

AL 107

Interviewee: Kate Barnes

Interviewer: Rick Alexander

Date: March 30, 1989

A: Today we are interviewing Kate Barnes. My name is Rick Alexander, and we are in her office at the county commission of Alachua County. Today is March 30, 1989. Kate Barnes was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was raised in Lakewood, Ohio, and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. She began her art education at age ten in a program for children at the Cleveland Museum of Art. She attended special courses throughout high school in life drawing and design, and she received a full scholarship to the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art in 1968.

She made a small tour of the world in 1969 to 1970 and returned to the U.S. to settle in Ft. Lauderdale. In 1971 she moved to Cross Creek, Florida and began her career as a studio artist. In the 1970s she began to exhibit regularly in Florida galleries and outdoor exhibits. She developed a reputation for Florida landscapes and water color, as well as still-life subjects and nature close-ups. She also illustrated the books *Cross Creek Kitchens* by Sally Morrison and *Mountain Lake Almanac* by Ken Morrison.

In June of 1982 she created the Friends of Cross Creek to oppose a large development plan for Cross Creek. As an alternative to the development, Kate Barnes submitted a successful proposal to the state of Florida for Lochloosa State Forest. She became active in regional and state conservation work, and in 1988 she decided to run for county commission. She was successful in that attempt, defeating five opponents. She is on board of the Florida Defenders of the Environment and was on the board of the Chamber of Commerce last year. She is president of the Friends of Cross Creek and is currently a county commissioner in Alachua County. I guess we should start the interview with your full name.

B: My full name is Kathleen Marian Barnes.

A: What is the Marian for?

B: Marian was my grandmother's name, and it was my chosen Christian name when I was confirmed.

A: Where were you born?

B: I was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and I spent the first five years of my life in Herkimer, New York, where my father joined his father in the music store business. Then we moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and then we spent a couple of

years in Ft. Lauderdale. Then we went back to Cleveland, where I finished growing up and doing my schooling.

A: So your grandfather was from Herkimer.

B: Right.

A: Your father's family is from New York, then.

B: Right.

A: Where is your mother from?

B: She is from the Pittsburgh area.

A: How did your parents meet?

B: My father was an air force cadet in World War II, and he was stationed in Pittsburgh for some of his cadet training. He met my mother at a cadet's dance.

A: Was it a USO [United Service Organizations] type affair?

B: Right – the standard World War II model.

A: Did you go to school in Herkimer?

B: No, I just lived there as a small child. I have continued an association with that area all of my life. I have a lot of family still there, and my father's family and ancestors are all from that Mohawk Valley area. I still go up there almost every year.

A: I am somewhat confused. After you left Herkimer, where did you go?

B: We moved to Cleveland, Ohio. We stayed there for a few years, and then we moved to Ft. Lauderdale. We moved a lot as children--I think about fourteen times total.

A: That is a lot.

B: I attended ten different schools before I graduated from high school.

A: Was that difficult?

B: Yes, but I think it has been very useful to me as an adult. I am a good traveler,

and I am adaptable, and I think that comes from a lot of moving as a young person.

A: Does it make it easier to make friends quickly?

B: Yes, and it also makes it easy to make major changes without total trauma. I guess I am just used to picking up and relocating periodically.

A: When did you or someone first realize your interest in art, or was that there from the very beginning?

B: As a young child I must have shown some abilities in it. When I was ten I was selected by my elementary school art teacher to join a special program at the Cleveland Museum of Art for young people. It was conducted on Saturday mornings, and we would each take a bus across town to attend the classes. The instructors would take us through the museum collection and explain things to us, and then they would let us draw from the collection while they talked to us about what the different periods of art meant and so on. It was a really good experience. There was not very much doubt in my mind after that that I had an artistic bent, because I never questioned it much from that point on.

A: You liked it. Did you know right then that that was what you wanted to do?

B: I thought so; at age ten I was pretty convinced that I was going to be an artist. That was what I started telling people, and I guess it was a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A: So you really enjoyed your trips to the museum.

B: Oh, yes. First of all, being selected by the school to represent the school was a big honor. Also, I just loved to draw and paint, and I think it was a very timely opportunity for me as a young person to take a particular direction and have some really high quality instruction and inspiration at a young age. I am hoping that when the [Samuel P.] Harn Museum [of Art] is finished and open that that kind of opportunity will be made available to the young people in this community. I would certainly like to teach a course like that.

A: Where is the Harn Museum?

B: That is the "Miracle on 34th Street," which is very exciting for all of us who are involved in the arts in Alachua County. To have that coming out of the ground is really a thrill.

A: Did you have anything to do with that, or were you just cheerleading?

B: I was just rooting in the background, but I hope to have something to do with establishing a program for young people similar to what I was lucky enough to encounter at a young age.

A: That sounds really exciting. How long did you stay in Cleveland? Were you taken away from this program relatively soon?

B: No, I lived in a suburb of Cleveland called Lakewood for most of my schooling years; Lakewood is the first western suburb of Cleveland. We only had two years in Ft. Lauderdale before we moved back, so I went to elementary, junior high, and high school in Lakewood, Ohio. I was not too uprooted at that time, although we moved from house to house quite frequently. We moved into different neighborhoods within Lakewood, but we settled in that community so that all of us could take advantage of the good school system there.

A: Did you stay with that program, or was that just for a certain age group?

B: That was just for a certain age, but when that was finished it seemed there were always good opportunities for me to do some extra studies in art. In high school especially I had a lot of special classes in it, both at the high school and on Saturdays and evenings, when I was allowed to go to a commercial art school in Cleveland to study figure drawing and so on. So I have always pretty much involved myself with art as much as I could, even from childhood on.

A: When you were in high school, was there any particular one teacher or person who really showed you a certain way and whom you latched onto as a mentor?

B: Yes, I had two mentors in high school. One was my home room teacher, Mr. [William] Waters, who was a chemistry teacher. He was an inspiration in the sense that he believed in us as young people and really tried to make every opportunity for us to excel. He was instrumental in encouraging my family to let me take a scholarship that I was offered in Boston.

The family was a little afraid to send me away so young into the big city, but Mr. Waters convinced my father that it would be a really good opportunity and that I was mature enough to handle it. He also got me a student loan to cover some of my dormitory expenses, so he was a real help.

The other mentor was my art teacher, Mr. Harold Winkle, who simply encouraged me every inch of the way to apply for scholarships and to take advantage of every opportunity that came along to pursue an art career. He sort of stood over me and made sure that my portfolio was the best it could be and that I did not miss any deadlines on applications. With that kind of help, I consequently got

several scholarship offers, and, as I said, with the other teachers' assistance, I was able to take advantage of the one in Boston.

- A: So Mr. Waters was kind of like a college advisor.
- B: Yes, he was. He was a very intelligent and forward-thinking individual, and he seemed to take special care in anyone whom he thought had gifts that needed to be developed. Between the two teachers, I was fortunate enough to get the right guidance at the right time. Although there was not much money at the family level to support an education, I was able to get one, thanks to a lot of help.
- A: Let me go back and get some dates. I guess I missed your birth date.
- B: August 12, 1945.
- A: So you graduated from high school, then, around the early 1960s.
- B: 1963.
- A: So you are a baby boomer.
- B: That is right – the leading edge of the baby boom.
- A: You got this scholarship offer, then, in 1963, about the time you were about to graduate?
- B: Right.
- A: What happened when you went off to Boston?
- B: Boston was one of the most formative and exciting years of my whole life. It still stands out. I have a lot of memories of that one year there. I lived in the New England Conservatory of Music dormitory and attended classes at the Boston Museum School. I also had several interesting part-time jobs – I was an usher for the Boston Symphony [Orchestra], for the Jordan Hall concert series, and so on – so I was totally immersed in art and music and culture of all kinds.
- Plus I was away from home for the first time; I had come from a really close family, so that was a big experience. Also, getting along with young people from other parts of the country, living in downtown Boston, and just being responsible for myself to that degree made it a very exciting experience, and I think I probably learned more in that concentrated period about all of the arts than I have learned since. It was really wonderful.

- A: I know for a lot of people it is an exciting period. For me, it not that I was glad to get away from home – there was no particular reason to leave – but once I got out on my own I really enjoyed it. Was it that way for you? Some people really have a difficult time adjusting.
- B: It is a big experience for a young person to suddenly have full responsibility for all of their time and for getting themselves to school and taking care of their own clothes and meals and so on. It was the usual freshman experience, I think, in that regard. But it had another level of total immersion in the arts, and that was something I do not think every young person gets a chance to experience.

The best concerts that are held anywhere are in Boston, and I got to attend most of them for a year, to meet many of the famous musicians and artists of the time, and really to be a part of a fine arts community that is of the highest caliber. I will never forget it; it was quite exceptional as an experience.

- A: How did you find Boston as a community compared to Cleveland?
- B: "Night and day" I think would be a good way to put it. While Boston had all of the same urban problems that Cleveland had, it has a sophistication and a veneer of culture that most of the other large cities do not have. It also had a friendliness to it that I was not accustomed to. In Cleveland and most of the other Midwestern cities, I guess as a survivor mode, people get to be very self-contained. They are not friendly, they do not wave on the street, there is no natural give-and-take between people who encounter each other accidentally.

But in Boston for the first time I experienced the phenomenon of somebody walking up to me on the street and talking as though we knew each other. At first I felt threatened by that; I thought there was something wrong. Then I immediately began to love it. When I went back to Cleveland, it was a little tough to go back to the little islands that each individual was there. Each city has its own characteristics and its own life. Boston will always hold a very special place in my heart. I like to go back periodically and visit my old haunts.

- A: That is interesting, because I have heard otherwise, that the Northeast is very self-contained. I have never heard that side of the story. Of course, I have never been to Boston, so I do not know anything about that.
- B: Rural New England is more like what we associate with the Yankee coolness and austere qualities, but in the cities it is quite different. I do not think that the Bostonians think of themselves as Yankees as much as they think of themselves as Bostonians. The pride and the culture is their own. I do not think there is much connection between a Boston urbanite and a Maine farmer; that is a different kind of a feeling altogether.

- A: You were only in Boston for one year. Why did you leave?
- B: Very simply, I could not afford to return. Even with the full scholarship and working two jobs and some help from home, it was just so expensive to live there. Art school is quite an expensive proposition, anyway, and I was pretty much paying my own way. So I had to drop out of school for a year and just work in order to go back and finish my degree.

I moved back to Cleveland in June of 1964 and took a job and lived at home. I just put my head down and tried to save money so I could get back to school. Then I began classes at the Cleveland Institute of Art in 1965.

- A: What were your two jobs? You said you had two jobs at school.
- B: I was an usher for the Boston Symphony and also for Jordan Hall, which is a small concert hall where most of the traveling performers perform, people such as [guitarist Andres] Segovia, [folk singer] Joan Baez, and small quartets and chamber groups. They were both ushering jobs, but I worked almost every night at one place or the other. It was a wonderful opportunity to hear a lot of music and, as I said, to meet some of the outstanding musicians of the time. It was a great job. I would probably do it again if I could make a living at it. It was a lot of fun.
- A: It sounds like a work study program.
- B: Right. Cultural immersion.
- A: Was there anyone in Boston or later in Cleveland who was more of a mentor who framed you in a certain way or in a certain direction. Who was your inspiration as far as artistic development?
- B: I seem to be attracted to the most strict and uncompromising professors. In Boston it was a drawing professor named Robert Grady, a little Irishman who would not take second-best from anybody at any time. Because I had had so much drawing experience, I thought I could kind of cruise through the drawing classes, which were every day from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Boston put a lot of emphasis on drawing; we had twenty hours of it a week. I thought I would be ahead of it: "I can cruise a little bit here." But when he saw that I had had extra experience, he cracked down extra hard, and he gave me nothing but a hard time. Of course, I griped the whole way, but pleasing him in the sense of achieving the level that he was looking for became a really important goal for me – not specifically to please an individual, but to meet his standards.

