

# Madison Historical: The Online Encyclopedia and Digital Archive for Madison County, Illinois

## Beth Warnecke Oral History Interview

Louis Thuet, Interviewer

Glen Carbon, Illinois

October 7, 2018

**Louis Thuet (LT):** The following was conducted with Beth Warnecke on behalf of the Madison County Oral History Project as a part of the Madison Historical: Online Encyclopedia and Digital Archive for Madison County Illinois. The interview took place Sunday October, 7th 2018 in her house in Glen Carbon, Illinois in the city of Glen Carbon. The interviewer is Louis Thuet a student in the department of Historical Studies at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Uh...so to start where and when were you born?

**Beth Warnecke (BW):** Ok I was born in Treasure Island, an island off of San Francisco California. My dad was in the Navy and my mom and dad got married and they moved out there. And basically, right after they got married they found she was pregnant with me so I was born in the local naval hospital, out there.

**LT:** Ok so since your dad was in the Navy and... in the Navy yeah?

**BW:** Mm-hmm.

**LT:** So since your dad was in the Navy when did your... was it because of his service that you guys moved here? Into Glen Carbon?

**BW:** No, no. We stayed out there... he was in the Navy for quite a while before he got married, before I was born, and while we were out there... and I honestly don't know what the catalyst was for this decision. But he came back to Madison County, he came back to Venice Illinois, to set up a law practice with his brother in Granite City. So I was only... I was not quite a year and half old... when we moved back, my brother was a few months old when we moved back. But he got out of the Navy at that point, full time Navy, and went into the Naval Reserves and we came back here, basically he just wanted to bring us back home to Madison County where all our Family was. Then he set up his business... law practice back here.

**LT:** So the naval reform is that how your dad... am I getting that right Naval Reform? Or what...

**BW:** Reform? Naval... he was a United States Naval Officer.

**LT:** And then you said he... he got out and joined...

**BW:** He went into the Reserves...

**LT:** Naval Reserves.

**BW:** Yeah, which means you're not... you're not every day active duty Navy but you could train once a month wherever you are. Um my brother continued in his footsteps so Ed is in the Naval Reserves.

**LT:** Ok that is my uh... so that was my mess up. Naval Reserves [Chuckles]

**BW:** Yeah... yeah, no, no, so you can always be called into active duty. You have your monthly duties as assigned. That is what dad did.

**LT:** So after the na... after you moved out here after your dad left the Navy. Uh your dad became a lawyer umm... growing up how much did you understand what your father did?

**BW:** Umm... very much. So not only was he a lawyer he uh, he was, he had a partnership with Uncle Harry, I don't know if you remember Uncle Harry, he had a partnership with Uncle Harry for a while. And then moved over and um started a new law firm with a man called Lance Callis and that is probably the years that I remember. I don't remember when he partnered with Uncle Harry at all, 'cause I was way too young. But while he was lawyer and I was growing up most of our... he worked constantly. He owned a business you understand what that is. He brought briefings home and worked constantly um but a lot of our social life... if we weren't doing things with family we were doing things with his law partners and they entertained clients. They got real big into the railroad and were prosecutors for the railroad accidents. So he had his connections in Louisville Kentucky and I'm trying to think where the other man lived. Um a lot of our social times as kids going out revolved around his business. Because his, his... we either went out with his partner entertaining their clients or they hosted a lot of dinner, dad was very political too he was very big in the Democratic Party here in Madison County, and we had a lot of dinner parties at our house growing up too. So we were always surrounded by his business, it seemed like, and actually in high school and apart of college I worked for him which was very cool. And all of his... so he and lance were partners and they had several young lawyers in the firm. We would always do stuff with those young lawyers too we would go to their weddings, we got together at Christmas time with them. Fam... summertime barbeque or picnic were always politically centered or with other lawyers that he knew about, so he was very ingrained in his law world and the Democratic Party world and that is just how us kids grew up. If it wasn't family-oriented, it was having to do with his business. We do all... we still keep in touch of all those people that we know from back then. Pretty cool.

**LT:** Uh. ok that is actually ra... rather interesting, something I didn't know.

**BW:** Yeah... you're gonna find out all kinds of stuff, you didn't know.

**LT:** Uh so what I...I...I...I...I. Aside from working with him in college what other impacts did your dad, in the lawyering field or in the Democratic arena... yeah arena, what what impact did it have on you?

**BW:** Ummm. He was, I'm trying to figure out how to answer this, it's not necessarily tied to him being a lawyer, it's not tied to him being part of the Democratic Party. He was very well respected in this Community. I didn't find out about this till years later, I always knew that he just was known wherever he went, and I'm a young kid naive not knowing why but we always had to stop and talk to people all the time. But he liked to donate quite a bit, and my brothers were in a Boy Scout troop, I don't know if this troop was connected to our little catholic church at the time, but dad would do a lot of donations to the troop. And that impacted me, um it made me want to be, not necessarily financial donations to things that

surround me today, but I learnt how to be very involved in the community, if that makes sense, volunteer my time at the churches, um I guess church I should say church that I belong to. Um even growing up in high school I got into the student council, got into politics back then. I was in student council all four years in high school. I don't remember ever one-time dad saying "Hey you had to do this." I just saw him being so active in the community... I don't know, I didn't necessarily want to be like him but it made me want to take on that role of responsibility and helping guide our high school community, with student council. I continued it with college, I uh became a RA to help guide the housing association that I was in. So I guess just watching him be so active in the community with donations and people looking up to him for his opinions, um it just rubbed off on me to be more of a leader than a follower, if that makes sense. I, um still do that today in my art world, which we will get to later, but I guess his... I guess he very much did influence me... not with being outspoken but being aware of what was going on and just you know pushing up my sleeves and getting in elbow deep to help out in different venues and avenues that I've been in. Whether that be the church, whether it be something in the community, stuff I would do when my kids were in grade school, I was just on every advisory board, leadership board, there was and help run the fund raiser and I think that all trickled down to how dad was in the community when I was growing up. And actually until today I didn't realize that I... that is probably why... pretty cool. [begins to cry]

**LT:** You Ok?

**BW:** Yeah... yeah I'm good... good memories.... good memories. [laugh] Y... Yeah you didn't really... I'm always active and I'm always doing volunteering stuff and I'm very much in leadership roles, which we will get to, but it's pretty cool you just made me realize it was from him. So thanks. [laugh] Ok onward buddy.

**LT:** Uh.... [laughs] ok so um... So moving back a little bit to more of your childhood and uh... what was it like Glen Carbons in the '70s?

**BW:** Ok so...

**LT:** Because you were not old enough in the '60s to really have huge memories...

**BW:** No

**LT:** ...so the '70s and '80s. What was it like growing up in Glen Carbon?

**BW:** Ok. Um. It was much quieter than it is now. It was a sleepy little, they call them bedroom communities, we were close enough to larger towns that we could get there. But... but Edwardsville/ Glen Carbon was just this tiny little area, it was perfect growing up, it was smaller than it was now. Not many businesses um... most of your social life revolved getting on your bike and going to hang with friends um... there was one bowling alley, we didn't go to, there was one roller skating rink that we grew up with. Repeat the question? Where am I supposed be going with this?

**LT:** [Laughs] Um... I just want to know what it was like growing up in Glen Carbon when you were a kid, maybe early teens.

