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

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Arkansas Memories Project

Martin R. Steele

Interviewed by Scott Lunsford

November 13, 2009

Fayetteville, 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, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at http://pryorcenter.uark.edu. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, 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 twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

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

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

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

Citation Information

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Scott Lunsford interviewed Martin R. Steele on November 13, 2009, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Um—we're gonna take care of some business first here.

Martin Steele: Sure.

SL: Um—uh—we're going—uh—today's date is Friday, [*MS laughs*] November the thirteenth . . .

MS: Probably not good. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . two thousand and nine. Uh—we're here at the Pryor Center—uh—the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History on the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville campus in Mullins Library. And today we're gonna be havin' a conversation between—uh—Marty Steele—Martin . . .

MS: R. Steele.

SL: . . . R. Steele.

MS: Uh—yeah.

SL: Uh—and my name is Scott Lunsford. And—um—Marty, I wanna ask you if it's all right with you that we are recording—uh—this interview in both audio and video and that it reside in the Special Collections Department here at the University of Arkansas in Mullins Library.

MS: It is all right.

SL: That's a great answer.

MS: I—yes, thank you.

[00:00:53] SL: [*Laughs*] So now we can keep goin'.

MS: It's a good start.

SL: Yeah, it's a good start.

Trey Marley: Could you pull your shirt down just a little bit? Just pull . . .

MS: Mmm.

TM: Yeah, there you go. Get shirt down just a little bit.

SL: It's—there you go. Yeah, that's better.

MS: Mmm.

[00:01:04] SL: Um—well, Marty, what we usually do is we—uh—start with when and where you were born.

MS: I was—uh—born—uh—on the fifteenth of September, 1946, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

SL: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

MS: Yes.

SL: Now—um—Pennsylvania—uh—there are many parts of Pennsylvania that look a lot like Arkansas, Northwest Arkansas.

MS: Yes.

SL: Uh . . .

MS: In fact—uh—mine was Manayunk, Pennsylvania, which is east of the Schuylkill River and a very mountainous, hilly area.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:01:39] MS: And I have—my recollection of it is only by going back, Scott. Uh—I was a very young boy when we moved to Fayetteville, but I've gone back and kind of—uh—from my vague memories with siblings or being directed by my siblings, I've gone back to be able to go the spot where I was when, colon, dot, dot, dot. And it's been an extraordinary experience in my later years in life, but I have very little recollection of it. It's—but—mostly what my older brother and older sister and my—uh—mother have told me about it.

[00:02:11] SL: Ha—how many years were you there?

MS: Uh—I left when I was four, and we . . .

SL: Ah.

MS: . . . moved when I was four years old to come to Fayetteville.

SL: So really there . . .

MS: So in 1950 we—uh—we moved down here.

SL: Any memories, then, would be pretty remarkable.

MS: Yeah, I mean, they're just vague. I mean, they're exciting. They're, like, sledding down a hill and—and—uh—running into a tree and something like that. And—uh—going to a fair—uh—like

a county fair down here, but you know, in a little boat going around and riding a horse in a circle. But they're very—but they're very fleeting memories of it all. Yeah.

[00:02:45] SL: Sounds like a—a—a typical, good childhood, though . . .

MS: Well . . .

SL: . . . what you do remember of it.

MS: Well—uh—I—I think that's because of my mother. She was a remarkable woman. Uh—she was a nurse—uh—in both Philadelphia and here in Fayetteville and truly a giving type of person and very nurturing for me. Uh—but it was not a good childhood. My—uh—father—uh—owned a bar in Philadelphia in Manayunk, and he—he was an alcoholic. And—uh—I have a brother eight years older than I am named John, a sister four years older than I am named Joyce, and then me, and then I have a half-sister that we'll talk about later that's eight years younger than I am.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:03:27] MS: But my recollections and—and—uh—are—are none of all this, but I've been told by my siblings about the situation between my father and—uh—uh—my mother and me. And it's interesting that my brother, who's, again, eight years older than

I am, has—uh—negative memories, and my sister, four years older than I am, has positive memories of my dad. And I have no memories of my father and—uh—as we get into this, I'll tell you some things that have happened in my life that have brought that ba—image back, but they have shared with me—uh—some things that were very unpleasant, unpleasant—uh—as a young boy that I've carried with me as part of who I am as a human being. Uh—to get—uh—almost maudlin at the outset—uh—the gift of life, if you will, as opposed to just kinda meandering through life. But—uh—as I've been told by my brother, that when I was two and still not potty trained, my—uh—uh—I had poopy dipes when my father in a drunken rage tried to launch me out the window of the third story of our home—uh—in Manayunk. And my brother tackled my father, according to—uh—the family story and—uh—prevented him from launchin' me through the window, which—uh—one person told me—Dan Gable from Iowa University, I've told the story to, the famous wrestler, and he said, "Well, you—he wouldn't have killed you." I said, "Well, I woulda been dead." And he said, "Not knowin' you. Now that I know you, General, you woulda survived [*SL laughs*] the fall." [*Laughter*] But—uh—but the—uh—the reality as I recall it from my brother was that—uh—he

has a scar on his head, and I have a scar on mine, and he was ten years old, and he saved my life. [00:05:14] And shortly thereafter, my mother left my father. Uh—we were Catholic. Uh—my mother was a devout Catholic. We practiced the faith, and so it was a very difficult thing since there's no such thing as divorce . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . in Catholicism. And—uh—what happened was that she was given an annulment from the marriage, which—uh—my understanding of the Catholic Church, that all has to do with money and—uh—uh—in retrospect, but I know we didn't have any money. But anyway, she left him, and he died shortly thereafter of black-mole cancer, a lymphoma. And I'm gonna race ahead here, but I knew very little about it except the incident that I just shared with you.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:05:57] MS: But through the years—uh—uh—and it was kinda suppressed, particularly by my mother. She wouldn't share anything with me. Uh—my—my brother only—uh—has a minimal amount of information, just so I knew and was aware of it. I'd never even seen a photograph of my father, but flash forward to just a few years ago here in Fayetteville, and I can't

remember the date now, but—but I will soon—but—uh—but when my mother passed away, I eulogized her at St. Joseph's Church . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . in Fayetteville. And my stepfather, who I'll talk quite about here in a moment, but—uh—and then when we—uh—interred her remains out at the—the National Cemetery, the—uh—came back to our house over on Berry Street, just—uh . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:06:46] MS: . . . west of the university and my father—or stepfather. I call my father my stepfather. My father is—I've never known anyone other than him—told me to go in the back bedroom where my—uh—brother and sister were. And I said, "Pop, what do you"—he said, "Just go back with your brother and sister." And he was kinda sitting there rocking in the chair, still—uh—mourning the death of his wife—uh—my mother. And I—uh—dutifully, as a son, went back in there, and they were standing on my—uh—at my parents' bed with a photo album that I had never seen before. And they were both weeping, and—uh—it was a profound event because it was the only thing that my mother told my stepfather and my siblings. Said never show a photograph of my father until she passed away.

SL: Hmm.

[00:07:42] MS: And when they showed me the photograph, it was like I was lookin' in a mirror and looked . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . just like him. And there were beautiful photographs of them walking on the boardwalk together in Atlantic City, New Jersey. But it was stunning for me to find out in my mid-forties that I was the spitting image of my father. And then my mother, because of the trauma of him tryin' to take my life, although inebriated at the time, she just never wanted to expose me to—to what he looked like.

SL: That's interesting. [*Sighs*] [*TM clears throat*]

MS: Extraordinary start to the interview, isn't it? [*TM laughs*]

[00:08:18] SL: Well—um—we ca—we're gonna talk a little bit about—first of all, what was your—do you know your mother's maiden name?

MS: Yes. My mother's name is Catherine Marie McColgan. The last name's spelled *M-C-C-O-L-G-A-N*. She's Scotch-Irish.

SL: Uh-huh.

MS: Yeah, and a remarkable woman. Her parents, I never really knew. She was an orphan.

SL: Uh-huh.

MS: Um—she had an older brother named Joe McColgan. And—uh—my m—as I recall, my mother's mother passed away on my mother's birth, during the birthing.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:08:52] MS: And she was immediately, or soon thereafter, placed in an orphanage in Philadelphia. And her older brother, my Uncle Joe, was much older than—and part of his effort through his early life was tryin' to get her outta the orphanage. And some of the stories that my mother shared. It was a Catholic orphanage, and the strictness of the nuns and all was—uh—was relayed. My mother, I don't think she would call it abuse, but it was a pretty stern upbringing—uh—and—and she met the challenge, I think, if you will. [00:09:25] But she yearned always to be with her—uh—with her older brother. And he was a remarkable man, too, and I got to know him through the years. He's passed away today, but his wife was—uh—my Aunt Ree, but they used to share stories about how special my mother was in surviving her experience in the orphanage. And it's what made her such a giving person because of—she didn't get it when she was a small child. And so that's why she was such an effective nurse and such a loving mother and—and had a powerful impact on my life.

[00:10:00] SL: Do you know about when she was born?

MS: Well, I do. I believe it was 1913.

SL: Okay.

MS: Uh—March or April—uh—no, March 20, excuse me, March 20, 1913.

SL: In—in Pennsylvania?

MS: Yes. Yes. Yeah.

SL: And so her—um—uh—older brother eventually prevailed in—in getting her . . .

MS: Yeah. They . . .

SL: . . . out of the orphanage?

[00:10:23] MS: . . . they—they got out, and he went into the navy in—uh—in World War II. But I—I should know this, and—uh—if this carries on, I'll find out because my—the genealogist is—in my family is my older sister . . .

SL: Okay.

MS: . . . who's four years older, and she—she has it all down and has . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . been collecting the information on my family for—for many, many years. And it's just something that—again, she remembers our father more fondly than my brother, and

obviously, I have no memory of my father. But he used to—even when my mother separated from him—uh—you know, he would get visitation or whatever it was called back then . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:11:03] MS: . . . and it was normally with my older sister. And he'd take her to the park and so on. So she had fond memories of him . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . because he would—my mother obviously wouldn't release any of us to him if he had any alcohol, so he would come sober and . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: I don't believe that it was a—you know—um—abusive so much. Maybe verbally abusive, but I don't think he was physically abusive, but I may be wrong . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

MS: . . . because it was all buffered from me, for sure.

[00:11:32] SL: Well, [*MS sniffs*] did your—um—mother—was your mother placed in foster care? Did she have foster parents?

MS: No. No.

SL: So . . .

MS: I—I don't think so. Now, it—I say that. I think that some of her

relatives—uh—cousins or something like that may have had her at some time during the experience . . .

SL: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . come out for a per—a period of time, but I don't think it was permanent—uh—but I may be wrong with that. Again, my sister, Joyce, knows all of that.

SL: Okay.

[00:12:00] MS: It's just that I—and it wasn't denial. It was just that they buffered me. I mean, I could say it . . .

SL: Sure.

MS: . . . all day fifty times that I wasn't made aware of it. And now, you know, uh—uh—since my mother's death, I know why. Because it would've drawn out, "I wanna know more about my dad," and it woulda drawn out the photographs, and it was my—my mother's one request. She just didn't want me to see the similarity because of the one incident.

[00:12:27] SL: Um—so let's see, now. I'm just going to assume you probably never met—um—what about your grandfather on your mother's side? Did you ever meet him?

MS: No. No.

SL: Um—don't have any idea what they . . .

MS: No.

SL: . . . did for . . .

MS: No.

SL: . . . living or . . .

MS: But—no. But—uh—my—again, my sister [*laughs*] knows. My . . .

SL: Okay.

[00:12:50] MS: She knows it all. I mean—and—and she'll say some things and has in the recent past. I saw her in May when I was privileged to be the commencement speaker at the Walton College . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

MS: . . . graduation, and she was here. And—and she'll give me these vignettes, vignettes, every now and then of . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . making a remark about some relative that—that I have a vague recollection of because as a youth here between the ages of four and ten, they—they visited my parents. And, "That's somebody and somebody." And I—but you know, it just—they were kinda out of our life. In fact, the standing joke was when we moved from Philadelphia to Arkansas with my stepfather, they couldn't believe—uh—when photographs were sent that there were shoes on our feet and that there were indoor toilets.

[*SL laughs*] They thought that we had come down to the sticks of Arkansas and . . .

SL: There you go.

[00:13:38] MS: . . . it was outdoor toilets . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . like most people thought.

SL: Yes.

MS: Yeah.

SL: And some still . . .

MS: Do.

SL: . . . hold on to that.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. In some way, maybe . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . more insidious ways but . . .

MS: Yeah.

[00:13:49] SL: . . . the—um—um—so I guess we should—um—you're not going to be mu—you're not gonna have much knowledge about your father and—and his side of the family. You don't remem—you don't . . .

MS: Well—uh—I'll close the circle. Uh [*sighs*]—sometime within the last four or five years—um—I needed to close the circle. I'm a

leadership consultant and advise my clients who have histories to close circles on themselves.

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:14:22] MS: And I went back to Philadelphia, initially by myself, and with a client, a friend of mine, we drove over to Manayunk—uh—to my address, which my brother gave me, and parked the car. Uh—it was on Ritchie Street, and parked the car out, and I got outta the car, and on my cell phone, I called my brother in Edmond, Oklahoma, which is where he lives, and he described—uh—which window it was . . .

SL: Hmm.

[00:14:52] MS: . . . on the building. And—uh—and I looked up at the will—building, and I could hear that my brother was crying on the other end of the phone [*clears throat*] and commenting about being alive and—and so then we got in the car, and—uh—I was told where his remains were in the cemetery.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: And—uh—and I—I—my business—uh—acquaintance, if you will, drove me out there, and we went—uh—to the site. And it was a list of the entire side—my father's side of the family. And the irony is—uh—that although my name is Steele, that's my stepfather's name . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:15:37] MS: . . . but my birth name is Hagenbucher.

SL: Ha.

MS: *H-A-G-E-N-B-U-C-H-E-R*.

SL: Thank you.

MS: Yes.

SL: We would've never gotten that.

MS: You never wouldn't gotten that. [*SL laughs*] And uh—uh—and so there is a clan of Hagenbuchers in this cemetery, and I went to my—my father's name was Walter Hagenbucher, and my brother's—older brother's name is John Walter Hagenbucher and now Steele. But I went to his gravesite and—uh—in my mind talked to him for a while and then forgave him so I could move on. And then my wife, I wanted her to go through it with me, and so we went back and kinda repeated the whole thing.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:16:16] MS: And we went to the church where I was baptized, which is just up the street from our home . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: . . . and then went down to the spot where she saw the window, and then I took her out to the cemetery site, and she held my hand as I forgave him again.

SL: So it was a—kind of a brownstone house.

MS: No . . .

SL: No?

MS: . . . it's not. It's a—it's a—on that theme. It's a row house, but it wasn't brownstone. It was—it was kind of white stone, I guess . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

MS: . . . or maybe even white clapboard.

SL: Mh-hmm.

MS: Uh—but it's not—it wasn't a brownstone house. But there were rows, and it was on a hill, so you know, they were all above one another as you . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:16:55] MS: Yeah. But—uh—it was modest. But I'll share another thing. My wife and I went to the bar that my father—I thought he owned, but he worked in. And it's called the Nineteenth Hole, and it's on the top of the hill of Manayunk, and we went in there. And I remember stories of my mother telling me about that at one time we lived above, in the apartment above, the bar. And it just—I had visions that the bar was a huge bar and—and—uh—but my mother shared stories with me that—uh—my dad would—she'd be working at the bar, and he'd

be upstairs, or my brother and sister would be upstairs, but when I was crying, they would put me in the dumbwaiter that—uh—[*SL laughs*] went from the kitchen upstairs, which is where sandwiches were made and things like that. And they fired me down the dumbwaiter to—to—so my mother could nurture me at the—in the bar. And so we went into the bar, my wife and I, and it—it was half the size of a car. I mean, this thing was so small. It probably had a bar that held six or seven people and then maybe one or two tables, and obviously, it was sixty or seventy years old, if a day, and—uh—but prominent, and it had its regulars, you know. It's a local bar and clientele. And so I went and introduced myself—uh—to the proprietor there, and I asked, "Do you—do you know who Walter Hagenbucher was?" And of course, they did. And—uh—and then everybody started comin'. They called people, and they came in to tell me the stories that, some of the older people, of me bein' in the dumbwaiter. And my wife and I were drinking pitchers of beer, talkin' to these people and—and had a grand ol' time. Some—they came from all over, and my wife was so thrilled about the good side of it all, the fun side of it all. And—uh—some of the younger workers, you know, that were twenty-one but that worked at the bar to get additional money, they called them

down so they could hear the stories of the old people telling me the story that I could appreciate about my youth in the bar. And the fact was, my wife didn't wanna leave. She said, "Well, let's just sit here and drink beer and eat peanuts [*laughter*] and talk to these people forever because this is quite a story." 'Cause it . . .

SL: Yeah.

[00:19:03] MS: . . . really was, rather than the—rather morbid or—uh—sad part, this was the light part. And—uh—it was a wonderful thing. So when we go back—uh—we've gone back once to drink beer, and soon as I walked in, they recognized me again. I mean, I'm the marine general, [*SL laughs*] you know, that was Walt's son, you know, that—that moved away to Arkansas . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

[00:19:28] MS: . . . and—uh—became a general in the marine corps. And so, you know, there's a lotta—the founding of the marine corps, you may not know this, Scott, is in—in Philadelphia in Tun Tavern, in a bar in . . .

SL: No, I did not know that.

MS: . . . yeah, in—yeah, in—uh—1775, so the marine corps, notorious for—uh—alcohol at one time, not so much now, but—

uh—the—the—for all of these people, it's only right that General Marty Steele, Marty Hagenbucher Steele's father ran a bar, and the marine corps was founded in a bar, not the same one but one that was nearby, which has been destroyed.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:04] So—but we've had a lotta fun with the story, goin' back to see the people. But I had always believed that my dad owned the bar, and he may have been a part owner, but somebody else really owned it, I think. I think. I don't—and I don't know who that was but—and they had many, many clientele over the years from what I've been told. I was told that the Philadelphia Eagles came to my baptism because of my father and his clients being Philadelphia Eagle football players at the end of World War II. And my—and I was, again, a post-war baby, born in 1946, and that, you know, famous football players held me at the baptism. But again, it's kinda family lore more than it is anything else, but it's a good—it's a nice thing to think about.

SL: It's a great story.

MS: Yeah.

[00:20:58] SL: You know, it sounds to me—well, first of all, I'm getting the impression that your mother was a wonderful

person . . .