I think I set myself up right there for the way that I approached my academic life

afterward. I would find the toughest challenge and go after that. Sometimes I would make it, and sometimes not, but I think that is a typical characteristic of my life in general ever since then. So Robert Grady at Boston was very significant in setting a standard which I have continued to follow.

In Cleveland I had several excellent professors, but the one who stands out twenty years later is Julian Stanczak, who was a painter and my painting advisor. He was a well-known optical artist at the time.

- A: What is that?
- B: That is geometric abstract designs that have an optical illusion to them. His work was very sophisticated compared to most of the gimmicky things that were being done then. He was one of the leading painters in that field. Again, he was an uncompromising teacher. If he saw any extra qualities in a student, you could be sure that he would give that person an extra hard time. So once again, I pitted myself against this standard. I was generally successful in doing all right in his classes, but it was tough. I always seemed to be setting myself up for a very tough challenge – as if just getting through school was not enough. I guess that is characteristic of me.
- A: Did you like purism or the theory? I am trying to relate this to history. There are theoretical historians. Is that something that you liked, or were you more practical?
- B: Practical is how I would describe it. I am, I guess, more of an artisan than an avant-garde creator. I love the theory and the intellectual side of art, and, like most artists, I enjoy sitting down and talking shop with other artists about where the field may be going and so on. But as far as my practice of art, I have always had a very strong interest in drawing and craftsmanship, and a sheer love of the human figure and the natural world.

I had to struggle with that in art school, because especially in the 1960s there was a strong push toward op art, pop art, and different forms of abstraction. They were sort of fads at the time, and I had a real resistance to them. I just did not want to get out my masking tape and pink and turquoise colors. I wanted to paint what I saw and to draw realistically what I saw.

That put me at odds somewhat with the art establishment at the time, and that, too, has become an ongoing dichotomy: I have never really fit into the art world of my time because the style in which I work is realistic and (some would say) conservative. It does not jibe with the people who are leading art into the twenty-first century. I am not trying to do that, and I never did. So in art school I was sort of an anachronism. There were not many people who still really

wanted to learn how to draw in 1968. Luckily, there were still plenty of professors who knew how to teach it, so I hit it just in time, I think. I have to say that I decry the lack of craftsmanship that exists today in the art schools and in art instruction. There simply is not the emphasis on longevity and on the purist ideas that will transcend time, the kind of work that will look just as fresh and good to us a hundred years from now as they do now.

There was in art school, and continues to be, in my opinion, in the art academe, if you will, a tendency to change the world. Everybody wants to be a [Pablo] Picasso. Everybody wants to lead art into the next century. There has developed a very strong, elitist line in art that I encountered as a student and still encounter as a professional artist that holds that what the people like does not seem to be appropriate to the art academe. They have their own ideas of what is right in art and a real contempt for those of us who choose to follow more traditional styles and means of expression.

Through my whole art career there has been that tension between the art that I am choosing to do and the art field at any given time. I probably will never fit in to what is considered to be trendy or hip at the time, but I like to think that by sticking with a particular means of expression that I might be able to create something that will endure in value and in inspiration over a longer period of time.

That makes it a little hard to get by, though, in the art world.

A: I know what you mean. We have the same sort of thing in history. In the 1960s and 1970s, and in the 1980s, social history is now the trend, whereas if someone wants to study political history, up until very recently he is kind of an outsider. The buzz word is the "cutting edge" – everybody wants to be on the cutting edge.

B: I know. That has a value of its own, and if a person chooses to live on the cutting edge, I have no problem with it. My brother is a classical composer, and he is the head of a music department of a small liberal arts college in Kentucky. He lives on the cutting edge of contemporary classical music. We have a very different way of approaching our work, but there is no difficulty communicating with him. We have just chosen other means of expression.

I do not have a moral problem with people wanting to deal with theory and with avant thought. God bless them. I think we need as many visionaries as we can get. I would hope that that respect would go both ways, but it does not seem to.

I detect a very strong bias against art such as mine in the art academe, and that is unfortunate. It deprives the university system and the art schools of a side of art that is alive and well at the grass roots level and pretty much dead in the water at the visible art world level.

A: Let us go to Cleveland now. You said you sat out a year, so started in

Cleveland somewhere around 1965?

- B: Right. I worked for a year, so I started in the fall of 1965 at the Cleveland Institute of Art and lived at home.
- A: How long did it take you to finish there?
- B: I graduated with a four-year diploma in June of 1968. My major was painting, and my minors were graphic design and textiles.
- A: There seems to me to be some closeness between art and advertising. Was there ever any appeal there, somewhere in the commercial world, where you could use and apply your art?
- B: Well, I do cross that line back and forth on a regular basis. I do commercial illustration. I do commissioned paintings, which sometimes are quite commercial, if you will. They are very specific to a client's need. I also do political graphics and logo work--all kinds of advertising art. I have illustrated magazine covers, and I have illustrated books. I really am comfortable in the commercial world, and I do not make a big deal about where that line is.

I make a living at art, and that means a lot of different things. Everything that people need artistically I would like to be involved with. I think I would be bored if I just stuck to landscape or one side or another of art. I like to stay open to it all. Also, in a small community like Gainesville it is not easy to make a living as a fine artist unless you are teaching, so that is how I supplement my income – with illustration and commercial arts.

I do not even feel defensive about it. I really have enjoyed the commercial assignments I have had. Of course, I am not doing advertising for missiles or polluting products or anything like that. I do draw a line as to what kinds of clients I am able to work with. I have not have not had any real conflict, internal or otherwise, about the different sides of art.

- A: That is good. Now, in 1968, or even in the period during school, you were a budding, young politician here, even though you probably did not know it.
- B: I sure did not.
- A: My question concerns Vietnam. Were you aware? Were you involved?
- B: Anyone who was a young person and alive in that time who was not aware and involved was probably in a coma or out of the country. Everyone had opinions, and I think it was a very exciting time. I graduated from college in 1968. That

was the year [that President Johnson bowed to domestic opposition to the war and halted the bombing of North Vietnam], and it certainly activated my political interests. I was against the war, but was not an active protester. I had a strong feeling about it, but I did not mean to get as active as some people did.

I could see at least a little bit of the other side, the other point of view, because my father was a World War II medal winner and combat veteran. He was a pilot, and he had flown fifty missions over Europe. There were lots of things that he had done that would have received a lot of criticism if they had been done in the Vietnam War. I had a real problem distinguishing. I could not just totally hate the war, and I certainly did not hate the people who fought the war, and that separated me from other protesters. I could not get out there and throw rocks at marines. I really did not have a hatred for the individuals involved. I hated the war, but I did not hate the people, and that made it hard to find a place in the protest movement. You pretty much had to buy the whole philosophical package or stay quiet, so I stayed quiet.

In the summer of 1968 I decided that since I had just graduated and did not have any particular job prospects I would do some traveling. At first I thought I would just travel around the country and maybe work in several different places. Having some commercial background helped me feel that I could do that. I moved to Ft. Lauderdale at that point, and then I joined with several friends and moved to California. I worked out there for a while, and then I moved to Japan. So my form of protest to the war, I guess, was to leave the country.

- A: In 1965, or in the year you took off, what did you do? What was your job?
- B: I worked for a temporary service called Kelly Girls at the time; I think it is called Kelly Services now. I knew how to type and take dictation. That was the part-time job that I usually had in summers, so I found that the Kelly Services really gave me a chance to move around and keep working but not get stuck in a boring job. I did that for a while. Then one of the clients that I was sent to asked me to stay on as a receptionist and market researcher, so for most of a year I worked for a management consultant firm, a very blue-chip, small outfit in Cleveland that dealt with mergers, acquisitions, executive recruiting, and so on. It was really interesting. I think that perhaps that is where I developed some interest in business and some knowledge of it, because I was involved in some really interesting corporate studies and so on.
- A: This has placed you in good stead recently.
- B: Yes, definitely. Certainly, because the people who worked for the company and the clients with whom we dealt were such high-caliber individuals, very intelligent people, and very committed. They were good people, and I guess I developed a

positive attitude toward business at that time that many artists do not have.

All my life the opportunities keep coming to me at just the right time to accumulate some piece of experience that is now really paying off. That was where business plugged in. I should say that one of the things that impressed me about this company is that when they realized I was an artist and was trying to save to go back to school, the management of the company really encouraged me to do that, even though they liked the work I was doing and would have liked to hire me somewhat more permanently. They more or less said that I should go back to school and that they would do what they could to help me. They offered loans if I needed them. So I had a very positive experience with big business when I first delved into it.

A: Now we are back to 1968. I have some questions in general about the [social] climate and your impressions. Maybe we should go on campus. What was the climate like in Cleveland? Was there a lot of radicalism?

B: The climate in Cleveland was not as involved with the war as perhaps other places were. Even though I was living in the Italian neighborhood adjacent to Case Western Reserve [University in Cleveland, OH], the Cleveland Institute of Art, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the Cleveland Museum, it was the whole university and culture area with neighborhoods adjacent to it that were student ghettos. Even living in the middle of that, I think that would have been the place where you would have seen most of the marching and flag waving going on, but there was not much. There was a lot of talk. A lot of us were quite aware of our contemporaries, of other young people who were being forced to go to the war, being forced to leave the country, and making tough choices about what they were going to do. And, of course, the boys who were training as artists were not given the same deferments that other students were, and the army was plucking art students out of school and putting them on the front lines. It was a very traumatic time for us, but we were not the ones out at the barricades. We were very aware and very involved and very concerned, but as far as being an active part of the student movement, there really was not any in the student area of Cleveland.

We heard about most of the activities that were around the state universities, like Bowling Green [State University in Bowling Green, OH] and Kent State [University in Kent, OH]. Kent State is very close to Cleveland, and a lot of my friends were at Kent State when that incident happened. [On May 4, 1970, four students were killed by National Guard troops during an antiwar demonstration on the Kent State University campus. Ed.] When I first heard about it I was in Japan, and I had to call home to see if anybody I knew had been involved. There was no question – you could not be oblivious to it. No matter what your opinion was, there was no way you could not have one at that time.

Cleveland and, I think, many Midwestern cities are not hotbeds of activism. Midwestern people have a work ethic that is almost an extreme. It is such an ideal to "work until you drop" that it does not leave time or the type of energy that the students who were really active had. We had forty hours a week of classes, and most of us had twenty to forty hours a week of work to get ourselves through. Most of my friends put themselves through school, as did I, and when you have sixty to eighty hours of the week committed, it does not give you a lot of time for intellectual theory.

- A: How do you explain the University of Wisconsin at Madison? That was a radical place in the 1960s.
- B: There were other pockets of it, too, like Amherst [College in Amherst, MA] and Kent State. The student body was more active in the sense of being out there and taking chances. I cannot really explain it. It was not typical of the Midwest, but there were pockets of such activism.
- A: It may have just been certain personalities that met together.
- B: Yes, and the chemistry and the individual situations. The artists, especially the young artists, feel like we are pushing the edges all the time. Also, because we were being, as I said, plucked out of art school and being put on the front lines, there was a very personal resistance, but organizing would not have stopped our guys from going to the war. It was just a question of each person's trying to get whatever deferment they could and so on.
- A: When I think of 1968, I think of a lot more than Vietnam. It was just a traumatic year – the late 1960s, not just 1968. The civil rights movement was pretty much finished in the South and was expanding to the northern cities. There was black power in the 1968 Olympics. There was the fashion revolution – I guess that is what it was. How did you perceive all of this change that was going on?
- B: It did not seem as broad to me then as it does, of course, looking back. I have vivid memories watching Bobby Kennedy's [Robert F. Kennedy] funeral the week I graduated from college, from art school. We seemed to gather in these little dumb pockets and just sit there numbly trying to absorb these horrors as they came upon us one by one. Everybody felt helpless, I think, and especially as artists we felt totally without power and without influence. Martin Luther King was killed that year. It just seemed like a blur of traumatic events and images that kept compounding one after another after another. Meanwhile, our boys were being pulled out and were disappearing overseas.
- A: It was not just on the news.

