess "Barnie" started down that . . .

AS: Probably Barnie started it. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . road, but . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . Coach really took it to a different level, didn't he?

AS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I mean, Coach Broyles—I mean, you know, his—I don't guess athletics have ever been higher in Arkansas than when Coach Broyles was the coach. You know, he was highly successful in any way you measure it. Now, being successful in the Southwest Conference and being successful in

the Southeastern Conference may be too—a little bit too different challenges, but still, he—any way you look at it, he had a highly successful program. And, you know, our football program fell on some hard times during the [19]90s.

[02:19:27] And then I think Houston came in, and he was able to elevate it up. And, you know, the—when I—in the [19]90s, we made—at Fayetteville we may have—a lotta games we had forty, forty-five thousand people, you know, at the game and empty seats on each end. [02:19:46] And now, they're pretty much all full houses, and we've gotta keep that going, you know. Basketball—we had a little lull, and now it's back up, you know, with th—Coach Pelfrey.

[02:20:00] SL: Well, you know, I can remember when it was just only football.

AS: Mh-hmm. Oh, yeah.

SL: There really wasn't a basketball program.

AS: Right. That's right.

SL: I can remember when there really wasn't a track program.

AS: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm. Well, Coach Broyles is to be given credit for—wasn't no baseball program.

SL: That's right.

[02:20:15] AS: You know, when I was at the University of Arkansas,

we didn't have a—we were not in the Southwest Conference baseball. We had a club sports almost.

SL: And women's athletics.

AS: Mh-hmm. That wasn't . . .

SL: Wasn't there.

AS: It didn't exist. Yeah.

SL: Didn't exist.

AS: Mh-hmm.

[02:20:32] SL: It is amazing how the entire state identifies with an . . .

AS: It's a blessing.

SL: . . . athletic program.

AS: It's a blessing. It's a blessing. It's also a challenge. But, you know, the—if nobody cared, we'd have a serious problem.

People care, so therefore, we've got—makes a hard—makes our job more challenging. But we've got to be sure that we do our best to run the athletic program in a responsible way and that we have great coaches.

[02:21:03] SL: So each of the chancellors report to the Board of Trustees, basically, don't they?

AS: Hmm . . .

SL: Or do they report to you?

AS: They report to me. Mh-hmm.

SL: And so are you in daily contact with chancellors—each chancellor every day or . . .

AS: No, no.

SL: No.

AS: No, I'm not. I'm not. It's a, you know, you go—I get to deal with the very good things, and I get to deal with the very bad [laughs] things, you know. If we have a, you know, groundbreaking and dedication of new buildings, well, I get to participate in that. [02:21:42] If we have problems with—if we have problems, I get to deal with that. Usually, the great middle ground is that I don't get involved much with that, you know. And . . .

[02:21:53] SL: Let's talk about some of the problems you've had to deal with.

AS: Uh-huh.

SL: I think we should be up front with some of that, because it, you know, it can't be all fun and games—that . . .

AS: No.

SL: I mean, it's a job. And there—and sometimes jobs are hard, and hard decisions have to be made, and—okay, maybe just give me a couple of examples of those problem things that you've—that

you're faced with.

AS: Well, one of the big examples is—I think is moving the football game from Little Rock to Fayetteville. You know, I think that the reasons that—why we wanted to do that—why Frank Broyles thought we needed to do that is that we needed to really produce more resources for the athletic program at the University of Arkansas 'cause the football program, the basketball program carry the rest of the athletics, even though baseball is now pretty much a—pays its own way. But there's still a lot of cost in that. And Frank thought if he would—could be able to build a big stadium in Fayetteville and move a football game, that would work. Well, as we know, there were a lotta people that didn't agree with that. [02:23:03] And so we had to work through all that, and it was painful. But, at the same time, we had to be sure that whatever we did is that we maintain—did every—do everything we—did everything we could do to maintain the passion for athletics. And so we had a couple of almost town meetings here in Little Rock, you know, invited people to come and speak and talk about this and see if there was a way we could get some kind of compromise out of all this. And so, there was a compromise that was developed, and that was to, you know, always play two football games—not always,

but had a fifteen-year contract—play two football games in Little Rock and one would be an SEC game. And I think it's worked out okay. You know, there are still some carts—scar tissue in regard to that decision because people were really disappointed that we were moving a football game from Fayetteville—I mean, from Little Rock to Fayetteville. [02:23:59] But when you think about it, that's, you know, if they weren't disappointed, that would be too bad, you know. [*Laughs*] I mean, I'm, you know, and—that we needed to work hard to be sure to bring everybody back into the fold that we can. And I think we're, you know, I think it's worked out okay. We have a lot more people goin' to football games in both Little Rock and Fayetteville now than we did—well, on a particular game. Now there—we had three—usually three games before, but there are some years when we'll have three games here. And I predict we'll be playing football in Little Rock for a long, long time to come.

