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

University of Arkansas
1 East Center
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 575-6829

Arkansas Memories

David Jones

Interviewed by Randy Dixon

August 7, 2025

Bryant, Arkansas

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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.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved in the Pryor Center archives. The transcripts, audio and video files, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at https://pryorcenter.uark.edu. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio and video recordings in addition to the transcripts to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

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 ten 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 ten 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 18th 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.
- Brackets enclose
    - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing; and
    - annotations for clarification and identification.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

Citation Information

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Randy Dixon interviewed David Jones on August 7, 2025, in Bryant, Arkansas.

[00:00:00]

Randy Dixon: Uh—my name's Randy Dixon. I'm with the Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History. This is August 7, 2025. I'm at the home of David Jones in Bryant, Arkansas. Mr. Jones is the former general manager and owner of KARK, among other things. And—uh—just like to thank you on behalf of the University of Arkansas and Pryor Center for sitting down with us today.

David Jones: I'm honored because, as I mentioned to you, I love David Pryor and his family. And I'm truly honored to be part of his facility . . .

RD: Well . . .

DJ: . . . in—uh . . .

RD: Thank you very much.

DJ: . . . Fayetteville.

[00:00:41] RD: So if y—we could start off just—uh—tell me when and where you were born.

DJ: Well, I grew up in a little town of Sheridan, about . . .

RD: Grant County.

DJ: . . . thirty miles south of Little Rock—um—in Sheridan. Uh—I had marvelous parents. Uh—my dad . . .

RD: What were their names?

DJ: They?

RD: What were your parents' names?

[00:01:04] DJ: Well, my dad was a teacher in his early days, and later he went into politics. He became county treasurer in Grant County and then county clerk. Uh—he was never defeated in an election. He retired as a young man, and in fact—uh—he told me later that a man asked him, "Why did you retire? You were doin' great. Everybody liked you." And he said, "Because I have a son who may wanna go into politics. And I wanna retire while my name is good—uh—to leave him a good name." And so I was president of my senior class, sixty-nine members. That was the extent of my political career. I will tell you that Mr. Witt Stephens, who I loved, too, he was—he and Jack Ste—that family's from Sheridan. Well, they're from Prattsville, Grant County. And I was a salesman in those days. I'd not been promoted anywhere. But he loved my family, too, and he called me one day to come see him and said, "I want you to run for the state legislature." He said, "There's a Republican named Herbert Rule that's running. And we don't need a Republican in the state

legislature," 'cause in those days, Randy—uh—you couldn't find many Republicans in Arkansas. And he said, "I'll raise all the money, and you'll win." I said, "Wow. Okay." He thought my dad was a great politician.

[00:02:36] RD: And what was your dad's name?

DJ: Jewell Joseph Jones.

RD: Okay.

DJ: In those days, Jewell with two *L*s on the end was masculine, and one *L* on the end was feminine. Many ladies were named Jewel. Many gentlemen were—were named Jewell. But anyway, I said, "Well, Mr. Witt, that's wonderful." I said, "I'll need to talk to my wife." And he said, "Okay. Come see me tomorrow," and I said, "Okay." [00:02:59] So I got home, and I told Betty, "Mr. Witt wants me to run for the state legislature. He'll raise all the money, and I will win." And she said, "I think that's wonderful." But she said, "I don't think you'll be happy livin' by yourself." I said [*laughs*], "What does that mean?" And she said, "That means you're not livin' with me if you go into politics." [*Laughs*] So the next morning, I started to chicken out and call him on the phone, and I said, "No, I gotta look him in the eye." So I went by the office and told him. And he just kinda grinned, and he said, "I understand." Because Uncle Jack, his daddy, had been

in the state legislature. And then Witt was in legislature. He didn't like it. But I think he was there one—at least one or two—it may be two terms. [00:03:47] But—uh—Sheridan was a great little town to grow up in. Uh—I had my first horse when I was twelve years old. I named her Patsy after a girl I liked. And then in about two years, the horse was prettier than Patsy. And I met Betty June. And I kissed Betty June when she was fourteen years old. While we were both fourteen. And on July the ninth, 2025, if she were still here, we would've been married seventy-five years.

RD: Wow.

DJ: And so that kiss at fourteen took. I lost her in 2020. I lost my daughter in 2019.

RD: Mmm.

DJ: So it's been a dark—dark place. But it's better. Time helps. It's gettin' better. [00:04:42] Uh—from Sheridan I went to Henderson, where my dad had gone to school. And I—this sounds kinda stupid, I guess, but I had trouble stayin' away from Betty. [*RD laughs*] If I didn't see her for a day or two, I—I functioned, but I was really not normal. And so I arranged my classes at Henderson to where I would not have any classes Wednesday afternoon or Thursday morning. And that way I

could hitchhike to Sheridan Wednesday afternoon and be with her on a date Wednesday night and hitchhike back on Thursday morning and not miss any of my classes.

RD: 'Cause she was still in Sheridan?

DJ: She was one year behind me in high school, yeah.

RD: Okay.

[00:05:29] DJ: It was kinda interesting. Our psychology teacher gave us a test, aptitude test. And a couple of days later, he asked me to stay after class. And of course, it scared me 'cause I didn't know what I had done. And when I met with him, he said, "I just wanted to tell you"—this sounds braggadocious. I don't mean for it to. But he said, "You made the highest score in the class." And I said, "Well, there's something wrong with your testing." He said, "Why do you say that?" I said, "Because I'm a C student. I'm not smart. I'm average." He said, "Don't you hitchhike to Sheridan every Wednesday afternoon and then hitchhike back on Thursday morning for class?" And I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Case closed." That's where my time went. [*Laughs*] But it worked out. We had—uh—we had three kids. We lost our first little boy. But then we had a daughter, Rhonda, that—the one I lost. And my son, Randy, who I still have. And presently I have three grandchildren, and I have two great-

grandchildren. And at this moment, we're all healthy, thank goodness.

RD: That's great.

DJ: I'm ninety-four years old. I am still very active. In October, I was in Rome. I've been to twenty-eight foreign countries, some of 'em more than once. I told my son not long ago that I plan to go Mach 2 with my hair on fire until I drop dead.

RD: Not a bad way to go.

DJ: Not a bad way to go.

[00:07:25] RD: So tell me about growin' up in Sheridan. What was that like?

DJ: Well, I had a horse, like I say. And—uh—I would—uh—get up and have my breakfast and, on pretty days, get on my horse and go to my favorite places. There was a—we called it the Lancaster Hole on Little Big Creek there in Sheridan. We'd all go swimmin'. Uh—I was in the band. And according to a reliable source, I was the greatest drummer that there ever was, the source being my mother. [*RD laughs*] She would tell anybody that would listen that I was the greatest drummer in the country. And went on and played drums at Henderson as well. Uh—it was a wonderful time because you didn't lock your doors. Uh—I was drivin' my dad's car when I was twelve years old.

Uh—in fact, that was the night I kissed Betty June. Well, I guess I was fourteen at that time. I had driven his car to junior choir practice at the First Baptist Church. And I had told her that after junior choir practice, meet me at the Legion Hut, which was about a block away. And she had ridden her bicycle up there. And she did. Put her bicycle down and got in the car, and we visited for a minute. And I said, "Well, I been thinkin' all day today that I was gonna kiss you tonight. So here goes." And I leaned over and kissed her. Next day, told all my friends I kissed her right on the mouth. [*Laughs*] And that kinda cemented the whole deal. Uh—she was different than most women. She was the prettiest girl in the county. Uh—she had hair the color of honey and blue eyes the color of the sky. And she always put me first. It was a—and I didn't take advantage of that, but she always put me first. I heard her tell a gir—I heard her tell a girlfriend one time that she never wanted me to leave home needing her. And that was her attitude.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:09:58] DJ: So growin' up as a teenager, I taught her how to drive my daddy's pickup truck, which she skinned a friend's car with. It was parked. [*RD laughs*] We lied about it. He never did know that she did it. [*Laughs*] And it was just—it was a

great time. And I like I say, I saw her while I was at Henderson. And then as soon as she graduated from high school, we got married. She—we were children. She was eighteen. I was nineteen. And I worked at Safeway for like—I'd been workin' at Kroger goin' to school, then I got a job full time at Safeway.

RD: Is this after you graduated?

DJ: Uh-huh. And, like I mentioned to you I think, I went to class in the morning. I worked for Kroger in the afternoon. And she and I were married my second year at Henderson, and we managed a little motel at night. Had a little, one-room apartment there. And we lost our first little boy. [00:10:59] And Dr. Kennedy had a ten-room clinic across from the motel. The Arkadelphia Court Motel was where we were. And he was our doctor when we lost our little boy. And I cleaned his clinic once a week. Waxed the floors—big clinic—to pay my bill. He was a great guy. And so I've always worked. I didn't—my dad was successful. I mean, we were average people. But got my first job at a dairy when I was twelve, workin' part time, and I just always wanted to work. And so it was a—with the parents that I had—my sister and I were not close. She was five years older than I was. And she had her own agenda. Good person, but she had her own agenda, and course, I had mine. But that was the childhood in

Sheridan, Arkansas. Everybody liked everybody. If we didn't like 'em, we ran 'em outta town. [*Laughter*]

[00:12:11] RD: So when did you start teaching?

DJ: Well, I could not get a job when I graduated from college 'cause I didn't have any experience. And . . .

RD: What was your degree in?

DJ: I had a double major in speech and English.

RD: Speech and English. Okay.

DJ: Yeah. And growin' up in a town of 2,000, I was offered a job teaching high school in a major high school in Camden. And I taught tenth-grade English, eleventh-grade speech, twelfth-grade drama, directed the high-school plays, sponsored the Future Teachers of America, the Thespian Society, and the junior class, sold tickets at the basketball and football games for $2,700 dollars. Three hundred dollars a month for nine months. In the summertime, I worked with the coach, and we painted blackboards and put roofs on buildings, school buildings and so forth, in order to make ends meet. And after three years—it was a magical time because we were like twenty-one, had a little girl. Our seniors were eighteen.

RD: So what year would this've been? This was . . .

DJ: [Nineteen] fifty-three, [19]54, and [19]55.

RD: Fif—okay.

DJ: And Channel 4 had signed on the air in April of [19]55, and I went to work there in January of [19]56, so they'd been on the air like eighteen months when I went to work there.

[00:13:46] RD: Okay. Well, let's back up a little bit . .

DJ: Okay.

RD: . . . and talk a little more about your teaching. Because I understand you had a Pryor family connection that involved your teaching.

DJ: I did. I had a beautiful little—all my kids were beautiful, but I had an especially beautiful little teenage girl. Precious. Named Eleanor. And in fact, she was my stage manager when I directed the senior play. And she was the teacher's pet. I'll have to admit that. She was. Her name was Eleanor Pryor. David Pryor was her older brother. And through her I get to know Miss Susie, her mother. Her dad was gone already. Mr. Edgar had died. But I saw her maybe—I guess it was at David's funeral, at the visitation. And we hugged, and I said, "I've always loved you." And she said, "I've always [*laughs*] loved you, too." And she married a guy named Steve Osmond. His dad was a doctor, a family practitioner there in Camden—and, in my opinion, screwed up big time. He was a professor at an Ivy

League school. And I'm not sure whether it was Yale or Harvard, but it was one of the two. And he got involved with one of his students, and he left Eleanor and their kids to go with this younger woman, which I think is really a very selfish thing to do. And she never remarried. [00:15:39] She wa—she had it all, I mean, and I guess she just was so—I don't know, so distraught more—unhappy because of where life—she'd lost a child that was a—not a full adult, but a teenager, I think. And—but yeah. And there was a gal named Nancy Patterson that had a convertible that—as a senior. She had—some girls would come to get Rhonda and—my—our little girl and take her and buy her ice cream. And it was more of a family situation. Because in those days, Randy, if a kid got in trouble in school, when he got home, he was in more trouble. But in this day, the teachers do not have the backing that—and in my three years of teaching, I only had one discipline problem. [00:16:39] A kid named Richard Holmes, who was a senior. He was a football player. A good football player. Sat right next to my desk. And I made a comment one time that I was gonna do something. And he made a comment, and I said, "What did you say, Richard?" He said, "I said, 'Anybody can be a horse's ass.'" I said, "Well, you are expelled." And in those days you could only expel for five

days. Well, the sixth day he comes back into class. I call the roll. And I said, "Richard Holmes, you're expelled again." So he left. That afternoon, he came back, and he said, "Mr. Jones, I'm a senior. I have got to graduate. So what do I have to do to get back in school?" It was a speech class. I said, "Well, why don't you make us about a three-minute speech on why you should be respectful to your teachers and your elders." And he did. [*Laughs*] He did a good job with it. And after that, he and I became fast friends. I got a Christmas card from him for ten years after I left teaching. We became friends over that. [00:18:03] Camden—at that time the paper mill was the heartbeat of that whole town. It's now closed. And I remember when we opened windows for the first time, the smell of the paper mill came into the classroom. I said somethin' to the effect of, "What is that?" [*Laughter*] Somebody said, "That's the smell of money." And that's true. It was a—just about everybody worked there. But that was a great experience for me. When I saw an ad in the newspaper that Channel 4 was lookin' for someone to sell TV commercials—I may have mentioned—my mother has always told me that I would be a good salesperson. I says, "Why do you say it, Mom?" She said, "Well, you like to talk. You never meet a stranger." She said,

"People like you and trust you. I just think you'd make a good salesperson." And I'd been at Channel 4 for about a couple of months, and the sales manager that hired me caught me in the hall one day, and he said, "Would you like to know why I chose you over the other applicants for this job?" And I said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Because when I asked you why you thought you'd make a good employee, you said, 'Because my mama said I would.'" [*RD laughs*] And he said, "That tipped the scale and made me hire you." And I was there thirty-two years to the day. In a few years I became sales manager.

[00:19:45] RD: Well, tell me a little bit about TV in the [19]50s. I mean, they . . .

DJ: Oh, wow.

RD: It's always called the Golden Age.

DJ: Well, the reason it was because it was new, and it was magic. How did that picture fly through the air and come in that little box? I made a comment one time, "I don't understand how that happens," and some guy said, "How can you be manager and not know how it works?" I said, "I know the chief engineer's phone number. [*RD laughs*] That's all I need to know." [*Laughs*] But it was all new. And you could go out to lunch with one of the people on the air, and they were stars, truly stars.

And they would be asked for their autograph, wantin' to take their picture with 'em. I don't know what you do with an autograph. But—and we would do focus groups maybe about every three years where we'd have a one-way mirror or—and we'd have the talent and our management on one side, but the audience of ten or twelve could not see us. And they—and I saw Tom Bonner one time say he's never comin' back because [*laughs*] he got some harsh words of criticism from some people and . . .

RD: Oh, they're honest.

[00:20:54] DJ: Yeah. Oh, yeah. And Carolyn Long—I hired her outta Mississippi. A very talented, precious girl. I assigned her a franchise called "Wednesday's Child." You'll remember this. And what she would do is she would spend a day with a kid that was handicapped. They were all handicapped. Either by racial, physical, mental, age, somethin'. They were all handicapped. And then she would spend a day with 'em, maybe get an airplane from the Holberts out at Central Flying Service to fly around the city or go to a movie or go to the zoo. She'd spend the whole day with 'em. And then on Wednesday on the newscast, she would present that story and this kid, and he's for adoption. Please look at him. And she corrects me every time I

say this. I tell people she was running a—you ready? A 55 percent adoption rate. And every time I say that, she'll say, "Fifty-eight." [*RD laughs*] But anyway, she wa . . .

RD: Either one's pretty impressive.

DJ: Oh. Oh, blow your socks off. And she left us and went to Fayetteville at KHOG up there and became a star, did some stuff with St.—with Fort Smith as well. And she's very, very active now in charitable work, particularly in the Methodist Church work. At our reunion a couple of months ago—Lencola Sullivan was the first and only Black Miss Arkansas. And she was gorgeous. And I loved her, and she worked in our newsroom. And she came back from the Netherlands for our reunion a couple of months ago. [00:22:53] She was a singer, and she was opening act for little Stevie Wonder for a while. And she went to work for some international company headquartered in Amsterdam. And I don't know doing what, but she was employed by them. And at a convention in New York, she performed. She sang for the convention. And she met a guy named Roel from Amsterdam, and they got hooked up. And they now have been married like twenty-five years, and they live in Amsterdam. He's a white guy. And I met him, too. Wonderful, wonderful fella. And I was also proud of the fact that

I put the first Black anchor in an anchor seat, Rob Wiley, when I made him sports director. [00:23:51] My daughter was in the hospital, which is why I was the founder of MEMS, and I'll you about that later if you wanna hear it. But Dave Woodman came to me. My daughter was in the hospital twe—in a coma twenty-eight days, in the hospital for forty-two. And we're at the hospital, and Dave Woodman comes out to see me and apologizes profusely. And I love Dave. I don't mean this to be ugly 'cause I did not think it ugly. But he said, "I have a chance to be the Voice of the Razorbacks, and that's my dream. But I gotta go to Channel 7 in order to do that, and I wanted to talk to you and see what you thought." And Bob Brown, who had hired him outta Louisiana—we both had hired him—was my boss, had since gone to Phoenix to run our station out there. Combined had five VHF and two UHF stations. You could own seven in those days. By now you can own a hundred, as you know. But major markets, Phoenix, Atlanta, Oklahoma City, Little Rock, the UHF was Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Louisville, Kentucky. [*Coughs*] But my boss, as I had progressed and become sales manager, then I become pres—I became president. But one me—when he came to the hospital and gave me that information, I said, "I want you to go to Phoenix. I'll give you an

airline ticket—and talk to Bob"—our former boss—"and see what he thinks." And he did that. And Bob told him, "It's a mistake because they don't treat their people right. It's an error. You shouldn't do that. You're with"—he called me Davey. He said, "You're with Davey, and you got a great job, and everything's goin' good." [00:25:51] Comma there for a second. When we decided to play *The Beverly Hillbillies* in prime access, six thirty to seven, Monday through Friday, and we called our New York office, our rep office, and told 'em that, they started laughin'. And I said, "What're y'all laughin' about?" And the guy said, "Well, that's crazy. You're not gonna do this, are you?" I said, "Of course we are." He said, "Well, we think that's a terrible mistake." And I said, "Well, we're gonna do it." Bob and I both had agreed we're gonna do it. First book comes out, we got a fifty share. A fifty share. That means fifty percent of everybody watchin' TV was watchin' *Beverly Hillbillies*. [*Laughs*]

RD: Watchin' you. Yeah.