B: Right. Plus, I was living in an Italian ghetto at the time; it is now a neighborhood, but at the time it was quite impoverished. Most of the people living there were directly from the old country, and there was a tremendous racial hatred among the Italians for black people. So the climate was up close and personal. There were murders in our neighborhood – blacks who were just walking through or driving through, even – and people literally got away with murder. There was the growing fear of attack of individuals.

I worked every night at the Cleveland Museum library. I worked until 11:00 and then had to walk a mile home through some really rough neighborhoods, and when you are involved in something like that, you are not thinking about the big picture. You are thinking about "am I going to survive to get home, and when I get home is there going to be somebody waiting in my apartment?" All of us who were in art school at that time in that particular place and living among other students were much more concerned with our immediate problems than with the larger issues. We were all against the war, but, again, it was a personal response rather than an organized response.

A: A lot of professors we have talked to who were professors then and are professors now say that there is not a lot of difference between students then and now. Most of the students were concerned with the things that students are concerned with today. There was an increased awareness, perhaps, and there were some radical students. There was some violence here at the University of Florida.

B: We did not have in our little college any people who you would call radical. It is funny, because you would think of artists as being somewhat avant-garde types and very passionate in our beliefs and so on. Many are, but these kids were really struggling just to get by and to make a living and to build some kind of a future in a career that is always difficult. That is where the priorities were.

A: Do you remember where you were when Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot, or do you remember when you first heard about it?

B: I was working at my drawing board in my apartment when I heard it on the news. It was pretty much the same with Bobby Kennedy.

A: What were your feelings when these things were announced?

B: It was just sort of a numb horror. We had been through Jack Kennedy, which for many people my age was a very traumatic experience, and then here we go again. All I can remember is just being horrified that my beloved country could produce this kind of madness. That feeling endures over all the years. I would

not ever want to go through another 1968, even though it was a good year for me personally.

A: Then I guess it is time to take off and go to Japan.

B: The first thing I did was to join with a couple of friends in a Volkswagen bus and do the classic late 1960s trip across the country.

A: Like that movie 1969. Did you see that, where they take off in a bus?

B: No, I did not. We made our own. [laughter] It was just a few friends who thought we would go to Japan and teach English and see what it was like to live somewhere else. We had to get from here to there, so we all moved to San Diego and took jobs for a few months, pooled our money, and eventually got tickets to Japan. In May of 1969 we took off for Tokyo.

A: These were friends from Cleveland?

B: Friends from Ft. Lauderdale.

A: You had moved to Ft. Lauderdale.

B: After graduating I went to Ft. Lauderdale and spent the summer down there working in commercial art. People I had known over the years (because my family was settled there by then) became better friends at that time, so we pooled our resources and went west. After a certain type of classical odyssey that took place, we settled down in San Diego and worked. Then we sold everything we did not need in Japan, pooled the money, and went over. We took a house in Nagoya, which is Japan's third largest city. It is an industrial city with some very attractive natural areas around it. We began to teach English as a foreign language with the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] English school.

A: Did it take you a couple of months to figure out the language there?

B: More than a couple of months. Luckily, to teach English conversation you did not have to speak Japanese, but my few crude words had to expand pretty quickly. Of course, in the larger cities many people speak enough rudimentary English to get by. When you are living in a place like that, there is not much point in depending on other people to communicate in your language. It would be a lot more fruitful to learn theirs, so I took a six-month intensive course at the YMCA that was designed specifically for professors. That was really the basis of what language I eventually had.

A: How did you know you would be able to do that? Did you see some

advertisement for it or something?

B: One of the friends that we went with had been in Japan on a *National Geographic* expedition, and he was in Ft. Lauderdale just before he was preparing to marry a Japanese woman and settle down over there. He "greased the skids," if you will; he was the one who told us that we could get such jobs. He set it up so that we would be able to meet the YMCA people right away, and he basically helped us find lodging. His (then) wife did a lot of our early translating, so we had someone there who helped in the early stages. But then pretty quickly we each had to become self-sufficient and to be able to get around alone and work and so on.

A: How did you find Japan?

B: Just the chance of knowing someone there. I suppose if I had known someone in France I would have gone to France. I just wanted to take a look at the States from a foreign perspective. I had never up to that point been particularly interested in Oriental art, although I had been exposed to quite a bit of it in Cleveland and Boston. It seemed like it would just be an interesting thing to move somewhere totally different, with a totally different culture, language, and way of thinking about aesthetics and things. It did not take very long before I really got hooked on Japan. It has proven to be a major part of my life still.

A: How did you like it?

B: It was hard – hard fun, I guess. It was very exotic and different and unusual experience, which would be a whole interview in itself. I ended up living there almost four years, and I have been back another two times. In general, I would say that the culture differences ironed out very quickly once I started studying art and actually creating some artistic products over there. I also got a teacher in weaving and textiles who turned out to be somewhat of a karate master. She was yet another of the mentors who have made my life happen the way it has.

A: What kind of an influence was that?

B: It was a radical influence on a person of my background. I was raised in a . . .

A: Was she a strict disciplinarian?

B: Very strict. Once again, she appealed to me because of the standard that she set – it was so uncompromising. I was just attracted to her. Her name is Shinako Goto. She was sixty-five at the time, or something like that, so she is in her eighties now. She had a bearing about her that was extremely aristocratic and warrior-like. She had that upright quality that good officers in the military

have. She was a weaver and did all kinds of textile work. She was the head of a large women's craft organization in Japan and was nationally known as a crafts person. She took me under her wing and took me to her house, which was a fabulous living museum of Japanese art, folk artifacts, and so on. She had a number of looms there, so I would take a bus out to the countryside and spend half a day or an entire day weaving in her home. Then we would talk about everything in the world, including the war and all the things that were going on.

- A: What did the Japanese think of that?
- B: Well, they did not think very highly of it. I think it really made them nervous that America was at war so close by.
- A: What did they think of [President Richard] Nixon's mining of the harbors and such?
- B: There was a negative attitude toward the American presence in Vietnam--there was no question about that – but the Japanese also provided R & R [rest and recreation] for American soldiers who were in Vietnam, and essentially the Japanese are very respectful and fond of Americans, so we survived that strain. But there were times when I went into my classroom in the morning and there would be forty people staring hostilely at me because of something we had done the day before in Vietnam. Some of my more advanced classes would want to talk about it, so instantly one becomes an ambassador.
I found right away that even though I had my own criticisms of the war and so on that that was not the place I was going to take them. So I ended up not defending something I did not think was defensible but trying to explain to the Japanese young people why we would do something like this. I think that was very valuable experience for me to have to put myself in the frame of mind that would say, "This is why we do this and why we feel compelled to stay there." It did not totally convince me that we should be there, but it did soften my attitude and open up another whole other line of thinking that then expanded in time.
- A: I guess you came back in 1975?
- B: No, I was there for just eighteen months that trip. Toward the end of the eighteen months, I married one of the friends who had gone over with us. His name is Gary Haskins, and he is a potter. He was studying pottery in Japan at the same time I was there. We were married over there and decided to have a joint exhibition of our Japanese art that we had each created while there. That was so successful that we had enough money then to travel in Europe for several months. We came back to the States via the Soviet Union and Europe. We took a three-month backpacking tour and a ship cruise through the Black Sea on a Soviet ship.

- A: That must have been interesting.
- B: It was very interesting. Again, here it is 1970 and we are still in Vietnam, and things are still really tense with the Soviets. There was a lot of world tension.
- A: This was before the China detente.
- B: Absolutely. Things were very suspicious over there, and we had a lot of trouble. We were students, and we were broke. We were not traveling like most tourists in tight little packs. We were trying to get as much experience out in society as we could. We were arrested at the Kremlin wall and put through about a four-hour ordeal before we were cleared and able to leave. All of that has a radical effect on a young person's opinions of his own country. By the time I left Russia, I was a lot more pro-American than when I went in.

I think when I am planning something like a trip to Europe, it is just a trip to Europe, but it always seems to have some secondary meaning, and this time it was a time to compare our way of life and our way of governing with other cultures. At a time when everybody was sensitized to the American presence in the world, we had a lot different position then than we do now. It was very interesting to be out there as a sort of informal ambassador and try to understand it and try to come to terms with the parts of it that I did not believe. It was the standard 1960s experience, I guess I would say.

- A: I do not know how many people actually had the "standard" experience that everybody talks about. It is the romantic one that you think of when you see *Life* magazine or something like that: "This is what everyone is doing." But not everyone was.
- B: That is true.
- A: I guess you were fortunate in that respect.
- B: Very fortunate.
- A: After you left Europe you came back for a while, and then you went back to Japan?
- B: At the point of coming back from Europe, it was November 1970. We moved to Ft. Lauderdale and lived there for a while with my husband's family. Then he was bequeathed a small inheritance, and we decided to invest in a property in Florida so that eventually once we had gone back to school, gotten master's degrees, and maybe taught for a while we might be able to move to Florida and

settle as studio artists. That was when I first saw Cross Creek. On a camping trip in the north part of the state we happened to drive through Cross Creek, and an old Victorian farmhouse that had been abandoned called out to me. A few months later we moved in. That starts the next part of the saga, which is the Alachua County part.

A: What year was this?

B: That was 1971.

A: Did you go back to Japan a couple more times?

B: Yes, in 1975 and 1976, and again in 1980.

A: Was this for school?

B: No, I went back to Japan and lived another eighteen months, this time in a country town where my husband was doing his pottery apprenticeship. We had a small house in rice paddies where I spent most of my days painting, studying flower arranging, and language, philosophy, and so on. The second time I went back I did not have to teach, so I took advantage of the opportunity to really study Oriental aesthetics and language and philosophy. It was sort of a self-designed master's degree in Oriental aesthetics; I guess that would be a way to describe it.

We had already moved into Cross Creek by that time, so the last eighteen years have been continuous residency.

A: Were you active in the community in the beginning?

B: No, I was just a very quiet reclusive artist. My main interest was in remodeling and in renovating the house, which was in serious disrepair. I spent the first two years there very quietly going about my business. The only time I came into Gainesville was to pick up supplies for the renovation. And I was learning to do things that I had never done as a city girl, like growing a garden, doing light carpentry and repair work, running a tractor, and all of those things.

The first four years at Cross Creek were pretty uneventful. We were just two young people going back to the land – I even had that experience. [laughter] I was involved in going back to the land, organic gardening, and starting to compost and recycle from the beginning. All of those things, of course, are very useful now. For eighteen years that has been a way of life out there. I never really believed I was going to be any kind of community leader or activist. I had no history of it. I have just had personal growth and pursuits up to that point, so there was no reason to believe that was going to change. In fact, I went further in the background in my first years at Cross Creek. I had no real friends in the

community or any real involvement. Besides, to be honest, I was not particularly accepted in the community at first.

