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Y. Stories to Save Lives

Interview Y-0021
Vickey Everhart
26 June 2018

Abstract – p. 2
Field Notes – p. 3
Transcript – p. 5

ABSTRACT - VICKEY EVERHART

Interviewee: Vickey F. Everhart

Interviewer: Caroline Efird

Interview Date: June 26, 2018

Location: Vickey Everhart's home in Misenheimer, North Carolina (Stanly County)

Length: 1 hour and 29 minutes

Vickey Everhart was born on August 2, 1952 in Albemarle, North Carolina (Stanly County). She recalls what it was like to grow up on farm in northern Stanly County. She attended Richfield Elementary School (1st-8th grade) and graduated from North Stanly High School. She worked in restaurants and automobile sales. After her first marriage ended, she opened Vickey's Dairy & Deli in Richfield, North Carolina. She describes how she and her second husband, Lanny Everhart started their own trucking company in the 1980s. She explains the process of adopting two children from Russia in 2001. She describes what it was like for her family to receive financial and social support from their local community, given that their son Logan has experienced over 40 surgeries. Mrs. Everhart describes her families' experiences receiving medical care from Carolinas Health Care System in Cabarrus County and Mecklenburg County, as well as Wake Forest Baptist Medical Care Center in Winston-Salem, NC and UNC Health Care in Chapel Hill, NC. She describes how her husband Lanny Everhart became the first person to have glue put inside of their body during a knee surgery in 1984 at Wake Forest Baptist Memorial Hospital. This interview is part of the Southern Oral History Program's project called Stories to Save Lives: Health, Illness, and Medical Care.

FIELD NOTES – VICKEY EVERHART

Narrator: Vickey F. Everhart
 Interviewer: Caroline Efird
 Date: Tuesday, June 26, 2018
 Location: Vickey Everhart's home, Misenheimer, Stanly County, North Carolina

NARRATOR:

Vickey Everhart was born on August 2, 1952 in Albemarle, North Carolina (Stanly County). She attended Richfield Elementary School (1st-8th) and graduated from North Stanly High School. She worked in the restaurant industry, auto sales, and owned Vickey's Deli & Dairy in Richfield, North Carolina (Stanly County). She has two biological children from her first marriage, Jarrett Lowder and Kerry Lowder Bracey. She and her second husband, Lanny Everhart, own a trucking company which they operate out of their home in Misenheimer, NC. They adopted two children from Russia in 2001, Logan Everhart and Kristina Everhart. The Everharts are active members of Matton's Grove United Methodist Church (Gold Hill, NC) and the Richfield Volunteer Fire Department (Richfield, NC).

THE INTERVIEWER: Caroline Efird is Ph.D. student in the Department of Health Behavior at UNC-Chapel Hill. She is currently working with the Southern Oral History Program on the Stories to Save Lives: Health, Illness, and Medical Care project.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW : The interview was conducted in one of the living rooms in Vickey and Lanny Everhart's home. The door was closed so that Everharts' pets could not enter. Mrs. Everhart was a gracious host and eager to share about her life, her family's experiences with the medical care system, and their life in Stanly County. Additionally, she told the interviewer about 45 minutes of stories after the conclusion of the recording that she did not want to be included during the recorded portion.

NOTE ON RECORDING : Several background noises occurred, including a barking dog a that wanted to enter the room, and occasional vibrating of the narrator's phone. Given that the narrator and interviewer were sitting on leather couches, occasionally movements can be heard when one of them changes positions. There were two interruptions when the phone rang and when Mr. Everhart entered the room because he needed to ask Mrs. Everhart a question. The interviewer used the SOHP's Zoom 4 recorder #4.

HIGHLIGHTS OR POSSIBLE EXCERPTS

1) Near the end of the interview [1:17:24.6 to 1:20:18.0], when asked if she had anything else to share, Mrs. Everhart told a story about her husband's near death experience after a trucking accident in Tennessee. Using her own money, and against the advice of medical

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providers in Tennessee, she hired a medical transport to move him to Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, NC, so that he could be seen by a doctor she trusted. Three teams of surgeons were waiting when he arrived, and she signed paperwork saying that she understood the risk of him being the first living human being to have glue inserted inside of their body for knee surgery. The surgery on his leg was successful, and he is now known as the “glue man” within the Wake Forest medical community. Unfortunately, one of the Everhart’s dogs occasionally barks during this story.

2) Additionally, Vickey and Lanny Everhart adopted two children from Russia in 2001. Their adopted son, Logan, was in need of a great deal of medical care when he came to the United States. At the time of the interview he had experienced 40 surgeries. From 0:42:57.0 to 0:47:53 she speaks about a time when a pediatric surgeon at UNC-Chapel Hill went against the odds and completed a successful surgery on Logan’s duodenum. She discusses the medical procedures that she and her husband had to learn to do in order to care for their son at home after insurance stopped paying for their son to stay at the hospital. She describes how their local community in northern Stanly County came together to raise funds for their family and support them.

