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I: Okay. Today is July 15, 1997, and we're talking to Marjorie A. Boon, and I'm Thomas Paleo, and we'll get started. Could you state your name and birthdate for us?

R: Sure, Tom. My name is Marge Boon. I was born June 28, 1930 in Grand Rapids, Michigan on the North end of Grand Rapids. My mother and father were Marie Grace Romance and Earl E. DeNeut, so I'm a Romance-DeNeut product. I have one brother, Earl R. DeNeut, and my husband and I have three children, and they are all grown. Chris is married and lives in Holland, and has one child. Amy and her husband live in Holland, and Dennis and his wife live in Grand Haven and have two children.

I: Okay. Why don't you give us a little background to, you gave a nice introduction to your family. Why don't you tell us a little bit about what it was like in the early years with you growing up and what maybe your parents did for a living, things like that?

R: My Grandfather, Dennis Romance, was a wood carver at Imperial Furniture Company, and he and his wife, Cora, lived just two blocks from us on Center Street. We lived on Dale Street in Grand Rapids, as they say in the north end. My father was sales manager of Slack Furniture Company before the depression, and then after Slack closed, he went to work for a Mr. Rice of Rice Veneer and Lumber, and went on to buy the company, a very small company that sold veneer and moved the company over on the corner of Dale and Monroe, so we all lived on Dale in way or another, my grandparents, my parents, and then my father's business, and that business is still in the family, so to speak, my brother and his son, Bill, now run it just about a mile from where it was originally started, so Grand Rapids was where I was brought up. I attended Palmer Grade School, and then Creston High School, graduated in 1948. Still go around with several of the people that I graduated with, there are four of us girls that I'm sure will grow old together. We get together with our husbands every summer, and so we have atmosphere as they say, go out to lunch when we can get to Grand Rapids or they come down here, and we thoroughly enjoy that time together. Growing up in Grand Rapids was an interesting time. I remember when World War II started, and I remember exactly where I was on Dale Street coming home one Sunday afternoon, so I went through World War II, and as I liked to say later on to students in high school when the Vietnam War was going on and everybody else was so against it, what we really needed was a good war because World War II, you knew who your enemy was, and you knew who your friends were, and thank goodness, the good guys won, whereas other wars we've fought since, sometimes you didn't know who the good guys and the bad guys were, and that makes for a difficult war to wage. My grade school and high school were fun times, and certainly, they were not times when we didn't get into trouble. We would skip school and go down to Joppie's and go down to the D & C Store, and we got caught, and I had to make up some time in school, but we never destroyed property, but we did have a good time, and afterwards, when I was teaching high school, it was very hard for the kids to get away with much because I'd done it all, and we pretty well knew that all the tricks of the trade of how to

get out of homework or how to get out of a class, and how to do a little mischief in class. When I was four, my father, even though, he probably couldn't afford it, built a cottage just seven miles south of Grand Haven. He had a brother who had a cottage a little bit further down, and so we had summered for overnight in that cottage, but about in 1934, '35, there was a tremendous polio epidemic in this area, and he read that if you had a home seven miles from where a river opened up into the lake, your family would be safe from polio because it took seven miles to cleanse the water coming out of the river, and so he pretty well paced it out from Grand Haven, and we built the cottage in 1934 back when the horses had to do your foundation and clear the land and Eddie Sheehan and his two white horses cleared the land for us, and built the cottage, and by golly, we never got polio, and years and years later, in fact, it was probably three years ago, I heard somewhere where this same theory had been brought forth again. And I thought, "By golly, Daddy was still pretty good back then," because as we all know, Grand Haven was hit very hard with polio back in the '30's, and many of those people are still around, but we never got it because we were seven miles from Grand Haven.

I: That's really interesting. I think that's a great story. The question I have is with your cottage, you explained that they were still using horses to help with the building. What was that area, knowing what it looks like today, what did it look like then? To me, it seems like that would have been a pretty unchartered area, I guess, wouldn't be a whole lot of development out there?

R: No, there were several cottages, the Jureckis were there, the Eckermans were there, the Shotzes were there. There're many cottages that are still standing that were there then. The Coxes, but next door to us, we had a drive-in parking for bathing and you paid 50¢ a car, and then you could go down to the lake and bathe and sun, and another interesting thing about the lot that we bought, Dad paid \$400 for one tree, and \$400 for another tree, they were a big Oak and a big Ash, which are still there, extra, and he paid \$10 a foot for the property that didn't have trees, and \$20 a foot for the property that did have trees, and part of our property that we bought had trees and part didn't. So, it was interesting how they sold property and the Fites(?) owned most of the property around there, so we summered there for many years, and I still have run into people because we'd go to Sunday School out there, Pigeon Creek Sunday School, and I still run into people who went to that Sunday School, and we had wonderful, wonderful times. Dad hired a minister to come once a month after a few years, and give us a sermon, but mostly, we had Sunday School, and we enjoyed that. It was 2:30 Sunday afternoon, and after that we could go swimming, so we thought, and of course, back then, in those days, you really didn't get to Grand Haven that often. You went to Bhem's for your groceries on the way down, and to begin with, we even had to put ice on the front bumper of our car because we didn't have electricity, and we also had to pump up the pump because we did have a well, and we did have a pump house, and so in order to use the inside plumbing, we had to make sure that there was enough water in the container to flush and draw water for dishes and drinking, and so us kids would have to go down in the pump house and pump up that water, and then of course, we could use the water in the house, but for several years, we did not have electricity.

I: Is the cottage still in your family?

R: No. It was sold, probably seven, eight years ago.

I: You talked about when you were in high school, World War II, and that was something I was gonna ask you, do you think that affected some of the things that you and your friends were able to do. Did you feel the effects, I guess, of the War, and that was a war effort that maybe changed things from the years before that?

R: I don't know, Tom, whether I could say that, but there were war bond drives, I can remember those. I can remember saving money for the saving stamps for your war bonds, and there were many times when you'd have bond drives for different efforts. Of course, the most famous one was right here in Grand Haven, and my husband bought one of the bonds to redo the Escanaba, and that, of course, was well over \$1,000,000 that was raised, so there were bond drives, and we really came together for those efforts. I can remember my dad being in the Civil Defense, and he would go out and ride with the Civil Defense. I don't know whether they really ever thought anybody would come to Grand Rapids and bomb us, but they were organized, and so World War II, yes, had an effect on us. I will say this. It certainly unified us in our efforts to defeat the enemy, and for that reason, we would write our friends, my brother's friends, a lot of them were in the army and the navy, and we would write them on these little onion sheets, and send them off to wherever they were in the service. Several of our friends from church, either were killed or were missing, and of course, we all prayed and thought about those young men that were out there fighting for the country, a very patriotic time, and it was a good feeling that you were really fighting for a cause to defeat a very, very evil situation that we knew was going on in Germany and in Japan.