- A: It is tough to gain acceptance in any new community.
- B: It is. It is a small community where up until that point most people had been there forever and were well known to each other, and here comes a couple of long-haired young people. I am sure it must have seemed suspicious that we were not working at regular jobs, so I think we were a little exotic for the community at first. But as time passed and it became clear that we were doing our best to improve the property and make it shine again – it is a landmark house; it is the only old one in the community besides the [Marjorie Kinnan] Rawlings' house – we got a little more acceptance. Gradually we have become very involved in the community, but it took quite a while.
- A: In 1975 or 1976 you went back to Japan, and then you came back here. In that period of time, did you get more involved, or was it more of the same?
- B: Until 1980 I think things stayed pretty quiet. We came back from Japan and had a couple of major exhibitions of our Japanese work, both in Florida and in Ohio. We went back to Cleveland to show. At that point I started to develop my career as a Florida landscape painter and started to look back to some of the painters of the past – Winslow Homer [1836-1910] and John Singer Sargent [1856-1925] – who had come to Florida in the old days (about the time our house was built) and whose work still looked fresh and alive and accurate, and I decided that I would try watercolor landscape. That became a redirection, so from the years 1976 through 1980 I would say most of the effort went toward developing a market for landscape painting and also just painting itself. By that time the house was pretty much brought up to what par we could, and it was mostly a period of intense artistic development and working on the business of art, which is a whole other ball game from making art. I cannot say that anything really activated me up to that point other than personal concerns.
- A: What are the secrets of the business of art, or not secrets, but the difference? You said there is a difference.
- B: There are some secrets, I guess. One of them is in a community such this one, which is both small and not loaded with wealthy people who can pick up art more or less on a whim. A major art purchase is a big decision for most of the people in this community, and I found out right away that if I wanted to be successful – without spreading myself all over Florida – I needed to understand the tastes of my adopted community. That was easy. It turned out that the tastes of this community were very much in line with my own, and it was not a stretch at all to find a style and a subject matter that pleased the people who were in a position

to buy it. So I did not have to compromise to do that.

What I did need to do – and it was a pleasure to do it – was to get to know these people. That is when I started to come out of my shell, if you will. That is when I started to make the effort, not to impose myself on the community, but to get to know real grassroots folks, what they were thinking, what was on their minds, and what are they like. I think that, without my knowing it, was the beginning of a political career, because to find a market I had to know and love the people. It was a pleasure, as I said; it was no trouble at all. I was really delighted to find that the community's tastes were very close to my own

- A: Would you tell me about going back to Japan?
- B: Yes. In 1981 I went back for the third time – third and most recent time. I was only able to stay three months then, but I did resume pretty much the life in the countryside that I had before. I simply spent the time painting and just being there refreshing my knowledge of Japanese and some of the other studies which I had, visiting with teachers, and so on. It was not a vacation but a short term experience.

Then I came back to Cross Creek, and that was the turning point. Right about the time I returned from Japan in the fall of 1981, the largest landowner in the Cross Creek area, which was also the largest landowner in Alachua County – formerly Owens Illinois, now Great Northern Nekoosa Paper Company – introduced a development proposal for the Cross Creek area that encompassed 87 percent of the Lochloosa Lake shore line and about 20 percent of the Orange Lake shore line, and it would have included up to 200,000 people over a sixty-year build out, so it was actually a plan for a totally new community.

- A: A major development.
- B: Right, similar to Palm Coast. It would have engulfed the whole community of Cross Creek, and, of course, it would have had a major negative impact on the environment of the area, which, as most people know now, is still in pretty good shape.
- A: It is wetlands area, right?
- B: It is a wetlands and it is a very productive wildlife habitat, and it is also a place that human beings have sought out as a refuge over many, many centuries, so it has a lot of history. It has a lot of varied wildlife and natural features, and it was clear that such a huge development would obliterate it. So all of a sudden the quiet, reclusive housewife/artist became a mother lion in her den, I guess. If you were to talk to some of my opponents at that time, I think they would have

described a radical change in the way I went about matters.

A: How did you find out about this?

B: It just got to be scuttlebutt in the community that there were some major plans afoot. One of the landowners who had been in Cross Creek for some years – I think he had grown up there – got wind of it through business associates of his, and I happened to be tipped off to a meeting in which the company presented their plan to the Regional Planning Council. That was a very significant day in my life, because at that point I ceased being a private citizen and became a public person literally overnight.

A: You went to this meeting? Was it open to the public?

B: Yes, it was a Regional Planning Council special session to receive this application and for each of the agencies which would be required to permit such a development – it was a development of regional impact, obviously – to come forward and state what standards would have to be met, what applications would have to be made, what the costs were, what staff would need to be added, etc. It was probably the biggest development to be proposed in north Florida ever up to that point, so it was a stunner, not just for those of us who lived at Cross Creek.

A: Was it shocking when you actually went to the meeting and heard what they had planned?

B: The biggest shock – probably of my life – was walking in there and seeing a large map of the Cross Creek area and the two lakes and actually seeing my house marked on the map, all completely surrounded by massive development: industrial zones, shopping centers, schools, golf courses, marinas, thousands of homes, tens of thousands of townhouses and condos. You name it, and it was there. To call it a nightmare is an understatement; it was a really profound shock. I had to struggle with my emotions. The sense you get when you are confronted with something like that that is going to totally change your life forever, even if it does not happen, is not one that I would want to have many times in my life. It was overwhelming.

A: What did you do, then, at the meeting?

B: I sat quietly and listened to them plan away my town. Then a sense of deep outrage began to grow. It was as though something inside just said "no, it does not have to be this way. This is a place that has a life of its own and has an intrinsic value to the state of Florida and to the people who live here, and an unknown value as far as preserving the natural systems of Florida. There is no

way I am going to sit quietly by and watch that taken away because somebody thinks this is a hot idea." I knew as one individual that I had no power, but I thought "at least those of us who are going to be so severely impacted by this should get together and talk about what our alternatives are and find out if there is any way we can affect this. If it is inevitable, if it is a foregone conclusion that this thing is going to happen, how can we affect it so that is does not obliterate us?"

At the end of the meeting, Charles Justice, who is still the head of the Regional Planning Council, got up and said, "We accept this application and this presentation. You (speaking to the company) know what you have to do now to meet our requirements. Although this is not a public hearing, I wonder if there is anyone in the audience who has anything to say." I just put my hand up; I did not even know what I was going to say when I stood up, but I stood up, and the words just came out. I said, "I am Kate Barnes. I am a resident of Cross Creek, which is the community that would be the most severely impacted by this proposed development. My neighbors and I are in the process of organizing a coalition, and we would like to know with whom we can stay in touch so that we can have some part in the planning process for this development." I did not make any confrontational statements or say anything of that nature.

- A: I am sure they must have been shocked.
- B: They jumped on me like ticks on a dog! All of a sudden there were four or five business cards in my hand and attorneys coming up to me saying, "Call me. We want to talk to you, and we want to talk to the people." The planners for the development jumped all over me and said, "We have been looking for somebody who would act as a liaison with the neighborhood." So it was instant public life for me; that was it. I went home from that, and my life was changed right then and there. I went to the meeting as one person, and I came home another. The very next day I met with the attorneys from Owens Illinois and listened to a presentation that was a little more in-depth – and was even more appalling than the first one.
- A: Did you let them know that you found it appalling at the time?
- B: Well, I think they assumed that. Citizens do not ordinarily organize unless they are against something. You do not usually see citizens organizing to propose a development, so I think they probably correctly assumed that I was against it. But I made it just by instinct, because I certainly had no background or knowledge from which to work. By instinct I just guessed that it was going to do no good to scream and yell, that it would do no good to name-call or to place a negative moral value on the people who were doing this. It is tempting to do that, certainly, and in my private thoughts I may have done it, but I knew that I

had no chance at all of affecting it in any way on our behalf if I went out swinging.

So I just took a very business-like approach. I said, "We are just getting organized. We really just want to form a liaison so that we are kept informed of things as they come along and so we have a chance to put our opinions in so we can save our community from being obliterated if this thing takes place." They accepted that gratefully, I think, because it was not the usual confrontational attitude.

A: Then what happened?

B: At that point I called a meeting with my neighbors, most of the ones that I knew who had moved into the community since I had. They were in their thirties or forties, had families, and were committed to staying in Cross Creek for the duration. They were the people most likely to get involved in something like this.

About twelve of us formed the Friends of Cross Creek at that point. At first it was an informal group, and eventually we incorporated with the state of Florida as a not-for-profit corporation--the Friends of Cross Creek, Inc. We elected officers: I was elected president, Bruce Delaney is the vice-president, Gary Mayhew is reporting secretary, and John Jernigan is treasurer. Those officers remain in place; we are now a monitoring organization as of 1989. At the time we went into full swing.

The first thing we did was put together a couple of think-tank sessions with the leading environmentalists of the area: Marjorie Carr and Helen Hood from the Florida Defenders of the Environment, Francine Robinson from Earth First (I think), John Mahon, and a number of people who are still active in the community. We got them together and said, "Here is the problem. What do you think the alternatives are?"

Bob Simmons, who is an active member of the [National] Audubon Society and a private forester, seemed to have the background that was most appropriate for our needs right then. He had the background in commercial forestry, plus he was a very skilled environmental scientist and was highly respected by both the environmental people themselves and by government and business people who have had to deal with him. He made the suggestion right then that we consider asking the state of Florida to purchase the property as a state forest. There were only two, and he knew that the state wanted more commercial forestry land, plus they would be willing to work with a multi-agency approach to it with Game and [Fresh Water] Fish [Commission] and DNR [Department of Natural Resources] to come up with some sort of project that would be economically feasible but would also protect the natural values.

We just kept taking it one step at a time. The Florida Defenders of the Environment folks were really very supportive and helpful. They told us who to

meet at the state level, which systems to get involved in, etc. Pretty soon we discovered the CARL Project (Conservation and Recreational Lands), the acquisition arm of the state of Florida. The CARL system consists of a staff and a group of state officials – cabinet members and agency heads – who meet a number of times a year to select properties throughout the state for acquisition. Citizen groups, developers, and land owners can make presentations to this group. They choose the acquisitions and rank them by number, and then a certain number toward the top of the list are negotiated for purchase for a certain period of time. That list changes all the time; it is updated every six months, and rankings change on it. We made a presentation to the CARL committee in 1983.

A: How much time had passed?

B: Over a year. Meanwhile, the company was not doing much. They apparently met with more resistance at the agency level than they were expecting, so while they dropped back to do their environmental studies and so on, I think they were beginning to discover that it was just not economically feasible to think that big. I do not know whether they ever explored the idea of a smaller development in the same area or not, but they got really quiet at that point.

We decided there was no point in waiting to see what they were going to do. Our feeling was "let us move forward. If this development does not work out, surely someday somebody is going to take another look at it when times change.

So let us try to nail this down." We began making our trips to Tallahassee, which we have been doing now for seven years, trying to get this property acquired.

In the middle of it we have had some wonderful cooperation from within the community. Bob Wigglesworth from the M. K. Flowers survey company did the entire official boundary study for this 35,000-acre proposal for free. He had most of Owens Illinois boundary maps in-house, and he put it together by adding in the other properties that were on the proposal. Thus he created a state-quality boundary map that really moved things forward more quickly.

Lots of things like that happened. The University professors in many different departments provided studies of the area that either had been done or they went out and did them. We had a lot of scientific expertise volunteered. We had the hydro-geologist from Palm Coast, which was a development of comparable size to what they were proposing, volunteer to give us the hydrology study of the lakes and creek and a projection of the damage if the development went through.

So we had really reputable industry specialists willing to participate.

A: Did you go out and recruit these people?