[02:24:39] SL: Well, I guess the arguments were that Little Rock's centrally located. It's easier for more people to come or . . .

AS: That's—mh-hmm.

SL: . . . you know, people in southeast Arkansas—it's a big trip . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . to go all the way to Fayetteville. And so you take away

those games and you're taking away their—a pride, almost, you know, is . . .

AS: Yes.

SL: And they can't participate anymore.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: Or it's very . . .

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . difficult for them to participate. So you can . . .

AS: There are arguments on both sides, you know.

SL: Yeah.

AS: It's good recruiting to play in Little Rock.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[02:25:14] AS: But at the same time, we need to have a SEC big-time stadium, and the only way to do that is to be sure that we have enough revenue coming in. And you've got to have a seventy-thousand-seat stadium to have enough revenue coming in. And if you're gonna do that, it's logical to do that in Fayetteville. But it's—there are good arguments on both sides . . .

SL: Yeah.

AS: . . . you know. And—but I think that we've weathered that storm, for the most part, and that we're—we've rebuilt that

goodwill and—but we've got to have a competitive program to do that. And we have had and I think we will have in the future.

[02:25:53] SL: You know, UAMS is a big success story.

AS: It's enormous.

SL: And I guess Harry Reed . . .

AS: Harry Ward.

SL: . . . or Harry Ward had kind of—I know that he—you didn't recruit him, did you?

AS: No.

SL: He was in before you got here. But it seems to me that that's another classic example of a system hiring the right guy at the right time.



[02:26:26] AS: Yeah. Harry Ward was—is one of the greatest leaders that Arkansas's ever had, I think, in higher education, business, or whatever it may be. He came in when the—when UAMS was really struggling again. And he had a vision for UAMS, and he had the ability to recruit a lotta people as supporters of UAMS to do what he thought needed to be done. He raised a lotta private funds. He brought the programs. He hired some outstanding faculty members to come in. He already had some good ones. And he just provided the, you know, the care and the nurturing and the leadership for UAMS to be highly

successful. And they recruited a, you know, Bart Barlogie to come in as—to head the cancer center. [02:27:21] Multiple myeloma—some other strong—all strong academic programs within the university or UAMS—kind of a UAMS institution—are built around people, you know. It's because you really have somebody really capable and bright and in a particular profession or in a particular discipline for that to be great. And we've—UAMS has really hired some world-class physicians and faculty members to come in to UAMS to help build that. A lot of it's done with private funds. That's another phenomenon I think that the University of Arkansas has had over the last twenty years, is the ability to raise private funds. Because twenty years ago, we raised almost no private dollars. [02:28:12] Today, we probably have coming into the University of Arkansas System well over a hundred million dollars per year of private dollars, which we didn't have twenty years ago.

SL: Well, twenty years ago that was more than the endowment at the University of Arkansas.

AS: Yeah. I mean, yeah. I mean . . .

SL: The whole thing.

AS: By far. Yeah. And so that is—and that's just part of the job of a university leader anymore—is to be dedicated to raising private

funds, because we can do a lot with state dollars, but if you really want a real margin of excellence, well, then, you have to have those private dollars.

[02:28:49] SL: You know, another thing that I think is a stroke of brilliance and a great service from UAMS is that AHEC program, where you've actually got clinics affiliated with UAMS out in the communities where there are not major medical facilities—that there's real medical care—again, where the rubber meets the road.

AS: Right.

SL: Where it's needed. It's because of that program, there's people out there in the state—they can get the medical care they need close to them—their home.

AS: That's true, too.

SL: And . . .

[02:29:26] AS: And another thing is, our students in the medical school work through those programs—particularly, in interning. And so they understand—they leave the UAMS understanding what the challenges are in the rural parts of this state, and they have a better understanding. And they're—the—and they also know that we have to meet those medical challenges throughout the entire state of Arkansas. So, I mean, UAMS has got a

tremendous outreach mentality. You know, they really view the state of Arkansas as the medical school campus, almost. And they have a real commitment to providing quality health care throughout the state of Arkansas.