TRANSCRIPT: Vickey F. Everhart

Interviewee: Vickey F. Everhart
Interviewer: Caroline Efird
Interview Date: June 26, 2018
Location: Misenheimer, Stanly County, North Carolina
Length: 1 hour and 29 minutes

START OF INTERVIEW

Caroline Efird: My name is Caroline Efird, and I am with Vickey Everhart in Misenheimer, North Carolina, and today is June 26, 2018.

[0:00:16.2]

Vickey Everhart: I am Vickey Everhart, and I'm going to be telling you a little bit about my life.

[0:00:23.1]

E: Thank you. Could you start by telling a little bit about your grandparents, if you knew them?

[0:00:30.2]

D: I didn't get to meet my father's parents because his mother died when he was six and his father died when he was about twelve. My mother was actually borned (sic) in Society Hill, South Carolina, and she was one of four children before her parents separated, divorced, and then had two different families, her father having nine additional children, and her mother had another eight additional children. So my mother had a very large family that made up for my father not having very many.

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[0:01:13.6]

E: Did you spend any time with any of them?

[0:01:18.9]

D: I did get to spend some time with my grandparents. They both lived a few miles apart. My grandfather was a farmer, and so we got to help working tobacco and working in cotton, so I did get to actually pick some cotton and pick tobacco, and for a sum total of five cents a day, and it was really, really hard work, but it was nice at the end of the day when you got to go back and have a cold drink and a pack of crackers and rest after a hard day's work.

And at my grandmother's, we hung out and chased the chickens, so it really wasn't that much, but there was always a lot of people around to talk to and tell stories and learn about family history with.

[0:02:24.6]

E: What kinds of things did they tell you about family history?

[0:02:28.9]

D: Mainly the guys, of course, making street rods and how they would run 'em up and down the back roads, and swimming at the Boy Scout camp, which was a few miles from there, and when they would go swimming, every so often an alligator would get after 'em, and one of the campers lost a toe to an alligator. [laughs] So there was some really, really special stories that they got to share with us.

[0:03:04.4]

E: Did you spend a lot of time there?

[0:03:07.0]

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D: Not a lot, because it's about a little over seventy miles from here, and, of course, we always had our own gardens and everything to come back and take care of here, because we were a self-sustaining family. My father was a welder and he traveled all over the United States, and he helped build the Astrodome, he helped to build a lot of the bridges in Louisiana. He helped to build the Arch in St. Louis. He's one of the people on one of the videos that they have, the history videos, helping put one of the last pieces into the Arch when they had to weld it in, the very last piece of it. But with him always traveling and, of course, we were always fixing the garden, canning things, there was seven of us and so we had to put away a lot of food to make ends meet and to make it through the winter, because everybody around Stanly County, they didn't tend to have a lot at that time in the [19]50s and [19]60s, and so basically you had to work for what you had.

[0:04:33.3]

E: And how did your parents end up in Stanly County?

[0:04:36.0]

D: That's really a crazy story, because my father was married before, and with him being a traveling welder, his wife ended up pregnant, she didn't want the baby, she tried to get rid of it, the baby died and she died. And so he went to visit his brother in Society Hill, South Carolina, who was married to my mother's aunt, and she lived in a farmhouse, my mother did, because her—I said "farmhouse." It was a dairy farm and they had 2,000 head of cow. So when he came down there to visit, they hung out together, and he was going through the mourning period after losing his wife, and with his brother being married to my aunt, who lived in the house, they spent a lot of time together. She had another boyfriend and she found out he was runnin' around on her, and my dad said, "I'm

tellin' you what, if you married me, I wouldn't never run around on you." And he dared her. She went through the dare. They stayed married till the day he died. [laughs] So, life's sometimes stranger than fiction. [laughter]

[0:06:18.1]

E: And what year did they get married?

[0:06:19.8]

D: That've been 1940, because my dad was borned (sic) in 1913 and she was borned (sic) in 1923. So there's, an age difference there, but they made it work.

[0:06:49.9]

E: And did they move to Stanly County right after they got married?

[0:06:53.3]

D: They did. He brought his new wife back to the place that he had lived and had a nice house, and so they lived there until my mother decided she couldn't live in the shadow of his former wife, so they built a little house on five acres of land, and that's where I was borned (sic) and raised. I was borned (sic) in a hospital, but raised there.

[0:07:20.2]

E: Can you tell me a little bit about your childhood, growing up there?