- B: We did, and some of them came forward. Cross Creek, to our delight, has always inspired a lot of protective concern.
- A: We can probably thank Mrs. Rawlings for that.
- B: Right. I think everyone realizes, and even back then realized, that this is not a place that is just another little spot on the map. It has a lot of Florida history in it. People identify it as being a last little bit of old Florida that has not been destroyed. There was a lot of motivation outside the community to help us, so we were the beneficiaries of a tremendous volunteer effort. Hundreds of people participated at that stage. We were successful in convincing the state to purchase it, and it went on the list.
- A: When was this? How long did it take?
- B: They made the decision to purchase in 1984. It got on the list at number thirty-two, and over the next few years it worked its way up as far as number nine. As it was being actively negotiated, the timber company changed hands. Just at the point where we felt we were making significant headway in negotiations, everything suddenly came off the market. No negotiations were going on, and we did not know what was happening. What was actually happening was Owens Illinois was being taken over by a New York investment firm, Seymour-Kravitz-Kohlberg, the big one that does all the major takeovers. They [Owens Illinois] were victims of a hostile takeover. So for over a year Cross Creek was owned by the New York investment company. Naturally, I did not get a lot of sleep that year. Of course, negotiations with the state ground to a halt, and we just had to wait.
- A: Why did the state cease negotiations?
- B: Because the company did not want to sell off any parts of its assets until the final buyer was determined. Seymour-Kravitz-Kohlberg (or whoever it was) was not interested in keeping the company together, so what they did was purchase it and then sell off all of its divisions. Eventually, the Owens Illinois Woodlands Division was sold to Great Northern Nekoosa Paper Company, and they are the owners at this time. [Nekoosa has since been bought by Georgia Pacific. Ed.] They did not make any obvious changes in personnel or anything; they have continued their operations pretty much as they were.
- A: Did they still have the development plan, or did that die?
- B: No, that died.

- A: When did that die?
- B: That actually died probably about the same time the state agreed to buy the land. At that point, Owens Illinois took their development division and melded it back into the main corporation, so we knew for the time being that the plan was on hold. Great Northern Nekoosa does not appear to be interested in developing it themselves. However, the land has been clear-cut; most of it has been clear-cut around Cross Creek. That concerns us they that might want to sell off parts of it to other developers, so we are not out of the woods yet, as it were. Meanwhile, we lost our position on the CARL list. Now we are back down to around number thirty-two; we are right back where we started.
- A: It must be depressing.
- B: It is very frustrating. But I am not through yet. For my next trick, . . .
- A: From what I can see so far, I am sure you are not through yet.
- B: What we are going to try do now is redesign the project to exclude the strictly commercial timber lands and simply be a conservation acquisition. We will try to concentrate on wildlife habitats that are most endangered, which include bald eagles, wood storks, and red-cockaded woodpeckers – we have them all out there. I am going up to Tallahassee next week to try to start the redesign on the project.
- A: So it goes forward even as we speak.
- B: Right.
- A: I guess this puts you forward as a leader of the environmental community, then.
- B: Well, it had that side effect, yes. [laughter]
- A: Did you get involved in other projects once you became involved in Cross Creek?
- B: Cross Creek had another aspect to it, too, which I will try to summarize quickly. In 1983 the movie *Cross Creek* was released.
- A: Oh, that is right, the Mary Steenburgen movie.
- B: It was a Hollywood movie starring Mary Steenburgen and Peter Coyote. It was filmed in Cross Creek and was released in 1983. We have not seen the end of that yet. That created a surge of tourist interest in Cross Creek, and it also created a surge of interest on the part of the older landowners, the larger

landowners, in the area to sell their land for development.

Up to this point we have dealt with the forest lands around the community of Cross Creek. Now all of a sudden the crisis is right in the neighborhood. We are an unincorporated neighborhood of about 800 people and 300-some landowners, about ten or twelve of which own larger parcels – say 200 to 350 or 400 acres. All of those landowners banded together, and each of them proposed different kinds of developments at the same time. Eleven or twelve of them hit in one year. They presented to the county for subdivision and different kinds of approval. There was everything you could think of: R.V. [recreational vehicle] parks right on the bank of Cross Creek with a sewage treatment plant adjacent to the creek, large subdivisions, a huge townhouse development right on the bank of Orange Lake --all of it in the flood plain. I can go on and on; there was just every conceivable plan.

- A: How did you fight those? One by one?
- B: We started by fighting them one by one. We fought off the trailer park and sewage plant. That was pretty easy. Then a second development came up with the same owner that was also fairly easy to defeat. But at that point the county commission said to us, "We do not want to sit here and be dealing with individual Cross Creek matters forever. How about you folks getting together at the neighborhood level and come up with some sort of a land-use plan or a goal for how you want to see your community grow? We will put it into effect and give you some extra planning out there."

It sounded so simple and appealing that we did not even anticipate any problem. We had had such solid community support on the forest that it did not occur to any of us that we would be opening a can of worms here. But when you take on the big landowners and the old settlers in an area, and you were all newer residents and younger people without the generations of family connections, it became instantly a conflict.

So the famous conflict of Cross Creek that you hear so much about has to do with different opinions about how we want to grow and develop and how we do not. Those who own land want to be able to do what they want with it--sell it to the highest bidder or whatever they think is economically in their best interest--and those of us who have made a stake in the community for a long period of time and are looking down the road to what it will be like fifty or even a hundred years from now. We are saying, "We are willing to sacrifice some of our opportunities in order to preserve the whole." We had a long and bitter battle over the plan. Eventually the county took over the whole planning process and created the Cross Creek Special Area Study, which has since been to court successfully.

- A: Who took it to court? One of the landowners?
- B: All of the landowners – the so-called landowners. I am a landowner, too, but I did not get to be called that. I was the "tree hugger" or "bunny hugger." Only the people who owned over 100 acres got to be called landowners. It went to court in May of 1988, and all thirteen counts were dismissed by Judge Chester Chance, so the plan held up very well and is being implemented without any great difficulty now.

That is the whole story on Cross Creek. There were two parts to it, and both parts had different aspects and different areas of knowledge that had to be acquired. I would say that the combination of things gave me the background to take to the next step, which is, of course, where I am now.

- A: I am interested in finding out how your political career developed. When you first started your campaign for county commissioner, you were considered an environmentalist. Once you were involved in Cross Creek and so forth, were you involved in any other environmental projects that came along?
- B: Right. I did become a board member of the Florida Defenders of the Environment, which is a statewide, highly respected organization. But I also was invited to participate in Visions 2000; I was one of the original appointees by the legislative delegation. I guess you could say I was the token environmentalist.
- A: We should say briefly what that is. I know what it is, but we should say something for the record.
- B: Vision 2000 is a community goal-setting endeavor that I believe was a part of the Growth Management Act of 1985 that communities should participate in communitywide goal setting. We chose the American Assembly process as practiced by John DeGrove and his staff down there at the Center for Urban and Environmental Studies in Ft. Lauderdale. He came up and guided us through the first process of choosing 100 participants for a forum and then in conducting a forum in which 100 people had a chance to express their opinions on a number of subjects. We combined that opinion into a document which we then voted on line by line, and we came up with a final product of a consensus document from two forums that were held over a three-year period. I have been actively involved in that from the beginning. I was on the first steering committee. I was a recorder at both sessions, which means I listened to all the testimony and more or less reported back to my group what had been said and put it into some kind of verbiage that was agreed upon by the group, and then plugged into the main document. I served on the steering committee for four years.

Visions 2000 is definitely a big part of my activity that led toward political office, because it became clear that the people who were gathering to participate in the Visions forum were really an accurate cross section of community thought and opinion. I felt once again as though I was plugged right into the heart of that, that people were saying things I felt were true myself. I did not hear anything from either of those forums that I could not accept.

- A: Did you find yourself as kind of a facilitator, as somebody who could work with both groups? That is kind of the position you have taken.
- B: Yes, that is exactly what I found. In the recorder's role I could not have my own opinions; I could not express my own opinions. I had to just listen to what other people were saying and come up with what I thought was a consensus opinion. That does not mean that everybody agrees with it equally, but it is an acceptable compromise position on all the major issues facing us. I found--and I do not know where I got this ability -- that I could really hear the thread going through all these opinions, and I could hear the areas in which there was a common ground. I could bring that out and put that up front: "Here is something we agree on. Here is what we do not agree on, so let us start working in the middle on it." As I said, I do not know where I got the experience to do that, but it did seem to work out well, and I got a lot of cooperation. People basically worked with me very well on it. That technique of really listening to what people are saying and finding a common ground is the most useful thing I have as a commissioner. I can definitely tap into that.
- A: Was it the Visions 2000, then, that made you start thinking about running for county commission, or when did you start contemplating that?
- B: I guess I have been fighting the idea for a long time. Whenever you get to be a leader in anything, somebody sooner or later is going to suggest that you run for office, and people were making that suggestion all along the way. I had no interest in it, to tell you the truth, even right through the whole Visions process. I guess I was just reluctant to see myself, first of all, taking that level of responsibility, and, second, I did not see myself as having the ability to lead. I have always been a facilitator. I have always been a staff person or a support person for somebody else, and I did not know I had it in me to step out in front of the pack and lead. I fought those suggestions as being inappropriate; I used to say, "You can do more from the outside." I was afraid that if I got to be involved in elected politics that I would just be co-opted by the establishment. I just did not know what my skills were. I did not know that I could do it. So even though I have heard for years that it would be good idea, I did not really consider running until about a year before the election itself.

It just became clear that there was not anyone stepping forward to run for that

seat who had the broad-base background that I did. I just kept waiting for that void to be filled. I know we have a lot of outstanding leaders in this community, and I kept thinking somebody would step forward. But when you look at it realistically, people who are successful in business to a certain degree cannot leave the business behind to serve in an elected office unless they are compensated somewhat for that sacrifice. A county commissioner's salary may seem like a lot to some people, but not for a person who is making \$200,000 a year as an attorney or is doing well in small business, the gas station business, or even my own business. I had to think as modest as my income was as an artist if I could sacrifice it: how much could I sacrifice and still do a good job of running, and then do a good job as a commissioner? I did not see anybody coming into the race who had a broad perspective on things, who had had the travel and other experiences that I have had. I did not see anyone coming into the campaign who had the combination of the broad-based experiences that I had had through the environmental work and the Visions work, and also the travel and the varied experiences of my life, and who could also give to the job the kind of effort and time and energy that I was prepared to give it.

I just finally woke up one morning and said, "I have been resisting this for a long time. I think it is time to see if these folks are right." So I did a little investigating among friends and business associates and other colleagues, and the response was very positive. After a couple of months of testing the waters to see if there would be enough support there, I made the commitment to do it. At the time there were six people in the race.

A: Who were they?

B: Bill Lovett and John Connell, who were Republicans; Kiki Carter, who was an Independent; and Dick Jones, John Beville, Mac McEachern, and I were the Democrats. I guess there were seven people to start.

A: Did they all start out running?

B: Yes. Some of them started out running a long time before I did. Of course, Dick Jones had been out almost a year, Mac was committed for a long time, and John Beville had had some time in working out in the small municipalities. I was not the last one to enter the race, but I was not the first, either. Significant headway had been made by some of my opponents before I ever got there.

A: As I remember the campaign, in the beginning there was kind of a "who is Kate Barnes" specter, and that lasted a while. You really came out of the pack. At the beginning of that race, people were asking who the front runners were, and they seldom answered Kate Barnes. How did you get your organization together, and how did the beginning months fall out for you?

B: It was pretty inconspicuous. I think from the beginning I took an unconventional approach to campaigning because I did not know anything about it. All I knew was that I had had over my lifetime in Cross Creek a number of experiences to work with groups of people from different communities. For instance, I taught art for the Older Americans Council for eight years. I met dozens of older people through that, and they were quite devoted to me as an art teacher. When they heard I was thinking of running for county commission, they became part of my campaign team. Some of my "seniors" were some of my best activists.