DJ: And we learned very quickly the lead-out program was as important as the lead-in program. And when you got a newscast doin' fifty shares, you're blowin' everybody outta the town. We had the first helicopter. We were doin' live shots. Bob Doubleday was, too. He was doin' live shots when it was

impossible. He would run coax cable from the Union Life Building over somewhere else in order to have a live shot. [00:27:04] But when Woodman came back, he was decided he had to do that. And Rob Wiley had been his assistant at that time. And he was there, I guess, two years and got fired. Frank Broyles fired him. And he came back to me and asked me if I had a job for him. And I said, "Yes." I said, "You would be workin' for Rob Wiley 'cause Rob Wiley's my sports director now. And but you would be workin' for him. I'm not sure where I'm gonna put you yet. I may put you Monday through Friday at ten or at six or whatever. I don't know yet. But yeah, you got a job." And he, even today, tells people that that saved his life because he had nowhere else to go. Well, I needed him, too. I mean, it wasn't charitable. He was great employee and a good guy, and we did that. My boss was a guy named Al Flanagan. Our headquarters were in Phoenix with the seven stations we owned, Combined Communications Corporation. And he came in about every three months and, for some reason, liked me and mentored me and promised me for probably seven or eight years that if Channel 4 ever came for sale, I'd have first shot at it.

RD: So you were the president and general manager at this point.

DJ: Yeah, I was president at that time, yeah. And one day my

private phone line rang, and it was him. [00:28:50] Let me tell you little bit about him. He sto—he was in World War II. He was in the Marines. My wife said he was the best-dressed man in the world. He was about six two, had a twenty-eight-inch waist. And every time he was in town, we'd all have dinner together with Bob Brown and a couple other guys.

RD: Now is this the Bob Brown that ended up going to Channel 11?

DJ: Uh-huh.

RD: As the general manager there.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Okay.

DJ: But when . . .

RD: I just . . .

DJ: . . . he was in Phoenix, and when he came back, we still had lunch together every week because we loved each other. He's one of my best friends in the whole world. And in fact, I helped broker—I helped Gannett buy Channel 11. But involving him—the guys that owned Channel 11—the guy owned the *Arkansas Democrat*. He had never married. He had two nephews. And I'm havin' a senior moment. I'm tryin' to think of their names. I don't know whether I'll get there or not, but anyway, that was the outlay of the family ownership. [00:30:07] And they

decided they would sell it. And workin' with Bob Brown and workin' . . .

RD: So Gannett decided they were gonna sell KARK?

DJ: Well, I'd already bought that.

RD: Oh.

DJ: I'd already bought Channel 4.

RD: But . . .

DJ: I'll get back to that in a second.

RD: Okay.

DJ: And the—but they offered Bob Brown to come back to 11. This was before the sale happened—with 10 percent ownership.

RD: Oh.

DJ: And that he would be the general manager. And so I was involved in that whole transaction th—which worked out well because he came back to town, and I got a friend back in town. 'Cause he mentored me, too. [00:30:52] I learned that relationships are what it's all about. Flanagan was his name, my boss's name. Private phone line rings one day. I answered. It was him. I didn't finish the story about him. He stood on a beach in World War II and gave a play-by-play description of an invasion on a portable wire recorder. And that wire and that recorder are on display at the Smithsonian Institute with his

name under it. He got a battlefield commission in the Marine Corps for doin' that. But he called me on day on the private line. And the reason he—I had a private li—and all the seven managers had a private line 'cause when he calls you, he wants you to answer the phone. He didn't wanna go through the switchboard. He said, "Okay, we're buyin' Minneapolis so you can have Little Rock, so go get your money." I said, "How much money do I need?" He said, "I can't tell you that. We're a public company. We're on the stock exchange." I said, "Oh, okay. [*RD laughs*] Well, thanks," and hung up. And I'm sittin' there wonderin', "Now what do I do?" [00:32:11] In about ten minutes, my private phone line rings again, and it's a woman. And she said, "Mr. Jones?" I said, "Yes." She said, "Twenty-five million dollars," and hung up. So I knew he had told me without tellin' me. Well, I was servin' on a board of trustees of a bank, Twin City Bank. Terry Renaud was the chief executive. He was a buddy of mine. And I called him, and I said, "I need 25 million dollars, and I don't have 25 million dollars." He said, "Well, come over here and let's talk about it." So I did, and back to relationships, friendships. He said, "You know Jerry and Gene Jones. You know Jerry's got a little football team down in Texas." [*RD laughs*] I said, "Sure." "You know Mack McLarty,

who was Bill's chief of staff when Bill was president." "Yeah."

RD: Had some car dealerships.

DJ: Oh, yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: His son has a lot of 'em.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: Mark does. "And you know Sheffield Nelson, head of Arkla." "Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah." "And Larry Waller, the prominent lawyer." "Yeah." And we sat there, Randy, and in about a half a day, we raised 25 million bucks. And we all got on Jerry's plane and flew to the Republic Bank in Dallas. I was responsible for gatherin' everybody's financial statement to go borrow 25 million dollars. And when I saw Jerry's, I called him. I said, "Can I tell everybody I'm your first cousin?" And he's so gracious. He said, "Oh, David, are we kin?" I said, "We are now." [*Laughter*] He—I won't even get in it, but I could talk all day about what a great guy he is and what a wonderful lady Gene is. He just bought him a new boat a couple of years ago, named it the *Eugenia*. That's her name. That's where the G come from was Gene for her name. But we sat there, and in about a half a day, we raised 25 million, went there and I—when I handed the financial statements to the senior vice president of

Republic Bank, I kinda chuckled. I said, "You'll notice that my financial statement is not quite as good as the other guys." And very seriously, he looked at me and said, "Mr. Jones, if it weren't for you, we wouldn't be here. They don't know how to run a TV station." And they were great partners. In five years, we had bought—they had an ABC station in Meridian, Mississippi, and a CBS station in El Paso, Texas. And in about five years, they decided they wanted to borrow a hundred million dollars and consolidate the debt. And my heart was in Little Rock. And I did not want to take a chance on me losin' Channel 4. And so we made a deal, and they bought me out. And they made the loan. And in about twenty-four months they had to sell because they couldn't make it work.

[00:35:33] RD: Now when they bought you out, did you retire?

DJ: Yeah. I was . . .

RD: Okay, so . . .

DJ: I . . .

RD: . . . they bought you out, and you left.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: So they still owned the station . . .

DJ: Yeah.

RD: . . . but you were gone.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Okay.

DJ: And they had put a guy that was a minor—he owned 5 percent. A guy named Waddington had been at Twin City Bank. They had asked him to move in as president of Channel 4. And he asked me didn't I think he could keep the wheels on the thing for a couple of years, and I said, "Well, probably." But as it tur—I'm not blamin' him, but as it turned out, things didn't work out, and they had to sell it all. And it's so interesting because my budget back in those days would be maybe twelve million income, and in 2024—I won't tell you which station it was. It wasn't my old station, but one of the TV stations . . .

RD: In Little Rock?

DJ: Yeah. Income-wise, just politics—sixteen million. And you can watch now—I was say—I'm a news junkie. And I was watchin' David Muir the other night on *ABC Nightly*. And he broke for a three-and-a-half minute commercial break. He came back and did a ten-second news story and broke again for another three-and-a-half-minute commercial break. Now, I don't know. Normally, that would kill the goose that laid the golden eggs. But with all the blogs and the streaming and all the news sources available—I've always said if you have access to

someone's home, you have power. Well, I don't know what's gonna happen to local television. I've always been wrong in my prediction because when television came out, I figured radios would be gone. When electricity came out, I figured batteries would be gone. And now batteries are bigger than ever for everything. But I don't know where it's gonna go now. I do know that we're in, probably, in my humble but accurate opinion—are the most divided and in the most hurtful place I know the country's been in, since I been here. [00:38:11] And the division is as great as it was during the Civil War. It's almost to a point of cultism because the cults on each side do not care what each one—candidate is to do. They support 'em anyway. They're their dear leader. And that, to me, is very scary. But after five years and the big loan, I sold out. My son wanted to build some assisted living facilities. And so—I wanna come back to MEMS because, if I'm allowed to leave a footprint of my life, it'd be because of that. But after we sold the station, we built five assisted living facilities.

RD: Is this in Hot Springs Village?

DJ: Well, Hot Springs Vill—well, we sell—built, actually built four. Hot Springs Village, Bentonville, and Rogers. And North Arkansas is different than Central Arkansas. It truly is. You live

in Fayetteville. You know that.

[00:39:26] RD: How would you say they're different?

DJ: Well, the mayor of Rogers told me—this was five to six years ago—that there are 1,500 new families moving into North Arkansas—you ready? Every month. And I was blessed. I got to spend thirty minutes a year with Mr. Sam Walton, just the two of us. And I cherished that 'cause I loved him. And he had been bankrupt with Ben Franklin stores years before, and he was just such an amazing guy. And I kept trying to get him—I wanted to put Lew Short—you 'member Lew?

RD: Sure.

DJ: I wanted to Lew with . . .

RD: Chief photographer, right?

DJ: Yeah. Well, he's gone, now.

RD: Right.

DJ: But I wanted to put Lew with him for a year, and when he went to the restaurant—Ol' Roy was his dog's name. That's why the food's named—the dog food is named Ol' Roy in Walmart. But whatever he did, tape it. And I said, "Mr. Sam, you could lock it up in your safe every night. If you don't want it shown, you don't have to show it. But you're such a valuable resource to this state and to our people. I want you on record." Like you're

doing me. I'm an old guy, and you're tapin' me now. The last time I saw him he—we were at Central Flying Service, and he was gettin' on J. B.'s airplane, J. B. Hunt's airplane. J. B. was from Lowell. Biggest trucker in the world. And he had an IV in his hand. [00:41:12] And every time I'd suggest we do this, he'd say, "David, let's just wait a year because," he said, "I've had so much published." "You don't have to show it. Lock it up in the safe." "Yeah, I don't wanna fool with it right now." Okay. I member one time before the Walmart store on [*unclear word*] Springs Road, which is now closed, became a Superstore, he called for an early-morning meeting, a six a.m. meeting, of all the employees at that store. And he walked in, and they're all waitin' for him, of course. And he looks around. He said, "You know, I think these are the cleanest floors that I have ever seen in any of our—anywhere. Let's just sit down on the floor and have our meetin'." And they did. The richest guy [*laughs*] in the world at that time sittin' down on the floor. He was just—he was like you and like me and Charlie, and it wa—he was just us, just a person. But that was my big blessings, one of 'em, that I got to spend time with Mr. Sam Walton. [00:42:18] And my buddy, Frank Fletcher, was mentored by Mr. Sam.

RD: Frank Fletcher Ford?

DJ: Well, and he owns the Wyndham Hill Hotel.

RD: Right.

DJ: And he owns ten car dealerships.

RD: In the state.

DJ: He owns a bunch of racehorses, too, which I used to.

RD: Oh, that's right.

DJ: Which I used to, too.

RD: Yeah, we'll talk about that in a minute.

DJ: But he . . .

RD: You and your horses.

[00:42:42] DJ: One time Mr. Sam called him in, and he was sellin' him—well, later. That's later, but he called him in, and he said, "Frank, you need to get out of the sales job 'cause I'm gettin' ready to bypass all salesmen and go directly to the manufacturer to save my clients, my customers, money. And so you need to get outta the sales business." And Frank's story is cute. He says, "I said, 'Mr. Sam, do you want me to kill myself here in your office, or do you want me to go out on the parkin' lot?'" [*Laughter*] And Mr. Sam said, "No, you'll be fine." He said, "Go buy yourself a picture-frame manufacturing company." And he did. He bought one. I think it was in Fordyce. And so he started sellin' picture frames. And then he became the largest

lamp manufacturer in the world. He had two factories in China. He had a plant out by the airport that employed, I don't know, several hundred people.

RD: Making lamps?

DJ: Making lamps, yeah.

RD: Making lamps.

[00:43:50] DJ: But he is an amazing guy. The—I tell people he gives away hundred-dollar bills; I give away tens. My birthday's on May the fourth, his is June the fourth. And I'm exactly ten years older than he is. And we always exchange and celebrate birthdays together. And his place in Florida's about an hour from mine. He's at Grayton Beach. I'm at Navarre Beach. I've had a place there about thirty years. And once in a while, he will have a seat, and I'll get to fly in. And when you fly into the Destin airport, which is in the Redneck Riviera where my place is, it's like flying into a picture postcard. You go out over the Gulf, and you come in. Most sophisticated airport I was ever in. We had our own jet at Channel 4, and we'd go to Love Field and different airports but this—the one at Destin. They have their own concierge. Big screen. They gave you tail numbers, arrivals, departures. You pull up. The van comes right to your door at your plane and takes you inside. But he has a house, and then I

have a condo. I'm—which I've had, like I said, for a long, long time. But I think he's the most generous man I've ever met. He grew up in Tamo south of McGehee. His daddy told him that if he made anything less than a B, I think it was, when he went to the university, he would come home and ride a tractor the rest of his life. His daddy had a farm. I don't think a great big one, but he had a pretty good size farm. [00:45:38] And Frank was roomin' with Billy Moore. Do you 'member Billy Moore? He was a . . .

RD: Football player?

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: He was the only All-American quarterback we ever had.

RD: Exactly.

DJ: And we could spend all day with me tellin' tales, but we won't do that. [*RD laughs*] But . . .

RD: I've heard a few about him.

DJ: He—Frank said it scared him so bad about ridin' a tractor he never made anything less than an A. [*Laughter*] So he turned out to be a good student. [00:46:10] But back, again, to relationships. We built those assisted living facilities. We sold the last one about two years ago. I told my son when he wanted

to do it that—he needed me to help him, and I was glad to do it 'cause he's a good guy. I said, "It's gonna be a very sad business because you're gonna be in the—begin to love these old people. And they're gonna die." And he said, "Yeah, Dad, but it's gonna be a happy place too, because the last years of their life, they'll receive the finest food, the warmest bed, the best care of anywhere." Because when he and Jimmy Elrod, a kid he started first grade with, came to me wantin' to do this, I told 'em I had some rules if I backed 'em. Number one, I did not want 'em to look like an institution. I want 'em to look like five-star hotels. And they did. And I don't want 'em sittin' in their room lookin' at the wall waitin' to die. So hire enough activity directors and vans to take 'em movies, ball games, whatever they're able to do, to do that. And they did that. And true, they—we all—I was out there about once a week for a free lunch. Free. And [*laughs*] I got to know a bunch of 'em. [00:47:45] And it was kinda interesting. We had a guy that was a retired Coast Guard veteran. Widower. And there was a lady that was a widow out there that they got to be friends. And they were in their eighties. And she would go to his room, and he would rub her feet, and they would talk and visit. And her daughter became really upset about it and came and jumped on

my son, who was runnin' that one. Jimmy was runnin' Hot Springs Village. We had other people runnin' the others. And said, "You gotta stop that. I cannot have my mother goin' into another man's room." And my son said, "They're eighties—they're in their eighties. You're not worried that they'll get pregnant." Daughter said, "Don't be ridiculous. No. I just don't think that should happen." [*Laughs*] My son said, "If that changes, you'll have to do it. I won't do it. They make each other happy. They grin. Who cares? If she gets pregnant, who cares? They'd make money on [*laughs*] *Ripley's Believe It or Not*." But anyway, after five, I guess fi—no, longer than that. Seventeen years in Benton and about twelve years in North Arkansas, we sold out. Hiring people—I mean, I would not wanna change an old man's diaper. Most people wouldn't. They have a calling to care for people. And hiring people like that is not easy. But we were blessed and doin' a lot of it. And it was interesting. A kid would be puttin' his parent in Mount Carmel—it was the name of our facility. And the parent, some of 'em, would quit speakin' to their kid. "I'm not comin' here." "Yeah, you are." And they would get so upset. They would—"Get away from me. I don't wanna talk to you anymore." Within about four or five months, you would take that parent on an outing,

and in a couple hours, they would say, "I wanna go home." Mount Carmel was their home within a few hour—a few d—few years. Few months, really. About four months. And they would make up with their kid. And so we used that a lot of times. 'Cause we would interview and qualify someone—if they were too advanced in some ways, we couldn't take 'em. We did have a separate building for memory care, for dementia. But it was a place that we would actually advertise that if you have a need for a place like ours, there's none better. You walk in the lobby—[*laughs*] my kids—my boy would kid me about this occasionally. He said, "I'm so tired of hearin', 'I want the wow effect.'" People walk into the lobby, I want 'em to say, "Wow."

RD: Wow.

[00:51:10] DJ: And they did. And those big columns, those weren't cheap. And the murals on the wall, and the aquariums. But anyway, I'm through braggin' about Mount Carmel. It was a wonderful place, and we sold 'em. And I have now been outta work for about two or three years.

RD: I think you're allowed.

DJ: Maybe.

RD: Yeah. [*DJ laughs*] So, well, let's talk about MEMS and your involvement with that.

DJ: Yeah, my daughter—I was—we were in the old Nash Automobile building at 10th and Main, and my daughter was twenty-two years old, been married a couple of years to the golden boy. He'd been a Golden Glove champion, handsome. He was the nephew of the John Matthews family in North Little Rock. Very good family. And the day I was brought into president, it was September the eleventh, 1974. I called Betty, and I said, "Hey, I've been named president. Do you want me to call the kids?" My son was at UALR, and my daughter worked for AP&L at 10th and Spring. And she said, "No, let's wait and do it tonight. We'll go out to eat and to celebrate," and I said, "Okay." [00:52:34] Well, in about fifteen minutes, she called me back, and her sister had been manager of the jewelry department at JCPenney's. And she had called my wife and said, "Hey, I hear David's been promoted to president." And Betty said, "I think we better go ahead and call the kids." [*RD laughs*] And I said, "Okay." Well, I couldn't call Randy. He was in school. But I called Rhonda, my daughter, and told her. And she said, "Oh, Dad, I'm so happy I think I'm gonna cry." I said, "No, don't do that." I said, "We'll go out tonight and celebrate and have a good time." Well, in about fifteen minutes, someone from AP&L called me and said, "Your daughter has fainted, and you might wanna come up

here." So I picked up Mike Anderson, one of our sales guys, and we jogged up to AP&L. And I walked in expecting to find her coming to from having fainted and embarrassed in front of her friends. And yet, they were givin' her mouth to mouth resuscitation and heart massage. And what had happened was that she fainted, and while she was unconscious, she vomited and aspirated and caused a cardiac arrest. And it took about twenty-five minutes for an ambulance to get there. We had two ambulance companies. A1 and Medic-Vac. And when I got there, my daughter wasn't breathing. And I've never felt that helpless. And the more I thought about it, the more I thought, "That's gotta get fixed." [00:54:21] And NBC had a program called *Emergency* where the ambulance system was in the fire department. And I got to thinkin' about that, and so I started talkin' to Jack Davis, who was fire chief in Little Rock. I started to talkin' to Carleton McMullin, who was a city manager, about getting a city-owned ambulance company under the auspice of the Little Rock Ambulance Authority. Took me ten years. We wanted—we had consultants that told us we that needed to form a utility, which really means a—we were the only game in town. And Bill had just been beaten by Frank. Frank White had just beaten him after his first term. And Frank had called a special

session of the legislature.

RD: So we're talkin 1980, [19]81, somethin' like that?

DJ: I don't know. I'd have to think about that.

RD: Yeah. Well, [19]80—probably [19]81 or [19]82.