**BW:** Well there wasn't much to do. It was... it really was I guess like I said. SIU was not a big place to go, as a teenager. My teenagers now go out there now for entertainment. Um you basically went and hung out with your friends at someone's house. We didn't have all the parks that we have today, there wasn't a lot. We didn't have the bike trails we have today, shopping was, back then shopping was not a thing to do as a teenager. Um I don't know it was very relaxed, very hometown feel. You just you got together with your friends or you had a couple sets of friends, you had friends, I had school friends because I went to a catholic grade school and catholic high school, but you also had your neighborhood buddies that went to different school. Now my brothers might have different perspectives, two of them went to the public school here. Um so their neighborhood friends were the same as their high school friends, mine were not that. I don't know my mom stayed home which is kind of an anomaly now, we can't, you don't find that a whole lot. So we would just hang out at home, play with the dog, have friends over, like I said hop on your bike and go play kickball all day. It was just very quiet, sleepy little town. You drive through Glenn Carbon now it's not, Glen Carbon/ Edwardsville is not the same town, at all I think we had one Kmart, one grocery store, um... one skating rink that we would go to and hang and then we play kick the can all night long because there was truly not a lot to do, and it was the coolest, funnest childhood growing up here. It seemed very country and rural back then because of the developments weren't around. It took you fifteen minutes to drive into town, so you had to plan your trips. You couldn't just say "Hey mom I need some poster board for a project." You planned your trips to the store, I don't know. But growing up it was just very relaxed and very quiet around here. And a lot of it, they...Glen Carbon was very proud of their history back then. I remember my mom taking us to the library, a teeny tiny library full of donated books, but even in that small of setting they had one room set aside in this old building for Glen Carbon history, they were always proud of their history, with the mining, and I was always fascinated with the pictures. Um a lot of the names that I saw as a little girl you still have those names throughout the city today. Um and new people that move into the town probably don't realize how old these names are, dating way back. I do remember trips like that, going to our little one room library, and, and even though we barely had space for the library they always had space for a history room that we would go in and go read around. Is that what you look for? Or not, is it? Point me on the right direction and I'll start talking about that.

**LT:** There really is no right directions, all what you remember and what you

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** uh and your perspective on things growing up.

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** Uh so you mentioned just getting on your bikes and hanging with your friends

**BW:** Uh huh

**LT:** and the one bowling alley and one like ice skating rink. Is that where you would normally go with your friends or was there somewhere else?

**BW:** Normally during the day we would get on our bike, or we would walk, and we would go up to one of our friends, we lived in the subdivision and it was not all the way developed. So one day maybe we would go look, the subdivision was developing as we lived there. We would go look around all the new

homes being built, play on the big dirt piles. I mean we're talking simple childhood here, it was awesome. We play on the big dirt piles, we get tired of doing that we may go home and get a snack, get lunch, and then we head back out and there was a ton of neighborhood kids and we would play kickball all day. Or we would, I was probably getting too old for pretend games like house, and dressing up and that, but we would just hang. Seriously we would just play kickball for hours in the back of this kid's house, um the Dewers: Freddy and Faith Dewer. Because there was no development behind their house yet, it was one big field, and their dad would mow down the field for us, we play kickball all day. At night we would all go home for dinner, we all just kinda... I don't know how we knew what time it was. There was not cell phones back then, we didn't wear watches, but we all knew to go home for dinner and then after dinner after it started getting dark, our house was always the house to go to play kick the can. And everybody would come down, we play kick the can in our yard all night, it was so simple. There were no... back then there were no VCRs for movies. You have to watch what was on TV, so there was not a lot of TV watching, we didn't do a lot of that. Cartoons, you know Saturday morning probably, there were no cartoons Monday through Friday because we didn't have all the cable channels. Back then you truly went outside and were outside all day. From after breakfast we all would gather, go exploring. We had, we lived, we had a creek behind our house. We go exploring in the woods, and the creek, and there was big giant horse pastures where now stands a hotel and a gas station, but there, we would be outside all day long, and in the winter we were outside all day long. It didn't matter if it was snowing, I'm trying to think what we did on rainy days, probably just did a lot of reading. But um I don't remember those too much, back then kids were just outside and somehow you just knew what time it was. You knew it was time for lunch, you knew it time for dinner. We had landline phones, of course, and sometimes the moms would be calling the other moms "Hey is..." you know, "...so and so at your house, so and so at my house." But we were never home but we were always home. If that makes sense, we were always in the neighborhood. It was it was a nice relax, I call it a Mayberry feeling childhood, growing up. I don't know if you know Mayberry, Andy Griffith Show, [LT shakes his head no] nope, nope. It was just a simple childhood, and then once high school came we would do a lot of spend the nights, being a girl, we would all... girls spend the night a lot more than boys do. But it was just still very simple, there was nothing to do. Even when you started driving, you had a car but what are you gonna do with it. There is nowhere to go, we might go to the mall once in a while, but we didn't have a whole lot of money to spend at the mall. We just... hanging out with each other... and now you're making me really think. Like what the heck did we do all those hours passed away. Hung out and talked. Yeah we had campfires and hung out, it was very... we worked once we get into high school you get a job, so... you spend your time working but most of the time you just lived to hang out with each other. That was it.

**LT:** So it was like uh a village to raise a child kinda situation in Glen Carbon.

**BW:** Yeah pretty much, pretty much. We were like, like we were big dust bowl gang of kids going from house to house to house. And like I said it was really cool, we moved to Glen Carbon when I was in 6th grade. It was an awkward stage when you were still a kid doing kid stuff for a couple years and then get into high school, starting to do more high school stuff. But yeah the parents had to rely on each other to know where the kids were, and most likely all of us kids were, there was a group of us all together all the time. So if you weren't at somebody's house you were at somebody else's house. And if you weren't at anybody's house we were all out together doing something in innocent it was never, never, uh we were never doing bad stuff it was just all, all innocence back then. Probably we weren't supposed to be climbing around and snooping around all the homes being built. It probably be a huge infraction of the

law or something today, but yeah I remember climbing up on ladders, if it was a second story home, and being kinda scared, there's, it's like no walls up you're gonna fall. Just silly stuff like that and going out and exploring, looking for old horse bones um... uh yeah it used to be a horse pasture behind our neighborhood. You can see it from the highway it was a big giant hill, it was for the race horses that's where they went, the retired race horses. Somebody owned the land up there and they were allowed to be a horse pasture up there and the horses would die and it was cool exploring looking for old horse bones up there. I think it must, that must have been before we moved 'cause there wasn't any live horses up there. And we go catch tadpoles in the pond, you know just simple fun stuff like that. Yeah all the moms they were all stay at home moms and it was a village to raise a child, it was fun.

**LT:** So you talked a bit about it, but where did you go to high school?

**BW:** Ok, so back in the day we went, all my brothers and I went to a catholic grade school, and you had the choice of staying here in Edwardsville and going to the public high school. Which to me seemed huge at the time, Edwardsville High School, and if you wanted to continue on in your Catholic high school we had to be bused either to Alton or to Highland. There was a St. Paul high school, it was a Catholic high school, and you probably had the option to go over to Bellville, there was a Catholic high school there, just one, but most of my friends, well not most of them. So we had maybe eighteen kids in our 8th grade, most of them chose to go to the public high school here in Edwardsville. And there were four of us, I believe, four girls; Jenny, Patty, Amy, Judy, and myself, so five of us, chose to go onto catholic high school. I.. I cannot tell you why I made that choice, probably cause Jenny and Patty were my best friends, and Jenny was the youngest of eight kids and she was going to that catholic high school, she didn't have a choice her parents said she had to go. So probably that made the decision for me, but Edwardsville back then probably had three to four hundred kids in the freshman class and good ol' St. Paul's Catholic high school there was eighty of us, so that was a huge decision of why I chose to go there. So what um...what made my decision to go to that high school?

