

Interviewee: ...recording to make.

Interviewer: Really?

Interviewee: Is that not amazing? There are not that many states. But Alaska is one of them.

Interviewer: Really? I did not know that.

Interviewee: Anyway, that is a piece of trivia.

Interviewer: Yeah. That is a good piece of trivia. Thank you. Okay. So, I am just going to ask you a few questions about you. And we will start the actual interview in just a minute. So, what is your date of birth/

Interviewee: 1/2/52.

Interviewer: Okay. And where were you born?

Interviewee: [TOWN] Indiana.

Interviewer: All right.

Interviewee: [SPELLS TOWN] It is named after [TOWN NAME], France.

Interviewer: All right. And where did you grow up?

Interviewee: [CITY] Indiana.

Interviewer: All right. And where do you live now?

Interviewee: Hydaburg, Alaska.

Interviewer: And how long have you lived there?

Interviewee: Since 1980. So, 43 years before that, I lived on Dall Island 25 miles from here.

Interviewer: All right.

Interviewee: I lived at an old cannery site that I used to fly out to. And I never had to go to Prince of Wales Island. I just flew out from Ketchikan to Dall Island.

Interviewer: Okay, okay. Oh, go ahead.



Interviewee: And then, around about 1977, I started living out there in '76 after seeing the place in '75 and then using my pipeline to buy the place. But I started living out there in '77. And then a Haida girl... my future father-in-law came to get me. He needed another member on his steam boat. And I fished for him for three years. And then I had my first child.

Interviewer: Oh, wow.

Interviewee: And then I started working back in construction where I could make a more stable, predictable income.

Interviewer: Sure. Okay, okay.

Interviewee: And benefits. I always worked union.

Interviewer: That is great. Okay. And your answer to this might be no. But do you have an Alaskan native group that you identify with like Tlingit, Tsimshian, Haida or do you not identify with any of those?

Interviewee: Well, it would be hard not to identify with Haida. I mean I am in one of the richest native cultures, I think, in the world with their art and just the way they have survived. And to maintain the lifestyle that they have been able to keep even for like four centuries.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And it still has not been totally immersed into the white culture here in Hydaburg. They are still fighting for their native identity. And it is hard not to get involved in their lifestyle living here.

Interviewer: Yeah, certainly.

Interviewee: And their way of thinking. See, you kind of become indoctrinated. So, I would have to say I am real close to the Haida people here as far as what they represent and how they believe. But I do not try to become one because I am so different.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I am so different and raised so differently than they do. I never had the battles or what they have had to face in their lives.

Interviewer: Sure. Absolutely, yeah.



Interviewee: By the way, are you native?

Interviewer: No, I am not. Nope.

Interviewee: Oh, I just wondered.

Interviewer: Yeah, of course.

Interviewee: So, that did not make a difference to the person that you mentioned. I forgot his name already.

Interviewer: Yeah, it is [PROJECT PI]. Yeah. So, yeah. I think he was curious about interviewing you because you have lived there for a very long time. And you have a lot of experiencing aging in that place and living with Alaskan native people. And so, I think that is why he was curious about your experience as well.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I mean the school even invited me to talk. In order to graduate from Hydaburg, you have to have a class in Native Rights and Tribal Law and Tribal Government.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: To graduate from Hydaburg High School. Well, they even asked me to come and talk about coming to talk in their class.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: Yeah. Even though I am not native, they have asked me to come and talk.

Interviewer: That is great, yeah. What is your preferred language?

Interviewee: English. I only took a foreign language in high school.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And then I did not continue it.

Interviewer: All right.



Interviewee: But it was kind of interesting. I took Russian. And then I worked in the cannery in Homer during my... all from college. I went to the University of Alaska Fairbanks. And all the native women on the... I mean all the women on the processing were all Russian. And I could talk to them at break time.

Interviewer: Oh, that is neat.