[00:55:29] DJ: And so I called Frank, and I said, "I need to get on the—your agenda for the"—he was workin' at First National Bank at that time. First Commercial Bank. And I said, "I need to get on your special agenda 'cause I need to get a bill passed to give me a law for the city of Little Rock and any city that's"—I think it's considered first class, 35,000 or more population. He said, "Okay." And so he did. And why, I don't know, whether it was divine guidance, interference, or what, but Senator Bill Moore from El Dorado took me under his wing. And we would go to his office and write up a bill, go to the Senate floor, he would present it, and somebody'd say, "I don't like so-and-so." So we'd go back to Bill's [*laughs*] office, scratch that out, rewrite it, take it back. We did that three or four times. But finally, they approved it. And we had exclusivity for our ambulance company in the city of Little Rock. Course, the two ambulance companies were fightin' it. Well, once we became an entity for the City of Little Rock, the two ambulance companies went on strike. It was Memorial Day 1983. And the mayor called me and said, "We

can't do this. How can we cover the city during Memorial Day Weekend without ambulances?" I said, "We can't. Let me call you back." So I started makin' phone calls. We borrowed ambulances from around town, other towns. And it's strange. Twenty-two of the striking people from the other two ambulance companies offered—called and said, "We'll work for free." I said, "Well, [*laughs*] I'll get you paid. Somehow. I don't know, but I'll get you paid." And I did, eventually. And we covered the city. And that was the beginning—I started—of course, I'm runnin' the TV station those days. And I had a lot of help. A lot of help. W. P. Rockefeller, I loved him. He was like a brother. Mike Kumpuris of St. Vincent's. I had a bunch of great people helpin' do this. And we started it with nine ambulances and ninety people. And today we have 120 ambulances and 420 people, and we service Little Rock, North Little Rock, Pulaski County, Maumelle, Sherwood, Cabot, and Sheridan. [00:58:38] I'm so proud of Sheridan, where I grew up. Poor county. I think the population's about 8,500 for the whole county. And part of the law I got passed was—or the bill got passed was that we could not go into an area unless we were invited. MEMS could not go in anywhere unless they were invited. Part two of that is we could not stay there if we were losin' money. The City of

Little Rock owned it, so we couldn't do that.

RD: Right.

DJ: So after about a year or two in Sheridan, we started losin' money. And so we had to go to the city council and explain to them the law and explain how sorry we were, but we had to leave town. Well, James Wise was the mayor. Kemp Nall was judge, county judge. Scott Winston was the leading physician in the county. They put together a coalition and got a bond issue passed in that county for a tax to keep MEMS. Amazing. The right thing to do. Because when I did my research, the poor part of Little Rock, the eastern part of Little Rock, their response times were twenty-two minutes. The—that was not—that was an average. The affluent east—west part of Little Rock response time was twelve minutes. Well, that's a key because when you have response times of that duration, people die. And now if you have a heart—a life-threatening emergency, whether it be a heart attack or whatever, at your home in the city of Little Rock, you will have at your side, in the form of a fireman, a First Responder. And within eight minutes, you'll have there a mobile emergency room in the form of an ambulance with two paramedics. Well, one paramedic and one EMT, if possible. [01:01:12] And we started gettin' into trouble with the public,

with some of the public, because we stabilize—if you're havin' a heart attack, the family say, "Take him to the hospital, take him to the hospital." We're not gonna do that.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: We stabilize 'em at the house, and then we take 'em to the hospital. And we had to start a [*laughs*] public service campaign to explain why we're not puttin' 'em—pushin' 'em in a truck and haulin' 'em to the hospital. [01:01:47] The major problem we have today, and we're tryin' to solve it, is not—I don't know how we're gonna do it 'cause we've had the problem now for probably two years. It's we're havin' to keep patients in our box, in our ambulance, three and four hours . . .

RD: Wow.

DJ: . . . before they have room for 'em in the emergency room. And I won't call any names 'cause I was on the board at Baptist for many years. I love Baptist medical systems. But they're all guilty. I think the heart hospital—Bruce Murphy, my buddy who owns that, is probably the least guilty, but they're all guilty of it.

RD: I 'member we did a series of reports at Channel 7 about response times and taking passes on certain—or emergency rooms saying they're full and rerouting . . .

DJ: Well, diversion—the . . .

RD: . . . rerouting ambulances.

DJ: Well, yeah. Diversion. And see, we talked to . . .

RD: Yeah.

DJ: . . . we can now send vital signs directly to the emergency room and talk to the doctor while we're there. And then if we have a wait and it's serious, they will divert us to another hospital. And the—I wish you could see—you need to do a story on the new MEMS building, which I'm so honored—it's a twelve-million-dollar building, and they named it in my honor.

RD: Oh.

DJ: And it's at twe—it's at 7th and State. We have our own academy. We now teach our own EMTs and our own paramedics. And a lot of people don't know this, but once a guy becomes—or a lady—becomes a paramedic, they can do things that a registered nurse can't do. And they have a career. They can work at any hospital in America. They can work at any ambulance company in America. So after they are educated—and we pay 'em when we—when they go to school. [01:03:44] And once they graduate, they have a career. And the response time—and Greg Thompson, who's a wonderful director of MEMS now fusses at me at all time because any time I give an interview, I talk about the response time's at four minutes and

eight minutes. I'll tell you one humorous story. It was a lot of anxiety and heartache that ten years it took me to do it. But there's a law that a municipality cannot borrow money without collateral. Well, after eighteen months, I didn't have enough money to make payroll at MEMS. Didn't have any collateral. We had accounts receivable. But I knew Little Rock had two new fire trucks. I never will forget that night. I go to the city council meeting. The room was packed. They're lined—they're standin' against the wall. The place was full. And after I got through makin' my pitch—Buddy Benafield was acting mayor at that time. And Buddy leaned from the dais and said, "David, are you tellin' us you want us to hock our new fire truck so you can make a loan?" And I said, "No, mayor, I'm askin' you to hock 'em both." And believe it or not, they voted unanimously to do that. And we hadn't had the papers very long. Maybe it was three or four years—we been in business forty years now. But we got the original loan documents. The city gave 'em to us, and they're framed and hangin' on the wall at the MEMS building where we actually did that. [01:05:34] One other story. Sandy Keith was on the city council at that time and when I was explaining—when Paul and I had gotten the 911 thing done. Call—emergency call number. And I was explaining to the city board one night how

the First Responder would work. The fireman is an EMT. He would get there first because we had more fire stations. And when I got through explainin', Sandy Keith, leaned forward again from the dais, and said, "Well, David, what if the only truck we had available in the fire department was a ladder truck? Would that go to somebody?" And I said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Well, don't you think that's overreaction?" I said, "Not if you're the one on the ground." [*RD laughs*] And here again, they voted unanimously that they would be our First Responders. And they do a great job, too. Man, I mean—and these guys—let me tell you, it ain't just a truck ride to the hospital. They pick up eyeballs and arms and legs and pronounce people dead when they're pronounced dead. We've operated under Dr. Chuck Mason's license for the entire time we've been there. His brother, Zach, is a leading neurologist in town. And I wish you could see the new building because they thought of everything. They'll stand 150-mile-an-hour winds, hurricane winds. They have underground antennas that, if a tornado blows the antennas away, come out from underground and go up so they can still communicate with the—they got a dummy we paid $65,000 for. But it has blood pressure, has all the vital signs in our training and our academy, in our learning academy. We got

a pregnant women that would deliver babies and have—a dummy that will have babies.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: I wouldn't wanna do that, either. They have kind of a brotherhood at MEMS. Greg, the guy that is our general manager out there, he's been there since we started. [01:07:55] He actually, with the internet, got his master's degree while working as a medic, and will get his Ph.D., I think, this year. He did that to be qualified to replace Jon Swanson. John was a retired colonel, a pilot, that managed MEMS for a number of years. And Scott Gordon, who was the chief operating officer at Children's, was on the board. Bright, bright people. And it was actually Scott's idea that we beg—that we develop a campus for MEMS, which we have done. And course, we have our own mechanics. We have—we take care of ourselves and of our own. We had a—one of our medics died recently. And things like that will band people together. And so we have a coalition of relationships and friendships. But MEMS would be—if God allows me a footprint of my life, it'll be because of that. We average, according to they, the professionals, we save an average of a thousand lives a year. That ain't bad.

RD: It's a noble cause.

DJ: My daughter.

[01:09:28] RD: So let's talk about your love of horses, now. You got your first horse at age . . .

DJ: Twelve.

RD: Twelve. And you had horses as a grown-up, right?

DJ: Oh, yeah.

RD: Racehorses.

DJ: I had my first horse at twelve. I may have told you this already 'cause old people repeat themselves. If I did, thank goodness you can edit. [*RD laughs*] But I named her Patsy after a girl I liked. And in about two years, the horse was prettier than Patsy. And I met Betty June. And I had my dad's car for the first time at night when I was fourteen. And Betty, my girlfriend, the one I liked—we were both in junior choir at First Baptist Church in Sheridan. And I had told her I was gonna get my dad's car to come to junior choir practice, and when the practice was over, meet me at the Legion Hut. It was one block away from the church. And she had ridden her bicycle to prior—choir practice. And she got there and got in the car with me, and we visited. And I told her, I said, "Well, I promised myself all day today that I was gonna kiss you tonight. And so here goes." And I leaned over and kissed her. And the next day I told all my buddies that

I kissed her right on the mouth. And that started [*laughs*] the relationship that lasted forever. [01:11:13] One thing about high school and the seventh grade, really—we had our own little coup. Long before Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin and those guys ever thought about a coup.

RD: The Rat Pack? [*Laughs*]

DJ: Yeah. It was me, Bob Rushing, Bob Slaughter, and Joe Koon. There were four of us. Bob Slaughter, with a name like Slaughter, became an M.D., practiced family medicine in Batesville for fifty years. He's gone now. His wife was my wife's best friend. I still talk to her several times a week. She's ninety-four, too, our age. Bob Rushing became a dentist, Joe Koon became a bandmaster, and I became a teacher. So we all amounted to somethin' at least. [*Laughs*] And I'm the only one left, and outta my high-school class of sixty-nine people, there're three of us left. And, Randy, strangely enough, they're all men. Usually women outlive men. But Edgar Mitchell is a preacher in Nova Scotia. He's been there many, many years. Ed Waddell was director of the forestry department under Bill when Bill was governor. He's a retired colonel in the military, National Guard, as well. And me. The three of us. Whenever I'd hold a class reunion as president, we had a last man's bottle of whiskey.

And the turkey that I k—we kept givin' it to kept drinkin' the whiskey, and so every time [*laughs*] we'd have a reunion, I'd have to buy another bottle. [01:12:51] But I still visit the graves, and I still, at ninety-four, I hear the voices of those I loved. Junior high, high school—horses. And then later with horses, I owned five gaited American saddle horses. Tennessee Walking Horses. Buggies. Cliff Peck was the Chevrolet man here. Wonderful man. He enjoys his wine. And he was big in horses. He taught me how to drive, how to drive buggies. I taught my grandkids how to do it. I lived on five acres in Mabelvale. I had my own stable. And . . .

RD: Did you race . . .

DJ: . . . that's where I raised . . .

RD: . . . quarter horses?

DJ: Huh?

RD: Did you race quarter horses?

DJ: Not quarter horses.

RD: Oh.

DJ: Thoroughbreds.

RD: Thoroughbreds. Okay.

[01:13:36] DJ: All mine were gaited horses.

RD: Okay. Yeah . . .

DJ: Quarter horses are . . .

RD: Gait horses.

DJ: Yeah, Quarter Horses are okay, but they're not comfortable to ride. A gaited horse, it has single-footing, pacing, fox-trotting—they're all very comfortable. A horse in a single footing is like sitting in a rocking chair. It's like a Tennessee Walker. And the first buggy I got had red plush velvet seats and red fringe hangin' around it. And my wife—we lived on a little dead-end road. My wife said, "I'm not ridin' in that. That looks like a house of ill repute." [*Laughs*] So finally she agreed, and she took a grocery sack and cut out the eyes and a mouth and put lipstick on that and put the sack over her head before she would ride in my buggy. I have pictures of that. [*Laughter*] But we had a big laugh outta that. [01:14:35] But my first little Thoroughbred I named Davey's Dream. She was a filly. And I raised her in my back yard. And she won her first race at Churchill Downs because . . .

RD: In Louisville?

DJ: Huh?

RD: Churchill Downs in Louisville?

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: Because when you own racehorses, you're like nomadic. You're like pea pickers. You go from crop to crop. We would leave Oaklawn and go to Churchill. Then we'd go to Arlington Park in Chicago, maybe Louisiana Downs. You go where the money is. And course, now, where Oaklawn used to be like fourth or fifth in line of prestige, they're right up there because—'cause with the casinos—a maiden race like at Louisville might have a purse of sixty thousand. A hundred thousand at Oaklawn because, believe it or not—I used to know the number of the law, but I don't anymore. I got old. But I'm sure the people that represented Oaklawn got this done with the legislature. There was a law made years ago that if any other facility opened as a legal wagering business, they had to pay 17 percent of their gross to Oaklawn Park. So Saracen in Pine Bluff pays 17 percent of their gross to Oaklawn. West Memphis. And if Pope County people ever get their head where they belong and get their own casino, they'll do it.

RD: Yeah.

[01:16:17] DJ: But the caveat to it—the Cella family does not get the money. The Cella family started Oaklawn Park in 1904. And Louis, one of two . . .

RD: Brothers.

DJ: . . . brothers of Charles, who is gone now, who managed Oaklawn—and Louis has done an amazing job. He built a new hotel. He made the casino what it is. He's a lot of wonderful things. Someone asked me if I'd stayed in their new hotel. I said, "No, it's 465 dollars a night. I'm forty-five minutes from my bed. I ain't staying in a [*laughs*] hotel like that." But he's done a lot of wonderful things. And he and his wife—her daddy is Jimmy Dean. Not the cowboy, but from England. He's a Kubota tractor dealer. I bought a tractor from him years ago. They just had their first—well, now they've had their second grandchild. And Louis interned at Herschel's—at Herschel Friday's law firm. And Herschel is the one that's handled Oaklawn all these years. Friday, Eldredge & Clark. [01:17:34] Largest law firm in the state. They have eighty lawyers on staff. And I'm sure he's the one that did the lobbying that got the law passed where Oaklawn'd get all this money. But Louis actually interned for Herschel. And I am told that the Cella family owns about half of St. Louis, and Louis's brother John manages that part of it. And Louis does the Hot Springs part of it. They've just built a new home. If you recall where Charles's old house was, at the north end of the racetrack encompassed by the fence and the rock wall. It was a log house. They tore it down and

built Fort Knox. I'm serious. I have never seen that many electrical boxes on the end of a house. You can see it if you walk down to the north end of the track. You can see all the end of the house. [01:18:36] If you turn on the—at the traffic light just 'fore you get to the track, you can go over to the street east of the track and drive down—you're on the east side of the racetrack. You can really see the house. But you know, Randy, you think about it. The cash that goes through that casino and through that racetrack—I was there one Saturday morning with one of my horses, practicing, rehearsing, workin' it out. And an armored car pulled up on the apron in front of the grandstand, state police car in front it and one behind it. Officers get out with Thompson submachine guns. People come out of the racetrack with dollies, and they're getting the cash for that day's operation. The point of the story is, Rochelle and Louis could not live in Shinall Heights. She can't go out in the backyard and hang out her clothes and visit with a neighbor because with that kind of money—I don't know whether it's true not. Rumored they're in the six billion category. And your kids could be taken hostage. So now they're under the umbrella of security. Now, the only other racetrack—because the securi—of the casino as well. But you know, here again, nothin's for free maybe except

a bird singin' for you. Because you pay a price. They're very wealthy, but they pay for that. They can't live a normal life. [01:20:25] But Lewis is a good guy. I won my first race at Churchill Downs, and Pat Day was riding. Pat was a premiere jockey. The name probably means something to you. He won a hundred million dollars in purses.

RD: I've bet on him a lot. [*Laughs*]

DJ: And he won with my horse, first race out, and it was Pat's 500th win at Kentu—at Lou—at Churchill. So I'm in the history books. My horse is. [*Laughs*] Davey's Dream. He was ridin'—his five—we have pictures everywhere. And so we're in the history books up there. I won my last race at Oaklawn Park about five years ago because I got a stallion, got in the breeding business. My stallion was named I'm a Jones Boy. And my offspring would be One of the Jones Girls, I'm a Jones Girl Too, Another Jones Girl. [*RD laughs*] And we won several races. But my last race at Oaklawn Park about five years ago—the way time flies, could be more. I'm a Jones Girl Too, her first race, gate opens, she won't come out of the gate. Had to send her back to school, get another gate pass. Second race, she won't come out of the gate. I told the trainer, who trained with me for forty years, by the way—we're still friends. I said, "If you'll get a cattle prod

and stick it in her butt, she'll come outta the gate." He said, "Yeah, David, but she wouldn't go back in." "Okay." Third race. She comes out of the gate, leads all the way around, and wins by about four. So we're walkin' back to the barn, and she's limping. Call the vet, he comes over with his x-ray machine. And she had fractured her sesamoid, which is a bone right behind the ankle. She can be a riding horse, but if I put the pressure on her on the track, chances are she'd break down, and I'd have to put her down. I'd loved her since the day she was born. I didn't wanna do that. [*Laughs*] So I told the trainers, "See if you can find a kid somewhere who wants a horse and make his day." And he did. He found a little boy in Heber Springs. Made the kid's day, made the horse a happy home, and got me outta the business. [01:22:54] And my trainer—I still introduce him to friends at the racetrack and tell 'em he rai—he was my trainer for forty years, and that he had made me a millionaire. And they'll all say, "Really?" and I'll say, "Yeah. I had ten million when I met him. I just got one now." [*RD laughs*] And course, none of that's true but he's a great straight man. [*Laughs*] We play the story well together. And but I love to ride. I used to ride Patsy in front of Betty June's house bareback, galloping, showing off. And . . .

RD: So you were a pretty good rider.

DJ: I was. I could've been in the equine business. I loved a spirited horse. The last Tennessee Walker I had had been what they call cut proud. They had not done a complete job when they castrated him. And he still thought he was a stallion. And when I tried him out to see if I was gonna buy him, I had a blister on my hand for holdin' him. He was that spirited, and I loved that. And I kept sayin' I wanted to teach him to rear up and take about four steps on his hind legs so I could really show out. [*Laughter*] I never did achieve that. [01:24:17] But oh yeah, I loved—I still do. I'll tell you one last story about a horse. There was a filly runnin' last year named Thorpedo Anna. She had been Horse of the Year in 2024. And my trainer, I knew, knew her trainer. His name was McPeek. And he actually was the trainer for Mystik Dan who won the Kentucky Derby last year and won the Arkansas Derby. Owned by the Gasaway family. Wonderful family. Sharilyn Gasaway was the chief financial officer for Alltel, and now they're in the horse business. And I'm sure that Joe Scott—Joe Ford, who's a buddy of mine, too, who owned in—his family, Scott, ran Alltel, then they sold out to Verizon. I don't want you worryin' about their next bill, because they're okay. [*Laughs*] But anyway, I called my trainer, Jerry

Calvin, and I said, "Hey, I wanna meet Thorpedo Anna. She's runnin' today in the feature race at Oaklawn Park, and I wanna meet her. I wanna hug her, rub her nose, and pet her. Love of the animal." He said, "What time can you be here?" I said, "Ten o'clock." He said, "Okay." They keep about 2,000 horses on the back side, in the stables back there. And so I go, and they have her out of the stall. They got a blanket on her. I didn't tell her to take the blanket off. I wanted to, but I didn't. I got pictures I can show you. And so I got to nuzzle her and hug on her a little bit. She had a great personality like my first filly did. My first filly, in the paddock, she'd just stand there like this with—you'd think she was asleep. [*RD laughs*] Everybody else is like this, you know, hyperactive. The greatest racehorse that ever lived to this point was a filly named Zenyatta.

