

LOIS MYERS

Interview by Bill Miles
April 7, 1993

TOPICS:

Family
Land Development
Construction Contracting
Madison School District
School Board
Sexual Abuse
Community Organizations
Parent-Teachers Association (PTA)
Torch Drive
Christine Jorgensen
Fire Department

Transcription by John W. Weigel
June 17, 2001 – July 5, 2001; December 31, 2001 - January 7, 2002
Transcription by Matt Zalewski

July 8, 2001 – October 7, 2001

Q: Testing one, two, three. Testing one, two, three.

[Tape turned off and on]

Q: Today is April 7, 1993. The time is 11:30 a.m. and we are seated in the Seniors Room at the Branch Library. I am Bill Miles, director of the Madison Heights Library, and my guest for this audio interview is Lois Myers. Mrs. Myers is a longtime resident of Madison Heights. She's been highly involved in the community and will discuss her life in the southern end of the town, and her involvement with the Madison School District, and many other bits of historic information. Mrs. Myers, for this tape, please state your full name and address, and please include the name of your spouse, and the names of any of your children.

A: My name is Lois Myers. I use "M" for my middle initial. My husband's name was Bill Myers, and my sons are Jim and Jack Myers. I don't think I need to get formal with their names, do I?

Q: No. I think we pretty well...are pretty well acquainted with your sons too.

A: I...I believe so.

Q: One is...Jack is the superintendent of the...

A: Right.

Q: ...Madison School District at the present time. And Jim was both a wrestling coach at the Madison School District and...

A: Football coach.

Q: ...football coach.

A: Yeah.

Q: And he was...

A: Track coach.

Q: Track coach. Wrestler, too, right?

A: Yeah.

Q: Professional wrestler.

A: Right.

Q: And he's with the Royal Wrestling Federation now, isn't he?

A: Right.

Q: Down in Florida.

A: Yeah.

Q: Lois, how long have you lived in Madison Heights?

A: Since 1937. That's May the 30th we moved in, where we are now.

Q: So the address you're living at now...

A: Something like 56 years.

Q: Okay. Why did your family select Madison Heights? Now you came from where?

A: I came from...you mean originally?

Q: Yeah.

A: I came from Georgia.

Q: Okay.

A: And we...my family lived in Warren, and my husband's family lived in...he's from Oklahoma.

Q: Okay.

A: And his family lived in Hazel Park.

Q: Okay. You talk about Warren, Michigan?

A: Yeah. Warren, Michigan. Yeah.

Q: Oh, okay. Okay.

A: And we met when I was a school kid, you know, in...in Lincoln and Van Dyke.

Q: Okay. That's where I went to school, Lincoln...

A: Van Dyke?

Q: ...Van Dyke School District.

A: So did I.

Q: Yeah, I went to Lincoln Senior High School.

A: So did I.

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: '35.

Q: Okay.

A: Prob'ly before you's born.

Q: So you only came here two years after you graduated from Lincoln High School in Warren?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay, now how did you select Madison Heights, being that you lived in Warren? Warren was a big area. Now why didn't you move to Warren or Hazel Park?

A: Well, we wanted to get a little bit away from the family. We don't...not...not far away, 'cause, you know, this isn't far from Van Dyke, right?

Q: Right. Right.

A: But back in those days...

Q: Well, it's a pretty good piece, though, in those days.

A: ...it was a little bit far. Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And we just wanted to get away a little bit, so we moved...I mean, we were driving by, looking...we were headed to Clawson.

Q: Okay.

A: Because we thought we'd like to live in a little town like Clawson.

Q: Okay.

A: We passed Eleven Mile and Hales Street, and there was a sign there, and it says, "Build Your Home", you know. And we...I...I looked at it, and I read it, and I saw this little two-room school building. And I kept thinking about it, and driving on down to John R and Eleven Mile Road. And I was standing in the woods over there and everything, and I says to my husband, I said, "Bill, they had a sign back there. Let's go back and look at that property." Because we did want to build. We didn't want to buy.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And so we turned around and went back. And it was almost like a cow pasture, you know, it was not really roads. It was just a...

Q: Like a path.

A: ...like a wagon path, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. So we went thr...we went and we drove around, and we looked around. We never went to Clawson. We kinda liked it, because I liked the wooded area and it was really funny. And this...you would not believe it, it's the truth. We drove by, and I said to Bill, I says, "just look over there." I says, "That would make such a wonderful high school some day for our kids," because it seemed like...over here was so far from where we were looking, you know.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Which is less than a mile. And so we bought the lot. And my husband, and my dad, and my brother-in-law (my husband's brother) started building the house.

Q: Now this area, in 1937, when you would have gone to Clawson, Clawson was a well-developed city in...

A: It was much better than here.

Q: ...'37. This was, what, this was just open land.

A: This was actually farm land.

Q: Okay.

A: That yard the...the first night that we spent here, the next morning, when we was...the cows mooin' woke us.

Q: Uh huh.

A: And they...there was cows and horses...

Q: Eleven Mile was like, what, just two lanes? Dirt road?

A: Well, it was a dirt road.

Q: Okay.

A: And it was awfully hard to pass because there was big ditches on both sides.

Q: Okay.

A: And you really had to be careful passing, because it didn't give you a lot of room.

Q: Now when you came from...where were you staying? Were you staying in Warren or were you staying with Bill in Hazel Park? Or when you came out here, where were you coming from? Or did you stay out here once you came? Or did you have some place where you lived and then come out here to build a house? 'Cause it took a while to build a house.

A: Not...not really. Not back in those days it didn't. 'Cause we didn't have much money, so we didn't build a big house.

Q: Okay. And Bill built the house, right?

A: Yes. Right.

Q: Okay.

A: Now we...I lived in Warren with my family. He lived in Hazel Park with his family.

Q: Okay.

A: We had married...all right. And we had rented a house, can you believe, for one year. In Van Dyke. We paid \$96...

Q: Oh my God.

A: ...for the year.

Q: Uh huh.

A: To rent. That's the only rent we ever paid in our life.

Q: And that's where you were staying was...

A: That's we were staying where...

Q: ...in that house while you were building...

A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Q: Okay.

A: When I went into the hospital and had my baby, and...

Q: Which one was that?

A: Jim.

Q: Okay.

A: In April of 1937. And we were married in '36. In April of '37, when I came out, my sister and my mother had moved us over this way.

Q: Now, hospital, where...which hospital did you go to?

A: The old Grace, downtown.

Q: So there weren't even any hospitals up here.

A: Yes, there was one, just one small one. Royal Oak Hospital it was called. It was in...in the Washington Square Building up on the for...fourth floor.

Q: Okay.

A: That's where Jack was born.

Q: Oh no kidding. Okay.

A: Mmhmm.

Q: But for the...for the first one you went out to Grace Hospital in Detroit.

A: Grace Hospital. Mmhmm.

Q: Okay. Umm, let's see. We kind of went through the general area. Can you tell us, maybe, some of the landmarks, some of the businesses, some of their locations. What actually was out here when you came out here?

A: What was here when we came out?

Q: Yeah. Anything.

A: Lots of empty land, lots of mud and water.

Q: Any businesses...

A: I don't know.

Q: ...at all?

A: Hmm?

Q: Any businesses at all?

A: Yes, there...here on the corner of Eleven Mile and John... and John R, on the south...let's see, yeah...the southeast corner was a poolroom.

Q: Okay.

A: And then there was a gas station.

Q: You don't remember the name of the gas station...

A: Well, I know who owned it.

Q: ...you don't remember the poolroom? Okay.

A: I don't know as it had a name, but it was Roy Stevens...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and...and Bob Stevens, and they had an older brother. I think his name was Carl, if I'm not mistaken.

Q: Roy Stevens is in the Rotary?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yes. Mmhmm.

Q: Okay, that Roy Stevens. Okay.

A: And they also had a small trailer park.

Q: Right. He told me about that.

A: Okay. And...

Q: Now where was the trailer park?

A: Right back of the business. It...

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, it's where those houses are now, though, over on Groveland, you know, where...right in here.

Q: Okay. Right across from where the United Methodist Church is there.

A: Yes. Mmhmm.

Q: Right in that area.

A: Uh huh. Uh huh.

Q: Okay. Shopping, where did you do your shopping?

A: Mostly in Van Dyke.

Q: Okay.

A: Because...

Q: Over in Warren.

A: Yes. We weren't...at that time it was called Van Dyke.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Yeah. But...there...we weren't acquainted with [Etherea?]. And after we did get acquainted with it more, we did our shopping in Hazel Park. There was a big store down there called Kuhn's. Grocery store.

Q: Okay.

A: K-O-...K-U-H-N-S. We usually did our shopping there.

Q: I've heard that name before, too. Mr. Ryder, the postman...

A: Mmhmm.

Q: ...who lives down on...the street begins with an "H" down there. I can't...

A: Harwood?

Q: Harwood! Lives down on Harwood, told us about shopping at Kuhn's too.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay, so you...

A: It was a big, big place.

Q: Now your doctor. Was there a doctor out here that you could see?

A: Yes. I...I was going to Dr. Benson P. Russell.

Q: Mm-kay. In this area? In Madison Heights or Royal Oak Township?

A: Well, he was in Royal Oak.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, he was in Royal Oak.

Q: Did he take care of the children too, or...

A: Oh yeah, one doctor did everything then.

Q: Everything. GP. Did everything.

A: Yeah, but he...he didn't deliver my...Jim. He did Jack. But Dr. Mitchell over in Warren I had then.

Q: Okay. Now naturally there was electricity and there was...