Interviewee: But that was like when I was in my early 20's. This was 50 years ago I guess.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: But go ahead. I keep interrupting.

Interviewer: Oh, you are fine. What is your current marital status?

Interviewee: I am married, but live separately. And we are considered separated for 20 some years. But we have a very good relationship. And I am invited to all the family functions. And I still help my kids' mom with her house doing repairs and checking on her. And the last thing I did was I put in a new floor for her. So anyway, we are still together, but not together.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: We are together for the family. We have kids. And we have always thought that that was more important to stay together for them than to go through not being recognized as a whole family.

Interviewer: Sure. I am just taking a note on that. One second. Okay. What is the highest grade of school that you completed?

Interviewee: I had two years of college.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And then I worked on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline for the rest of my education as a laborer. And stayed in the labors union for over 30 years and documented over 50,000 hours in the labors union.

Interviewer: Wow.



Interviewee: So now, I am living in Hydaburg comfortably on a retirement from the labors.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Which includes all my medical and everything.

Interviewer: Okay. That is great. Okay. How many people, including yourself, are in your household?

Interviewee: My step dog.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: A dog. And then I babysit my daughter's dog. Sometimes I have three dogs and sometimes I have one. But no one lives with me.

Interviewer: Okay. And where do you want to live your remaining years or grow old?

Interviewee: Right here. I am building a house right now right down from where I raised my kids. I can look up and see the house that my kids were raised in. And they are up higher. And I am right down on the beach.

Interviewer: Oh, that is fantastic. Okay. And can you tell me your mailing address, the best way I could mail something to you?

Interviewee: [MAILING ADDRESS]

Interviewer: [ASKS FOR CLARIFICATION]

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: All right. Okay. I am going to get started with the interview questions. So here, one second. Okay. So, can you tell me a little bit more about yourself? How did you get to where you are now?

Interviewee: I hitchhiked up to Alaska after going to school in Nebraska. And I was going to a small civil arts school. And I do not know. It just did not seem to be what I was into. And I ended up in the spring going out west. And I got as far as Olympic National Park and stayed there for a while and picked berries that summer. And when I was picking fruit, I tried to go to Alaska, but I did not make it only as far as British Columbia. And the next year, I went all the way to Alaska hitchhiking.



Interviewer: Wow. So, that was... when was that? That was before you worked on the pipeline.

Interviewee: Yeah, that was in '71 – '72.

Interviewer: Okay, okay. And then you worked on the pipeline. And how did you end up in Hydaburg?

Interviewee: Well, with my pipeline money, I had always wanted to have property. And I got in kind of late in trying to get... they used to give out 40 acres of homestead land if you proved up on it and built something. And they ended that in 1973. And I did not get in on that. And then the pipeline started. I said well, I am going to use this money and buy property. And I wanted to buy remote property. So, I went looking. And I hitchhiked up here and took, the ferry. I fell in love with southeast Alaska. And I always wanted to live on the ocean. So, I came back with my pipeline money and bought an old cannery site on Dall Island.

Interviewer: Okay. All right.

Interviewee: And Dall Island is the 42nd largest island in the United States. It is bigger than Guam. It is 42 miles long. And it is between four and eight miles wide. And it was named after Robert Heely Dall, the same person that they named the Dall Sheep after. And he was the naturalist on one of the first voyages of the Kennecott Expedition. And he wrote a book, Resources of Alaska in the 1880's. It was the most used book for anyone coming into Alaska like people going up the Chilkoot Trail. If they wanted to know anything about Alaska before they even came to Alaska, they would try to find this book and read it.

Interviewer: That is fascinating. Okay.

Interviewee: We have an original copy of it in the library, the Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska Fairbanks that I actually got to handle.

Interviewer: Wow. That is pretty cool. So, how does it feel to be viewed as someone who is aging successfully?

Interviewee: I do not know if anyone ever thinks about that.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I do not know who would look at me as aging successfully. I mean I do not know how to answer that question.



