

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

## **Bob Daiber Oral History Interview**

Kelli Barbour, Interviewer

Madison County Regional Office of Education

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**Kelli Barbour (KB):** Ok, the following interview was conducted with Bob Daiber on behalf of the SIU oral history project. It took place Tuesday, June 11 at the regional education in Edwardsville, Illinois and the interviewer is Kelli Barbour. So, welcome Bob Daiber.

**Bob Daiber (BD):** Thank you

**KB:** So Bob, if we could start off if you could describe how growing up in Marine, Illinois influenced your life?

**BD:** Ok, uh, I guess, the way that it probably most of my life is that it was so local. Ok, and you, you grew up really, really in a time that is different than today in that, um, ah, I always, when people talk to me about growing up in Marine, uh, it was, it's, it could almost be like a story because you grew up walking around places. You grew up on the street really was how you grew up and in neighborhoods with a lot of different kids that you played with every day. You know, I grew up in the 1960s and that was before, um, people even watched T.V. all day long, you only watched T.V. [laughter], when you watched a particular program that were on, it wasn't like you had, you know, T.V. during the day was, um, I think soap operas and, you know, it wasn't like kids shows, I mean, cartoons were only on, on Saturdays morning and it was after school programs and things like that so. During the, during the day, you know, most of us played outside, um, um ball games were like all day long, like from 11 o'clock until probably dark and bicycles were the main thing because everyone rode their bike everywhere. And, as you got older, you know, you were more responsible so your distance that you could ride bike was further around town and, and so, that was what life was like growing up and, you know, you were, I think the thing is that growing up in Marine, it was, it was a safe community. But, um, you were asked as a young person, you know, the responsibility, like, I, I always walked to school from the time I was four years old until, um, you know until I graduated from high school when I would come home on activity buses late at night. I mean, um, parents were, it was just different then, parents didn't take you to school. I mean, I walked to school every day with my, um, boyhood friends and, and walk home from school and, um, I did the same thing, uh, through high school, we, activity bus would drop you off, no one picked you up, you just. So, in saying that, what I really mean is, is that you, you part of the community. People saw you around, everybody knew whose kids everyone was, um, I, I, think one of the bigs things going to Marine grade school was very wholesome, um, because there was a lot of pride in the community, um, I played sports and, um, was, was knowing part of that, in the community and it helped shape personality with people and how younger kids looked at me and how I was inspired by, by older kids and, also, when I was growing up in Marine, there was an army base there and lot of people don't know that today but right on the northwest part of Marine, it was a military, a missile base in fact there. So, in the community, the other thing is, you know, I use to see these, uh, these young soldiers that were, that would come into

town. They walk around town, I had an older sister so they naturally were there, they, they visited my sisters and, and so my mom and dad would have them there a lot of times for dinner cause they felt sorry for these guys. So, there was another dimension<sup>03:35</sup> that, you know, I learned about the military very young, growing up and, and um, it was at a time when we had the military draft in fact. So, um, but Marine taught me a lot because it was a working class community, as I look back on it. And I guess, the one thing that was most inspirational about it was, was that most people that lived in Marine were not college educated, ok. Um, and, other than, unless you were like a teacher, um, my mom and dad, um, my dad especially, um, was, um, a very, um, pro going to college. I mean, he didn't, he didn't get to go because of the depression and he, his goal was that all his kids would graduate from college, which they did. And, um, so, uh, and, you know, it was like living the American dream and everybody wanted better for, you know, this generation that I was growing up in. Um, so, but, there was also, you know, like real fundamental values, I think that, that shaped my life there and, uh, part of them was, was, was, you know, we had a church community we were a part of and, and you know, participated in and you knew people from there and, and the community as a whole was, was a big neighborhood, I want to say and everybody knew each other. You know, but, uh, you know, I had aspirations and a lot of it came from, you know, um, my education that I got when I was in grade school and went on to high school and, um, and how that began to shape what you were going to do and what your abilities were and, um, I never did really, um, plan to be teacher for example, it was just that, ah, you know, I was a good shop kid when I was in high school and I was inspired by Mr. Yakos, who was teacher, and that was kind of a roundabout way but I, in answering the question, I think, I think, just a lot of the values that were there in the community.