A: There...

Q: ...phone service? There was no phone service.

A: No. No phone service. Electricity was there, but there was no water except from a well. We had it pumped in from a well.

Q: Okay. That was on your property, the well?

A: Yeah, all...no. Bill, you should find out where that is. It's really a historical site. I don't know what they did with it. I don't know if it's filled up or what. It's just north of the street by my house. University?

Q: Okay.

A: It's just north of there, sittin' in the back of that first little lot that's there.

Q: And there was a well there?

A: Yes.

Q: And it served, like, the whole area?

A: All of us. Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Q: No kidding. Just in your particular area, or this whole south end area here?

A: No, just in our area over there in that Mount Royal subdivision.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Uh huh.

Q: Okay.

A: And the water was full of gas. You...you know, turn it on and gush, gush, gush. And if you struck a match, you'd have a fire up to the ceiling, you know. A lot of times, you'd show somebody how much gas was in the water by doing that, you know. It was...

Q: Kind of...

A: ...dangerous.

Q: ...the same as the water at the Frank Lloyd Wright subdivision. 'Cause that...that has gas in it too.

A: Does it?

Q: Yeah.

A: Mhmm.

Q: This must have been kind of a swampy area.

A: It was. It was. We bought...at the time when we bought, we bought the highest lot in that area. That's why we're down at the end of the street instead of down near Eleven Mile Road...

Q: Mhmm.

A: ...because it was higher and it come on a slant down. We didn't buy the first lot, which was about the same as ours, because you think of improvements and everything, and we thinkin' paving on two streets, we mightn't maybe couldn't afford it. You know, money was tight then. You never know...I didn't have much, you know. And...

Q: Mhmm. That's pretty slick, because a lot of people don't think of things like that.

A: We thought of everything like that.

Q: Yeah.

A: Really we did. And we liked the school because it was right across the street from us.

Q: Now...now I wanted to ask you about that, the two-room school. Now that was which one?

A: Koss.

Q: Koss School.

A: Uh huh.

Q: That was a wooden school building...

A: Right. Wooden school building. It had a building...it had a room on the north side and a room on the south side, and the center part was like a furnace room and a coat room where they hung the coats and things.

Q: Okay. That's where the boys went to school.

A: That's where the boys went to school.

Q: Okay. And when they were out of elementary school, they went to high school here at just...

A: Yeah, but now this school--the other school—was built before Jack was in school.

Q: The new high school?

[Transcription by John Weigel ends. Transcription by Matt Zalewski begins].

A: No, no. The elementary school down there by me. We had made an addition on, you know...

Q: Oh, no kidding?

A: Yeah.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: Now that one down by you, that's not Koss, that's...

A: No, it was...

Q: That's Schoenhals?

A: ...it was Koss. And then it went to Vandenberg.

Q: Okay.

A: And then it was changed to Schoenhal.

Q: Schoenhals, yeah, okay. So Jack got to go to the building that's there now.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Well...not...well, it's had an addition since Jack was there even. But it was made first into a ten room...ah, you know...a...a...building, and then I think it's twenty-two now, if I'm not mistakin'. Something like that.

Q: What happened to the two-room, the Koss building?

A: They...

Q: Is that the one that burned, or...?

A: No. They kind of build over it.

Q: Okay.

A: You know, and, uh, [laughter] the kids would go in there and they was still workin' and they rented the Madison Methodist Church.

Q: Okay.

A: And Jim, with their son, they went, ah, had a building over at Monroe where the Monroe School is, where the b...board office is now.

Q: Did you say they went to the Kendall School, too, or they didn't go to the Kendall School?

A: No, my kids didn't go to the Kendall School.

Q: Okay. Do you remember the Kendall School?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Where was it located at first?

A: Ah, it...

Q: Do you remember where it was?

A: The first time I knew about it was, um, on Lincoln.

Q: On Lincoln. At Wolverine.

A: Where the Roosevelt sc...yeah, where Roosevelt used to be.

Q: Okay. You don't have any idea where the Kendall school was built, do you? 'Cause we've been trying to track that down for ages...

A: You might...

Q: ...and we've never been able to do it.

A: ...find that in that article I just showed you. It might be in there.

Q: Okay. 'Cause we can't find anything certified...it's like...

A: Uh huh.

Q: Yeah, okay. Ummm, let's see what else? Ummm, well, what were some of the obstacles or difficulties encountered in raising a family in the early...early years here?

A: You know, Bill, we didn't have the problems people have today. I would hate to be raising children today, honestly. We...the...first place, there was plenty of room to play, you know. It wasn't congested.

Q: You didn't have to worry about cars.

A: You didn't have to worry about too many cars. You didn't have to worry about, ah, your kids getting into too much trouble because everybody knew everybody.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And, somebody see Myers' kid doin somethin', they'd come tell you, and you go out and see what it is, you know...we don't really...we didn't have that problem.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: It was easy to raise kids then, compared to today. I would hate to raise kids today.

Q: Okay. You know, one thing I wanted to ask you about that I haven't asked you yet...what did Bill do? What was his occupation?

A: My husband was uh...he worked at Briggs Manufacturing Company...

Q: In Detroit.

A: In Detroit. And then Briggs sold out to Chrysler and...

Q: Okay.

A: ...Chrysler, he went with Chrysler.

Q: That's why you always drive a Chrysler?

A: Yeah! [laugh]

Q: Yeah, okay, and...and...uh...Jack does too.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, okay.

A: And I'm trying to get Jim to.

Q: Okay.

A: And you, too, if you want to.

Q: Well that's a good company. I bought it for years.

A: You'd better believe it.

Q: Yeah.

A: And, uh, they make good products and I figure that they...they kept us all of our lives. You know, my husband worked for it.

Q: What did he do?

A: Well, see, well, at first, he was...um...he drove a hi-lo.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay? And then later, he was...um...in management.

Q: Okay.

A: That was at Briggs, now.

Q: He was a pretty talented guy, because he designed your house, didn't he?

A: He sure was. Yes.

Q: Floor plan and everything. Build the cupboards, cabinets.

A: Mmhmm, Mmhmm.

Q: Okay. And he didn't have any formal training in that, he just did that on his own.

A: Well, he had worked for a builder a little bit.

Q: Oh, did he?

A: Just a little bit.

Q: Okay.

A: When he was a kid, like fourteen years old. Uh...you asked me a question, what was it? Oh, what else did he do?

Q: Right.

A: Okay. In 19...I think it was around 1950...

Q: Okay.

A: ...it looked like Chrysler was going under, you know, they were having lots of problems...

Q: Right. They were having a hard time them, yeah.

A: Okay...then my husband went into, ah, modernization contractin'.

Q: Okay.

A: And he did that on the side.

Q: Okay.

A: Several times, he wanted to...um...drop the shop, and go in that full time, but we always thought of the benefits, you know...that came up later, and...

Q: Yeah.

A: ...my husband was, ah...he wouldn't beat anybody for anything, you know. Like, he might go and bid on a job, and if he bid eight hundred dollars, somebody else would bid twelve hundred dollars; and this happened with a friend of ours...

Q: Mhmm.

A: ...Art Stokowski. Uh, Bill gave him a bid, and the other guy gave him a bid...now everybody got their material from the same place.

Q: Okay. Where did you go when you bought your material?

A: Miller Wholesale on Ten Mile Road in Hazel Park.

Q: Okay.

A: And, um, Art thought Bill's work couldn't be as good, so Bill showed him some of the work or something. Well he says, "well, then the material can't be as good," you know. And he...he got the other guy because it was more money, but my husband would not charge what he should have, but...you know. He says

- they can't afford it...he didn't know how they could afford it...whether they could nor not...but he just was that kind a guy.
- Q: Did he do most of his work in this area, when he was doing his remodeling?
- A: No. He...um...he did work all over. He did...he did a lot here, he did a lot in the Mt. Clemens area, he did a lot in...um...in Royal Oak. Did some in Ferndale.
- Q: When he did...now, you said his supplier was in Hazel Park, Miller...
- A: Yeah.
- Q: ...were there places here? Was there John R. Lumber here where he could have gotten it...
- A: Jim's Lumber.
- Q: ...or McGin...Jim's?
- A: Jim's Lumber. Now, Jim's Lumber, he got all his lumber from Jim's Lumber. That was Jim Cruise.
- Q: And he was where?
- A: Down just past Lincoln.
- Q: Okay.
- A: South of Lincoln.
- Q: Okay. Is there...is there still...
- A: There's a building there, but it's not Jim's Lumber.
- Q: That's that National Scaffold there.
- A: I think it is.
- Q: Oh, okay.
- A: It's across from where the auction place used to be...Jack's Auction.
- Q: Okay. Yeah, I think that's what's there now...
- A: Right, mmhmm.
- Q: ...is National Scaffold or Ladder, or whatever was there.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. Now was there a McGinnis Lumber too? There was...ah...down on Ten Mile, wasn't there, over there?

A: It think on Ten Mile Road, yeah.

Q: We've heard a lot about Jim's Lumber.

A: Yeah, well, Jim was a personal friend, and you know, he...

Q: Did he live close to you?

A: No, he always lived down in...on Dallas, which isn't far, you know...

Q: No, yeah, okay.

A: But...um...he was from Georgia, also.

Q: Okay.

A: I was from Georgia originally.

Q: What made your family--just as an aside--what made your family come from Georgia to Michigan? Was it the jobs?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes. My dad was...um...a farma', and we always had plenty to eat because he was sort a like a truck farma'.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And I had a cousin that lived here, Bill [Simmerly?], and he kept telling my husband, "you should bring those girls and mom up here," he says, "you can do so much better in Michigan," you know, and so forth...

