

1 Washington County Museum  
2 Oral History Interview with Pat Reser  
3 At: Pat Reser's home in Beaverton, Oregon  
4 Date: November 1, 2012

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6 Informant: Pat Reser  
7 Interviewer: Winn Herrschaft  
8 Photographer: Beth Dehn  
9 Transcriber: Ellen Rogalin

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11 P = Pat  
12 B = Beth  
13 W = Winn

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16 W: Good morning, Pat.

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18 P: Good morning, Winn.

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20 W: Well, I waited for this opportunity for a long, long time. It's going to be one of the highlights  
21 of my life . . .

22  
23 P: Oh my

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25 W: ...for the opportunity to talk to you this morning and to learn about the pattern of your life and  
26 the opportunities and the experience that made you what you are, which is one of the most  
27 beautiful and generous, thoughtful people I've ever known.

28  
29 P: Thank you.

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31 W: So, on that basis I'm not going to ask you direct questions, but I have great respect for your  
32 intelligence and I think you can probably better tell your story than we can ask you about it. So,  
33 would you being by telling us about your background, your family background, and our origins.

34  
35 P: Okay. My father was born in what at that time was referred to as Austria-Hungary, and of  
36 course all of the wars that have taken place in that area since then the geographic names have  
37 been changed. He was born in a village that is called **See Me High** – at least that's the  
38 translation that came to us and he, the language that they spoke was Rumanian. But again,  
39 boundaries have changed and people would go to war and then they would stay there, so he  
40 wasn't really sure where the family originated. His family, though, moved to Canada in 1905.  
41 So he was born in 1900, in January, and when he was five the family moved to Regina. There  
42 was a community of others in that area – some of them spoke Serbian, some of them spoke  
43 Rumanian – so there was kind of a cluster of folks in Saskatchewan and his family moved there.

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45 What . . . I know they did some farming at the time and my dad went to first grade, but he was a  
46 strong, plucky little guy who could fix things and had a sense of mechanics and so he only went  
47 to first grade, and he was needed on the farm. So, he had an older brother who died at the age  
48 of 26. He had four sisters. One of them died in her late 20's from TB, but my dad made sure  
49 that his other sisters went to school and actually went to college. So he was, he was a  
50 supporter from a very early age. And then his dad, my grandfather, actually ended up becoming  
51 a groundskeeper for the Parliament buildings in Regina, Regina being the capitol of  
52 Saskatchewan. And so I can remember as young child we would go and visit the gardens One

53 because they were beautiful, but grand-dad had the understanding of horticulture and so that  
54 was the kind of expertise that he had.

55  
56 My mom was born in Avonlea, and that's closer to the border than Regina. Their family moved  
57 back and forth. The border existed, but in the farming community it wasn't that hard line and  
58 you didn't have to go through the customs piece; you didn't have to go through the customs  
59 piece the way one does now. One thing I do remember being told about my grandparents is  
60 that when they were farming in \_\_\_\_\_ in the US, they sold the land, but they didn't underst...,  
61 they weren't aware that they could have maintained the mineral rights because oil was found on  
62 their property. And so after they moved back to Saskatchewan and had property there, they still  
63 maintained the mineral rights. In fact, I had an inquiry from a person in Vancouver trying to  
64 locate my aunt regarding mineral rights,

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66 **05:04**

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68 So who knows where that's going to go. But my dad didn't . . . oh, I need to backtrack; where  
69 was I born? (laughter) Sorry about that. My brother was born with \_\_\_\_\_ anomalies, so  
70 mom took him back to Toronto for some surgeries, and then they moved back. My dad moved  
71 back there, too, and then they moved to Windsor. There was a church that was affiliated with  
72 the church that they attended in Saskatchewan in Windsor, so that made sense. I mean from  
73 my history that made sense why they would move there, and that's where I was born. But the  
74 dampness and what-not – it just, it wasn't home – and so when I was nine months old they  
75 moved back to Regina. And so even though Windsor's my birthplace, I only had nine months  
76 there.

