

Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project
 William Michael Mattler Sr. Interview Abstract
 February 19, 2020

Interviewee	William Michael Mattler Sr.
Year of birth	1950
Place of birth	Venice, Los Angeles County, California
Interviewer	Camille Hatcher
Interview date	2020-02-19
Interview location	Kindley House; Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas
Keywords	<p>Mattler, William Michael Sr. Hatcher, Camille Bella Vista, Benton County, Arkansas Gravette, Benton County, Arkansas Hiwasse, Benton County, Arkansas Westville, Adair County, Oklahoma City government Farming Music Politics U.S. Army Vietnam War, 1961-1975 Walmart</p>
Description	<p>Someone who's lived in many places, enjoyed several careers, fought in Vietnam, and been politically active in his community will likely have interesting stories to tell. William (Bill) Mattler is that someone.</p> <p>Mattler's parents were from Indiana. Dad, a carpenter, had Sioux blood; Mother was Pennsylvania Dutch. Dad's work took him to Venice California. Mattler was born there, moving to Westville Oklahoma when he was five. He attended a one room grade school that became a social gathering place on Saturdays and church on Sunday. It's where Mattler learned to play guitar. A high school assignment led him to research why the city of Westville, on the eastern border of Oklahoma had that name. A great lesson in old maps, the Oklahoma land rush, and changing state boundaries.</p> <p>Mattler shares his experiences of being drafted after high school graduation and serving in the U.S. Army. As part of a helicopter team, he flew troops and supplies into Vietnam. Mattler also spent time at bases in Germany, Texas, and Georgia. Mattler's commitment to veterans remains strong. Today he is active in the American Legion, Disabled American Vets, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.</p> <p>After time in Louisiana, Mattler and his family came to Arkansas where he managed a dairy farm. He quickly learned how to operate the farm that included milking 70 cows and raising calves. He made sure his operation routinely passed inspection.</p>

	<p>In a story, one calf was named Supper to remind the family not to make him a pet. After leaving that farm, Mattler lived around Arkansas including Gentry and Decatur. From 1991 until his retirement, Mattler worked on machine maintenance for the printing division of Walmart.</p> <p>After living many places, Mattler wanted to own land. He got that opportunity and bought five wooded acres in Hiwasse. Mattler shares details of his involvement during the annexation of Hiwasse to Gravette. That civic involvement continues. In addition to his work with local veterans' organizations, Mattler is a member of the Gravette Planning Commission and the Gravette Lions Club. For fun, Mattler is in a local band where he provides the vocals and plays the guitar. He and the band can be found on Tuesdays at the Senior Center. These activities are Mattler's way of participating with pride in his combined community of Hiwasse and Gravette.</p>
Duration	55 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	http://pryorcenter.uark.edu
Questions or Comments	https://nwaoralhistory.org
Interview sidebar	<p>In Bill Mattler's words: "I call Gravette my home. We've become very attached to it. It's got the potential to be a city...the right kind of city. And I want a stay in it...[to show] younger people and families the pluses of moving into a place like Gravette." [00:50:35]</p>