Q: Where did he live?

A: He lived in Detroit someplace.

Q: Okay.

A: But actually, it was the best move we ever made in our life.

Q: Did you dad continue truck farming when he came here?

A: Oh, no...

Q: No, he went to work in a shop.

A: He went to work in a shop. Don't ask me which one, I...

Q: No, that's okay.

A: Ummm...International? Was there an International Truck?

Q: Very possible.

A: Yeah, I think so, and he helped build those.

Q: Okay. Ummm...I'm aware of your past and present involvement with various facets of community life. Were there any factors...how did you get involved, or become so involved, in the community? I mean, people can live here all their lives and never do a thing. Why were you...why is it that you became interested in, say, the school district or whatever?

A: Bill, some people are born to work, some people volunteer. I really believe I was put on this earth to be a volunteer, to...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...serve other people.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And I've always done it, and I enjoy it. Never did anything I don't like.

Q: When was it that you started? Was it when you were very young? Did you have small children? Or did you...

A: When I was in high school.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. When I was in high school, we had a couple teachers, Gertrude Brown and May Bradfoot. And our superintendent was um...our principal, not our superintendent...was James Truax. He was later killed in an accident. But those people helped me adjust from being a southerner...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...to a northerner, you know.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And they did more for me than anybody I ever had in my life, I think. And, um, my dad made the right move when he moved up here, because he had a drinking problem down there and he got out of his company...

Q: Not enough to do.

A: That's right.

Q: Mmhmm. I was always very impressed...um...just as another side note, I was always very impressed with the Madis...uhh... Van Dyke School District because that's where I went, and it always seemed to me that the Madison School District operates under kind of the same philosophy, I mean, you work real hard...

A: That's right.

Q: ...without a whole lot...

A: That's right.

Q: ...and you turn out some real good kids.

A: That's right. And that's...I...I...I think that I had a lot of influence on that.

Q: From Van Dyke.

A: From Van Dyke.

Q: Yeah.

A: Because I loved that school district. As of now, when ah, well just a few years ago, Madison played Lincoln at a ball game over here...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...them Lincoln kids were very, very rude...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Very, very rude.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Doggone I called up the principal and I told him. I said, "I'm an alumni and I was ashamed of them.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: He wrote me back a nice letter and apologized. He says "it'll never happen again," and it never happened again as far as I know.

Q: That's good.

A: But I was very faithful to th...to there. And I'm very faithful to Madison and when they play the school song over there I stand and when they play our school song I stand.

Q: By that same token, when did you get involved with the Madison School District?

A: When did I...

Q: When the kids were little?

A: No...yeah...when Jim was...well, Jim was...when we came up here. When we moved over here. My husband worked afternoons, and we had no car, except he had the money to...to work.

Q: Okay. There was no way for you to get around except walking, right?

A: Right, except walk. And I had a baby buggy and I used to put Jim in the baby buggy and pull up here and watch the ball games.

Q: Over dirt roads? Pretty much.

A: Yeah...

Q: 'Cause there was no pavement, right...

A: ...there was all dirt roads. No...nothing else but dirt roads. Then one that I remember first playing ball on the team that I used to watch was Chuck Skinner.

Q: Okay.

A: And...uh, I went to PTA, which was right across the street from me. You see, in Van Dyke, the last year I was in school, they had PTSA, which was Parent-Teacher-Students Organization...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and that's how I got into PTA.

Q: Okay.

A: And so when we moved over here, I just automatically went into PTA.

Q: Okay. And you say that was across the street from you? In the Koss School?

A: Right.

Q: Okay. That was for the whole district?

A: Yeah, well, we had our own little one but they had...

Q: Little group.

A: ...a...uh, central one was for the whole district. Yeah, each school had their own, you know, and then we had the council that was...covered the whole district.

Q: Now, before we get into your actual involvement on the board, as a PTA member, what were some of the things that you were concerned about back in the '30's and the '40's about the school district?

A: Well, about the school district?

Q: Well, some of the things that, as a parent, you wanted.

A: Alright. What we wanted for the kids...

Q: Right, right.

A: ...when I was in the PTA.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay. There was no place for 'em to go, except playin' outside.

Q: Outside.

A: So...um...Helen Wells, a very dear friend of mine, and I decided that our kids had to have something to do. So we got to where we would have movies at the school on Saturday afternoons. We would get those ones that you get free from the library down in Detroit...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and...and...we'd show them, you know, and...

Q: Who went and picked them up? That's a pretty good piece.

A: We did.

Q: Okay...what...

A: Her...

Q: Bill drive down...she went...

A: No, her and I. We...

Q: Okay.

A: Then they got to where they'd mail them to us, and then we'd mail them back, you know. But...um...they'd pick out...we...we'd tell them something what we had, and they kept a record of what we used, you know, and they have to...that's how we started out. And then we decided that we didn't like our kids going around begging at Halloween, so we had a big Halloween party over there at school, and we'd have everybody in the area; now, I'm talkin' about the Mount Royal subdivision. That's Park Court, Hales, and over to Dequindre.

Q: Okay.

A: Everybody would put in donations, and we'd buy stuff. The kids would have a bag. They'd go down the line. You'd put in stuff in the bag just like was out beggin', and then we'd have hot dogs and stuff to keep them so that they would rather come there than go begging, you know, and they didn't go beggin'.

Q: Don't you think it's interesting that now people are getting back to these organized Halloween parties? That's something that you guys did years ago, and I never...I never knew that.

A: Yep. We did that and we...something else that we did, we started. My...my Jim's class started the all night parties after graduation. Mr. Wilkinson says "it can't be done, it can't be done," you know. And I said "Mr. Wilkinson, can I take charge of it, and I'll take responsibility." "It can't be done, it can't be done." But we kinda, you know, just kept talkin' and talkin', finally he says, "well, okay." I says, "and you and your wife come, we'd like to have you as our guest," you know. And they did, believe me, they did, and they stayed all night, too. It went perfect.

Q: Now what did you do at an all night party back then?

A: Back then? We had...um...uh...juke...juke box, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: And we had games. Oh, all kinds of games. I remember having a room fixed up like...like you use for Halloween, and scary things in it and have 'em blindfolded and touched, you know...and I remember...just one of the things that I remember, we had, like, [inaudible] on the water, you know...

Q: Mhmm.

A: And we had a pan of water and had our, you know, had it written on it, and sticks him in the pan of water...stuff like that, just...

Q: Yeah.

A: Kid games!

Q: Just fun stuff.

A: Fun stuff.

Q: Now you did this where, in the old high school building?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Good...well attended? Lotta people?

A: Almost a hundred percent attended, and the parents, just...it...everyone did well...

Q: Ate it up, yeah

A: It was like a big party. The next day we went out to...umm...Bob-Lo. We left there, went home took a shower, and come back and went to Bob-Lo. Made a whole day of it.

Q: Did you have any costs for this party, when you did it?

A: Cost?

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. Everybody, you know, the parents...

Q: Pitched in.

A: Yeah, and they, I'll tell you, there's no place like Madison Heights for people helpin'. All the business people and everybody else. They just pitched in just great. You...you know, I got...I kind of got a reputation when I'd walk into a store, they'd ask "what do you want today, Lois?" you know, because I was always after something, but...

Q: Some of the places that you would go to for donations, what were some of the businesses?

A: Oh, the big ones?

Q: Yeah.

A: That used to donate constantly, constantly. Jake Ancona, from Ancona's, used to be down here.

Q: Okay. I remember that one, yeah.

A: All right. John R. Lumber, Dunn, Katz.

Q: Okay.

A: Wonderful, wonderful person. Mike Krizina used to have the...um...little shop down this side of Dequindre on Eleven Mile Road.

Q: What was his shop?

A: I'm trying to think. Something 'matics...oh my...

Q: Automobiles? Something to do with automobiles, or...okay.

A: Ah...and across the street, and by him there, was...um...Bryson Eleven Mile Auto Collision.

Q: Okay.

A: Great people. I'm telling you, great people. They onl...they didn't only give of their money, they gave of their time, if you needed it. Like Jim's Lumber, another one. We used to sell hot dogs and coffee at the football games, so one time, I said to Jim, I said, "you know, we really should get us a place because we have nothing there," we sellin' right off the ground, you know. We had 'em sittin' there in buckets, sellin' 'em, and heated them in the school if they went, took them over there.

Q: Uh huh.

A: But people bought 'em, because, they, you know, we...we were workin' hard.

Q: Sure.

A: And, um, one day he called me up and he says, "Lois, come over here, I want to show you something." So Bill and I went over. He had built us, this, um, it was four walls, you know, and you could lay them out and make, um...it was fixed real good where you could use it for servin' counter, and...uh...it had a roof over it.

Q: Like a stand.

A: Yeah! A real stand. That's exactly what it was. He put it on a truck and brought it over here...over there at the Madison, what is now Huffman Field.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And brought it over there, and we had that after that, you know.

Q: Now, you say you went over to Huff...Huffman Field, is that where the games were played?

A: That's where the games were played.

Q: Oh, okay. Okay, that was when the old high school was here.

A: Yeah.

Q: You didn't have a field around the old high school to play on.

A: We did at first. That Chuck Skinner and them used to play here, but then they moved over there, and we got lights.

Q: Bigger area, is that why?

A: Yeah.

Q: Because it was lighter, too.

A: Well, we had it lighted.

Q: Okay.