77

78 My sister was born about two and a half years later in Saskatchewan and just before I was, well,  
79 about seven, seven and a half, dad said I'm not spending another winter in Regina. So they  
80 applied to cross the border and they were going to go to Phoenix. But the okay didn't come,  
81 didn't come; finally he said, I'm ... he had a sister who lived in Vancouver, he said I'm moving to  
82 Vancouver, found a job, sent for us, and of course at that time was when we got the okay to go  
83 to Phoenix, but he already had a job, found a house, and so forth, and we moved to Vancouver.

84

85 I actually started school, obviously, because of my age, in Vancouver, excuse me... When I  
86 started school in Regina my birthday was October 14<sup>th</sup> and the cut-off date was in September –  
87 September 30<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> or sometime in September. So I was put in kindergarten, but in January  
88 they moved me into first grade, so I was younger than a lot of the other kids. I don't remember  
89 a lot about school in Vancouver. I remember walking to and from, and we had to wear these  
90 what I thought were horrible brown stockings because it was so cold in the winter time, and we  
91 had to bundle up – you know it took you five minutes to bundle up to go outside for ten minutes  
92 and come back in and unbundle. I remember walking home on wooden sidewalks

93

94 W: Excuse me, I just want, for curiosity Pat, where in Regina was this?

95

96 P: We lived on 2036 Elliott Street and we went to Wetmore Elementary School.

97

98 W: Okay, I know it well, thank you.

99

100 P: Isn't that fascinating, that the time in Regina was still during the second world war and so I  
101 remember hearing my parents talk about the blackouts in Vancouver, because in addition to  
102 my dad's sister, my aunt, we had cousins, cousins of my parents who lived there, so we'd hear  
103 about blackouts and how somebody forgot to turn, to pull the blink down in the bathroom and  
104 they were fined. It was that kind of thing. So growing up there was this uneasy sense of ... I  
105 remember one day my sister and I were home alone for whatever reason and mom had taken

106 my brother, probably to a doctor appointment or something, and came home and it was, I knew  
107 it wasn't late, but it was getting, it was winter-y, and it was getting dark, and we hid under the  
108 table. My mom always had a tablecloth on, so we pulled the tablecloth down and we hid under  
109 the tablecloth, and then we could hear footsteps as my mom and my brother walked down the  
110 sidewalk to the back door to come in the back door, and I remember being frightened. So, it's  
111 interesting as a young child the images that you retain forever

112

113 **10:00**

114

115 Because of fear and not really understanding that in the middle of the country, of the continent,  
116 you were not going to have a bomb dropped on you. But nonetheless, between the blackouts  
117 and the news, that was a very poignant memory in my mind.

118

119 We took the train across to Vancouver, lived off of Frasier, not too far, went to McKenzie Grade  
120 School, Sir Alexander McKenzie, and then went to \_\_\_\_\_ High School in that area.

121

122 W: Is it still there?

123

124 P: It's still there, yes, I've been back. As a kid, I remember wanting to organize things a lot.  
125 We had the PNE, Pacific National Exhibition, that came to Vancouver every year, and it was a  
126 big highlight. It was the state fair times ten. And so we would always, mom would take us, and  
127 we'd always come home with something that was fairy-ish – either a fairy hat or something or a  
128 wand or a baton or what-not, and then I'd gather the neighborhood kids together and we'd  
129 always set up a parade and make flyers and take them to the doors, to people on the street.  
130 You know, nobody watched except my parents or maybe my mom because dad was at work,  
131 but I can just always remember wanting to organize something. And that carried into school.  
132 The year I would have gone into the seventh grade, John Oliver High School was opened and  
133 so the old high school building became the ninth grade and part of the earlier old high school  
134 became seventh and eighth, so we ended up with kind of a middle school setting and then ninth  
135 grade in a building and then 10, 11, 12. They also had what they called senior **matric**, and so it  
136 was like a grade 13, almost like a junior college. But as a ninth grader I was involved in senior  
137 choir, which was a really big honor, and there were three ninth graders and four 10<sup>th</sup> graders in  
138 senior high choir and that was to build that infrastructure, so that it would always be there. And I  
139 took piano lessons so I played the piano, I could read music and I had a voice at the time. But  
140 what was so exciting was we put on operettas and I really, I really loved putting greasepaint on,  
141 being in front of an audience, being part of a troop; it was really exciting. I enjoyed that a great  
142 deal.