Interviewer: That is okay. What do you think successful aging means?

Interviewee: You have stayed healthy and active. And you can get around without any help physically or mentally. And you are past the age of 60. And you have maintained your mind and health.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: I mean maybe 60 sounds young nowadays. But not too many people get to live to be 60, especially if you grew up in a small community. And there is a lot of risk. More so when you are on the water is what I am talking about.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

Interviewee: Anyway, I think that is what I would say. Anyone that can stay alive.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. How did you learn about aging well? From whom did you learn about how to age well?

Interviewee: Well, you watch your parents age. And I would go on both my mom and dad's side to help them before they passed. Because my mom had a debilitating disease like cancer. So, you knew that she was going to pass. So, I went home and stayed with her. And then my dad, when it is time for him to go, I was down there helping him with his caregiving needs. And he wanted to die at home. So, we had to hire people to come in and help us with the caregiving. And he got to die in his recliner right in his family room. And we kind of knew it was coming because he had a heart....

Interviewer: That must have meant a lot to him.

Interviewee: Watching my parents and helping with their caregiving needs and being right there when they passed taught me a lot about what to expect and now I am going to have to deal with it.

Interviewer: Sure, sure. Yeah. How would you say that aging affects your day-to-day life?

Interviewee: I do not really ever think about it. I think if you stay busy and have projects, and you always have something to start your day off doing. And then you try to accomplish what you set out to do that day helps you maintain an active... you got to get out of your house when you are... you need to socialize. And if people are not visiting you, then you should go



visit them. I was complaining about being lonely. But if you stay in your house and wait for people to come and see you, you are going to be lonely.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: You need to go out and get involved. And find something that you can do to use up your time. Right now, I am trying to build a tiny house. So, it is more like a minimal house where I am just using the smallest amount of space as I can. And it keeps me busy working on that. And then there are always projects of other peoples to help on. But I have been trying to just use what skills I have developed having spent my life working construction helping other people.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. How would you say that aging has affected your relationship with family, friends, your community?

Interviewee: Well, I would say that... I do not know. I would say aging does not mean that you automatically get respect for just being old. You have to come with some sort of achievements I guess. And you had to have had some sort of vision to have gotten where you got. And I think me building a house at 71 is kind of a vision and helping with my aging process and being looked up and understood in the community as someone that is trying to make themselves a place to retire.

Interviewer: Yeah. That sounds like an important thing to be doing right now. Yeah. You talked a little bit before we started the interview about loneliness and about how loneliness is not very conducive to aging well or does not help you age well. I am curious if you can talk a little bit more about the role of loneliness and why that is not a good thing for aging.

Interviewee: Like I was trying to say earlier, loneliness can be self-induced if you do not try to be more proactive about your situation. And I do not know. I think people need to talk every day. And if you are living alone like I do and you do not have anyone drop by and you do not have anyone to expel all of the stuff you have been thinking out of your head, I do not know. I just think interaction is what stimulates your brain and makes you have to think about what you are saying like having this conversation with you. I am using the words that I have never used probably in years. Because I do not have all of these kinds of intelligent conversations all the time. Mostly, it is pass me the salt or....

Interviewer: Sure. Sure, yeah. So, part of not being lonely and having that connection is being able to talk to people, share your ideas, and have conversations.



Interviewee: Yeah, because I do not think it is healthy to live inside yourself all the time. And that is what I am finding. You have to have an outlet.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewee: And one thing we have going on in this town is we have senior meals once a month where you go up to school and you eat with the kids, all the seniors do. And that is nice that they try to recognize that we need to have some involvement. But that is through our school. And our school is really good about recognizing the elders. And having them come in and talk or even work up at the school as aids. There are jobs up there no matter how old you are if you want to work as a student teacher aid.

Interviewer: That is great. I am glad they have that. How have your relationships affected your understanding of aging?