I started building a grass-roots coalition that was unusual in its composition. Of course, it had my environmental friends at the core, but it also had, as I said, some of the unusual groups like the older folks and some of the country people who had worked with me on different local issues. I also had some small business support at first. Of course, one of my opponents had all of the major business support already lined up.

A: Was that Dick Jones?

B: Yes, Dick Jones had the business community pretty much lined up. I expected that; I did not expect to go into the campaign with a lot of heavy-hitter support. I knew that a lot of people knew me; a lot of regular folks, a lot of people who are not involved in politics normally were ready to be active on my behalf. So I started with the home folks. The first campaign event I had was a fish fry at one of the fish camps at Cross Creek, and about seventy people showed up for that.

A: When was this?

B: This was in May, I believe, in 1988. I had been just working on the phone, going to lunch with people, and doing background work up to that point. I kept trying these small events that were not very hard to produce. I photocopied all of my campaign literature and the artwork for the buttons. I did not have any money. Instead of bumper stickers I photocopied my logo and put it in windows; I made little window stickers out of them. So I started to think of myself as the "Xerox" campaign; it was absolutely low budget. By the time qualifying fee came up, that was all the money I had; I had just barely made qualifying. So from the day that I qualified I was broke. I had no war chest at all, but I knew I had my folks.

I knew I had a large group of people who had never been seen in Alachua County politics before and who were really ready to get out there and kick it. We just started. Nobody knew anything about it. I think its success was that people, as they got to know me at the different forums and at the different neighborhood gatherings and on public interviews and so on, began to see that I was like them. I was not a political insider. I was not a big business person. I

did not have the typical background that you look for in a politician, and I think that appealed to people in this unusual county. It started to just take a life of its own.

By the time the September primary came I had a good feeling. I knew that no one else saw it, and it was almost a sense of enjoyment thinking what a surprise it was going to be to people when I did better than expected in the primary. I did not know that I would win the primary, but I thought I would get into the run-offs.

A: As I remember, there were two dramatic events in your campaign. The first was when Dick Jones left.

B: Right.

A: The business community, then, was wide open, and everyone was vying for their support.

B: Right.

A: I remember most people perceived John Beville to be the inheritor.

B: And he was the inheritor of Dick's support, his spoken support.

A: I remember one of Dick's campaign managers saying, "Kate Barnes has almost been invisible."

B: That is right; I remember that, too. I was invisible to the political movers and shakers, but I was far from invisible to the grass-roots folks, and I think what finally started to become visible was how many people out there who were supporting my campaign.

A: The other thing that happened, when I knew you were going to win, was when you got the [endorsement of the] Homebuilders Association.

B: Yes, that was an unusual moment in the campaign. Dick's dropping out was a big shock to me. I had no inkling of it, and when I was first told he was leaving I just could not believe it. He had worked so diligently and had made so much headway that he had created an almost insurmountable block to any business support. I was definitely going to have a hard time there.

But I am a business person, so when he left the campaign, I decided that it would be silly for me to stay in the background and appear to be only a one-sided candidate. I knew I had more to offer than that. So I called the people I knew in business with whom I had worked in Visions and who had a reasonable

possibility of knowing that I had something more than "tree hugging" to contribute. Sure enough, that is how it grew. C. B. Daniel, Steve de Montmollin, Fred Shore, Jerry Warren--people that I worked closely with in Visions – started to talk in at least positive terms about me. In a sense, they took a second look. Several of them came forward and stated that they were going to go with me. C. B. Daniel was the first major business person to do so, and then it started to snowball.

By the time we got to the primary, I had a good bit of business support. But I think the ones who were holding back needed to see that I could win. They needed to see that I was really a viable candidate and that I was not a nut. They had to be convinced, because Cross Creek was not necessarily popular with the entire business community. I think some were supportive, but some were not. So it just gradually took on its own life. One person would talk to another, and I think my credibility gradually spread because of the people who had worked with me.

- A: Once you got the Homebuilders' support, then the Hunt Club situation erupted down by Payne's Prairie. I talked to a lot of environmentalists who said that you were in the pocket of the developers. In fact, people I knew who did not know about the situation at all except what they read in the paper were saying that Kate Barnes was in the pockets of the business community, that she had sold out. How did you respond to that?
- B: Well, it was, of course, a very painful accusation to have, considering what I had put into environmental concerns in the six or seven years before that. It was unexpected. I had had every kind of criticism that could be thrown at me during the Cross Creek situation, but, of course, all of that came from developers and land speculators – people who wanted to build. So a few months later to be getting it from the so-called environmentalists was pretty painful. It did make me angry because it seemed so unjust. But right away I realized that there were a couple of candidates who have nothing positive to offer, so naturally a person running for office is going to find whatever they can. I had to understand it as a political ploy and not as an opinion that was really shared by a lot of people. I could also see right away that there was quite a bit of momentum behind spreading this thing as a perception and that they were making some real headway in doing so.

By the time of the first primary, that was not that significant of a problem. I had published a list of my supporters, and they included some of the bigger developers and the major environmentalists of the area. I always took that approach, that I was proud of all my supporters, that I would not want to leave a single one behind, and that I felt I could balance the needs and desires of the community because I could understand both points of view. That perspective, I

think, started to take on some momentum right about the time of the first primary.

Of course, winning the first primary gave me more support among the business community and also from some of the environmentalists who had not come forward made a stronger stand at that point.

- A: They planned to run Kiki Carter a long time before any of this happened. Do you think this became part of their strategy beforehand? Why did they not support you in the beginning?
- B: I have never been able to figure that out, although the way they behaved I was glad they did not. By the time the general election came around, I would not have touched that support with a ten-foot pole; it was poison. In fact, for the record, not one candidate supported by those people survived; they did not succeed in electing anyone. That says a great deal about this community. The plain common sense that the average Alachua County voter brings to the polls could not be hampered by hysterical propaganda. So I was really happy to see that I survived in spite of everything they threw. It was an amazing period of time, especially that last month of the general election campaign where every little innuendo and nuance that could be dreamed up was.
- A: Not just in your race, but in all of them.
- B: In all of them. Paranoia reigned supreme, and it was a very fearful time. I think all of us who were campaigning had a sense that the community understood and that they were going to be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. But it was going to be nip and tuck. The hostile and paranoid approach to things was really gaining in life and credibility, and it was going to have to be addressed very firmly, which it was. I think specially towards the end especially the television debates got to be very specific, and I think that brought that conflict of growth versus no-growth issue to a head.

The community, I think, was the beneficiary of a very solid debate on that subject among all of the candidates running for all of the offices. I think it was a pretty amazing exercise in democracy, and I believe the people went to the polls informed and voted very responsibly. Naturally I think so – they elected me. [laughter] But they also elected some people I would not have chosen, and I have found in working with some of those people that the community was right. They picked a balanced commission, and they picked balance in other areas as well. I think it is going to work out very well for us.

- A: I guess we can move on from some of the general environmental questions, then, since you are now a county commissioner. I have some questions about Ocala and the relation there. There are two issues going now. There is the proposed turnpike, and then there is the airport. Was that a city plan, or was

that regional?

B: It is a regional airport plan.

A: Ocala is a very different community. They are very pro-development, and Gainesville is not nearly so. Are we ever going to get together over the long term? Is there going to be an expansion? Is Ocala going to grow up towards us?

B: I am convinced that Ocala will grow enormously over the next few years. They have chosen that approach to their future, and I believe that because their land-use controls are not geared toward concentrating urban services in the center of the community they are allowing for all kinds of growth in all parts of the county. I think we are going to see them ambling right up to the line. Of course, I live in Cross Creek, which is just a few miles from the line, and there is already a distinguishable difference between the Alachua County side of the line and the Marion County side. Junk yards and trashy types of development--the worst kinds of development--are right there on the line, and there is no attempt being made either aesthetically or environmentally to deal with it. I do not want to be critical of Marion County's government. I am going to reserve comment on whether they are doing it right or not, but they are certainly doing it differently, and we are going to be impacted by them more, I think, than anyone realizes.

A: Is there going to be an airport?

B: I do not think so, not in the foreseeable future. I think that there is going to be a bigger push now that the idea of an airport between Ocala and Gainesville does not seem to be working out for fiscal reasons. I can see Ocala combining with Citrus County, which is where most of their growth is headed, with retirees and large rural developments. I can see Citrus County putting pressure on Ocala to have some sort of municipal airport between Ocala and its south. If an airport happens, that is what will happen. It is just my guess, but it is an educated guess, that due to environmental constraints on the border between our two counties, and due to the enormous cost of putting in a regional airport at this time and the fact that the airlines are not exactly in an expansionist mode, it seems highly unlikely that a regional airport will happen in the foreseeable future. I think we are going to need to fall back on our Gainesville airport and get it really functioning as thoroughly as we can, and let Ocala make its deal somewhere else. I do not think it is in our best interest to pursue that, now that we have been given the price tag on it. I do not think we even began to delve into the price tag environmentally.

A: What about the turnpike? That might be a different story.

B: I think the turnpike will come back to haunt us as soon as Governor [Robert] Martinez is safely re-elected. I am sure that that is the motivation for his dropping the plan – conveniently for two years. That would see him through the 1990 election, and I believe that other candidates for that election are going to make a political hot potato out of it, even if it is on the drawing board.

There will be some effort made, and probably should be, to move traffic more efficiently through this part of the state, and I am certainly interested in advocating a reasonable expansion of traffic facilities. But as far as a huge, six-lane turnpike with high-speed rail and the swath that would cut through our most sensitive areas is concerned, that just absurd, and I do not have much patience with the idea. It is such a bad one that it does not deserve serious consideration, in my opinion. When you get the president of the University [of Florida] and most of the business people saying they do not see any advantages in this for us but plenty of disadvantages, I do not fear the kind of community split over that issue that we have had in other areas.

But we are going to have to be prepared to be reasonable about alternatives to it. If we are not going to go for something that big, what will we go for? I think if we shut the door to all possibilities we are going to make a mistake. We are going to cut ourselves out of the planning process. So as a commissioner I am trying to keep an open mind to other possibilities. I did not have an open mind to the Jacksonville-Tampa toll road.

A: We touched on something there: wetlands. What are the wetlands in Alachua County. How do we protect them?

B: The wetlands in Alachua County come in every shape and form. In the southeast part of the county, which is my district, they predominate the landscape. They take the form of everything from cypress swamps to wet and dry prairies, marshes, all kinds of little ponds and sloughs, and all kinds of water. Then, of course, there are the lakes, streams, and springs. The whole southeastern part of the county is a flowing sheet of water, both above the ground and underneath. There are two different water bodies moving through the area – on the surface and under the surface. "Wetlands" makes it sound like it is something separate from the real land, but that is the real land in the southeastern quadrant of the county. In other parts of the county, wetlands are more isolated; they are not as clearly connected with each other, so it is a little harder to generate the kind of protection that wetlands need.

I think the southeastern part of the county should have more publicly owned lands, more parks, and more conservation easements and areas. The major emphasis on conservation of wildlife and wetlands should be in the southeast. I am not just saying that because I live there; that is just the area that is the most

sensitive.

Another vital water interest is the aquifer. Its closeness to the surface is a big problem in developing the western part of the county, and I think in years to come we are going to have to be much more careful with what we put in the vicinity of open sinkholes and so on.

- A: Does this affect Marion County, too? The open aquifer goes south into their county.
- B: Yes, it does, and I am glad that we are on the upstream side of it, frankly. There is much less if any concern down there for the quality of the water when it leaves its boundaries.
- A: Let us talk about some of the other things you are facing now. As a commissioner, you are facing two things that more or less affect growth: the EMS [Emergency Medical Services] problem, and the idea of consolidation/unification/annexation. How have you dealt with those problems in the past couple months since you have been in office?
- B: The [Hunter Environmental Services] ESE sewer and water issue has not been active in my tenure as a commissioner.
- A: I meant the emergency medical issue.
- B: Okay. ESE is the environmental company that we had to run a sewer line out to. Emergency services and fire services do seem to be an issue that is beginning to settle down. We do have a conceptual agreement with the city now. I was actively involved in that primarily in instigating the discussion of unification of services that I know citizens wanted us to look at. In both of the Visions forums a very strong statement was made that unification of services should be explored and achieved wherever possible, including fire, law enforcement, planning, and other areas where we have some duplication with the city of Gainesville.