A: That was...that was something in itself. We had a game schedule for the night...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...that that light was supposed to be finished and we could go you know, and they had...it was running late. Mr. Wilkinson wanted to call off the game, and the guy kept saying "no, no, I'll have it ready, I'll have it ready." The game was supposed to start at eight o'clock, seven thirty the lights went on.

Q: Oh, you're kidding me.

A: No I'm not! And it was...it was really great. It was...

Q: Now that park...that's a city park now.

A: Yeah.

Q: But that wasn't a city park when you were using it.

A: Oh, no, no.

Q: That was owned by the school district...

A: Right.

Q: ...and then you obviously later on sold it off...

A: Right. Right

Q: ...to the...to the city.

A: We made a lot of good...uh...good exchanges with the city, Bill.

Q: And several places that I'm aware of.

A: I don't know if you are aware of the Halfman School. Right now it's on city property.

Q: No, I didn't know that.

A: We rented it for a hundred years for a couple bucks.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Okay?

Q: Okay.

A: And...uh...they maintain the park, and we maintain the school.

Q: That's a good deal.

A: They maintain the park.

Q: Well, our branch library is in a former school building.

A: Right, right.

Q: The building we're in right now.

A: Right. See, Madison, we never had money, so we never made the mistake of over-building. Lamphere over-built, but they had to at the time because...

Q: Because they had so many kids.

A: ...they had kids, kids, kids, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: But we, instead of that, we rented trailers.

Q: Mobile schools, almost.

A: Mobile schools.

Q: Yeah.

A: And we had four of those back in the back of the new school over here after we built this, is when we really got the rush of high school kids, and we had those in there and certain classes would go in there, you know. The teachers liked it. The kids liked it too.

Q: Well, correct me if I'm wrong, but you not only had those trailers, but in the even earlier years, say around...you wouldn't...naturally, you wouldn't be familiar with 1915 or 1916, but the Kendall school was a building that was movable because it was here on John R...

A: Right.

Q: ...and Andover, and then they moved it over to Lincoln and Wolverine, and even though it was a...a wooden school building they picked it up and moved it where they needed it.

A: Right. That's right.

Q: So you were pretty forward thinking in that respect.

A: Yeah. I...I think...well we had to.

Q: Necessity.

A: Necessity.

Q: Lack of money, and uh...

A: Absolutely and...and...

Q: ...the need to do a job without a whole lot of resources.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. Um...

A: And it's fun.

Q: When...when did you get your...begin your involvement with...because you were a Board member.

A: How...how come I was a Board member, or was a Board member?

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay. We had a man on the Board, God bless him, he's gone. But he told us over at this school, they were going to build a school, they were going to add on it one more school. They were going to build a building over there.

Q: Okay.

A: And he says "they don't need it, we need it here."

Q: Where? In the Koss area...

A: Koss area.

Q: ...where you were living, down by your neighborhood there.

A: Yes, right across the street from me.

Q: Who was the man? What was the man's name? Do you remember?

A: Do I have to say that?

Q: No, ma'm you don't.

A: No, I...I just not to...

Q: Okay.

A: ...he's still got family.

Q: Oh, that's quite alright.

A: Okay. And, uh, he did...he told us a lie. He said they didn't need it over there as much as they needed it here.

Q: Okay.

A: Well, I was president of PTA, so I said to Mrs. Wells, "you and I will attend the meetings, and we will see exactly what is going on, because they don't need a school over there, and why are they building it when we need it over here?"

Q: Mmhmm.

A: So we went to the meeting.

Q: Now, just for the record, Monroe School is where? Where the administration building is.

A: On Dallas, yes.

Q: On Dallas.

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. So we went to the meeting and what we found out...the...the reasoning why they wanted a school over there. By this time the pavement had gone in, you know...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and so forth. Well, these kids over here had to walk across John R, which was not safe...

Q: Okay, right.

A: ...and so forth and so on. So we came back to our PTA and I said to the people, I said, "we've been misinformed." I says, "those kids need a school worse and we have one here..."

Q: Okay.

A: "...They have nothing there. So, we sold them the idea, and then they decided that...the school board decided...that they were going to have my husband on the school board. So they came over and asked him to run for the School Board, and he said, "Absolutely not. I'm not interested." He says, "To the degree of doing it," he says, "I'm interested enough to see that it's done." But he says, "Get my wife, she would do it." "We don't want a woman." Women are not...[inaudible]...you know, they had no women on school boards.

Q: They didn't know you, did they?

A: And Bill says, "well, you're missin' the boat, you know." So the next year they came back, and they wanted Bill to run again, and Bill says, "no." And I guess one of them got a little bit nasty when said...he said "get my wife," said, "She'd be great." So, he left and my husband...the neighbor had come in...[Helcia?] Cooper, and...uh...she says "I don't like the way he said that." Bill says, "I don't either." He says, "Go get the petitions. My wife will run." And I said, "no, I don't want to, I don't want to." He said, "you will." He said, "doggone..." he says, "let 'em know that a woman can do it," you know. So he and her and the neighbors and everybody circulated the petitions. Well, I was known out here real well because I had took the school census for years...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and stuff like that, and everybody...

Q: Were on the PTA.

A: And PTA.

Q: You were a joiner and a volunteer anyway.

A: That's right.

Q: Okay.

A: I was in on the, uh, we were going to build a community building, over where the old city hall used to be here.

Q: That's on John R, right?

A: On John R, on the other side of Gregg.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. And, uh, so forth...I was on that committee. I was on everything...Parks and Recreation, and everything else, you know. Ah, wheel and horse gets the appointments, I guess. I enjoyed it, too. I enjoyed it, and I'm...I'm a person...I had to have something to do. I just cannot sit and waste time.

Q: Well, Madison Heights seems to be...now, I'm sure this is to, you know, a certain degree, all communities are like this...but Madison Heights had a lot of famous women. A lot of...

A: Oh, yeah!

Q: ...women that were a driving force.

A: Right.

Q: Virginia Solberg...

A: Right,

Q: is an example...

A: Right, right, right.

Q: ...yourself is another example.

A: Right. Virginia Sol...

Q: Ann Edwards...uhhh...

A: Mmhmm, mmhmm. Ann Edwards is one of the people that I remember first when I moved here. She was a very...a very lovely person. Virginia Solberg came in a little later, after I was here. I remember the first time I met her was at a PTA...an afternoon thing that we had for the teachers over at Koss, and she came in, and...her daughter Joyce, sweetest girl I ever saw...came in and she says...uh...I mean, Miss Virginia came in and she says, "oh I know you, who you are, you're Joyce's teacher. You're Mrs. Deal, aren't you?" And I said, "no, I'm not." And she says, "you have to be." She says, "She described you." And I said, "no, no, Mrs. Deal is over..." you know...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...and Mrs. Beal was chubby, and so was I. I'm fat [laugh], and so forth, and Virginia just assumed it was her, you know. But anyway, we got to be friends then and, uh...

Q: Okay, now you...

A: ...started working.

Q: ...to get back to your school board. You ran for the school board. How did you do, as far as votes?

A: Well, I didn't vote for myself. I was real dumb in politics. I didn't know at first to vote for the self. I thought that would be real selfish, so I voted for the other guy.

Q: Okay.

A: I really did. I didn't leave...

Q: Okay. What were the results? How well did you do? Being a woman...

A: Well, I...I drowned them.

Q: Did you?

A: The only thing was, I felt really bad because there was one man on the board that really wanted me to run, Mr. Jeswine, Paul Jeswine.

Q: Okay.

A: And he says, "I will help you all I can," and he was a...a real nice man. He got beat...

Q: Oh, that's too bad.

A: ...and I won, and I...I felt real bad about that. I really did. But he didn't. He says...he said "I had to give up my seat sooner or later, and I'd rather you have it than anybody else."

Q: Give it to you. How'd the board accept you came on, being that you were the only woman?

A: That is worth a million dollars. I came in and Mr. Orville Fraser, very dear friend, so I don't mind using his name in this, okay? He sit there and he was President of the board, and he looked at me and he says, "okay," he says, "What's your

gripe?” And I looked at him and I said, “Gripe, what makes you think I have a gripe?” He says, “what are you doing here?” I says, “I was elected, don’t you remember?” And he says, “yeah, but what...why did you run?” He says, “You wanted to do somethin’, you wanted to straighten up, what was it?”

Q: You gotta have an axe to grind, right?

A: Yeah, and I said, “Hey, I just want to help.” I says, “I...I...I don’t know a thing about it.” I says, “I want to learn and I want to help.” So, for about three meetings, I didn’t say anything. I’d just sit there and listen. And they got a lot of respect for me, and they seen that I really wasn’t there to cause trouble, and he turned out to be one of the best friends I ever had! Really. You know. But it was just funny, he, you know...

Q: Didn’t take you long to get accepted.

A: No, no, not at all. But see, they all knew me, but most people, when they do go on the school board, they go on because of animosity against...

Q: Yeah.

A: ...something or somebody.

Q: They got something they want to get accomplished.

A: You know. And I really didn’t. The only thing I went on...I did think the school should be over there.

Q: Okay...

A: And I figured...

Q: ...over where Monroe is.

A: Yes, and if I lived in...over where the other man wanted it, he’d a lived there too. And if I lived there, and people knew me, and they know I’m honest...if I go back and tell them that this school is needed over here worse, the kids need it worse...we at least had something, you know.

Q: You didn’t have bussing.

A: Absolutely not.

Q: So the kids would have had to walk.

A: Absolutely. We didn’t have cars where people could take them like they do now.

Q: Which, why, from the Monroe area, that's a piece for a kid to walk...

A: That's right.