MS: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: . . . and you know, she probably—when—I'm just going to guess, Marty, that when she fell in love with your father, he was probably a healthy man, and there was much to love about him.

MS: Oh, I think so.

SL: And there's probably—there were those around him that saw the same qualities.

MS: Yes.

SL: So to . . .

MS: Yes.

SL: . . . to have that kind of gathering to descend upon your visit, I think, speaks of another side . . .

MS: Yes.

SL: . . . probably well before the disease . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . took him.

MS: Yeah.

[00:21:44] SL: So it sounds like to me you have made a circle here, and I'm just guessing that he was probably—he probably had some great qualities about him. And it's sad that that disease can be so—can change a person so dramatically.

MS: Yeah.

SL: But I—you say that your father died not long after . . .

MS: I think he died in—and I should remember this from visiting his tombstone. I think it was in [19]52, so it was two years after we came to Fayetteville, I think. But the other more poignant side, Scott, about all this was that I knew so much about my mother's youth, which we haven't started on that yet.

SL: Right.

[00:22:38] MS: But my mother was, first of all, stunningly beautiful as a woman, as a young woman. And she was an actress, and a very good one, and started out in church plays up there, where she was a performer. And the family is filled with albums of my mother with performers. And she's in the era of Bette Davis, Joan Crawford, and Grace Kelly. They're all of the same era, and they're all in the Philadelphia area. My mother played with Grace Kelly and her older sister in some of these plays. She made it big time. She was—she had a choice, at one juncture in her life, to go to Broadway or raise a family, and these were major choices in her own life. My mother—as a small boy here, used to show me the photographs and then describe the place. And in my gene pool, my brother has that gene. He was a—he's an entertainer. I mean, he's an insurance man, retired, but he

was a singer and dancer and actor of the year in Oklahoma for several years. His children are entertainers. They're on Broadway. His grandchildren are Broadway performers today, all coming through the line of my mother, who was a gifted, talented entertainer. And I remember, again, early on, the promoter and the disc jockey, the audio guy on the radio, his name was Nebs Costello and . . .

SL: Hmm. That's a great name.

[00:24:10] MS: . . . and a—yeah, a great name. And he was one of the, again, one of the leading, as I have been told and my vague memory about it, was the leading disc jockey. But he revered my mother, probably loved her. But he came to visit us in Fayetteville once, and I remember—probably, I was five or six, but he told me that he was—that my mother was so much better as a performer than Joan Crawford or Grace Kelly, that they couldn't hold a candle to her. But she had made the choice to raise a family, so another thing that endeared me to my mother because she was really remarkable.

[00:24:47] SL: So her career started before her marriage to your father.

MS: I think so. I mean, I think that probably when she got out of the orphanage and got into nursing, probably as la—early as

eighteen, nineteen, twenty, she was performing. Because—first of all, again, I—you know, you'll see the pictures. She was stunning. I mean, just absolute breathtakingly beautiful. And she could sing like a bird, you know. And I had that gift until puberty. I could sing like a bird, and I performed when I was growing up here at St. Joseph's School, was the star of all the shows. I remember as early as the second grade, and we'll get to that later, but I—my mother taught me songs. She sang to me at night. I'd sing back. And at St. Joseph I was, for years and years, sang in the choir, did the solo at midnight mass. "O Holy Night." Broke glass once when I was a young boy . . .

SL: Oh.

MS: . . . singing. Yeah.

SL: Wow.

[00:25:51] MS: I mean, I could sing but what—when puberty hit, it was gone forever. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well . . .

MS: I never—I mean, I can't sing in the shower anymore.

SL: FYI . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . I know you're gonna have dinner tonight. David Gearhart and I went to St. Joseph kindergarten together.

MS: Oh, you did? Really?

SL: Yeah. So I've got a little bit of . . .

MS: Well . . .

SL: . . . history at St. Joe's.

MS: . . . I mean, there's a linkage there. Sue Gearhart dated my brother, John.

SL: Oh, okay.

[00:26:15] MS: Yeah. So the Gearhart family's in my family, too.

SL: They're . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . great folks.

MS: Yeah, yeah.

[00:26:21] SL: Great folks. Well, so your mother, did she ever tell you any stories about the Depression?

MS: Often. Often.

SL: Well, so she probably was in the orphanage . . .

MS: Yes.

SL: . . . during the worst of the Depression . . .

MS: Yes.

SL: . . . but it sounds like she probably got out while it . . .

MS: I . . .

SL: . . . was on . . .

MS: . . . I think . . .

SL: . . . the waning side.

MS: I think so. I mean, obviously, I'm a history major and familiar with it, and I should know more of the vivid details. I mean, my mother's description of meals and—not starvation but subsistence living, for sure, in the orphanage and very tough times; cruel taskmasters in the nuns; of corporal punishment, three-sided rulers for no reason; and porridge soup three times a day; and just a very, you know—just subsistence, just survival living. And it's why food was never thrown away in my house. I mean, you could have the same leftover, if you will, in the refrigerator for five years if you didn't go in there and get it because my mother, like so many people of the Depression, they just hoarded and never would allow a piece of food to be wasted. My, you know, jumping forward again, my brother when I was visiting once while a marine, I think I was a colonel or somethin', so I'd been in the marine corps for twenty years or more, but my brother came over from Edmond. We were visiting, and we opened the refrigerator door, and it's just stuffed [*laughter*] in this house ?over?, just stuffed. And you know, it was just—I mean, the mayonnaise coulda been in there for fifteen years for all we knew, so what we did was—my mother was distracted

from it. [00:28:12] I don't know how. She may've gone out to the mall or something like that. But my brother and I cleaned out the kitchen or the refrigerator. And it was the worst thing we ever did [*SL laughs*] in our life. I mean, but not for us, but the—I mean, everything went, and my brother would, he was the actor again, so he would, "Mmm," go through all the shtick routines with everything that he pulled out that had, you know, five years worth of mold on it that—and my mother came back when he was in the middle of the shtick. And she didn't come where we could see her. She stood outside the room and listened.

SL: Oh.

[00:28:47] MS: And then wept and came in. Just—she was weeping. And my brother just completely shut up and stopped, and we, you know, we took all the stuff out to the garbage and had to apologize.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Food was a precious commodity. That's for sure.

SL: So she—do you have any idea how she met your father?

MS: Ah, not specifically. He's much older—or younger than she is, probably eight years younger. She probably knew him intermittently before World War II. My father went to

Drexel—my stepfather went to Drexel in school, and like so many on the day after Pearl Harbor Day, he was down there signing up.

[00:29:45] SL: Oh, now, this—we're talkin' . . .

MS: Stepfather.

SL: . . . about your stepfather . . .

MS: Stepfather. Yeah.

SL: . . . now.

MS: Yeah. Yeah. My father, allegedly—and I don't know much about it. I should know more. Again, another buffering, but ironically, again, another reason my mother wouldn't tell me—but allegedly joined the marine corps in the [19]30s and was an abysmal marine. And his mother—he wanted to get out, and his mother allegedly paid his way out of the marine corps. And he may have had even an other-than-honorable discharge as a result of all that. Again, I've been buffered from it. My sister knows, and if we reconvene this, I'll—and edit this document, this'll be a place that I will edit it. I guarantee you. [*Laughs*] But it's something, again, that I've suppressed. I mean, someone who's spent my entire life in the marine corps. My vague recollection is—and I've never spoken about it until this moment. This is the first time I've ever said about it. My wife doesn't even know

what I just told you.

SL: Okay.

[00:30:50] MS: Don't even know how I found out about it. I mean, I just—it's somewhere in the back of your brain in something like this, and you just let it go here a little bit. But I'm not embarrassed about it other than that I'm embarrassed about it, that my father may have been other than honorably discharged from the organization that I spent my entire adult life in. [*Laughs*]

[00:31:09] SL: Well, let's go ahead and talk a little bit about your stepfather then . . .

MS: Okay.

SL: . . . who you call your father . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . and you grew up and knew as your father.

MS: Well, he—yeah, I never called him anything other than my dad. I mean, it's not—I—when I became of the age of reason and my birth—my dad—stepfather did not adopt us, did not adopt us, until I was in my mid-twenties.

SL: Ah.

[00:31:36] MS: I mean, it was just a natural act that he was Dad for everybody, but when I was a youth growing up here in

Fayetteville, my birth certificate said Hagenbucher, and I had—but I never called myself that or nobody did. We all were Steeles, but the formal adoption process took place by a high-school friend of mine who was an attorney in Fayetteville, Chuck Hanks. You may have known Chuck Hanks but . . .

SL: I know that name. Mh-hmm.

MS: Yeah. But he did the paperwork. And I would—I coulda been even in my thirties when it was finally done, but yes, he, from my perspective, he was my father.

[00:32:13] SL: And so—but he was in the Philadelphia area . . .

MS: Yes.

SL: . . . when . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: And after your mother and father's marriage was annulled—had your mom known your stepfather . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . through the years . . .

MS: Yeah, I think so . . .

SL: . . . maybe schoolmates or . . .

MS: I don't think there was—no. Again, he is at least eight years younger than she was, so she's so far away ahead of him. But I think he was a stand-up man, first of all. He's a diminutive little

guy, but he was, and I think, like most men around there, saw my—the beauty in my mother. I mean, not only physical beauty, but this gift that she had about dealing with human beings. I mean, she was remarkable. So I imagine he—I'm bein' facetious here, to some degree. He probably said, "That's a pretty good-lookin' woman there. I don't care if she's got three kids or not" type of thing. And—but somehow they got together, and I should know all this, but I don't. But anyway, they did. And I—my dad—my stepfather has an extraordinary story, too, in World War II.

SL: Okay.

MS: Yeah. In . . .

SL: Let's hear that.

[00:33:33] MS: Yeah. He was in the army air corps and flew P-47s, and he was—and part of that [*unclear word*]—he has an older brother named Bob, and they were all part of that early entry after the start of World War II. And my dad wanted to fly airplanes. And when he went down to sign up, he took a balsa-wood plane. He's told me this story of his [*laughs*]—and he was tryin' to convince them that he shouldn't be in the infantry, but he should be flyin' planes because he had been dealing with planes and had thought about airplanes all of his

life, which was a crock of hooey. [*SL laughs*] He just didn't wanna be in the infantry. Anyway, he—they sent him into flight school, and he went over in World War II and flew the P-47 for—and had thirteen missions, and he was shot down by the Germans on his thirteenth mission. And it was on a railroad track, and he was tail-end Charlie, just like in the movies. And they shot him down, and he got out on the wing of his plane, and he's—he describes this. This is a very poignant story of how my father dealt with his issues about all this. But then he evaded the Germans for several weeks in the French underground. And he spoke high-school French, and he was in a hay wagon with a bunch of other people who were tryin' to get back to friendly lines, allies, many of them. And my dad, as he—he never spoke about this except on each of our eighteenth birthdays, so we never knew anything about it. And the deal was that my older brother, older sister, and me—he would take a day off of work, and we would take a day out of school, and he'd tell his story of World War II one time. And the—you were sworn to secrecy, and I'll describe how he did it to me but—so I never knew anything from my brother or sister about my dad, and he never would speak about it. But I'm telling you, leaping forward from my eighteenth birthday, 'cause this was very, very

?close-holed?. He just didn't talk about the war, like so many of his generation don't; like so many of my generation don't talk about the Vietnam War; like so many of the Afghan and Iraq War won't speak about it either 'cause that's who I'm dealin' with today, the kids that suffer from that. [00:36:05] Well, anyway, in my eighteenth birthday, 15 September in Fayetteville, Arkansas, I took a day outta school, and my dad took a day outta work for the post office, and we went to the kitchen, and he drank chocolate milk, I remember vividly, and it was eight hours, just like this interview. He never went to the bathroom. I never drank anything. I just sat there, mesmerized. Couldn't ask a question. You just sat in stony silence and just listened to him tell the story. You couldn't take notes. When he finished after eight hours, he said, "That's—you can't speak to your mother about this. You can't speak to your siblings. You never can say this to anybody. This is it. You never can ask me a question. It's over." [00:36:48] So, the story was basically profound. It was one of the reasons that I left the University of Arkansas to enlist in the marine corps in the Vietnam War. It had such a powerful effect on me because of his courage and self-discipline and desire to live as a prisoner, but I go back to the hay truck. [*Clears throat*] A French farmer

whispered to the people in the hay truck, "We're—be very silent. We're going by a busload of German soldiers, and be very quiet." And my dad whispered to the fellow people. I mean, he understood what the guy said, and he whispered to the fellow people under the hay. And sure enough, like in a B-grade movie, a young British soldier with a Thompson submachine gun panicked and got out of the hay and shot the bus up, and the bus went off into the ditch, killing many German soldiers. And the survivors got out and killed everybody except my father. [00:37:44] Killed the French farmer. Shot 'em all in the head, and they captured my dad. And he was in Stalag Luft 1 in Barth, Germany, for around a year, which is in the northeast portion of Germany. And so most of his story is not so much about flight training or preparing, although he said he was a good pilot and just it was in a, you know, a tail-end Charlie that had a—got a bead on everybody, since he was the last guy in the formation. [00:38:14] But it's about life as a prisoner of war; man's inhumanity to man; the banality of war; survival; compromise; people who give up and die. And when he shared it with me, he was very poignant. He had—he was an unemotional man, if you will. That doesn't mean he never cried or I never saw him cry, but he was very matter of fact, and I was totally mesmerized,

just totally mesmerized. And he would describe, and he would name the people, which I don't have any idea their names were—Joey or—of them giving up. You know, there was no hope. "We're up here near the Russians. The Russians are gonna come in here and kill us after the Germans and whatever happens"—they just had no idea. And he talked about escaping and the many times that they attempted to escape. He talked about his treatment, which his opening line is, "Son, I'm glad I wasn't in a Japanese prisoner of war camp." But as the war went on, he unwittingly predicted D-Day in this portion of this just because he was a extroverted, flapped his jibs, because he had a little bit of that Napoleon Complex, little bitty guy. But he told 'em, "They're comin' on the sixth of June." He had no idea. Just pulled it right out of his sphincter muscle. [*SL laughs*] And when it came, they went in and nearly beat him to death. "Who are you? How did you know that?" And he barely survived the attack 'cause he didn't know. He kept tellin' 'em, "I don't know. I just said it." And that experience and the brutality of that experience affected him for the rest of his life. He never overcame it, really. He never forgave the Germans. Start of the man—part of the manifestations, we never had a German car. He could tell a Volkswagen for miles away. I had a high school

friend who had a brand new Beetle, and I had to tell all my friends, "Don't bring your German car into our driveway." And a close friend of mine, James Remmel—you may know Harmon Remmel. They're famous people here in Fayetteville. But he had a brand new one, and he was comin' down to pick me up. We were goin' out one night, and the thing was a half a block away on Berry Street, and my dad heard it, and he said, "Did you tell James?" And I said, "I did, Dad. It's—obviously, he forgot." And he raced out of his chair. Opened the door. James pulled in the driveway. Immediately saw the look on my dad's face. Turned that thing in reverse as fast as he could to get it up the street. I mean, his license plate in Arkansas was POW13 till the day he died. [*SL sighs*] Always drove Ford products. Same thing with Japanese cars but that—but he didn't have any knowledge about the Japanese, other than he was glad he wasn't a prisoner of war in Japan. [00:41:06] When the war lingered on toward its end, and they kept—the Germans kept trying to put younger people on the front to fight the Russians, as they were closing in on Berlin and so on, so they were kind of enveloped. The old men, old men, were the guards, and they were the most brutal, reminding themselves of World War I, the horrendous defeat in World War I. They're gonna have to go

through this again, and they were brutal to the prisoners. Brutal. My dad couldn't understand it. I mean, obviously, he was much younger than they were, but they just took it out on all the prisoners. He was repatriated by a Russian Cossack on a horse with a f—a woman he said was the most beautiful woman he'd ever seen in his life on the back of it. Flaming red hair. And they came in to get them out of the prison, and my dad can—remembered it so vividly, so vividly. And then the first thing they did after they got out, they went to one of the concentration camps. And my dad, his only saving grace or the only thing that he could be sanguine about was when they went in and looked at all the emaciated people who he carried out in his arms, who weighed, you know, less than fifty, sixty pounds, who were near death, it was—it brought him back into the reality of the blessing that he still was alive and [*clears throat*] and he saw all the carnage and all the death. And another reason he couldn't forgive the Germans for what they did 'cause he was a first eyewitness to all that. [00:42:49] And he came back to the States just thrilled that he was alive, and I think he came back on a boat. He bought a bottle of whiskey and sat under a tree somewhere in Georgia. I don't know if it was Fort Benning, but one of the bases, and just drank the whole thing straight.

Threw up profusely, and then the other thing that he would say is that Harry Truman was one of the greatest presidents we ever had because he dropped the bomb because he was gonna have to go to Japan, and five hundred thousand Americans were gonna die. And, "Don't let anybody ever tell you that Harry Truman didn't have the strength of character by makin' that decision. Atomic bomb's bad, son, but I never woulda survived goin' to Japan, and we all woulda been killed over there 'cause they were tenacious." So he finished the story, and I got the same ritual, which I subsequently learned that my brother and sister got. "That's it. You can't say anything to anybody. Last time we'll ever speak about it." And I said, "Dad, I—it's struck me so much here. It's gonna change my life." And he said, "I don't care what it does to your life. [*Laughs*] It's about my life. And I love you, but we're never gonna talk about this before." So I would come home on leave and throughout my marine corps career, and I would [*clears throat*] badger him about it. And he said, "You know, you"—he drank a lot, too. He was—he became an alcoholic, and I'll get to that later, too, but—for these reasons, by the way. I mean, that . . .

SL: Sure.