RD: Oh, yeah.

[01:26:24] DJ: She won her first nineteen races. You can't do that. You can't—it's impossible. Because number one, a female horse gets a headache every twenty-eight days. You got weather. You got a crowded field. And the way she would run, it would drive you crazy. Mike Smith rode her every time. They'd come out of the paddock, and they'd just stand there. Everybody else was exercisin'. But Zenyatta would just stand there. And come

out of the gate. In the back stretch, she'd be ten lengths behind everybody. And Mike would sit down on her. In the final turn before you get to the stretch, and here she'd some. Wins her first nineteen. The twentieth race, she gets second by that much. I saw Mike gettin' off the scales, because you weigh in after each race, tears runnin' down his face. He knew he had screwed up. [01:27:21] You might remember Mike. He married John Lively—remember John Lively, the jockey?

RD: Mm-hmm.

DJ: He and Larry Snyder were famous.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: He married Patrice Lively. And he screwed up, too, and now she's—they're divorced. But he knew he had sat down on her too late. A second—I—it's hard for me to believe this. They tell me that a second is five lengths when a horse is running. Now that seems impossible. I've forgotten what Thoroughbred it was, but the length between the front legs and back legs when they were running was twenty-eight feet when they're stretched out running.

RD: Wow.

DJ: And they're very fragile. They're very temperamental. But they're gorgeous. And Zenyatta, one last word about her and I'll

tell you the story—final about Thorpedo Anna. True story. They got it on tape. Terry Wallace was the announcer. They're comin' out for the big race. Pre-race, Terry introduces each horse by number as they come out forth. And when he gets to Zenyatta—I've forgotten the number, but he said, "And number so-and-so is Zenyatta." She bowed three times. Literally. That's not possible, I understand that. She literally bowed three times to the fans. And everybody went nuts. They got it on tape. Well, they retired her, and she had her first foal. It was a 125-pound boy, and mother and daught—mother and son were fine. But she's not really produced any runners to speak of. [01:29:06] The greatest sire was Northern Dancer. He died when he was twenty-five. Back to Thorpedo Anna, when I got over there and hugged on her. She won that race that day. And by winning that race—the winning horse gets 60 percent of the purse. She was $100,000 short of winning—you ready?—four million dollars. And she had just turned four in January. Now what her future holds if she stays healthy, I don't know. But you talk about a star. Man, she's a star. And that's what a guy like me gets in business for. I never made any money. I won some races. The winner gets sixty, second place gets twenty, third place ten, fourth place six, fifth place four. And if you're runnin'

a million-dollar race, you gotta have a great horse to do that. I never did have one that great. But even with Mystik Dan, they kept him rather than selling him 'cause after you win the Kentucky Derby, you have buyers, breeders, waiting to buy the horse. And they offer you a lot of money. Well, Sharilyn and Brad, her husband, decided they'd keep Mystik Dan and run him. He ran like next-to-last for the next two or three races. He then won—that's not true. The last race at Oaklawn Park, he ran second, which I thought might give him his confidence back. And it did. He started winning again after that. And he would still be a good stud, but not like he would as the day after the Kentucky Derby. [01:31:01] My wife used to tell people that David's three most boring subjects were his horses, his horses, and his horses. [*Laughter*] And she was right. She was right. But yeah, animals and—I got three tombstones in three different house's flower beds for my dogs that died that I had. I've always just loved the animals. And . . .

RD: Anything special on the tombstones?

DJ: What?

RD: Anything special on the tombstones?

DJ: Just "Our Friend." The one here is Sampson with his date of birth and date of death. He was a Cocker Spaniel. "Our Friend,

Sampson." And we had one named Precious that's at our house—the house we got in Mabelvale. We—my—she would not have a house dog, an inside dog. We had to always have a fenced yard. Now, they were treated like queens. But she was a—she was almost obsessed with a clean house. And I heard a jokester one time, a comedian, say his wife was so obsessed with cleanin' house, if he got up to pee during the night, she'd make up his bed. [*RD laughs*] She wasn't that bad, but she alway—she was really a fastidious housekeeper. And we loved our dogs. Always had great facilities for them, but never in the house. [01:32:25] But yeah. They played an important part in our lives. Like I said, when that—when I started writing my memoirs, that paper I gave you—I've had a magical life. I got the woman that I wanted. Had the parents I wanted, the childhood I wanted, two kids I wanted, the three grandkids and two great-grandkids, the two jobs. All my dreams came true. Now, I don't wanna mislead anybody. I've got more scars than Frankenstein. I'm a four-time cancer survivor. I've been clean for eight years. But blessed beyond measure.

[Recording paused]

[01:33:13] DJ: Whenever you're ready, I'm ready for Bob Clausen.

RD: All right. Let's do it.

DJ: Well, Bob Clausen called me after we had our—Channel 4 had a news reunion about a month ago. And it turned out that we had other people come, not just news people. And Lencola Sullivan—I know I've told you this, but I don't think I've told the camera this. Lencola Sullivan was the first and only Black Miss Arkansas. And she worked for us. We hired her in our news room, and she was precious. Her singing—her talent was singing. And after she left us, she was—did the opening act for little Stevie Wonder.

RD: And weren't they together . . .

DJ: Yeah.

RD: . . . romantically for a while?

DJ: They were together for a while, yeah. And anyway, Lencola came back for the news reunion. She lives in Amsterdam. She had secured a job in New York for some international company based in the Netherlands, and she performed at one of their conventions in New York, and some of the executives from that company, obviously, were at the convention. And one named Roel spotted her and was thunderstruck. And she was Black, and he was white. He was an Amsterdam native. And they got togeth—they been married twenty-somethin' years now. [01:34:47] Anyway, she came back for the reunion. And we

had a marvelous time. And I told my family when I got back, "I have not felt that loved in a long time." I got more hugs, more thank yous—'cause we were all friends. I had 116 employees, and I had learned the name of every spouse, the name of every child, and that wasn't easy. I was an adequate manager. I mean, I made budget most of the time, made the company money. But my strength was in people.

[01:35:28] RD: Well, and that could be considered more important as a manager.

DJ: It was, but . . .

RD: Than crunchin' numbers.

DJ: I 'member Carolyn Long one time had a wreck on a Saturday morning, just a fender bender. And within thirty minutes, I got five phone calls sayin', "Carolyn had a wreck. She's okay." But everybody reported to Daddy that—and you know, Randy, at summer picnics and Christmas parties, the parent appreciated when I knew Johnnie's name, when I knew their kid's name. They knew I cared. And that's where my strength was was with people. And so in—I had a great time with Carolyn and Lencola, and a lot of our people. They told a story—you knew Gary Long, our news director. He's dead now. Ron Gardner told the story at the reunion that one day Gary said, "I've got a story that I've

gotta go up and ask David about it." Well, everybody knew that a general manager does not interfere in news. The FCC was very strict about that. If a general manager tried to direct the news service and what stories ran and did not, they'd take your license. And they should. And so Ron was tellin' the story that Gary said, "I gotta go up and see David about this story." I won't tell you what it was, but it had to do with a very, very high-profile individual and a friend. And Ron said, "When Gary came back down from seein' David, I said, 'What did David say?' And Gary said, 'David said, 'If the story's true, run it. If it's not, don't.'" I didn't put hands on the news department because I didn't wanna lose my license. WHBQ lost theirs at Channel 13.

RD: Memphis?

DJ: They put it open for the public. There were five people that applied for it. I applied for it. Three Black dudes in Memphis applied for it, and a white guy in Cincinnati applied for it. We all went to Washington, testified before the FCC. My great-grandmother was on the Trail of Tears. She's full-blood Cherokee. I chartered an airplane and flew my mom and I over to Tahlequah, Oklahoma, tryin' to get some form of minority recognition in my applyin', tryin' to get the license in Memphis, and I couldn't. You gotta be 25 percent. I was only 12.

[01:38:12] But after we all got through testifyin' before the FCC, they awarded the license to me. They gave chan—well, really, 4, Channel 4. They gave the station credit for their telethons because our signal fell into the shadow of Channel 13's signal in eastern Arkansas. And it turned those white guys—those Black guys in Memphis white that a white guy in Little Rock, Arkansas, could get a license in Memphis, ABC license, away from their natively bein' there. And one of the guys had a radio station. They were all nice guys. [01:38:49] Willie Harenton was one of 'em. He was head of the school system and was later mayor of Memphis. And I saw him at both of Bill's inaugurations, so he was a big Democrat. But I didn't know what to do. I didn't wanna move to Memphis. And I could see appeals for the next ten years for those Black guys in the courts. And so Willie called me one day, and he said, "Hey. We got a guy in wa—in Florida that would like to look to buy that license. If we brought you a sack full of money, would you sell it?" And being a normal, greedy man, I said, "How big a sack?" [*Laughter*] And they told me. And I said—because seriously, if I had been them, I'd appealed it to the end of days. Because it belonged—it should've belonged to a Black guy in Memphis. I wasn't gonna tell them that, but that's the way I felt. And so we

agreed, and they brought me a sack full of money, and we sold it, and they all got some money, too. And everybody went home. I've often thought, "Did I make a mistake? Should I have pulled up roots?" Because my heart, like I said earlier, was here. And you know, it's like the rich guy. They asked him how much was enough money. And he said, "Just a little more." I'm not that way. I got lucky and made a few bucks. But more than once, I've been offered a deal that I would say, "I—thank you, but I'm really not interested. Thank you for askin'." And they would say, "Don't you wanna make money?" I said, "Not really. I got enough for my family. I don't need any more money." And that's the way—been my philosophy. You wanted to talk about . . .

RD: Let's talk about . . .

[01:40:59] DJ: . . . Bob Clausen.

RD: Yeah, let's talk about your interview with Bob Clausen.

DJ: Well, Bob called me on a—one day on the way home from somewhere. And you know, he lives in Bismarck. He comes over here every day. Drives back and forth. Bismarck's . . .

RD: No, I didn't know that.

DJ: Oh, yeah. His wife's into horses. They live between Hot Springs and . . .

RD: That's a pretty good haul.

DJ: . . . Arkadelphia in Bismarck. Nice guy.

RD: Great guy.

DJ: And he said, "I'd like to interview you." And I said, "Why?" And he said, "Well, you were a pioneer in television. They didn't have tape, and they didn't have this and that when you started." And I said, "Well, I would be honored to do that." I was about half irritated, to tell you the truth. And it's okay to leave this on the tape. He interviewed all my talent during their seventieth anniversary, but I never got a call.

RD: Oh, I thought that's why he interviewed you.

DJ: Huh-uh.

RD: Okay.

[01:41:53] DJ: It later turned out it was, some six months later or whatever it is. And so we agreed, and I went down to the studio. Treated me like royalty. I noticed he had about a forty-year-old woman camera person and a young, Black kid camera person. And I could tell they had true affection for him. And when I wrote him my thank-you note for doin' it, I said, "I noticed the two operators of the cameras in the studio hold true affection for you. That's a wonderful testimony when your coworkers like [*laughs*] you."

RD: True.

DJ: So anyway, he opened the interview by saying, "When we did all of our interviews with the talent, the anchors, on Channel 4 on our anniversary, one name that kept comin' up was David Jones. Not Tom Bonner, Roy Mitchell, Troy—Carolyn Long. It was always, 'David Jones did this, did that.'" And he said, "I want you to tell me why. How did you do all that?" And I said, "Well, the people really did it." I said, "I was blessed that I had the right people in the right job, and I let 'em do their job." Yeah, we had the first helicopter. Don Holbert, who'd been a pilot in Vietnam, we made a deal with him to be our pilot out at Central Flying Service. We weren't first in color. Channel 7 was first in color. We were second. They beat us by a couple of months. But we called—I think I mentioned this to you earlier. We—well, Bob Brown was the boss at that time, and we decided—and he included me. We both were runnin' the place. I was general sales manager. Wonderful guy. He'd been sales manager at Denver for the station there, and they sent him here as general manager when they bought 4. [01:44:08] And we had decided in prime access, we were gonna run *The Beverly Hillbillies* six thirty to seven, Monday through Friday. And we called our New York office, our rep office, and told 'em we were gonna do that,

and they started laughin'. And I said, "Why are y'all laughin'?" And one of the guys said, "Well, you aren't serious, are you?" And Bob spoke up, said, "Yeah, we're [*laughs*] serious." And they said, "Well, we don't think that's the right thing to do. We think that's crazy." And Bob said, "Well, we're gonna do it anyway." And we started playing *The Beverly Hillbillies*, Monday through Friday, six thirty to seven following our newscast. And then when the first rating book came out, we had a fifty share in our news as well as in *Beverly Hillbillies*. And that's where we learned out—we learned that the lead-out program was as important as the lead-in program as far as ratings were concerned. And we were also—I don't know whether—I think the *Hillbillies* played a part in it, but we were one of two stations for NBC in America that was number one in their time period, five-thirty to six. [01:45:36] And Tom Brokaw, when I would go visit the network, would always—we'd always visit. He was a terrific guy. Have you read his book, *The Greatest Generation*?

RD: Mm-hmm.

DJ: Wonderful book. "Why are y'all the only one in the country"—with one other. I think the second station was Arizona, maybe. "Why are you number one with our newscasts and nobody else is?" And I say, "We got the right people head—backin' you up."

Because see, during the school crisis of 1957—the name John Chancellor will mean something to you. Sander Vanocur. Those guys came and lived with us for that school-integration crisis period of time. Point of that is, we've always been a close affiliate of the NBC network. When I went to Israel, I was supposed to meet with Rabin. I had an opportunity to meet him, and I kinda fudged. I said I was with NBC. Well, I really wasn't. I was associated with 'em. It was a half lie. But two weeks before I went, he was assassinated. And I regretted that, really, because I'm a huge fan of the Jewish people. I've been there, of course, and it's an amazing country. The boys—when they grew—they—by high school, they have to go to the military for two years. Girls have to go for one. I think that'd be wonderful in America 'cause it helps you become a person. It makes you realize who you are. You become a man. [01:47:24] And I stayed at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. You can't fly to Jerusalem. They don't have an airport. You fly into Tel Aviv. You bus it over. And on a Saturday night, you'd see these teenagers hangin' out. You'd see the pistol in their pocket or AK over their shoulder 'cause they were all responsible for their gun. And they didn't go anywhere without it. I hired a car and driver to take me to Galilee. I wanted to see the Sea of Galilee. And

on the way back, we went through Jericho. But on the way back, as we approached Jericho, the driver reached in the car compartment and pulled out an automatic pistol and laid it on the seat. And I said, "Is there somethin' you need to tell me?" [*Laughter*] And he said, "No, Mr. Jones, don't worry about it." He said, "Jo—Jericho is about 95 percent Arab," and he said, "On the weekends sometimes they get to feelin' their oats, and they get a little bit wild. We're okay." [*RD laughs*] And then I really got nervous. And when we got a little bit closer, he took it and laid it in his lap. And about that time, we made a turn, and there was an Israeli military vehicle with about six soldiers. He said, "Oh, we're okay," took the gun, and put it up. But I rode my first camel in Cairo riding to the Great Pyramid. And I asked the young Arab boy leading the camel—he said his name was Mohammed, but I think everybody in—Muslim was named Mohammed. I said, "Mohammed, what's the name of your camel?" Now this is in Cairo on the sands goin' to the Great Pyramid. He said, "Michael Jackson." [*Laughter*] Which I thought was hilarious. I had just made my speech on education. In those third-world countries, the kids can go to school and work in the afternoon, or work in the mornings and go to school in the afternoon. They fix it where you can work and go to

school. But in my travels, like I said, I have been so blessed meeting these people that are really important and do the important things. I told you my favorite travel story. I don't know that we need to repeat it, unless you wanna hear it again.

RD: Oh, why not?

[01:50:09] DJ: Well, I'm in a Paris train station about to go to Munich because I wanted to see Dachau, a concentration camp like Auschwitz. They had the fu—the areas where they burned and cremated the Jews after they murdered them. And there was an older woman and a younger woman which I assumed to be their daughter—her daughter. It turned out it was. Boarded the train. And I helped them put their luggage up on the luggage rack. They sat behind me. And the older lady said, "You're American." I said, "Yes, ma'am." She said, "I've been to your country." I said, "Really?" She said, "Yes. In fact, I've been to your capital." I said, "Well, tell me about that." And this story's—this was thirty years ago. And she said, "Well, during World War II, I was in the French Underground Resistance, and what we did was we would help American pilots that were shot down in France get into Switzerland to get back home to America." And she said, "I was captured with the Nazis, and they tortured me," and her daughter's doin' this

[*nods*]. And she said, "But my compatriot friends helped me to escape." No tellin' what they did to her. But she said, "I came to your capital. I was in your Rose Garden. Your president awarded me the Congressional Medal of Freedom." And here I am, like I mentioned, I'm a hickory nut from Arkansas in a Paris train station that met a true hero. Can you imagine living that kind of life back in those days? Each minute, you can die. And here I had the pleasure of meeting one. That's my favorite travel story.

[01:52:09] RD: Well, I wanted to ask you—you were talkin' about being in the Holy Land. Religion has always played an important part in your life, hasn't it?

DJ: It has.

RD: Tell me about that.