Interviewee: I do not know. I am just gifted with a strong... I do not know. I think I am able to process things a lot easier than a lot of people because I have such an easier lifestyle. And I do not have to worry about things that other people have to worry about. And I just think I am not in the same situation as most of the people that live in this town. I have income coming in. And I am just more active.

Interviewer: Sure, sure. Yeah. What supports you in aging well? How are you able to age successfully?

Interviewee: Well, I think having a good financial backbone with Social Security Retirement check and a pension check makes me so much different than anyone else aging in this town. Because I have resources coming in at the end of every month that other people do not have. And it is just like without being in a union and not having had a pension, I am like a middle class person. And there are hardly any middleclass people in the village. They are mostly working on grants and government jobs that do not pay very well. Like the city jobs only pay like 17 bucks. And the tribal jobs only pay about that much. The price of groceries and electricity is harder and harder. And fuel... it just gets harder and harder on people because of everything going up and no one having enough money to really do much once they age.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewee: So, I am so different than everyone else here. I mean I do not know anyone else that... well, there are a few people that worked for the Alaskan Marine Highway through the Inlandboatmen's Union that have



pensions coming in. And I am not the only one that is middleclass. There are a few people from this town that went out and had to leave Hydaburg and get jobs. And they did it through the ferry service.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: Or getting involved in the Merchant Marines. We have people that work helping drive ships and work in the shipping industry through the Merchant Marines that live in Hydaburg. So, anyone that has made it well in the town of Hydaburg have had to go out and work somewhere else.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Interviewee: I mean none of these jobs in this town have pensions. And some of them do not even pay benefits.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: And I do not understand why we have government money and government entities in this town that do not pay well or offer benefits. I mean it just does not make sense. It is like... I do not know. It just does not seem fair that everyone is not offered the same retirement benefits.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely, yeah. These next few questions are about elders. So, you can think about some of the elders in your community. Why do you think some elders age well and some do not?

Interviewee: Financial resources, I think, is the main one. I think you age a lot better if you do not have to worry about your money. I think a lot of older people become very restricted when they cannot go out and work in the workforce anymore. And they have to deal with what little bit of money they have. And it is just hard to make ends meet in a village. And because everything costs more here, they are not given the increases in Social Security or whatever to live on.

Interviewer: How can you tell if an elder is aging well? Did I just ask you that? I am sorry. How can you tell if an elder is aging poorly?

Interviewee: They do not have any food in their cupboards or no one to help them to put up fish or gave them fish that they had put up and had extra. Or if they are having trouble with their electric bill or fuel bill and they are just not warm or full in their stomach. And believe it or not, this time of year when it is hard to go out and go fishing except fishing gear, I mean we need really someone in the community that goes out and harvests our



subsistence and passes it out to the elders is what needs to be going on more. And I think the elders need to be recognized for having gotten where they have gotten today. And where they have gotten today, it is harder for them to go out and get subsistence, firewood, or pay their bills. I do not know. When they say it takes a village to raise a child...

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: It should be it takes a village to raise a community. Because you have to not only deal with children, you have to deal with the elders. They become like children. And you have to take care of them like you would a child. And I do not think the villages are prepared to take care of their elders. And I think this is a really good program. It is trying to understand we are getting more and more elders because we have better healthcare facilities. And we had better medicines. And we have a higher... I was part of the baby boom. And now, we are all part of the... we have a lot of baby boomers that are my age now. And what do you do with them especially in a village where they do not contribute much?

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

Interviewee: So, how do you figure out... you have all these people. They have needs. But we are not prepared to address them. I do not know how you guys are going to figure this out. But it is nice that you are doing a study to know that there is this need to fix this problem that is going to be coming up more and more.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Especially if the availability of goods gets lower and lower.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And we are going to have to rely more on subsistence. We are going to need these kids to get off their iPhones and go out and get in a skip and set up halibut gear, shrimp pots, and crab pots, going clamming, and bring it by elder people. And go deer hunting and drop off a deer to an elder or help them put it up. Maybe we should have... instead of government commodities on a lot of food that none of these people will eat that gets stored in these commodity buildings, we should have a subsistence commodity setup where we have people bringing elders their native foods. I do not know.