I: After high school, what did you do at that point? Did you go into college or go into jobs or do both or what was it like after high school?

R: Well, very good. I and several of my friends went on to Hope College, which is the college of our church, and spent four years there, and had a very, very good experience at Hope at that time, and our daughter continued that tradition and graduated from Hope. We did it in four years, something that sometimes isn't done today. I can remember the first year, my board and tuition and books amounted to about \$360 a semester, and so probably, my total bill for the four years I was in college was about \$4,000, which of course, is a lot different now.

I: That's about half of a year now.

R: That's right, but Hope was a good experience. It was a college that had a lot of rules and a lot of regulations and so of course, you had a few rules and regulations that you could have a chance to break, but we had to behave ourselves, and that was good. That was good. I got a good education. I majored in biology, would have liked to have been a doctor, but back then, very, very few women got into med school. They felt that that would be money wasted back then, and I'm not judging that at all, but women get

married and have babies, and that was a deterrent as far as the medical schools were concerned to let women in because they did not feel that they would continue then with their medical career, so I settled for a biology major and education major and came to Grand Haven in 1952 and was interviewed by Superintendent Babcock, and was one of the last teachers that he hired and taught biology in the old high school for one year with Ted Cody(?) and then was one of the first faculty to go into the new high school, which is now the old high school, and taught there for another four years before I married and started having children, and of course, back then if a woman married and started to have children, the superintendent said very kindly that they were very happy that you were going to have children, but thank you anyway, they'd see you when your last one was in high school, and so even though, perhaps there could have been an opportunity for me to continue teaching, and by the way I taught biology, and so that was, and we had a good time. There was not the ability to teach after you started to have children. You could substitute, but they would not give you contract, and of course, back then we didn't have tenure, and so it was up to the administration as to whether you got a contract or not, so then I stayed home and raised our children for many years, and did a lot of substituting and finally went back part time in, I think, '75, 1975 and then full time for a few years and then finally did not teach after 1981, but I never went back to biology. As I say, he wrote most of the book after I quit teaching it, with all the DNA and RNA and everything else that came along, but we had a good time. We made good use of the greenhouse, and raised a lot of flowers and a lot of plants and made good use of the lab. We did a lot with rats, and guinea pigs and snakes and whatever and did some experiments that way, so we had a good time. It was a good time to teach. My students were close enough in age that we could all laugh together and have a good time together, but then the line would be drawn and they'd get down and start working and many of them are dear friends today.

I: The one thing I wanted just inform you about, the one thing I think that's too bad about the new high school is that they don't have a greenhouse in it, and that's a class that I know a lot of kids really enjoyed because they were able to grow things, and it was a nice thing, but now it'd be part of the middle school. When you came back into education after your children had started to grow, what were you teaching then?

R: I was hired as a half time Administrator of the Special Means Program. Now that's a program that is Federally funded and State administered, so it's Federal money that comes through the State to the local district, and it's to help young people who are in danger of not making it in a vocational field, so I worked with a vocational department, and what I would do is go in and identify some young people who either were drop outs or returns or in danger of dropping out because of different pressures on their family or different pressures on them. Certainly all the Special Ed students were available for this service, and then I would hire a para professional that had background in that area of either auto shop or machine shop or wood shop or let's see, there was foods, and also, the place where you sell stuff, I can't think of the name of it right now, but anyway...

I: Buck Stop?

R: Yeah.

I: It was known as the Buck Stop when I was in school.

R: Right, but it was the course that got you ready to do that sort of thing, and nurse's aide, all those classes, I would hire a para professional, and then they would, in stenography, too, typing and stuff, then those para professionals would help all the students in the class and let the teacher have some time, too, to help all the students, so it was a good effort, and lots of help given to students who other wise the teacher would not have had time to give that help to those special students, so it was a good effort, and I enjoyed the work. I'd done a lot of subbing in Special Ed, and so I knew the capability of many of those students, and it was a good effort. I enjoyed it.

I: At that time was the Careerline Tech Center open on West Ottawa?

R: Yes. It started about the same time as we got the Special Needs Program, and that at first, many of the students felt more secure staying with our high school. Now, of course, as you well know, most of the vocational department has been disassembled...

I: Mm eh.

R: And the kids, for the most part, go out to the skill center, but at that time our vocational department, which by the way, is one of the oldest in the State was still very prestigious and very much a factor in our high school, and the kids for the most part stayed right here in Grand Haven to get their vocational education.

I: You're right. Having been in the high school last year, most of the kids now have used the Boat Center for any type of training that they're gonna get that way, so that's where you are with education. Did you feel, you obviously came back and started working with the Special Ed kids after a time of not being in there, but did you see a change in the kids from when you first taught to when you came back, just in general maybe in the hallway kind of thing or just a difference or similarity, either one?

R: It's hard to judge because if you don't have your own class, and if you've done any subbing at all, you know what they can do to a substitute, and they did it, and so I'm not gonna judge whether the kids were that much better or worse when I went back. There were other pressures on the kids. When I started to teaching, there were no drugs, to my knowledge, okay? There was alcohol, and there was sex, and we dealt with 'em both, and so that had not changed that much, but the drugs were not there, and I think the kids perhaps were a little less respectful, respectful, but then again, maybe that's because I was a substitute and not a teacher, and there is a line that is drawn between those two.

I: Yes, there is. I can attest to that myself.

R: When I had one kid throw a chair out the window of the second story when I wasn't looking, I thought, "Now you know, Marge, I'm not sure you really need to go through this," and that's when I really kind of drew the line on subbing because you get to a point in your life and you get older and you get a little less tolerant then of that type of action,

and perhaps you don't quite see the humor in it anymore, and so you tend to say, "Now, I really don't need this pressure, and I don't need this stress," and so you say, "Find somebody else to do this."

I: Okay. We've talked about your education and your background with your own education plus being in education as a teacher. We know later, you're gonna become the Mayor of Grand Haven. What type things did you get involved in that you feel really led you into that? Did you feel a calling to politics or was it just something that kind of happened I guess?