[02:30:17] SL: That's a great example of how the people of Arkansas really [*laughs*] benefit from having a strong university system.

 AS: Mh-hmm. Well, that's what we try to—that's what we say. We say that the University of Arkansas System collectively—and this includes UAM—this includes the medical, it includes the University of Arkansas, it includes our other universities in other locations, our community colleges, the Division of Agriculture, which is a land-grant part of the university—Cooperative Extension Services in every county, experiment station services in several locations throughout the state of Arkansas. We have about eighteen thousand people—faculty, staff, administrators—working for the University of Arkansas System. We're about a two-billion-dollar organization. That's our budget. And how well we do our job in teaching and research and service, I think it has everything to do with the future of the state of Arkansas. And we need that good leadership in all of our institutions. We need that commitment that the reason we exist as an inst—the reason

we exist as institutions is because we need to serve Arkansas.

We need to make Arkansas better. Better place to live, a better place to work, and a better place to raise a family. And, you know, you—it's a commitment. And I think we have a lotta people all throughout the University of Arkansas System that feel that way and have that kinda commitment.

[02:32:06] SL: What kinda business—you know, you talked about it being a two-billion-dollar business—what kinda business was it when you first got here?

AS: Oh [*laughs*], well, it was smaller than that, I can assure you that. It was a lot smaller. And we've, you know, we've raised a lot. We've raised a lotta private funds. We bring in a lot more federal dollars in—more research dollars. [02:32:27] We have a lot more students. We have a lot more nurses and physicians at UAMS. Our athletic program—bigger at the University of Arkansas than at UALR and others. It's a—but it's grown—I don't know what it is, but it's grown substantially over the, you know, over a period of time.

[02:32:54] SL: Let's do two things here. What do you see—first of all, what do you see as the biggest challenge for the university future and what do you see as the brightest spot that the university has at this moment?

AS: Well, I mean, the greatest chal—the greatest continuing challenge that the university has—the university system has—is to be sure that we have the resource base to support the activities that we need to support. And the greatest challenge is that we keep top-quality people within the University of Arkansas System—that they don't leave Arkansas to leave and go other places because we don't have the salaries to pay them and we don't have the research facilities or we don't have the laboratories or we don't have the technology or whatever it may be. And it's a—you know, it takes a lot to keep all that in terms of state of the art and maintaining competitive salaries to keep that going. So I think the continuing challenge is having the resource base to keep it all going. And, you know, when you—we start thinking about the—looking at the economy in this day and time—what's happening in the economy—it gives you a little bit of . . .

SL: Pause.

AS: . . . reason to worry. [02:34:20] And—but we'll just have to keep working harder and try to raise more moneys and do what we can do. And then we can't—we cannot pass all the cost on to students, you know, because students have a—there's a limit in terms of how much they can pay for tuition and fees, and there

are a lotta challenges for state government to fund highways and prisons and health and education. So it's a big challenge to find all the resources that we need to adequately fund the important mission of universities.

[02:35:00] SL: What's the brightest spot you see right now for the university?

AS: Well, I think we have a lotta momentum. I think people are proud of the University of Arkansas System. I think proud of UAMS, University of Arkansas, UA Fort Smith, UALR, UAPB, the community colleges. I mean, I think we're hitting pretty well—pretty much on all cylinders right now. And I think that's the real bright spot. And the reason people feel good, I think, about—and there've been some surveys developed that indicate this—feel good about their universities and the university system is because we are responding to those challenges that—of providing educational opportunities and doin' the kinda research and providing those services that Arkansans need.

[02:35:57] SL: So, let's see, now—how long have you been system president?

AS: This is my eighteenth year. [*Laughs*]

SL: Eighteen years. So you've been here as long as you were in Corpus Christi, then?

AS: Well, I've been at the—it's the longest I've been in a, you know, I was a president there for eleven years, and I've been here for eighteen years. Mh-hmm.

[02:36:17] SL: Yeah. What do you think the future holds for B. Alan Sugg?

AS: [*Laughs*] Well, I'll be seventy in April, and, you know, I—at some point in time, the organization needs new leadership [*laughs*], you know. And so I would imagine that probably I've—I'm not there yet, but I can see it from here, you know, in terms of retirement. And I think probably not too many—not too distant future, probably, I'll be retiring. We do have some unfinished business to do right now. Terry Ward has already announced—I mean, Dodd Wilson has already announced his retirement as of June of [20]09. Milo Shult is gonna be stepping down in, you know, in not too distant future.

SL: That's agriculture.