Interviewer: That is a good though, yeah. I think that is a really great idea. What do you think a person needs to do in order to age well or in order to prevent poor aging?

Interviewee: Well, he must feel his worth. And if he does not think he is contributing. Then I do not think the will to live will be as strong. But if they think that they are contributing, even as a grandparent, I cannot believe some of these elders that their families all moved away and they do not have anyone here. It must be terrible. But I think being able to pass on the knowledge you have to your grandkids is what I think will help your aging.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: It is being able to share your knowledge. And it was such an honor to go up and talk at a school classroom about tribal government and what it means to be a tribal entity. And trying to explain to them that the most important thing that they have is their land and their resources. And that is what their strength is in. And people that understand that is what is going to also go to give you your strength. If everyone gets behind protecting their land and their resources in the community that they live in, and they have that going on, then I think that is what is going to make the communities survive is understanding that they have to protect their resources and that the greatest thing they own is all the land around them.

Interviewer: Yeah. No, that is really interesting that you say that.

Interviewee: You do not have to be a tribal or a native person to realize this. You can come in there and just know as another ethnic group how important their culture and their land is. And how they got there. And knowing where they came from.

Interviewer: Yeah, that is really important. Yeah. What do you say it means to be an elder? What is an elder's role?

Interviewee: I think an elder's role is to lend a hand and try to get involved when asked and being there for other people.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And not thinking you are too old to help. Everyone has something they can offer. And I think our strength is in our numbers. And if you are involved, then we will be stronger. If you are uninvolved, it is like you are not there and your number does not even count for anything. So, just being



an active member of the community or an active member as a grandparent is important.

Interviewer: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. How do you know if someone is regarded as an elder or not?

Interviewee: Other than the way they look; I do not know.

Interviewer: Okay. How you distinguish someone that is 60 years' old that is an elder and someone that is 60 years old that you would not think of them being an elder. So, there are some people... oh, go ahead.

Interviewee: I just do not know how you make that distinguish of what makes an elder other than the way they look.

Interviewer: Okay, yeah. So, is elder defined by age? Is it defined by knowledge? Oh, go ahead.

Interviewee: Yes, it is defined by age.

Interviewer: Defined by age, okay. Okay. Yeah.

Interviewee: If anything, elders lose their knowledge. Especially if they do not have conversations like this and engage. And if they are just waking up and having coffee and sitting around all day waiting for their life to end, I mean those are... and then... I do not know. It just does not make sense to do that. But we have people that do that.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Do you think elders in your community are aging successfully?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No. Why is that?

Interviewee: They are not getting the help they need, especially with housing. And their houses are not being kept up. And people are not helping elders work on their houses. And that is all they have to live out the rest of their lives. And it is their homes.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: And a lot of people, besides groceries, do not have money to put in their homes. And when something breaks, they just have to get along without it.



I mean we have a lot of people in this town that are elders that their plumbing is in such disarray that they have to go other places for showers and laundry. It can be a simple fix. But an elder woman living alone might not have the mechanical skills because they were never on a job to see how this stuff was done.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: They made their living doing other things.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: Like working as a treasurer of the city or a teacher aid or running a grant for the tribe.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: All those jobs are important. But they do not teach you any mechanical skills or life skills for dealing with some of the things you have to deal with. And they do not have the money to pay somebody to do it. And we need some sort of program for elders that is funded that helps them with their housing projects.

Interviewer: Yeah, absolutely. How do you think that aging has changed compared to 20 years ago in your community?