DJ: Well, I started Vacation Bible School when I was five years old in Sheridan. My parents were Baptist. And I always went to church. My parents insisted on doin' that. Consequently, Betty and I took our children to church. We always went to church. I never did wanna be a deacon or anything like that. I didn't feel I was worthy. But we were good church people. And I was asked to teach a class, and when I left teaching high school, I started teaching a Sunday school class, and I admitted very openly that

the Lord knew I did that more for me than I did for him because I like to teach. I had so much fun teachin' school. I loved—I taught Shakespeare six weeks every year. My dad had been a teacher, and Dad used to tell me all these wonderful stories as a kid. And then when I got older in high school and in college, these wonderful stories that he had told me were classics that he had told me in his own words. He'd given me the plots. And his favorite play was Hamlet. And at one time he could recite the entire play of Hamlet by memory. Well, my favorite play was Julius Ceasar. I could recite a lot of Hamlet, and a lot of Julius Ceasar, too, 'cause he taught me to commit to memory things that I loved. And I've probably got forty poems committed to memory. I could probably recite Shakespeare for thirty minutes, different plays. My two favorites are ha—*Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*. [01:54:01] But the story of teaching Shakespeare—every time that I would announce—this is tenth-grade English class. "Okay, the next six weeks, I'm gonna teach you *Hamlet*." I did that 'cause it's my dad's favorite. I did that to honor him. And these football players would say, "Oh, I hate *Hamlet*." No, "I hate Shakespeare." And I'd say, "Really?" And they'd say, "Yeah, I just hate it." And I'd say, "Why?" And they'd say, "Well, I just do." And I'd say, "Okay. But why?" "Well, I don't

know. I just do." "Okay." Well, I always laughed at teachers that would have kids write "I will not talk in class" on the blackboard. That's [*unclear word]*. You don't learn anything when you do that. I decided certain lines, certain phrases, certain paragraphs of Shakespeare, as punishment, to make 'em memorize that, and then they'd recite it in speech class. That was part of their payment for being unruly in class. It was so wonderful. By the end of the six weeks, these old football players were saying, "Can we read *Julius Ceasar* in next week's speech?" They didn't have the right teacher. And I have to tell you, I was a good teacher. [01:55:33] My wife used to say, "I'm just not good at math," and I'd say, "Baby, that wasn't the problem. You didn't have the right teacher." I had a guy named Clark Elkins that taught American history at Henderson University. My first class under Clark Elkins, he had talked about ten minutes and the bell rang. And I said, "Well, first day. Screwed up bells." He had spoken for fifty minutes. And he was the kind of teacher that you would—you'd be on the edge of your seat waitin' to see what he's gonna say next. And he told a story. He said, "You know, Sam Houston was governor of Tennessee, and he married this woman. And they were married for six weeks. They divorced. He resigned the governorship of

Tennessee. He moved to Arkansas, lived on the Arkansas River with the Indians, where he got his nickname, The Raven, and then later moved on to Texas, where he became quite famous." And he said, "You know what was interesting, he and his wife both went to their graves and never told anybody why they divorced after six weeks of marriage." He said, "I think I have a pretty good idea." And the bell rang. And he closed the book. He says, "Okay. See you guys [*laughs*]"—some guy spoke up and said, "Wait a minute. We're not goin' anywhere. What do you think happened?" That was the kind of teacher he was. He would bait you where you would [*RD laughs*]—I think I read like four ancillary books during that semester that he had recommended. That teacher is so important. [01:57:22] Alexander the Great conquered Egypt without ever firing an arrow because of his reputation. They bowed down and made him Pharoah. The only non-Egyptian Pharoah to ever live. His teacher was Aristotle. You think that was by accident? He never kept slaves. When he would capture a country, he turned all the slaves loose because he was taught humanity by Aristotle. And no, I'm not old enough to have been in Aristotle's class, in case that's what you're wondering. [*Laughter*] But the—I don't even know where I left off, but I guess the point was that—you asked

about religion. I have become a true devotee of ancient history since I sold the TV station. And I have been reading a book. I read it four times, as a matter of fact. It starts in the year 432,000 B.C. It's written by name—man by the name of Sitchin. That's kitchen, but with an S. He's written like a dozen books. The first words came from Sumer, Sumeria. And he learned the Sumerian language, the Mesopotamian language, the Acadian, the Asyrian. He learned all of the Sumerian words in the old, ancient days so he could translate the cuneiform tablets that the Sumerians had left. [01:59:20] And in this book, it talks about—the ancients did not refer to the Great Flood as a flood. They referred to it as a deluge because it involved rain, too. And they have all kind of scientific evidence that it really happened. It was not a legend. And he describes the gods. And I'll shut up after this because this is one of my boring subjects, too. [*RD laughs*] His—in the book of Genesis in chapter six, it talks about aliens traveling from another planet coming to Earth. They were called the Anunnaki. Space travelers. And they liked our women and married 'em and had children with 'em. Read chapter six in Genesis. It's a short chapter. Won't take you two minutes to read it. They're mentioned several times. Space craft is mentioned several times in the Bible. The Book of

Elijah's almost all about space travel. The two men that never died were Enoch and Elijah. Enoch was taken up in a fiery craft, chariot. And Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind. So space travel has been there all these years, and that's part of these ancient writings that I'm loving is because I do know that UFOs are real. The most obvious fact that there was an ancient civilization much more advanced than us that lived here before us is the Great Pyramid. You can ask any architect or any engineer, and they will tell you that today we cannot build it. We do not have cranes big enough to raise stones, even for Stonehenge. [02:01:33] And so it was built by an ancient civilization, which Mr. Sitchin explains was brought about by the Anunnaki. In fact, the ancient writings even give—the Sumer languages, the tablets, even give the names of those people in Genesis, even the names of some of their children and grandchildren. And so what has happened is, because of my background in religion and the history of man—because civilization of religion is only five thousand years old. Abraham has told everybody they needed to have one god that was Yahweh. But Yahweh was a living being. It talked about how he loved to walk in the Garden of Eden everyday, get the breeze. He asked Eve where were they when, one day, he couldn't find them. But Hercules and

Poseidon and all of these people actually lived and walked with men on Earth according to the Sumer words. [02:0:48] So bottom line is—and I'll shut up after this—is I have become so interested in ancient history because of my early youth and early young manhood, in the history of the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and then Christianity and when all religions started bein' formed. I read about a book a week, and I think that's good for my mental health. When I lost my wife and my daughter—I lost my wife in 2020. Lost my daughter in 2019. I decided in order to maintain my mental health—'cause I wasn't sure I was gonna make it. But in order to maintain my mental health—and I'm always very disciplined. All my life I been very disciplined. [02:03:45] I smoked when I was eighteen years old. My mom and dad smoked. I was a senior in high school when I found out they were killin' you. I put 'em down. I loved 'em. I loved the holes they burned in my clothes, the bad breath. I loved everything about 'em. But I'm disciplined. And the—I decided that I would set aside one day a week to be sad. If I wanted to sit at home and look at pictures and cry and be sad, I would. But if I felt it come along another day—where the discipline comes in and the energy in ninety-four years old, the blessing of bein' able to get up and do things—if I feel that

sadness comin' on another day, I go get that little smart-aleck red sports car [*RD laughs*], and I put the top down on pretty days. If nothin' else, I'll just drive through the shoppin' center and be a smart aleck. Somethin' to get my mind off my loss. And I think it's worked. My mental health is good. I have those sad days, obviously. But I also have an outlet that—because of the great generosity of my children in givin' me that [*laughs*] sports car, you know. [*Laughter*]

RD: That was so nice of them.

DJ: It was. Just—I was overcome.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: But is that enough on religion?

[02:05:24] RD: Yeah. I think so. I wanna ask what made you decide to go from teaching in Camden to just answering a blind ad and move to Little Rock . . .

DJ: Well, television was . . .

RD: . . . as a sales . . .

DJ: . . . romantic. It was new. WMCT was the only station in Memphis, I mean, that we could get. We had an old black-and-white TV at our place, at our apartment, in Camden. We lived in a housing project when we first moved to Camden. We lived in a government housing project because my teacher salary was low

enough I qualified. And we later got enough money were we got an apartment. But television was exciting. My mother had told me, like I said, that I'd be a good salesperson. I had a lot of friends. What I didn't finish, and you'll notice on that page I gave you, when I said I had the right parents, the right kids, the right grandkids and everything, I ended it by saying, "And I got a thousand friends." I got a friend who told me, "I think you shortchanged yourself. I think you got more than that." You can't be blessed more than that. And so I think that and the fact that even though I loved it, dearly loved it, I wanted to do better for my family. I mean, I really wanted to send my kids to college. My dad and mom couldn't afford to send me to college but—and they did help some. [02:06:59] But I went to class in the morning, I worked for Kroger in the afternoon, and then when I married, I think I mentioned to you, she and I ran this little motel. And when I walked across that stage and got my degree, I had a lump in my throat as big as this chair because I worked for it. We got a guy—I'm goin' on the twenty-first, which I guess is two weeks from today. No, it'd be a week from today. Two weeks from today. His name is Caver. He graduated from Henderson State University in 1962, and we're having a dinner honoring him. He lives in Virginia. He graduated from

Henderson with a degree in engineering. And if you will recall—if—and I will have to say this—I don't wanna hurt anybody's feelings, so I'll leave names out, but if they had listened to me—I was on the board at Henderson. Bill appointed me to the board at Henderson several years ago. And if they had listened to me and not hired a certain individual to run the place, they wouldn't've almost gone bankrupt two or three years ago. You read about all that, heard about it. And ASU took 'em under their wing and made 'em part of it. Shane Broadway, a name you know, is my neighbor two doors down. He's the number two guy at ASU in charge of Henderson, now. Well, this Dr. Caver, I don't know what else he did besides havin' an engineering degree, about a month ago wrote Henderson a check. He made 'em a gift. You ready?

RD: Mm-hmm.

[02:08:42] DJ: Ten million. Now I've heard of grants. I've got a ?college? room named for me over there. I've got MEMS Building named for me, but I ain't in that category. He gave ten million bucks to Henderson. Wrote 'em a check. And I asked our development officer, I said, "Is he married?" He said, "Well, he's a widower." I said, "I'd marry him for that kinda money." [*RD laughs*] And we—course, we got a laugh [*laughs*] outta

that. I said, "Did he leave his family any money?" He said, "Yeah," he said, "I think—nah," he said, "I think his daughter's—has more than he has." I said, "Well, maybe his daughter wants to get married." Anyway, I'm goin' to a dinner honoring him. He worked like a dog to get through college. He had nothing. I've got my speech made up. When I meet him, I'm gonna say, "Oh, I gotta ask you a personal question. Is it true that when you started to school here, your father had the family chauffer bring you to class each morning, and at noon would bring the chef out, and he'd fix your lunch? And did he hire you tutors that were Playboy centerfolds?" By this time if he says yes, I'm gonna say, "I had the same thing. [*RD laughs*] Look what we have in common." [*Laughter*] But anyway, I'm really looking forward to meeting him. So—graduated in [19]62. He's in his eighties. But seriously, do you know any individual human that's ever written a check—now, Win Paul did that back to UMS on some stuff. But he's the one I knew that ever could write a check for ten million bucks. Anyway, back to wherever we were, and I'm sorry. I'm . . .

RD: Well, that's okay.

DJ: . . . glad you got a good editor.

[02:10:31] RD: When you went to Channel 4 in the [19]50s, how

long had it been on the air?

DJ: It went on the air in April of [19]55. I went there in January of [19]56.

RD: Okay. So were you guys . . .

DJ: Eighteen months.

RD: Were you guys just makin' it up as you went along?

DJ: We had two cameramen, Chris Button and Rusty Ralston. Everything was done on film. We had a film processor. Buckner, Ed Buckner was our film processor. He would develop the movie. We used to kid Chris Button. He went racing to a fire one time and left his camera at the office, and we never would let him forget that. You 'member Les Bolton?

RD: Sure.

DJ: Did our ten o'clock news. Had one hand . .

RD: And then he flew a plane . . .

DJ: Yeah. Yeah.

RD: . . . for Channel 7.

DJ: Yeah. He had one hand. One day he came into a meeting. We were all having a meeting. He came in. He said—well, first let me back up. You 'member George Moore?

RD: Mm-hmm. "That's the news, by George."

DJ: Channel 11. George Moore would end the news every day by

saying, "And that's the news, by George. George Moore reporting." Bolton walked in a meeting one day, and he said, "I'm gonna change my name, y'all." And we all said, "What?" 'cause he's serious as death. "What are you talkin' about." He said, "I'm gonna na—end the news every night by sayin', 'And that's the news, by God. Godfrey Bolton reporting.'" [*Laughter*] We thought that was hilarious. Course he never did—we wouldn't've let him do that anyway. Yeah.

RD: Godfrey Bolton.

DJ: "That's the news, by God. Godfrey Bolton reporting." Is that not good?

RD: That's good. Les had some pipes . . .

DJ: Huh?

RD: . . . didn't he? He had some pipes.

DJ: Oh, yeah. Yeah. He loved to fish, and he was a reader. That's all he did. He'd sit in his office when we were at 10th and Spring, work on his rod and reel and—but he did—General Life Insurance Company sponsored him Monday through Friday at ten o'clock. And we didn't even know what runnin' a television station was like. [02:12:48] When Bob Brown came to town, and John Mullins on KBTV in—Channel 9 in Denver—it's now KUSA. They changed its name. He also owned the Outdoor

Company, AM/FM. Bob had been the general sales manager, knew about—he knew how to run a sales department. It's like MEMS. When we started MEMS, they were truck drivers at Medic-Vac and A1. And now we got medics that save your life. But we [*laughs*]—Bob Brown brought to us the knowledge. And I take a lot of credit for it, but I don't really deserve a lot of it. I own some of it, do some of it. But he brought the umbrella format to news. We no longer said, "Sports is brought to you by our Union Bank, news is brought to you by Southern Home Builders," this, that, and the other. You got the opening on the front end. Brought to you by all the three. You didn't separate it. They sponsored all of the segment of—the whole thirty minutes. Twenty-six, about but—and I was against that. [02:14:15] When he first came to town, there were two salesmen, John Rinehart and me. John died way too young. Died of a heart attack when he was thirty-nine years old. But we took Bob Brown to the Downtowner for a cup of coffee. Never will forget it. He's a divorcee. Had four kids. He got custody. But at The Downtowner, I said, "Bob, we hope you like us. But we're not gonna be anything that we're not. We're gonna be ourselves. What you see is what you get. And we'll always tell you the truth." From that day forth, we were the trio

at that station. He trusted us, he loved us, and it was reciprocated. He was that kinda guy. I was holdin' his hand the day before he died. His wife had called me and said, "If you're gonna see him, you better come on." And he had been back here by the end of Channel 11 at a hospital bed. He lived out at Pleasant Valley. I went out and told him goodbye. I was holdin' my daughter's hand next door. I built them a house—my son-in-law, who's her widower, still lives there. He's a great guy. I was holdin' my daughter's hand when she died. And I was in bed holdin' my wife when she died. I did not want them be afraid if I could help. And I—way that happened was, I got up to pee at two o'clock in the morning with Betty. [02:16:08] And her light was on in her bedroom. We got a what they call a Hollywood bath in between the two bedrooms. And I went in there, and she wasn't there. And I came back in the Hollywood bath—or, no, in the cabana bath that leads back to the pool. She was lyin' on the floor, cryin'. And she had fallen and broken her hip. And I called MEMS—'cause they don't serve Saline County. They do me, but they don't serve Saline County. And I said, "Run hot till you get here," but I said, "Don't—turn your sirens off when you hit the ?cemetery? 'cause it's two in the morning." And they did. I rode in the ambulance with her.

Went to the hospital. Next day they operated on her. She had never, never been the same. The year before, we'd lost our daughter. Because during the five-year recuperation of our daughter that—we had some residuals. But she went on to have a child and marry a guy and have a decent—have a good life. But Betty never was the same after we lost her. They had been joined at the hip. And so the average life of an old person that falls and breaks a hip and has surgery—the life expectancy is ninety days. That's about how long they live if they're elderly. And she lived to be a hundred days. She lived a hundred days after that. [02:17:46] She had kinda lost the will to live after we lost our daughter. But I had a nurse with her. I brought a nurse home with us from the hospital. Every day. And the nurse told me it was gettin' close. And so I went and crawled in bed with her. And that was it. [*Cries*] But you know, like I said it, once again, I'm so thankful for the blessings that I've had. [02:18:20] [*Laughs*] There was a guy the other day, old friend, tellin' me how—he was upset about the politics, he was upset about the weather, mad at his wife, one of his grandkids had done somethin' really crappy. And I said, "Let me ask you a question. You got cancer?" He said, "No." I said, "You got money in the bank?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "You got a home?"

He said, "Yeah." I said, "You got a woman?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Then shut up." [*RD laughs*] "Your roughest day is paradise for 50 percent of the world. Paradise. Get over it." Probably didn't do any good. [*Laughter*] But I preached my sermon for the day, at least. And that's what worries me about our country today is nobody likes anybody anymore. Everybody's mad at everybody. And it's gonna take a major catastrophe to bring us together. World War II did it. It brought everybody together. Molly the Riveter. The female—you know, brought women into the workforce. It brought people together. When I was in Finland—I took my grandson by my son. His name is Andrew. [02:19:43] I don't know, about seven or eight years ago, I said, "I don't really know you, and I want to." He was workin' in Dallas. Smart kid, worked—computer genius. And I said, "Let's take a cruise together 'cause I wanna get to know you." He said, "Okay," so we did. And we're in Finland, and I always like to talk to the people. And I caught this Finn, and I said, "Tell me about your country. I don't know anything about it." He said, "Well, we decided we wanted to improve education, and in order to do that, we had to abolish poverty. So we did." I said, "Are you tellin' me there are no poor people in Finland." He said, "Yes. There are no poor people in Finland."

He said, "All of your education from kindergarten through Ph.D. is paid for by the government. All of your medical, doctors, hospitals, everything, all paid by the government. If you get pregnant, you get up to two years maternity leave with 80 percent pay." I said, "Whoa, whoa, wait a minute. Wait a minute." I said, "We're the richest country in the world, and we can't do that." I said, "How do you do that?" He said, "Two ways. The first way is everybody pays 57 percent tax." And I'll bet you if we sat down and figured state income, federal income, gasoline, groceries, all the taxes we pay, a lot of people pay that much in this country. [02:21:26] And he said, "The second reason: We don't fight wars." Makes sense, doesn't it? But wouldn't it be wonderful to abolish poverty? That's the only thing I ever fussed at Bill Clinton about. I loved Bill. I never was political. I just loved him personally. He had many [*unclear words*]. His foundation has done so many wonderful things. But Randy, there are people between Dumas and Lake Village that go to bed hungry at night in the Delta. That should not be. Just like in Gaza. I've been heartbroken for like a month watchin' those little children die of starvation, and there's ten of thousands of food in a warehouse—I think it's in Texas that's paid for called Plumpy paste or somethin' like that that was

supposed to go there, but since they dismantled USAID office, there's no one to take it. Elon Musk is the richest man in the world. Why can't he do it personally? Why can't somebody step up and do that? I don't have any respect for Elon Musk. I don't care if he's the richest man in the world, the reason I don't have any respect for him—he's just had his fourteenth baby by four women that he lives with and not married to any of 'em. Where I grew up, that was white trash. I don't care how rich you get to be, you're still white trash when you do that. Don't you know he's gonna be a wonderful daddy, goin' to Boy Scout campout trips with his kids? Huh? [*Laughs*] No. [02:23:03] But anyway, what worries me is—and Finland had the right idea. Even in Arabia—well, United Arab Emirates particularly, if a foreigner's there workin', if he gets outta work for thirty days, if he doesn't get a job, he's exiled. He's run outta the country. Now they're strict. If you steal somethin', they'll cut your right hand off. They still do that. But at the same time, the sheik—we call 'em sheiks [pronounced "sheeks"], but the sheik [pronounced "shake"] is what they call 'em—issues a check every month to all the citizens that live there from their oil money. It's like people tell me, "We can't hire anybody." I'm thinkin', "Sure you can. Pay 'em. Two and two's four. You pay

'em, you can hire 'em." I always paid our people about a quarter an hour more than the competition did, and I never did have any trouble hiring people. Course, I know times have changed. My grandson and I were talkin' about that the other day about how times have changed. I said, "You know, you're right. I didn't have to contend with cocaine and marijuana and the internet and all that stuff when I was a boy." But I said, "You know somethin' that hasn't changed? Five thousand years ago, it was wrong to tell a lie. It still is. It's wrong to cheat on your wife. Still is. Some things have not changed." But that's the problem, I think, with the young generation. I love to quote this. There was a man that wrote—I'll paraphrase it. "The youngsters, the young people, are goin' to the dogs. They have no respect for their elders. They won't work. You can't depend on 'em for crap." Confucious wrote that four thousand years ago. So old people have always felt that about young people. [02:24:56] But young people today, in deference to what Confucious said, can walk into a computer and hit a button and get hard porn in his own home. And I read a survey, I guess you would call it, a study on it the other day by a group of clinical sexual psychiatrists that had done this study telling how it affected young people in their adult life in marriage, even.