**LT:** No, I was just curious as to where you went.

**BW:** Yeah yeah, so I was bused into Highland, Illinois to go to the Catholic high school there, St. Pauls, which is no longer there.

**LT:** Ok so as, uh so your, the girls that were you friends, kind of, in your opinion, helped you choose...

**BW:** Mm-hmm

**LT:** ...uh St. Paul.

**BW:** Mm-hmm

**LT:** What were, the best experiences in high school with them?

**BW:** Oh gosh, you want the... the nice good wholesome experience that you're supposed to choose? Or the stupid choice ones that all high schoolers do. Take your pick. Um my best experiences in high school, like I said, I got very involved in the student council there, which was way cool, and we did all kinds of activities. When you're at that age, you love to be active, and I was active constantly, so I was doing, I

was working on the homecomings, the proms, the um... the play, I got into drama, we put plays on. Our high school was big into basketball, so those were fun. Just getting together with your friends, we went to a lot of basketball games, and hanging out and being stupid. I don't know just hanging out, we had the best kids in our class. We are still very, very close today and this has been, I'm taking a stab, somewhere between thirty-five and forty years ago, I have to do that math of when I graduated, and I can still say that at least a dozen people from that high school I still keep in daily contact with via social media a lot now or texting or just running into them still, no we don't see each other a lot. My best high school experiences probably were the social ones, obviously, nobody wants to sit in class. Although we had some decent, we had some awesome teachers, and some of the classes we had and were still friends with two of our high school teachers, we still keep in touch with them. School time was fun, there was always lots of fun activities like there are today, but probably my best memories were the social ones. Hanging out... hanging out with our class, we had such a small class. It wasn't super clique, so it didn't matter if you showed up somewhere and your little group of friends weren't there, there was always someone to hang out with. Um having eighty kids in the class, no, no, no I take that back we had sixty, we graduated in eighty-two we only had sixty-one graduating kids. So you always knew everybody in class, and I was the type that even if I didn't hang with you, or our personalities didn't jive or jell, I still got along with you and still hung out with you. Best memories definitely were social but I can still remember classroom memories too, and they are all pleasant. It was just a cool, relaxed feeling back then.

**LT:** So you told some of the, let's call them, safe or tame experiences

**BW:** Uh huh.

**LT:** That you remember. If you're comfortable, uh telling this... telling this, what were some of the fun or memorable that you called dumb?

**BW:** Stupid. Yeah, yeah.

**LT:** Yeah.

**BW:** Well back then, probably freshman and sophomore year, everything was safe and tame. And then once you getting into junior year underage drinking was huge back then, and maybe I see it as huge, maybe it's not, I don't know. Our social times weren't just revolving around basketball games or other sporting events, or say prom and homecoming. We would get together on the weekends to hang and then there would be drinking involved, and back then you didn't stay at someone's house, you did these road parties and it is interesting all of the people I know now as an adult. You either knew about the road parties or you didn't. You had to come from small towns to know these, but you all get together, everybody would go park out on the road, in the cornfield, and just hang. And it wasn't crazy drinking, but it is what you did while hanging, had a few road parties get busted and the cops were very tame back then, they just were. Uh I don't know if that was good or bad, we didn't really have alcohol accidents either it's a miracle or really it wasn't that huge of a problem. But it wasn't as strict as they are today, which is probably not a good thing, I don't know, umm... dumb things like that. One time we were all together and there was a big group of us, and then, back then station wagons were the thing. You could pile a whole lot of kids into a station wagon, I remember in someone's station wagon and driving through these farm... farm fields. Someone was chasing us in a car driving through farm fields. And it

was just stupid stuff like that, and now that I look at it was destructive to the farmer obviously 'cause we didn't stay on the road the whole time. You know there are little farm roads that go between the fields um that was probably the dumbest thing I remember being in high school. I remember flying over a ditch at one point and just stupid, our guardian angels worked over time that night. Um it wasn't I guess senior year got to be a little more, it wasn't, every single weekend, like I said we still had all of our girl sleepovers and we would just hang and sleep over at girls homes. We would go into highland there was one little girl that would live in highland, and we go to the movies there, probably paid all of dollar to get in and I can't even tell you how much we paid. But we walk back to her house and hang and stay up all night. We still had simple moments like that, hanging, but everything was just social. But the dumb decisions was the drinking, obviously, obviously. I don't know how rampant that is in today's high school, I'm sure it is and there is much more involved with high schoolers these days. Ours was just simply drinking... beer or sloe gin, cheap stuff. Just hanging out thinking we were cool.

**LT:** So you said someone was chasing you, was it a friend who was chasing you while you guys were in the station wagon?

**BW:** We didn't know it at the time, but yeah... yeah just a friend, just dumb, dumb, dumb, stuff. I don't even who it was, it was somebody else from Highland. Because we would mingle with the Highland high school kids too, they would join us in these parties, and I didn't know 'em because I'm from Glen Carbon and there from Highland and they go to the public school but the other, the St Paul kids that lived in highland would know these kids, yeah. It turned out just to be another kid they just thought it was hilarious. We, at the time, obviously thought it was cops chasing us, well now that you look at it what police officer would chase you through a farm field? It's not that important to them, but, yeah. Just stupid stuff, that is probably the stupidest moment.

**LT:** So junior and senior year when you were finally were able to drive or got your license...

**BW:** Mm-hmm

**LT:** I know there is a drive-in around here even to this day. Did you ever go there for entertainment?

**BW:** I... I think I went one time, when you think it would be more memorable. I went one time and I remember, no well no, maybe it wasn't me. Maybe I'm remember Eugene's memories, he went one time. And you had to pay, back in the day, I don't think you paid per car you paid per however many people were in your car. I, you know, I take that back I never did go, maybe I went one time. I don't remember, you would think I'd, I must not have gone. But somehow I remember going, I remember the little talkie boxes to put the sound in your car, which was not all that great. But I remember him saying one time they locked him in the trunk and drove in because he was small enough to get in the trunk and they didn't have to pay for him. I remember that story, I must have gone one time. But it must not have been that great of an experience, I never gone... again. My brother still goes today and Luke still goes with his girlfriend's family, I've never gone. We would go to, yeah, instead of the drive-in we, we would go to Edwardsville Wildly theater, that was big, and I went there a lot and then the Highland had their Lory theater. And both of them are still open, the Wildey now is more, they do more performances there and they do special films there, they revamped and revitalized it. The Lory Theater today still shows current movies, those, those two I went to more. But see this is awful I know I had to go to the drive through one time because I



have vague memories sitting there and going “You can’t really see the screen that well and you can’t hear this that well.” So maybe we didn’t even stay for the whole movie. I had to have gone otherwise how would I have known what it looks like. I remember it being dark but it must have not been that great of an experience, I never went back.