Q: ...on bad roads.

A: That's right. So, um, they got it, you know.

Q: Okay. What were some of the other problems that you faced while you were a board member?

A: Buildings. Oooh, we was short of buildings. We had...every building had to have a...we built some new buildings, and we had to have additions on every one. Made two...two additions...I don't think we had three, unless it was the old high school here, we might have. Uhh, buildings, buildings, buildings, and...

Q: You took advantage of WPA...

A: Oh yeah.

Q: ...because this building that we're in now, the Branch Library, was built by the WPA.

A: Yep. And, uh, excuse me, we took advantage of...uh...when the government, during the war the government built the old Roosevelt School.

Q: Okay. That was where?

A: On the corner of Wolverine, and, uh, Lincoln.

Q: Okay. That's about where the Kendall School used to be.

A: Yeah, it's exactly where it used be.

Q: Okay.

A: And, they built it in, after the war, and everything they put it up for sale to the highest bidder, and we got, well, you know, we...we bid on it, so we bid...this was the year I came on the board, by the way...we bid ten thousand dollars. Nobody else bid. We could a got it for five thousand. Who wanted a school down in here, you know.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: So that was...that really helped the school district that we got it for ten thousand dollars.

Q: Before I forget, you were on the board...what was the time? From what year to what year?

A: I was elected in 1951.

Q: Okay.

A: And I served until 19...well, I took office in 1952. I...okay. And I served 'til, um...twenty-nine years. That would be 19...

Q: Twenty-nine years on the board.

A: Straight.

Q: So you did really see a lot of different kinds of problems.

A: Mhmm. Seen it go from a very small district to a pretty good-sized district, and...uh, oh it was an experience. I wouldn't take anything for it.

Q: Always without a lot of resources, though.

A: Yes...we never...

Q: You were never real well set.

A: Honest, Bill, you might not believe this, but it's the truth, and I have mothers...if they was still around, could attest to it. We used to stand on the line, on the side of the line, football players' mothers, with needles and threads, and when they'd come off, if their uniform had got torn, by somebody pullin' it, we'd sew it back up real quick and then go back in. Now that's the honest to God truth. That happened.

Q: Well I can believe it...

A: Yes.

Q: I can...Alfred Ryder told me that when he...Albert Ryder...told me that when he graduated from Madison High School, they had one tie, and they took the graduation pictures and he would put, you know...the kids would put the tie on, and the next one that would go in would put that same tie on.

A: Yep, yep. You know, the first time I ever saw Madison School District, I was in high school. And they had a woman... Superintendent Mogle, I think was her last name...

Q: She was a principal, too, wasn't she?

A: Principal, maybe it was principal.

Q: Okay.

A: No, she was Superintendent.

Q: Okay.

A: Principal, whatever. Anyway, we had b...played ball over at Clawson, basketball.

Q: Okay.

A: We were on our way home with our coach, and she says "I want to show you pearls something," she says um, "in progress." She called it, oh, not political, but some name she used, anyway...in progress, and we drove by here just as they had the chair, and they was carrying the chair and her sittin' at it outside. And, uh, we parked over across the street and watch.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Yeah. First time I ever knew there was a Lincoln School...I mean Madison School.

Q: That's when you were going to Lincoln.

A: That's when I was going to Lincoln, yep.

Q: That's funny that you...that you wound up here.

A: Isn't it, though?

Q: Yeah.

A: It really is.

Q: Yeah.

A: And it's funny...the funniest thing to me is that we finally ended up building a building over there where, the first time I saw it, I said to my husband, "wouldn't that make a beautiful high school setting?" And who would have ever thought...

Q: That's really strange.

A: ... I would have been on the board? I never...why, I would have never thought I would have been on the school board. And I knew I could help sell that, you know, not as a board member, but by talkin' to my neighbors and stuff. And that's what I always preferred to do was kind of work the background. Like, I'd rather be workin' the kitchen and not the truck.

Q: Like Dorothy Lents...ah...former city manager used to say, she used to "sit like a mouse," and just listen and take it all in.

A: She did, but I didn't. I always had a big mouth!

Q: Oh, okay! Ummm...any other problems? Building problems, any other problems?

A: Oh yeah. We had a teacher here once that was I guess a sex deviate.

Q: Okay.

A: Uh, we had little problems with that, and Mr. Wilkinson would...bless his heart, he's still living. I hear from him every year....ah, he gave...well, I told him that I had heard this from parents. He says, "well I bet my life on it." And I said, "Mr. Wilkinson, don't bet your life on anything, because you don't know, you know."

Q: Mm.

A: So, he wouldn't do anything about it. So, I went to Bob Richardson, who was police chief. And I told Bob, Bob says "well," he says, "I'll tell you who will work it." He says, "Bob Liike," he says, "we'll catch him if it's true." And I told him what I had been told that it was happening under the stair well here at school.

Q: This is where? At the high school?

A: The old high school. And...uh...he says "we'll set it up." And he set it up, and Bob Liike caught them.

Q: He was a police man.

A: No. Bob Liike was our assistant superintendent.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: And he caught them.

Q: Okay.

A: And he called Bob Richardson, and we went to court, and we got rid of the guy. But, what upset me the most was that Mr. Wilkinson gave him a recommendation at another school, and I didn't think he should. And I asked him "where did he go?" and he wouldn't tell us. And, it was two years later, he was in here one day, and he mentioned something about this teacher and where he was...and I wrote that down real quick, and I run home and I made a quick phone call, and I talked to the superintendent down there, and I said "you watch this guy. This is why he was let go from our school."

Q: Mmhmm.

A: They found it immediately, in fact they were having trouble, that's why Mr. Wilkinson had mentioned it...they were having a little trouble with him, but he didn't tell us that. So, about two years after that...well, I told Mr. Wilkinson what I did. I says "I called him and told him, because I don't think he should...that's kids. It might not be our kids, but somebody else's kids." So Mr. Wilkinson said, about two years later, I came into a board meeting, and he says "I want you to know, he says, "that teacher killed himself...committed suicide." And I said, "well, I'm sorry, but I'm not sorry that he did, because," I said, "he was hurting kids," you know. And they caught him. He did commit suicide, but that's his problem, not mine.

Q: Pretty weighty problem.

A: Yes, absolutely. Better him than kids.

Q: But, very similar to problems that we have today.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Th...they're not all that much different, are they?

A: But, it was...it was a lot less of them, or else, they were found less, or something, I don't know.

Q: Maybe. Maybe not publicized as much.

A: And, yeah, I think that, too.

Q: Because this isn't something that was common knowledge in the community...

A: Right.

Q: ...probably, it was kept a little more...

A: Right.

Q: ...quiet.

A: But we didn't have unions to deal with. I remember when we first took the unions, MEA and FTD were both trying to get it...I don't know if it's FTD...yeah, Federal Teachers Association...were trying to get in here...

Q: Okay.

A: And, I remember making the remark, "well, if we have to take one, we might as well take MEA because they're the less radical..."

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...which they were.

Q: Okay.

A: So we accepted them, and...but they have been good. Our teachers have been good. Like this year, the people are, you know, screamin' for money, and everybody's gettin' it. Two...I think two percent cost of living, you know. Our teachers are good. Most of them are great.

Q: So it was a little bit easier, though without the unions, than it was after they came in?

A: I...I don't think so, really.

Q: Not really. Not with your teachers.

A: Nuh, uh. I don't think...

Q: Everybody seems to work together, pretty much in the school district...

A: Mmhmm, mmhmm, mmhmm. There were...we used to call it the "Madison family..."

Q: Okay.

A: ...and it was kind of like that.

Q: Can you...[tape ran out, then continued on other side]...for bad or good or whatever.

A: Naw...

Q: Just some different people that you know that you can...

A: Dr. Spothow, I think that was pronunciation [sic]. He was here when I first came here. Mr. Wilkinson took his place.

Q: He was the first superintendent, or one of them?

A: That I...that I knew.

Q: That you knew. Okay.

A: Okay. He went from here, either to Central Michigan, or he went on to Northern Michigan, in college...

Q: Okay.

A: ...as the dean of the college.

Q: Okay.

A: I knew him...um...I'm gonna go to paper and kind of watch this now.

[Transcription by Matthew Zalewski ends, transcription by John Weigel resumes.]

Q: Okay.

A: Mr. Decker of course I know. I know Jack. I know...

Q: Did you hire Larry Decker?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were you on the board when they...we was hired?

A: Yeah, as...

Q: Fantastic.

A: ...a teacher. As a teacher. I was on board one time as a teacher, and also when we put him in as a superintendant.

Q: Mmhmm. Nice guy.

- A: Mmhhh. Mmhhh. Very nice guy. And his wife was a nice guy. Good Christian people.
- Q: Mmhhh. Who else?
- A: Now you're talkin' just about...you're not talkin' just about schools, or are you?
- Q: Ohhh...any...any...
- A: Don Scott was an...one of our...he was our coach. He was my kids' coach.
- Q: Mm-kay.
- A: Fantastic guy.
- Q: Football coach.
- A: Mmhhh.
- Q: Okay.
- A: And he became an assistant principal at the Wilkinson School. He was fantastic with kids. A lot of people didn't like him. He was strict. He was one way all the time. I mean, he didn't lean here and lean there and change his mind. He had rules and those rules was kept, you know. And like [inaudible] Bob Blacke, had the...he had the dirtiest job of anybody because he was the one that negotiated the union contract, and he had to also see that it was fulfilled, so a lot of people loved to hate him, but they all admitted he was a fantastic man and...
- Q: Respected him.
- A: ...respected him, and he was great. I loved the guy. He was just, you know, of course...and he married one of our favorite teachers too, Kay Oberley.
- Q: Okay. You had a real special friend, Helen Hennesy.
- A: Yeah, Helen Hennesy and I get...
- Q: Still your special friend!
- A: Absolutely.
- Q: Mmhhh.
- A: Helen and I...I can remember the first time I saw her was here at the old school...