**KB:** Mm-hmm

**BD:** Um, made people who lived there what they are, about what they value, what they respected, what, you know, how they keep their property today. You know what mean? Because it was an expectation, you know what I mean? Of the type of person, you suppose to be, so

**KB:** mmhmm, ok...ok, so you did become an educator, a teacher in the classroom. So with all your years in public education, what were some of the greatest changes in education that you've experienced over the years?

**BD:** Well, this reveals my age a little bit but you have to realize there were no computers, ok?

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** Packets calculators were really just becoming the big challenge when I started teaching in 1980. In fact, I remember teachers who didn't know if it was a good idea for kids to do, use calculators, um, as to how well their math skills would be. Like, if they used a calculator, could they really do the times table? If they used the calculator do they really understand percentages and fractions? Um, and then, you know, so typewriters, and then self-correcting typewriters, I mean I could go down this whole technical lineage of things I remember. Um, but prior to the computer age, ok, and with the advent of, in 1983, uh, I was teaching, uh, it was my third year of teaching, it was this big thing that happened in the United States, it was called "The Nation at Risk" study and I remember it because, very well, I had went back and taken some graduate classes and, and, so we were learning about what was being said and, and the "Nation at Risk" study began to change things big time in education, along with the advent of the computer, ok?

And, and the reason I, I was the two is the "Nation at Risk" study said that we were falling behind other countries and that there was no data accountability in what was going on in the United States and learning, ok? So you had the data driven part of education coming from that and you, you also had this other technological revolution that is going to take place electronically in education. So, probably the greatest thing that I saw happen was when the first computers, the Apple Two Ees, came out. And, um, and, I, I bought the first one that was in the Tirade district and I remember having discussions, I bought through a grant, yeah, about whether or not this was good or bad for education as to what was going to happen with this, ok? So, little by little, the story be told, computers became, you know, we started having computer labs and the changes in which kids were going to learn and how we did tutorials. And then also the technical application for those computers as for the different things they could do in business applications, as well as word processing...so that was, that was a major change in education. And then in the 1990s, with the advent of the internet, come about, was this whole new dimension. I remember, I wrote and got one of the first online grants, uh, to help the Tri district go online. I remember what was said to me by the principal at the time there and that the principal said, "I am going to go along with this but I don't think you know what you know what you are doing, that you are going to expose these kids to this whole world" and, you know, today I couldn't imagine a school not having the internet. You know what I mean? No school could function without it...

**KB:** Right

**BD:** but these things were all questioned cause they were new and they were risky because of, you know, outside of the world of communication, it was opening our world to everybody. But, uh, um, and then, you know, this whole thing with mobile learning, tablets, I think has been the one for one initiative we have seen as to how kids learn. Those technological developments have had all been major that I have watched, uh, unravel but, you know, something that I think far beyond that I've seen is I've seen, I've seen a change in maybe the dynamics in teachers, ok? And that, um, subject matter wise, um, you know, I think the way teachers teach has changed because of the technology, ok? And, um, you know, that also had to do something with, what I call, the art of teaching, you know? Uh, teachers, before they had all the technology, to be really good, had to be somewhat of an actor. There had to be an art to it, to hold, I mean, to....

**KB:** Right, to hold attention

**BD:** you know, when people think about or they would say something about, "This guy was a really good teacher," they were really talking about, you know, cause, you know, "why did you like him?" "Well because he did this or this lady did this or what." And today, you know, teachers, in many cases, that are, that are in the classroom are more facilitators cause they are facilitators learning. So what, what I am describing is, is really a change in teaching dynamics that I have observed. And, um, I still believe every really good teacher has to have an act in the classroom. There have to be something that's the attention getter that gets kids attention, no matter how much technology we have. Um, the other thing is, is that, I think I have seen it in education happening is that there has been a request and I think schools have delivered it and it is a greater level of accountability, ok? When I started teaching there was no accountability, I mean, it was like freedom {laughter} and I laugh about it because today we have peer evaluations and you were evaluated but, um, it wasn't, it wasn't on benchmarks or by gaining scores and that is why I mention "The Nation at Risk" because it brought about looking at, you know, data ok? So,