[00:44:31] MS: . . . was the genesis of all of it, but [*laughs*] but he—

I kept badgering him. I said, "Dad, your story needs to be recorded. It needs to be recorded for proster—posterity reasons." And I remember as a little boy, we lived over on Fletcher Street, 391 Fletcher, when Hollywood came to Fayetteville, and they wanted to make a movie about my dad's experience in World War II. And he sat my mother, my older brother, my older sister, and me—my little sis—my little half-sister wasn't born yet—on the couch. And he proceeded to tell all these people from Hollywood why that would never happen. They would never get a movie outta him about all this. Private matter. Survival was what it was all about. He loved his comrades who were in the prison camp. Mourned the death. Never forgive the Germans, but there won't be any movie about it. And I was probably five or six years old. It was right after we got here. And another powerful image in my mind about his character, if you will, and remembering that my mother was an entertainer—I'm hookin' all this together, Scott, and the emphasis of all that and the little images for me, probably perceived much differently than my older brother and sister, but for me, not even knowin' what he was talkin' about, here was a Hollywood guy [*laughs*] wantin' to make a movie about him, and he was adamant that it wouldn't happen. [00:46:00] So flash

forward. William Jefferson Clinton promotes me to brigadier general in the Oval Office of the White House. I mean, I met, and we'll talk about that later, but I met President Clinton at Boys State in Little Rock. We're the same high school class. I've known him since then. Lots of things here at the university. Lots of time as governor and so on. But anyway, it was a private ceremony with my immediate family, my wife and children, Senator Glenn, and a couple of other people. But the [*laughs*]—a couple of days later, my dad came to where I was stationed, which was Quantico, Virginia, and he was sitting in the chair, and here's this brand new brigadier general. [00:46:46] And I was the base commander at Quantico was my first assignment as a brigadier general. And he was sitting there with a cocktail in his hand in my living room, and he said, "Come over here." And I walked over and said, "You all right, Pop?" And he said, "Here." And he handed me this document, and it was a picture of him in the cockpit of his P-47 with this little Errol Flynn moustache [*SL laughs*] and his flight helmet on, arm over the side of the cockpit, smiling. And it was his thirteenth mission. It was the morning of his flight. And behind it was twenty-five pages of single-spaced type of his story. And I started to say, "What is this?" And he just said, "You know." And I went in the

back bedroom and sat down and read. Wept like a baby, readin' it. And he had collaborated—corroborated with a professor from the University of Arkansas, a friend of his, to record the story. And I went out, and it was like E. F. Hutton, you know. Everybody stopped, and I looked at him, and I said, "Pop," and he said, "All I thought you'd be was a sergeant [*SL laughs*], and then you'd come back. But you became a general. You don't have to badger me anymore." [*Clears throat and sighs*] [00:48:21] And I said, "I'm so proud of you for doin' it. I'm so proud of you. It truly is remarkable. It's as if it were my eighteenth birthday. But Pop, you left half of it out from my memories of that eight-hour, eighteenth birthday." And he looked up at me and paused and said, "Son, I'm still tryin' to forget." And I said, "I know. I know." And then in true Richard Dunlap Steele fashion, he said, "Doesn't mean you can show it to anybody." [*Laughter*]

SL: Gee, thanks. Oh. Oh brother.

MS: Classic. Classic.

SL: Yeah, yeah.

MS: And I said, "I got it, Pop. I got it." [*Laughter*]

SL: Oh my.

[00:49:32] MS: He's just tremendous. Just a—but it's a tremendous

story, Scott, of courage and selflessness and survival. It really is. It's a wonderful story. And I have it in my desk at home and pull it out. Now, he's obviously passed away, but I look at that—I think he was twenty-two, maybe. I don't know.

SL: Yeah.

[00:49:58] MS: But that confident guy on his thirteenth mission that affected his life forever. I mean, obviously, he—and you know, I'll talk about his greatness and our relationship over the years, but the gift of life was so important to him, and what he imbued in me as a young man growing up here of the preciousness of the gift of life and to live every day like it's your last. I mean, what are you gonna do today to be better than yesterday? What are you gonna do? And I got that as a little kid. I mean, he was a—you know, I was an athlete here in town and I—it was always—you know, we'd play a baseball game, and I'd pitch. I was a pitcher and didn't matter how old I was, Little League or Legion ball. It didn't matter, but he would—I'd pitch a one-hitter and strike out sixteen guys and hit a home run and hit a double to drive in the run, and we'd win two to nothin' or somethin', and he'd say, "You hung a curveball. [*SL laughs*] Shoulda been a no-hitter." [*Laughter*] And for a while it made me angry, you know. I mean, we used to fight like cats and dogs, but I love

him because he was so—that's how he was with me. Where my mother, it was—if—and my coaches, obviously, were—you could get more outta me by pattin' me on the back and . . .

SL: Right.

[00:51:26] MS: . . . say, "Go in there and score the winning touchdown," or—you know, I played center field, and it was the last inning. "Come in here and strike this guy out." My dad thought the best way to approach me was to always make me go for the bigger ring, you know, higher.

SL: Sure.

MS: And—yeah. But he was pretty tough about it, pretty tough about it.

SL: Tough love.

MS: Yeah, tough love.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Big time. Big time.

SL: Yeah.

[00:51:47] MS: I mean, I, again—my last birthday present from my dad was when I was twelve. He gave me a baseball glove, and it was one of the best things that ever happened to me. But he handed it to me and said, "This is the last thing you're ever gonna get from me, [*SL laughs*] ever. No money. No nothin'.

This is it." And I would—I had a couple paper routes by then, deliverin' *Northwest Arkansas Times*, *Tulsa World.* And I said, "I understand." He said, "No, you don't. This is the last thing you're ever gonna get from me." And I said, "Okay, Pop, I got it." And he said, "No clothes when you grow. Sixteen, a car. College education. I'll put a roof over your head, and I'll put food in your mouth, but that's it. Nothin'. You're on your own. Become a man." And I said, "I got it, Pop." And he said, "I know you're kinda flip in your response." And I said, "Well, you want me to get a third paper route tomorrow or what? I'm twelve years old. I can—I'm—it's my birthday. I got this." And of course, over time it had a powerful im—positive impact on me. I mean, positive impact, and there was nothing negative to it. I da—dug ditches for Brennan-Boyd Construction Company here [00:52:56] My dad had a construction company. It was Steele and—Brennan and Steele or Steele and Boyd or somethin'—he and his brother. And we—they built Fayetteville High School. My dad was in the construction business at the time. Wilson Sharp House here, Carlson Terrace, the Methodist church in—here. Many, many prominent—the Pike House. I mean, they were all in my dad's construction company. And I was too young to work in it, and it went bust in the Eisenhower

administration in the late [19]50s. My uncle lived in Fort Smith, and he was—although a partner with him, he built—he was mostly into bridges and things like that around here and Oklahoma. A lotta the bridges around here have been built by my uncle and this Steele thing. But hard work—go—visiting construction sites, labor. And even when it went under, if you will, I—it was one of those very, very—that was a recession, if you recall, in those years and the one bad bid, you know, one bad bid where you underbid and couldn't make it, it was enough to put you in the tank, and that's what happened to them. And I don't know what bid it was, but he went on and did a number of other things, and we'll get back to that. [00:54:10] But I wanted to share the power of growing up in that family because it kinda set the condition of understanding that he never talked about his experience until that seminal moment in his life and mine, one on one, to share it and how it affected me for the rest of my life, for thirty-four and a half years in the marine corps. And what it meant to me because of his story and him finally writing the twenty-five page document that tells it. It was powerful. [*TM coughs and clears throat*]

SL: How are we on tape?

TM: We're getting pretty close, but you got about . . .

MS: How's this goin', by the way, here?

TM: [*Unclear words*].

SL: It's goin' great. It's goin' great.

TM: Yeah. I was about to cheer.

[00:54:56] SL: I was just gonna tell you that my father was a estimator for a construction company, Carl Tune . . .

MS: Oh, sure.

SL: . . . when I was growin' up.

MS: Know him very well. Blake Tune . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . was a friend of mine growin' up. But the Tune Constru—they were all in the business together.

SL: Yeah.

MS: And that was all . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . it was a cabal of those people. Then Brennan-Boyd after that.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Joe Brennan, I don't know if you ever knew him, but he and Carl Tune, they were icons. I mean, Joe Brennan is one the early mentor of mine. Now, Carl was not, but Blake I grew up with. He's a little bit older than I am. But Joe Brennan—Byron Boyd—

particularly, Joe Brennan, I really was close to him, growin' up in Fayetteville. A number of other thing, but he was one of my early mentors, just like my dad. I mean, they were all in it together. My dad and my uncle fell out. They regrouped and stayed with it and obviously ma—did very well for themselves. But you know, my dad stayed connected to them, and they were probably, in my relec—recollection, the closest friends to my family. But Joe Brennan became almost like a second father to me here in Fayetteville. And he hired me when I was sixteen to do construction work in his—I have so many great stories about that, of Carlson Terrace to be one, some sorority houses here. [00:56:16] But the—I'm jumpin' way ahead of the gun but the [*laughs*]—one of the great things, when he hired me, he said, "Just because you're you, and I've known you for—since you were a little boy, and your dad and mother and I are so close, doesn't mean that—you slack off here, I'll fire your ass [*SL laughs*] so fast." And I said, "Mr. Brennan"—he said, "But trust me." And he said, "Here's the golden rule, Marty. We're gonna hire ten people every morning, and eight of 'em are gonna be gone by noon because they're gonna be hangin' out by the watercooler." Now, remember this was in the summertime, so it was hot in Fayetteville. So, I was sixteen years old. Legal limit.

And that was the best-payin' job in town. I think I made two—$1.90 an hour when I started and $2.10 by the end of each summer and then $2.10 the next year—$2.25. I mean, that was big money back then.

SL: Yup.

MS: Big money. And—but sure enough, at noon eight of the ten people'd be gonzo. They'd be outta here, fired, because they were hangin' around the watercooler. He'd come over, and he said, "Your tongue parched yet?" [*SL laughs*] I said, "Mr. Brennan, I'm dyin' over here." He said, "Go get a drink, son, and get back to work." [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, [*unclear words*] . . .

MS: It was great.

SL: . . . [*unclear words*] . . .

[00:57:5] MS: But I wouldn't even go near that damn watercooler, I'll tell you.

SL: Yeah. [*Laughter*] Needed the money.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[00:57:32] MS: Needed the money. Really liked the work ethic. It

was just some great, great people, particularly here in Arkansas. They'll remain nameless right now, but a man that had been workin' in the construction business, diggin' ditches, with a third-grade education for thirty years. No teeth. He looked like somethin' out of a—that television program with the people that struck oil and go out to . . .

SL: *Beverly Hillbillies*.

MS: Yeah, *Beverly Hillbillies*. And wore, you know, bib overalls. One of the greatest men I've ever known in my life, and I mean, he knew how to dig a ditch, and he knew how to tell a story and keep you workin' and inspire you every day with—about the values and life. And I learned in the second summer, he was the father of a kid that I played baseball with. Didn't never know that because I'd never seen him before, but I went to my—'cause I was playin' baseball in the summertime, and I said, "Your dad"—and I quickly saw on the face of my fellow player that he was embarrassed about his father, you know, with a third-grade education. I could see it on his face, and it's my intuitive nature. And I said, "Your father's a great man. Don't you ever forget it. You need to hug him. He's gonna put you through college diggin' ditches. And he digs the best ditch I've ever seen." And he cried, and the kid cried, and he said, "I am

embarrassed." And I said, "Don't be. He's a great man." Next day at work, his dad's comes up, and "What'd you say to him? [*SL laughs*] What'd you say to him?"

SL: He's actin' strange.

[00:59:09] MS: Yeah. "He came home to me. He looked me ?sorta? funny in the face. [*SL laughs*] He came over and said he was sorry. What's he sorry for?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Well, we had a private conversation, sir." And he said, "He gave me a big hug. He never gave me a big hug before." And I said, "Well, he loves you." "He told me that, too, and I don't think he's ever told me he loved me." I said, "You ever told him that you loved him?" And he said, "Probably not." [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, that was uncommon . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that people—folks weren't like that back then.

MS: No, they weren't like that.

SL: No, they . . .

[00:59:38] MS: They weren't like that. But I mean, again, that's another vivid recollection that I've—that's not paraphrasin'. That's how it went down, you know. That's the way it [*laughs*] was. It was great.

SL: I remember the day my . . .

TM: We need to change tapes.

SL: Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[00:59:53] SL: We've heard—we've already heard some great stories. [*MS laughs*] And it's okay to flash forward and go back. I mean, there are no rules here.

MS: Good. Good.

SL: This is just us talkin'.

MS: Great.

SL: And . . .

MS: Scott, thanks. They have to hook somehow. I mean, if you did it sequentially, I don't know how I could do it. I mean, I . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] It . . .

MS: It had a meaning. I mean, again, like most of the people that you're privileged to interview, those events had meaning in . . .

SL: Sure.

MS: . . . in your life. I mean, they impacted what happened to you later so . . .

[01:00:22] SL: Okay. I wanna get back to your mom.

MS: Yeah.

SL: And let's go back to Philadelphia, and I'm assuming that your mom and your stepfather marry in Philadelphia?

MS: Nope.

SL: No? She follows him . . .

MS: They . . .

SL: . . . back to . . .

MS: . . . they . . .

SL: . . . Arkansas.

[01:00:45] MS: . . . they make a decision that—and again, for the kids. I'm sure my older brother [*laughs*] and sister knew that they weren't married, but he chucked us in a car. My understanding and recollection, as I've been told, is that my older brother and my uncle, meaning Uncle Bob Steele, and my father, meaning Dick Steele, did a reconnaissance, if you will, by driving to Arkansas 'cause my older brother, again, is ten years older than I am. So he's probably in the ninth or tenth grade, somethin' like that, 'cause it was 1950. But anyway, they came down here and decided where they were gonna move to, either Fort Smith or Fayetteville, one of the two. And they decided that Uncle Bob would live in Fort Smith, and then we would live in Fayetteville. And then they drove back, and then they chucked us in the car, and we drove down here. And I remember the trip, you know, bits and pieces of it, of the games on the side of the road, singing songs comin' down on the trip, my dad driving.

I don't remember if we—it was both families because I have a cousin, if you will, not by blood, my uncle's daughter, Susan Steele. I don't know if we were intermixed in between the cars and things like that, but she's a year older than I am. But I do remember the trip. I mean, the highway system's not in existence at that time, and it was a long trip, but a lotta fun because of all the books we read out loud and the games we played and the adventure we were going on. And obviously for me, it was a—it was the biggest adventure 'cause I was the youngest kid. And they weren't married. I didn't know that. But they weren't married. They got married down here. [*Laughs*]

[01:02:37] SL: Do you remember the kinda car you were in?

MS: I think it was a Hudson, but I'm not sure. Coulda been an old Mercury. But for some reason I think it was a Hudson. But again, my sister [*laughs*] would know but . . .

SL: Sedan. So it was . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . a sedan, then.

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[01:02:56] MS: Yeah. But it coulda been a Mercury. But anyway,

we came down here, and we initially lived over on Oakland Drive. And there's a little creek behind there, and I've, again, I've gone down there several times to find the house, and it's there, but they're all—they all look alike. There's about six of 'em in a row look alike. My brother and sister know which one, and they've pointed it out to me on a trip to Fayetteville, and then I'll come back a year later, and I still get 'em confused, which one was which. But we, anyway, we lived over on Oakland Drive for a while before—and somewhere in the mix there, Scott, my parents were married at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. My dad's a Protestant, by the way, and my mother's a devout Catholic, so that was another interesting thing. Again, I'm callin' him my dad. That's it. I mean . . .

SL: That's fine.

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: That's fine.

MS: But he . . .

SL: We've got it clear.

[01:03:56] MS: But I don't—I—he may have darkened the Catholic Church once [*laughter*] in the entire—my entire life, and that was probably because somethin' went screwball for him. I mean, I—he—maybe once, maybe once. I don't know. But

anyway, my life really—and my memories of, vivid memories of, the greatness of Fayetteville, and I say today in my public speaking—of Camelot, Fayetteville, Arkansas—were really when I moved over to Fletcher Street and start the first grade in old St. Joseph's School there on Lafayette and . . .

SL: Sure.

[01:04:41] MS: It was the wooden school back then, not the one they have now. I was in the third grade on the one that's now the condos or whatever it is there. But I was in the old wooden school and the church. It was the little one on the west side. And my memory starts to take vivid hold of me. The other major family in our life at the time were the Ferrells—"Groundhog" Ferrell.

SL: Is that right?

[01:05:09] MS: Oh yeah. They were our neighbors and . . .

SL: Big family.

MS: Big family. Well, Rachael Ferrell, who's—one, two—third or fourth in line, I guess, of that magnificent family, is my age, and we went from the first grade together all the way through college. And she's, to this day, my closest friend. She's the mortician of the state of Arkansas down in Little Rock today. But Groundhog—in those early years, Judy was the oldest of the

Ferrell clan and then Billy and Eddie. Just—but Rachael's the second one after that. Rita. Rita and then Rachael.

[01:05:58] SL: Now, were they on Lafayette?

MS: Yeah, they were on Lafayette.

SL: And you were on Fletcher, which was at the base of . . .

MS: Corner. Right.

SL: . . . Mount Sequoyah?

MS: Yeah. I'm . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: We're the first house on the right there. As you start to make the turn on Highway 45 . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . the house on the right is 391 Fletcher.

SL: Yeah.

[01:06:13] MS: Yeah. And [*sighs*] you know, it was a wonderful upbringing there. The school, the nuns, the education, the discipline. My mother's horror stories, again—I shared some of the three-sided ruler stories. But my mother had told me a story about some boy lying [*laughs*] to a nun once. And I don't know—I mean, I—it's still in my memory. I'm sure it's been monkeyed up a little bit. But the nun stabbing the kid with a [makes a stabbing motion with one hand into the other]—with

something that penetrated his hand and stuck his hand to the desk, you know, for him lyin' to her. And that always had a big impact on me on goin' to school, [*laughs*] goin' to the Benedictine nuns and their habits, if we were gonna suffer the same thing. But they were not quite that way. But it was fun and the Ferrells and the whole—my older brother and sister and the Ferrells were—we were just like peas in a pod. There was a movie back in that time that was called *Room for One More*. I don't know if you remember. It's a famous Clifton Webb movie, and it was about this oversized family. And there was always room for one more. So when you stuck the Ferrells—they were—Mrs. Ferrell, still alive today, you know, she was pregnant the entire time I remember [*SL laughs*] as a child.

SL: Yes.

MS: The—with the Steeles, it was—we were always jammed into this—a car to—but there was always room for one more. It was just a—it was a great early remembrance. But the school, the education, learning—second grade is when you take your first Holy Communion, go to your first confession. The priest was a man named Robert E. Maloy, Father Maloy—Edward R. Maloy, excuse me.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Edward R. Maloy. And in the second grade, I became an altar boy at St. Joseph's School, St. Joseph's Church. And mostly daily Mass before school, which is a ritual back then. But what—something that was unique about me early on in my life is that Father Maloy, kinda through my mother, put the dong on me to study Latin. And . . .

SL: Wow.