**LT:** So moving from high school to college, where did you go to college?

**BW:** I went to Eastern Illinois University, um back then it wasn’t online applications, everything was by paper. Um I remember getting on mom’s typewriter and typing up my essays as to why I wanted to go. The information as to what University to go to was not as prevalent, so I think we had a few things mailed to our home from the guidance office from our testing, so we all took the ACT back then. So you would have some universities mailing their information, their pamphlets, to your home junior year. And um I picked Eastern because they had a good program for what I wanted to do, and they were close, your mom and Mary Ann picked Western, but I think I did a visit there one time and it I just didn’t like the campus, I’m not too sure why I didn’t pick that. I did a site visit to Eastern and I really liked it, the U of I was way too big for me that scared me. Eastern seemed smaller, nice compact campus and that is where I went.

**LT:** Was... ‘cause college for you was the 80s?

**BW:** 80s.

**LT:** 80s

**BW:** Uh huh.

**LT:** [clears throat] so... was Edwardsville, SIUE, ever on your radar for college?

**BW:** No, no it wasn’t um I don’t know why because they had decent programs there, probably they were not, not like today, but they weren’t really, what do you call it, a commuter campus. It was mainly local people, there were people that came from around the country to go but housing was slim to none back then. They had very few residence halls if any, they had a lot of campus apartments. Back then I wanted to go out and be away and experience the true, the whole campus life, I wanted to live on my own um be away from home. So SIU was not an option, it surprises me that I wanted to do that because I was pretty darn shy back in high school. Um but I had friends that went there, that commuted even from Carlyle to go up there. And a lot of Highland kids commuted over there, I was lucky back then money wasn’t an issue. My dad wanted us to go away, he wanted us to experience all that. He never got to, he went to school here locally, which was the thing to do. No... yeah I guess you went away to college back in the 50s and 60s um but he encouraged us to go. Go away to co... school. I don’t know I did campus visits, I really liked it and SIU for some reason was never an option because it was so close. It was still a very respectable school back then, but I couldn’t do the whole stay on campus life. I’m trying to think if they had, they had to have some residence halls back then but not the amount they have now, it was for us locals it was known as a commuter school, you drove, in went to classes, and came home and that is just something that wasn’t on my radar back then. I wanted to go away. That was the more traditional approach to college, there is no traditional approach anymore, but back then it was.

**LT:** So you said Eastern had a good program for what you wanted to do...

**BW:** Mm-hmm

**LT:** ...what did you want to do?

**BW:** Well it took me a while to figure that out, I remember in high school, junior and senior year, wrestling back and forth between accounting, I... I loved accounting I don't know why. I love the organizational aspect to it, the numbers are black and white, I love my little brain computing and doing all that and being in an organized setting and keeping everything neat and tidy and straight and narrow, to this day I think I still would love to get into a public accounting and do all of that and crunch numbers but I was also torn with the idea of, completely opposite, of going into special education. I actually remember taking a test trying to determine my weakness, my strengths, and having this test determine my interests. And I was split 50/50 between whether or not special education would be good for me or something in the business realm. I don't know what prompted me to go to the business world but that is the route I took, for some reason and I mean you can't find a bad business school around here. Eastern had a good program for what I wanted to do and loved it, that's what I chose. Had a great college experience.

**LT:** So the organizational aspect is what interested in accounting?

**BW:** Yeah business in general um I took marketing classes, I took the management classes, I would enjoy the management aspect now, but accounting I don't know I just really enjoyed working with the numbers. Making everything even out, just being very general about it. I loved working with numbers, I loved those classes it was interesting to me. Business law was interesting to me as far as that goes, um finance a little scary. That got a little confusing for me but I loved making one side of your ledger match the other side of your ledger, to put it very general. I enjoyed it.

**LT:** So wh... so... I'm assuming... How am I going to say this? Anyway, when... moving away from schooling a little bit, or maybe not, where did you first meet your husband?

**BW:** Actually in high school, so we both went to St. Paul's high school. He lived in Highland all his life, his whole family still lives in Highland, I don't think they ever left Highland. In high school, so freshman year I dated a little boy named Paul Rake Pail, and it was such a small high school class that even when you were done dating you were still buddies, we all hung together and my husband was very quiet and very shy. Never really noticed him all of high school year and someone, we were at some guy's house, it was the beginning of the year party like to kick off senior year and um I noticed he was cute but never even thought about anything about it. Then one of our friends said, "Hey you should date him this year." And she probably said something to him, "You should date her this year." And that is kinda how that happened. So we dated all through senior year, I guess, and then off and on during college. The first two years he went to Eastern too, he set his sights on doing engineering and he wanted his degree from U of I, but Eastern Illinois University had a wonderful pre-engineering program and then transferred to U of I [cough] so we dated off and on through college too.

**LT:** Ok so during the senior, or even the off and on through college, uh what was your best memory of that time with him? Like what was a good... what was the most memorable date you went on or just a good memory [laugh] good memory you had of you two together before you were married?

**BW:** I don't know, we would sit up and talk a lot. It was convenient when we were at Eastern. Actually I will tell you a funny time that I remember. So freshman year we both stayed at the same housing complex, there were three small dorms, they don't like being called dorms but were going to for simplicity we'll call them that, there were three small dorms that shared the same food service. We stayed together in those dorms, he was in a different one than I was, and then I went into the residence assistant program aid to help, it paid for all my housing while I was there, that's kinda my work study program that I put on myself, um also because I love the organizational and leadership activities of it um... so starting sophomore year I was an RA and I moved up to another housing, we will just call it dorm, moved to another dorm and he moved to another dorm, And the funniest thing I remember is him, back then still landlines, but you still had phones in your dorm rooms, I don't even remember how that would work, extension numbers or something, calling me in the middle of the night just scared witless because, we were still underage until partway through your sophomore year, well the RAs are responsible for busting underage drinking or overage drinking if your too loud. But him and his roommate, and probably a couple of other guys in his dorm, got caught underage drinking. It was hilarious he was scared to death. So he called me up "Our RA just came in and how much trouble are we going to get in?" and I'm laughing at him and going "You're not gonna get in trouble, they confiscated all your stuff because they're gonna have a party with your stuff probably." That is the funniest that I remember, dating, back then.

**LT:** Ok so when did you, end up marrying him?

**BW:** Um... we got engaged senior year and then so we all graduated what May of '86, he got a job right away with Wisconsin Power and Light, he graduated from U of I by the way, he moved up to Wisconsin and um we got married that October. I remember going up to see him in Wisconsin once took him mom and dad up, like I said his family doesn't leave Highland [laugh] they don't. I had to drive his mom and dad up to Wisconsin to see him, to see the new town he was living in um I guess I made two trip, took his mom and dad once, and I went up once. So we... we... we dated solidly junior/ senior year of college, and graduated in May of '86 and got married in October of '86.