143

144 But, of course, the church affiliation we had didn't really support that kind of activity, so as long  
145 as it was in school, part of my choir, it was ok, but I also served as my class representative to  
146 the ninth grade and then the tenth grade rep on senior, on the council. And I wanted to  
147 organize things. We had to do a fundraiser. And this was an era when a lot of moms baked  
148 and it was okay to have baked things at school, so I organized, as a tenth grader, a pie sale and  
149 we asked each class to provide a certain number of pies and I found, I talked to the cafeteria  
150 people and they provided – I don't know if we had to buy them – but we could buy little paper  
151 plates and plastic forks for a penny and then we sold pieces of pie for 25 cents, so we made a  
152 pretty good profit that year. So, it seems that organizing and fundraising seemed to be kind of  
153 something that came very natural to me, because my mom was a very quiet person.

154

155 **15:00**

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157 She would never put herself forward in a group. My dad would take care of everybody, but he  
158 always did it quietly. He just – you need something? You know, I'll help you.

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W: Excuse me, Pat, you haven't mentioned your maiden name.

P: Oh, excuse me. I was born as Patricia June Valian, and that seemed to be quite an issue for spelling, so I just learned to say Prince Valiant without the t, and then they could spell it. Or, if they saw it, they didn't know how to pronounce it, so again, Prince Valiant without the t because people were reading the comics in those days and Prince Valiant was one of the comic characters.

So, when, we had cousins and family in Vancouver and enjoyed that a lot. I loved Vancouver. I loved being in my high school. It was really, I could see myself taking steps that would serve me well down the road. I could see myself taking steps that would serve me down the road. And then my parents decided that they wanted to move to the United States. Again, the church was kind of a thread during this time because there wasn't a church body in Vancouver, but there was one in Portland. And we belonged to a small church group that was called the Apostolic Christian Church, and there were churches in Windsor and Regina, Portland, Cleveland, Phoenix, Mansfield, several in Ohio and so forth. So there were clusters around. But the family really enjoyed the northwest and so my parents decided to move to Portland. And so I came . . . we moved in 54 . . . I came here going into my junior year and my sister was going into her eighth grade.

Where we first moved I was within the Cleveland High School attendance area, so even though we were only there for a while, several months, but enough to get through most of my junior year, I was able to simply take the bus and continue my senior year at Cleveland High School. But when we purchased our home, we were in the Franklin School District and my sister went to Franklin High School and graduated from there whereas I graduated from Cleveland. When I think about my activities and what may have led me to who I am, not may have, but certainly what led me to where I am now, I tended to be more service-oriented than social-oriented, and that's not a criticism, that's just who I am. That's an observation. In Cleveland High School I was on a service sorority, or *in* a service sorority, but it's, I have to smile because moving to another country there's always inherent risk in not reading the culture well and so, in Canada, if you belonged to a group, every year that group, we would have a pin and the name of the group on it and the year. And so part of what you did to show how involved you were, was to wear a variety of pins. So the first time it was cool enough to wear a sweater to Cleveland High School, I had my little bank of pins and I kept getting these funny looks from people and I, of course, I didn't know how to interpret that. And so I was in the restroom and this gal said "How many guys are you pinned to anyhow?" And I said,

**20:00**

P: "What do you mean?" She says, "Well, how many guys are you going with?" I said, "Well, I really don't have any boyfriend right now." She said, "Well, why are you wearing all those pins?" And I really didn't understand why, but I realized I needed to remove those pins, and I did, and I never wore a pin again. [laughter] They just stayed in the little jewelry box on my dresser. But it's, that's just the inherency of reading a culture. So I spent a little more time after that just observing cultural behavior in clothing, actions and so forth and didn't have too many more faux pas after that. But, it was a lesson, so it probably also influenced why I, in a group, I tend to be part of the background until I really get a sense of the lay of the land and what's being asked and, you know, what's going on. And that served me well, too. It's not a criticism; it's just an observation of self. But, when it was time to go to college, I seriously thought of going to Kent in Ohio and was actually accepted there, but I knew that wasn't an affordable situation. It was out of state, it was travel, it was room and lodging. It wasn't going to work, but it was still good to know that I went through the application process, I was accepted and so forth. So I applied to