And I don't know what. It didn't go into detail what effect it had. But it said that that exposure to hard pornography when you're thirteen and fourteen years old affected 'em when they were twenty-five and married and caused a lot of trouble. But the times have changed so much. And like I said, it's gonna take an actual national, international catastrophe to bring us to our knees and make us realize. [02:26:12] I'll tell you, I—one of the gifts I'm gonna give you guys when you leave—I don't give out business cards. I give out pens. And the ones I've been givin' out for the last four or five years has my favorite slogan on it. It says, "Don't cry because it's over. Rather, smile because it happened." And I think that has a powerful message. What it says is be glad for what you had. And I oughta go and tell you who said it. There's several sources that say different people said it, but I believe that the one source that I have, for me, is the guy that did it. He played first base for the New York Yankees for twenty-one years. Started when he was twenty years old. Crowds loved him. Fans loved him. And one day at Yankee Field, he stepped up to a microphone, and he said, "I stand before you today the luckiest man in the world." And he went on to say, "The doctor has just diagnosed me with a disease that they don't know what it is, but I'll be dead in a

month." And he was forty years old. And that's when he finished his speech by saying, "Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

RD: So it was Lou Gehrig.

DJ: Yeah. And the ALS disease, obviously, was named after him. Well, I just got a new set of pens in that have my new slogan on 'em. I'm still gonna give those away, too. But I got a new slogan I just fell in love with. I love pretty words. That's one reason I was a good English teacher. Just love pretty words. Poetry. Anyway. I guess my dad put that in me because of his teaching. The . . .

RD: What's the quote?

DJ: . . . the new slogan is, "Kindness is a virtue that can be seen by the blind and heard by the deaf." Isn't that cool?

RD: Mm-hmm.

DJ: And the last sentence is, "Be kind always." You gotta go get a pen for that.

RD: Oh, thank you.

DJ: Yeah. And I'll give you one of the old ones, too. Who's the general manager at 7 now?

RD: Mark Rose.

DJ: Yeah, he's been there forever, hadn't . . .

RD: He has.

DJ: Is he a good guy?

RD: He's a good guy.

DJ: Is he?

RD: Yeah. He was Dale Nicholson's number-one guy.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: He's sorta like you were with Bob Brown. But . . .

[02:28:55] DJ: Tell you a story 'bout Dale. When the ratings would come out, we, like I said, we'd all go to New York to our rep. And we were great friends even though we were competitors. It's like Bob Brown and I once he went to Channel 11. I 'member we—one time we were havin' lunch at—was it the Flaming Arrow in the . . .

RD: Oh, yeah.

DJ: . . . Quapaw Tower? And Millie—what's the advertising gal's name? Millie Ward?

RD: Millie Ward.

DJ: Yeah. She handled Wendy's. And Jerry Hamra was a buddy of mine and jer—and Bob's. And we were, the three of us, havin' lunch down there. And she walks up, and course, I loved Jerry Hamra, too. He was such a wonderful guy. He had thirty-six Wendy's at one time. Oh, back to Millie Ward. She said . . .

RD: Oh, yeah.

[02:29:46] DJ: She said, "How could you—why do you—you and Bob Brown are in collusion. You all setting rates?"

RD: Oh.

DJ: "What're y'all doing havin' lunch together?"

RD: Antitrust.

DJ: I said, "We love each other. We're friends." Jerry said, "Yeah, they're joined at the hip." And I said, "He mentored me, and he—whatever I've got is because of him and Alvin George Flanagan." And she's been a great success. I think I mentioned to you her offices are magnificent.

RD: They are.

DJ: A lot better than governors or anybody else's offices. And I guess she finally married Stone, didn't she?

RD: I think so.

DJ: Yeah.

[02:30:29] RD: So let's—we're—I'm—can probably wrap this up in about thirty minutes. Do you . . .

DJ: Oh, sure.

RD: . . . wanna keep goin' or . . .

DJ: Sure, sure.

RD: . . . you wanna break for lunch.

DJ: No, no. Let's keep goin'.

RD: All right, let's do about thirty minutes about Channel 4.

DJ: Okay.

RD: So started there in the [19]50s. You were there thirty-two years to the day.

DJ: Yeah. Yeah.

RD: What were the biggest, I guess, technical advancements you saw?

DJ: Well, goin' to color was really the big shot in the arm. When Bob Doubleday came here, Channel 7 was Channel 17. It was a UHF station. And he converted it to Channel 7, which was one of the major steps. Do you 'member the *Vic Ames Show*?

RD: Sure.

DJ: I don't know whether I ever finished tellin' you that story this morning or not, but as a salesman, I had all of Pepsi-Cola's business. I told you this earlier. I hired Ron Sherman when he was eighteen years old. He even called our studio cameraman Sir. That's how young he was. He ended up marryin' Vicky Tucker, Bob Tucker's daughter. Bob was in charge—the manager of Pepsi-Cola for Arkansas. And he and I were friends. And he gave me all of his budget. Even when Ron left me and went to Channel 7 as a salesman, he wouldn't give Ron any

business. And finally one day—his budget kept growin' and growin' and growin', and finally one day I said, "Bob, you're reachin' your frequency. You're wasting your money. You're spending too much money on our station. You need to give Ron some money." And he liked Ron. It wasn't anything personal. He just knew that I'd always taken care of him since he didn't—since he was nobody. And he'd put Pepsi on the map, really, in Arkansas. But the *Vic Ames Show* that I mentioned earlier . . .

RD: Well, that was a live noon show, correct?

DJ: That's what I'm tellin' you but . . .

RD: Variety?

[02:32:31] DJ: Yeah. Five days a week. And Bob Tucker—I was tellin' him one day—he asked me how the *Vic Ames Show* was doing in the ratings. And he taught me a very valuable lesson that day. I kinda told him, I said, "Well, he's just kinda dyin' in the ratings." And Bob looked at me and said, "Well, at least he's doin' somethin'." And I thought about that for days. Here's a guy that did not have remote facilities and yet worked out a live show five days a week. First time. And I always respected him a great deal. [02:33:15] You knew that Tommy Goodgame would not fly, didn't you? He rode trains . . .

RD: Oh, I'd heard that.

DJ: Yeah. He rode trains. Any time they went to New York, he'd ride trains. He'd—and Doubleday would ride with him. But Doubleday changed this market dramatically just like Bob Brown did. He was very charming. He was nice looking. He was tall and handsome. Had a voice like he had great testicular power. Everybody liked him. And he was a doer. And like Bob Tucker, that manager of Pepsi, told me, "At least he's doin' somethin'." All we were doing was local news and carryin' the network. And when Bob came, he is the one instilled in us to do more than who we were. Be somebody. We were the only television station in America that was doin' a telethon totally free for Easter Seals. Eighteen hours of free time, gave 'em a cash donation. Our people gave time, plus we paid some of 'em to do it. That's one of the reasons that WMCT in Memphis gave me their license, the FCC did, was because of the reputation that we had. And KARK had a tremendous radio station reputation. [02:34:47] Pop Binder, an old guy in the mail room, been there forever. Colonel Barton owned it originally. Barton Coliseum. When I went to work there one of the first days, he told me, says, "I want you to know that we don't need salesmen here." Said, "People come here and buy our time. We don't—radio and TV. We not gonna need any salesmen. I don't even know why

they hired you." "Okay." When he died at eighty-six, he smoked three packs of Camels every day, and at the funeral we all said, "We knew the cigarettes would get him eventually." [*Laughter*] And so, but—where in the world was I goin' with that? The fact that KARK had the reputation that they did. And we also found out, too, Randy, there's this thing called dial habit. I didn't know what that was, but we were informed of that. People get in a habit of a certain station that they watch. For instance—and I—it's really kinda—has come to light in the last few days, MSNBC is my favorite news station 'cause I was with NBC for a long time. And they're in great turmoil. One of the reasons, in my humble but accurate opinion, again, is Rachel Maddow, which is one of their stars. Her salary is twenty-five million a year. You can't survive runnin' a company payin' somebody that kind of money. I was payin' Carolyn Long a hundred-and-something-thousand, givin' her a five-thousand-dollar-a-year clothing allowance and furnishing her car. And what . . .

[02:36:39] RD: And that was in the early [19]80s, right?

DJ: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: She walked in one day and said, "Boss, it's time for me to get a

new car." I said, "Okay." She said, "I'd like a Porsche." I said, "Why?" She said, "Well, I just really like it." I said, "We"—and she loves me. I said, "Well, I won't even think about that." She—"Okay." So I called Flanagan, the boss. And I said, "Carolyn"—and he knows—he was in on the focus groups. And he said, "She wants a Porsche?" And I said, "Yeah." He said, "In our focus groups, didn't she show up as the number-one personality in the state?" And I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "What color does she want?" [*Laughter*] So I went out to Riverside Motors. Win Paul—that's another story. He owned the Mercedes place out there. We'd always hug when we saw each other. One day I was out there pickin' up a new Mercedes, and he shows up, and we hug. He said, "What are you doin' here?" I said, "I'm pickin' up my new car right there." And so we visited for a while. And I said, "Okay, I'm gonna go in and pay you." He said, "Well, while you're gone, I'll set the buttons on your radio." I said, "Okay." I bragged about that to anybody that would listen. A lieutenant governor set the buttons on my radio.

RD: A Rockefeller.

DJ: Oh, he was so wonderful. [*RD laughs*] But . . .

[02:38:18] RD: Hey, let me throw out some names . . .

DJ: Yeah.

RD: . . . for you. And you just tell me—it'll be like word association.

DJ: Sure.

RD: We'll do name association.

DJ: Good.

RD: And you just give me . . .

DJ: My first thought.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: Okay.

RD: Yeah, okay. Roy Mitchell.

DJ; Roy Mitchell we brought in from California. He was originally from Arkansas. And Roy started havin' a problem. He had a very quiet, passive personality. His wife's name was Betty, and they had two daughters. Maybe three, but two for sure. And one night on the news, I noticed he said that a treight frain had had a wreck. And so I had Mr. Aroot, our business manager, whose office was next to Roy's upstairs, to watch him and check his office when he was on the newscast to see if there was anything—if he was drinkin'. And he found a briefcase, opened it up, and there was an imprint of a bottle. When you closed the briefcase, it was a little tight, so it made an imprint, which told me he was drinkin'. And the news director had noticed some things, too. And so I called him in and said, "Roy, I love you."

[02:39:43] I was in on the hiring of him. I went up to the Top of the Rock, had dinner with him and his wife. I said, "I know you're drinkin', and that's gotta stop." And I said, "We can do it one of two ways. You can go into rehab tomorrow, or I'll fire you tomorrow, whichever choice you want. And I'll pay for the rehab." He said, "Well, you're not givin' me much choice." I said, "That's right. You're not gonna work here as a drunk. If you work here, you're gonna be good like everybody else." He went into rehab. And it was probably two or three months after rehab that he and Betty came to my office. And he thanked me for savin' his life. The fact that I brought that to a head and made him get rid of that alcoholism trait. He credited me for savin' his life. He died bending over a commode at home—it wasn't because of alcohol—throwin' up with a heart attack. And they called me and Bonner and all, everbody—we had probably twenty people out there shortly after the ambulance got there. And he died as a young man. Next name.

RD: Oh.

DJ: Is that what you want or . . .

RD: Yes.

DJ: Okay.

RD: Absolutely.

DJ: Okay.

[02:41:10] RD: Carolyn Long.

DJ: Carolyn Long was in Mississippi, and I hired her because I saw a tape on her. She was lookin' to go to a bigger market. And I just liked her. There was somethin' about her that was real. And it turned out it—I was right. I wasn't always right, [*laughter*] but I was right with that. And I hired her a—as a reporter, and she loved it. Willin' to do anything. All the people in the news room loved her. Again, relationships, as I keep referring back to. And then the story I told you about Wednesday's Child that—have I told you that on tape already?

RD: Yes. Yes.

DJ: I thought I had. Yeah. [02:42:02] And that was a humongous success. Every time she calls me—she's married to a guy—her first marriage was to a guy named Ken Rosenzweig, who's a neurologist. About five years ago, I'm sittin' on the edge of my bed at three o'clock in the morning. Well, Benjamin goes—been longer than five years. My back was hurting so bad I was begging God to let me die. And Chuck Mason, who is the medical doctor that MEMS operates under, his brother Zach Mason is a well, well-known—probably the most famous neurologist in town. Maybe in the state. Maybe in the country.

And I have—one of the biggest assets that I own—I made a couple of bucks, but the biggest asset I have is I have the cell phone of about six of my doctors. That is so valuable, I cannot tell you. So I called Chuck, and I said, "You gotta get me in to see your brother, and you gotta do it now, or I'm gonna die." He said, "Let me call you back." He called me back in fifteen minutes. He says, "Okay. You want me to come get you?" I said, "No. I can drive." He said, "Well, get there," gave me the address. He's in the Doctor's Hospital out on—by Maumelle. And did the MRI, the whole bit. He said, "Okay, we gotta go down the hall." I said, "Why?" He said, "You gotta see another doctor." [02:43:48] I said, "Who?" He said, "Ken Rosenzweig." I said, "Ken Rosenzweig? He's Carolyn Long's first husband. [*RD laughs*] I went to both their weddings." He said, "Yep." Walk in. There's Ken. We hugged. And he said—I—he said, "You have a bulging disc. That's why you're hurting so bad." And he said, "I'm gonna give you an epidural." I said, "I thought an epidural was to have a baby." He said, "Well, it is, but it's also good for a bulging disc." I said, "Okay." Got me on the table. Showin' me a picture. He's—Carolyn are divorced, of course. Carolyn's been married twice since then. Maybe she got a good guy this time. Showin' me a picture of his

granddaughter, who's gorgeous. And he's an amateur photographer. And later in his office—he's a great photographer. Deaf in one ear. His brother's a lawyer who takes the bad cases in Little Rock. Murders.

RD: It's Larry, right?

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: I can't think of his first name. But he gave me an epidural, and I walked out of there well. Completely well. And about a year later, I started hurtin' again. And I called him and said, "I gotta see you." He said, "Well, come on." And [*laughs*] he set in front of me, and he pushed my knees together like this and held 'em with his hand. He said, "Now open your legs." And I pressed open the legs. "Do it again." He said, "It's not your back. It's arthritis that's hurtin' you this time." [02:45:36] Wasn't anywhere near the pain I'd been havin'. I just thought it was comin' back. He said, "Take Tylenol. You'll be okay." [*RD laughs*] And sure enough, if I lie in bed too long—I go to bed early. I'm old, and I cold. [*Laughs*] I like to be covered up. And I can get up and take a Tylenol in the morning and be functional. Sometimes I have to take somethin' a little stronger called naproxen, which is a cross between ibuprofen and Tylenol.

But maybe once a week one of those. And other than that, I tell the family unless I fall and break something, I think I could live to be a hundred. Because I'm healthy. I told you about the invitation by—my travel agent has invited me to be on the Oriental Express for my next trip, but I'm too cheap. I'm not gonna pay that amount of money to do that. [02:46:38] But Robert Raines, when I told him—my friend that I was tellin' you about that owns the gangster museum. If you've not been there, you need to go. My father was involved with Owney Madden, who was the . . .

RD: Oh.

DJ: . . . Godfather to that.

RD: In Hot Springs. Had the Cotton Club in New York, right?

DJ: He did. He had a gang. He was shot five times. In the hospital. He survived. Could not remember, when he got out of the hospital, who shot him to tell the cops. But a couple months later, they found eight rival gang members murdered. They gave Owney the nickname of The Killer. He decided he wanted to change his life, and he moved to Hot Springs, Arkansas. And he became the Marlon Brando in the movie. The [*unclear words*]—by the way, don't let me forget. I'll give you guys—I may have one for each one of you. I wanna give you a book on

Hot Springs, too. Don't forget that. Robert wrote it. He's written several books on it. Hot Springs is an amazing town. I never did wanna live there, but it's an amazing town. [02:47:49] Central Avenue is—underneath the real Central Avenue, did you know that?

RD: What?

DJ: There's a bowling alley underneath there.

RD: Wow.

DJ: There's either sixty or six hundred springs in the mountains around—you've heard this in the book. And in the wintertime, in rain season, all that water would flood in on Central Avenue and flood everything out. And so they built it up. Central Avenue is built up. And I asked Robert one day—his box at the Oaklawn Park is next to mine, his track is—his table is in the Jockey Club. By the way, I got my bill last week. They want me to pay my bill by August twenty-first for parking at the Jockey Club, a total of seventeen-hundred dollars. The first race is December the sixth. They did that last year, and I wrote on there, "I'm really sorry y'all are havin' a cash crunch, so I'll go ahead and pay you a hundred days in advance of the race meet so maybe next year y'all can afford a return envelope." Well, no, they didn't. They didn't return the envelope. I still had—I'm gettin'—I'm gonna

pay 'em by the twenty-first, but it really hacks me. The amount of money they got, and they want you a hundred days to pay 'em before—that's why they got money. They're smart. [02:58:56] But I'm off on the book, but Central Avenue—one day Robert—we're at—we're in the club. We're on the glass lookin' out at center field. I said, "How big is the underground area of Central Avenue." He thought for a minute and looked around. He said, "About the size of the center field." I said, "You're kiddin'. That's acres." He said, "Yeah. There's a bowling alley down there." I said, "Well, how do you get to it?" He said, "Well, there's an entry from the Arlington. A couple of bath houses have entrances." He said, "Ole O—Ohio Club has an entry." And he's promised me for two years that he'll take me down there, and he hadn't done it yet. They got lights, the whole bit. But anyway, he and I just became friends about two years ago because a mutual friend of ours—we're at the track, and I told him that my dad had told me a story about Owney Madden in Hot Springs, and I would love to meet the museum owner of the gangster museum. And my friend was sittin' there. He said, "Hey, Robert!" [*RD laughs*] He was walkin' by. "Come 'ere."

RD: That's Arkansas.