Q: High school.

A: Mmhhh...they were having gym, exercises for adult, and I was in it.

Q: She started that program, right?

A: I...

Q: Think so. When she...when we interviewed her, I thought she said...oh no, maybe not. Maybe she just taught in it.

A: I think...I think she came to it but I think she...she might have started it, but I don't think so.

Q: Okay.

A: And we also had a singing program here. I think that's the one Helen...I think she...she started the singing program.

Q: Okay.

A: And Mrs. Phipps over...that used to live over in that area, was the one that played the music for us and helped us also.

Q: She lived in what area, your area?

A: No, right over here across the street.

Q: From the Branch Library...

A: On Groveland, on Groveland.

Q: On Groveland, on Groveland. Okay.

A: And Gregg.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. Let's see who else I knew. Now some...Bill McCann is one of our teacher...he was one of our teachers over across the street from me. He's now principal. Now, I'm not talking about McCann in there...

Q: Jim. Yeah.

A: ...I'm talking about over...over in the...in [Heflin?].

Q: Any relation?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Okay.

A: A great guy.

Q: Okay.

A: Really a great guy. Most of ours were great guys, some teachers that...that are just outstanding wrapped the rules still with the system. He had a way with kids that a lot of people don't, you know, don't have. A lot of that's a gift I think when a person can relate with kids so well. Other people that I knew, I knew Judge Hartwick. I knew Judge Holland. I knew Judge Frank Dougherty, who taught me more than anybody else about law.

Q: This is where? They were local judges?

A: They were judges in Pontiac.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: Circuit Court judges.

Q: How did you meet them?

A: Servin' on jury.

Q: Okay.

A: And Arthur Smith, I mean Arthur Moore.

Q: Okay.

A: That was one of the greatest guys that ever lived. Now I...

Q: Now what was...who was Mr. Moore?

A: Mr. Moore was a judge also.

Q: Okay.

A: He was a youth judge, okay, worked with youth, and he wrote a book, "Johnny Delinquent." He gave me an autographed copy of it. Really good book. And you know, his idea of a delinquent child was a kid next door, never yours, you know.

- And that's true. Most people think somebody else's kid, but they don't see their own's fault.
- Q: We get...let's...let's talk a little bit about that. Back in those days, did you have a different approach...teachers aren't as free to discipline now as they used to be. I know my wife is a teacher. She teaches third grade. There are some real concerns about "Help my child to...to be a certain way, but don't do too much because it's not your right to do..."
- A: Right.
- Q: "...whatever."
- A: Right.
- Q: What was it like when you were on the school board? Did you have any problems with them?
- A: All right. Everybody wanted their child to be the best they could. And they felt...they felt if, you know, they didn't expect them to be...today I think they...I think a lot of parents expects the kids to raise the children. We didn't. We expected them to take over for the few hours they had 'em. We had 'em at home, and they take over if they was parents. That's what I always told my kids, "They're your parents 'til you get back here." You know.
- Q: Okay.
- A: And a lot of 'em was taught like that.
- Q: So you didn't have a whole lot of problems...
- A: We didn't have a lot of problems...
- Q: like that when you were on the board.
- A: ...no. And I never, in my life, heard anybody say "We'll sue you." You know.
- Q: Okay.
- A: That's why Jim's out of...out of teach, is because he just...the lack of discipline.
- Q: Um, there are several...there's a...a lady who's a reference librarian at the library, whose father used to teach in one of the school districts and he has a similar...
- A: Mmhmm.

Q: ...he had a similar complaint...

A: Mmhmm.

Q: ...that it's very much different now than...

A: Yes it is. And it's sad, you know, really, because the kids are the ones that's losing.

Q: Right. Other...other famous people that you may have...

A: Well I used to work for a newspaper, Madison News Weekly.

Q: Okay.

A: You know, I wrote...I wrote just...

Q: That was the Baker weekly?

A: Yup.

Q: Was that the Baker paper or was that...?

A: No, that was...still...

Q: Madison Weekly is...is...is still...yeah. Okay.

A: Yeah, but this was Madison News and it was done in Hazel Park.

Q: Okay.

A: A guy in Highland Park owned it.

Q: Okay.

A: I can't think of his name.

Q: You wrote a column?

A: Uh huh.

Q: No kidding.

A: And...

Q: Education-related column or just...?

A: No. No. It was more like a socially, you know, so...so...

Q: Gossip column!

A: Yeah! Sorta like that.

Q: Okay. What...what year was that? What [inaudible]?

A: Oh what years was that? That was...twenty two years. It started...I would say in the late 30s maybe. Early 40s anyway. And it lasted quite a while. Wilma Waldron was the editor after a while.

Q: Did you have a pen name or...what was the name of the column? Did it have a name? Byline or anything?

A: Let's see. I'm trying to think what the name of it was. It...

Q: Okay. That's all right.

A: I don't know. I can't just think.

Q: That's okay.

A: If I think of it, I'll tell you. But it was...coulda been "Here and There", something like that. But it was tellin', you know...I was tryin' to include the whole area, and...

Q: What's going on in southeast Oakland County.

A: Yeah. Well not...no, just in Madison area.

Q: Royal Oak Township.

A: Yeah.

Q: Madison Heights.

A: Yeah. But I was tryin' to not just, you know, give it to my section over there, because I was representing everybody, and I was trying to scatter it around [inaudible].

Q: Okay. How did you get...how'd you get involved in something like this?

A: Mr. Horkey suggested...they...they were looking for somebody...

Q: Township supervisor.

A: Mmhm.

Q: Okay. So you knew him too.

A: Oh I knew him real well, yes. In fact he had a very...he's the one that caused me to be able to stay on the school board so long, because he'd always said the first...first time I ran...and he didn't ask me to run. A lot of people thought he did. He did not. But when I first told him that I was going to run, he says, "Well I want to tell you something." He says, "The people can take you off just as easily as they can put you on." He says, "Never forget how you got on." And every year he would say that to me. "Never forget the same people that put you on can take you off."

Q: Don't forget the people.

A: Right.

Q: And I never did. And I stayed with the people. And I was always honest with them. Like, for instance, one day...one time we was talking about a millage or something, and somebody said sumpin' about watchin' our tax dollars. And they looked at me and says "I worked for you." And says, "I expect you to watch our tax dollars." And I says, "Well wait a minute." I says, "I didn't tell you I would watch your tax dollars." I says, "I didn't go over...over here for that. I went over here to help the kids." And I says, "If it costs a few bucks, it costs a few bucks, but that's what I'm on here for is to help the kids." And that's all I ever wanted it. A lot of people thought I was doing it to get into politics. Business people, all of 'em, tryin' to get me, they'd run...

Q: You never actually did get into politics, though, did you?

A: Absolutely not. Absolutely not. No, and I...I resent anybody that ever saying I was political on the school board, because I wasn't. Really. I...it's just a service, a community service.

Q: Millage campaigns. You...you mentioned millage campaigns.

A: All right.

Q: Millage campaigns today are in terrible shape. The other day we had Lakeshore millage...

A: I know.

Q: This was an operating millage, was defeated.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: How were...Madison doesn't have...

A: Madison School District...

Q: ...have a whole lot of problems, does it?

A: ...when that...when I was on there for twenty-nine years, whenever we had a millage, we told it like it was. It was put out just exactly the way we wanted it. Oncet...

Q: When you say "just exactly the way we wanted it" you explained it so that people understood it, is what you're saying.

A: Yes, we...and the way...and that's what we did...is what the way we explained....

Q: The way it was, that's what happened.

A: ...and it was what the kids had to have.

Q: Very good. Okay.

A: Now once we had one fail, and the reason it failed was my workers told me, "If you don't put a pool in that new high school, we will vote it down." I says, "But we can't afford the pool. We can't afford it. We can't afford it."

Q: Mmhmm.

A: "We'll pay for it. Add it to it, and add more to our taxes will pay for it." And Marian...used to live over here in a farm area...

Q: Woman or man?

A: Woman.

Q: Okay.

A: She was...she was a very good worker for me, you know. And she told me, she says "Lois, I'm gonna work against you in this one." But she says, "Have a meeting that night." She says, "It's gonna fail. I'm workin' against it."

Q: Because of the pool.

- A: Because of the pool. And then we had a meeting right after the election. Everybody was there to see how it come out. And they says, "Now put it back just as fast as you can get it back. Ask for more money. Put the pool in and we'll...we'll pass it." And we did, and they passed it.
- Q: When you added the pool.
- A: When we added the pool. And that's the only one that ever failed while I was on the board.
- Q: Now it failed at first because you didn't have the pool in it.
- A: Mmhmm. And they asked us to...
- Q: Isn't that interesting?
- A: ...and they asked us to do it, and we just thought that they couldn't afford it.
- Q: Another sign that the people in this area...I mean if...
- A: They want it.
- Q: ... it's well-justified and if it's something they wanted...
- A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.
- Q: ...they're willing to cough up a couple hundred extra dollars.
- A: And do you know something today, Bill? And you can check the records for this. When Madison School has a millage, you know, who puts it over? Seniors. The ones that was here and seen this b...this growth. You know?
- Q: Senior citizens.
- A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.
- Q: Okay. Because most of you are still here, most of the people that were...
- A: That's right.
- Q: ...in this area to begin with are still here.
- A: That...that's right. And they, lot of 'em over there at the Towers...I'm...I'm sure it must be about 90% that vote, votes for the school district.
- Q: Do you know how unique that is, to have senior citizens vote for a millage?