212 Portland State and actually got a scholarship for my first year. But I was still, it was still within  
213 that five-year period during which you cannot apply for citizenship, at least that was the rule at  
214 the time. You had to live in the U.S. for five years before you could apply for citizenship. And  
215 so they still had me has a, whatever classification it was, but it wasn't a native Oregonian or a  
216 Portland person and the tuition would have been more than double. And so I really appreciated  
217 that scholarship because it allowed me to go to Portland State. And I got a job at **Newberry's**,  
218 so I worked Monday and Friday nights and all day Tuesday, and that really paid for my books  
219 because the scholarship was only for tuition. And so the next year . . . I did not get involved in  
220 college life in terms of activities. Between working and doing whatever I was doing at church – I  
221 played the organ, I conducted a small women's choir and I taught Sunday school, so that pretty  
222 much took care of my extra time.

223  
224 But there's a really interesting story how I met Al. At the time we had to take math and English  
225 placement tests. And I was a good math student, but I was a really good English student, but I  
226 was placed in a class that had a lab attached to it for people to better learn sentence structure,  
227 grammar and writing. And I didn't understand why I was in that class; how could I have  
228 performed so poorly on that test. But I'm 17, I'm not going to go in and challenge authority and  
229 say I don't belong here. So we had, within the first or second class, we had to write a paper,  
230 and so when I went to class the next day, or the next time . . . Classes at that time were pretty  
231 much Monday Wednesday Friday and if you had a lab it was Tuesday or Thursday that made  
232 that extra class. And so the professor – you know, I remember two or maybe three professors'  
233 names, but I remember his name, and that was Professor **Netboy** – he asked me to stay after  
234 class and he said, "Why are you in this class?" And I said, "Well, that's where I was placed."

235

## 236 **25:02**

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238 He said, "You need to go to the registrar's office and demand that they place you somewhere  
239 else." Now, maybe had he used other language I may have done it, but for me at 17 to demand  
240 that they; I'm sorry, that wasn't going to happen. And then I got to thinking, you know, I must  
241 have been placed in this class for a reason – why else would it have happened? So, in that  
242 class, among others, Al and his friend **Darrel** were also there. And they had been – they were  
243 GI's, they were through with their service, neither one of them . . . Let me rephrase, because  
244 I'm really jumping around here.

245

246 In that class there was Al and his buddy Darrel. And Al and Darrel had returned from their  
247 service during the Korean conflict. The peace had been signed and so they never really went  
248 over; they just finished their time out in the US. And so neither one of them had done a lot of  
249 writing while they were in the service. Writing letters home and also, Al's history was such that  
250 he went to six grade schools in four different states, returned back and forth, and so there was  
251 never consistent education for him. And so his English skills, his writing skills, were not very  
252 well-developed. And so they recognized if they were ever going to get through that class, they  
253 needed to get someone that they would start dating and they'd get that person to help them  
254 write these papers.

255

256 I need to backtrack, too. Al had a really wise counselor. He got out of the service in November,  
257 so he started school in January. And his counselor asked him, "How much writing have you  
258 done since high school?" And he said, "Well, I think I wrote my parents a letter or two" kind of  
259 thing. And he said, "I suggest that you focus on classes that would really interest you and don't  
260 start your English 101 series until the fall." So that's why he was there at that point in time. But  
261 nonetheless, they both realized they needed some help. And then of course when the class  
262 was over their plan was: sayonara! And I just chuckle when I tell that story and tell people that  
263 that class lasted over 52 years. [chuckle] But one day at class, toward the end of class,  
264 Professor **Netboy** asked if I would stay after the class for a minute, and he asked me how old I

265 was. I had just turned 18, so I was proud of that number, you know. I said, "Well, I'm 18." He  
266 said, "Well, let me tell you that sometimes the GI's prey on the younger students and you just  
267 might want to be careful." Well, I'll jump ahead about five years. After we graduated and had  
268 two children, we happened to be in Vancouver. We'd gone to Seattle for a business purpose  
269 and then, we're this close, I have to take you to Vancouver. So we drove by the house, the park  
270 I used to walk through, the school and then, of course, Stanley Park is a given. And we were at  
271 Prospect Point and just putting quarters in the viewfinder so we could look out over the bay  
272 there, and who should be at the next viewfinder but Professor Netboy and so I went up and  
273 spoke to him. Of course, he wouldn't have remembered me. But I reminded him of what he  
274 had said to me and how much I appreciated that he cared about his students, but I wanted him  
275 to know that his concern was considered but not followed, and that Al and I were married and  
276 we had two children. [laughter] So that was kind of fun to be able to share that story.