[01:08:37] MS: . . . starting in the second grade, I would leave school every day, and his house was right across the street. And every morning I would go over for an hour in his office and study Latin with him from the second grade through the ninth grade. And you know, all the trauma, and we can talk about that later, too, but pedophilia and all the heinous crimes that priests have committed on young children. I mean, there was—in my entire experience of being with Edward R. Maloy, I mean, absolutely nothing. And it was a—he was a magnificent man, a tremendous cleric, and a great teacher, and truly an inspiration, which was another—again, I'm emotional about it. But the tragedy and the travesty of that sin, if you will, and a crime has been devastating to me in my life because I know how good it coulda been.

SL: Yeah.

[01:09:30] MS: I was telling a couple last night [*clears throat*] at

dinner here in Fayetteville. Because of Edward R. Maloy, it wasn't until I was—I'm sixty-three today. But it wasn't until I was fifty-five years old that I believed that priests were above of all of us. [*Laughter*]

SL: Yeah.

MS: They were more than the common man. They were more—they were godlike. They had the power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, to forgive sins in the name of God, and they were godlike. And I lived my whole life because of the guy that I knew at that age was Edward R. Maloy 'cause he was godlike. So he taught me Latin, and the nuns were extraordinary. In the third grade, they built the school. I used to run—by the way, I—living up Fletcher, so we were poor, and my dad lost his job. He was now working at Oklahoma Tire and Supply. [01:10:30] He worked in Tulsa. He'd go over on a Monday doin' somethin' in Tulsa, probably construction work, and come home on Friday, so my mother was a single parent. She was a nurse. She was a waitress at the old Mountain Inn Restaurant. She was a waitress at the Gulf Cafe across the street from the Ozark Theater on College Avenue. It was little hamburger diner. And she was a nurse at both Washington Regional and then, subsequently, with Dr. James K. Patrick, who

was a leading ear doctor.

SL: My doctor.

MS: Yeah. Well, you had to have my mother 'cause he—she was his nurse for twenty-plus years.

SL: My—I'm named after him.

MS: Are you really?

SL: Mh-hmm.

[01:11:12] MS: Yeah. Well, are you a "Lunsford" Lunsford? Are you . . .

SL: Yes. Uh-huh.

MS: Well, your brother . . .

SL: Porter.

MS: . . . Porter dated my sister. Yeah. So we're all in a [*laughs*] . . .

SL: I . . .

MS: So . . .

SL: . . . I was gonna tell you that . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . I remember the day that Porter got stuck in a ditch.

MS: I think so. I think that's it. I think that's it.

SL: And he got stuck in a ditch down here below where the stadium is now, digging a ditch one day.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Got stuck in the mud and they . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . [*laughs*] they—he was big guy, if you remember.

MS: Oh yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Oh yeah.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

[01:11:43] MS: Yeah, I'm—I think he's my sister's age or between my sister and my older brother, but I can't—but . . .

SL: Yeah, he's . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: I don't know how he—yeah.

MS: David is your brother, too?

SL: David was my younger brother.

MS: Okay. Okay. Okay.

SL: And then there was—there's another brother, Gary . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . who's a . . .

MS: He's in bet—he's between you and Porter?

SL: It went Porter, Barbara, Gary . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . me . . .

MS: Okay.

SL: . . . David.

[01:12:14] MS: Well, obviously, I guess Gary dated my sister, and Porter went to school with my brother. I think is it—I think how it goes. I'm—I should remember that, but I think that's how it goes, Scott.

SL: Well, we just lived up the street on Assembly.

MS: Yeah. Yeah, I know.

SL: Yeah.

[01:12:33] MS: Yeah. But anyway, the—it was a big thing, the memories of that period when we were building the school. Obviously, the impoverished Catholic Church and the memories I have of all the fund-raising and selling chocolate and collecting money and the collection. If I wasn't an altar boy, I was with Charlie Baum of—collecting the money in the church. It was about the time that Walton, Sam, had the Walton's Five and Dime here. It was not a Walmart back then but—and I was—you know, he used to sell me penny candy, and Charlie Baum was in there with him. And Charlie Baum collected the money at church. But we were—this—the whole Catholic community—2 percent Catholic in Arkansas then. Lots of fears about Catholics. Some of my friends, you know, that we had cannons in the

basement, and we're gonna overtake the world [*SL laughs*] and things like that. [*Laughter*] And the—yeah, but my experience was so positive in understanding if someone got together, they could build this school, and we were so proud of that new school. And you may remember, it had a big cross in the front of it with glass. It was a . . .

SL: Sure.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Sure.

MS: And a telephone—or a flagpole out front so I . . .

[01:13:54] SL: I ran into the clothesline post out there.

MS: Oh, you did?

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Playin' tag one day.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Knocked me out.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Colder than a wedge, I imagine. I mean but the . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[01:14:04] MS: That little field between the church and school, which

was the exer—you know, the race—recess area, playin' baseball. It was—we used to have—it was a home run over the fence and to Jodie Crumpler's yard across the street. [*SL laughs*] But—and the nuns got so upset because they said it's an out if you hit it across the fence, so we had to try to hit the ball to right field towards the school and center field towards the flagpole. But [*laughter*] they were great, great memories of the—of faith and good scholarship. The nuns, by their reputation, they were profoundly gifted teachers. They really were. Took a lotta time. For me, it was the amplification of the Latin. Probably by the time I was—you knew the prayers because the Catholic Mass was in Latin, and I didn't need to read the altar card, you know. By the time I was in the third grade, I had 'em all memorized, and I could simultaneously translate every prayer from Latin to English and then some. And then had the pronunciations down pat, and it stayed with me. I studied Latin in Fayetteville High School. Mrs. Andrews, I don't know if you remember her. She was a beautiful teacher here . . .

SL: Yes.

MS: . . . at Fayetteville High School.

SL: Yes.

[01:15:22] MS: And we were the first class by the time I was a

senior that went to Latin III because we had Mayer Schwartz, a brilliant Jewish kid, and I think he's now professor out at Stanford. Tommy Ernst, Tim's older brother . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . Tommy's passed away now, and myself were—Mrs. Andrews wanted to start a Latin III class, but it was because of that—Mayer was brilliant, but it was because of what I'd learned from that second grade . . .

SL: From Father Maloy.

[01:15:50] MS: Yeah, from Father Maloy. And we could simultaneously in high school do Caesar's Gallic Wars. I mean, you could—simultaneous translation [*laughs*] without writin' anything down. That's how good we were in high school.

SL: That's remarkable. And . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . uncommon.

MS: Yeah. Like, I can't do it today. I mean . . .

SL: Yeah.

[01:16:08] MS: . . . I've still got my book at home, and I took Latin in college here when I came back to school later because I loved it so much and the teacher here. But, I mean—and I made A's in it. I mean, the professor used to just laugh, you know. His

Ph.D. dissertation was in tombstones and graffiti in Africa, Latin graffiti in Africa, and he'd flash me somethin', and I'd laugh and [*laughter*] they . . .

SL: Now, see . . .

MS: You know . . .

SL: . . . there's something I would've never thought about . . .

MS: [*Laughs*] I mean, it was a great dissertation . . .

SL: . . . Latin graffiti.

MS: . . . about [*SL laughs*] Latin graffiti. It's just as raw as ours is, by the way. [*Laughs*] It is, really. It's just as—it's the same thing. It's just two thousand years later.

SL: Oh man. You know, you . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . you think it's such ancient stuff, that somehow it's above . . .

MS: Oh, yeah.

SL: . . . gra . . .

MS: No, it's a . . .

SL: Not every [*unclear word*] . . .

MS: Nope, it's not about everything. It's the same stuff, but . . .

SL: Wow.

[01:16:55] MS: . . . but anyway, it was a wonderful growing-up

period in St. Joseph's School. It was very diverse, eclectic kids, Catholic and non-Catholic. We had some serious challenge with nuns. You were in classrooms. Like, the third, fourth, and fifth grade were all in one room, one teacher. You learned how to listen. You learned how to blow things—stop, not listen. I mean, even with a new school, it wasn't big enough. But you really could turn things off when it was your time to study and then be on when it was your time to learn something from the teacher, which made it very special. I had some interesting nuns, some that used corporal punishment for no reason. My mother's stories came through. Never got stabbed with the thing and through the hand, but I got hit with a three-sided ruler for no reason. And then we—I had that same nun, who'll remain nameless. God rest her immortal soul. But she—I had her third, fourth, and fifth grade, or Rachael and I had her, along with the other people. But by the fifth grade ended, then she had a serious problem in maltreatment of kids, so they took her to the home, if you will.

SL: Yeah.

[01:18:14] MS: Yeah. But the sixth-grade teacher was remarkable. Sister Felicitous, I remember, an early inspiration for me for English and communication study. Truly remarkable. And it's

about the time you're goin' through puberty. And what happened was there—the thought was—all along there was an MO to Father Maloy's—they wanted me to be a priest. And . . .

SL: Sure.

[01:18:46] MS: Yeah. And I was singing and I—again, doing all that stuff I talked about on the plays, and I'd be in my cassock and walkin' back to sing in midnight mass or whatever. But in the—you know, sing from the altar, even if I were an altar boy, on Sunday to sing to the church assembly. But—and I went in the seventh grade down to Little Rock to the seminary there and visited, and I was just goin' through raging hormones and puberty at that time, and I really did know that there was just no way—I mean, it had everything to do with girls, nothing to do with anything else. And I knew Father Maloy—I mean, he was just the icon—he was the chaste—he lived with his mother across the street, and there was just no way that—I couldn't even imagine it, you know, I mean, "Huh?" And so I had to come back to my mother, and you know, she always wanted me [*laughs*] to be a priest. [01:19:46] I had to come back and say, "Mom, I just can't do that." I mean, and tell Father Maloy, and he's—he was fine with it. But I be—I stayed an altar boy, if you can imagine this—left in—St. Joseph's through the ninth

grade, then, and Fayetteville High School. Ten, eleven, and twelve, I'm seventeen years old, eighteen years old. And when the bishop would come from Little Rock, I was always the altar boy until the day I went in the marine corps. Every funeral of the people in Fayetteville. Even when I was at Fayetteville High School, I'd be the altar boy for the funeral 'cause the family would request that I be the altar boy. So most of the people—and I go there all the time, Scott. I go out to the Catholic cemetery east of town on 45 . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . to visit the gravesites.

SL: Sure.

[01:20:30] MS: That's where Groundhog Ferrell's buried. But I go, and it's part of who I am as a man, but to go and visit their sites because I was there when we put them in the ground. [*Laughs*] But most of the community during that period who all passed away—we had, you know, infants that died at childbirth, and I was there for their funeral and—as an altar boy, with Father Maloy. And when the bishop would come from Little Rock, I was the altar boy, and they had me in the house to eat dinner with the bishop. My mother was there. She would cook the food for the bishop, you know, and it was a unique experience of

Catholicism and one that I maintain, my faith. The end of the story of St. Joseph's, and the school there that's—I guess it's Olive and Lafayette, if . . .

SL: Yes.

[01:21:18] MS: . . . I remember right. Yeah. Yeah. But the—is David Lewis, one of my closest friends in Fayetteville. When they converted the church to condos, [*laughs*] David Lewis, of the Lewis family, rented the one that—where the altar was and where the priest's dressing room was and where—the master bedroom was where the altar boys dressed. The kitchen was where the priest dressed. And the living room with a big flat-screen TV is where the altar was. And so, for me, you know, they were all sacred things, you know, with the sacred relics of those who—saints from two thousand years ago. [*Laughs*] And I—David had me over, and I gave him the story of everything that had happened in that space where he was living, you know, that once was this sacred place where the priest dressed. And it was almost not fathomable to me, you know, how we—how we've evolved and how that thing could become that thing and where I was, which is his master bedroom. And it was just somethin'. It really was. It was fun, first of all, but it was amazing that it had morphed [*laughs*] into this thing that was so

different than when I was growing up. David laughed, and we still laugh to this day. He doesn't live there anymore. He moved from it. But it's one of more—his more fonder memories from me telling him all the stories of what happened in those rooms with the priest and the wine and the—all the stuff [*laughs*] that goes on, which is pretty neat stuff.

[01:22:52] SL: I never got to go in there after they did all that. I did buy one of the pews.

MS: Did you really?

SL: And I've got it on my back porch.

MS: Oh, do you really?

SL: Uh-huh. And it's beautiful.

MS: Oh, that's wonderful.

SL: Big, long oak . . .

MS: I'd like to see that.

SL: . . . oak pew.

MS: I'd like to see that.

SL: You're certainly welcome . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . to come see it. Yeah.

[01:23:04] MS: Yeah. It was unique. I mean, again, as a kid, you think it's much bigger than it is, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . when you come back later. I mean, the—it's—it was a little cracker barrel. I mean, it was nothin'. But—and my—and the new church had been built, and that's where my mother's funeral was. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, my wife is Catholic so . . .

MS: Oh, she is?

SL: Yeah, we go there.

MS: Who is she? Is she . . .

SL: Claudette.

MS: And what's her maiden name?

SL: Hennessey. She's from California.

MS: Okay. Okay. But they're way out on the . . .

SL: Out on 45.

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah, I've been in there in a couple times but, anyway . . .

[01:23:43] SL: Well, it's a—I think it's a kind of a transition space right now. The . . .

MS: Yeah, that's what I heard.

SL: Yeah, it's . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . kinda the—they haven't built the sanctuary yet, really.

MS: Yeah.

SL: That's . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . that's kind of a transition space right now.

[01:23:57] MS: Yeah. Well, they—the—I don't know. If I had to summarize all those years—we had a football team, an eight-man football team, and played schools like West Fork and Gentry. Our first . . .

SL: Now, see, I don't remember that.

MS: Yeah.

SL: I don't remember that.

MS: Yeah.

SL: I don't remember the . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . Saint Joe had a . . .

MS: Oh, we did.

SL: Wait a minute. I kinda do remember that . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . now that . . .

[01:24:16] MS: We did. We had—a guy named Irish O'Connell was our coach, and he was a—he passed away at early age of a

massive coronary, but he had a number of kids also. And he worked out at Standard Register, as I remember. Magnificent man. Huge guy. But we were—as St. Joseph's, you would expect undermanned—eight—it was an eight-man team, and we were all tough as nails. I mean, [*SL laughs*] 'cause we practiced in that dirt pile there. Took no quarter, I mean, and we had great football teams. And we'd go down—'course, a lotta those small schools, like West Fork, they all had eight-man teams back then . . .

SL: Okay.

[01:24:56] MS: . . . [*coughs*] in the junior high. But some of my close friends, like Jim McCord, David Lewis, they remember. We would scrimmage Woodlawn, you know. And their most horrific memories are having to do that because we were so brutal. Brutal. [*Laughter*] We had no numbers on our—we had these goofy, old, cheap jerseys with no numbers on 'em. I mean, we really looked like somethin' outta *The Katzenjammer Kids*. I mean, it was just ridiculous. But we played hard. Different positions at different times, and I mean, I was a quarterback and a running back. I mean, you played both ways.

SL: Sure.

MS: But it was fun.

SL: Yeah.

[01:25:33] MS: It really was fun. And we had some great players. Paul Ramey, I played with, and Paul Ramey was a high school All-American at Fayetteville High and played for the Razorbacks. But you know, it just—it was just a lotta fun. And we took it very serious. We had a basketball team. I was tellin' a kid last night, a student—we went down to Winslow, and this kid doesn't remember this at all. I said, "Do you still have a"—but they were the Winslow Squirrels [*SL laughs*] and they [*laughter*]—and we went down there to play 'em, which is a big trip for us, you know. We ne—we didn't have a bus or anything. We went in some type of van or something. I don't know. But Tom Glaze—do you know Judge Tom Glaze?

SL: I know that name.

[01:26:15] MS: Yeah. Well, he's a—he's quite a man. He coaches. Most of these people did all this pro bono.

SL: Yeah.

MS: You know, I mean, we didn't have any money so they just—but anyway, we went down and the basketball—and I think I was in the—in that same puberty period, sixth or seventh grade, and I had developed a little bit earlier, so I had hair under my arms. And [*SL laughs*] this little gymnasium in Winslow had a roof no

bigger than this. [Raises right hand above his head] I mean, literally, the ceiling was just about like this. Think about that. So when you shot, you had to bank it off the roof into the [*laughs*] goal. I mean, it—ah, that's an exaggeration. It may have been a foot higher than that but not much. Not much. And it was—there was no chairs around the court, you know, which was not a full-sized court.

SL: You had to stand against the wall.

[01:27:02] MS: Yeah, there was no bleachers or anything, so you had to stand against the wall, and people stood up. And they're, course, they're howling at us, you know. I'm thinkin', you know, I mean, "These are the mountain people. I mean, this is really bad."

SL: Yeah.

MS: So I'd raise my hand to guard somethin', and they'd all—all the girls'd point to my underarms [*SL laughs*] and start laughin'. [*Laughter*] And I'm goin' like this [moves arms up and down] and goin'—I mean, just like in [*SL laughs*] a movie. And coach is sayin', "What are you doin'?" I'm sayin', "They keep pointin' at my underarms here." [*Laughs*]

SL: That's fun.

MS: Yeah, it is. It was great. It was great. But anyway, it was a

wonderful experience growin' up. Wonderful. I wouldn't trade it for anything. Wouldn't trade it for anything.

[01:27:37] SL: Let's talk about Fayetteville . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . a little bit.

MS: Yeah.

SL: You had a—you already mentioned you had a paper route growin' up.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Or two.

MS: Two.

SL: Two.

MS: Yeah. The—tryin' to remember—Tony Lacreesha? Is that his name?

SL: Letricia?

MS: Letricia.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah. [*Clunking sounds*] Besides the liquor store, Tony had the concession for the *Tulsa World*, as I remember.

SL: I member . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . gettin' the *Tulsa World* at the house.

[01:28:04] MS: Yeah. And I was a young boy, probably ten maybe, and had a route. That's a morning paper, so I was up four in the morning. I think what happened when my dad stopped at twelve, it was because he already saw my work ethic earlier than that, you know, that I was earning my keep and things like that and workin' on a bicycle. My bike—my bicycle was a hand-me-down from my brother. My dad put new fenders on it. I mean, we didn't have any money. I mean, there was just no doubt about that. But we had food on the table, but we had no money in my family. I don't even know how he could make the mortgage payment. We did fill out the basement. It was mud and used to flood all the time. I don't think they've ever fixed it. I've gone back over there to see the people who lived it. But he—we'd built it out, construction, again, with my dad, and then rented the space to university students. And I was tellin' the students here yesterday that part of my major affinity towards the university was because I was around them all the time in my home. I used to do errands for 'em, and they had me down. In the summertime I'd go over there. Even when I was a young boy, they'd take me to DeQueen, Arkansas, to be on the lake with 'em and . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . some of 'em were Ph.D. candidates and—but my—you know, besides—I haven't gotten to other things about the Razorbacks, which I'll tell you, but all of that period of time growing up that—

I've kinda bounced all over the place. The seminal person in my life outside my dad, again, away because of the job in Tulsa and so on, was Groundhog Ferrell. And . . .