R: Well, when I started having children, my husband was very tolerant, and rather than have me cut out paper dolls, I joined the League of Women Voters, and he certainly was supportive of that effort and glad to see me use some of the intelligence other than just patty cake, patty cake, so the League of Women Voters was a very good organization and still is, much more active in those days because not as many women were working full time, so I started in the League of Women Voters when our first child was born, right afterwards, and spent some time on the different study committees, you might say, rose up through the ranks and became President of the League of Women Voters here, and about the same time in 1970, and our first child was born in '57, the Planning Commission of Grand Haven decided that they would expand and become a nine member planning commission instead of a five member planning commission, and so I had been, just come off being President of the League here, and so Virge Quebblemen, who was then Mayor, asked if I, along with Dorothy Johnson, who was Michigan Council Foundations Executive Director, would come on the Planning Commission, so we were the first two women ever appointed to the Planning Commission. I don't know whether there were women on the other boards and commissions, but we had done some work in the League on planning and work on the League on the sewer plant and those local issues, and I think we'd done good work. We did a lot of investigating, a lot of studying, and we didn't just lash out with unfounded statements. We had done the study, we came to consensus, and then we took action, and I think the city people appreciated that approach to a problem solving situation, and thought that perhaps we would be valuable on the Planning Commission, so Dottie and I came on the Planning Commission in 1970. Vyn Erickson was still on the Planning Commission and certainly was a mentor to me as he was to so many other people, and certainly a stimulating person to have known. Vyn always would put his money where his mouth was. He wanted to improve our harbor front, saw no reason why the area, which is now, of course, our boardwalk, could not be improved so people could walk along there, and pay for a plan to have it done, and presented it to the Corps of Engineers because of course, the Corps does own that property, and does own the harbor. They determined that they could not afford to implement the plan, and so from 1970 until the boardwalk was built, until the Parks and Recreation Board really took off with the plan for the boardwalk, that plan was there, but it was Vyn Erickson that really stimulated through the years the idea of improving that water front. From the Planning Commission, the City Council had gone through some turbulent times around 1970, '71 and '72. For some reason, they had three or four mayors in a row that were very short termed, well one died and one moved to Grand Rapids and one resigned because he evidently didn't understand the pressures that would come to

him as Mayor, and so they had appointments to make to the City Council. By 1973, I saw the value of being a part of the City Council rather than just the Planning Commission. We'd done a new Master Plan, and we'd done a new Zoning ordinance, and so we accomplished a lot. Billiken Lehman, who I think is still the professional planner for our Grand Haven, Chuck Carnes, had led us through that process, and Chuck is very conservative, but very nice to work with so we had accomplished a lot in the Planning Commission, and I thought perhaps I was ready to come on to the City Council. Interestingly enough, they appointed a lot of men...

I: That's a surprise.

R: So my friends in the League of Women voters urged me to let it be known that perhaps, I could be one of those appointees 'cause I did feel at that time, in 1973, that it would be a lot easier to be appointed than to be elected in this community. It's a very conservative community, as you well know, and there's nothing wrong with that whatsoever. So I did approach some of the Council and let them know that I was available without waving my arms up and down and shouting, and they just felt I was valuable at the Planning Commission level. I was Chairman at that time, and I thought, "Well, okay, I guess if I'm gonna do it, I've gotta do it on my own." So, our youngest child was only three, I think, three or four, and no she wasn't, she was nine. Anyway, I have to keep thinking how old they are. They grow up so fast. Some of my friends said, "Hey, we'll help you babysit, you know, we'll help with the family," and again, my husband, you know him as Moon Boon, many people know him as Maurie Boon, teaching and, again was very supportive of my effort, and so decided that we would make a run for the City Council. There were seven people that ran for two open seats in the primary. It was a very vigorous race, and I did a lot of walking, got a lot of advice from a lot of people, and was one of the two that were elected along with Jack Smant in the November election. It was a hard fought primary. I had one gentlemen really question whether I should have taken a \$25 contribution from someone in town, and so I checked it out with the Prosecuting Attorney at that time, because I was new. I was new at this, and I didn't know how much money it would take to run, and someone was helping me raise that money, and it wasn't that much money, but we were recording it, and telling who was giving what and whatever, and of course, you have to put all that information on a sheet of paper and then send it in to the County Clerk, and so I asked him, I said, "You know, I really am feeling very nervous about having taken this \$25 contribution from this gentleman, because he is in a business that perhaps one day would do some business with the city of Grand Haven, and he looked at me very solemnly. He said, "Marge, I've never known \$25 to buy much of a whore." I looked at him. I was so surprised because he's not the type of gentleman who would say something like that, but I've always remembered it, that \$25 doesn't buy much influence, and so with that I felt much better about it. As I said, it was a hard fought primary, and a hard fought election, but Jack and I prevailed, and I became the first woman to have been elected to the City Council.

I: You were the first woman on the City Council, and obviously, you were the only one in that race out of the seven.

R: Yes, not many women have made a race for the City Council, but I applaud all of them that have.

I: You had told me earlier when we were discussing how, and you explained it a little bit when you were talking about the League of Women's Voters how the perception of women had changed in some of the things that you did actually made people look at you and say, "Hey, this person is thoughtful," and those kind of things. Can you kind of just briefly discuss how you feel that perception was starting to change by the time you were elected?

R: Well, the League of Women Voters, I've always said taught me how to approach problems, okay? Because in the League, and this spills over into other perceptions of people when they think about an organization. In the League, you all choose the subject that you want to study, and then you get a group of people and now it's people 'cause there's men and women in the League, but in those days it was only women, a group of women that want to study that subject, and they do it for like six months, and they really do an extensive study on the subject that they have chosen, and one year it was Special Ed, and another year, it was Planning in the City, and another year it was the Sewer System, and after the study has been completed, that committee, then makes a presentation to the League, and the whole League of Women Voters in the area, and then after a couple more discussions of the subject matter, a consensus is taken. Now that isn't a vote. It's just a feeling that you get from the committee or from the whole League, and then you take a stand, and you say, "We're for this for this reason, we're for that, we're against this," whatever, and then you start working towards that premise, whether it's a better Special Ed system, whether it's a better Sewer system, whether it's a better Planning system, but only after the study and only after consensus, do you take action, and I think when you learn to approach problems in that way, and you don't just jump in without any background knowledge, without any ability to give a history of where you're coming from, people respect those kinds of studies, and those kinds of approaches because it's hard to trip up a person who has done that much study and done that much consensus work on an opinion. Certainly, there are other opinions, but when you get that many people studying it, and you come to a consensus, and it's a broad consensus. It's not a narrow consensus, then I think people are willing to accept that and work with you, and I think that that spills over into the city and area's opinion of people who go through that process, and you can use it in your church; you can use it in your schools; you can use it in your personal life; you can use it with your children. It's just, I think, a wonderful way of approaching problems, and there are many, many women who were very active in the League and still are, but there just aren't enough women to do the studies any more 'cause so many of us are working full time.