277  
278 But anyhow, getting back to college, Al and I – Al wanted to have a food tech minor and it  
279 wasn't available at Oregon State [*whispering -- ... start again*] Al needed a food tech minor and  
280 it wasn't available at Portland State, so he needed to transfer to Oregon State. And, of course, I  
281 didn't have a car;

282  
283 **30:00**

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285 he had a car. That 90 miles just seemed like it was too great a distance. I mean when you're  
286 madly in love and you're that age, 90 miles is a long way. And so we thought well, let's just get  
287 married and we'll go down as married students. Plus, I was a bonus of 25 dollars a month on  
288 the GI Bill. If you were a married student, you got 135 dollars a month; if you were not, you got  
289 110 a month on the GI Bill. So we got married and went down to Oregon State. And...before  
290 we got married, we had, we spent a lot of time talking about what we expected from our lives,  
291 what our hopes and dreams were, what we would want our marriage to be, our family and so  
292 forth, and we kind of narrowed it down to four basic things – that I was going to graduate before  
293 we had children, that I would not work in the business, that we, that church would be part of our  
294 family life and that we would always give back to the communities in which we lived and worked.  
295 And I can't tell you where that came from, you know, a specific thing, I just think it was kind of  
296 the logical next step for who he was and for who I was. And we pretty much were able to do all  
297 four. Our first child was born 10 days before graduation, but I had completed my coursework at  
298 the end of winter term, so I still met that goal. And Marty was born in May and we graduated in  
299 June and moved to Forest Grove. And his family, his mom and dad.

300  
301 I need to kind of do a little bit about Al at this point. Al's life was really nomadic. Al led a very  
302 nomadic life. He was born in Topeka, Kansas. They lived in Greeley, Colorado, Wichita,  
303 Topeka, Ranier, Oregon, back to Kansas and then they moved the summer he was going into  
304 the ninth grade, they moved to Hillsboro. And they lived in a labor camp. He has three younger  
305 sisters. Two of them preceded him in death. But the family – he was 15, Lois was 13, Jeanie  
306 was eight and Dotie was five when they moved out here. And they lived in the labor camp in  
307 Hillsboro and worked the fields until they were able to secure lodging at the Chickadee Motel.  
308 And then they . . . the Chickadee Motel was on the site of the current Hale's Family Restaurant,  
309 and Al used to tell stories of how he had two pairs of jeans and so when his mom washed them  
310 by hand and she would turn the oven on and put the jeans on the open door to help them dry  
311 because they wouldn't necessarily dry during the cooler times overnight and that he was not, he  
312 was uncomfortable with the living conditions in terms of announcing it, so they kept calling into  
313 the office saying we need an address for you. "Oh, I forgot my address, I'll get it" and so he  
314 kept ignoring and avoiding, and then he'd get off the bus, the school bus, at a different stop and  
315 then walk to the motel, and so forth. And so there were a lot times when he was, well, the  
316 whole family, making the best of a situation that was not really ideal but nonetheless. And he  
317 tells stories of ... he wanted to play football. He was a fairly big strapping kid.

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**35:01**

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321 And so he went out for football, but he was using his dress shoes and finally the coach said,  
322 "You have to get a pair of football shoes. You cannot wear these anymore." And he said, "I  
323 can't afford it." And he said, "Well, you know, if you want to play, I'll give you two weeks to get  
324 that done." And so he started collecting bottles and newspapers and so forth and shoes were  
325 12 dollars and finally the deadline came and he didn't have enough to buy the shoes. And so  
326 he told his coach, "I was able to scrape up six dollars" and so the coach loaned him six and he  
327 went to Penney's and the only pair they had left was size 12. Well, he wore a size 11, so he just  
328 stuffed paper in the ends, but he had his football shoes. So Al was a make-do kind of kid from  
329 early beginnings and shortly thereafter they were able to rent a house in Cornelius, and so Al's  
330 mom started making potato salad and selling it to the grocery stores. And in the meat  
331 departments at that time, the meat wasn't pre-packaged. You asked for, I'll take a half a pound  
332 of this or a pound of that or could you cut me slice of or what-not. So it was all very butcher  
333 involved and pieces weren't pre-wrapped. So she went to the grocer, to the butcher, and asked  
334 him if he would consider selling some of her potato salad in one of those long trays that you'd  
335 put the green grass to separate things out and for visual appeal, and he did and it went very  
336 well. And so the kids were pressed into service at an early time. Before they went to school  
337 they either had to help mix potato salad or fill cups or sprinkle paprika on top or put the pickle  
338 slice or whatever was needed.