But there was a lot of resistance, I guess, on the part of Gainesville to really discussing unification as a possibility. The conceptual agreement we ended up with looks like unification to me, my definition being a service network with independent providers linked by a common plan and common protocol. That seems to be what we are going to end up with, and I think that is marvelous. A creative approach has been found.

The other issue was consolidation of governments and/or annexation. It is now the end of March, 1989, and I think in the next few months there will be a lively

and very substantial debate on the issue of annexation of parts of the urban fringe. What we have seen up to now is that the city has made a pretty strong move toward annexing parts of the urban fringe, and up to now I have not wanted to interfere in the dialogue that is taking place between the city and potential annexed neighborhoods. But recently I have been getting a lot of calls as a county commissioner asking for factual information: what will happen if we annex into Gainesville, will we spend more money on taxes or less, will we gain services or will we lose them, what exactly is going to be the result for the individual? I have not been able to answer those questions. I have also gotten a lot of complaints about the methods that are being used to encourage annexation, if you will, that have to do with citizens perceiving that they are being put under pressure to annex by the withdrawal of services that they have become accustomed to. The closing of the fire station is one example.

- A: There was a fire a month or two ago in the news, and it has become a political hot potato that they are going to close the Gainesville fire station.
- B: Gainesville closed one of the fire stations that they had agreed to man in the urban fringe, and people are very upset about that. So I think the real debate about annexation is just about to begin, and it is going to be very lively. In the campaign I heard a great deal of very strong opinion against annexation by most of the people who would potentially be impacted, and I think it is going to be very tough for the city of Gainesville to convince me and those people that there is an advantage to annexation great enough to overcome the upheaval that it would cause, both fiscally and in terms of distribution of services and so on.

When you start tinkering with the basic government mechanism at a time when we have enormous challenges to meet financially, environmentally, and in terms of economic development, it strikes me as a very poor time to be fooling around with the basic elements of government. There is probably never going to be an easy time to do that, but I personally do not hear that annexation is the solution to any of the major problems we have. It will not remove any responsibilities that the county has. No matter how many neighborhoods are annexed, we will still have to provide urban services somewhere. We will not be able to dismantle any of our departments if annexation occurs. We will simply lose tax base, and as for the citizens themselves it is difficult for me to understand what the big advantage would be to be a part of a municipality instead of the county if they are going to receive the same basic treatment. I think those questions have to be answered in a much more straightforward fashion than they have been up to now.

Right now we seem to be in an atmosphere of "what do you want in order to annex" and the almost bargaining for services that is going on between individual neighborhoods and the city. I do not think that is a healthy way to go about it. I

think this is a community decision that needs to be made the same way the elections are conducted. We need that same level and quality of debate on that issue, and I think that is what is going to start now.

A: What about consolidation?

B: It is a lovely concept, and I think that people who have been in government for a long time tend to favor it because they can see how much less complicated their lives would be if governments were consolidated. But, coming fresh from the campaign and fresh from a lot of really vocal opinion about these issues, what I hear on consolidation – and I tend to agree with it myself – is that the small municipalities of this county are in some sense part of the life's blood. Each one is very individualistic. If you name all of the communities – Hawthorne, Waldo, Micanopy, LaCrosse, Newberry, Archer, Alachua, High Springs – each one has its individual personality. They have a very strong sense of community and a very strong sense that they know best how to govern themselves and how to manage their own affairs. As a rural resident and a member of a small residential community, I would not like to see them engulfed in the giant metropolis of Gainesville. I do not think that the Jacksonville solution is in any way, shape, or form appropriate for us. I think that people would lose representation rather than gain it in such a situation.

I guess what I am saying is that I am against annexation as a solution, unless I can be given some facts that will persuade me otherwise. I am open minded, but in two years of paying attention to these issues, I have not found any advantages that would justify that level of upheaval. Consolidation seems like an overly crude and broad solution to some fairly refined and specific problems.

If I can capsulize the whole issue in an opinion that I have, it would be that at this time in Florida's history the counties are the center of the action. It is not something the counties chose, necessarily, but the Growth Management Act of 1985 puts tremendous responsibility in the laps of county government. Of course, as you have heard many times that the state does not compensate us financially for those mandates. We are in the position, as are all the other counties in Florida, of coming up with urban services for rapidly expanding communities and with long-range planning that not only meets local needs but ties into the state plan and the regional plan and is consistent and fair. It is a tremendous challenge. Then we have the mandates of the jails and the courts.

A: And no money to do it.

B: And no money to do it. And this is a time when we start fooling around with consolidation and annexation? It seems absurd to me. I have a very strong opinion that this is a poor choice of time to be doing this. I do not criticize the

city of Gainesville for trying; I certainly do not. I do not see that there is a single purpose to annexation that would compensate for the level of upheaval it would cause, but if I can be convinced that there are such reasons, I certainly am keeping an open mind to it.

Basically, I am convinced that the vast majority of people who wish to live in Gainesville already do, and that if a large group of people comes forward who up to this point have not spoken and who are anxious to become citizens of Gainesville, I will certainly do everything I can to facilitate that, if in fact that is a majority opinion. But I will not be able to sit quietly by while neighborhoods are annexed against their will. If there is not a great effort made to convince the people involved that it is in their best interest to do so, I am going to be pretty aggressive in defense of leaving it as it is.

- A: Do you think the rest of the county commissioners feel the same way as you?
- B: No, I do not. I think I probably have a minority opinion on that, but I would not want to say what I think other commissioners think. I know I am not totally alone in this opinion, but I think I may be in the minority at this point. I think this dialogue that is coming up, this debate between city officials and ourselves over the qualities of annexation or consolidation of governments, is going to be very useful in helping the citizens make an informed decision. I understand it is going on the ballot in May. I would hope that we would have enough information – solid facts, not opinion or speculation – out at that point so people could make a decision that will be allowed to endure for some time. The constant attempt to annex has been destructive, I think, to a forward effort on the part of the entire county.
- A: The growth/no growth is one of the issues of our study, and it is very interesting to me. I found myself, as a Democrat, in a position that was in opposition to a lot of other Democrats, and I was told that I was conservative for this belief. I did not really think I was.
- B: What belief is that?
- A: I believe that we need economic growth; that is my opinion. We have too much poverty, and we have to create jobs to alleviate that. That is where I did not think I was being so conservative, but I was told that I was playing into the developers' hands.
- B: So you got that treatment, too?
- A: Amazing. What is your opinion on growth/no growth?

B: There is no question that growth, development, and building have been the driving forces of Florida's economy for a great many years. As a young person, I was subjected with my family to the effects of the boom-and-bust type of economy in Florida. We moved to Florida in 1952 when I was seven years old, and in 1954 we were forced to move back to Cleveland because my father was in the building trade. He was a lumber salesman, and the boom crashed at that point, leaving him out of work just at the point where we were getting settled. It took fifteen years for him to pay off all the debts that were incurred by that move. I cannot help but wonder how many families are packing their cars to move back north now, because they came down here expecting to find prosperity and a place to make a life and have instead found that this current boom is starting to wane.

So I have a basic, fundamental problem with the boom-and-bust type of growth that Florida has experienced. I think that my experience is not unusual. What we are looking at now is the tapering off of the current boom and the attempt of the building industry to maintain the boom mentality in Florida long past its useful point, long past the point in which the land, resources, and the infrastructure of the state can handle it.

Growth in itself is a very necessary part of Florida's economy at this point, and we are not going to see it disappear overnight as the basic driver. But I think we have to start – and we have started – looking for other ways to spread out the economic base and create other industries that will sustain the state when the building industry cannot at the same level that it has been. We had better get there quickly, because with the Growth Management Act on top of it all we are looking at a time in the very near future when we may actually have to say no more growth unless we put these mechanisms in place to handle it.

So I am not anti-growth, but I am anti-boom, for very good and practical reasons. The jobs that we create have to be maintained; they cannot just be quick construction jobs or three- to six-month temporary positions. They have to be longstanding, they have to provide benefits, and they have to provide good salaries or they do us no good whatsoever. Simply growing, simply adding people to the community does absolutely nothing for the economy except drain it further.

I am now serving on the board of the Chamber of Commerce, and there is a very good reason for that. I believe we have to – we must – bring in more business into the community, more substantial jobs that pay decently and that provide adequate benefits for the employees.

The only way to do that is to start from the bottom up. We have to have a government that is forward thinking, organized, and also conducive to business

needs and business interests. That does not mean you give away the store. It does not mean that you allow environmental damage to occur in order to get economic growth. But within the constraints of the environment and the type of philosophy this community has toward growth, I think there is a lot that we could be doing to increase the opportunities for people.

Of course, our impoverished people are a tremendous concern for any elected official, and it is incomprehensible to me that anybody could use their position in government to actively work against creating jobs for poor people. I think we are seeing less and less of that as time goes on. Those people who are actively doing that are being voted out of office at every opportunity, and I am really happy about that.

My intent in joining the board of the Chamber of Commerce was first of all to show that a person who has substantial recognition as an environmentalist can also be probusiness and can work actively on behalf of business without compromising the environment.

- A: In other words, the two do not have to be opposed.
- B: They certainly do not have to be opposed. In this community I already see that they have been melded together. The chamber president last year was Steve de Montmollin, who serves with me on the board of the Florida Defenders of the Environment and has been a well-known and active environmentalist for more than twenty years. That is a good sign, I think, that the problems of the past, the polarization of the past, between business and the environmental community and the neighborhoods and so on are beginning to diminish. I think the more people like me and Steve de Montmollin and some of the other business people who are active in their neighborhoods and in other concerns, we are going to proliferate. I think that the moderate opinion that comes with that is going to dominate, if it has not already, the politics of the area.

We have the best opportunity, in my opinion, of any county in Florida to achieve the proper balance between environmental concerns and economic development. In every issue that is coming before us as a commission, I see that balance being forged, and it is very exciting. We are really at a very critical time in Alachua County's history, and I am just thrilled to be right in the middle of it all.

I think my philosophy that business, number one, is a good thing – it is practically heretical to say in this community that business is good, that profit is good – is one of those things that I am sure four years from now if I run for re-election my saying that into this tape recorder will somehow be brought back to haunt me. I am going to say it again: business is good! I really believe that in the time I have

to be here that I will see that attitude change substantially in the community. I think I already have. I think it is very important for people with moderate views to come forward to express them so that it is understood how much support that point of view has in this community.

In the campaign, people came up to me every day and said, "Thanks for being reasonable. Thanks for considering both sides of this argument, the economic impact as well as other concerns." It just seems so little to ask of a public official that it was almost shocking to be commended for what you would think would be something you would take for granted in a public official, that you listen, that you do not come in with an opinion and plan and then try to make everything work around it.