- A: Darn right. Absolutely. That's why I'm braggin'.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: Madison...Madison's unique in that, really. It...it was always...just everybody worked together.
- Q: Mmhmm.
- A: When everybody was in the same class, you know, it wasn't rich people against poor people, it's everybody was just about, you know, in the same class. We called ourselves a blue collar area, you know.
- Q: Mmhmm.
- A: And we worked.
- Q: Ummm, I think we've pretty much covered everything we want to cover, unless there's something else you'd like to discuss.
- A: Well, the only thing I would like to discuss is...oh another one that I would like to tell you I interviewed was Christine Jorgensen.
- Q: Oh you're kidding me.
- A: No, sir.
- Q: You mean for your column?
- A: Mmhmm.
- Q: Oh no kidding. What, was she here on a...for a book or...?
- A: No, she was down...no, when she had the operation, she left here and went to another country as Chris [inaudible]
- Q: Right.
- A: ...and came back as Christine.
- Q: Uh huh.
- A: I was in the Metropolitan Auxiliary, and we had our state meeting at the Cadillac Hotel, and my husband and I were there. And Bernie Travnikar and Harry

- Kendall, who were two of our police officers, and their wives were there. Lots of others were there.
- Q: Metropolitan Auxiliary was...is connected with the police department, right?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Okay.
- A: It was the wives of the ones that was on...
- Q: Okay.
- A: My husband was a volunteer fireman [inaudible]...
- Q: Oh that's just what I was gonna to ask you. What was his...?
- A: He was a volunteer fireman.
- Q: Okay.
- A: And Bernie and...and Harry Kendall came up, and they says, "Lois, you got your card with you?" And I said, "Yeah." "Hey, Christine Jorgensen's next door!" She says...he says, "Go and interview her!" you know. Well, I says, "I don't want to," you know. I was embarrassed. And he says, "No, go!" He says, "We dare you!" you know, and they knew they didn't dare dare me. And I says, "Okay," so I went and I knocked on her door and some guy came to the door. And I said, "I understand Christine Jorgensen is in here." Well first I went down and rode up the elevator with her, to be honest with you, and I rubbed real close to her and rubbed to see if...to see if she felt like a man or a woman [in her arm?] you know...
- Q: [Laughter].
- A: ...and Bernie and Harry was on the elevator too, and they got quite a kick out of that. But anyway, I went in, knocked on the door, and the guy said, "No, she will not talk to you," and she says, "Let her in." And she...he says, "I certainly will." So I went in and there's two beds in the room. She's sitting on this one, he's sitting on this one. And she says, "Sit down here." And I sat down by her, and she says, "Now just feel and tell me do I feel like a lady or do I feel like a man?" She'd step her legs up, and I felt [inaudible] her legs, and she felt like a woman.
- Q: No kidding.

A: And she was very gracious, but you know what? I was also quite a teaser. And Wilda...Wilma, when I came back and told her, she would not print it because she thought I was puttin' her on, that I had, because she knew she was in town.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: I said, "Well ask Bernie and Harry, because they were there. They's the ones that sent me to do it." She says, "They'd lie for you and I know it!" So she wouldn't do it. She wouldn't print it. But I certainly did inview...interview her.

Q: Could I ask you a quick question?

A: Mmhmm.

Q: You were talking about Bill being on the volunteer fire department. Umm...could we talk a little bit about the volunteer fire department?

A: Sure.

Q: Where...th...there was no fire station down in this end of town.

A: Yeah, there was here; there wasn't up there.

Q: Oh real...oh, there...that's right! There was an old building.

A: Yeah. They had a...they had a old garage down there that after they got building down there. Well you remember this was back when there was nothin' down there anyway.

Q: Okay, right it was...

A: Except the school.

Q: ...yeah, right.

A: And I remember a family that was down there. She used to win everything at the state fair for canning.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: It was great, fantastic people.

Q: Name? Do you have a name?

A: I will.

Q: Okay.

A: Anyways, they would go down there. They rented that garage, the fire department did, or the city did. And they fixed it up where they had beds upstairs.

Q: That was on which side of John R? That was on the east side of John R.

A: That was on the east side of John R, on 13 Mile Road, I think.

Q: Right, just down the way from where A &...Farmer Jack is now, right?

A: Mhmm. Just about in that area.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. And the men, they would have to stay certain nights, you know. My...my husband, very few nights he had to stay. He, you know, usually he just went when the siren sounded or the phone rang.

Q: Was it an all-volunteer force then or there was a...okay.

A: Yes, all except we had Joe Solomon. He was fantastic. He had...no, he...it wasn't all-volunteer at that time. He had about four, five that were regulars.

Q: This was after we became a city?

A: Oh yes.

Q: [Inaudible] yeah, okay.

A: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: Okay, that's like after 1955.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: And I remember over here on...what's the second street runnin' east and west?

Q: Down by Thirteen or down...here?

A: No, here, on the other side of Eleven.

Q: Oh jeez, I don't know.

A: Farnum.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. There was a house burn with a bunch of kids in it. And my husband came home, he was so sick for weeks afterwards, you know. But he enjoyed it.

Q: Did he have equipment at home with him that he took with him when he went...?

A: He had his boots and his badge and his hat and his coat and things, yeah.

Q: So he was involved and kind of a doer too. He just...

A: Oh he was a...

Q: Wasn't as, you know, in the eye.

A: ...absolutely. Absolutely. He just...my husband was one of the best speakers I ever heard, but he absolutely had no idea of what to say. But if I wrote it out for him, he memorized it, and he could...he could stand with the best of 'em, Bill. Really and truly he could. But on his own he couldn't. Another person that I met that I really loved was Ed [Craigist?].

Q: Oh you're kidding me.

A: Yeah.

Q: This was when you were writing on the paper, or somebody came to the school district?

A: No, I met him through the March of Dimes. He was the overall chairman, and I was chairman for this area. And we used to get together. And he used to read poems. Every time we'd get together, he'd have to bring some poems, cause we'd ask him to, you know. And, oh he was great. He was great.

Q: Just...just name some...you're...you're naming little bits and pieces of different things that you were involved in. You were involved in the school board. Involved in the March of Dimes. What else?

A: Torch Drive.

Q: Torch Drive. In a...a chairperson?

A: Pardon?

Q: Like a chairperson? Okay, what else?

A: How...how I got started in these things, okay? One of our teachers was Karl Baker. And he was a coach. He came in when him and Don Scott went to school together, and they came here as teachers together, coaches together. And he married a girl named Billie, and she was sweet as she could be. I loved her dearly. And she call me up one day, and she says, "Lois," she says, "Would you help me out?" She says, "I have to do that...I have to be chairman for over there because," she says, "there's just nobody over there capable of being."

Q: In your area.

A: In our area.

Q: Okay.

A: She lived in Royal Oak.

Q: Okay.

A: And I says, "What do you mean nobody over here capable of doin' it?" She says, "Well that's what they told me, that they just can't get anybody that would be capable of doin' it." I said, "What do they want done?" You know, nobody had asked me.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And she said, "Well, we have to do this," so I just thought, "Well, let's show 'em." So I says, "I'll take it." You know, that's how I got started. We had this thing well organized that we had John R was a half, Gardenia was half. We had four areas.

Q: District, yeah.

A: We put these down in a half, so we had four in each one of those. Then we had...where...on this street, she did this side, she did this side. And every house was covered and everybody gave. Now...and this was a poor district. But honestly, it was...that's why we got started, because we were challenged that nobody could do it.

Q: People didn't challenge you much, did they? Well, they challenged you, but...

A: They didn't get by with it.

Q: That's right.

A: That's right.

Q: Well Lois, I want to thank you very much for coming to speak to us today. It's been a real pleasure. Thank you very much for...for the years of involvement in the city, and as you say, almost everyone I talk to, this is probably, to my mind, one of the finest places...

A: It is.

Q: ...Madison Heights.

A: It is. It's great. I love it. A lot of people'd say, "Well you and Bill wanted to buy a different house," you know, before he got sick and passed on. I says, "I...this is home. I...I want to...I want to die where I live, okay?"

Q: Mmhmm.

A: I don't wanna...I don't want to leave.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: This means too much. I'm traditional. I guess you can tell that. I like things to kind of grow along real normal and close. I like close home families. I feel sorry for people today. I...I think television has hurt. It could be used so marvelous, you know...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...such a marvelous way if it was used correctly, but it's not. And I just...I don't know. But the happiest things in my life, no. I did get 'em certificate from the joint chiefs...Congress, I mean Senators and House Representatives. Get one of those when I retired.

Q: From the school board.

A: From the school board.

Q: Okay.

A: And I got...I was run up for Michigan Mother of the Year, which...for the state.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And this was a really...

Q: Quite an honor.

A: It was quite an honor. And you know who beat me? A woman judge. So I [inaudible].

Q: An honor for all of the things that you were involved in.

A: Yeah, and she was...and she was judge, and she had eight children. And I had two. So she really had me, you know. Mrs. Koon, Judge Koon's wife?

Q: Okay.

A: Judge Koon's mother?

Q: Mmhmm.

A: 'S the one that got me involved in that.

Q: Well, thank you very much. And it's been a real pleasure.

A: Bill, I've enjoyed it. I've enjoyed it. Thank you.