[0:07:23.2]

D: Well, I was a tomboy, and my dad had bought my sister and I a couple of horses, and I rode bareback around the pasture. And my brother that's four years younger than me, he would jump out from behind the tree with a stick, and the horses would throw me.

Sometimes I landed in the pig waller. [laughs] Sometimes you got dirty and scratched up.

But I was a bit of a tomboy, and anytime they wanted to find me, they'd look in the top of the tallest tree and that's where they would find me.

[0:08:02.6]

E: What was your experience at school like?

[0:08:07.2]

D: I liked school. I didn't love school, but I did okay. Of course, when I turned sixteen, I started driving the school bus, along with starting to take cosmetology out at Endy. And as a matter of fact, the day that I got my license, I wrecked my mother's new car on the way to Endy, and so they bought me a Volkswagen, so that little Volkswagen ran a lot between North Stanly and Endy with the cosmetology classes. But I've always loved fixin' hair after I got through climbing the trees. Then I went on to fixin' people's hair.

[0:08:58.7]

E: And were you expected to help out a lot with the garden and the farming and all?

[0:09:04.4]

D: Oh, definitely. It was a family affair, so you got up with the sun, sometimes before, and everybody grabbed a hoe. We didn't have a tractor; we actually had a mule. And the mule, you had to hook it up and plow the garden. And then when my dad got horses, he did teach the horse to pull the plow. But life was an experience. I learned to cook, I learned to can, I learned to bake, and all those good things that it takes to grow up to keep a husband happy. [laughs] Because they like to eat.

[0:09:50.2]

E: What was one of your favorite things to cook?

[0:09:54.1]

D: I normally did a lot of the baking in the house, and so I baked a lot of different cakes. In Home Economics at school, I learned to make biscuits, and I was an A1 biscuit maker, but, of course, my mother, she liked to make the biscuits, but I would slip in sometimes and get 'em made before she got back in there, so then we got to eat my biscuits however I decided to make 'em. And since they teach you to make 'em out of a lot of different things, once in a while she would get mayonnaise biscuits, then again she would get butter biscuits. [laughs] But they were biscuits.

[0:10:37.1]

E: And what did it mean, when you were growing up, to be healthy in your family?

[0:10:41.7]

D: To be able to do the things that you needed to do, to work a full day, go to school a full day, to be able to take care of yourself, be self-sufficient.

[0:11:00.8]

E: Do you have any memories of going to the doctor when you were a child?

[0:11:04.6]

D: My main memories, being a tomboy, I had quite a few accidents, and when I was five years old, I was standing aside of my dad in his [19]52 Pontiac, and he hit a tree and my head went inside the glove box, so I spent many, many months in the hospital, and I still have a scar, and it cracked my skull and all of that, and the sinuses, so I've had a lot of sinus problems and ear infections throughout the years. So I had quite a few doctor visits. The rest of my family, not so much.

But with mine, one little story about when my head was so messed up is they were taking me in for a special kind of an X-ray, and it happened to be the time of year

that we were making kraut, so you'd take the cabbage and you'd chop, chop, chop, and my older sister told me that when I went in, that she wanted to go ahead and tell me goodbye and give me a kiss because when I went in and that machine come down, it was gonna go 'chop, chop, chop, chop' like the kraut. [laughs]

So I jumped down and I ran, and I hit my head and I burst it back open, and so they had to send me back into the operating room to have stitches all over again. So that's what happens when you have older sisters and brothers.

[0:12:41.2]

E: And how did your family—do you know how they paid for medical care?

[0:12:44.8]

D: I think it all came out of the pocket, because I don't think back during that time that we had any type of insurances until later, in the later years, maybe, maybe even in the early [19]60s until we started getting insurance.

[0:13:05.7]

E: Can you tell me a little bit about what you did after you graduated from North Stanly?

[0:13:13.8]

D: Well, when I graduated from North Stanly, that summer I was the Richfield-Misenheimer Beauty Queen, so I got to be in the parade out at Oakboro and at Albemarle and all of the surrounding towns where they go out and they show off their best, and it was quite an honor to be able to do that.

Then I started working my first—well, I had actually always worked, babysitting or at restaurants, but I actually started working at a used car lot as a receptionist, and I was actually good at selling cars [laughs], because when people would come in and they

would talk to me about things, I'd start talking about the cars and they would buy the cars. So I was a natural salesman.

[0:14:14.8]

E: And what did you do after that?

[0:14:19.1]

D: Well, after that, I ended up gettin' back together with a friend of mine that I had dated several times, and we started going out. Then decided to get married, and I ended up moving to Guam, and I lived in the Pacific Ocean in Guam for a year. And then I got pregnant with my first son and ended up moving back to Stanly County for a few months until after he was borned (sic).