[02:37:16] AS: That's agriculture. Right. Those are two very important jobs that I would—you know, I think we need to fill. And I think that the board feels that if I could stay and be sure that we have good leadership there—and, once again, remember that—I mean, leadership's everything. And, you know, and then I think probably at some point in time after that, I'd—I'll

probably be stepping down.

SL: They might give you a break. [*Laughter*]

AS: I don't know.

[02:37:50] SL: Those are two big hires coming up.

AS: Right.

SL: I bet you're thinking about 'em all the time, aren't you?

AS: I am. Yeah.

SL: I just don't see how you can grab a hold of that stuff, and you can be on top of it enough to know [*AS laughs*] where to turn and where those guys are. I—you know. I mean, I could see that pretty easily with Dave Gearhart. But I don't know where you're gonna go for those other guys. I mean . . .

[02:38:22] AS: Well, they're out there someplace. We just have to find 'em and identify 'em and recruit 'em and, you know, be sure that they're ready to come to Arkansas, if they're not already here.

[02:38:34] SL: Mh-hmm. So let's say, you know, couple years from now, you're out of the university system. What do you see yourself doing?

AS: Well [*laughs*], yeah, I don't know. I don't know.

SL: You hadn't thought that far ahead.

AS: I hadn't thought that far, I know. I mean, I, you know, Jeannie

and I have been lots of different places and, you know, and we'll cross that bridge when we get there, I guess. And I think I'd—I'll probably spend, you know, our grandchildren are beginning to—enter high school, and so I'd like to spend more time with them and more time with our daughters. And they both live in Texas and—we'll have more time to travel and probably do a lotta that.

[02:39:24] SL: You know, Dr. Sugg, you're such a—you've been in the center of all things university system for so long now. You're such a great resource of information and history. It's hard for me to imagine that you don't have a whole lot more to say and a whole lotta stories that you can't really [AS *laughs*] tell right now.

AS: Okay. [*Laughs*]

SL: But, you know, I just feel like I wish I could get some kinda commitment from you to be involved with the Pryor Center when you get done with this critical stuff. I—I'd like to be able to turn to you and maybe go back over some of the folks that you've worked with and some of the issues you've worked through.

AS: I would like to say one thing. I just . . .

SL: Okay.

[02:40:14] AS: . . . just thought about this. This is, you know, John

White is gonna be stepping down.

SL: Yeah.

AS: And he'll be stepping down in June. I think John White has done a phenomenal job for the University of Arkansas. Any way you look at it. Any way you measure it. And, you know, the last part of his tenure—the last year of his tenure, we've had several athletic challenges, you know, with the Razorbacks.

SL: Yeah.

[02:40:37] AS: And I think it—I think it's been a great disservice to John for the way some people view John White as a leader, because they were disappointed with the Razorbacks, you know, with the performance of the Razorbacks. But—and I'll tell you for sure, and I guarantee you this is absolutely true—John White and I discussed his retirement about nine months ago before he made his talk and told me what his plans were. [02:41:12] And this was already in—he was—already made that decision before any of this uni—athletic controversy came along. And for some people to even think about blaming John White for any of the negative publicity that's happened to the Razorbacks, I think is very, very unfair to John. And I think it's just not right. And at this point in time, when John has given so many valuable years of his life to the University of Arkansas, and he's not—and some

people, you know, want to just blame him for some of the athletic issues, which he really had nothing to do with—is just really unfair. And I'm just sorry that that people feel that way about John White, because John White has been—he's done so much for the University of Arkansas, and I so much appreciate what he's done.

[02:42:09] SL: Thank you for saying that. I feel the same way. You know, John—he's such a smart guy.

AS: Brilliant.

SL: I always feel so unworthy whenever I get into a conversation with him 'cause he's so sharp. I just never can keep up with him. He was always—he always seems to be a step ahead.

AS: Yeah.

SL: And he's such a good—I think he reads people really well. And it, you know, I got to work with him for what, five years, I guess.

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . He and Dave. And what a great team.

AS: Mh-hmm.

SL: What an honor it was to be a part . . .

AS: Yeah.

[02:42:44] SL: . . . of their efforts. Well, so we should probably go

talk to John at some point in time.

AS: Yeah, you should. [*Laughs*]

SL: I don't know if he's ready to talk right now or if he feels—but I do . . .

AS: He's a very important part of the history of the University of Arkansas and the state of Arkansas. And I think you—I think it'd be great for you to visit with him.

SL: And you know that he has great stories.