I: Okay, and I think part of the perception then changes because you guys were looking at, the people in the League are looking at things kind of in a scientific approach, where you're studying it, where I think the perception for a long time about women would be they can't be politicians because they're gonna be emotional, and some of their roles have not got them ready maybe to be in a position to make decisions, and I think with the League, people are perceiving you now as someone that can lead and someone that can

make a decision and someone that knows how to, how to base that opinion, on what to base it on. So you win the election, that was '73?

R: Mm eh.

I: Okay. Explain how things went from there with that City Council. Was it different then what you expected when you were running or just how was that?

R: No, I was very comfortable, and we really had a good time. Darrell Tammen, of course was the city manager back then, and we had a lot of things on the plate, as they say, and we were busy. The Council was friendly, and I never felt that I was excluded. Now, maybe I was, I don't know, but I never felt that I was excluded. John Walhot was Mayor, and Paul Rose was on the City Council, I'm trying to think of all the people that were on the City Council, and Jack Smant, and oh, there must have been one other, oh, Cliff Pfaff was still on the City Council when I first elected, so it was a nice group of people to work with. We had some good times, and we worked hard. We all cooperated, certainly no feeling that it would be a vote of 5 – 0 every time. We had our own opinions on things, but we were open and honest about those opinions, and I think we worked very well. Jack was only on the City Council for a couple of years, and then there was an opening on the County Commission Board, and Jack went to go on to the County Commission. Then Paul Verseput was appointed to the City Council so we had a good City Council, and I stayed on for six years, and then...

I: Were they two year terms or...?

R: Four years.

I: Four year terms? Okay.

R: I was re-elected, and then in 1979, in the middle of my second term, I decided to run for Mayor, and was solemnly defeated by Peter Ball, which was fine. I always said afterwards, I said, "I've won and I've lost, and I like winning much better than losing," and I think most people will agree with that. Then in '81, I again ran and was successful then, and became Mayor in '81.

I: Then you would be the first female Mayor of Grand Haven?

R: That's correct.

I: Did you see a difference in what you did possibly campaigning from '79 to '81, or I'm also kind of curious to know if the itch came from within you or were there people also kind of edging you along, trying to tell you you know, "You'd be a good Mayor, we'd like to see you run."?

R: In '79, the fire was not in my belly, and that's not an excuse for losing, okay? But my mother was taken ill, and died the summer of '79, and that was tough, and then my

father-in-law died in September of '79, so that was tough. Very honestly I could not get up for the election, and Peter did a beautiful job and deserved to win, and won. I was still on the City Council. I'll give him all the credit because I did have fire in my belly. In 1981, we had lost Challenge Porcelain, we were about to lose Cooper, we had been told that Cooper might be on her way out, we had lost AP Parks, you're talking about six or seven hundred jobs out of this community in two years, and I didn't realize it, but I was gonna be laid off from my teaching position in June of '81. Well, I'll tell you, if you ever want an experience, you go out on Robbins Road and stand in line for your unemployment check, and that will give you fire in your belly to replace those jobs, and I had fire in my belly, and I walked this community and I was up against a good, good man for Mayor, Jerry Witherell, certainly did not mean to defeat him at all, he was a good friend, still is a good friend, had been one of my students in high school. He and his wife are still dear friends, certainly did not want to make it a personal issue, and hopefully, it was not because we are still good friends, but I just knew that we had to do something to stop this hemorrhage of jobs leaving Grand Haven. Eagle Ottawa was not doing very well back then because the automobile industry was done. It was just a tough time in Grand Haven, tough job wise, and ACI was still between CED and the Chamber, and the leadership of one firm organization was not as focused as what I thought it could be, and what it certainly became. Again, not criticizing, but just knew that cities could do things. Larry Dietchen had come on as our city manager, and if you ever want to see a person that is a race horse, you have to get acquainted with Larry Dietchen. I knew that Larry and the City Council could and would go out and try to get the government grants and government loans that we would need and the stimulation that we would need in order to get new factories into Grand Haven. We had gotten a grant from the Federal Government and had built the Airport Industrial Park around the airport, and that was starting to take off just a tad, and so we had the land. I felt we had the formula, and I had the background. I had eight years on the City Council. I had become acquainted with people in Washington. Guy Vanderjack and I had gone to college together so Guy and I were good friends, and we kept that friendship for many, many years. I just had the feeling that I had the background, the knowledge, the experience that was needed to at least make an effort to replace those jobs, and so I ran and it was hard fought, but a clean campaign, a clean campaign, and I was successful, and we went from there.

I: How do you feel, how did you serve as Mayor first, but then during that administration, did you, what kind of things did you do that helped you see that you started to replace some of those jobs? 'Cause I know that was one of the big things during your administration that I know you're proud of.

R: Right. Perhaps prouder than I am of the boardwalk, which sounds silly, because they all fit together. We, Larry, of course, was our City Manager, but Daryl Tammen had come back on as a Council person, Dave Klassen was on, and Don Wessel was on and Jim Dean was on so we had a good City Council, and we just got together and said, "Look, we have to do everything we can for economic development, and we're going to try to replace the jobs that we've lost, and we're going to try to create new jobs that are meaningful to this community," and so we said to Larry, "Whatever you go after as far as Federal grants, and State money is concerned, it must be for economic development, it

must have something to do with economic development.” And we pulled in the Planning Commission and the Harbor Board and the Parks and Recreation Board and all the Boards and Commission and let them know how important this whole entire effort was to the well being of the community, and so we went from there. We hired an economic developer, Ross Giles, and he put in his own office, which we got free. We got the furniture from Herman & Miller, and so he set up an Office of Economic Development. He, by the way, had been the economic developer down in Holland for many years, and was just about ready to retire, and took on this challenge. Even though Ross did not place a lot of industry in Grand Haven, he certainly let it be known, that we were here to help. We had the industrial facilities exemption certificates. We called them PA 198s, we had the commercial exemption certificates, which we called PA 255, and so we had the instruments through the Federal Government to help people improve their companies, improve their businesses, these are tax exemptions, 50% for over 12 years on the building and the equipment, there are two different certificates. The commercial certificates didn’t last too long. They only lasted about five years or four years, and then they were sunset by the State Legislature, so the commercial certificates were not here very long, but the Ford Garage, Redeker Ford, was able to take advantage of it, The Tribune was able to take advantage of it, and I’m sure there were others, but right now they don’t come to mind, but...