uh, there was you know, how well someone did, so it was observation, ok? And today, I think we are more analytical, ok, as to how things happen. Uh, I might also just say something about just the nature of our schools, ok? And I don't know if it is all good, but I see our facilities resembling more as to what maybe higher education was today and not what high school was meant to be, ok? Uh, you know, like everybody tries to have the better facility, ok? And, and our goals, you know what I mean, like we have, very high-level sports complexes, I am going to use that as an example, and they attract residents because they are awed by them. Um, you know, they are not what they were in the 60s, 70s, or even 80s, or even the 90s, with what you see today. I mean, um, these are state of the art complexes, and, and, our schools, you know, I taught twenty years in a non-air conditioned environment with no phone, it was one phone line and, this will sound absolutely crazy, but it was one phone line and a pay phone, I even taught before there was a call cards, you know what I mean?

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** So, you know, today, you know like I am sitting here with two cell phones and a phone, a land line on my desk and, and I just think about that sometimes and I laugh, I actually laugh about the first time, when I was, um, I was working on a textbook series in the late 80s and I think about taking these calls at the secretaries desk on, because there was only one line. You know? It was just, it's just different, the expectation of what you need to have today, and the environment in which you work, in which, no one thinks about sending their kid to school in a non-air-conditioned environment. No one thinks about not being able to email a teacher if they have a question. Or being able to make a phone call, I mean, these are just facilities changes, you know? The other thing is, that I have seen, and being regional superintendant, I am the guy that has to sign the documentation on it, but um, school lunch is changed. Because, you know, um, up until, like 19, um, the mid 1990s, there was no breakfast programs. I mean, um, you either ate before you came to school for breakfast or you didn't have anything, you know what I mean? So, breakfast was...

**KB:** It was just lunch

**BD:** Yeah, lunch, lunch was served but there was no school breakfast and studies showed that kids that ate before they begin to learn, learned better cause they are not hungry and their attention span is better which I, I agree with, um, but that was a major, a major, change to see breakfast being served and lunch being served because, you know, I remember going to grade school and sack lunch days. I mean, we always had a hot lunch but, um, 50% of the kids probably brought their lunch.

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** You know what I mean, in a sack, it's just the way it was, you know? But, um, you know, for all in all if I had, is education much better, much richer today than when I started in 1980? Definitely. Would anybody go back? No. [Laughter] No one, no one, would want to go back to, you know, one thing that I miss was Xerox, talking about Xerox. Cause I started teaching with mimeographs machines and you had these blue duplicator masters in the sink and especially when started school in August, it was hot. [Laughter] You know, so you normally came home, and you were purple, you know? 'Cause you sweated....

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** and you would be making copies for the next day and you'd be assembling them, so you had this purple and the smell. You know, there was the old factory part of the job too. And I remember when we got the first Xerox machine about what you were allowed to use it for and what you were not because we were still on purple digital masters. And, you know, just how you saved information in file folders to make masters as opposed to today what you are saving in your folders on your computer. And you know, if, if I went back into the classroom today, so much of the way I would teach would be electronic, paperless.

**KB:** Right

**BD:** So, you know, uh, and like today, uh, I operate a computer based testing center for certifications and, you know, things like that were unheard of, I mean, I have seen GED go from paper to paperless in this job. So...

**KB:** Wow

**BD:** Those are the transformations that I have seen in education, um, over my career.

**KB:** That's a lot {laughter}

**BD:** Yeah....

**KB:** Lots of changes

**BD:** I look back on it, yeah, yeah, it's amazing. It's really amazing where we have come from.

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** But the one thing that is consistent, that hasn't changed, is that every kid that comes into school wants someone to like him and wants the teachers to like him.

**KB:** Yeah, that's true. Even though may they act like they don't

**BD:** Yeah

**KB:** They really do, right?

**BD:** Yeah, every, every kid wants, every kid wants, wants to feel included and every kid wants to be liked.

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** I mean, so....