AS: Yeah, he's got great stories. Now he'll—and he, you know, he's—he'll be retired, so he can talk. [*Laughter*]

[02:43:12] SL: Well, is there anything else that we need to talk about? I mean, I know we didn't really—I know that you're hesitant to tell some stories. They're just too current, and you're very careful with protecting people, and I know that you feel some responsibility for John 'cause you brought him on. You recruited him.

AS: Oh, no doubt about it. And I'm . . .

SL: And you made him . . .

AS: . . . proud I did.

SL: . . . you [*laughs*] convinced him to come back, and what a great hire that was. But it's almost like one of your children, you know, when you hire these guys . . .

AS: Yeah.

[02:43:49] SL: . . . 'cause you've stuck your neck out, and you're saying this is the one. So is there anything else that we need to talk about? I'm thinkin' I'm gonna maybe go visit with your wife just a little bit.

AS: Okay.

SL: And maybe sit her down . . .

AS: Good.

SL: . . . and let her tell some of her story. Is there anything about her that I should ask?

AS: No—I mean, you know, we've—she's always been a great support for everything that I've ever done, and when we—you know, when I decided—when we talked about going to Germany and then coming back to the University of Arkansas and then having a job and havin' two little girls, you know, and figuring out how we were gonna go to graduate school and get all that done. And it all worked out. And, you know, then we moved around some, but—and, you know, bein' a—going—she goes to a lotta functions that she probably would say that "maybe I don't wanna do that," but she does at any rate, you know.

[02:44:48] And she's a great representative for the University of Arkansas, wherever she goes and whatever she does, and I

appreciate, you know, her support, her valuable assistance, her—and she's extremely bright, and she's a good adviser and—you know. But we have a—you know, there were some challenging times and—but not many, you know. And most have been very good times, and so I, you know, I feel very fortunate to be married to her. And she's a great mother, and we've got two wonderful children, and, you know, that's a—and as I said earlier, there's not any father who enjoys being a father more to his two daughters than I do. [*Laughs*]

[02:45:44] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about your daughters. We haven't—I mean, we talked about their rodeoin' and show horsin' and stuff. Is there anything else you want to say about your daughters?

AS: Well, I'll say I love 'em very much, and you know, there's not anything that—there's not any time in my life that I'm happier than when I'm with my family. I mean, that's just a—that's just my number one priority. And, you know, and with their families, and so, it's a—I'm proud of 'em. You know, they've given me nothing but happiness. No grief. [*Laughs*] A little grief.

[02:46:27] SL: Well, they wouldn't be normal. I mean . . .

AS: I guess. But, no, no, no, no, I, you know, it's—I think there's no greater feeling in life than to be loved by your children, and I

feel like that they love their father, and I love them, so I guess that's what I'd like to say. [*Laughs*]

[02:46:51] SL: Well, you know, Alan, what comes around—what goes around comes around.

AS: Okay. Good.

SL: I'm sure that they got all that from . . .

AS: Right.

SL: . . . you too, as well.

[02:46:59] JE: I've got—son-in-laws?

AS: Son-in-laws? We have two very fine son-in-laws. One is a CPA accountant, and one's a lawyer. They're both very successful, and they're—they, you know, and they—we enjoy being with them. And, course, we have two great grandchild—two wonderful—we don't have any great-grandchildren yet. We have two wonderful grandchildren in Mitchell and Jackson. And one's thirteen, and one's fifteen, and they're—they—Jenifer and Jeff and Mitchell and Jackson—they're in the race car business and, you know, drag racing, and they go all over the South. And they're big cars. I mean, they—big. That's big business, and they've got . . .

[02:47:49] SL: I'm sure you've done everything you can to spoil your grandchildren.

AS: I have, but—yeah, I have.

SL: That's pretty much . . .

AS: And I think I've worked . . .

SL: . . . your job now is to . . .

AS: I think I've worked—I think it's worked. [*Laughter*] No, I love to spoil them.

SL: Yeah.

AS: Yeah.

[02:48:01] SL: Yeah. Well, why don't we—let's go ahead and take a break here.

AS: Okay.

SL: I'll go visit with Jeannie, and see if I can't get her in this seat.

AS: There you go.

SL: And if you think of something else you wanna say . . .

AS: Okay.

SL: . . . while we're here . . .

[02:48:13] JE: I got one more.

SL: Okay.

TM: I got one more, too.

SL: Oh, let's . . .

JE: We were gonna talk about the painting.

SL: Oh, yeah, the painting in back.