I: I’m gonna stop you just for a second so I can get the tape.

R: Okay. In the industrial facilities exemption certificates in the commercial, we made it very clear to the remaining industry that was in Grand Haven that we were here to help. Ross Giles and I visited every factory in Grand Haven, met with the people, met with the managers, the presidents, and also toured the factory itself, and I, firsthand, was able to see how hard our men and women work in Grand Haven. Being an educator, we had very few business industry days where the educators would go into an industry and view the people working in that industry, but I made it a point to visit every factory in Grand Haven, and I could feel the fear, and the pride, the fear of losing the job that they had, but the pride of doing the job so well. Every factory that I went into, the people were working hard, and they wanted to work, they wanted to be efficient. This is one of the most beautiful things about the Grand Haven or Tri-City area. We have a work ethic that just won’t quit, and even when we volunteer, we work hard, so that was a wonderful, wonderful experience, Tom, to be able to go through those factories and see all those workers and talk with the owners and talk with the managers and let them know we were here to help, and we would do anything we could to make it easier to remain in the city of Grand Haven.

I: Okay, so you tried to help obviously in which is the local businesses stay here, but at the same time, were you trying to recruit new industry?

R: Oh, yes, and Ross and the ACI were working very closely and trying to stimulate people to come over. Shape Corporation was just a small spinoff of Verplank, Coal and Dock, and it was located in Ferrysburg, and when Shape came over to Grand Haven, look what they’ve done and look where they’ve gone, and they started with just maybe five or

six people in the roll form and certainly have done a beautiful job, and there were some people that had worked at Cooper that formed a roll form plant and a stamping plant so there were many spinoffs and certainly, we had a lot of people who were very, very well trained in how to do very intricate machining jobs but were out of work, and so anybody who had the ability to form a company, and use that pool of very sophisticated workers, hopefully could take advantage of it, and start up again.

I: The other thing you talked about was the boardwalk. Explain that process, what you guys went through to be able to get that going, what your reasoning was for it, and what you think of it.

R: Okay, well first of all I think it's wonderful. The Parks and Recreation Board began looking at a boardwalk, an improvement along our harbor. About the same time Ross Kiddleman of the Corps of Engineers let it be known to us that the Corps of Engineers was going to do so revetment work, and they had MNOP and those are all different sections of the revetment that they were going to either replace or improve, and so the two ideas came together and it just meshed beautifully because while they were doing their improvements on the revetment or the harbor area, we could also then stimulate the people to get the boardwalk or get the improvements back to the road, instead of just along the revetment, and just the replacement of the cement that forms the harbor, why not do the whole thing and make this beautiful dream of Vyn Erickson's come true, so the Parks and Recreation Board laid out the plan. They got the plan all laid out by M. C. Smith, who by the way cut his teeth down here and did a beautiful job and now has world wide reputation, I'm sure, but M. C., Mike Smith, laid out the plan and we went to the Corps of Engineers, and they said they would cooperate. However, all of sudden, they said, "The area where the boardwalk was going to go, section P was going to be delayed for five years," and we said, "You can't do that. That's our boardwalk. That's where the boardwalk's gonna go," and they said, "Well, we're sorry, it's just not in the plan," which meant that several of us had to do a little traveling to Washington and to Detroit, and I know Ken Formsma went down to Detroit several times to talk with Colonel Burkett of the Corps Engineers, and we finally got P included. Then we had to get enough money to build the boardwalk because the Corps was not going to do all the amenities for us, and so the Parks and Recreation Board, with Ken Formsma, I think who was Chairman at that time, came up with an idea of the same kind of boardwalk that Traverse City had, and that they had a plan whereby people would buy the boards, and so this is where \$25 buys a plank, and that's where we got the idea of "Fill your tank and buy a plank", because you would buy gas, and all the profit from that gas at Wessels would go toward the boardwalk, and hopefully, you would donate \$25 toward the boardwalk. Then we also went to the Loutit Foundation and said, "How would you like to be involved in this?", and they said, "Well, you still owe us money from the Bi-Centennial Park, which was by the way was another thing that was done when I was on the City Council, and we're very proud of that because certainly, that was an area that had been slated for redevelopment, and instead the Loutit Foundation gave it to the city for, I think, \$120,000 over a period of years, and then we didn't have to pay any interest, and we sort of set that aside for the Bi-Centennial of the United States. That's why it's Bi-Centennial Park, but the Parks and Recreation Board did a beautiful job of putting on all sorts of fundraisers as you well

know. We got the Loutit Foundation involved. We were still short, and so Larry and the group went to the Corps of Engineers again and said, "Look, you've got some job corp money, like two or three million of job corp money that you have spend someplace. Why don't you spend it here? And, Tom, I don't know how they were able to convince the Corps to do that, but they did, and so without the dedication of the Corps of Engineers, and the tremendous effort that our City Manager and the Parks and Recreation Board and the City Council made, even though, there were hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people who donated money toward the boardwalk, it took that extra effort to really get it all meshed together, but it was a wonderful, wonderful, experience, and a tremendous bringing together of the community to have that boardwalk there, and obviously, when it was dedicated, it was a very proud moment for all the Parks and Recreation Board members, especially Ken Formsma, and the Committee that he worked and the City Council and the Corps of Engineers and the Loutit Foundation and the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation. It was just a tremendously, wonderful effort, and we were very proud of it, and as you can see, in getting back the economic development, all the people who come to Grand Haven, you ask them whether it's a person who builds a factory here or brings their boat in to spend some money while they're here, what's one of the things you love about Grand Haven, and what's one of the things that brings you to this area, it's the beauty of our harbor, and of course, that started when Bill Creason, as Mayor, had the committee that he formed build the musical fountain. As he likes to say, he wanted to draw attention to how terrible the harbor was by putting something beautiful across the way, and as you can see, we now have our marina, which we were able build on and build around, we have the park at the end of the marina, even the little boy scout is there, and that was the dedication of the people who were in boy scouting around the area, so we've been able to redevelop that whole area. We used TIFA, and Tax Increment Financing, and it was so successful, and nobody lost a penny on TIFA. I want to emphasize that because some people were really upset about TIFA, but actually TIFA took the tax that you were paying at the time that they formed the big area for redevelopment and you never paid less taxes than you paid when TIFA was formed.