**KB:** That's true, that's a good point

**BD:** Yeah, it is

**KB:** That's a great point

**BD:** Yep

**KB:** Um, so why did you decide to leave the classroom and enter the regional education office that you are in now?

**BD:** Well, it was difficult, um, I was torn. At the time when I became regional superintendent, um, I was also in the second term of being on the Madison County board, I was in government, ok, here. And I had an office on the second floor, here, in planning and development, I was, I chaired planning and development which oversees, like, all the development in the county, construction development, residential, commercial, business. And, um, it was a very busy time, it was there from 2002 to 2006 when the building boom was going on. And, um, there was a lot going on in Madison County, I will just be honest with you. We were looking at building roads and bridges and I was involved in all this, I was highly interested in it. It was luring my attention, I was also very involved in education at the time and tried because I was wearing many different hats. Um, I was, I think at the time, I was president of the IEA there, I was, um, I was department head, I was coordinating what was called teach prep. Um, I was teaching full time and, uh, so I was like really busy, ok? So, my life had gotten so busy and I was torn between two worlds that I really loved, ok? So, the regional superintendent, Harry Briggs, decides he is going to resign, he is going to go back and become a district superintendent and I was on the county executive committee at the time and the members of the county executive committee seriously talked to me, they told me, "Look, you should do this, you really should do this." And, and the discussion happened really, really the deal breaker happened one morning at about a quarter to eight, we use to have seven o'clock highway department meetings. And, um, it always tough for me cause I do those seven o'clock meetings and I never did want to stay because, for coffee and donuts, cause I had an eight o'clock class. So I would have someone covering for me until I got there at eight o'clock, you know? And they all knew I needed to get to school so...and on that particular morning, um, Frank Laub said to me "Hey, don't run off, I want to talk to you." So, Frank's like, "You know, I am going to be very honest with you" he goes "you're a fool if you don't take this because you are the right person, you do a great job, it would simplify your life, you know" and he went on with those [sic] and you are really needed in the county. And, and he said its, it would be a great professional move for you. So, but it was so hardly tried because I had been there for twenty-eight years...

**KB:** Yeah

**BD:** You know, plus I went to school there, ha, twelve years so, I like forty years of my life has been at this place that is on the wall that I look at every day here in a picture. And it was just like, I couldn't, I couldn't, I had a hard time imagining giving my keys up. Like I had the biggest ring of keys of anybody because of tech ed. I mean, because we all these locks and I had keys to bout everything there and, I was just like wow, you know? I just, you know, helped design that part of, it was a new school at the time.

**KB:** That right, yeah.

**BD:** And, um, and I was, it was so nice and I just always dreamed of working, like what we talked about, you know? In such an environment and I was going to leave there to come to uncertainty. You know what I mean? I mean, and leave a place where everyone likes you, to come to a place where maybe not everybody likes you. But I looked at it as professional growth, I looked at it has a new challenge in my career and I looked at it has a place where I could make a bigger difference. So, um, Oberner, talked about it with my family, also it is an elected position so, you know, it wasn't secure. I mean, I was going to have to run in two years to get reelected. Well, the story be told, you know, um, I served in this office for ten years and, and a lot of good things have happened and, um, it was the right decision because I have impacted a lot more kids, I think, then if I have stayed being a teacher. And, um, and have brought some very positive things to education in this region. So, uh, but you know probably ah reminiscing I'm most proud that I'm a teacher. That's why I still teach. I teach at the alternative school, still go there and have fun, and teach um, units every year. I've taught every year that I've been a regional superintendent there and ah, kids prolly the greatest reward that I get is kids say to me: "How come don't you just teach?" you know? And you know I drive back and I think about it so, I you know, I don't say that I won't ever be a teacher again, but that was how I made the decision and I think it was the right one.

**KB:** Huh. Wow. Okay.

**BD:** I didn't make it for money, in fact I'll tell you a secret in this interview. I actually made less when I became regional superintendent than when I was a teacher at Triad the first year.

