

Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project  
 Douglas R. Grant Interview Abstract  
 February 7, 2020

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| Interviewee        | Douglas R. Grant  |
| Year of birth      | 1951  |
| Place of birth     | Parkersburg West Virginia   |
| Interviewer        | Susan Porter  |
| Interview date     | 2020-02-07  |
| Interview location | Bentonville Public Library; Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas  |
| Keywords           | <p>Grant, Douglas R.<br/>         Porter, Susan<br/>         Bella Vista, Benton County, Arkansas<br/>         Adult Day NWA (formerly Village House); Rogers, Benton County, Arkansas<br/>         Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Benton County; Bentonville, Benton County, Arkansas<br/>         Veterans Wall of Honor; Bella Vista, Benton County, Arkansas<br/>         Air traffic controllers<br/>         GI Bill<br/>         Newspaper industry<br/>         Newspapers<br/>         Politics<br/>         Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike<br/>         Real estate industry<br/>         Small town life<br/>         U.S. Air Force<br/>         Vietnam War, 1961 - 1975<br/>         Volunteerism<br/>         Weekly Vista (Newspaper)</p>  |
| Description        | <p>Small-town newspapers long have been a part of Northwest Arkansas culture. Douglas Grant's experiences and insights as former editor of Bella Vista's <i>Weekly Vista</i> illustrate the importance of the paper and role of its staff.</p> <p>Some newspaper professionals grow up knowing it's their career path. Not Grant. He came to the profession after growing up in the East, a career in the U.S. Air Force, work as an air traffic controller, and college as an adult taking advantage of the GI Bill. Stories of these years discuss his deployment to Thailand, the PATCO strike in 1981, and the combination of military and life experiences leading to his college degree.</p> <p>It was a job at a West Virginia newspaper while attending college that steered Grant to the career he held for over 30 years. Grant calls small town newspapers 'an amazing world.' As part of the staff on small-town newspapers</p> |

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|                       | <p>around the country, Grant has been a reporter and an editor; he's done advertising, interviews, written stories, corrected copy, taken pictures, designed the layout, delivered the papers, and swept the floor. He believes it is important to be involved in the community, although that makes it a seven days a week job. Always active in the Bella Vista community, Grant's worked with the Single Parent Scholarship Fund, Village House, American Legion, Kiwanis, and Veterans Wall of Honor.</p> <p>Grant came to Bella Vista in 2007 as editor of the then village's weekly newspaper, <i>Weekly Vista</i>. He held that position until 2011. These were the years Bella Vista moved from a village to a city. With that came changes in the role in the Property Owners Association, city government, and community growth. Calling himself 'an equal opportunity editor', Grant's editorials, interviews, and stories touched on whatever topics he felt were relevant. He would take a stand, knowing others might or might not agree. He asked himself; was it necessary, what were the costs, and was it the right/wrong direction.</p> <p>Grant enjoyed sharing his knowledge with new and long-time staff: that was the teacher part of being an editor. He won awards for writing and design. He cites a memorable story as one he wrote before moving to Bella Vista about an animal shelter. Some of his readers ended their subscriptions; others bought new subscriptions.</p> <p>Asked about the future of small- town newspapers, Grant is not optimistic. While believing that the culture of small towns will help them endure longer than papers of larger communities, technology is vastly changing the market. Grant currently works as a real estate agent, getting satisfaction watching his clients planning their moves. He hopes they will find Bella Vista as special as he does. Grant expects to spend the rest of his life in Northwest Arkansas...'it's gotten ahold of me; won't let go.'</p> |
| Duration              | 30 minutes   |
| Audio File Format     | MP3  |
| Images                | Yes  |
| Producer              | Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project  |
| Copyright             | Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History, University of Arkansas  |
| Website URL           | <a href="http://pryorcenter.uark.edu">http://pryorcenter.uark.edu</a>  |
| Questions or Comments | <a href="https://nwaoralhistory.org">https://nwaoralhistory.org</a>  |
| Interview             | Grant has interviewed many people. Some of his favorites are   |

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| sidebar | the volunteers who “give of their own time to make their community a better place.” [00:17:47] |
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