I: Okay.

R: The wonderful thing about TIFA was that as you redeveloped, and you had to redevelop, the property went up in value to pay off the TIFA bonds, which by the way, a local bank picked up and gave us a tremendous rate on 'em, NBD People's Bank were just wonderful. That money went to pay off the TIFA money that we borrowed, and we paid off those bonds in five years instead of seven. There was such a tremendous redevelopment in the TIFA area, which of course, is the piano factory in Chinook Pier, all privately developed on public land, not the piano factory, but the Chinook Pier. It was just a wonderful redevelopment of the whole harbor, not only the boardwalk, but the whole harbor, and it was economic development. It was economic development, so several years ago, while I was still in office, I was asked to put on several slide presentations around the state as it had to do with economic development and TIFA, and so, I was able to find some slides that were pre-TIFA, pre-redevelopment of that whole area, when that's where the carnival used to be, down along Harbour Avenue, and the piano factory and that whole, one end, and I was amazed. I was amazed to see the old

Bird Garage and the old Chamber of Commerce of Building with the CED in the back. It was just a back office that you had to climb upstairs, all the different, as we called it now, junk, that was in that block, but it's now a beautiful parking lot, which we were able to get a State grant for it, and then to see the redevelopment, to see how Harbor Avenue was a Boulevard, and the trees and the grass and that whole area and the Farmers Market. By the way, that was one of the first projects that Rotary every was involved with here in Grand Haven, and now, Rotary, every year, underwrites at least two or three projects. This year, they're going to put a pendulum clock in the new high school, so our City Manager, our whole team was able to convince a tremendous amount of people to buy in to economic development in Grand Haven. Now there are some people who're gonna say that we went too far too fast, okay, but I have to share with you, Tom, that once the ball gets rolling, you can appear to be doing nothing for two or three years, and then all of a sudden, all your projects come together, and are finished about the same time. There was a period of six months to a year where I swear I was cutting ribbons almost every week. I didn't ask to do that, okay? I was asked to do it. And people said, "Oh, Marge, you know, you're in the paper too much." Well, believe me, it was the last place I wanted to be, okay? But people were so proud that they were able to get things done, but it all came together at one time, and it was all kind of finished within a period of six months to a year after maybe six or eight years of planning, and so then sometimes people get the feeling you're going too far too fast, and as one friend said to me years and years ago, "If you do that, you'll probably end up in the next county," and of course, that's what happened, so you don't go too far too fast, Tom, at least the appearance of it.

I: Mm eh. So how long did you actually serve as Mayor?

R: Eight years.

I: Eight years, so two terms?

R: Four terms, those are two year terms.

I: Okay. And what was your recollection, or things that, as Mayor of Grand Haven, I know that you have a tie in with the Coast Guard, and the Coast Guard Festival, you visit Washington. What was that experience like?

R: Wonderful! Wonderful! Of course, I had gotten acquainted with the Coast when I was on the City Council, but as Mayor I just had a ball. We would each year go out to the Coast Guard Commandant's home, and meet with him, along with our Senators and Representatives, we would spend about three days in Washington, go out, I think, on probably a Friday night, and come back on a Tuesday morning, so that we would get in with the congress as well as the Coast Guard, and it was just a wonderful, wonderful experience. We would go up on the hill, have a prayer breakfast at the Capital Hill Club, and meet with our Congressman and Senators and the Coast Guard was there so they had an opportunity to get further acquainted with our Senators and Representatives. They would, we went off to the Commandant's house several times, and there were probably 30, 40 of us that would go each year. Jim Gracie was Commandant for four years while I

was in office, and then Admiral Yoss was Commandant for several years when I was in office. Jim Gracie and his wife and my husband and I really hit it off. She was a teacher, as well as my husband, and so they had a lot to talk about, and Jim was just one of these people that you felt like he was an old shoe, and at that time, of course, Escanaba 3, along with several other Coast Guard cutters were being built, and he knew the significance of Escanaba here in Grand Haven, and since women always christened ships, I was asked if I would christen the ship, and that was certainly one of the highlights of my ever being in office. I think about 35 to 40 people accompanied me and our family, my husband and I and our family out to Newport, Rhode Island for the christening, and it was just a wonderful, wonderful experience, one that I certainly will never forget. Then, of course, Deace Thompson, Admiral Thompson, of the Atlantic Fleet, two years later, even though I had certainly hinted that we wanted her here for the commissioning, and those things always take about a couple of years to happen 'cause there're shakedown cruises and whatever, anyway, we had certainly suggested that she come here for her christening, and Deace, in Washington when we were out on, excuse me, we were in New York on Governor's Island and he was the admiral on Governor Island and that whole area at that time, announced when we were there that she certainly would be coming to Grand Haven for her commissioning. That was just a wonderful, wonderful experience, to see her coming in the harbor and going out to greet her, well it was just a beautiful experience, and one again, that will be a highlight of my career as Mayor of Grand Haven.

I: Okay. Now the question I have, and this is for people that may not be aware of it in this community. As mayor, most mayors have another job. I know you taught and things like that, but can you explain a little bit of the, how you were compensated, I guess, from city because I know it was not anything very big, but I think a lot of people don't realize that the Council people and the mayor and that, this isn't their full time job.

R: Right. Well, number one, I had been working, and then I was laid off in June of '81, so for the first few months, I had my unemployment coming in. This is where a husband really comes to your rescue, and my husband, as I said, Moon has always been very supportive of whatever I've done, in politics and in organizations, and we lived off his salary, and that wasn't as easy as it could have been had I been working full time. Also, the fact that my mother passed away, there was some money there that she and my dad had had, and that was divided up between my brother and I, so it wasn't that we were destitute, I don't mean to say that. But when I became mayor, I think, when I was on the City Council, I think I started out at \$200 a year, and then it went to three, and then I think the mayor got \$500 a year. By the time I left as mayor, I still wasn't making \$1,000 a year. But keep in mind, we have a Council Manager form of government, and we have what they call a weak mayor in Grand Haven, and that's a specific form of government. When I would say that to people, sometimes they would laugh, but the Mayor in Grand Haven has no more authority than any one of the City Council. I cannot veto any vote that comes along. I'm just one vote out of five. The Mayor votes last, so I can break a tie between two and two, but I certainly can't influence the vote any more than any one else on the City Council. The compensation, again, is not meant to be a living wage. It, the only thing that I wanted to see, as far as a compensation committee was concerned, and I pushed for this, is enough compensation so that it would open the office to more people