DJ: And introduced me to the owner of the Gangster Museum. And I said, "Robert, my dad, when I was a young man, told me that when he was county clerk of Grant County, Owney Madden came to Sheridan, and my daddy sold him his marriage license." And Robert said, "Well, yeah, I've got your father's signature all over my museum. He also had a contract that he had to do to get a marriage license. Your dad had a beautiful signature." I've got copies of it here. So that's how we became friends. [02:50:57] He has Owney's—Owney, when he got here, he married a postmaster's daughter. You've learned this in the book. Her name was Florence Agnes Demby. She was the daughter of the postmaster. They moved in his house and lived with him the entire time. I was in his house a couple years ago. Robert took me. It's vacant right now. It's on Central Avenue about three or four blocks beyond—that's not true. So Grand Avenue about three blocks beyond Central. You'll recognize it 'cause of the little, short picket fence in front of it. The garage has a—double garage has a door on the front and the back. You go in or out either way. Upstairs in one of the bedrooms, there's a stairwell that leads you outside in case he needed to get away. Oh, there's so many interesting stories. You're gonna love that book.

RD: Oh, good.

DJ: Both you guys are. [02:51:51] Where's the third guy that came with y'all?

RD: Oh, he's in the other room.

DJ: Does he not like us?

RD: Oh, he does.

DJ: Okay. [*Laughs*]

RD: Lars. [*Laughs*]

DJ: Anyway, when I told Robert I was goin' to Rome last October, he said, "Who's goin' with you?" I said, "Nobody." I said, "I called Rent-a-Friend, [*RD laughs*] and they didn't have anybody." And I said, "My family's all busy. They're not goin'." He said, "Well, I hate you goin' by yourself." I said, "Well, it's okay. I've done that a lot. My wife was afraid to fly. She never would go on these trips that I went on. She loved the video, but—show her the pictures." First group I took to Greece first class—I was goin' to Athens. I took a doctor in case any of my customers got sick. You guys started it, Channel 7 did, with [*RD laughs*] Rome.

RD: Oh, yeah.

DJ: Then we had to pick it up. And Betty wasn't gonna go. And we—the doctor I was takin' was a friend. He had been a teacher at the med school. Had just recently gone to LRDC. And we're

havin' a goin' away party the night before we leave. I gave everybody a flight bag, instructions on what to do, and this, that, and the other. And Betty goes with me to the goin' away party. And Jim Adamson was the doctor's name. He later became medical director of Blue Cross when George Mitchell was the director, the head of it. He and I started first grade together in Sheridan, George Mitchell and I did. He's gone now. Great guy. Kinda like David Pryor. Everybody loved him. [02:53:24] But Jim came up to Betty and said, "Betty, please go with us to Athens." She said, "I'm not gonna fly." He said, "I tell you what I'll do. At the air—when we leave Little Rock, I'll put you on a valium drip." [*RD laughs*] And he said, "You won't know anything till you get to Athens." She said, "Yeah, but I'm not gonna crash and drown, too. No, I ain't goin'." [*Laughter*] And I figured, give up. Don't try to convince her to go. If she's not happy flyin', let her be home.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: That's—and that was a compliment to me, to the husband. She'd rather be at home. She had a home. Go ahead with your next name.

[02:54:08] RD: Oh. [*Laughter*] Tom Bonner.

DJ: Tom Bonner is from Blackton, Arkansas. His family owns a

1,500-acre farm, a rice farm, over there. His brother Gilbert manages it. He has a second brother that was a genius, but I don't know what he's doin' now, but the last time I heard of him, he was pumpin' gas at a service station. He just did not have any direction on what he wanted to do. Tom was probably, before Carolyn Long no doubt, was the best on personality. He made a comment one time on the weather that he wish he could see a tornado. And in the paper, in the *Democrat*, the editorial cartoon showed Tom runnin' with a hurricane beh—with a tornado chasin' him [*laughs*] as their editorial cartoon. So we never did let him forget that, either.

RD: He ra—he was your assistant GM, wasn't he?

DJ: I made him the station manager.

RD: Station manager. That's right.

DJ: He—I'll make this airable. He was divorced. And a lot of women were after him, a lot of pretty, young women. And he was seeing a different one probably every other day. And I kept tryin' to get him to go to church. And let me stop here and say he has now become a leader in his church. But I would tell him, "Tom, this is not—you're killin' yourself. You can't have a different woman every night. You're gonna die. You gotta get your life organized, get in church, and get normal." And one day

he walked in, and he said, "You're gonna be proud." I said, "Why?" He said, "I joined a church." I said, "That's wonderful. Which church?" He said, "The First Heathen." [*RD laughs*] He said, "We meet on Thursday afternoons, drink beer, and talk about girls." So I turn around and pick up my private phone, and call my wife. I said, "Can I join Tom's church?" [*RD laughs*] She said, "What are you talkin'"—[*laughs*] and I told her, and she hung up on me. But . . .

RD: I guess you didn't join the church.

[02:56:44] DJ: Yeah. He was funnin' me and messin' with me, of course, 'cause we were good friends. And I went with him the day he bought his house. He bought it from a guy that worked for Stephens. It's one block from the Little Rock Country Club. And I'm told by a friend of his he has lunch pretty well every day at the Little Rock Country Club now that he's retired. Personable, well liked, huge ego, as I think you're supposed to have if you're gonna be big with people. Confidence. He and I were tight. When I sold out my stock, I raised, and he got a financial benefit from it. And if I had known what I was doin', and I've wished this a hundred times, I would've saved some stock for my department heads whenever we made the loan because I was in charge. I didn't really realize how in charge I

was. But I had the option. The guys that owned it said, "David Jones is the man." I could've disseminated that any way I wanted to. But I guess I was selfish. I had been told by people, financial people, that you could get a sponsor if they could have 80 percent. [02:58:20] So I went to Stephens, Jack Stephens, who I loved, and told him the story. He had his financial people come over and go through our books. And in about a week, he said, "I think I'll pass." I can't tell you how many times he's apologized. He's gone, now. But I said, "Okay, I'm gonna go try to do it." That's when I talked to my banker friend and we got it done. I wish that I had given at least 1 percent to maybe twenty people because that would've been a nest egg for them when we sold. Because we paid twenty-five million dollars for it. And a guy from Savannah, Georgia, walked in five years later and put sixty-two million in cash on the desk. And I told our guys, "I'll do whatever y'all wanna do," 'cause I had an employment contract that God couldn't break. I was in charge. I got that from Bob Brown, which he got at 11 when he went back over there. And but I said, "We may be the laughingstock of the business community if we don't take this deal." And they all agreed. And at that time, Gannett bought it. And they were the largest communication company in the world. They had 120

newspapers, eighteen radio stations, seven TV stations, the largest billboard company in the world. And Al Newhart was head of all of it. He had an office in Florida as well as one in New York. When we had our annual meeting at the Hilton in Washington every year—he's the one that started *USA Today* newspaper. He's the one that announced from the podium that he'd agreed to sell me Channel 4 in Little Rock. He said, "I want y'all to meet the next millionaire." [*RD laughs*] That's not necessarily true, but it was nice of him to say so. [03:00:39] He was a great guy. He kept secretaries in Rogers, New York, and in Florida. And of course, he had his own private jet. And when we had our meetings in Washington, he would always take me with him. And I got to sit personally and talk to three United States presidents. And the first ti—that's a—that's somethin'. I don't know of anybody else that's done that. But because of relationships, again. He was my friend. And I ran Little Rock and made him money. And I was always impressed with him 'cause he had a limo, and you could see him joggin' on a Washington—Pennsylvania Avenue early mornings when we'd have our meetings in Washington. And we walked in to—we were gonna see Ronald Reagan and Ms. Reagan. And obviously with the communication company, they all loved him because of

the contributions that he had made to their campaigns. And I knew how important he was. [*Laughs*] [03:01:44] We're in this room waitin' on Mr. and Ms. Reagan to come in. And I had been a huge fan of Ronald Reagan. I was always an Independent. I voted for the person, not the party. And at an NBC convention, Ronald Reagan was governor of California. He was a luncheon speaker. There were 500 NBC people in this luncheon. Century Plaza has a dining room that'll seat 2,000. First words out of his mouth: "You know, I'm glad to be with all you broadcasters, but I gotta tell you, I'm ashamed of you." And I's sittin' next to Bob Brown. I lean—I said, "Who is he to be ashamed of me?" And he went on to say the reason he was ashamed of us is we couldn't—we let the United States government take away cigarette advertising from us and yet leave magazines, newspapers, and billboards the right to advertise. But discriminated—broadcasting could not advertise cigarettes. You had to stop. "And the fact y'all let 'em do it? Shame on you." Well, by the time he finished his speech, we gave him like a twenty-minute standing ovation. And I told Bob, I said, "If he ever runs for president, I'm gonna support him and [*unclear word*]." Well, obviously, he didn't know—I didn't get to meet him at that luncheon. [03:03:02] But we're in this room

waitin' on him and Mrs. Reagan to come in. And when they do [*laughs*] he looks over at Al Newhart, my boss, and he said, "Hey, Al." I knew I was in high cotton, boy. [*Laughter*] We sat and visited for probably fifteen, twenty minutes. Did the same thing with Jimmy Carter. And course, Bill—I had my tailor make Bill a suit every Christmas the entire time he was governor. He wanted me to go to New York with him when he had the first-time homebuyer bond issue. He had twelve New York Wall Street bankers in the dinner. Why he wanted me to go, I don't know. But I went on the state plane. We went up with—and we were friends. That's why. Because when Frank beat him, we were at a holiday the week—the Friday following Thanksgiving. And I was at home. And he called me. He said, "Can you come to the Mansion?" I said, "Sure." And at that time there was a rumor that there was a murder—there was a assassin contract put out on the governor. They didn't know whether it was Frank or whether it was Bill. Well, when I pulled up to the Mansion, the guard out—I saw some guns come up. And they all knew me, and so I got out and went in. [03:04:19] He was by himself. Chelsea was in a playpen. She was probably two years old. And, Randy, he sat there and cried off and on for two, three hours about the only job he ever wanted was governor, and he

lost it because of raisin' the price of license tags. And I'm gonna take credit for this. Nobody'll ever give it to me, but I'm gonna take it. I kept saying, "Bill, you're a child. You'll make a comeback. You got all the time in the world. We'll help you. You will make a comeback." His slogan when he ran for president was the Comeback Kid. 'Member that?

RD: Oh, yes.

DJ: Now like I say, I ain't gonna get credit for it, but I'm gonna take credit for it. [*RD laughs*] [03:05:09] But in that room, of those twelve Wall Street bankers—George Ball was there. He was head of E.F. Hutton. I got to meet him. You 'member "When E.F. Hutton speaks, people listen," the commercial? He told me how all that happened. But when Bill spoke—he's probably the greatest speaker since William Jennings Bryan. He told me one time, he said, "Hillary is smarter than I am." But he said, "I'm a better speaker." He held those twelve bankers—you could hear a pin drop when he made his presentation. And I was so proud of him. I loved Virginia, his mother. She was a racetrack fan, so ordinarily we had a—yeah. She and my trainer's wife were buddies. They went every Thursday, I think it was, in those days. [03:06:00] But he sold 42 million dollars worth of bonds in fifteen minutes to those Wall Street bankers. And I've always

been so proud of our relationship. After it came out about the tryst that he had with these women, I got a call from a reporter from the *New York Times*. They said, "Mr. Jones, we noticed that three of the women he's reportedly had a tryst with work for you." I didn't say anything for about four of five seconds, and he saw he wasn't gonna get anything out of me. And I said, "What's your point?" He said, "Well, I guess my point is you have a good eye for hirin' women. Thank you very much," and hung up. Well, I personally hired Gennifer Flowers. She was gorgeous. She had no experience, but she had stage presence. She was a performer. And I knew she'd be great on camera. So I hired her. And Lencola Sullivan was one of the women he supposedly had a tryst with. David Matthews, my Black assistant news director—when Gennifer's book came out, my buddy Frank Fletcher called me and said, "You're in Gennifer's book." I said, "No, I'm not." He said, "Yeah, you are." I said, "Is it good or bad?" 'Cause they say anything they want to in a book. He said, "I'm not gonna tell you." He said, "But I've got a courier on his way right now with a copy of it for you." I said, "What page is it on?" He said, "I'm not gonna tell you that." [*RD laughs*] Well, I'm sweatin' bullets. So the book arrives, and man, I'm flyin' through that thing tryin' to find out where my

name is. And it talks about what a snake Gary Long is and what a piece of trash Tom Bonner is and what—everybody—she—everybody—she had it down on just about everybody. But she got to David Jones. Said he was the most professional, honorable man she had ever worked for. [*RD laughs*] I could show that book to Betty. [*Laughter*] Which I did. [03:08:17] But Frank Fletcher's another story. I could talk to you two days on him. He's so wonderful. The things he's done. But Bonner was dependable. He loved his job. He was not a good peoples person. He liked his privacy more than he did being associated with groups. He has gotten to a point now that I rarely ever hear from him, and we had a lot of history together, and I'm sad about that, but I've done my part. So, anyway.

[03:08:51] RD: Well, let me ask you about when you did leave. And we talked in our last interview, you know, at the reunion, about a lot of the things at Channel 4. But we didn't talk about after you left and what happened. When you left Channel 4, KARK was a powerhouse, number one. You had Roy Mitchell, Carolyn Long . . .

DJ: Dave Woodman.

RD: . . . Dave Woodman, and Tom Bonner.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: That was, I guess you'd call it, the dream team.

DJ: It was. It was.

RD: And you had a well-oiled machine goin'.

DJ: What happened was people—when Dean Hinson took over . . .

RD: That's what I wanna hear about.

[03:09:39] DJ: When Dean Hinson took over the job—as you know and as many people know, the reason you're here is of your longtime standing, good standing, I might add, in broadcast, TV broadcast, Channel 7. And y'all were wise enough to give your archives, which there's no value you can put on that. They're invaluable. There's no price that you could pay for that. You gave it to the Pryor Center. And I want a card that tells me the exact name of what that is before you leave, the Pryor Center.

RD: Okay.

DJ: And he took all of Channel 4's archives and had 'em sent to the dump.

RD: Dean Hinson.

DJ: And there was some lady—I'd love to meet her. There was some lady heard about it and went to the junk pile and stopped a bulldozer. And Bob Costa told me the other day when we were being interviewed, we talked about it. They were able to save their film, but none of their videotape. And all of that history—

that would be like the library of Alexandria. Can never be replaced. Aristotle, Plato, and all the great teachings if we lost those. The library I told you about, they had—in Mesopotamia, when they dug out Nazareth out of Caanan after the Great Flood. Priceless. It hurts me to even think about it. Anyway, he threw all that away. Plus the fact he started mistreating the people. [03:11:35] We had a guy named Carl Graham that started off as an engineer that became our art director. And he was amazing. Everybody loved him. One of those guys you never heard anything but blessings about. You could ask Carl for a sketch, and he would bring you a Michelangelo. I drew out the floor plan of a house I wanted to build, the one that's before this one, that I gave to my grandson. He was very wise in choosing his grandfather. [*RD laughs*] And it's wonderful. It's a man's place. It has its own lake, its own stable, tennis court, its own pool, its own guest house, and an iron gate that locks out the world. How can you get anything better than that? [03:12:22] Anyway, I drew a sketch of what I'd like to have. That was on a Friday. I said, "No hurry." On Monday morning, Carl came in with an architectural model. He had made a house with my floor plan. You could take the roof off and see where to put your furniture. He was a genius. And Dean Hinson did not like him.

He hired him an assistant and began to get rid of him. And he finally left—he'd been there—he'd worked there for thirty-eight years when he finally ran him off. He went to live with his daughter in Texas. A couple of years later he called me and said, "David, they tell me I'm losin' my mind." Dementia. And a year later, he was gone. [03:13:10] But Dean Hinson was an idiot, not only on the archives that he threw away—all he was interested in was playin' golf, living in Pleasant Valley, and being somebody. And he did not care about our people. It started to disintegrate. And if you don't have—like we talked earlier, if you don't have the spirit, the Bob Doubledays, the Bob Browns, me—you can't have it without them. Because you can have all the good equipment, you can have all the best of everything—it's like I realized when I bought my third TV station, 'cause we ended up havin' this TV station, as I told you, in Meridia, Mississippi, ABC. El Paso, we had a CBS station. On my third television station, it dawned on me who was the most invaluable employee that you have, and it's the maintenance guy. It's the man that can fix things. And if you think about it—and I, like I said, I've been on the university board. Big believer in education. But the trade school today—a college graduate with a Ph.D. twice can't do what an electrician does or a plumber if

you got a stopped-up commode. My point is the trade schools are gonna be so important, and are now, and from now on will be even more so. [03:14:56] And my house I described to you that now is my grandson's, when we first moved there, I'm twenty minutes from downtown Little Rock. It's in Mabelvale on a dead-end street. There's thirty houses on the dead-end road. I had a well. And it pumped thirty-two gallons to the minute. It was a little hard. I had to have a softener, but the water was perfect. And I always maintained that well, and once we got water out there, I joined the Little Rock water system, but I kept that well as a backup. And one year I got a six-hundred dollar watering bill from my watering—sprinkling system on my yard, and I hooked it up to my well, and that's where my sprinkler system runs for him today. But if this country goes to hell in a handbasket and we don't have groceries or whatever else, I got a well of fresh water, and I got a fish—a pond full of fish as a food source. I don't really remember where I'm [*laughs*] goin' with that, Randy.

[03:16:01] RD: Well, you were tal—we were goin' with Dean Hinson.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: And what happened the—well, let me guide you.

DJ: Yeah. Do.

RD: And let's talk about what he did to the news department. Now Bob Steel was news director you hired.

DJ: And he was wonderful.

RD: He was.

DJ: Great people person. Great news guy. And he and Sherry, great couple.

RD: So he wanted to change news formats, is that right? And he . . .

DJ: That's what I heard.

RD: And fired Bob and brought in a guy named Al Sandubrae.

DJ: Who, opening day, got on a desk red—dressed as a devil. Did you hear that?

RD: I've sorta heard that.

DJ: He had on a devil suit, and his first day in the news room got up on top of the assignment desk and said, "I want you all to remember this day because the devil has arrived." My wife's brother, the youngest of the four children, was a drug addict. And I called him one day and got him, and I said, "I think your problem is you need a good job." He was in his thirties. And I said, "I think you would enjoy television, so I'm gonna put you in my news department and let them train you as a photographer." And he agreed. Within a couple of weeks he was off his drugs. He ended up winnin' two Emmys. But when Sandubrae came in,

he was so bad—Phillip was his name—that he was tryin' to get him to fire him. He couldn't work for him. He was that terrible. And the bottom line is he finally did. And my brother-in-law went back on drugs and ended up killin' himself. So Sandubrae was, indeed, the devil. I don't know what happened to him. [03:18:10] But go ahead with Bob Steel, because Bob Steel had a home back at 7 because he had a reputation there, and he came back. Was he news director or assistant at that time?

RD: He came back as news director.

DJ: Okay.

RD: Right. He replaced Pitcock.

DJ: And he and you both had been trained under . . .

RD: Jim.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Yes. So I went from being Jim Pitcock's assistant news director to Bob Steel's assistant news director.