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340 And so from a very early age Al was always making things work. And from a very early age I  
341 was always organizing and making things work, only in a different way. So it really, you know,  
342 we really had an attraction in our skill set as well and things that interested us excited us. So  
343 after we got – I need to think about this a minute . . . So we graduated from Oregon State and  
344 moved to Forest Grove, and I got a job teaching middle school – it was called junior high at that  
345 time – in Forest Grove. I was a little bit disillusioned by the whole setting. You know you  
346 graduate and you're going to go out there and conquer the world and bring all your skill set to  
347 whomever is waiting for you, and so forth, and I was hired by a district that was extremely poor.  
348 And there were no textbooks and those that were available were very old. And then of course  
349 there's always the culture they know, the other ones know, get in there and grab all the  
350 textbooks you can at the beginning of the year and so another seventh grade home teacher  
351 took me under his wing and he said, ok, you've got to come with me and this is what we have to  
352 do or you're going to be left in the lurch. So, he took me under his wing. But the district was a  
353 little parochial in another way. It seems that I got pregnant quite quickly with Michael and so,  
354 soon it's obvious and you talk about it. Well, I was invited to the principal's office and it was not  
355 considered a good idea for a middle school or junior high to have a pregnant teacher.  
356 Therefore, I really needed to submit my resignation.

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358 W: What year was this?

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360 P: This was 1960, 1960-61.

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**40:00**

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364 P: So, I did that. I mean how are you going to, I was not of the ilk to challenge authority. If that  
365 was the rule then I had to abide by it. So they did allow me to go into January because it  
366 benefitted me, my vacation pay, if you will, could be accrued in the next calendar year, which  
367 would reduce the taxing. So ... but I've got to tell you this one, too. In that year I applied for my  
368 citizenship. And there, in 1960, it was an election year, so you couldn't become a citizen within  
369 so many days prior to a national election. But I had gone right into the application process. I  
370 had not filled out paperwork that was a declaration of intent. The Forest Grove School District

371 required that their teachers, if they were not citizens, have that paper, a declaration of intent, in  
372 his or her file in their office, and I couldn't go back and get it, so they couldn't pay me until I  
373 received my citizenship. Now, would that fly today? No. Would I have allowed it to fly today?  
374 Of course not. But nonetheless you are who you are at various times in your life and so I  
375 started in August with teacher in-service and so forth, like everybody else, but I didn't get my  
376 first paycheck until December because we had to go through the election process and then I  
377 became, I got, I received my citizenship after that and then I got my check in December. So we  
378 borrowed from his mom until, so we could make it through that time, and just paid her back  
379 when I got my check.

380  
381 So after Mike was born in April, I decided I didn't really want to apply back in Forest Grove, so I  
382 applied in Hillsboro. And again, things that, I think young women have no idea of how things  
383 used to be. And, so I applied in Hillsboro. I had, you know, a good reference from Forest  
384 Grove. They were happy with me and I had my good transcript from Oregon State and so forth.  
385 But the superintendent made reference to my two children. He said, you know, "They're not  
386 even a year apart." And I had a sense of where he was going. The unanswered question was  
387 birth control. And so I thought, I'm not going to let you go there, and in my inexperience I just  
388 said, "Yes, I do have two children who are less than one year apart and I'm not Catholic." And  
389 so that ended that conversation. I didn't know what else to say. [laughter] And for all the  
390 Catholics who might at some point see this, no, I'm not intending any disparaging remark, but  
391 it's what came out of my mouth at that time. And so then the next question was, "Well, you  
392 know that the taxpayers of Hillsboro pay your salary, but you live in Forest Grove, and so how  
393 might that work out for you?" And I said "Well, if it's any help to you, I shop at the Piggly-Wiggly  
394 in Forest Grove." . . . So I said to him, "I shop at the Piggly-Wiggly at the Y in Hillsboro. I am  
395 supporting the community that's supporting me." And so he seemed to be okay with that and I  
396 was hired. But, I worked at Peter Boswell and taught sixth grade and enjoyed that immensely,  
397 and then after four years there I was pregnant with Mark, and by now I had gained a little  
398 wisdom.