Then we left from Stanly County and went to Germany for four years, and that's where my daughter was borned (sic). As I was saying before, I had come home for vacation around July, and that's when I ended up they thought I had had a miscarriage, and I was in Presbyterian Hospital, and they were going to go ahead and do a DNC and everything, and my older sister helped to smuggle me out of the hospital because I didn't think that my baby was gone, but yet I had passed a fetus. So my mother had signed papers saying that I was not real right in the head, because I kept tellin' 'em they couldn't do surgery because I didn't feel that my baby was gone, and that was in July. And my little blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl was borned (sic) on December the 13th, on Friday the 13th of that year. So I did the right thing and my sister did the right thing, and my mother could never do enough for my daughter because she felt that she almost ended her life before it ever got a chance to start. So she was her favorite out of twelve grandchildren, and my son was her only grandson, so he was her favorite for that. [laughs]

[0:16:41.5]

E: Did your children spend a lot of time with her or their grandparents?

[0:16:47.4]

D: When I moved back, we came back from Germany, because I went back to Germany and that's where she was borned (sic) after I almost lost her here, and we moved to Maryland for three years and I worked at the National Security Agency while I was up there. Then I decided that I was gonna move back to Stanly County because we grew apart, my husband and I, and so I moved back to Stanly County and we got a divorce.

My daughter seemed to think that, of course, her grandmother loved her more than anybody else, and so she wanted to stay with her all the time, so we made one of my mother's spare rooms into her room, even though she had a room at home, but she stayed about as much with my mother as she did with me, because it was only three miles between houses. And it was really funny, because if she was not with my mother, my mother would drive up in the yard, and she would run out and jump in the car and she would wait. My mother would say, "She's in the car again."

I'm, "Well, you shouldn't have stopped. [laughs] You knew she was gonna go." So she would go and stay. Every so often I would pick her up and bring her home, with her screamin' and hollerin', but she did stay with me, quite a bit, but she really liked staying with her grandmother.

[0:18:22.7]

E: And how did you support yourself when you moved back to Stanly County?

[0:18:26.6]

D: When I moved back, I actually—oh, my goodness. I started working at Pat & Mick's Fish House and I helped out there, and I also worked at the florist's, Poplin's Florist, during the day. After a while, I decided that I had to be me, and so I opened the Dairy Bar in Richfield, and so I ran Vickey's Deli & Dairy for two years, and I had the first video games in Richfield, and all the kids would come and have their birthday parties. Lanny worked down the street, so he would come over and help me out at the dairy bar. So it was one of those things. He hung out there and helped me so much, we become closer friends, and then we got married.

[0:19:28.1]

E: And what year was that?

[0:19:29.3]

D: That was in 1984, and we're still married today.

[0:19:36.7]

E: Can you tell me any about what the two of you would do during your early friendship or dating relationship?

[0:19:45.7]

D: Normally work in my yard. I would plant flowers, he would dig holes, plant bushes, and he helped me out around the dairy bar. It's one of those things. I *really* had no intentions of gettin' married again, but every time I turned around, he was saying, "Why don't we get married?"

And I'm, "No."

And then finally one day I was so tired of saying no, I said, "Okay, let's do it."

And so we did. [laughs] We had a small wedding out at Richfield Baptist and had friends,

close friends and family that came to the wedding. And, of course, my two kids, Jarrett and Kerry, they were there, and they were really happy to have him as their stepdad. Jarrett says that had I not married Lanny, that he wouldn't have had a dad to show him how to do things, because he showed him how to work on vehicles and all things about being a guy.

And the real main reason why I finally told Lanny that I would marry him is because I accidentally walked in on my son in the bathroom one day, he was in the tub, and he was using my razor to shave his legs because he thought that's what people did. And I explained to him, "Guys don't shave their legs."

And he said, "Well, you never told me that." And I decided he needed more of a male influence in his life.

And as he got older, he only dated women who had kids, and we asked him, "Was that a prerequisite, that a person's got to have kids for you to date 'em?"

And he said, "No, but it helps," he said, "because if Lanny hadn't of married you, I wouldn't have had a dad." So life goes around.

And, of course, my daughter also, the first guy that she met that had a little boy and he was a few years—Alex was a few years younger than she was, but he and his girlfriend had had a baby when he was sixteen, and when the baby was eighteen months old, he and Kerry met each other and she fell in love with the baby, and they got married. So they're still married. [laughs] And they have one daughter, Racelyn Elizabeth. They live down in Charleston, and she's a registered nurse and he is an English teacher. They went on and both of 'em finished their college education and did great.

[0:23:05.3]

E: And do you still get to see Jarrett?