**KB:** Really?

**BD:** Yeah. I made less. Cause I gave up my county board salary. [laughs]

**KB:** Ah okay.

**BD:** So that was how I made less, in fact, Ken Miller who is the business major

**KB:** So you had to give up the county board position because this was another county

**BD:** Because this was another county elected office yeah so.

**KB:** Interesting. Huh. Okay. So, what - tell me about your other political experience um prior to leading up to being the regional superintendent and now the next step that you're going into.

**BD:** Well, you know, I was in when I was teaching at Triad, I had run for the legislature unsuccessfully. I had a really an interest when I did those legislative runs that I wanted to reform the way schools were funded because property taxes was people just complained and they still complain about property taxes okay, so I was on this mission that I wanted to get elected to the legislature to introduce legislation to try to reform the way schools were funded that was my whole my mission. I also saw you know, things that I thought I could help bring about in state government that would be good. But I was unsuccessful. So, from that, um you know, um, I became a village trustee in Marine, ah I decided I'd serve on the village board I was encouraged to do so there was an open seat, so I did that, and it was good and today I look - I drive around Marine and local government is really doing service for people so when I look at the pavilion in Marine in the park that I engineered and sought built, I drive to Pocahontas Road and I look at

the how much better that entrance is there because it was falling apart and I took it on and redid it, and I looked at Lubeck Reach which is a drainage problem that was there I corrected it - I look at the Marine Heritage Park at the lake there I began that, so ah, and then I look at the equipment that's was still there that I bought and purchased I did all this in 4 years time and so I saw a real dedication that I had done in community service there as a trustee and I was going to run for another term, and Don Goodall who was the township supervisor came to me and he goes: "You know, people talk about you, I mean you gotta think about ..." he goes "I wanna not be a supervisor and I'd like for you to take it over." So I said well, I'd think about it and then I left the village board and became the township supervisor which I did and which was really administrative, and being a township supervisor is you do alright, but it's really an involved job because you deal with general assistant and it probably taught me a lot about people in need. Okay. And so I have you know I'm still - you know I'm still township supervisor although I'm regional superintendent but I have a policy because of kids that go to school every day is that every kid that lives in my jurisdiction has running water, has electricity, has the amenities they need to live. Okay. So we don't often think about we have people living without electricity we have people who get their water shut off. So, water shut off, how's that kid take a shower or a bath the next day? There's no electricity, how do they go home and do homework or use you know, if they have a computer, how do they use it? You know? So, those are some things that I've felt very good that I've provided through general assistance and um, and also ah, just helping do the general maintenance in that area so, that I have done - I'm in 4th term and final term of that office I'm not running again. So I'll serve 20 years after this term is up as township supervisor, and um, but I've learned a lot about it and financial management, budgets, levies and all those types of things. So um, and as I mentioned when I was on the township supervisor I was also on the county board and the county board experience I will tell you proly if there was anything that I ever reach back upon for knowledge um, it taught me so much about government about being a part of a legislative body and how you get along with people that you are serving with and how you support them, and it taught me so much about Madison County. Because I lived on one side of the county, and Madison County is diverse I mean the west side of the county is all-together different than the East side of the county in demographics in so many ways and in needs because we the river borders Madison County so if you live out where I live in Marine or Highland or Saint Jacob, you don't think about the river every day. If you live in Granite City, you think about the river everyday because you think about flooding and you also think about just what that river does and the other thing in Madison County and serving on the county board, it's rural on the east side and it's heavy industry on the west side so there's different needs. Your communities are different, your bigger cities are on the West side, your more rural neighborhood communities are on the East side, so I learned all about this, and got to be friends with people and they saw me as a supportive person and got involved in some really big skilled development with the Gateway Commerce Center and I got really involved with the Governor's Parkway something I'm really proud of that I was part of, and at the very end of the time that I was on the county board the America's Central Port was about to be considered, we took over the old Army Depot near Granite City, and that whole development began taking place there at the port district and then the last thing that I was involved with on the county board was the new Mississippi River Bridge Project because I was on the Highway Department and we had to exchange so many acres we had to acquire wetland areas in the old river valley in order for that bridge to be built which taught me you know a lot about environmental controls and my main role that I did as chair of a committee is ah you know I'd drive around the county I'd see a lot of these subdivisions that I signed off on, so I oversaw planning and development so I signed the preliminary plots final plots on these subdivisions and you saw vacant land that then became a now it's a