[01:29:40] SL: Now, when you say Groundhog Ferrell, is that—that's not Lon Farrell?

MS: No, this is Bill Ferrell. He was trainer of the Razorbacks. He was the football trainer.

SL: Okay.

MS: He came here with Otis Douglas in . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . and then stayed with Bowden Wyatt and then Jack Mitchell and then Frank. And he stayed the entire time. He was the clan father of the Ferrell clan and truly an icon, truly an icon for generations of Razorbacks. I mean, Jerry Jones and Jimmy Johnson and Switzer and all these guys that you hear . . .

SL: They all talk about him.

[01:30:16] MS: Well, he's a—he was it. It wasn't Frank. Frank's a great man, but the man who was the glue that held the whole thing together was Groundhog because he was the trainer. And

he taped 'em up and bunged 'em up. These guys that weighed a hundred and eighty pounds havin' to play guys that weighed two forty and two fifty. And he did that with me. So what happened? My first game here, I think, was in [19]51. I was—that makes me five years old. We played Arizona State. Remember it very vividly. Remember kids when you were growin' up—in the north end where that beautiful facility is now, there used to be a hill there.

SL: Yeah.

MS: And kids would . . .

SL: Cardboard.

MS: . . . slide down with cardboard . . .

SL: Sure.

MS: . . . and . . .

SL: Did it many times.

MS: Yeah, did it many times.

SL: Many games. Many seasons.

[01:30:53] MS: And that's what I did as a kid. But Groundhog grabbed ahold of me because his kids didn't wanna do it. Yeah, I had [*SL laughs*]—it was Judy and then Billy was the second in line, so Billy's four years older than I am, I guess. And then Eddie, who became a trainer, a magnificent one, for Virginia

Tech. And then the next one—and the male in the Ferrell clan was no one. It was me. [*SL laughs*] So what happened was he, you know, unabashedly, I say, adopted me because my dad wasn't around.

SL: Yeah.

MS: He was tryin' to make money for the family. So I became kind of a second Ferrell. I mean, when they served food up, it was potatoes for ten, you know. And so I would eat with 'em because it was just two houses down. And he'd go out to Agri Park to pick tomatoes, Groundhog would, and I'd go with him. And his kids wouldn't, but I did. And we'd pick tomatoes, and my mother was called Miss Kitty. Her name was Catherine, but he called her Miss Kitty. Most everybody did. But he'd say . . .

[01:31:54] SL: Is that from *Gunsmoke*?

MS: Well, that was on around that time, but I think that she had the name before that.

SL: Okay.

MS: But it coulda—they coulda been simultaneous. That's the same era. I mean, [19]56. You know, that's *Gunsmoke*. But she was called Miss Kitty. And he would always give me a bag of tomatoes or potatoes or ears of corn and say, "Give this to your mother." And that was kinda my payment for goin' with him to

Agri Park to pick everything from strawberries to you name it. [01:32:22] And I can't count the times that I did that, I mean, in my youth, and just being with him, listening to him talk. If you don't remember—if you thought it was Lon Ferrell, you really did miss something. He had this deep New York—or, excuse me, Philadelphia. They're from Philadelphia—Philadelphia voice. He went to William and Mary, and he had this trait that was so seminal, and I used to be able to mimic it completely, but he whistled this shrill whistle, [*whistles*] and that's how he called his clan in, and that's how he [*SL laughs*] got football players to respond to him, and that's definitely how he got me to respond to him. You could hear him whistle for a block, without exaggeration. That thing was so powerful. And I—and he had a special whistle for me. [*SL laughs*] If he saw me out in the backyard, he'd be out there, and he'd hit this whistle, and I'd look up and see him, and he'd go, [beckons with hand] and he had six chickens that he was pluckin' in the back and the boiling water and—but none of his kids are around, Scott. And he would say, "Yep, this is how you do it." And he'd show me, and he'd slit the throat off the chicken, and the blood would drain out. And he'd dip it in the hot water, scald it, and we'd start pluckin' feathers off. And I'd take two chickens back to the

house and . . .

[01:33:36] SL: Now, what was it that he called you?

MS: He called me "Hoss."

SL: Hoss? Uh-huh.

MS: Yeah. But he really did call me Marty.

SL: Marty.

MS: But he called me Hoss . . .

SL: Okay.

MS: . . . and then Little Hoss.

SL: Little Hoss.

MS: And he had said it so many times that some of my peers in school later called me Hoss . . .

SL: Hoss.

MS: . . . because of the respect that he had for me for callin' me Hoss. But I don't know. It coulda been Cartwrights . . .

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

MS: . . . when you think about that . . .

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

MS: I don't know. I mean, he would remind you of Dan Blocker. He wasn't as tall as—he—but he was—he had that kind of a build.

SL: Build. Uh-huh.

MS: . . . big barrel chest and . . .

SL: Yeah.

[01:34:09] MS: But it was remarkable. But some of the early things—no face masks back then for Razorbacks. The—what he would do with me on the sideline, socks and jocks and hand out Coca-Colas in the dressing room. Then practices. And it wasn't just games. And then oranges and ice and bags. But one of the vivid memories I had early on in this, six, seven years old, were no face masks and people gettin' bloody noses 'cause everybody had a bloody nose. So I mean, noses were broken, and what he would do with me would, [*whistles*] you know, whistle. [*SL laughs*] And he'd hand me a wet towel, and he'd point to a player to go shove the towel up the guy's nose, get him on the bench. And I mean, there's—so blood and all that, I—at a young age, it never meant anything to me. It was just to help the player get ready 'cause Groundhog wants him to get back in the game. And there's some people that remember me for that. But I'd walk over as a little bitty kid, and they would sit down on the bench, which, back then, it wasn't you sat down. They wanted you to stand up, the players. But back then they'd sit on the bench, put their head back, and I'd shove this towel up their nose until we could get the bleeding to stop. And then we'd—I'd pull it off. I'd stand there with 'em—I don't know what I would

do other than say the guy passed out. I mean, I don't know what my instructions were, but I know I'd stand there with 'em. And then I'd take the towel off, and Groundhog would look at him and then say, "You're good. Get back in the game." [*Laughter*] That was it. And they would.

SL: Yeah.

[01:35:51] MS: And they revered him. And he was so—he had the perfect touch of those who needed a boot in the butt, he did, and those who needed a pat on the back. And he had it down to an art form. He had it down to an art form. And that's why they were great teams, undermanned, and you know, they just went—it got better and better. The little pigs in [19]53—I mean, Bowden Wyatt—that was a great era, but you'll—to anybody—you ask Eddie Bradford who held that thing together. It was Groundhog Ferrell. It wasn't Bowden Wyatt.

SL: I've heard that.

MS: Yeah.

SL: I've heard that from a number of sources that . . .

MS: Yeah. Well, it's true. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

[01:36:32] MS: He was truly special. And then he also was the coach of the baseball team. They weren't near as good. When

the weather was bad, they played down, you know, at the county—where the county fair was, that stadium down there, which is a rickety old place.

SL: Right.

MS: But they had players that played above their ability. And I was a batboy there and with him all the time. And he—my first baseball glove came from him. It was from a Razorback. Yeah.

[01:36:59] SL: Just for a point of reference, Washington County Fair used to be out here on Razorback Road, right?

MS: Yeah.

SL: Right? Yeah.

MS: Yeah, just down there . . .

SL: I—that's—I remember . . .

MS: It's where the tennis facility—indoor . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: Right in that area. Yeah.

SL: I remember going to it there.

MS: Yeah. Yeah, the county fair was there and a baseball—they had—it had a name, but I can't remember what the name of the baseball field was. But it was a—even back then as a kid, it was ugly. [*SL laughs*] I mean, it had holes in the fence. Green—it was a green, dilapidated fence. Big stadium, big field, but it was

just a—I mean, a junior high team wouldn't play on that today. I mean, it was that bad.

SL: Yeah.

[01:37:31] MS: Big chuckholes out in the outfield and—but that's what we had, and that's what he had. But watchin' him there as a coach, and the whistle was famous there because when he'd hit fungos to people and warm 'em up, every—he never really spoke. He just whistled, and everybody responded to the whistles. [*Laughs*] It was somethin' else to behold. But put his arm around me, and we stayed connected and the jobs and, you know, some days he would say, "Hoss, I want you to sell programs today to make some money." I mean, he knew everything. So he'd give me a bunch of programs, and they were twenty-five cents apiece or whatever they were, and I'd get me a—he'd say, "Come—when you get through sellin' 'em, come back to the bench." Then I'd go up to sell the programs, and I don't remember what our take was. We probably got a nickel or somethin' . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . for every—then I'd do it, and he said, "Did you get your money?" And I said, "I did, Coach." I always called him Coach. And he said, "Good." And then he'd hand me a towel or a

bucket to do somethin' to, but it was—so I stopped slidin' down those hills, Scott. And we used to play football in the end zone, if you remember . . .

SL: Sure.

MS: . . . with a peewee football.

SL: Yeah.

[01:38:45] MS: And I stopped doin' that at a young age because he had me on the sidelines with him. And the ol'—when I'd get a little bit older, it was oxygen. I had the—he taught me how to operate the tank and put it on their face and give 'em air when they were suckin' air, and I did that for that entire time growing up. I think Glen Rose was the basketball coach. I did it for the basketball team. Groundhog was obviously the trainer for the basketball team, too. We were up in the men's gym first when I first started doin' it with Glen Rose up there. And then when Barnhill Arena opened up, I was nine, I think. I think that was fifty—[19]53.

SL: Well, it wasn't . . .

MS: [Nineteen] fifty-four or [19]56.

SL: . . . really an arena then. It was . . .

MS: No. No, it was just a [*unclear words*].

SL: . . . it was literally a barn.

MS: Yeah. Yeah, it was a barn.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Sawdust pit.

SL: Yeah.

[01:39:43] MS: I was—I went back to make sure my dates were correct when I had the privilege to do the commencement speech last May or this past May in Barnhill, and I wanted to make sure—and I did the research on it and saw the dates and remember playing there when it was under construction. It may've—I don't know if it was done by Brennan-Boyd or not, but it coulda been. But playing in there—and then my life shifted at that juncture when Barnhill came into being because it was my second home. I lived in that place, in the sawdust, playin' football, climbin' those ropes in the back . . .

SL: Yep.

[01:40:26] MS: . . . workin' for Coach Rose and Groundhog, running, as I got mature, to be an athlete, running the steps in bad days when you couldn't run the stadium steps to get in shape for sports. Junior high, now. Not talkin' about high school. This was early, early. I think in [19]56, maybe [19]54, the Crip Hall Award was—the guy that played for the Colts, and his son was an All-America here. I just lost his name. A terrific defensive

lineman.

SL: Oh.

[01:41:02] MS: Madman. Then his son was an All-America. Played for the San Diego Chargers. Ah!

SL: Well, Alworth played for the San Diego Chargers but . . .

MS: No, no, this is a—yeah, his son, though, that I'm talkin' 'bout—two guys won the Crip Hall Award. You'd know this guy as soon as I say him. He was a maniac but [*SL laughs*] Ronnie Underwood and—mmm, can't—I've lost it. I'll get it in a minute. But I was a little kid, and they were gonna receive the Crip Hall Award for the best senior performance on the football field in Barnhill. And one of my great recollections, which I shared with the students, by the way, in graduation—had his name then—was the similarity to the Coke commercial where the Pittsburgh Steelers' "Mean" Joe Green—but they were about to go out to get the award and this guy, not Underwood—he was with him. He said—flipped me money to go get him a Coke. [*Laughs*] And I went over, and I was ten, I guess, ten years old. And I went over, raced as fast as I could to get him a Coke, and started to hand him his money back, and he said, "Good job, Marty. Keep the change, kid." Then they went out to get the Crip Hall Award. I—I'll remember the name here in a minute but . . .

SL: Well, I . . .

[01:42:26] MS: Well, it's a father, and then the All-America twenty years later is a junior. And the junior—the father played for the Baltimore Colts for years and years as a defensive tackle, and the son played for the San Diego Chargers.

SL: Was his son a tackle, too?

MS: He was a defensive end. Good-lookin' kid.

SL: Roper?

MS: Huh? No, no, no. I'll get it in a minute.

SL: Okay. All right.

MS: The father was maniacal. I mean, [*SL laughs*] he really was. He was a crazy man. They told stories about him of hangin' teachers out the windows of Old Main to get him a grade [*SL laughs*] and all this. I don't know if any of 'em were ever true. [*SL laughs*] But he was capable of that. That's for sure. But he was a wild guy.

SL: Gosh, we'll dig that name up here pretty soon.

MS: Yeah, we will in a minute.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah, it—I'll get it in a minute. But I can . . .

SL: Well, now, what . . .

MS: . . . I can see both their faces. That's why I'm, you know, I'm

havin'—I can't believe—I just was talkin' about the dad in May, and I can't remember the name right now. Anyway . . .

[01:43:20] SL: I remember the barn having a dirt floor.

MS: Yeah.

SL: And when they had basketball, they'd set up a wood—an island, a wood island.

MS: That's exactly right.

SL: Wood-floor island and its temporary stands.

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Seems like—I can't remember if the stands were on both sides or just on one side.

MS: No, just on one side.

SL: I kinda remember it . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . just being on . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . one side.

MS: Well, the permanent bleacher stands, if you will, that ran up to the top of the building, around one side, and the other side were permanent blea—or temporary green bleachers that they took up and down.

SL: Yeah.

[01:43:53] MS: When they practiced football, the bleachers came down, and they stored 'em against the wall.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

MS: And it stunk. That sawdust stunk and the—if they didn't keep it watered, which was one of my jobs by the way, to water the sawdust, and the dust got up in there, you couldn't breathe in that darn place. It was so bad, thick with water—or thick with dust. And [*laughs*] it was a great place to grow up in, and I obviously played basketball all the time. I was always amazed anytime that Coach Broyles would come here. I'm twelve at the time in [19]58 when he's here, and he's—and how great an athlete he was. I used to just sit there and watch him play, shoot baskets. Forget that he was a tremendous All-America baseball player, I think, at Tech and a football coach. I mean, the guy could shoot nothin' but lights out with a basketball.

SL: Yeah.

[01:44:43] MS: He was an athlete and a young man at that time, too. But—and I would ride a bike from Barnhill to my home, and my parents never questioned it. It was always stop by the dairy, the old Fayetteville—the university dairy, which is now where the administration building is . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . right there on the corner. And I'd get either chocolate milk or orange juice or a white milk in a bottle with the cap where the cream was risin' to the top, you know, and it was a paper cap.

SL: Yeah.

MS: And I'd get that and then drink it and ride home. There was also a bakery in there somewhere and we kids—my other closest friend, the best man at my wedding, Kenny White—his father was Dixie White, and he was a coach, and we used to go in there and eat bread and drink milk in that place all around that same time. And it was just—it was remarkable. [*Unclear words*]

[01:45:38] SL: There was a little mom-and-pop grocery store there down the street on Olive, as well, in . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . our neighborhood. I . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: And it wasn't Phillips . . .

MS: No.

SL: . . . 'cause Phillips was over on Mission but . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah. No, I'll tell you who it was here. It started with a *M*. Started with a *M*. We used to go in there all the time.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, it was my stop on the way to Washington School . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . when I . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . after kindergarten . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . we went to Washington and . . .

[01:46:07] MS: Yeah. I used to go there all the time. I—there was another one there at the corner as you turn right to go up to the gas company lot there. There was one there, too, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: But I'll remember the name of the—start with an *M*. But we used to go to the—my mother would send me to go over to get bread and milk and cigarettes. My—both parents smoked, unfortunately.

SL: Well, it was what was done back then.

MS: Yeah, it was what was done.

SL: The—no one . . .

MS: That's right.

SL: . . . knew . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . better.

MS: No one knew better, even my mother, the nurse.

SL: Right.

MS: She smoked Philip Morris, no filters, and my dad smoked Lucky Strikes like there was no tomorrow.

[01:46:43] SL: I'm quite certain I saw your mom . . .

MS: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . as I was growin' up.

MS: Oh yeah. I mean, she was a fixture—I—you know, flashing forward again, my dream always—because of when I got around that junior high/high school, my mother started working for Dr. Patrick. And my nature, again, is such that Dr. Patrick, while I was in high school, would take me on calls with him because I wanted to be a doctor like—not a priest like Maloy. I mean, this is—the images of my heroes growing up and my—Dr. Patrick was one of 'em.

SL: Sure.

[01:47:22] MS: And he would take me on calls, and many times they were the last call. I mean, they were death calls. And so as a kid, ninth grade, tenth grade on, I had seen a lot of death. I—and I watched how peaceful he was with people, family

members, and gathering around, and he would talk about me and obviously [*unclear words*] way beyond the age of reason there. I mean, they would know. And they knew that I was Miss Kitty's son, thinkin' about bein' a doctor. And so there was no question about it. It was okay if I was there, and I watched. And I watched him probably—besides ministers bein' there but—you know, take his stethoscope out of his ears and . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . say, "He's passed on." And I probably saw that twenty-five times in high school. He was a—he was another great man. He—just a great man.

[01:48:20] SL: Well, you know, [*MS sniffs*] back then doctors still made house calls.

MS: Yeah, yeah. Not anymore.

SL: Not anymore.

[01:48:26] MS: Not any—well, you know, they treated everybody. They—he had a number of black patients, and I remember years later, even at that time, too, that they would pay in bushels of corn or apples or cut firewood, and they would deliver that. And that's what their payment was. And that's what Dr. Patrick took, and that's—sometimes my mother probably did things that were inappropriate. I mean, she administered drugs and shots and

everything else. But I mean, she was his right-hand woman, for sure. I—she had a nickname back then of the Mother Cabrini of Northwest Arkansas. And I remember when she passed away, Moore's Funeral Home—and they used to live above us, up the street. Their last name wasn't Moore, but anyway, it was Moore's Funeral Home. But the owner of Moore's Funeral Home, and I don't know if it's still there, but my mother brought him into the world and his father into the world, as I remember it. And so, I mean, her legacy is just as deep as Dr. Patrick's. She had a amazing touch with people. Tireless worker. Didn't drive. Never got a driver's license, by the way, my mother. Wouldn't know how to drive a car. So my dad took her when he was here, and she took cabs, Yellow Cab, every day at work. Sometimes she walked, and it wasn't an easy walk either, really, you think about it. But some—most of the time, she took cabs if my dad was workin' someplace else on a construction job. Anyway, remarkable stuff.