because it does take time, and consequently, there are people who couldn't afford to run because they would lose some of their income by being in office, and I was trying to get the compensation to the point where at least it would pay for i.e., women, babysitting, if you had to be gone, and your husband was working, it would pay for a babysitter once in a while, okay? It certainly wouldn't pay for your clothes or the cleaning, but those are the things that you really don't think about. If you're willing to serve, and you're ready to serve and you've got fire in your belly, somehow you're given the wherewithal to get it done, and I mean, physically and spiritually and emotionally and even compensationally. However, I will also share with you that I was never approach with a bribe, and I mean that sincerely. No one ever approached me with any type of compensation if I would vote one way or the other, and I'm proud of that. Whether they didn't dare or whether they just don't, I don't know, but I was very proud of this community that I never was approached with anyone wanting to sway my vote for a personal interest.

I: I think that's just interesting. I wanted to hear that because a lot of people, I think, they way they criticize our city government, sometimes I think they must think that they're making a million dollars or something doing it, and I just kind of wanted to see, and you explained it with the fire that you have, that you want to be involved in it, that it's not something they're doing for the money. It's something that you want to do, and you choose to do, and then you get the good and the bad that comes with that. Is there any thing else about city politics or anything, a story you haven't told or something that down the line people might look at, maybe a humorous event or something that didn't quite work the way I thought it was going to?

R: Well, sometimes it's hard to find humor in politics. I did become active in the Michigan Municipal League, and was the second woman to be President of that, which I was very proud of, and it gave me a lot more exposure to many, many more politicians around the State, and then toward the end of my office, I was elected to the National League of Cities, which I was very proud of also because again, it gave me exposure to a lot of National figures, and I have to share with you, Tom, that yes, I found that there were some politicians that I would not want to follow in their footsteps, okay, but I also will share with you that the vast, and I mean vast majority of elected officials that I ever met were good, honest, God-fearing people, and I mean God-fearing people. They're religious. They live their faith. They're dedicated to the people they serve. They're not in it for the money, and they are truly, have the best interest of their community at heart. The vast, vast majority of the people I ever met in politics were just wonderful, wonderful people, made some excellent, excellent friends, around the State, around the Nation, and it just was a wonderful, wonderful experience. Now, I also will share a funny note because women back then were instilled, do have a organization, Women in Politics, okay, in the State, and there's one on the National level, the same as on the National level, there's an Asian group, and there's a Black group, and an Hispanic group, they all get together and have their own little organization, but the women's group in Michigan would meet every so often, at least on a yearly basis if not more than that, and it was interesting to hear the stories of other women, the experiencing that they were having, and the one that stands out as far as funny is concerned was this one women, who again, was a strong woman. And the men, evidently, and she was the only woman on the City

Council, and the men, evidently, had not accepted her, and so they would go in the men's room, and so she finally got sick of it and just followed 'em right in, and she said, "If you're gonna talk in the men's room, then I'm gonna be here, too. That never happened to me. I never had to follow anybody to the men's room, and I never had the feeling that the men were talking about City affairs, okay, without my knowledge or without my consent or without my inclusion, and so I was very happy about that. And again, I did not always enjoy a 5 – 0 Council. We always had very independent thinkers, and people who had their own agenda, but for the most part, I think they were great, good agendas, and they were dedicated to those agendas, and we worked with them and cooperated, and we had give and take, and hopefully, we came out for the better, but those eight years were very, very important.

I: Okay. You mentioned some of the different organizations you're involved in. What's Marge Boon doing now that, since she's a former Mayor, now, what is she doing?

R: Well, as I like to say to people, facetiously, anything I want to. Everybody will tell you that after you retire, regardless of what you retire from, if you have been active in the community, you usually are asked to join several organizations, and I was no exception, so I have been on the Salvation Army Board for many years. I have been on the United Way Board for many years. I have been on the Museum Board now for three or four years. I've been on the Vision Enrichment Board for several years, and I've been on a Bank Board for about ten years. I'm wondering if I'm leaving anything out. Oh, and I'm in Rotary, and I've been active in that. Also, enjoying being a grandmother, and I love those grand babies.

I: How many grandchildren do you have?

R: Well, we have four, and one is married. We always have called him our instant grandson. We love him dearly. He came with the marriage, and he got married last summer, and his first anniversary's coming up this Sunday. Then we have three others, Melissa, and she has turned 11, and Dirk, who has just turned 7, and then Alexandra, who will be 1 in October, and our son and his wife, Dawn, own Melissa and Dirk, you might say. Sometimes you think that Dirk and Melissa own them, but they're wonderful kids, and all four of them are great people, and Alex is the daughter of our daughter, Chris and Marv Inga, and they live in Holland.

I: Is there anything that we haven't discussed or events and things outside of politics maybe in your life or in Grand Haven that you might want to discuss, I mean, maybe, some of, when you talked about the cottage and things you did there. When you moved here, what was your perception, 'cause you said you didn't come in to Grand Haven a lot. What was your perception of Grand Haven? Did it fit that? And maybe, you already basically told us how it's different, just look at the boardwalk and you can tell, it's much more nice to look at and nice to be at than it was probably, I'm sure, when you were there, when the factories were there, which I can remember as a child being there, but maybe just give us a little feel for how you felt in Grand Haven originally, and...

R: Okay. Well, we didn't come into Grand Haven a lot to begin with, okay? But, by the time I was in junior high and high school, then the road was paved, and we did come into Grand Haven for church. We went to First Reform Church and Second Reform Church, and we would do some shopping here. The Style Shop was important, and then there was a couple of coffee shops, and I can remember, of course, Presley's Drug Store was very important to everybody, and there was one little shop where you could get sodas and sundaes and dance. I can't remember where it was, but it was closer to the harbor than Third Street, you might say. I remember Ewald's Drugstore, and Wheeler's Drugstore and Ekkens Grocery Store. I think if you would open a door and have that smell come at you, I would say, "Well, that's Ekkens," because it always smelled the same in Ekkens Grocery Store, you might say, but there, it was a nice town, and I can remember walking into town one time from the cottage along the beach, then having Mother come and pick us up, but we walked all the way in from...

I: Seven miles, that's pretty impressive.