399  
400 **45:00**

401  
402 P: And I had to take a letter from my doctor to the, or provide a letter to the superintendent  
403 indicating my due date and that I could not work within a month of the due date. So I explained  
404 this to my doctor and he said "Okay, when do you hypothetically want to have this baby?" And  
405 so we added two weeks to the due date because I wanted to be able to finish the quarter and  
406 provide the grades for the kids. It didn't seem fair that someone coming in, a long-term sub,  
407 would be responsible for the grading. So worked within two weeks of my third child and did  
408 perfectly fine. But just one year, no four years later, and probably four miles distance, just a  
409 different philosophical approach.

410  
411 I stayed home for 15 years and during that time the girls were born and then I just, I needed to  
412 get, I needed something more than just being a full-time mom and, recognizing full-time  
413 parenthood is very valuable and it meets many people's needs very well, but for me I needed, I  
414 knew I could be a better mom, more supportive mom, if I also had something for me. So I went  
415 back to school and over the course of almost three years got my masters in special ed. And  
416 then, it was difficult for Al, my going back. You know, "Aren't I providing well enough for you?"  
417 That's not the case. I needed something that would more closely reflect who I was. And  
418 actually my family, the kids were so supportive of it because I would come home and say "Oh  
419 my goodness, this is what I learned today" or what not and they were really excited, especially  
420 the girls. They picked up on that, my mom's going back to school. In fact, one of my birthday  
421 presents, when I first started going back, was a lunch pail – it was one of those soft lunch pails  
422 with a thermos – purple – I kept it for a very long time, and I'm sure it's somewhere, somewhere

423 still. But the kids were really supportive of that and they were proud to say my mom's gone  
424 back to school.

425  
426 So, I got my degree and then wanted to do something with it, and I had done my student  
427 teaching at Beaverton High School. Because I worked, I had taught in the elementary school, I  
428 had volunteered for years at Mountain View in the lab workshop and so forth, but I had no  
429 experience at the high school. And I know Mark was at the high school, the last thing he  
430 wanted to do was see his mother on campus, and the principal who'd been at Aloha High  
431 School and who both Al and I had worked on with various parental activities had been  
432 transferred to Beaverton High, so I thought that's perfect. He knows me; none of the kids know  
433 me, so that's fine. I did my student teaching at Portland State; excuse me. I did my student  
434 teaching at Beaverton High School and I finished at the end of -- don't ask me the year, I can't  
435 remember right at this minute -- but I asked if I could have a, just a conversation with the  
436 principal. So I said, "Talk to me about high school" because I wanted to understand the full  
437 curriculum of the continuum of school. And so he talked about a comprehensive high school  
438 and of the issues they're dealing with and so forth, and he asked me, "What do you like to teach  
439 most?" I said, "You know, I'm in special ed, I have all kinds of reading background, but the thing  
440 I like most is teaching math." And so he said, "Well, here's the deal." The district was, well, you  
441 know, districts always have programs going on and the program that was getting the most  
442 attention at the time was competencies. And the kids had to demonstrate competencies in  
443 various core classes