Interviewee: Well, 20 years ago, we did not have... 20 years ago, we had lots of money. We were logging extensively. And everyone was either long shoring or working in the woods. And now, we have no long shoring and no jobs in the woods. But you are not talking about the economy. You are just talking about the people. I think the elders lived more of their customary lifestyles than what they do nowadays. Twenty years made a big difference in modernization, I think, in this community. And I think that people are self-absorbed in other things other than trying to do... working on fish and stuff. I think they just do not do that as much as they did 20 years ago.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: I just do not even think they eat as much subsistence food as they did 20 years ago.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. Yeah.



Interviewee: We had money to buy guns and money to put in out ports to go hunting and fishing. But when you have no money coming into this community and the jobs are all really low paying, I mean by the time you pay your bills and your groceries, you have no money for doing anything or for even helping anybody. I cannot believe that the wages are not going up with the amount of groceries. When your paycheck does not buy you as much groceries as you used to be able to eat and the clothing has all gone up also. And people dress differently. And 20 years ago, you did not have to buy your kids iPhones. Now, you have to buy and eight hundred to a thousand dollar iPhone for your kids. I mean I do not know. People are too much into electronics than they were 20 years ago.

Interviewer: Sure. Yeah.

Interviewee: I just do not know how to explain it. But it is not the same earth as it was 20 years ago.

Interviewer: Why do you think some elders move away?

Interviewee: To be with other elders.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: They cannot... they do not have relationships anymore with people in the community because they got older. And no none seems to be interested in them anymore. And I think they move away just to be amongst other people like themselves. Not everyone can start building a house or retirement home. Some of them have to go to a retirement home because they cannot take care of themselves and they do not have the support system. And people are struggling just to feed their kids. How are they going to deal with elder people?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: I mean even big towns like Craig that have four times as many people as Hydaburg or maybe even six times as many are struggling right now.

Interviewer: Sure.

Interviewee: Because of the way the economy has turned and the way that there are less resources out there as far as when they are fishing. And we are doing with less and less. And we have more and more people. So, I do not know.

Interviewer: Yeah. How do you think aging is different in rural and urban settings?



Interviewee: Well, you would have to... I do not know. You would have to... like a poor urban setting compared to a poor rural setting?

Interviewer: Sure. Yeah. How are those different?

Interviewee: I do not know.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Do you think it is different in the villages versus the cities?

Interviewee: I think the city has the same problems in their poor communities as a poor village community in Alaska. And when I say poor, it is like Hydaburg does not have an industry.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Their biggest employer is the school and the tribe. And the tribe all runs on federal grants that they provide. And one of the grants that the tribe works on is they maintain our roads. So, they have a roads crew.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: And then they have all kinds of grants that are being administrated in this town that I do not even know about. They might even have one for elders. But communication and having everyone know what is going on, I mean there is so much that goes on at the tribe that if you are not a tribal member you are not going to know about. And a lot of those resources are available to non-tribal members. But you never hear about them. I do not know. Communication is a big thing. And getting out there and taking your job seriously is another. I mean a lot of these jobs that they have, they do not have any accountability to the job. You do not have to report to anybody but a grant to show that you spent the money.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: So, I do not know.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you have any advice for people in your community who want to age successfully?

Interviewee: Yes. Get out of the house. Do not spend days in your house.

Interviewer: Okay.



Interviewee: Walk at least to the post office or the store. Maybe just get out of your house every day. Show you have some life in you. Do not get discouraged that you got old. Do not let it be a burden. Make it be a badge you wear of honor that you got this far in life. Because not everyone gets this far in life especially if you live in a small community where you are out in the skiffs and fishing boats. One thing you do not see any more is people fishing all winter long.

Interviewer: Oh, yeah.

Interviewee: Or you do not see anyone trapping anymore. When I first came to Hydaburg, we had a group that would come in every spring and buy our furs. Now, we do not even have anyone that traps.

Interviewer: Wow.

Interviewee: When I first moved to Hydaburg though, there was not even a road. I mean you had three flights a day coming in from Ketchikan. Now, you are lucky to have one or two a week come from Ketchikan straight to Hydaburg to bring our mail.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: No one uses it to... you do not fly out of Hydaburg anymore. You go to Kowak or Hollis or Craig to get off the island.