residential subdivision so you know, it was a great experience before becoming regional superintendent. But being regional superintendent and being one of the county wide elected officials in this building is special. I mean it's a unique privilege I mean, cause you deal with all the other units of government I mean, we have worked together to make Madison County what it is people blame you for what it is, so you take credit for what it is too and ah it's been ah it's been an experience that you know there's only so many people have it because there's only a few of us that have the privilege and being elected to a countywide office like this is a privilege because there's only a few of you that ever get the opportunity in a lifetime. I mean, so you know, I decided um, in being regional superintendent I was elected to become the president of all the regional superintendents in 2010. So I served a 4 year term in which I was president state wide, and ah, that was an honor, it was a difficult time we were challenged with numerous things legislatively including we weren't paid for 6 months, and ah but it ah it developed a personality that people knew about me in Springfield because I was there so much, and ah, I learned a lot during that time just about the state and education throughout the state which really began to set a stage for this next endeavor that I'll talk a little bit about and that's running for governor. Okay, because you know, you know Illinois is a big state it's a wealthy state, and it's broke. And our school system you know there's so much discussion about how do we fund public education in Illinois, how do we move education forward why is it last in the 50 states as to how it's funded, and so I decided after 2014 when I really saw what was materializing that this is something that I thought that a person from another another part of the state outside of Cook County should become a candidate. There should be a downstate candidate okay? And, um, so I began exploring it, and I will tell you I'm in middle of this exploratory phase of my candidacy, where about two months from circulating petitions in which when we actually begin circulating those petitions it really starts becoming a real reality that you're going to become a candidate, I mean not just there are 6 of us that are recognized state wide as viable candidates right now and I'm very proud that I have gotten the invitations especially the last two months to be involved as a candidate that's being looked at to get this nomination. And, as I've talked about many other things that I've done in my professional career it's a real growth not to mention it challenges me in every way possible, my speaking abilities, my ability to message, to ability to manage, um my ability to be creative in ideas and in thought my ability to you know, deal with people and be kinda a good personal presentation so um, it's a great experience and you know, ah, win or lose, you know, we'll go back to the very first question. It's about growing up in Marine, you know, I think the thing is is that about me is, is ah, tomorrow I can go to Marine put on my jeans and t-shirt and be just like I was 6 so, [chuckles] that's ah the unique thing about it.

**KB:** Yeah. That's a good thing to go back to. So, since you led into the governorship, so why did you decide to run for this I mean that is the top position and it is because you just want to further make a difference across the state and?

**BD:** Well, you know, I think my background is so diverse and my background in local government was really the reason I decided to do it. Yeah, it's about making a difference but more than that the big difference that the next governor's going make is whether or not they can bring about stability to the state. Whether they can balance the budget, whether they can get the state back on track, okay? Whether they are willing to really make hard decisions, okay? You know, whether they can come up with a creative plan to solidify the pension dilemma that we have. Um, whether they can curtail the runaway cost of Medicaid in the state which is consuming 42% of our budget, you know, how - how do we make this state better and um, and understanding what Illinois has to offer? Something that I haven't talked about is that I've I have my lifelong background is in agriculture and it's the biggest business in the state you know

what I mean? Just having a working knowledge of agriculture, I think is a huge asset to someone who's the chief executive of an agricultural state on on harmful legislation or helpful legislation that it becomes law you know? I think also you know, I've got 38 years in public education. Um, and you know it's one thing to you know be advised about education is something else to have dealt with school budgets dealt with school administrations understand how school boards operate understand the impact that schools have on their communities economically okay? And understand teachers and understand I explained that I was president of Triad's education association with the IEA, um, you know, why should teachers be able to collectively bargain? You know, understanding, so I feel that my ability to govern, comes from the diverse experiences that I have had throughout my life okay? And that I can I can lead in those capacities. So um, this really wasn't an aura about something that you know I woke up and I said one day: "hey you know I think it would be great if I died and they could say that I was a governor." My goal is to be able to make a difference and you know, bring about a change that I think is needed in the image of the state, so that's why I'm running.