**LT:** Ok so you're married uh and next step is children...

**BW:** Uh huh

**LT:** ...how many kids did you have? [laugh]

**BW:** We have five children.

**LT:** Uh... when were they born?

**BW:** Um... Aaron's birthday is June of '89, so we were married about three years before our first one. So I worked in the accounting field up there and he, we worked we lived in an apartment for a while, saved up for a house and then started having kids. We had two babies in Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin Aaron and Katie they were born in '89 and '90. We wanted to get closer to home, 'cause it was a long drive, once you have kids you want them to be around your family more so we would come home for as much as we could come home for. You know the regular holidays; Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter. We would always come home once in the summer, you know how we always get together for pool parties. And we started coming home more and more just because we wanted our kids to be around the whole family,

because that is how we grew up, that is how I grew up I should say and his family too. So he took a job with a Illinois power company and moved down to Springfield Illinois so we were closer. So we stayed up in Wisconsin for three years. '86 no '89, '90... we moved down to Springfield in '91 so we were closer, right, so we're an hour and half away now then we had two more kids in Springfield; Kyle and Ben. Then his dad became ill with cancer and his company was going through a troubling time and they were bought out by another power company and they were sending their field engineers, or their downtown engineers out in the field. And we were probably gonna be sent to this rural area and we decided, and his dad being sick with cancer at the time, so it's like, if we were gonna be sent out to this little rural area where we don't know anyone, we loved Springfield, but he couldn't stay there because of the company buyout. That's when we moved back here to Glen Carbon in, and what year was that, '93 or '94... '95, I take that back '95. Did I answer your question? I am rambling at this point.

**LT:** [laughs] Um... yeah you've answered my question.

**BW:** Okay

**LT:** Um... so putting your kids through, if you even remember from your childhood, putting your kids through the '90s to today, how has the educational process of putting kids through school changed? Uh... if you at all remember it from your childhood.

**BW:** Well it's changed now um, you have more choices, and you may have had choices back then but you just did the perfunctionary thing. You know you lived in a town you either went to that public grade school or you chose the Catholic or say Methodist grade school but there many more choices now, there is many more types of schools you can send your kids to, you can do public, you can do private. But in the private sector there are more schools out there. Um... we chose to keep our kids in the catholic grade school because that is how we both grew up, it's a good education, when we moved, so say when we moved to Springfield and, how old were Aaron and Katie, they were maybe three and four when we moved from Wisconsin to Springfield. When we were choosing the neighborhood to, Springfield is a pretty large town with five or six parishes at the time, we always wanted to do the catholic grade school route because that is what we were comfortable with and it's a family within a family. Um we chose our home based on what parish it was in, so we lived in an apartment for I'd say, we were in this apartment for eight or nine months we rented a home actually, and we would on a weekly basis go to different churches around Springfield and we picked a parish that we were comfortable in, we looked at the schools and that is how we based to buy our homes in and people still do that today, they still do that over in St Louis. They do that here because we have several private schools here and the same thing when we moved back to Glen Carbon, we had our choice and it was a little bit different from when I was growing up. You either went to St. Boniface in Edwardsville or you went to St. Mary's in Edwardsville, but now this new choice cropped up since I was young and it's a school called St. John Newman, our catholic schools were getting too big but were landlocked, they couldn't add on necessarily to make the schools bigger, so what they did, they took a parish from Maryville Illinois, Troy Illinois, and Glen Carbon Illinois and did a... a school based on those three parishes, so you had three parishes feeding into one school. And we went and visited that school that had been brand new since I had been growing up and fell in love with it. It was just dynamic and fun and young and that's how we chose where we were going to live here, so we... we moved back to Glen Carbon and our kids at the time, Aaron was in first grade and Katie was going into kindergarten, that's where they started school there. So it's changed a little bit, it's

just that you have more choices, it seems people shop around for their schools now if... if you're lucky enough to do that. Even if you're going to a public school you... you buy into the neighborhood of what public school you wanted to go to, back then it just didn't matter you... you went where you were supposed to go. And now it seems like people are moving based on what school they want their kids to go to, if you're in that season of your life. If that makes sense. Did that answer your question? How... how it's changed.

**LT:** Yeah that's uh...that answers it pretty well.

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** Uh... moving back from family you mentioned in high school you had a job

**BW:** Uh-hu

**LT:** or had to get a job.

**BW:** Several

**LT:** [laugh] Can you tell me about those jobs?

**BW:** [laugh] Well my first one was the good old work at McDonalds job, and and I went there because they hire everyone, it's super easy. You want a job they're gonna find room for you. It was interesting it was my first introduction, I mean I used to babysit before then and dog walk I would get paid for doing stuff like that. But to get your first like big person job, your first teenager job, where you actually drive to and clock in and clock out it was good old McDonalds for me. Um... I don't know, I... I didn't, like I said I was pretty shy back then and I didn't know anybody, none of my friends worked there so that didn't last too long, I mean I worked at it for a while but I happen to be lucky enough that my cousin was opening up, was he opening up was it, brand new, pizza restaurant here. It was a pizza chain that was becoming popular back in the 80s, so he opened up Pantera's Pizza here in Edwardsville. And I do remember... I... I... I went through the motions and the steps on how you normally get a job, you have to apply, you have to be interviewed, but I also knew in the back of my head that he is my cousin, he is gonna hire me. [laugh] So I do remember filling out the job application, and my dad was helping me, everything was all paper, you know you drove up there and you got the paper application and you filled it out and you had to take it back. And I was putting down references and one of them could be family, I used one my teachers as a reference, and the other one since we kinda knew the job was in the bag, I was gonna get hired, this was awful but back in, it was right about when , you don't remember this, Natalie Wood had um drowned she was a big actress back then, and her death was all, it was very mysterious it looked like she was pushed off the boat I don't know what it was, but my reference she was one of my references. And she was one of my references and they wanted to know how I was related to her and I put swimming buddy and that is horrible, but I still remember to this day. I will always remember it, that was on a job application that's... you couldn't do that now a days, absolutely could not do that now a days. So I worked at McDonalds, then Pantera's for years it was fun I loved it, not necessarily because I saw my cousin but I loved working with, it was all high school and college kids that ran the place, it was just a fun place to work, excellent food by the way, so I probably gained a few pounds working there. And then when I went into college and started getting, well I worked on campus too, but when I started getting

more in depth into my accounting degree then I came back in the summers [cough] I co-opted the Madison County Auditor's Office, which was a very cool experience. So I went to the courthouse every day, I saw the inner workings again of government. Seeing how the Auditor, the Clerk, and the Assessor and how everybody worked together but I... it was also a courthouse so I got to see my dad every once and awhile. He would take me to lunch because he, being a lawyer, he would be in the courthouse working, so that was a fun experience.

**LT:** So what did you do at Pantera's? Like what was your job title?

**BW:** Ok so it was very um, I noticed it even back then, all of the boys got to be in the back making the pizza. And if you were a girl you were on the front, you were the, you took peoples orders, you bust the restaurant, you made sure the salad bar was full, you deliver the pizzas. Very... you know, I forgot one job, actually in high school I also worked with my dad in his law firm, that was a big job too, and I loved that.