[0:23:07.7]

D: Jarrett only lives three miles from here. He worked with us for fourteen years after he did two years in the military, and then he wanted to go out on his own, because in the trucking industry, guys think that if they're not doing it by theirself, and so after fourteen years, he bought his own truck, so he's doing a little bit different, but still working in the trucking industry.

[0:23:37.9]

E: Can you tell me a little bit about how you and Lanny got into the trucking industry?

[0:23:41.8]

D: Lanny went to college, to Piedmont, to be a diesel mechanic and welder. And it's crazy, but my dad died the year I moved back to Stanly County. The place, Rand Construction, was right next door to where my mom and dad lived, because they had moved off the farm and moved out to Richfield in a little brick house out there. And then my dad died, Lanny got his job, because when he had stopped welding, he had got hurt real bad in a welding accident, came back to Stanly County, and Luther Barringer had given him a job overseeing their shop, doing their welding, working on the trucks, and basically their shop foreman. And when he passed away, then they gave Lanny the job, and that's how he and I ended up talking, and it was amazing that he was so much like my dad. He did all the things that my dad did. I guess that's why we ended up together.

[0:25:05.6]

E: And how did you end up starting your business?

[0:25:12.4]

D: With him working on trucks and heavy equipment, and a few weeks before we were supposed to get married, his job, Rand Construction lays pipe for sewer pipes, water pipes, and they were gonna do a big job in Durham and they wanted him to move to Durham and he was gonna be there seven days a week for weeks at a time, and he told 'em he couldn't, that he was getting married, not to move to Durham, that I had the dairy bar and he was working next door, and that was great, but he could not move to Durham. And so when he wouldn't move up there, they told him they would have to let him go, and he'd been with 'em for quite a few years at that time and they loved him dearly. He fit into their family.

And so with them letting him go under those circumstances, the owner of the company, he kept signing stuff where he couldn't draw unemployment, and so Lanny took him to the Workmen's Comp thing, to try to draw—not Workman's Comp, but to the EEOC, to try to draw unemployment, and they said, yes, he could draw the unemployment because he was hired to work in Richfield and that that's where he was supposed to be, and because they wanted him to move to Durham didn't mean he had to move to Durham. And so he got to draw his unemployment, but then he didn't have a job, and he'd never drawn unemployment before.

So I had a cousin who was in trucking, and he drove my cousin's truck for two weeks. Then we got married, and he said, "You know what? If I'm gonna drive a truck, I'm gonna drive my own truck."

And I said, "Well, I have \$5,000. If we can buy a truck for \$5,000, we'll do it. If we can't, we won't."

We found a truck that was parked in a cow pasture [laughs], and the guy wanted \$5,000 for it. And so we pulled it out of the cow pasture and we brought it home and we worked on it for several weeks, and we would go out and we'd run one week and we'd bring it back in and take the money that we made and work on the truck until we got it to where we could actually get out and run decent. Then from that, we bought another truck, and that was in late [19]84, and we've been in trucking ever since.

And we actually went on to instead of running our own truck, we worked as an agent for another company, and we did that for about five years. And they more or less changed their policy, and we were hiring trucks for them and I would hire an average of fifty-two trucks a year. I could hire truck drivers, people with their trucks, because, I mean, I was good at selling cars, so I was good [laughs] at hiring on trucks, and they loved the fact that we could hire trucks and we could move freight. And we were actually their highest agents, and we won all the awards, we won trips to Aruba, different trips to the Caribbean.

And after winning all the prizes for three years, they started changing the things that I was telling the drivers. They weren't doing those things anymore. And one day a driver drove down from West Virginia and he's waiting on me to tell him all these wonderful things about this company that we were working with, and I opened my mouth and it came out, "If you're gonna hear anything good about them today, you're gonna have to call them on the phone, because I haven't got anything good I can say." And Lanny almost died, because we were on the top of the list. I mean, we were the top agents, we had the top revenue, and all of a sudden, I told somebody that I wasn't doing it anymore.

So he asked him to wait outside. We talked about it a little bit, and I told him, “I can’t do that anymore, because I feel like I’m ruining other people’s lives, because I tell ‘em this company’s gonna do this and they don’t do that. Because all my life, if you can’t be true to yourself, and even though I’m telling them what the company’s telling me to tell ‘em, if I don’t feel like that’s the truth, then I’m not being true to myself.”

So we quit that day, and started from scratch again, and we started our own company. There was quite a few of the trucks that I had hired for this other company that decided that they felt like I always told ‘em the truth, and so they came and worked with us. So we ran our own business for twenty-four years, and with all the changes in the way trucking is, and during that time we actually started our own brokerage, so we were actually brokering and we had over 2,000 different companies that called us wanting us to move their trucks, and we had hundreds and hundreds of customers that we moved freight with. With adopting Logan and Kristina, things got to be—you didn’t have any time for anything, and so we started backing back down, and we backed back down to where we’re running a couple trucks and/or we went back with the company who we left almost twenty-five years by this time again, and they welcomed us back with open arms, so we’re working as agents with them and still running a few of our own trucks. And we gave up the brokerage several years ago due to regulations, because of the changes and everything in trucking.