AS: Oh, my Uncle Philip. Yeah.

SL: Let's talk about . . .

AS: I don't know anything about that particular, but I know what it is.

SL: Well, it's a—it's some kind of . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . street scene, but . . .

AS: Yeah, it's a street, but my Uncle Philip . . .

SL: Philip . . .

AS: . . . was my mother's . . .

SL: . . . Best.

[02:48:30] AS: Philip Best—that's my mother's brother, was a very successful artist, and he's a very talented piano player. And those are his paintings, and that was his piano. [*Laughs*] And so—and Katie was extremely—is an extremely fine piano player—our daughter. [02:48:49] And so that came up through the genes, I guess, of mother and didn't come through me. But it had—there was a gene jumping, I guess, and, you know, it—from grandmother to granddaughter.

SL: It means something to have the very instrument that was . . .

AS: That's true.

SL: . . . your uncle's, and the children are still playing . . .

AS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that same instrument. That's very strong.

AS: Those are some more of the blessings that I've had in growing up. I mean, it's just been a wonderful experience, and I wouldn't trade it for anything, and I feel like I've been a very lucky person.

[02:49:26] TM: Yeah. I hate to get back to this business thing, but when you're doing these two big new hires, obviously the resources that you can provide them are major things you're gonna use to . . .

AS: Right. Mh-hmm.

TM: . . . to entice them. But beyond that, how do you go about, you know, more about what Arkansas has to offer and about the environment here? What do you do beyond the resources that you're gonna provide for them to do their stuff?

[02:49:49] AS: Well, I think Arkansas is a blessing. And when we're looking for people to come from outside the state of Arkansas into Arkansas, and then also, what has happened in those institutions before we're recruiting—you take UAMS. I mean, it's easy for me to show somebody around UAMS and to let them visit some of the star quality we have at UAMS and for them to see the new hospital being built and the new cancer center being

constructed and to visit some of the top people we have, you know, as physicians and faculty members at UAMS—and then to just let them see Little Rock and let them see Arkansas and know about what's happening in the state of Arkansas—that's a plus. So that's—UAMS is—we have some fabulous people who are working at UAMS who didn't know anything about Arkansas, and now, they're the greatest supporters of Arkansas, because this is a tremendous state. We have a lot to offer.

SL: Well, it's a world-class facility. And it's not a hard sell anymore.

AS: It's not a—it's not. And Arkansas is a easy sell. It really is.

[02:51:06] SL: You know, what—I'm gonna ask you one more question. And this can be anywhere in your life. I, of course, lean toward the early years, but what was the hardest thing that you've faced in your life?

AS: The hardest thing I've faced in my life?

SL: The hardest thing.

AS: [*Laughs*] I don't—I'll be—I've—I mean, I'm sure there's something back there that's the hardest thing in my life, but . . .

SL: Well . . .

AS: . . . I think, you know, I've had—but, I mean, I had confidence. I had so much confidence in the folks at UAMS. I don't think this was a challenge. But, you know, I've had some health

problems. I had open-heart surgery in [20]01. [02:51:59] And I had a—six bypasses or whatever the number. And—but I had so much confidence in the physicians at UAMS that I felt like it was gonna work out okay, and it did work out okay. And then, you know, last year I had prostate surgery, and you know, it was cancerous, and it was the—but once again, I had—Dr. Graham Greene—he almost made me feel like I was lucky to be havin' an operation, you know [*laughs*], because he had such good bedside manners, and he makes you feel so optimistic about everything that I felt that was gonna work out, and so far, it has. And, you know, those were not easy times, but if that's as bad as it gets, I'm gonna be okay, you know. They gotta be something harder than that, I guess, to cover your identification. But those—I guess those—I guess your—my health problems is probably the most difficult thing.

SL: Well, you look great.

AS: Well, thank you.

SL: You do. You look really good.

AS: . . . I feel okay. I think, you know, really—I think when your children are growin' up and when they have disappointments in life or whether they're grown or growin' up or grown up, I mean, you know, you're—they, you know, you just hurt for them if

there's—if they're hurting. And—but, fortunately, they're—
they've—they're doing okay, but they're, you know, there been
times when they've been hurting, and it makes you hurt when
they hurt, and so . . .

[02:53:25] SL: You will always be their parent.

AS: [*Laughs*] Right. I will be—always proud to be.

SL: Okay. That's good.

AS: All right.

SL: That's good. You did a great, great, great job.

AS: Ah, no I . . .

SL: No, you did.

[02:53:38 End of interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]