**LT:** So moving to more modern times, you work at Busch and the Enterprise center.

**BW:** Uh huh.

**LT:** How did that even come about?

**BW:** [laugh] So after I got married I did accounting work up in Wisconsin. I worked for a small newspaper up there um... doing their billing um and then I did temp work, I couldn't really find an accounting job with my degree, so they have these, I don't know, temp agencies where depending on your skills, your skill sets, your degree, you go in and do temporary work. I happen to get placed in this cheese factory, of all places, up in Wisconsin full of cows, right. Hello. But we we uh actually farmed our milk in from New York too but I worked in the accounting department there. And then when I had Aaron I worked for about six months still um at the cheese factor in the accounting department and decided I wanted to stay home and be a full time mom. So I was a full time mom for years and years until we got to the point where Aaron was getting close to go to college, back in the day when your mom or dad and myself and Eugene when we went to college we either paid for it, we took out loans, or if you were lucky enough your parents paid for it. Now a days the government tells you how much the student's gonna pay and how much you're responsible, as parent, to pay. And we were clueless to that and once Aaron was getting closer to college we realized that we couldn't just say "Hey you, go take out loans and put yourself through school." The government was saying "Hey you, as parents, you have to pay so much." We went "Oh shoot." So I decided I need to go make some more money just to send these kids to college um... I still wanted to stay home during the day, I still had a three-year-old. I thought well I look for some part time work. I didn't want to go back to work full time and in the accounting you kinda have to keep updated with schooling, I hadn't done that in seventeen years or so. So I got on, unbelievably, Craigslist looking for a part time job and I'm reading through it and I know the baseball stadium, right, because my dad had season tickets, I know what sections are what, I was like "I'm not going to do concessions." Um I needed something that gonna, I don't, little more glamorous of a job making little bit more money and um something I could do part time so I could be home a lot with the younger kids, I think was, how old was Ben, he was early grade school, well mid-grade school, but Luke was pre-school. I still wanted to be home with him and I saw this job advertised for a section called the uh diamond, the diamond box, and I

know where the diamond box is and I'm going "This, this can't be right, that right behind both uh both dugouts." It was like "Would that not be fantastic, to be a couple rows from the playing field and...and working just nights at baseball games, and at nights Eugene would be at home with the kids." So I went and applied for it, and sure enough that what it was and it was fun money, so that started that job so I could save up money here and there and then job lead to working over, it was called Scottrade Center then it just turned Enterprise center this year, but working with the St. Louis Blues. I knew nothing about hockey but several of the people that I work with at the stadium also work part time over there at the hockey rink and I started working there, and just extra money here and there but I could still be home during the day with the kids when they were younger. So it was kind of a win-win, it was extra money coming in but I'm still home during the day. And then it kinda went on from there. So then... you want me to keep going? Or do you have another question leading into that?

**LT:** I mean uh its whatever you want to do, if you want to keep talking about working at both these places, 'cause I'm curious as to what exactly you do at the diamond section

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** At Busch?

**BW:** Ok so what I did there was um you got little menus in your cup holders, you're kind of in a somewhat premium section. You didn't have to get up to get your snacks and concessions to watch the game, they kinda, pampered these guests a little bit. You could sit there in your seats, it's about the first um eight to ten rows around each dugout area. You could sit there, I would come down and you could wave me down and say "I want a nachos, or I want this..." it was a kinda limited menu and some beers or sodas or waters and you could just pay me and I would run up to a special little area and get it. So that's how that worked, we had the little, we had little hand... we had menus, little handheld machines that we just swipe your credit card or do cash and it was fun and we had to watch for foul balls while you were working, you got to hear the crack of the bat while working, and you're making extra money and it was good hourly pay but you work for tips, so it's a glorified waitress job is what it was. Uh... we also had a little section where everything was all inclusive with our ticket, there was... there were thirty-two green seats right next to the dugout. So you could... you could look in and there's Tony La Russa and watch him making his play by plays for, for the team, you could see all the players hanging out there um that section was pretty cool because there was no money exchanged they bought a super expensive ticket and same thing, they had the same menu, you just went and got it for them and brought it down, it was all cash tips and that was nice, you gotta work that section once in a while, they rotated us um and then I noticed, that was very nice because the tips were better we didn't have to charge them for any of their food, then they, this entire section behind home plate, if you look at the game it's all green padded seats, they call it the green seats, it's actually called the Cardinal Club, and I just started inquiring about over there and was like "Well what do they do over there." Because it was my first year at the stadium were talking, this was probably twelve years ago... it was twelve years ago. And then they said, "Oh that's like um the comm... the green seats that I would work down once and awhile." They go in and you have this, I call this, I call it the prime rib buffet, you go in before the game, we open up two hours before the game, you go in you eat this beautiful buffet of salads and appetizers and chicken and pasta and home-made soup and then you go to the carvery and get your carved prime rib or pork rib or turkey or whatever and that dessert table and the bar so you take care of the guests inside, it's like a restaurant setting and then

when they go out to watch the game then they get, again, a menu full of food and you just keep running 'em for seven innings, you run em whatever they want and it's all cash tips, and it's fun so it's good money and you get to go to eighty games a year for free and be out in that atmosphere. And I grew up going to baseball games, dad had season tickets to the game with his law firm, and um... I still work there today. Love it, love it, love it.

**LT:** So then in the... in the diamond or even in the Cardinals Club, were you working there the night of Game six in 2011?

**BW:** Oh absolutely, yeah.

**LT:** Can you explain the atmosphere of that night?

**BW:** Uh... scary and sad because that was the do or die game for us and I remember we were down, we were down, so we service until the end of the seventh inning and then we're done, the guests are done with their food and their drink. We come in, we clean up the area, we clean up whatever were working on and we go home. Were usually walking out of the stadium about bottom of the eighth inning or so trying to beat traffic, top of the ninth if we if uh... it's taking us a while to get out of there, and I remember coming in we were down, its look like were gonna lose the game and also the Cardinal Club is the premiere club for anything happening and we were told we had to set up a celebration party for the Rangers and they had prime rib, um... the owner of the Rangers ordered prime rib and all the fixings, and they had all this champagne on ice and we had one area of the restaurant where we had to set it up for them and then we were given the option based on seniority. Do you want to stay and work this dinner for the Rangers and all their families, so it's ownership, it's the players, it's all the families of the players, and do you want to stay and work and serve you know like restaurant style setting and take care of them for celebration dinner. And at the time I had, I carpooled with a friend of ours, a friend of mine, we would meet in Collinsville and drive over to the game, and were watching the game and were watching the game, I remember coming in and my manager standing there watching the game and the Rangers are up and she is just crying and was like "Oh god I just hate this, I hate this, why can we not do this." and I said "Do you want to stay and work this game?" Some of the people were already setting up, the chef, and that were already setting up. And I went "Oh hell no, I'm not staying." So we leave, cause we had... it was based on seniority, so if you didn't want to stay you didn't have to, but there were people then that had to stay and it was like "No, nope... not working it, not doing it, I don't care to be a part of history, I'm out of here. This is just too depressing." So my friend and I leave and to get from our department to get, you know out of the stadium and go, were walking the tunnels and you walk past the Cardinals organizational office, you walk past the locker room. That's really cool 'cause you run into players all the time coming and going, but all of the Ranger families, they were all lining up and that's where all the um... what do you call it, the press, we worked right next to the press area too, and all the press was there. They were all excited and giddy like "Yeah we won, were gonna win, we're gonna win the World Series." And I was just, remember being so ticked off and having to push my way through throngs of people because they were kinda cornered off because they were not allowed into our area yet, but they were lining up to get ready because it was probably the bottom of the eighth inning as we were leaving. And I... I just remember muttering under my breath it's like oh you know "Get out of my way, I'm going home." I was just mad at that point. And I remember getting in the car, so I wasn't there for all the excitement, but I remember getting my car and that is when we tied it up, did we tie up bottom the ninth? I believe. You see