[01:50:20] SL: I had thought of something I was gonna ask you about. [*Sighs*] Let's see, now. I guess I first became aware of Dr. Patrick, really, when they had the AHEC down off the Square . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . between the Square and Dickson Street.

MS: Yeah.

SL: It . . .

MS: That's the only place that I remember him.

SL: Yeah.

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah, and he was . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . in with Dr. Buckley and . . .

MS: That's right. That's right.

SL: I wish I could visualize your mom.

MS: Yeah.

[01:51:01] SL: Let's ask about this—about the home . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . there on Fletcher. Did y'all have a radio?

MS: We did, and we sat around it. [*Laughs*] And then we had a little nine-inch TV, black-and-white, in the early days. But we did listen to the radio. The big entertainment, I think, that I have vivid memories of as a small boy was my mother reading to me at night. She . . .

SL: Was it . . .

MS: That's what she did.

SL: What kinda material?

MS: Always books, I mean, vivid ones. *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Black Beauty*, classic books—just—she always did it. It was a regular occurrence. It was always two or three chapters, normally when I was in bed and—but it was a ritual. It was a ritual.

[01:51:56] SL: I wonder if somebody did that for her.

MS: Great question. Great question. You know, again, knowing how the hoarding of the food, being an orphan, it may've been that she wished they did, and they didn't, so she was going to ensure that it didn't happen with her children.

SL: Yeah.

MS: I don't even know if she did it, Scott, for my brother and my sister. I know she did it for me, and I don't know why. But again, it was my nature and I loved listening to her, and it made me a much more effective reader, and I was—I'm a voracious reader to this day. And the other irony—I was just talkin' to my wife about this the other day. [*Clears throat*] Our—because of busy schedules and so on, we're both into books on CD. We're listenin' to books and walk—my wife and I live in Florida, and we walk—try to walk five miles every day together, and it's normally with a book. Could be the same one, couple of discs ahead, or

different books and flop 'em back and forth. But my wife made the comment that—she says, "You know, I've been thinkin' about this. I believe that you've gone to books on CD because of your mother readin' to you."

SL: Yeah.

[01:53:02] MS: "And it's that voice that you—enamors you in there." And again, my mother was an actress, and it was inflection. It was male voices. It was—she just didn't read, it was—she took on the voice, the accents, the . . .

SL: So as the characters would change . . .

MS: Characters changed.

SL: . . . the voice would change.

MS: Yeah, absolutely. She was remarkable at it.

SL: And the emotions portrayed were . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah. Just like . . .

SL: She . . .

MS: . . . listening to a book on CD by . . .

SL: Yeah, she . . .

MS: . . . an actor today. And she did that. And my wi—it just happened within the last week that my mo—my wife said, "That's what happened. You" . . .

[01:53:35] SL: Did she [*MS clears throat*] continue with any of her—

I mean, there—was—there probably wasn't much of an acting community here in Fayetteville, and she got . . .

MS: I think that she probably . . .

SL: I guess . . .

MS: . . . she probably did it a little bit but . . .

SL: . . . that would've been DeMarco back then, I guess.

MS: Yeah. I don't remember that name or—I do know this, that, again, university students in the basement—young kid—if there were something up here, Marilyn Horne or some type of cultural event, a play, my mother went, [*laughs*] and she took me, normally, with her. And so we watched them, and she would speak about the performances. Another thing, when—if a movie—you know, we didn't have tapes and all that or things on television, but my mother was—I remember she took me to see *Shane,* the famous movie *Shane*.

SL: Ozark Theater?

MS: Yeah, Ozark Theater. And my recollection—it was eleven cents for me but, anyway—and her critiquing the performances of Alan Ladd and Jack Palance and how special that movie was.

SL: Oh!

[01:54:54] MS: And all of the camera angles and taking time. But I really—I—as I remember, we watched it twice; the first time to

watch it and she—the second time we just kinda hunkered down, got in the back, and she was tellin' me what was happening there with the cameras and, "Notice this and hear the echo?" *Shane*, you know, I mean—and of course, [*clears throat*] Palance's evil character and the fear and how Alan Ladd was so powerful in the movie. And she said, "You know, this movie, you'll remember it forever."

SL: Oh!

MS: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: That last scene.

MS: And she was right. Oh my gosh.

SL: Oh my gosh.

MS: Yeah.

SL: That last scene.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Wow!

MS: Yeah. [*Squeaking sound*]

SL: Yeah.

[01:55:40] MS: But that's the way we grew up. And then she directed plays. My mother was the director of the plays at St. Joseph's, so all these things that I was in, and I'm sure my brother and sister before, she was the director, choreographer,

et cetera, for all of them while I was there.

SL: Was that in the new school . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . where they built the little stage?

MS: That's it.

SL: Yeah.

MS: That's it. [*SL claps*] That's where it was.

SL: Yeah.

[01:56:06] MS: In the sixth grade, we did a operetta [*SL laughs*] and . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Oh boy!

MS: . . . and I was the—my voice hadn't changed yet, and I was the lead character. And my friends, like Rachel, they—that's their memory. And she, you know, she was a tulip or something in the back. [*Laughter*] But we were just talkin' about it down at the lake at Hot Springs just a couple of months ago. But I mean, I could almost sing the songs to you of that operetta. [*Laughs*] Not very well, by the way. [*Laughter*]

[01:56:37] SL: Oh boy. That's good. Okay, now, let me ask you this. Do you remember the balcony in the Ozark Theater?

MS: Absolutely.

SL: Do you remember African Americans . . .

MS: Absolutely.

SL: . . . being in the balcony . . .

MS: Absolutely.

SL: . . . and the whites being downstairs?

MS: Yeah. Yeah, again, most of my story, I—absolutely. And I'm not tryin' to interrupt you, but again, you have to know my parents and our lives. And I share it with people today, and my memories are very vivid. The first person I spent the night with in Fayetteville, Arkansas, was a black kid over in Tin Cup and . . .

[01:57:19] SL: Do you remember the family name?

MS: Yeah. Yeah, the Clarks.

SL: Clarks?

MS: Yeah, Onie Ray Clark.

SL: Onie Ray?

MS: Yeah.

SL: Wow.

MS: Yeah. They lived next to McNair's, and there's a passel full of kids, and we slept in a bed, and there were six or eight of us. And it rained that night, and we had the bucket brigade, and there was just raindrops everywhere. And ate grits for breakfast, and then on the next night, he spent the night with

me. So for me, it started early on, and again, I do this a lot because of my leadership consulting. And then when I tell people my story regarding what I'm tryin' to get out of marines and coming to who they are, particularly those who've come outta this war and reflecting back on their own lives, these are vivid, vivid memories. But my memories of—are unique because I believe firmly that after [19]54 and *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*—I know that Senator Bumpers says that his community was the first integrated community, but I believe Fayetteville was the first integrated community south of the Mason-Dixon Line after *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. So for me, that's a badge of honor, and it was the second major thing in my life next to Groundhog Ferrell, was integration, racial tolerance, and the leadership of people like Groundhog and my mother, the community at large, the leaders in this community. And so we had—I was up in the balcony is what I'm tryin' to tell you, Scott.

SL: Yeah.

[01:59:01] MS: I wasn't in the [*unclear word*] down below. I was up in the balcony. And [*clears throat*] on Saturday mornings, the kids used to go there to watch the cartoons. And I don't know if you were old enough for that, but we, initially, we had the same

thing, and I'm part of the era where they came down outta the balcony, and they were sittin' with us below. So it—and all . . .

SL: I can remember both that.

[01:59:24] MS: Yeah. Yeah. It went on and on. In my life, we had great teams. The most early recollections of how serious the problem was, this bastion of racial tolerance in this integrated community was in Babe Ruth League, thirteen through fifteen, we had phenomenal teams here at that time. Justin Daniel was a fifteen-year-old who went on to play. We had—we'd just had major players. When Porter and my brother—my brother's high school teams, eight years older, they were great, too. John Lewis and a lotta . . .

SL: Bull Hayes.

MS: . . . great names. Yeah. Bull Hayes. I mean, you know, and they couldn't be All-District but, you know, Bull Hayes was without question one of the greatest players to ever play at Fayetteville. Donnie Stone and Bull Hayes, I mean, they were truly gifted athletes. Donnie Stone's a white guy, but I mean . . .

SL: Yeah.

[02:00:14] MS: . . . Bull Hayes was remarkable. And so, my brother, and hooking me to all of that, and playing with them; playing

behind Old Main on the grassy plains there; playing in Razorback Stadium, touch football; black and white kids playin' down south of town—I can't remember the name. Leverett or whatever it is down there off the—down the hill.

SL: Jefferson?

[02:00:46] MS: Jefferson, down there. It was the way we were brought up. Just the—it's just what happened. And my mother used to tell people always the story I just told you about the first person I ever spent the night with 'cause that's the way she wanted it. And really, I mean, I don't even remember if my dad was around, but he woulda wanted that way, too. And [*clears throat*] it was just—it was the symbiotic relationship. It was so part of who we are, and as you're gonna hear in the rest of my story, it was—and particularly growin' up in high school, it was—it affected me. But we went over—and I'll name the towns, and I don't know if I'll regret it and edit it out later because there was so much racism. Springdale was probably the most racist town in Northwest Arkansas. But eastern Arkansas, my brother got married over in the Wilson area of eastern Arkansas when I was twelve or thirteen. Double-ring, double-wedding ceremony. He was a Sig Ep up here. And I remember going over there, driving all across the state, on the Mississippi River, and the

father of one of the brides—it was two couples, and one will remain nameless—but taking me down to the Mississippi River and showing me the remains of a black man who had been tarred and feathered and hung and killed.

SL: Wow!

[02:02:12] MS: And the message from this Southern icon that the town had been named after was, "He looked at a white woman here, and we just don't do that. You may do that over in Fayetteville, but we don't do that here."

SL: Wow! That's late.

MS: Yeah.

SL: How—mid-[19]50s?

MS: But I mean, it gets worse.

SL: Mid . . .

MS: It gets worse.

SL: . . . mid-[19]50s? Is that . . .

MS: It was [*unclear word*]. Yeah, yeah, yeah, but I'm—yeah.

TM: Excuse me. We need to change tapes.

SL: Okay.

MS: Yeah.

[Tape stopped]

[02:02:35] SL: We're on tape three now, Marty.

MS: Wonderful still to . . .

SL: This stuff that . . .

MS: . . . be here.

SL: You know, this . . .

MS: Time has flown, too, by the way, Scott.

SL: This is fun, isn't it? This is fun.

MS: Yeah, it really is fun. It's a . . .

SL: You can see how these things average about eight hours.

MS: Well, they do. I mean, I know I'm an emotional person here. We've—I've lost it about two or three times, but it really is—it's a great time, and I thank you for takin' the time. I'm . . .

SL: Well . . .

MS: . . . I'm honored and humbled to be a part of this.

SL: It's an honor to be sittin' across from you, buddy.

MS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Thanks.

[02:03:00] SL: Okay, so just real briefly, you remembered [*laughs*] . . .

MS: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . the name of the other Crip Hall . . .

MS: Yeah. The Crip Hall recipient that year, and I believe it was [19]56 'cause I think I was ten, was Billy Ray Smith and Ronnie Underwood—and the whole story 'bout the Coca-Cola. And if

you'll recall, Billy Ray Smith, unlike his son, had a completely different—they were tremendously gifted football players. The son probably was even better than the father because the father was just a mean, nasty guy, as I remember as a ten—but we had that Mean [*SL laughs*] Joe Green moment, that Mean Joe Green where they cross—you know, tossin' the jersey in that commercial from the Super Bowl from years ago. And I had that with Billy Ray Smith in Barnhill Arena in 1956. And I shared that with the graduating class of the University of Arkansas school—Walton School of Business last May. And it got—it had amazing response. I was lookin' at the audience. There were ten thousand people there.

SL: Yeah.

MS: And they got it. They got it. It was fun. It was fun to remember that.

SL: Well, I remember his son. I got to spend some time with his son but it . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: Anyway, that's another story.

MS: Yeah.

[02:04:13] SL: Okay. So now we're just startin' to talk a little bit about . . .

MS: Race.

SL: . . . race, race relations . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . the—Northwest Arkansas and the rest of the state and the differences.

MS: Yes.

SL: And how when you came here, you were immediately, literally, part of the black community just from day one . . .

MS: From . . .

SL: . . . from night one.

MS: . . . from day one, night one. That's correct.

SL: And what I can remember—I never just—I never remember any problems . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . here in Fayetteville.

MS: No.

SL: I mean, it was just always friendly.

MS: Yes.

SL: Everyone got along just fine, and there was never any hesitation to . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . be a part of the community.

[02:05:03] MS: You know, in all of my life—and again, it almost sounds like—unbelievable to an outsider. I don't remember one incident in my life. Now, remember, I was a student athlete. I played every sport possible and played 'em well. And we had black players at every level from the time that I was in Little League baseball, Babe Ruth League, and football. We had no black kids at St. Joseph at that time, and I'm sure that was because it was a private school and the cost of tuition was cost prohibitive. But I don't remember one incident in the entire time that I grew up here amongst ourselves. Now, we would fight like crazy if you were tryin' to beat me out for the position or somethin' like that and tackle hard and things like that and don't remember when it's—and really, for me, quite the opposite. [02:05:57] And I'll share some of those stories that some people may in this environment have recorded; some may have been too embarrassed to record. [02:06:07] But for us, growing up here, it was a bastion of tolerance in the sea of racism and hatred, and we were very proud of it. And the community leaders and coaches, like I said earlier—I talk about leadership today, about a manager doing a thing right as opposed to a leader doing the right thing. And it's a mantra of mine. And I was imbued by Groundhog Ferrell, Frank Broyles,

Father Edward Maloy, of doing the right thing. My mother, from the get-go, from the inception of my earliest recollections, it was doing the right thing. So [*clears throat*] there never was even a—I didn't even know any better. I mean, I didn't know that there was something about the color of someone's skin. The issue of spending the night with Onie Ray Clark was not my mother telling me to do it; it was I was wantin' to get there to do it, to be with his mother and—then it—and you know, the vivid memory of sleeping in a bed with—I mean, I don't know how—we were just like in a movie with feet this way [points one way then the other] and that way, [*SL laughs*] and it was only upset by [*SL laughs*] the rain coming and us getting wet in bed, and who was holdin' the bucket, and who was gonna move around. And it was just a—and it—and sharing food and them coming into our home and sharing food. And cookin' out in the backyard and sharing food and—it was just something that was so normal that it's never thought of anything being abnormal. [02:07:51] Having said that, I wanna share an inci—the first understanding of—we had wind of the—how much we were despised around the—Washington County, Springdale, Harrison, and the southern part of the state and eastern Arkansas. And as shameful as that is today, it was a reality back then. But when we were thirteen,

I made—there—I don't—there may've been another one or two, but made the Babe Ruth League all-star team. And we went to the state championships, and we were playing in Blytheville. And that's a long trip from here.

SL: You bet.

[02:08:37] MS: And the—my vivid recollections are, because of our diversity on our team, we couldn't go to town. We slept in a cabin outside of town. It was barn-like structure. Our meals three times a day were box lunches that they carted out there to us. We went to the ballpark, and we had urine and feces thrown on us, racial slurs, I mean, horrendous. I mean, it was just like you're lookin' at 'em, thinkin', you know, "What's your problem?" And the funny thing for me, again, was I was the lead-off hitter, totally outta the blue. "Leading off and playing center field for Fayetteville, number two, Marty Hagenbucker." And I looked up in the press box and looked over at my coaches, who knew because they had to hake—take the birth certificate, which still said Hagenbucher on it, and my dugout just went nuts. I mean, "What? What?" And the third-base coach—everybody said, "We'll take care of it in a little bit. Take care of it in a little bit." And so I got a hit and went to first base. And three outs later or whatever it was, they came over. "What was that all that

about?" And I said, "Well, that's my name. That's my name." "Well, your name's Marty Steele," and I said, "Yeah, that's my name, too, but my birth name is Marty Hagenbucher. He pronounced it wrong." [*Laughs*] And the coach went up into the press box and said, "His name is Marty Steele." And he says, "That's not what it says here."

SL: [*Unclear words*].

[02:10:23] MS: And it was because of racism—says "Hagenbucker." And he says, "His name is Marty Steele. Please call him Marty Steele." Then the guy finally did.

SL: Yeah.

MS: But—and we slept [*clears throat*] outside of town, and it was a—an awakening, just how much venom was there with—when you get urine—you're thirteen years old, and somebody's throwin' human feces on you and—so that was a remarkable experience, and we lost in the finals. We woulda gone on to the World's Baseball Championship. We lost to Fort Smith in the final game, and I know that the people in the stands were glad. [*Laughs*] One of our players made an error in the last inning. We lost 2–1. And they went on to become second in the nation, and that's how good we were, and I mean, we were good. We were good. [*Laughs*] So . . .

[02:11:25] SL: Well, weren't there schools that would not play Fayetteville?

MS: Absolutely. Absolutely. I mean, our—we played back then in high school, and we played Joplin and Springfield, Central, Hillcrest, and Parkview. We played schools in Oklahoma in basketball and football.

[02:11:49] SL: 'Bout what years were these you think?