[0:32:20.2]

E: What do you think instilled in you that desire to be truthful?

[0:32:26.1]

D: Well, I can tell you really quickly, because my dad, when I was really little, he was raising some hunting dogs, and the hunting dogs, one of the mother dogs was up under the house and had pups, and he told us, he said, "I'm trying to train the dogs. Don't feed 'em anything. I give 'em food for snacks and I feed 'em what they need to have." And he caught me one day. I had took the bologna out of the meat drawer, and I was under there feeling bologna to the dogs, and he sat me down on his lap—and I was probably somewhere between four and a half, maybe five years old—and he said, "Did you feed bologna to the dogs?"

I said, "No."

And he said, "Well." And he had a little pamphlet he always kept in his pocket and a pen, and he pulled it out and he said, "Well," he said, "I really think you did feed the dogs bologna, and you really shouldn't lie." And he said, "But here's what happens when you lie. You need to write it down, because if you go back and somebody asked you that same question again, you might not remember exactly what you told 'em, so you've got to write it down."

And I cried and I said, "But I can't write. I don't know how to write."

And he said, "Well, then you shouldn't lie," he said, "because if you tell the truth, you'll be true to yourself, and if somebody asks you again tomorrow or next week, you'll know what to tell 'em because it's the truth, where if it's a lie, you have to go back and look it up."

And so that's what I've always felt, that the truth is what it is, and if I lie, my face turns bright red. [laughs]

[0:34:20.6]

E: You also mentioned adopting two children. Could you tell me a little more about that?

[0:34:27.3]

D: We adopted Logan and Kristina the year that the Towers fell. We were in the midst of doing our paperwork, as a matter of fact, when the Towers fell. Lanny had always wanted to adopt, because we had raised my two kids and he felt like even though he was their dad, he didn't feel like he was a father, because they still had their birthfather, who would come into their life and take 'em to Carowinds, he would take 'em to all the fun places, because anytime we would plan a vacation, he popped up and ended up taking 'em somewhere. So we never got to have those special times. And he [felt] like he had missed out. So for probably ten years, we had talked about adopting.

Our next-door neighbor popped up one day and told us that she was going to Russia and she was going to adopt this little blond-haired, blue-eyed boy, and when I asked her how and why, and she told me this story about how she had gone to the Laundromat out at Pfeiffer College and that there was a magazine there, and she sat there looking at it while she was washing this big comforter, and that she opened it up and it had a picture of this little blond-haired, blue-eyed boy, that said he was in bad need of a home and that if you could give your love and blah, blah, blah. And she and her husband had talked about adopting.

So she laid the magazine down, forgot about it, went home. A few days later, she told him about it. She went back to get the magazine after she'd told him about it, and she couldn't find it, and she looked all over the Laundromat. And when she was giving up and walking out the door, this magazine kind of blew off from the floor and opened up to

the page of this little blond-haired, blue-eyed boy. Eighteen months later, they brought him home.

So Lanny and I, we kept talking about that, and he said, "We could do that."

And I would say, "Okay."

And every time I'd start to check, he'd say, "Well, maybe we shouldn't. Maybe we're too old."

And I'd say, "Okay."

And then he'd say, "Well, maybe we should."

And, finally, I said, "You know what? Proverbially crap or get off the pot. You're either gonna do it or you're not. [laughs] And this last time, if you want to, we'll check into it. If you don't, don't ever mention it again." Because I had always wanted four children, and I almost had three. I ended up losing the one, so I had two. And I figured we'd probably adopted two. And he said, "No, we want one little boy."

And I said, "No, if we do it, let's get two."

And he's, "Nope. If we do it, we'll get one little boy."

The day that I was finishing up all the paperwork, and I felt so dejected because I had seen this little girl who looked like my oldest sister who had died ten years earlier in a car accident, and it looked like her when she was little, and I kept saying, "But look at this little girl." We raised two the first time.

And as I was going to hit the last note to finish up the paperwork for the one little boy, the phone rang and he said, "Okay, if you want the girl, then get the girl," just like, "You want chocolate, you want vanilla, go ahead and get both."

And so I didn't hesitate, and I filled out all the information, and we were on our way to go get a little boy and a little girl. Unfortunately, the little boy turned out that he had paperwork that didn't work out, and so we had to make a choice two weeks prior to going, and we made our second choice, and that was Logan. And he ended up being very, very sick when we got there.