the details are fuzzy, I have the memory of... of a goldfish sometimes, I remember driving home tying it up and being ecstatic like "Oh my gosh, do we have a chance?" And then were driving along, I remember the Rangers going ahead and it was like "Oh you're kidding me." It's so hard tie up a game then when... when you're down, top of the inning, and then I remember tying it up again. And we sat in Culvers parking lot in Collinsville and listened to the game and that's when we tied it up again, we were giggled ecstatic like "Yeah we're gonna do it." So she gets out of her car and I start driving home and um... I think the Rangers went ahead again. And so When I came in and I kinda, I am very superstitious and was like "Well both times we got in the car, like we got into the car first go home we tied it up and were driving and then we were down and then Bridgette go into her car, when she got into her car we tied it up again." So I'm super, super, superstitious so I sat out in my driveway to keep listing to the game it's like "I'm not getting out of this car, as long as I'm in the car, we're doing something." So I didn't actually watch us win, I listened to on KMOX in my driveway because that is how superstitious I was, I just sat out there. And when we finally did the walk off, when Freese did the walk off, it was amazing. So then I quickly ran in, 'cause I knew they be doing replays. So yeah, I wasn't at the stadium, and then Game seven was incredibly boring because we were winning the whole time, it was so exciting and ex... and I stayed at the stadium till four o'clock in the morning cause then we serviced La Russa and all the owners of the Cardinals. It was like "Do you want to work that party?" like "Oh yeah I want to work that party." But our meal, we get an employee meal before each game when we get there, our employee meal on Game seven was all of the prime rib had ordered for themselves on Game six, that was pretty cool. So...

**LT:** So then is the.... What you do at the Enterprise Center for the Blues that uh...

**BW:** Uh huh.

**LT:** ...similar to the...

**BW:** Similar

**LT:** Cardinals?

**BW:** Yeah similar, I service the suits up there, so it's similar. We don't get to actually see, were not out in the bowl, the seated game, but were up in the seats. Same things were setting up food for them, delivering their food when they order it, making sure their bars stock. So yeah it's a glorified service like... we call... uh what are we, server position, it's not waitress or waiter anymore it's a server, it's [cough] Uh huh so same thing.

**LT:** So what... has.... aside from maybe Game six and seven of the World Series in 2011, uh what are some of your best experience downtown St. Louis at Buch and at the Enterprise Center?

**BW:** What do you mean? Working downtown...

**LT:** Because Busch and the Enterprise center is downtown St. Louis, has there ever been some... good experiences or some experiences that stuck out into your memory.... Stuck into your memory that is particularly good?

**BW:** Good, well... it... it's um... you get to know your way around town a lot, and that's fun. I mean once in a while after a baseball game we'll go out and I've... we'll have a nice time. It... it's made me appreciate downtown St. Louis because some people who don't go downtown are afraid of it but I can walk around downtown now and appreciate all of these little bitty, especially blues bars, we have these little bitty blues bars that play really good music, I appreciate live music a lot because there is a lot of it going on downtown. Um... I have a couple of my favorite places that we go to, the food is amazing, so when people come in town, now, I can recommend places to them, like um... you have people come for, um... the Enterprise Center, it's not just for hockey but you have people come in for wrestling matches, and basketball from all over, and you can recommend places to go to eat, to try, those are those are fun experiences being downtown and I can definitely get my way, like if I go down to a concert and I want some good parking, I definitely know my way around to where... where to go park and where to sneak in and what time I need to be here and that. So I... I can maneuver myself downtown very easily, where a lot of people are probably are afraid to go down there, I'm not, I don't know.

**LT:** So then on the flip side of that, has there been any uh... bad experiences working downtown St. Louis?

**BW:** You have to watch yourself, just like um... any big city, you gotta be cognizant to what is going on around you, um... again as you're parking you have to be smart and safe about it. Um... the biggest thing I remember is when the entire incident in Ferguson went down and all the um... marches were going on, there were some safety issues at that point because you just didn't know what was going to happen, so um... we had to be very careful going into work, it was during hockey season, we had to be very careful going into work. Our manager did some special parking arrangements for us at one point 'cause they were concerned for our safety, but most of the time um... there is not a whole lot of bad experiences, it's just city life and you have to be aware of your surroundings and just make sure that you don't walk to your car alone at night and if you take the proper steps it's just... it's as safe as you make it, if that makes sense.

**LT:** So moving from downtown St. Louis, you have created your own business how did you get interested in doing that?

**BW:** [Laugh] Um...

**LT:** Like where did the idea of creating your own business come from?

**BW:** Well... when I first got married and I was the stay at home mom, not only my focus on raising the kids my focus, my... I always had an interest in design. I remember being little and taking my brother's Legos and making homes and taking my doll furniture and always designing these rooms and making, I don't know, it's a girl thing, not always a girls thing, but for me back then it was just making pretty... I remember rearranging my room a gazillion times in grade school, probably my poor uh... mom and dad had to help me move furniture because I was too little. But in high school I remember constantly rearranging my room and watching my wall, wallpaper, so when I was married and setting up house, I had this desire to make our home beautiful with whatever budget we had. Back in the day it was wallpaper, I learned how to start sewing my own window treatments and when I would get away from the kids my treat to myself would go to the book store and just drink a coffee and read books galore and I always gravitated toward decorating and design and um... back when I told you we needed to make more

money for our kids to go to college I realized I did... I wanted to get back into some sort of industry to make money, and I didn't want to go back to the accounting world cause you're working from Monday to Friday during the day, I still wanted to be home with my kids, but I always had this interest in making things beautiful and I happen to read an article one time about, a lady who did the same thing. She went from being a stay at home mom, I was reading the Sunday morning paper, and she got herself highlighted in the paper and she took some painting classes and she paints furniture and walls for people. And I went "Oh holy crud you can make a living doing something that I absolutely love, it was like a passion hobby of mine." And so I took a painting class by someone that was here local. I was fortunate enough to be introduced a painting organization, there is actually a group, so I'm a decorative painter. I don't do murals, I'm not a fine artist, I don't have a degree in it um... but I'm also not self-taught, there is actually a world for decorative artists. So all the plaster you see here, the ceiling treatment you see there, my kitchen cabinets, go into the bathroom here. There is an industry for that and there is training for it and we have, what we call, master artists that train you on how to work with plasters and metallic paints and mediums to refinish cabinetry. You're not just slapping paint on there, there is certain techniques that's uh... it's a skill set you have to learn and I was slowly introduced to that [dog whine] about twelve years ago. And um... realized there is a whole world out there so I started training, some of my baseball and hockey went for business start-up, I never had to take [dog cry] out a loan, I worked out of my home for many years and my business just kept exploding and getting bigger and bigger so now I rent a studio in Troy and um... I control my own hours because it is my own business. I could work full time if I wanted to or I can [dog cry] I can, I am sitting on the couch here with you today doing this interview, I can do that, I just came back from a week of training in Colorado. Um... it just all kind of happened on top of each other I... I knew I needed to make some more money, I couldn't be stay at home forever, and it's kinda lonely only being a stay at home person [dog whine] kinda want to get back out in the world and meet people and the only way to do that is volunteer or get a job, right um... and I just realized there a whole other world out there and fell in love with it. So... I am now a full time decorative artist with my own business, has nothing to do with the accounting degree, and I laugh about it all the time. And... and um... it even snowballed from there, so when I was telling you from my dad I've kinda got this leadership thing from him it's natural but it's something I thrive on and love to do [dog whine] our decorative artisans group, there is a group of us out there, it's a whole little world all to ourselves um... we've got people, there there's about eleven hundred of us in this group, we've got people from all over the United States, we've got people in it from Mexico, from Europe, from China, um somehow I've gotten on the board that runs this organization, there is nine of us that are in charge of... of this organization and now it's just become my life and I'm not an accountant anymore, it's very funny, but I do the accounting work on this board. So I kinda married the two together, I guess.