MS: Well, I think that—again, my brother is a [19]55 graduate of Fayetteville High. I—and so *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* the year before and all—and then the Bull Hayes era, that's when the drift started going and the separation started taking

place in that period of time. And by the time that I get to high school in [19]62, it's at a fever pitch. You know, you would say that was late, but my recollection as a—and I'll tell you a story here, that Springdale still didn't allow blacks to come in after 6:00 p.m. at that time. And to us, whether real or imagined, it was reality. They would be hung if they did come in. And we really had to take care of our people. Every time we played them, it was a horrendous affair, no matter what the sport. If it was up there, it was a nightmare, always. And it was the players, their coaches, and their fans. It was ugly. It was ugly. And tragically, we didn't play our best against them because we

were so worried about our African American athletes being intimidated that, you know, it just distracted us. And most of our coaches were always tryin' to get us just to go out there and beat the poo out of 'em because we were not only better than they were, but they deserved to get the poo beat out of 'em. [*Laughs*]

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[02:13:23] MS: Yeah. And obviously, when we went to Springfield, Central—I mean, all of those three schools all had black athletes in 'em. Central—many of them, they were great athletes, and it was—and if it was wonderful competition playin' them because they were great teams. And the one vivid—I have two major recollections that I'll share. My senior year we had the number one team in the state at the time, and Springdale was number two, and we went up there to play. And it was something that will stay with me forever for my life. But when we pulled into the parking lot, they had a dummy of me hanging from a tree with my number, forty-four, and a kid with a KKK hood and a torch at the base of the tree. And the sign—I don't use this word, but *N* spelled out, N-lover, on my—on the dummy. And as we pulled into the parking lot, he torched the dummy. And we had a heck of a time getting our players off the field or outta the

bus onto the—into the dressing room. It was very frightening. Lots of guns and hoods in the stadium. The whole game was just this bizarre environment of spewing race. We broke—don't remember what his name was. We broke the collarbone of the best player on Springdale's team, and he played the entire game with a broken collarbone, on hate. Just spewed it out. And as a running back and a defensive back, every time he tackled me, he would spit in my face or grab me by my private parts and make some racial comment. [02:15:14] And we had some great athletes on that team, black athletes. And I can tell you, Scott, and I won't do it, but I can tell you almost every play of that game. That's how—I can't tell you what I had for breakfast this morning, but my memory—because of the impact that has. And I'll tell you the impact that it had on other players. [*Clears throat*] But we—and some people that you know, and if you haven't spoken to them yet, they'll share it with you. But we—just briefly, for a football fan, we scored first, and Bob White, who's an attorney here in Fayetteville, was our kicker. And he came in the game, and I was the holder. Couldn't go for two back then. And he was as white as a sheet 'cause it was so bad. I mean, it was the tension. By then there were gunshots and the—it was just a bad situation. And the center was good and

I—the hole was good, but he shanked the ball, 6–0, Fayetteville. Springdale scored. Don't know how. I mean, I say I can remember every play. I don't try to—I block out Springdale's side. [*SL laughs*] But—and they kicked the extra point, 7–6, Springdale. [02:16:31] They score again. By then it's so bad on the field, we're just numbed by how bad this is. I mean, everything—everybody's lookin' at us, and it's just—it's bad. And maybe I should sit down, say some of our black players. And you know, I'm the captain of the team, along with Paul Ramey. We're the cocaptains and, "No, let's beat these guys." A lotta profanity exchanged in the huddles and things, but we score—or not—they score again, and I block the extra point, 13–6, Springdale. The game goes on and on. Hoods are on. Torches are out. It's frightening. And there's two minutes and forty-seven seconds left in the game, and Springdale fumbles, and it's on our forty-seven yard line on a hash mark. And our coach, whose name was Brown—Jay Donathan was gone then. He was me—with me for my sophomore and junior year, but Ray Brown, our coach . . .

SL: He was my coach.

[02:17:41] MS: Yeah. A remarkable man. Anyway, he sent Giles Penick into the game, and the statement was, "Give the ball to

Marty until we cross the goal line." And we had a minute and forty-seven seconds, not two minutes and forty-seven seconds, to go. And I carried the ball seven times in that time. And we got down on the three-yard line, and we had three seconds to go in the game. And the referees came out with the sheriff and came to me. "Captain Steele, we don't—we can't guarantee the safety of anyone here. You need to forfeit the game." But I'm—"What?" And I say, "Well, let's go over to the coach." And we walk over to Coach Ray Brown, and he says the same thing, and I mean, one of the most significant memories of my young life, Ray Brown looked at the sheriff and the police guy and the referee after they said, "We just can't guarantee the safety. You need to get your people outta here." And Ray Brown looks at me and says, "Captain Steele, it's your call." I'm seventeen years old. I said, "Coach, we're playin'." And he said, "Get in there and score." Slow-mo, you know. It makes a—*Remember the Titans*, which is a great movie with Denzel Washington about this—really look like a kind of a amateur hour on how bad it was because they had internal problems. We didn't have internal problems. And they became great once they solved their internal problems, but we didn't have any. It was everybody else. [02:19:23] But anyway, pitched the ball to me. Three

seconds, two seconds, one second. Gun goes off from the referee. I cross the goal line. All the guns start goin' off in the thing. 13–12, Springdale. Can't go for two now. In comes Bob White. Now really, [*SL laughs*] eyes as big as saucers. So Bob White gets in the huddle, and we're all bloodied and beaten. We know we can't beat—win, but we can tie. And I said to Bob, "Bob, if you miss this extra point, I'm gonna kick your butt through the goalposts." [*SL laughs*] And it's a perfect snap, and Bob kicked the ball dead center through the uprights out into the parking lot of the north end of Springdale Stadium. Thirteen–all. We gather our players up as fast as we could. The crowd's coming down. Guns are going off. We're getting everybody around us, all the black players inside, and we're running off the field to get to the buses. The dressing room's right there. Don't go to the dressing room. Get on the bus. They're startin' to push the bus back and forth. Frightening for everybody. Frightening. And we get outta the lot, the crispy critter of me hangin' from the tree still there with singe goin' off from bein' burnt three or four hours before. [*Laughs*] And the student managers and everybody went up to get our wallets and clothes the next day to come back. [02:20:51] Well, two things about that game, and I'll share with you. A few years ago, one of my

closest friends, Paul Ramey, the co-captain, All-America his senior year from Fayetteville High, Razorback, and one of my closest friends, [*clears throat*] we went to the stadium. I came back to Fayetteville, and they say, "Let's go to all of 'em. Let's go to Bentonville. Let's go to Rogers and"—I looked at him, and I said, "I only think we need to go to one." And he said, "Let's start there." So we go up—it's different now. They got all this carpet and . . .

SL: Yeah.

[02:21:29] MS: . . . I mean, that thing is somethin' else. [*Laughs*] But I think it's in the same spot. But anyway, not me, but Paul Ramey goes out to the hash mark on the forty-seven yard line, and he says, "Marty, this is where it all started." And I said, "Do you remember it like I do?" And he said, "Every play, like you do. Every play." And I said, "Paul, what was that?" He said, "For me, it was this. It was the moment when I knew that you were a leader, and the rest of us were just tryin' to keep up. [*Chair squeaks*] And I was the big-time football player, but what you did then, carryin' the ball, [*clears throat*] tellin' Bob White you're gonna kick his butt through the goal posts, [*laughter*] and how we got outta there." He said, "That was the biggest ball game of my life. And I was an All-American." So flash forward.

I'm talkin'—Houston Nutt's the coach of the Razorbacks. They ask me to speak to the team, and I asked him if—and Bob White, obviously, is very close to Houston Nutt, the attorney here—and I asked if—or I don't remember who shot John, but Bob wanted to be there when I did it. And I said, "Bob, I'm gonna tell the story of the Springdale game. Then I'm gonna tell the story of the Sugar Bowl in 1969 against Georgia." And he said, "I hope you do, Marty." And I said, "Okay, I will." So with Bob White, who's the attorney for the Razorbacks at that time . . .

SL: Yeah.

[02:22:54] MS: He's in the audience, and he's got his head down, and I tell the story as—just as I described it right now. And they're all—the Razorbacks are lookin' back, you know, and when I get through with the football—the high school football game, and I stopped the story and said, "Bob, did I get it right? I hope I didn't embellish anything." And he stood up, and he was very emotional, and he said, "Marty, you—as amazing as it was for all these players and for me, you understated how it was 'cause I was younger than you. You were a senior. It scared the hell out of me. I mean, I've never been more frightened in my life than that game." And he said, "Now you gotta tell 'em

'bout the Sugar Bowl." And I said, "Well, Bob, I'm gonna—you gotta sit down. [*SL laughs*] I'll tell 'em 'bout the Sugar Bowl." [*Laughter*] [02:23:43] So I come back from Vietnam. We're playin' Georgia in the Sugar Bowl in Tulane Stadium, and Bob White's the kicker for the University of Arkansas. Chuck Dicus was the MVP of the ball game and the College Football Hall of Fame. Jake Gibbs is the All-America defensive back from Georgia. Long story short, Bob White kicks three field goals and an extra point. We were favored to lose. I mean, Georgia had a better team, but we stuffed Georgia 16–2. Seventy-five thousand people in Tulane Stadium, and I'm just watchin' Bob White from the stands, and I'm gettin' ready to go back to Vietnam. And [*laughs*] the—Bourbon Street, and I'm walkin' down Bourbon Street, and my wife, and we all had some drinks, and it was fun. And here comes Bob White, probably under the weather. I'll leave it at that.

SL: Yeah.

MS: He would say he was pretty plowed but . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Those were the days.

[02:24:48] MS: All these sycophants running, women and everything, and he was havin' a grand time, just a grand time. And Cindy's lookin' at me, my wife, and I'm lookin' at her. And

she says, "That's Bob, isn't it?" And I said, "It is Bob. Let's just see what happens here." [*SL laughs*] And he gets about twenty feet away, and he recognizes that it's me in this massive crowd of people on Bourbon Street. And he stops and comes over to me, and I said, "Bob, do you wanna finish the rest of the story as"—he says, "No, you do it 'cause you're probably gonna understate it again [*laughter*] to the Razorbacks." And I said, "Okay, Bob. You looked at me, and I said to you, 'Bob, I'm tellin' you, I can't be more proud of you. Seventy-five thousand people, three field goals, and Dicus is the MVP, but you shoulda been, or both of you shoulda been. But I couldn't be more proud of you, watchin' up there, kickin' 'em straight through the uprights." And he looked back me and said, "Marty, it didn't mean squat [*SL laughs*] in relationship to the Springdale game. And that's all I thought about when I came out on the field was the Springdale game. But if I could do that then, I can surely do this now. Doesn't matter if there's seventy-five thousand people here." So I said that to the Razorbacks. By then, the Razorbacks had lost it. Bob had lost it. [02:26:15] And I said, "Did I got it right, Bob?" And he said, "You got that one right." [*Chair squeaks*] Race was a big thing for us the following year. You know, that was in the fall of [19]63 and [19]64. I was the

only white guy on the mile relay team at Fayetteville High. We broke the state record, three black athletes and me, Louis Bryant, Robert Wilkes, and Bradford Jenkins and me. The record, allegedly, as I understand it, lasted twenty-seven years in the state of Arkansas. I was the anchorman. And we went down afterwards—they do it in Fayetteville now, but we went down to run in what's called the Meet of Champions in Little Rock, and we went without our coach, who was Tom Hardin.

SL: Yeah.

[02:27:24] MS: He came in that semester break there and became our track coach. And we went into a restaurant in Little Rock, Arkansas, before the meet. And before we could be served the water, the proprietor of the restaurant came over and with a .38 caliber pistol, cocked the hammer to the rear, and stuffed it down my ear canal, and blood's comin' outta my ear, and said, expletives deleted, "White boy, if you don't get these blankin' outta here, I'm gonna blow your blankin' head off." And I looked at these magnificent athletes. I mean, Robert went on to be a major college basketball player. Louis Bryant became the first black first team All-State football, first team All-State basketball person the following year in Arkansas history. And Bradford Jenkins was faster than either one of those. I was the fastest

guy but, the little white guy, but the—anyway, I looked at all three of them, blood comin' down my face, and said, "You didn't wanna eat here anyway, did you?" And they said, "No," and handed me a bunch of napkins, and we left. [02:28:37] And years later—I mean, I think you know the story of Louis Bryant bein' killed by a white supremacist.

SL: State trooper. He's a state trooper. Became . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . a state trooper.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Right.

MS: And lost his life to a whack job from Idaho who came down to kill a black cop in Arkansas. Well, I'm privileged to be on the first inductee in the Fayetteville High School Hall of Honor. I'm the first group, along with Louis's mother. And . . .

SL: Jessie?

[02:29:05] MS: Yeah. And we stood side by side. And I think it's still going on, but we were supporting the cost to educate Louis's children. And as far as I'm concerned, we'll do it for his grandchildren for as long as I'm alive. Whatever it takes. But we had a reunion one year, years ago, and I'm class of [19]64, and I was the only senior on that group of athletes. And Robert

is—Wilkes was a year behind me; Louis was a year behind me, I believe, and Brad's a year—maybe a year or two years. I can't remember which now. But anyway, I was in New York at the time. I had retired from the marine corps, so I'm a retired three-star general, and they said, "We're gonna have a reunion," and I said, "Well, I just—I wanna go, but I don't think I can make it this year." And they said, "General, you don't understand. It's not just your class. It's the class of [19]65 and [196]6 that wanna have theirs with yours because they wanna thank you and your classmates for what you did to help 'em get through this period of racism and hatred." And my wife heard it all, and she's the same class as me, and she said, "We're goin'." And we did. And they had it over here—whatever we call this hotel in the corner, the Radisson. I guess it changes names every five years here . . .

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

MS: . . . up on the Square. [Laughs]

SL: Yeah.

[02:30:22] MS: But that's where the reception was. So it's three classes. We had about a thousand kids in each class. But it's throngs of people—grandkids. I'm signin' diapers. And then just like, again, "My broker's E. F. Hutton." In the cocktail

reception—it was all a set-up. But the doors open, and there's Bradford Jenkins, who had retired from the city police force and had his—he had diabetes, and he'd suffered leg amputations because of his diabetes. And he had two titanium splints, and he came in on his crutches. And everybody kinda parted the Red Sea there, and he was walkin' towards me. And they had placed us in the middle of the room, and anyway, he put his crutches down and came over on his titanium splints and tears streamin' down his face, and I was cryin' by then. [*Clears throat*] [02:31:13] Put his arms around me and hugged me and whispered in my ear, "Marty, we didn't wanna eat there anyway." It was tough, but I think we did a great service to state of Arkansas. It sure shaped my life, along with everything I've told you up to this point. It carried me in my leadership positions in the marine corps, in Vietnam in two tours as the chief operating officer of the marine corps. It's all these things that you said from the outset, Scott, when I met you out in the hallway out here. And I'm just kinda gotten to the crunch point of those events shaped who I am as a man and as a husband, father, grandfather now, because of the power of doing the right thing and being inspired by Jay Donathan and Ray Brown and Frank Broyles and Groundhog Ferrell and Edward R. Maloy and

all of our teachers and coaches to do the right thing, knowing that it required our good judgment, our integrity, our character and, most of all, our courage at the moment of truth. Our judgment, our integrity, our character, and most of all, our courage. And our courage when others won't, that we would do the right thing. And that's what we did. [02:33:02] I went up to see Doug Cummings to help, classmate of mine who's a doctor up in Michigan and a very, very close friend, to help him raise money for a project up there. And we were—we'd raised some money for him, and we were in his home havin' a refreshment and in his own inimitable way—again, he's a great friend and very acerbic wit, a tremendous doctor and friend, but he apologized to me under the guise that he said, "You know, because I wasn't an athlete, I had no idea what the hell you were goin' through out there. And subsequently, over the years I've learned from people who were athletes who've—when I go back to Fayetteville, they tell me the stories about what you were doing, you personally were doin', as a captain of most of those teams and strappin' this thing on. And he—and I never talked you about it. All I was doin' was havin' fun going to school and made grades and all that. But I never did anything about it. Didn't think about it. I mean, I obviously wasn't gonna

do anything to harm it, but I never got engaged in it, and I've been wantin' you to come up here not only to help me raise money, but I want you to know how sorry I am that we didn't do enough to help you." I said, "That's okay," because there was enough of us who got it, and we were out there, you know, on the gridiron or wherever it may be, and we had to do the right thing, and we did it. [02:34:26] We went to Magnolia one year in baseball, earlier than that, and they—we had to stay in the gym, and they gave us cots and same thing. Box lunches. Never got to go out in town. We had two places that we were allowed to go, the baseball field where we played and the gym where they locked us up 'cause they wouldn't let us go out.

[02:34:55] SL: You know, it's so bad that all this happens after [19]57, that it's still—and you know, Marty, sadly, too, I think some of this stuff still lingers . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . around the state.

MS: Yeah.

SL: It's . . .

MS: I think it does. I think it does. I mean, I still have—I mean, I'd never state their name in this interview or anytime. I mean, there are friends of mine that I know that are from other parts of

this state that I—known over the years that truly are racists. They are. And you know, I live in Tampa, Florida, and it's very strong there. I mean . . .

SL: It—to be fair . . .

MS: [*Unclear word*]

SL: . . . to Arkansas . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . it's not just an Arkansas phenomenon.

[02:35:50] MS: No, no, it isn't. I mean, we have the largest Confederate flag in, to my knowledge, in the nation at the intersection of I-4 and I-75 in Tampa, Florida, and it flies every day. They—it's a private piece of land, and their amendment rights let 'em fly it. And I've been involved in so many issues there, workin' with young kids about this issue. I mean, I've been telling the story that I just shared with you with thousands of kids and thousands of marines for the last twenty years because it had such a powerful impact on me and shaped who I am. And I never embellish it, and it was such a wonderful thing, and I say this with a smile on my face, to tell it the same way I told it, to have Bob White say, "You understated it," because it was so powerful and so affecting. It affected all of us that you can't—it's hard to believe that stuff, that, you know, it was real.