444

445 **50:00**

446

447 and not just survive by getting a grade. And he said "I'm having difficulty with the kids meeting  
448 the competencies in math. I have some discretionary dollars. Would you be interested in it?"  
449 Whoa! Math. High school. Where do I go from here? But I'd been involved with Mountain  
450 View's middle school math labs and I was so impressed with what they did with math labs. And  
451 so in talking with them they gave me a resource in Clackamas High School. So I went out and  
452 visited him. He gave me incredible support and information and he said, "Here are my files.  
453 Take a copy of anything you want." And he really helped me formulate an idea of how I could  
454 deal with high school math kids. And these were not the calculus or trigonometry kids; these  
455 were kids who needed to meet; they were bright kids who needed to meet their math  
456 competencies. Many of them were English-as-second-language students and so there were  
457 just breaks in their education. And so he hired me to teach two classes and he said, "I will not  
458 put truant kids, behavior kids or known drug kids, problems in your classroom. These are kids  
459 who strive hard and they need their math competencies met so they can graduate from high  
460 school." And so armed with that and the information I got from the Clackamas School District .  
461 . . . I met also the person who was in charge of testing for Beaverton High School had been the  
462 teacher I did with student teaching with in Corvallis.

463

464 W: Excuse me, was George Russell there at that time? He was a mathematician.

465

466 P: George Russell -- I came to know him a little bit, like a year or two later, so whether he was  
467 there at that time or not I don't know. He may have; our paths simply didn't cross. Yeah, they  
468 did later.

469

470 So, at the high school I was invited to attend the math department meetings. And so I had first  
471 gone to the head of the math department and explained what I was hired to do and the  
472 approach I was going to take. And, in a sense I was kind of hoping for a blessing. And I was  
473 told, "These are not math students. Don't get your hopes up. Most of them probably will never  
474 meet their competencies." And I thought, "Them's fighting words to me." [laughter] So again,  
475 you know, there's always an angel in a crowd? There was a math teacher who kind of took me

476 under his wing and said, "You know, this is something that I do and I have a math Olympics and  
477 I do these kinds of things. Anything you want, I'm happy to help you." Now, the interesting  
478 scenario going on at the time – I was the head of the Beaverton School District Budget  
479 Committee and the Budget Committee, by law, is made up of non-district employees, and so I  
480 couldn't be hired until we'd completed our job. And we were so far along into the process that  
481 they didn't want me to be hired and have to step down. So what I offered to do was I would go  
482 in twice a week to this one math teacher's class who had kind of befriended me and I would  
483 simply volunteer. Because I wanted to get a feel for the culture in a high school math class  
484 because it's a lot different from elementary or middle school and I needed to understand that.  
485 So I volunteered for the month of January and then, of course, the semester was over, and just  
486 into February.

487

488 **55:00**

489

490 P: And then when that job was done, then I started the next week. But I had everything ready  
491 to go and I had requests tests, I wanted an A and B test that could be look at – just raw material  
492 and not scored based on age or grade, because I wanted to know what do you know now; when  
493 I'm through, what did I help you learn. And so I was provided with that, an A and B test form,  
494 and we started in. So based on the time it took to do the testing and spring break and so forth, I  
495 had just over three months of teaching. To my delight, the greatest gain was three years and  
496 eight months; the smallest gain was one year and eight months, and most of them were in the  
497 two, two and a half gain. And so I, you can bet who I showed those results to first (laughing).  
498 But as a result of that, what they called the HILS program, High Intensity Learning Program,  
499 was put into place in Beaverton following that year. But the principal told me, he said, ... My  
500 special education degree gave me permission to teach from grades k through 12, whereas other  
501 degrees limit you. But he said, "The reality is I need a track coach and most track coaches  
502 either teach history or math. And when I hire the track coach, it will depend on whether I can  
503 hire you or not." [break, switch tapes]

504

505

Part one ends here

arose to be head of the Assistance

514 Center.

515

516 Well, let me backtrack. As a learning disabilities program specialist, I acted as a resource for  
517 the teachers who were the learning disabilities teachers in the grade schools, and then that  
518 gradually expanded as cuts were being made, to include middle and high schools also. So I did  
519 workshops, I provided consultation, I worked, I just worked with them, the LD teachers, to help  
520 them to do the job that they needed to do in their schools. And then the Assistance Center  
521 became available, or heading the Assistance Center became available and I was moved into  
522 that position. And what our role was, was when the resources of a school were tapped out but  
523 the educational needs of the student were not being met, then they would call in the Assistance  
524 Center team and we would work together to come up with some solution. And again it was an  
525 organization listening to all, and I really moved forward in developing another set of skills that  
526 had become to emerge.

527

528 **1:00:03**