But the main thing is that when we were getting all of our paperwork together and they said, okay, if you've had a divorce or whatever, or if your ex died, you have to have a death certificate, divorce certificate, whatever, and so when we pulled out ours, of course I knew I had been married on June 12th, and when I looked at Logan's paperwork when we had to make the second choice, his birthday was June the 12th. And then with Kristina's, we put notes up all over the house with their pictures, and I had her birth date, which was June the 17th, on her picture where I could always look at it, and when I pulled out his divorce decree, he had gotten married on June 17th. So Logan was borned (sic) on the date of my original marriage, and Kristina was borned (sic) on the date of his original marriage.

And we were going to get him a little boy and me a little girl, and when we got there, she immediately threw her arms around him, and he had a little girl and I had a little boy. [laughs] And it's been that way ever since.

But Logan, he was very, very sick when we got there. He had a temperature of 104, and he had very little hair, and he had had numerous operations. When I looked at him, all I could see was a beautiful little boy, and where he was standing when they brought him to him, I swear it looked like a crown, the way the sun was coming through, and I kept saying, "He's beautiful." And later, Lanny told me that when he grabbed my

hand, he was hoping that I would jump out the window with him and we would run, because he realized that he was so sick and we were really getting into something he felt like might be over our heads. But forty surgeries later, and he's still a beautiful boy.

And Kristina, she's finished her second year at Pfeiffer College, and she's only had her wisdom teeth taken out and one cavity, and a Wilson's fracture on one finger, and other than that, she's in perfect health and so smart. She's been straight-A, Honor Roll from pre-K all the way up. She's on the Dean's List. She does all kinds of community service. We had told her that due to the fact of us having to spend, even though we had insurance, we had to spend out so much on Logan's, the copays and where the insurance wouldn't pay, and even though the community came together and worked as hard as they did, that anything that we would have saved for college education, it wasn't there.

And so she worked really hard and she got enough scholarships to completely pay for her to go to Pfeiffer, and she's continuing to get scholarships because she wants to go on to Pfeiffer's—I think it's the nurse practitioner course that they're building in Albemarle. So she wants to go on and take that, and then come back and work in Stanly County. I think it's because of her being associated with all of Logan's problems. There was a time he had a feeding tube for three and a half years. He was so, so sick at one point in time, we actually spent from June through March in the hospital. We were two months in Presbyterian and we were in eighteen days, home two, then back in for the rest of the month, and then straight on to UNC at Chapel Hill, and we were there from early August through March, and we'd get out for maybe a day and he would get deathly ill and have to go back.

And they finally found that it was—in January they found a blockage in his duodenum, because it wouldn't show up on X-ray because it was totally blocked, and so they went in and done surgery, opened up the duodenal area, but at this time, they had given him up numerous times and told me that they had done everything that they could. And my answer is always the same, “No, you haven't. He's still breathing.” So they would try something else.

And so then one of the pediatric surgeons, she took a leap of faith, because they kept canceling his surgery because he was so bad, and then one day she said, “Okay, we're gonna do this,” and she took him in for surgery. And the next month, they transferred her to Tennessee. Not positive it's because she did his surgery, but I feel like it is, because they really didn't think that he would make it, but he did.

And when they cut into his duodenum, it burst, and he ended up with peritonitis and they had to go back and lace him together. And even after, insurance wouldn't pay for us to be in the hospital anymore. Lanny and I had to learn how to debride his intestines, and so for three months, we would have to unlace him every day and go in so that he could heal from the inside out. So we set up a sterile room and we would have to sterilize everything and give him all the morphine he could possibly take and/or put the Lidocaine inside there and debride it. And finally one day it grew out, but before that, he was three and a half years on a feeding tube. He couldn't eat anything. And we remember the day he ate a half a green bean. [laughs] It was such a joyous thing, because always before, anything that went in came back out. So he had had a Nissen fundoplication where he can't throw up, but he, still, he would be so, so sick if he tried to eat anything.

And in the midst of him being so sick, his sed rate was so high that his legs bowed and he couldn't walk, so we went all the way back to a walker and we had to learn to walk. He had to learn everything all over again because he was so, so, so bad. So we did, at that point in time, get a little bit of help, and for a few months we had a few nurses that did get to come in and help us with that. Of course, he had a PICC line, so it was \$10,000, a very short while running all that stuff through the PICC line.

So he's a multimillion-dollar kid, literally. And had it not been for the community coming together at that time to help raise funds, Pfeiffer College, they had two different plays that they put on, and Richfield Elementary had a penny drive, and Fire Department had a hamburger dinner, and then they did a cookout. He was the face of every little kid who everybody always thought wouldn't make it, and he's still here and he had his fortieth surgery. He has one more coming up in July, and he will have to have a knee transplant sometime within the next few years, but we're going to push it as long as we can. But every time, he always comes through with a smile, that huge smile.