[02:36:46] The Birmingham bombing in Alabama was on the fifteenth of September, my birthday. And my dad, because of the way we were raised here, always told me, "Son, you'll remember the Birmingham bombing and those three little girls longer than you're gonna remember that this is your birthday because that's how we raised you." And he's right. [*Laughs*] In that church in Birmingham, Alabama. So you know, we grew up, Scott. We grew up, and we became young men and women of character. I mean, obviously, my wife—they didn't have athletics for women back then and—but she knew it. I mean, she didn't know how serious it was from an ath—and athlete-performance perspective. But I mean, I started datin' her in the tenth grade, and obviously, I was in love with her by the time that we were seniors in high school. So I mean, she knew it, too. But you know, it's wrong. [02:37:46] I had a young girl, and it's a digression, but it hits the point that you just made about it goes on, and it's everywhere. But a young girl down the street from me in Tampa, beautiful young woman who was the editor of her school newspaper, extremely talented student, and she was takin' a history class on the Vietnam War, and it hooks to this portion of our discussion, not the Vietnam War, which is later. But the—her parents asked me if I'd do an

interview for her for her paper about Vietnam. And I agreed to do it, and she came to my house and got a iced tea, and we're sitting out on the back patio, and my wife's in the kitchen. And just a stunning young woman and very, very bright, and I said, "Well, tell me about what you've learned about the Vietnam War in class." And her statement was, "We've only learned one thing, and that's the Calley Massacre. That's the only thing that's been discussed." And I said, "Well, how long have you been—I mean, is this brand new? You've only been to class once, and that was discussed?" She said, "No, that's the theme is the Calley Massacre." And I said, "Well, let me—tell me what's going on in school, and I'll get to what happened in Vietnam, and maybe it will add to your paper beyond that because that's a horrific incident in the Vietnam War, but it really doesn't tell the story that I think that you could reflect in your paper. And I'm sure you'll do well on the paper." "Well, we have a incident that's going on right now. We have young people that wear the Rebel flag on T-shirts and [*clunking sound*] slogans on the Rebel flags, 'Long Live the South' and 'South Will Rise Again' and"—and I said, "That's interesting. What"—"Well, the school is thinking about telling them they can't wear their T-shirts." And I said, "Well, where do you fit on that?" She said, "Well, I think

they should be able to wear their T-shirts." I said, "Interesting. Why?" She said, "Well, freedom of expression. And this is about heritage and our Southern heritage, and there's nothing wrong with that." I said, "Do you have—it's an integrated school?" "Well, sure." And I said, "Well, what do the black kids in the school"—said, "I don't know." I said, "You're the editor of the paper, and you don't know what they say?" And she said, "No, I really haven't thought about it." I said, "Well, what does that say about you?" She said, "Well, I haven't really thought about that." And I said, "Well, let's talk about that because, let me tell you, young lady, you think you came over here to learn about the Vietnam War, but that's not why you're here. I believe in a supreme being. God sent you over here one now—one time because this is my moment with you to tell you about racism." [*Laughs*] [02:40:46] So I told her the story that I just told you, and I said, "This is not about Southern heritage, dear. [*Chair squeaks*] This is about hate. This is about racism, and you're better than that." She's cryin', and I apologize, and she said, "Well, I—I'll fix this." And I said, "I know you will. I know you will, and you'll write it, and they won't be wearin' those T-shirts in your school." And she said, "You're right. They won't be wearin' 'em tomorrow. And I'm embarrassed. Do you wanna

come and talk to the student body?" I said, "You can ask the principal. I'd be glad to do it, but I want you to take care of this as the editor of the paper. I want you to take care of this as the vice-president of the senior class. I want you to take care of this as the salutatorian in this school." She said, "I promise you I will." And I said, "Do you wanna work on the Vietnam War now?" She said, "I think I'll come back tomorrow to do that." [*Laughter*] So I said, "Well that's good. You can give me the report about the T-shirts comin' off that you" . . .

SL: That's great. It's good that she grabbed ahold of it.

[02:41:51] MS: Yep. She not only grabbed ahold of it, she did a great job and she—it kinda changed the whole tenor of the school. By the way, the name of the school is Freedom High School.

SL: [*Laughs*] Oh, gosh. Unbelievable.

MS: Yep. Unbelievable. And she got an A-plus on her paper when she came back. And I got a twofer . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . a little bit of an explanation about both. It's . . .

SL: That's good.

[02:42:26] MS: . . . never-ending, Scott. I mean, you know, I think as a history major—and I—I'm just right now—and my light

reading besides—I used to never read fiction, so I do that now to have lightness in my life, and it's a [*SL laughs*] lot of fun, the authors. But I always have some type of history book. Right now I'm reading the book by James McPherson, who's a friend of mine. He wrote—won the Pulitzer Prize for *Battle Cry of Freedom*, which is about Gettysburg. And he and I have toured Gettysburg together, and of course, that's the time of the Emancipation Proclamation, et cetera, et cetera. But we've talked about these kinds of issues for quite some time. In 1863, a hundred years later, 1963, no change. We got *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education*. We've gone beyond *Plessy v. Ferguson*, separate but equal, all that, but we're still not there attitudinally. And then here we are, whatever it is, fifty years later. Fifty years later? No, forty-seven years later, and we're still not there. And it's not gonna happen in my lifetime. It's gonna take a long time. But I believe that people of character, judgment, integrity—I—what did I say? What's the third *C* there?

SL: Well, last was courage.

[02:43:49] MS: Yeah, character and courage. [*SL laughs*] Excuse me. Character and courage. I keep workin' at it. We'll get it improved ever so slightly. You really do have to strap it on. I

mean, I—some of these people I told you about who are around here, when they express themselves to me, you know, I said, "Listen, you know, years ago I'd be tolerant of your position and say, 'You know, maybe over time you'll change,' but I don't know whether now you're just doin' it to see my reaction. But I really don't wanna be around you if you're gonna do this anymore. I mean, you can carry this to your grave if you want to, but it's not gonna make me say that I don't want you to be my friend, but I really don't wanna be around you. I mean, this is sick. You're sick. It's wrong. You need to change your behavior. It's a bad example for everybody, your children. It's sorta like sayin', 'Why do Israelis and Palestinians kill one another today?' And when you ask either side, they'll—the response is—will normally be, 'Because my father did.' And that's why I put this on you. If not you, then who? If not now, then when? Get on, man. Let's start learnin' to love one another here. Let's start learnin' to respect one another." [02:45:09] So in summary of all that, the greatest feeling I have about Fayetteville, Arkansas, growing up is that way ahead of our time, this community got it, way ahead of our time. And it's the proudest thing about my growing up here in Camelot. As difficult as it was outside, internally, it was special because we

got it. We got it. And we did the right thing all of the time, all of the time.

[02:45:45] SL: Marty, what's amazing to me is that, you know, I played football for the same coach you did. I never knew anything about this game. I live in the same town, have friends in the same town up north. I never knew anything about that. [*MS sighs*] I mean, it just changes my whole perspective of Coach Ray Brown. I mean, I loved that coach, you know. And I was gonna ask you another thing. Did . . .

[02:46:16] MS: Shorty was a heck of a player, too, boy.

SL: Was he?

MS: His son. Yeah, he was a year behind me. He was All-State the next year, too. He was a heck of a player.

SL: Now, is—was—did Paul Ramey have a son named Ken?

MS: No, Ken was his younger brother.

SL: Okay. So Ken . . .

MS: But he . . .

SL: . . . was, like, our backfield . . .

MS: Ken played with me.

SL: . . . coach.

MS: No, he's the superintendent out at Siloam Springs still, I think. But . . .

SL: Okay, but . . .

MS: . . . he was in the game. He was . . .

SL: He was in the game?

MS: Yeah, he was the—I was the left cornerback, and he was the safety.

SL: Well, he coached us, too. He was . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . he was one of our football coaches . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . along with Coach Bobby Mix.

MS: Oh yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[02:46:49] MS: Well, I mean, if you really want—I mean, again, it's one thing, Scott, playing in it like we did; but then again, it's something else, the impact that it had on Bob White. So if you really want to get—because he's watchin' it. He nev—I don't think he ever played a down in a game except the two kicks. I mean, he's watching the whole thing unfold. And in the New Orleans thing at the Sugar Bowl five years later, six years later, whatever it is, and the—I mean, that's the perfect story there of the profound effect it had on him. And he was—so he's watchin' the stands. I'm tryin' to watch the football players, you know. I

mean, what's going on in the stands is one thing, but we were still tryin' to win the damn game. But his—he'd be the guy, I mean, he really would be the guy, I think. [02:47:48] But it's amazing, isn't it? It's a wonderful, wonderful recollection and story, and for me and Paul Ramey, extremely emotional when he—when we did this and walked out on the field. Extremely emotional. And just to know that you've been carryin' this around with you all your life, but [*clears throat*] just like, "We didn't wanna eat there either," had been carried around with Bradford Jenkins his entire life, as I'm sure it did for Louis Bryant until he was assassinated, as I'm sure it does for Robert Wilkes today of that event. But you know, it's what life is. It's really what life is. It's living it. And then what do you do with it? How does it do to shape you? What does it do to shape you and your value system? And how does it strengthen your moral fiber? Whether you believe in a supreme being or not or whether you're—you believe in one very strongly, it really is all about, "What do I do with this, and what do I do with this to become a whole person, male or female?" And they were such resounding events in such a great community for me that, as I've said already, it shaped my life, what happened here then, and it made me who I am today. And my kids would tell you the same

thing, by the way, and soon my grandkids will. I mean, "That's what happened to Grandpa."

SL: [*Sighs*] Wow. What time is it?

MS: It's about five fifteen, and I probably need to go. We probably need to go.

[02:49:22] SL: Why don't we go ahead and—I mean, I'm really not quite done with this Fayetteville . . .

MS: [*Laughs*] I'm not either.

SL: . . . section, you see. [*MS laughs*] Okay. So . . .

MS: But I don't think we're . . .

SL: But we're . . .

MS: . . . gonna get it done. You're tryin' to get to the end of the tape but . . .

SL: Well, I—you know, I do wanna talk some more about—I wanna talk about Fayetteville life . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . off the playing field and . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . and also, you know, there's that transition after you've had your talk with your father and . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . and you join the marines and . . .

MS: Yeah, we'll do all that.

[02:49:56] SL: . . . and there's all that. And then comin' back home briefly.

MS: Yeah.

SL: And . . .

MS: We'll do it.

SL: . . . you know, and . . .

MS: We can do all the . . .

SL: . . . you come back later and pick up your degree from here.

MS: Yeah.

SL: So . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . I'm a little bit . . .

MS: And I can . . .

SL: . . . aware of the chronology and . . .

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: . . . I'm quite aware of some of your—the outline of your career, but . . .

MS: Yeah.

[02:50:11] SL: . . . I suspect there are [*laughs*] many stories yet to tell.

MS: Well, there are. I mean, obviously, we—you know, we're a

reflection of society. Jumping ahead in the career—the—when I enlisted, and you know, we had Watts; Detroit, [19]68; Chicago. Race relations in the marine corps, which is a reflection of society, were at their highest peak at the end of the Vietnam War, where we really did have—we were inheriting all these people at the end of the draft, and it's very, very difficult inside, being a small unit leader in the marine corps. And our leaders of World War II vintage who—those were the generals, and they were in a segregated marine corps . . .

SL: Right.

[02:50:53] MS: . . . and they couldn't understand what was going on. I mean, "I told you to do it; therefore, you're gonna do what I told you to do because I told you to do it." And they couldn't understand the dynamic of what was happening in America. And initially—and again, there's much more to this, but they really did believe it was our fault that we were havin' all these problems 'cause it was "lousy leadership" that we couldn't control the environment and, "Why didn't they do what they told you to do?" And it wasn't until it really burst on the scene of how seri--it wa—seriousness—serious it was with violence, a marine on a marine, which is just—didn't happen to them. I mean, they may have gotten in a bar fight over alcohol and a

girl or somethin' like that but . . .

SL: But the next morning, they were best friends again.

MS: Yeah, yeah. They loved each other.

SL: Yeah.

MS: They're puttin' their—yeah, yeah, yeah, and, "Why did we do that?"

SL: And they'd die for each other. Yeah.

MS: Yeah, that's exactly right.

SL: Yeah.

[02:51:44] MS: And they would tell you "I love you, and I'll"—but in that period of time, because of the outcropping of what we're experiencing in the South, which blew writ large, and LBJ, and what we were doing in society—I mean, we were no exception. It was a serious, serious leadership issues and challenges in dealing with all this and violence and mayhem, just total mayhem. And it took all of our courage, again, judgment, integrity, character, and courage, to deal with it. It really did. And again, kind of closing the circle, I was prepared for it because of what happened here. I mean, it—I mean, I wasn't petrified by it because I knew what it was, but I sure had no qualms dealing with it. [02:52:36] And when someone would panic, for example, at a cross burning, which had been a typical

thing that occurred, and they would freak out, and they would come to me, say, "Captain, there's a cross burning outside." And I'm sayin', "How many? One or two?" "Sir, it's one, but it's burning out on the lawn." And I said, "Well, did you put it out yet, or do you want me to come to put the cross out?" "Yeah, sir, we're gonna have riot here." And I said, "We're not gonna have a riot here. The kid who put the cross out there is a moral coward, son. He's a moral coward. You're never gonna see that guy again. Just go put the damn cross out, and then let's start askin' questions and, 'Who was the moral coward? Who put the burning cross out?' And I'll deal with him. But don't get all wrapped around the axle here." [*Laughter*]

SL: Oh, that's good.

MS: Yeah.

[02:53:29] SL: That's good. Man, what are you doin' living in Florida? Why aren't you back here?

MS: Well, it's a great question. We moved after 9/11, and, you know, we're gonna get to that in my story . . .

SL: Okay.

MS: . . . somewhere down the line. It's a long story why we got there. My wife—I would—you know, very difficult—she'll edit this out, by the way. [*SL laughs*] I've always wanted to come

back here. My wife, a couple things, thinks that we've, because of these kinds of memories, we've outgrown this place just a bit.

SL: Yeah.

[02:53:59] MS: 'Cause we've lived all over. We've moved twenty-six times, Scott, in forty-two years of marriage. And we've lived in Korea and Japan, New York City, Southern California. We've lived all over the place. Detroit. And obviously, this is my home and my favorite place. But she moved here in the ninth grade and went—she was born in Little Rock but her—she was in the army, and she came from Germany and she—you know, the small-town aspect of it all—I mean, they [*chair squeaks*]—you know, I'd be a every game season ticket holder here for every sport, probably, and be involved with the community as much as I could be. But she wants me to do other things, and I'm involved in so many other things, as you'll find out and . . .

SL: Okay.

[02:54:44] MS: But the nature of the fundamental reason is the—we've lived in so many places in so many harsh climates, Korea being really harsh, but Detroit being really bad.

SL: Yeah.

[02:54:59] MS: We—she doesn't wanna—we don't wanna go through the four seasons. We don't ski. I do. She doesn't want to. But

shovelin' snow in Fayetteville, tryin' to get up Rockwood Trail, is not an appeal to my wife.

SL: Okay.

MS: You know, I mean . . .

SL: I understand that.

MS: Yeah. And you know, when I—we had that ice storm here last year or whatever and . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . people were callin' me sayin' it's the wor—you know, people who—lifelong residents, saying that's the worst thing that's ever happened to Fayetteville and that bad, and I told, you know, her, "This is really bad. I mean, the university is shut down and—I mean, this is bad. Power's out, and I don't ever remember that as a kid." And she said, "Well, it didn't happened, but it can't be that bad in places we lived." And then they sent the Arkansas Alumni magazine with that picture, that beautiful picture of the ice on the trees in front of Old Main, and I showed that to her, and she says, "My God, that"—and then I went down Washington Street with all those trees and then . . .

SL: I live there.

MS: Yeah, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: What a beautiful street, you know.

SL: Yeah.

[02:55:55] MS: But then saw all the fallen trees that—you know, like, millions of dollars to police up. And you know, where I was thinking, "Don't you wanna be back a part of that?" That was the [*SL laughs*] slam dunk, cherry on the top of the cake. "You wanna go back to that?" I said, "Well, that's the hundred-year storm, dear."

SL: Yeah, it is.

MS: "That's the hundred-year storm." Yeah.

SL: It is the hundred-year storm.

MS: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

MS: But anyway . . .

[02:56:19] SL: Well, listen, I know you gotta—you wanna freshen up before you go have dinner.

MS: Yeah.

SL: And you've been very, very generous, totally forthcoming, and have told wonderful, wonderful stories. They're very inspiring, and we're gonna get back together. And I . . .

MS: Right.

SL: . . . don't know what our—what your calendar is like but . . .

[02:56:39] MS: Well, we can do it. I mean, again, I would—I'd come back here just to do this because I'd come back here to do anything I can with the university. It's really—I mean, this—it's a—an honor to be a part of it but—and I'll also have done my homework on some of these things on my lineage and genealogy that I'm not aware of now. My sister will be glad to provide all that to me so . . .

SL: Photos.

MS: Yeah, I'll bring those.

SL: Family, early . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . earliest photos . . .

MS: Yeah.

SL: . . . you can find are good.

MS: Yeah, I got those. Yeah, I'll bring those.

SL: Some career photos.

MS: Yeah.

[02:57:06] SL: There's some of that already hanging out there on the web but . . .

MS: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, poignant moments for you.

MS: Yeah.

SL: I know you've had many.

MS: Yeah. Yeah. Well, as you can tell, I mean, I can't [*sighs*]—you know, 1963 and [19]64 are just as if they were yesterday . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . to me so . . .

SL: Well . . .

[02:57:25] MS: And I get emotional every time I say it. But I love—again, I'm just—I know it sounds trite—"But you still understated it." [*Laughter*] And to have that validation from Bob White, an attorney . . .

SL: Yeah.

MS: . . . means an awful lot to me because . . .

SL: Well, I'm gonna have to—we're gonna have to give him a call, I guess.

MS: Yeah.

SL: He sounds like a nomination to me.

MS: Yeah, yeah. I—again, the . . .

[02:57:53] SL: Is he in good shape? Is he in good health?

MS: Well, I think so. I mean, I'm not sure, but I think he is.

SL: Okay.

MS: I think he is. He's had lots of issues over the years, but I think he's in pretty good shape.

SL: Okay.

MS: He's a—again, that was the worst of it. It all started getting better. I mean, the next year Louis became the first African American. So things started—I mean, I begin—that was the beginning of the end, in my opinion, about the formal demonstration of hatred. And you know, shortly thereafter, I would say by [19]67—and I don't know when you went to school. I mean, we . . .

SL: I graduated [19]70.

MS: Okay. Well, I don't think we were playin' any of those schools in Missouri anymore.

SL: We . . .

MS: I mean, they'll play Raytown every now and then or Jeff City every now and then or . . .

SL: We played Springfield, I think.

MS: Okay.

SL: Maybe . . .

MS: But I mean, it's not—that was a conference back then.

SL: . . . [Nineteen] sixty-seven, maybe.

MS: Yeah.

SL: [Nineteen] sixty-eight.

[02:58:46] MS: Yeah. But we had two conferences.

SL: Yeah, [19]68.

MS: We had this conference here—whatever it was called. District, whatever it was.

SL: This 3A or 4A. Yeah.

[02:58:56] MS: Yeah, yeah. It—yeah. But then—back then it was called the Ozark Conference. I mean, we—again, they wouldn't play us. I mean, they wouldn't play us. So—and not only for the fact that we'd beat the heck out of 'em, but they wouldn't play us. And that was okay. I—you know—yeah. It—Harrison was another bad place, really bad. But . . .

SL: I've always heard that.

MS: Yeah. Really bad. [*Laughs*] But we played there our junior year, and we beat 'em, but they came over here our senior year, and we crushed 'em and didn't think too much about it. But anyway, we got to go here for now, I think.

SL: Well, I've had a great [*laughs*] time.

MS: Well, I have, too. I have, too.

SL: And . . .

MS: And I'm—I apologize again. I know it sounds almost obsequious but—for bein' late, and I'm really—if we—I know that we'll get to do this again, and we can make the time and take as much time as you want to do it. And I'd be honored to be a part of it.

SL: Well, thank you very much. We'll make this happen.

[03:00:01 End of interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]