Interviewer: Sure, sure.

Interviewee: So, that is a big difference.

Interviewer: Yeah. How do you feel about sharing your knowledge with the next generation? What are some of the benefits and challenges?

Interviewee: Well, I do not know that I am sharing my knowledge with anybody. I would like to think so. But not that many come around me. And it is mostly family. And if I had any knowledge to share with anyone younger that is coming through the ranks where they are not going on and trying to be a professional educated person and just want to start out in the working arena, it is to go to an apprenticeship and make sure you have a retirement. Some of these skilled professions like electricians, they make easily 50 bucks an hour and that is with benefits. I mean a laborer probably makes about 30 bucks an hour working out of the union. Did you know that?

Interviewer: I did not know that. No.



Interviewee: And they probably get another 15 dollars in benefits. So, a union laborer working on a union job would get, with benefits, 45 bucks. So, that means if you work a government job what it is called Davis Bacon, we have to pay the prevailing wage which they base that in Alaska on the union scale. Instead of getting on a highway job that is non-union, you would get those benefits as well. So, you would get like 45 dollars an hour cash. But if you were a union, you would get 30 and have 15 paid for all your benefits.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Well, that is the way to go. And there are all kinds of unions. I am going to go speak on career day up at school. And I am going to tell them about the pros and cons of not having union representation when you get old. They are trying to do away with unions. I mean when I was in the union, we were nationally 22 percent of Americans were union workers. Now, I bet you we do not even have 10 percent. And that is because they do not want to see a middle class.

Interviewer: Yeah. I think that is really good information that you will share with the youth. What drives you and what motivates you to share your experiences with youth like going to school and talking about benefits and pros and cons of working for the union?

Interviewee: I do not know. I did not go and offer my services. I was asked. So, it would have been different if I could have said well, I tried to go up to school and ask if there was any way I could... I guess I have done that. But anyways, I was asked.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: So, this is not my own initiative. But I do not know that I have initiative that I have had in the past. But it is not like a mindset that I go out and try to say I have knowledge and here I am; use me.

Interviewer: Sure, sure. What is the most important thing that you want to share with youth?

Interviewee: Well, you reap what you sow. If you are going to be a slacker and not go out and try to join the workforce, then you are not going to have anything to show for it at the end of your life. If you go join the workforce and you start trying to put money aside for a home and you feel more productive, then I think you are going to have a better life and age better. But if you try to stay out of the workforce and just tried to live on what you could, I



think it is going to be terrible lifestyle towards the end of your life. Because you are not going to have any money to even get off the island.

Interviewer: Sure, sure. Okay. Well, this is the last question I have for you. Is there anything about aging or about being an elder that you want to tell me that I have not asked about?

Interviewee: No. I just think that a lot of it depends upon the jobs you have had in your life and not be the knowledge you have. And I think the people that have been able to stay in the workforce are the ones that are doing the best aging.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: The ones that tried to avoid joining the workforce are the ones that are having the problems. So, my advice is to get out there and do something productive to make yourself of value.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewee: Show something that you have retained for your gift of life and the gift of having this beautiful universe and Mother Earth to live on. And try to be more of a steward and caretaker for what we have. And if you see youth brutalizing fish just for the heck of snagging them and beating the heck out of them and then not eat them, tell them that is not a good sign you are showing. And if you are littering and not caring about what your town looks like and think nothing about just dropping your wrappers or discarding your cigarette butts without thinking about putting them in the right place, then that is going to affect how you age. It is about how you give back and show respect for what you were given.

Interviewer: I think that is really beautiful. Yeah, and really important. Yeah. Well, thank you so much for sharing. That is all the questions I have for you.

Interviewee: All right.

Interviewer: The next thing we will do is we will figure out the gift card just how you would like me to get that to you. So, I can just mail the....