[Tape turned off and on]

Q: We're back again with Lois Myers. Lois has indicated that she would like to add some information to the tape. She would like to talk about some of the people that we may have glossed over a little bit in the first part of the tape. Lois, who did you want to talk about first, Larry Decker?

A: Larry Decker, Bill Huffman and...and Winifred Boyle.

Q: Great. Okay. Let's go for it.

A: [Inaudible].

Q: Larry Decker.

A: Larry Decker. Good training from...he was one of our teachers at first, and his wife was also. She was music teacher. He got his training from Mr. Wilkinson. Nobody could squeeze a dollar like Mr. Wilkinson. But Larry learned easily. He had to. And he was a great...absolutely a great PR man for Madison School District. He was a...a good superintendent, and he stayed close with the kids, which is hard to do, but he did.

Q: Seems like a very warm person...

A: He is.

Q: ...when I met him.

A: Good Christian man and a good Christian family. And I...I enjoyed working with him. I felt...felt it was really an experience working, you know, with him.

Q: Can you...can you tell me...you say he was a good PR person. Can you tell me some of the things that he might have done? Did he go out and talk to the parents a lot, or was...did he do a lot with newspapers...?

A: With newspapers and clubs and organizations...

Q: Okay. I know he's on the Rotary.

A: ...and things like that. Yeah. Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: And yeah, he'd go out and--not house to house or anything like that--but if...if I wanted to have a group in for coffee or something, he'd come talk to them, you know.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: But mostly...

Q: Keep in touch.

A: ...he would train us to do it, you know, but he kept in touch with the parents too. They...his office was always open.

Q: That's good.

A: And it was good.

Q: He was superintendent for how many years?

A: Oh golly, I don't know. A long time, though.

Q: Quite a while, though.

A: Yeah.

Q: 'Cause he just retired not too long ago.

A: Yeah.

Q: A couple years ago.

A: Two or three [inaudible].

Q: Yeah. Yeah.

A: And Dr. Webb, I was quite disappointed in his retirement party. Saturday night I guess it was. Friday night the 5th. I was...

Q: The 5th of what? This was the 5th of...

A: This month, June.

Q: ...May...June?

A: Yeah.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: The only people from Madison Heights there, I'm sorry to say, was Bill Huffman and Lois Myers. And as much as he has done for us, I cannot believe that people didn't go to, you know...

Q: Oh you're kidding me.

A: I am very dead serious. And I know a lot of politicians that spread pictures of him and them together, you know...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...and so forth and so on. I think they owe respect to a person like that.

Q: Yeah.

A: Really. But Bill Huffman's the one that got the thing started. Bill Huffman, way he explains it, he was a little old hillbilly from Georgia. That's the way he'd always start out.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: "I'm a little old hillbilly from Georgia." But Bill had personality that nobody could beat. He really...he could make you think yes if you really thought no. You know, he was...he was a good politician. Unbelieving to everybody. We had certain people, and I'm sure they told Bill the same thing they told me, that

- Bill Huffman didn't like Lois Myers and Lois Myers didn't like Bill Huffman, you know.
- Q: Mmhmm.
- A: But I always liked Bill. I admired him. He had lots of strength, you know. But I'll tell you somethin' that most people don't know is we would not have a school district today if it wasn't for Bill Huffman.
- Q: You're kidding me. How was he instrumental in setting up the school district?
- A: Well, they...we had no money as usual.
- Q: You were part of Royal Oak Township originally.
- A: Mmhmm. And...but this was...that was way after that. But it was just before he retired. A few years before he retired, before Dr. Webb was elected. Bill suggested that they get some men up there that knew about education. He says, "This district, they need it." You know, the people...there's a bridge between the people. And he says, "They really need the two school districts," you know. And they were gonna force us to consolidate, either with Hazel Park or Lamphere. And I...Bill suggested that Dr. Webb come up. So Dr. Webb come up. So Dr...while Milliken was the governor...Dr. Webb went up. And he would have been superintendent of schools. But he says, "I can't leave my people. I can't leave Hazel Park." He says, "My gosh, that's my home all...all, you know, all these years. I can't leave it."
- Q: He was the superintendent of the Hazel Park District.
- A: Oh yeah.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: And he just absolutely would not leave. You know, would not leave and go up there. And he retired from the school, then he went up as a state representative. But Jack has had many meetings with him, and he says that he knows more about school than any man he ever talked to, you know, anybody in Lansing.
- Q: Can...can you talk about some of the things he may have done for the school district?
- A: Dr. Webb?
- Q: Yeah.
- A: Well...I...I really don't remember...I don't remember it just too straight.

Q: Okay. Okay. That's fine.

A: But...

Q: Bill Huffman was involved in setting up...

A: Yes.

Q: ...helped in setting up...

A: Yes.

Q: ...the school district. Now I have a question. Why is it that you didn't think it'd be a good idea if the two school districts together, and do you still think it would be a bad idea?

A: I never thought that. Everybody thought I thought that.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Bill, the thing is, when I was on the school board, I didn't take sides in politics.

Q: Either way, yeah, you indicated that earlier on in the tape.

A: But I was representing both sides...

Q: Yeah.

A: ...and I kept my mouth shut.

Q: Yeah.

A: I voted how I wanted to but I kept my mouth shut.

Q: Uh huh.

A: And I...I just tryin' to get it the way I want it said...the...[tape turned off and on]...I really didn't like the idea at the time because if we would've...if we would have consolidated when it was first mentioned, we would've had to take all of the people north of Gardenia and then Lamphere School District down here. Our kids were already on half-day sessions. What was we gonna do? Put 'em on quarter day sessions? You know. It wasn't feasible...

Q: You just didn't have the facilities.

A: ...to take them. We absolutely did not have the facilities, and we certainly didn't have the money. So Lamphere could choose...the people in that area could choose. They could go to Oak Park, Hazel Park or here. And I think maybe some of 'em might have even went to Royal Oak. We had quite a few other students. Well, now I don't think it will ever work because Lamphere has the money. They would be stupid to take us, and I don't think they are. Because ours is mostly property tax, it...it would raise their...

Q: Yeah, you don't have the industry in this end of town.

A: ...property tax and everything. That's right. We don't have it. And we can't compete with 'em. And I know Mr. McCann that's just retired. He...he feels bad about it. Jack feels bad about it. But just...

Q: Jack, your son.

A: My son.

Q: Yeah.

A: But you have to think of the whole pe...all the people.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And what it's going to do to all the people. Now if we couldn't take them when they really needed...needed a place to go, and we just absolutely couldn't take 'em, then how can they take us now when it's gonna raise their taxes up like ours? You know.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And I don't blame them.

Q: Yeah.

A: I certainly don't. If I was sittin' up there, I'd feel the same way.

Q: Okay.

A: Course now we'd like to ride up there.

Q: Do you think it'll ever come about?

A: I doubt it very much. I don't...I don't see how with all the industry up there. I just don't see how it can ever get equal enough to bring 'em together.

Q: Do you...?

A: I think it would be a good idea.

Q: Recently, we just had this ele...this election for Pro...Proposal A.

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you see that as a good proposal?

A: I thought it was great.

Q: Okay.

A: I thought it was a great. I really thought it was a great idea.

Q: It would have helped Madison considerably, wouldn't it?

A: Absolutely, it woulda helped Madison, and it...it wouldna' hurt Lamphere.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: It wouldn't have hurt Lamphere.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: It wouldn't have hurt...it woulda hurt places like maybe Birmingham and places like that because they wouldn't have got all the money they're getting. But the people didn't understand it. What they should have done was sent Dr. Webb out on the...you know, Larry Decker, Jack. People like that that knew what they were really talkin' about. And put 'em out and let them tell...

Q: Stump for it.

A: ...the people. People trust them, you know, people that they trust. And people, if they trust you, they gonna listen to you, and if they don't...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...they're not, you know.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And I was sick. I couldn't even go down to Senior Citizen and talk it up. And some woman was in my house the other day, and she says, "I voted against it." I says, "Why?" She liked the \$1000 she gets back on her tax. I said, "But honey,

you'd had that...you wouldna' had to pay that \$1000 in the beginning, you know." She can't believe in that. She just...and I for some reason, they don't...they do not trust politicians. They said they'd give the money that we got from the lottery, you know, to the...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...school district. Well, they did and we finally got that across to 'em. They did do it. They are givin' it to us. But they cut out the state aid. So really they didn't give us anything.

Q: So it's a wash. What they did was substitute one thing for another.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: Absolutely. And that's what the people were afraid they would do this time.

Q: Okay.

A: But I really don't think so.

Q: Okay.

A: I...this governor that we've got, I really think he's...I think he's a smart man. And I think he would do something if he can. And I hope he can, because it's needed really bad.

Q: Okay.

A: Very bad.

Q: Anyone else you'd like to talk about?

A: No...let's see. I wouldn't mind sayin' a few words about my kids.

Q: Okay.

A: I'm just real proud of 'em. I got two as you know. Jim, Jack, and both of 'em have been very successful and my grandsons went to Madison School. They've been very successful. I...

Q: So the school district did 'em proud.

A: Absolutely. Absolutely. The school district has done right. My kids got good wives, good children. I'm just real proud of my family. I just wish my husband was here to, you know, see 'em and enjoy 'em and know what was going on.

Q: Well, thank you.

A: [Inaudible]. You're welcome.

Q: Thank you very much for coming back.

A: I enjoyed it.

Q: Thanks a lot for the extra information, and I wish you good health and good luck in the coming years.

A: Thank you Bill. Good luck to you too.

END OF INTERVIEW