**LT:** So before we started recording, you told me a... about an inside joke, can you tell me that again?

**BW:** Inside joke about my degree?

**LT:** Yeah your degree and the fact that you're in this guild.

**BW:** Yeah, yeah so I'm... I'm in charge of all of these artists and I'm self-taught a lot, a lot of the artists that I work with side by side they all have art degrees. You go to college for a fine art degree and I'm very respectful and intimidated for what their background is and [dog whine] we will be doing things and there, we all recognize each other in our skills and our talents and we all um... encourage each other but

I'll take some, this past week in Colorado, I was taking some classes outside my comfort zone. So you have to know a little bit different... about the different things we do but all of the plasterwork you see in here and the paint work, see you put a trowel in my hand and I'm just fine but I was taking some fine art classes, and to me they are very intimidating and people were loving my work and they say "you know, How are you doing that? That's great. Where did you learn that?" And I said "I don't know... I'm an accountant, I have no idea no idea why I'm, in the room with all you people." And it's just funny, they all look at me and say "You're an accountant?" I say "Yeah my degree is in accounting, my degree is not in art. You all went to your art schools, I'm an accountant." And is... it's just the standing joke. But then another standing joke is that you have two types of artists, so if you think of an artist just off the top of your head do you think kinda flighty and out there and um... probably can't hold a thought and can't be organized cause that is what your typical artist is, dreamy and flighty. But then we have what we call our analytical artists and those are the ones that can be organized and you can create art but you can still kinda keep your life in order. Um... the accounting background does help, so I'm known as an analytical artist to all of my colleagues and friends, and that's who... that's who we get on the board, we can actually organize these thousand people, these thousand artists, so it does go... it helps. But my degree has nothing to do with what I'm doing now.

**LT:** So just to have a few more questions before we wrap up. Um... how is working at a big industry business like the Busch Stadium or with the Blues, similar to your own business?

**BW:** Um...

**LT:** Or is there is any similarities at all?

**BW:** There are, there are, [thinking noises] I... I guess I have the utmost respect for the management that I work with um... there are rules set in place um... the managers have to be in charge of [water running] all of us that are there say on any given baseball or hockey game um... I understand the hours they put in, I guess, we show up, we do our job, we take care of our people, we do our job, and we go home. The managers are there early doing paperwork and organizing everything for the event, we clock out and go home say like after the hockey game last night, I clocked out at 10:30 and I left. All of my managers and supervisors are still there couple hours after we leave because then there doing all the reporting and um... number crunching and filing all of the reports they have to for each game um... I... I have a respect for that and understand what they're going through, especially they.... They tell us a rule... that makes no sense to anyone else. But when I am done paining for the day, when I own my own business, then I have to come home, and I have to do all the paperwork and the accounting and I have be accountable to myself um... I... I guess that's how those two would gel, I understand all the after-hours work that goes into something. Like my clients, they see me show up at eight o'clock and they see me leave at three or four o'clock and they think I'm done for the day, I'm not done for the day. Then I have to come home and do all the behind the scenes work of cleaning my tools and then sitting down and doing paperwork and still marketing and and talking to other clients when I'm not there, at their house, so I guess I have... I do have a respect for management because there not only there during the event, there doing all the behind the scenes stuff that... that the rest of our department doesn't know about before the event, after the event, when there is no baseball there still there doing all the paperwork that has... that comes with everything in their job.

**LT:** So then on... again on the other hand... on the other hand how are they different? How is the two business that you're at different... how's Busch different from your uh... your own business?

**BW:** Um... I don't know that there different... I mean obviously, the only thing, different I have to do, it's a little more stressful, I have to market and go find jobs and find my clients. Um... obviously you got baseball, you got a captive audience, you're always gonna have people there, you've got a company that owns our contracting company so you're gonna get paid regardless, so if I'm not painting I'm not getting paid, right, so I'm always having to look for new clients, new designers, new work, and the all the marketing that goes with that. Um... you're always guaranteed an overhead company, so the Enterprise Center, when I go there to work hockey I work for a company called Levee Restaurants, there based out of Chicago. Levee Restaurant is always going to get money 'cause you're always going to have people there. There is... there are budgeting issues and you gotta... you gotta make sure we don't go over budget, we have enough orders coming in to... to justify the hourly there paying us, different things like that, so it's pretty... it's still a business though and you still have to watch the numbers and work within your budget to make sure there's a budget. With me it's just not guaranteed work, I'm not guaranteed a baseball or hockey game where tons of people are gonna come in and buy food, I have to go out and find my work. I guess that be the biggest difference.

**LT:** Well um... I... that... I... that about wraps it up. Thank you for taking time out of your day to allow me to interview yourself.

**BW:** Ok. Did we get all the historical questions you think? Did we touch upon everything?

**LT:** Historical in this case uh... yes and... yes we did cover what I did have historical wise, for the most part the interview was about you and your life and your perspective on Glen Carbon in general.

**BW:** Oh, okay okay.

**LT:** [laugh]

**BW:** Well we didn't... we didn't touch upon how Glen Carbon has changed.

**LT:** I th... ok I figured we did touch upon that when... earlier but...

**BW:** Yeah... well there... just... it's exploded with all the businesses around here um... it's not the same town that I grew up in. Good and bad. I mean great that um... takes me five minutes and I can go to four different grocery stores, which is crazy because back in the day we had one. Um... we have the theater, that's... that's wonderful. There just seems so much more activity here, there's a ton for kids to do um... and it's also a bad thing, you can't just get on your bike and go somewhere, because the traffic as increased tenfold. So you can't just let your kid get on the bike and go anywhere, although, again, to loop around its changed because now the whole area is full of biking trails. We have one of the best biking trail areas here in Madison County, in the whole St. Louis area, it's wonderful. But the area has grown by leaps and bounds, mainly for the good but it's a little irritating having to drive down 159 and four o'clock in the afternoon, and we joke, we call it rush hour in the 'ville, for Edwardsville, but it's a big thing. We never had that before, ever, so...

**LT:** That... Ok that is more than I... that is more than what you originally gave me uh... so thank you for that ... uh... thank you for giving me more information on how things have changed around since you grew up.

**BW:** Mm-hmm

**LT:** Um... unless there is anything else you really want to talk about I think that no would be a good time to wrap up since.

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** I did take up at... close to an hour and hour and half? Maybe... of your...

**BW:** Oh

**LT:** Close to two hours.

**BW:** I'm open to talk all the time.

**LT:** [laugh] Well the... the thing this is, is this is only supposed to be an hour to two-hour thing.

**BW:** [laugh]

**LT:** And uh...

**BW:** We're right in the middle, were an hour and a half. We're good

**LT:** Yeah, yeah were at hour and half. But I... unless you... I have no other questions present, that you haven't, either already covered or we haven't already talked about so I...

**BW:** Ok

**LT:** For... so again thank you for letting me interview you and taking time out of your day... um... And like I said we will be uh... once this is all transcribed and everything's making sure that I... we typed everything correctly,

**BW:** Ok you will get a copy of this. So uh... than... once again thank you for the interview and thank you for um... the information because I didn't know a lot about it.

**BW:** [laugh]