R: Well, you could, and later on you couldn't because the water came up, and you just couldn't get by some of the areas, but yeah, it took us all afternoon to do it, and then we would stop at the Highland Park, not Highland Park, well, the other place down there and rent tandem bikes where the condos are now...

I: Mm eh.

R: Then we'd go to dances, and of course, what kid hasn't stayed at the Oval in high school, and then gone over and Hyland Gardens, that was it, Highland Gardens, and danced at Hyland Gardens with your boyfriend. When we were kids, they talk about kids, you know, cruising up and down Harbor Avenue, and I have to laugh because one of the biggest critics of that used to do himself. I know he did, but anyway, we would stay at the Oval, and then us girls would get out on Harbor Avenue and hitchhike into town, and actually one night, this was early in the evening. We all had to be in our tents at 11:00 o'clock, but we would see how many times we could hitchhike back and forth. Well, obviously, a lot of people were just going back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, from the Oval downtown and back, and of course, at that time, there was a lot of rinky dink stuff along where the Bi-Centennial Park is at, that you could have fun at, and then The Barn was still there, so you could roller skate in The Barn. There were just a lot of nice little things to do, and of course, all of Prospect Avenue, and Berwick, not Berwick, but Prospect and the one coming down, there were all rental cottages, you could have bought any one of them for three or four thousand dollars, and those were our motels in those days. We never had motels on the waterfront, but we had cottages that people would rent all summer long, by the week, by the weekend, two kids with chaperones, of course. You had to have a chaperone. Sometimes, they went home in the middle of the week because they couldn't take you, but again, we were not bad kids. We had a lot of fun, and perhaps broke some rules, but they were not rules that would get us into permanent trouble.

I: The one other question I have is where did you meet your husband and how did that happen? Is he a native of Grand Haven?

R: Oh, yes! He's a native. I think. I've always said that's the only reason I ever got elected is because he's a native. His mother was a native by the way, so he could apply for the Centennial family... We met at college. We were taking a Marriage and Family Relations course, if you'll believe it, and he was a veteran, and then, this was in summer school, and then I came here to teach, and he was teaching in Mason, Michigan, and then he, a group of friends that he went around with, and one of them, I had an apartment right next to the apartment that my girl friend and I were staying in the first year I taught, so I saw him again then, and then he was in a very serious automobile accident, and had about seven skull fractures, and that's why he's deaf, by the way, and his equilibrium has never been the same. We all say when you see Moon walking at night, why he's not been drinking, it's just that he staggers because he has an equilibrium problem, and I can tell you a good story about that, too, if you want.

I: Sure.

R: Anyway, we met again then, while he was recuperating, and then I was engaged to another gentleman from Grand Rapids who I'd gone with in high school, and then we took a Problems in Alcohol Education course together it was a pilot course out of Western Michigan University, and Arlene Wentinpool (?), and the three of us would go up, and we took that course, and then we became good friends and decided that perhaps we would like to do more together, and the next year we became engaged and got married in June of '56, so we just had our 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

I: Congratulations.

R: Thank you, or 41<sup>st</sup>, excuse me. Time goes fast when you're having fun.

I: Yep. So what was your funny story about your husband?

R: Well, we were up at Drummond Island. We have some dear friends, in fact, Moon's gonna go golfing with the gentleman tomorrow, and her parents had a cottage up at Drummond Island, and we love to go fishing up there for Pike, and met them up there one time, left the kids with Grandma, and met them up there, and they had a shallow boat, and we, in our rental, had a deeper boat, and he does much better in deep boat, but I didn't know how to run the boat, so my friend said she would come over into our boat, which left him to go over into the other boat 'cause the fellows then were gonna fish together and the girls would fish together, and so, as he would, and this was out in the middle, 'cause it was all rocky up there so you couldn't really get on to the shore, and he says, "You know, I'm not too good this," and he put one foot over into the other boat and just kept right on going. The boat tipped over, and everybody, the gentleman that he was with came up, and his hat was still on his head, and of course, all the fishing gear was floating away, and he said, "You just weren't kidding that you aren't too good in boats," so we had fun getting him into shore, and the water, of course, was very cold, but

as I say, Moon, after his accident, he was profoundly deaf, and taught for 37 years, profoundly deaf, so I'm very proud of him, and the kids would tend to make his life a little miserable once in a while, but he had a good sense of humor, so he's, and he got his Master's in Reading which I was very proud of because it isn't easy to hear in a classroom in a lecture situation when you're that deaf.

I: Especially in the time that he would have been going to school. Now they do have some different avenues they could have put him into to help him out, but back then, I'm sure, it was just kind of sink or swim, and I'm impressed that he did that, too.

R: Yep. Yeah, yeah. And he's always been very supportive, again, of what I have been able to do. I could never have done a thing without him, and never done a thing without the support of my children. Women, anybody, if they go into something, you have to have the support of your family, and if you don't, don't even try it. Find a different avenue for your interests. One of the funny things that he used to run into, and I used to run into when he was walking for me as far as campaigning, he would hand a brochure to somebody, and say, "I hope you can vote for my wife," and the woman, once in a while, would say, "Oh, I'll have to check with my husband." And then another time, I was walking and some woman said to me, "Well, are you sure your family's old enough that they can spare you?" Well, Tom, on the front of my brochure is my family. I'm 5'9 1/2", and I'm shortest one in the family, and they were all sitting there bigger than I was, and I thought, "Well, honey, if they're not old enough to handle this without me right now, I don't know when they would be," because they were pretty well grown by then.

I: It's interesting when you said that about him campaigning for you, the thought came to me the way people's perception of the role of the woman and the role of the man. He really, at that time, took a role that was foreign to a lot of men, and it must have been interesting for him where people would say to him, "Well, why aren't you running? You know, if she runs the town, who runs the house kind of a thing maybe, or, but it sounds to me like you guys had much more of a, did it cooperatively, which is...

R: And as I say, if your husband is not in support of what you're doing, then don't go into something like this because you're exposed so much in the public, that without his support, and people can smell whether he supports you or not. They can see it in his eyes; they can see it in his voice, and same way with a female and male, okay? If a male is running, if they don't have the support of their spouse, it's better not to do it because you're setting yourself up for failure, you're setting yourself up for a lot of frustration, a lot of stress, and there's enough stress without having that stress, and you know, there were some stressful times, but we learned to laugh, and not always, but most times, and again, the good Lord gave me a lot of strength, and I felt that strength when I needed it.

I: Right. Unless you have anything else to tell us about, that will conclude our interview today.

R: Thank you, Tom.

I: Thank you. I appreciate your time.