- A: Yesterday when I was listening to the interview with Grant Thrall, he came up with something that I thought was interesting. I do not know whether he articulated it, but it was something that you are saying, too. He was talking about the power elite, which concerned the computer industry in Palo Alto, California, or wherever it is. In Florida it is the developers. It crystalized in my mind that the greatest resource of Florida is its land, and that is what the economy seems to have been built on. Do you think we should expand? If the power elite is the developers, which it seems to be in Gainesville, where should we go? What kind of development do we want? What kind of growth do we want in Gainesville or in Alachua County?
- B: I think the idea of concentric rings of growth has some appeal to me. I grew up in a western suburb of a large city, and just outside of our boundaries was a green belt. It was a naturally occurring ravine that was kept from developing when the city expanded and was made into a citywide ring of parks around the urban area of Cleveland. Then the suburbs leaped over it and went on into the sunset. The experience of living in a community that represented the ideal that Gainesville is trying to achieve of a concentrated urban community, then a green belt, and then a much lower density outer area that is mostly agricultural – if I am understanding that philosophy well, that is the approach that they are taking – it sounds great. It sounds like it should make perfect sense.

But I found that a green belt does not do anything by itself to control growth or to stop sprawl or to create a situation in which the services are concentrated. A green belt basically is a nice view that you have on your way into the city to work. Unless land-use planning is in place to urge urban concentration and to urge that the service boundaries be kept concentrated, there is not going to be any positive effect of a green belt other than to provide, as I said, a nice view for somebody on the way to work.

That is the way it happened in Cleveland. The suburbs jumped the ravine and

went on until commuting distance became a factor, and that is where it stopped, and it stopped in one place and spread out in another until there was an even ring around and outside of the green belt. Unless you are willing to say there will be no growth at all outside of the green belt, it does not work. These goals have to be achieved through land-use planning.

My idea about how this community could look in ten years would be to go ahead and let Gainesville continue to evolve as a sophisticated university community with government being the chief employer and higher learning being the main industry. That is a pretty accurate description of where we are now. We also would need to allow a buffer area of medium density, as is happening in the urban fringe where the larger lots begin to occur. We would also encourage a low density type of development in the rural areas and no new concentrated developments outside of existing areas.

It still makes sense to me, but I think the means of achieving it are much more the responsibility of the county. It is the county's responsibility to conduct its land-use planning in such a way that these goals would be achieved.

- A: What kind of business are you trying to attract through the chamber? High-tech, clean industries? Is that something we want? What kinds of jobs can be created for the poor?
- B: That is a different question; let us get to that later. What kinds of businesses are the chamber trying to attract? I would not say that there is a type that they are concentrating on, but the number of jobs, rate of pay, the benefit packages, and the corporate attitude, if you will, are important considerations in the attempt to attract. Possibilities that I have heard in the last few months have included a high-tech company, a uniform cleaning company (or something like that), and other small manufacturers and industries.

There does not seem to be an interest on anyone's part, either on this end or outside, to attract large industry or manufacturers – anything that would pollute or be dangerous. Even the computer industry is not totally welcome as far as most people are concerned because of the potential for ground water contamination, which is more serious here than in California.

We have to be careful, but I think what has happened is that we have thrown the baby out with the bath water in the past. We have rejected IBM [International Business Machines], for example, but who knows why. I never could figure out why such an effort was made to turn them away. It was a successful effort, and I think we are still suffering from the success of that effort. I do not understand that; I do not understand the motivation of people who would turn away a fine company that has a stable track record in dealing with environmental concerns.

What is the problem? It seems to me that an anti-business attitude in general was in place at that time, and we are struggling to work our way out of it.

One of the industries that is being emphasized for attraction is the film industry. We have an active Motion Picture and Television Producers Association here in Alachua County, and they have been working with the chamber to develop a program for attracting film companies that might want to do location shooting in Florida but do not know exactly where. They have been successful in attracting the Ron Howard film [*Parenthood*] that has just done two days of shooting at the University. They also got a Nissan ad; I think last year the chamber was successful in attracting an advertising company that filmed a Nissan ad here. That kind of thing could be quite lucrative if it attracted on a regular basis.

The appeal of that industry is that they come in and do not cut down trees, do not pollute the water, and do not affect us negatively in any way. They just dump large amounts of cash on the community. They have to buy food and services, and all kinds of supplementary activities are doled out to the community.

The chamber and the producers association are working to develop a directory of locations and of services available to the film industry so that we will begin to see more of that kind of money come in. All of that takes a lot of time; even targeting a very narrow focus like that takes tremendous time and resources, but there is a lot of work going on right now in that direction.

A third industry, if I might take another minute, that is beginning to get some emphasis, although not enough yet, is the arts and the economic effect that the arts can and should have on this community. Up to now, the arts have been more a charity than an economic driver, but with the completion of the Harn Museum and the performing arts center out on 34th Street, with the completion of a major downtown library and several suburban branches, and with the general heightening of interest that things like the Spring Arts Festival and the Florida Arts Celebration and the Hippodrome Theater have brought to the community, I think we are going to see this be what one person called the "Florence of Florida." We have that possibility. I think we have more possibility to do that than even to become a high tech or industrial center. The arts are an industry, if you will, that has a lot of support from the people, and I think that we would find active citizen participation in attracting arts events and a public that would even come from outside the community to bring money in to attend such events or support the arts locally. I think those are all areas that we have a lot more work to do in, but I think they are exciting possibilities.

- A: One of the campaign issues that we ran into so often was what do you do about southeast Gainesville? What do you do about the incredible poverty? Southeast Gainesville seems to be isolated and cut off from the rest of the

community. What kinds of jobs do we have to offer them? We are basically a service economy, and minimum-wage jobs are not going to help anyone raise kids.

B: Right. That is the million-dollar question, and probably the one that weighs most heavily on my heart as a commissioner. Not only is the jobless rate extremely high in that part of the community, but crime and all of the associated difficulties are real problems there. People who are struggling to make a living and are barely succeeding are really being pulled at every day by these other problems that they have no part in causing but they are victims of.

What do we do? If I knew that, I could be the governor of Florida. [laughter] I do not have any quick or easy solutions to that problem. I think we are working to expand the vocational training opportunities for our young people. We are working to locate new businesses on the east side. I think an understanding is growing among the business community that we have to start promoting the east side for the types of businesses that would hire.

A: Is that difficult?

B: Yes, it is. It is because there is such a great promotional advantage with being associated with the University of Florida. The University is promoting a Progress Center and adjoining areas for economic development. I know they are not deliberately competing with the southeast [section of Gainesville], but what does the southeast have to offer compared to the University of Florida? What does the southeast have to offer in terms of facilities, proximity to major highways, and transportation connections? All of that has to be enhanced before the southeast – or the northeast, even – becomes a really viable place for economic development.

I have greater hopes for the area around the airport, which would still be at least within reach of the southeast for employment opportunities. There is some significant discussion about a northern beltway, which would be much less environmentally sensitive to pull off. There is a growing industrial base out there. Because the clay layer that protects the aquifer is on the east side rather than the west, just by land-use decisions we are going to be favoring certain kinds of development over there.

I am hopeful, but I do not have any brilliant ideas. I certainly would welcome any that anybody else has. I definitely have a high level of concern about it, and I am trying to stay in touch. I work closely with Avis Butler and her group, and with other economic development organizations on the east side. I at least try to put some moral support behind their efforts.

A: I have one final question. What do you think of *Alachua*, the new art work in the

middle of the science and engineering library? [The sculpture is very controversial, largely because of its cost to taxpayers, and is widely referred to by UF students as "The French Fries." Ed.]

- B: Naturally I have an opinion. Rather than answer that question, I would like to introduce a larger question, and that is what place should the arts have in the public spaces of Alachua County? That is an issue on which I am quite vocal. Then I will tell you what I think of that individual piece.

I believe that art in public places' time has come. Alachua County, as I said before, is a community that is very oriented to and supportive of the arts. In fact, the community will make great sacrifice to keep the arts at a high level. So I think that it is very appropriate for us to have public art.

I am concerned that the art that is selected by the government entities – the county, the city, GRU [Gainesville Regional Utilities], and so on – be compatible with the tastes of the people who are paying for it. That does not mean cater to the lowest common denominator, obviously. One of the functions of art is to inspire and to lead forward the thinking of the people.

But if we take that function totally seriously and do not think of the other functions that art has, that is when we get into the problem of sculptures such as *Alachua*.

That is an intellectual piece. As an artist, and as someone who is trained in the history of art and who has traveled broadly and visited museums all over the world, I can appreciate that piece as a contemporary expression. It is a style that one artist said is commonly understood by those who have looked at and studied art. That is its problem: if those are the only people who can understand it, then it should not be public art. It should be privately collected art. It could be a corporate piece or owned by an individual.

This is a little bit of a dichotomy in my thinking. The University is an institution of higher learning and a "temple of the intellect," if you will. I think there is much more place on campus for avant-garde public art than there is in the downtown community.

I happen to be serving on the selection committee for the art for the new library, and I am driving them crazy because I am so aggressively promoting the idea of what I call accessible art – art that is understood by more than artists and more than art historians and more than art critics. It is art that is understood by regular folks.

The philosophy that I am bringing to that committee is one that fortunately is shared by several members of that committee, and that is that what happens

when perhaps a young person from a less-privileged background walks into that new library, and the first thing he or she sees is a major piece of art? Now, if that piece of art is similar to *Alachua* or some of the sculptures that are on campus, what is going to happen? That person is going to look at it and is going to make no connection with their real life. It is not going to speak to them in any way.

The intellectual interest that educated people might have in it is going to be totally lost on a ten-year old from a poor family. So what happens when that person walks into the library and the first piece of art that he encounters in his normal, everyday life is something that is incomprehensible, maybe even threatening to look at, and certainly makes no sense to his or her life? I think we lose that person right there. That is not going to happen in that library unless they are willing to gag and bind me until they get the stuff in place.

There have been lively arguments among the members of the committee, two of whom were from the University. They advocated abstract sculptures completed by artists from as far away as London – definitely outside of the community, even outside of Florida for the most part. They were advocating spending the entire amount of \$95,000 on one abstract piece of sculpture – just like *Alachua* – and I went nuts over that. I really disagreed with that.

On the second day of the hearings I came in and said I was going to be a socialist here and advocate on behalf of the average person who is going to walk into the library that they have paid for, and they are going to see something that they like! They are going to see something they understand. It may not be traditional; it may be somewhat experimental or on the creative end of the scale, but it is going to be something that they can relate to and enjoy at the very least, and I hope something that will be edifying in some way. That is the attitude I have about art in public places and for the community. Whatever the University wants to advocate on behalf of the intellectual life of their students is fine by me, but not in a public library. Thank you. [laughter]

- A: Did I leave anything out? Are there some things that you want to talk about that I may have skipped?
- B: Let us get back just briefly to city/county relations and where we go in the future. We appear to be experiencing a lull right now, and then we will probably experience another growth period in which we attract the kind of people who want to live in "real" Florida, if you will – genuine Florida. I think a few years from now we are going to see another migration into Alachua County, and we need to be prepared for it. I think that the city of Gainesville and the county and the small municipalities have to start thinking not as a unit, because we all have individual concerns and responsibilities and goals, but as a large community.

If we think in that direction, we will not have to act in that direction. In other words, we will not have to legally consolidate our governments and lose our autonomy as individual communities to do it. If we start eliminating the boundaries in our thinking and start planning as if it were a whole and put that in our thinking, if we put Alachua County in the context of the state of Florida and of the region and try to keep a big picture, then we can be the best community in Florida.

When an artist is creating a work of art, you do not start with the details: you start with the big picture. As I am working on a piece over the many hours that it takes to complete it, if I for one minute forget what the big picture is, what the overall scheme of things is, I lose it. It does not work as a painting.

That is probably the thing from art that is most significant to my tenure in government. If there is one thing I think I bring from my artistic background that is not commonly seen in government, it is the ability and the determination to keep that big picture always before me.

If we do not begin to do that as a total community, we will lose our opportunity to be the best community there is in this state. We have that opportunity, and I am determined that if there is anything I can do about it we are going to be able to take it. That seems like the last thing I want to say.

[End of the interview]