**KB:** Okay well you kinda answered what my next question was going to be what are your strengths but like you said with agriculture obviously that's an enormous strength as well.

**BD:** I think that a strength that a lot of people you know don't always look at is the amount of time a person has spent in government. Understanding it. I said something about understand you know like, when you serve on a county board you realize you don't always get everything you want. Okay? That's a strength. You have to understand government that you have to be able to accept success and failure. I mean, because both happen. And so those are unique strengths and some people have a hard time you know when you look at any administration locally state level the national level you know the big debates over big issues you know, the compromise that happens and those people that didn't want to compromise and that's government. That's what it's about - that's government and that's how policy is shaped for people. Okay?

**KB:** Yeah. So, as bad as Illinois is as everyone knows in the media certainly plays on, I mean how to fix such a broken state? I mean that's gotta be such a huge mountain to climb...

**BD:** Right. Here's the beginning, first of all, it didn't get this way overnight and it's not going to get better tomorrow, okay? But it's gotta begin somewhere. So if you don't have a plan then you prolly shouldn't be willing to step up and do this and I have a plan and that plan is, first of all, you have to develop a manageable budget. Okay? And that's where it starts, and a management budget gets you a better bond rating and you begin to pay your debt down. The Senate Bill 6 that passed was good, because it is a plan okay? So, ah, that's why I supported it Illinois needs revenue a lot of people are really touting against this tax increase we have \$15 billion dollars of unpaid bills backlogs of bills so the crisis is not over because this has happened but people in Illinois are paying \$11 million dollars in interest. That's just wasting money away. So, my plan is to pay down the debt reduce the interest improve the bond rating, stabilize the state, then be able to move forward.

**KB:** Hm. Wow.

**BD:** And you have to allow in your manageable budget, debt interest, and you have to allow principle payments and the key thing is is that all these different aspects that consume a 36 billion dollar budget

you have to be thinking about you know how you're going to make that pension payment, okay? Or what could have been done that would have relaxed that pension payment you know? Because, you know, myself and every other teacher and every other state worker that has paid into the system or that has you know dedicated themselves as a professional part of the reason why was because at the end there was supposed to be something for them. Okay? So I don't think it's fair that you know we pass policy in this state that you know lies to people who did what they said that they were going to do.

**KB:** Mm-hmm. Right. So do you consider yourself an underdog going into this primary?

**BD:** Oh, well definitely, well, first of all, being from down state there's a whole lot of introduction that's gotta be made the Cook County area is about 3/5 about the total vote of the state, so there's a whole lot of introduction that you have to make okay? But um, I have great name recognition in this region, which is the second largest populated area of the state I think this region will really determine who is going to be the gubernatorial candidate for the Democratic Party, um, and ah things are going well for me in Chicago, so I'm not going to say I'm an underdog until I see how far I'm down in the polls. [chuckles] so, ah, I have a lot less financial resources there's people in this race most of us aren't too far apart plus or minus a couple hundred thousand dollars but you know when you have a candidate that has just unlimited financial resources what does that do? You know what I mean? So...

**KB:** And plus the name recognition, as well

**BD:** Plus name recognition, yeah so that makes a challenge, but that doesn't mean that doesn't mean that that's what happens on election day.

**KB:** Sure. Right.

**BD:** So. And it's a long way out yet, it's 7 months. So there's a lot that can happen. And money can be good, and money can be bad.

**KB:** Yeah, that's true. Yeah. Well, hopefully, you'll be the change that the state needs.

**BD:** We'll just see.

**KB:** [laughs] Right. Okay. Well, thank you for this has been a great interview I think and I think a wealth of information too.

**BD:** Okay good.

**KB:** That's going to benefit the county so,

**BD:** Well, I really appreciate in fact I'm going to send an email out Monday ah to you'll get one we're going to have a meeting here August 4th of ah everybody that's participating...