DJ: To news director.

RD: And then when Bob left . . .

DJ: Yeah.

RD: . . . I was news director for ten years.

[03:18:45] DJ: Well, Sandubrae is what destroyed the company. There's no question in my mind about it. Because James

Everett, who was our business manager, our money guy, had been there thirty-something years. Bonita Stroud, who was in the accounting department, retired after forty-five years. Me, thirty-two years. The longevity when Dean Hinson got there and Sandubrae got there started disappearing. And without them, you're nothin'. That's what happened.

RD: All right. You want me to throw a couple more names at you . . .

DJ: Sure.

RD: . . . and then there's—well, let's go ahead and get this out of the way.

DJ: Okay.

RD: Do you—are you okay with talking about some legal problems . . .

DJ: Oh, sure.

RD: . . . that you had?

DJ: Sure.

RD: And you know what I'm talkin' about.

DJ: Oh, yeah. The . . .

RD: So give me the background.

DJ: Okay.

RD: And tell me what happened.

[03:19:40] DJ: I had a very good friend named Tony Ma. And he had a restaurant my—Betty and all—we'd go eat there. We had a lot of friends that ate with him. And he'd been—he became a citizen. We helped him. Went to his swearing-in ceremony. Just really a good guy. And came to me one day and said, "Hey, I wanna go to China and get me a wife." He was forty years old. Never married. "And I want you to go with me." And I'd been a lot of places. I said, "Really? That's a—that is so intriguing." And I'll try to make this short. And I agreed. And Bob Rushing, one of my coup members that was a dentist and was retired, he came up. And he was a friend of Tony's, too. We all ate together. He invited Bob to go. And Bob had been divorced three times. And so Tony and Bob Rushing and I went to Guangzhou China, got on a train—flew into Hong Kong and got on a train and went to Guangzhou. And his cousin, who was there, had twelve young ladies interested in coming to be his wife. We had dinner with all twelve of 'em. We didn't get involved in the conversation. We had interpreters and all that. Stayed at the White Swan Hotel, which is the second-nicest hotel I was ever in. They had a jade carving of a ship that was as big as that table. It would blow your mind. Beautiful place. If you ever go, stay at the White Swan. [03:21:28] And Bob Rushing

sat next to a gal named ?Yue Shing?. I believe that's right. And she was in her thirties. Never been married. And they kinda got a friendship goin'. We were there like three or four days. And he asked me while we were there if he could bring her to America, could I get her into Henderson? And I was on the board at that time. I said, "Sure. I think so." And so when we get home, we do that. It takes a long time. We do all of our work through David Pryor's office, my friend. John Edwards runs his Little Rock office. And everything we did was with advice and with help. We did it legally. Well, when—Xiao Ying was her name. When she came in, she only stayed about three months and didn't like it and wanted to go back. So we bought her a ticket. I bought her a ticket, and she went back to China. But what we didn't know was that a few weeks after she was back in China, she used that paperwork that we had gotten her through David Pryor's office to come back to Seattle, where she had friends. If you'll think back, when Hong Kong was being given back by the British back to China when their lease ran out, Chinese people were buying land all over the state of Washington and Oregon as a second home in case somethin' went wrong in Hong Kong. Hong Kong has more Merce—no, Hong Kong had more Rolls Royces and Bentleys per capita than

any city in the world. Lotta rich people there. [03:23:29] Well, she came back out with her friends, and we didn't know anything about any of that. A second woman at the table named Zhong, *Z-H-O-N-G*—Tony wanted to bring her over here as his housekeeper and as his babysitter so that—by the way, he chose the one named Mary, and they been married thirty-somethin' years. They got three kids. They all had full scholarships. Their daughter, Jade, is the youngest one. Her scholarship at an Ivy League school—I've forgotten which one—is valued at $75,000 a year, her scholarship. So they're bright, brilliant people. Made a wonderful marriage. But Zhong didn't wanna be a hou—a babysitter. She wanted to work at Tony's restaurant and make money. So he let her. And she got to know a guy by the name of ?Jimmy Ying?, who was a Chinese nationalist and turned out to be a con artist as well. And he convinced her that if she accused me of rape, that in that courtroom under civil law, they could get a judgement because I had money, they thought, and that she could get a lot of money for the two of them and they could live happy ever after. There's not even a law for rape in the federal statues. But they got an FBI agent named Terry Weir and an immigration guy together and told them that I had done all this, bringin' them to Arkansas and arranging all this.

[03:25:18] And that they had brought me in illegally. And there were some things that had happened to look illegal. Bob, for instance, had to finally marry Xiao Ying in order to get her here, went to Mount Ida to do it because he didn't want his name in the newspaper. He had been divorced three times. And he [*laughs*] was a dentist in Fordyce. He didn't want that in the paper. He did it to bring her here for a better life. And maybe some future. He was a lot older than she was, but maybe some future. And they found her. And the two of them told 'em about how their—like I said, a couple of strange things happened like the—where we got married. About why he married her. And none of us would take the stand because our lawyers said, "No, no, no. You can't take the stand." [03:26:11] If you ever get in trouble, Tim Dudley's the greatest defense attorney in the world. He was defending my lawyer. My lawyer's one of the ones that helped do all this. It was Bob Rushing, me, Tony, my lawyer, and Mary was the final one. There were five of us were in there at the same time that were on trial. And Patrick Harris was one of the prosecutors with the US Attorney's Office, along with Angela Jegley. And first day of trial, the gal admitted it wasn't rape. She'd started a church, and one of her church members—she told her about some tapes she had with a lawyer,

and it was all voluntary, the sex was. I'd been married fifty years at the time. And Pat Harris—the whole w—he had to adjourn for the day 'cause everybody was in such shock. [03:27:15] Came back the next day, and George Howard Jr., who was a Black judge, token judge, appointed by Dale Bumpers, who was a friend of mine as well—when Dale was runnin' for office, he came by our place. This was before tape. He said, "You guys are the only station showin' me ahead. I'm gonna stay here with y'all." Sure enough, he won. [*Laughter*] But I'm chairman of the board of Baptist Hospital, and we're havin' our annual meeting. And one of the administrators brings me a note. We'd just had the opening prayer by my preacher to have the meal. And the note said, "Emergency. Call your lawyer immediately." Mark Riable was my lawyer. He's up here on the interstate. He's the one that married Bob Rushing and Xiao Ying in—at Mount Ida. And I'm totally baffled. And so I leave the stage long enough to go and find a phone. This was before cell phones. And called him and said that immigration and FBI had raided Tony's restaurant, arrested him and Mary, and they were—had a warrant for my arrest, Bob Rushing's arrest, and Mal—and Mark Riable's arrest for immigration fraud, the way we brought 'em to our—to the country. And obviously I

had never been in any kind of legal problem in my whole life and was blown away. I didn't know what to do. The only lawyer that I knew—and my lawyer, Mark Riable, said, "You gotta find a defense attorney." They only lawyer I knew was Sam Perroni, the criminal lawyer, because I had helped him bring the first McDonald House to Arkansas as a charitable move. And I called him. We got together. [03:29:25] And the day we got back into court, Patrick Harris—like the jury's here, you're George Howard, Pat Harris is here. Tim Dudley—we're at the defense table, all of us. And Tim Dudley looks at the jury and says—well, let me back up. Patrick Harris had made his speech about, "Folks, this is not about sex. This trial's about immigration fraud." And Tim Dudley got up to the stand and said, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I really, really hate to say this. But you see Patrick Harris sittin' over there, US Attorney? He's a liar." And I'm thinkin', "Holy mackerel. George Howard doesn't like me anyway." [*RD laughs*] And I knew two lawyers that had resigned cases that were gonna go before Howard. They wouldn't go because he was such a government man. [03:30:30] And as it turns out, my lawyer was acquitted. [*Laughter*] The rest of us were convicted of immigration fraud.

RD: Oh, I didn't realize that.

DJ: Yeah.

RD: Okay.

DJ: Well, most people think I was acquitted because—when she admitted it wasn't rape. The headline in the paper that day was "Chinese Women Lie."

RD: Yeah.

DJ: And that pretty much acquitted me, particularly with my friends. They knew that I wouldn't do that. And there was reason for everything that happened. You know the old story in a divorce there's his side, her side, and somewhere in the middle's the truth. Well, Angela Jegley, whose husband is a wonderful prosecutor, Larry Jegley . . .

RD: Sure.

DJ: . . . her goal—and it was so obvious that she and Pat Harris and the judge were in cahoots. That—when the trial was over, I wrote Pat Harris a letter. Because after she said this—it was not rape, it was just—and he stood before Judge Howard and said, "Your honor, we're not proud of our case. In fact, our case stinks." Well, Bill Wilson, who is a buddy of mine who was a federal judge was a character witness for me at the trial, told me that any judge in America would've dismissed the case right then. [03:32:04] But they had a hard-on for a white, rich guy,

according to what they told me. But I wrote a letter to Pat Harris a year, I guess, after the trial and thanked him for being probably the only honest guy in the courtroom to say at our trial, "Our case stinks." And I said, "My prayer for you"—I ended the letter by saying, "My prayer for you is you'll keep bringin' bad guys to justice, but maintain always your character. Because reputation is what people think we are, and character's what we are." I never did hear back from him. I didn't expect to. But I spent a million dollars. And I simply asked Perroni, when we were goin' back for a second trial—the first trial was hung. And we tried to get it dismissed, and the judge wouldn't hear it. And I asked Perroni about the charge for second trial, since he had all the documents. He actually came to my office with his assistant. I had an office on the freeway at that time, middle building up there by the old Hyundai dealership. And brought his computer and everything and actually prepared. I've never known anyone prepared like he did. He was, man, he was ready. [03:33:43] And he put Xiao Ying on the stand. And he had a great, big pad he used Magic Marker with. And he questioned her. He said, "And when you said that you were goin' back to China to stay, that was a lie, right?" She said, "Aye," which is Japane—we had interpreters—for yes. He

marked yes by that question. He went right down the line. And in fact, Angela Jegley, when it was over, said, "Your honor, I need a few minutes to rehabilitate my witness." [*RD laughs*] But anyway, when I asked him about the charge, he said, "Well, the charge is the same 'cause I've gotta do all this stuff again." I said—and Betty was with me. And she said, "Oh, Sam." And the question I asked was, "Do you charge any kind of a service charge?" For instance, he brought a woman in from New Orleans that was an expert in jury selection that cost me to bring her in, of course. He said, "No, and I'm insulted that you would ask that." The reason I asked was that in the advertising business, if you take over an account, they get 15 percent, and if we don't pay it, they mark it up 15 percent. That's what I was talkin' about. Next morning, raining Saturday morning, under my door was slid a letter that fired me as his client for insulting him. And so I called Tim Dudley to see who should I get for the next trial. He gave me a guy—a name in West Memphis that turned out to be a real turkey. And I found out later that he and Tim were two lawyers in the state that would sue lawyers, that they had a coalition between the two of 'em. So they had a partnership. And he was terrible. He would make a comment to the jury and glance at me to see how I reacted. It was a show

place for him. He's dead now, but bad, bad choice. [03:35:49] But I don't blame Tim for it because Tim gave me two names, his and one in Fayetteville. I chose West Memphis 'cause I thought that'd be easier. So when it was all said and done, I was convicted, along with Mary and Tony and Bob Rushing. And, as I said, Mark Riable, my lawyer, was acquitted. And I really hated it for John Edwards. He was such a great guy. He was the lawyer that ran the Little Rock office. I wrote him a letter and begged his apology for puttin' him in that spot. We didn't do anything wrong. But to put him in that spot. And I was afforded a lot of entrances, Randy, because of the station, the power of the station. I was able to get MEMS because it opened doors for me. The fact that Rockefeller was my buddy, the relationships that would help me get entrances to people that I ordinarily would not, the fact I got to sit and talk to three United States presidents—a boy from Sheridan? That doesn't happen.

[03:37:01] RD: Did you ever dream, when . . .

DJ: No.

RD: . . . you were a kid that you'd be here right now?

DJ: I didn't even think I'd ever make any money. I really didn't. All I was interested in was seein' my wife. I was absolutely

obsessed with her. Like I think I may have told you, if I didn't get to see her for two or three days, I was not normal. I was functional, and I could get things done, but I was not myself. And that's why I arranged—like I mentioned, I probably did this on tape. If I did, edit it out. But I arranged my—she was a year behind me in high school. And I arranged my classes, not any on Wednesday afternoon and none Thursday morning, and I could hitchhike to—fifty miles to Sheridan on Wednesday to be with her because she was my lifeline. I was blessed. [*Cries*]

RD: Yeah.

DJ: Oh. Sorry 'bout that.

RD: Oh, you're fine.

DJ: But great that you wanna know all this about the old boy from Sheridan, because let me tell you, to be named distinguished alumni in my university, to be named Arkansas Citizen of the Year, for MEMS to name a twelve-million-dollar building in my honor, and to have a great family and a thousand friends—tell me who's got somethin' better.

RD: You got me.

DJ: Got it all. And if I drop dead today, you guys say, "Well, you old fart, [*laughs*] you're blessed." And . . .

RD: Sure are.

DJ: 'Cause that will be the truth. I'm reminded of the old guy that said if he'd known he was gonna live this long, he'd've taken better care of himself. [*RD laughs*] [03:38:55] My son told me [*laughs*] one time, said, "Dad, I don't understand this. You don't eat right. You don't exercise, and you're healthy." I said, "I got good genes. They're not Levi's, but they're good genes that keep me goin' and keep me—givin' me energy" But a lot of that is mental, as I've said before. The minute my feet hit the floor every morning, the first thing I say out loud is, "This gonna be a good day." And if I'm not hurtin', I don't care if it's rainin'. I don't care what everybody else is doin'. I got food in the refrigerator. My family's okay. I got no complaint. Yeah, we're in deep trouble countrywise, but you know what? Americans are a people of reaction. They're not a people of action. Pearl Harbor showed us that. We knew that was gonna happen. We react. And we're getting to that point now—I'm watchin'—well, I'll say this. Donald Trump was not my candidate. But once he was elected, he was my president, and I vowed to do everything I could to help him be successful. Well, he's not. And every day I sit and watch my country burn down a little bit more. But more and more people are becoming aware of that. And I called Governor Pritzker of Illinois yesterday because he had been on a

press conference and made the comment of cult—that Donald Trump's people were a cult. [03:40:39] And I called him to thank him for that because finally somebody has called it for what it is. When he was running for president in 2016, he made the comment—I heard him. I'm a news junkie, as you are. But I heard him say that his base—he thought he could go out on 5th Avenue and shoot somebody, and they wouldn't care. And they wouldn't. You know why? He's their dear leader, just like Ho Chi Minh in North Korea. He's their dear leader. Moreso because of total fear from them and stupidity in believing what a con man's sellin' 'em here. It's gonna catch him because we're reacting, whether the [20]26 elections get him or not. [03:41:29] And that's another funny thing. Not funny ha-ha. Funny peculiar. About being old. I'll think, "I need to ask somebody this about So-and-so." Then it dawns on me, So-and-so ain't here. I outlived 'em. And then I'm thinkin' about the 2026 election. That's a long time off. Will I be here? I hope. But attitude is so important, to be thankful for everything. That's where I am. Thank you for the interview.

RD: Well, thank you. Do you have anything you wanna add?

DJ: Well . . .

RD: Any more words of wisdom?

[03:42:19] DJ: Well, people ask me how my marriage lasted as long as it did. [*Laughs*] There were several reasons, of course. But my wife and I had some friends before we got married. They got a divorce. And they got mad at each other and wouldn't speak and sulled up. And you don't wanna talk to somebody when you're mad at 'em. But she and I promised each other we'd never sull up. If we were mad or upset or whatever, we'd tell about it. And more than one time, I remember her saying, "I'm mad as hell at you. Shut up and sit down." And I'd shut up [*laughs*] and sit down. And she would tell me what I had done. And the vast majority of the time, she was right. But thank goodness as a young man, I learned the two most powerful words on earth in every language, and I know a few. But the two most powerful words on Earth are "I'm sorry." You can look at 'em and see the anger and the disappointment and the frustration melt to your mate when you do that. And because—I think that's a major reason. We never sulled up. [03:43:42] And I didn't wanna talk to her when I was mad, and she didn't wanna talk to me. But we kept our promise. "Shut up. I'm mad at you. Shut up and sit down. And here's why I'm mad at you." First time I used a private jet at the station, I was a sales manager. And I got home, and she

said, "Well, how was flyin' in that fancy jet?" I said, "I gotta tell you, that's the only way to travel. Man, I love that. I think I'm good as anybody." [*Laughs*] And she looked at me, and she said, "You ain't as good as me, let alone anybody." Oh, okay. [*Laughter*] She always knew how to put me in my place. And I heard her tell a girlfriend one time she never wanted me to leave home needing her. There ain't many wives feel that way. Most of 'em are thinkin', "What's that old fart doin'?" you know. She put me first. And course when we had our kids I became secondary. [03:44:45] But one time [*laughs*] there was a couple havin' trouble over kids, and the mama was takin' the kids' side, and I heard Betty say, "You're stupid. Your kids will go off and leave you when they grow up. Your husband's gonna be there. You better remember that." She just had a good brain on her. She was country, just as country as goose manure. [*RD laughs*] High-school graduate's all. Came from a crappy family. Mistreated. When her mother went to work, she was cookin' family for six, supper for six, makin' pies, cornbread, when she was twelve years old. We grew up in a hurry, but we grew up together. That made the difference.

RD: It's a gift.

DJ: Yeah. Miss her. Ah. This has been fun.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: Reminiscing. [03:45:41] The interview is on KARK.com with Clausen.

RD: Okay.

DJ: You might check that to see if there's anything you wanna add to it or take away.

RD: 'Cause I've already talked to Ernie about getting all of those interviews . . .

DJ: Good.

RD: . . . that they did . . .

DJ: Oh, great.

RD: . . . for the anniversary.

DJ: Great. Yeah.

RD: And have all those together.

DJ: That's wonderful. Yeah.

RD: Yeah.

DJ: That's just terrific. Well, and you can end it with me because I'm the last one that he talked to regarding all those interviews.

RD: [*Laughs*] Yeah, there you go.

DJ: Yeah.

[03:46:12] RD: Hey, last but certainly not least.

DJ: Well, and I was thinkin', too, you know, to be somebody enough

for you guys to make all this trouble to interview me to go in David's school of whatever it's called is a high honor for me to be recognized to that degree.

RD: Well, the honor is ours.

DJ: The what?

RD: I said, the honor is ours.

DJ: Well, you're very kind. I . . .

RD: Yeah.

DJ: I got a lot of stories. I like to talk. My mom [*laughs*]—my mama would tell you that. But thank you.

RD: Thank you. Let me officially end this . . .

DJ: Yeah.

RD: . . . by saying on behalf of the University of Arkansas and the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History, I wanna thank you for time . . .

DJ: It's my indeed pleasure.

RD: . . . and contribution.

DJ: I loved him.

RD: Thank you. All right, man.

[End of interview 03:47:09]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]