[0:47:58.1]

E: Can you tell me about what made some of your experiences good experiences with healthcare providers throughout all that?

[0:48:07.8]

D: We had some wonderful doctors, and when we first brought them back, Lanny and I were going to Richfield Family Physicians, and they actually had a place out here. It's Mt. Pleasant Family Physicians, but they had a place in Richfield. Dr. Sexton was the doctor that we had been seeing, and Dr. Lara Pons was finishing her internship and she was starting to work with them. When he got so sick within a—I mean, they were treating

him and he started getting bad and worse, and it started up one day his knee swelled really big, his right knee. When I went in the hospital, every night Dr. Pons would call me and we would set on the phone the majority of the night, knowing she had to work all day the next day. She would go over her computer, looking for anything and everything that she could, and she would give me things that I should talk to the doctors about.

So when the doctors would come in the next day, I would talk to them, and then they would check things out, because it really sounds right. So they would go through it, and again that night she would call me back as soon as she could, and we would start all over again if they hadn't come to a total conclusion. And so it's people like Dr. Pons. She is wonderful, wonderful. She has moved on. She's working at the hospital up at Cabarrus, which they're part of CMC now. But that was the only family doctor that he would even see, and he was "failure to thrive," so he stayed—he was twenty-four and a half pounds when we adopted him at four and a half, and he was still twenty-four and a half pounds two years later.

So we kept trying to—Dr. Lara Pons, she's really, really a special friend. So when she moved on to the hospital, which, that was an upgrade for her to get to work out at the hospital instead of working in the clinic every day, and so Dr. Joshua Hall is now our regular family physician.

But Logan actually—at this point in time, he has fourteen different doctors that we see on a regular basis, and it's really crazy, because when he was at—he was a Shriner's kid, because with his legs being so bad and he has a bone cyst in his left arm, they've actually done five surgeries and we're getting ready to have the sixth surgery done on that in July, and they're going to be doing that. Dr. Pat over in Charlotte at CMC

is going to be doing that, and he had his right knee done in Concord. We get referred to some of the best doctors. Once in a while, you end up with one, but it almost immediately when you meet 'em, because if they don't, I guess you could say, fall for Logan's smile, then it's not going to be a good fit and they're not really a good doctor. But he's really got some really good doctors at this time.

He does have two different types of arthritis because of being sick for so long, his sed rate was so high, and it took us over two years to get his sed rate down to anywhere near normal. It should be zero to ten, and his started out at 139. The doctors, the first time they looked at it, they said, "This is wrong." So they checked it again and it was 138. They sent it to an independent lab. It come back at 139. So he had some serious, serious inflammation. Every fiber of his body was full of inflammation. And we have no doubt had we not adopted Logan, that he probably would not have lived another month or two maybe, because he was so, so sick.

And I had the opportunity to go back to Russia five years later on a mission trip, and we raised money to go back and help out orphanages where we had adopted, Pansy and I did, where we had adopted our kids, and to go back and do things. We raised \$26,000 and went back over there, and they were—had come so far in that five years. So instead of buying tires and dishes and the things like we had had to help buy before, we actually bought soccer balls and bicycles and some of the fun things that kids like, basketball goals, and it was really something.

But when we went to Logan's orphanage and they said, "He really lived?" They really didn't think when we brought him home that he would survive, and they were so shocked and amazed. His facilitator and his translator that helped us out with the

adoption, they actually came to North Carolina from Russia, because it was during that time when people were having problems, that people were actually adopting kids and, taking a kidney, taking body parts and stuff like that. So when word got back at that time that he had had twenty-some surgeries at that time, they actually had to come and see him for themselves to make sure that we weren't taking piece by piece. And when they got here, where different people had brought toys and things for Logan and Kristina, their rooms were so full, and I had shelving everywhere and baskets hanging everywhere. And when they walked in and looked at their rooms, they're, "Oh, my god, they live in toy stores!" [laughs] And they were so amazed, but so pleased with what was going on with him, not him being sick, but the things that we were doing to help him through the problems.

It's been a long-term thing, and he will probably have to have different things, ongoing for years to come, but every surgery's put him a little closer to where he needed to be.

[0:55:46.2]

E: How do you think living in this community has impacted you as you cared for a child with so many needs?

[0:55:51.9]

D: Everybody has been so supportive. Like the Fire Department, after they helped out and had a fundraiser and everything, then Lanny felt like he needed to do something to help pay back, so he joined the Fire Department, and for eight years he was in the Fire Department and he goes on a lot of the calls, and he also became a medic, working with 'em. He took all those classes.

Then when Logan and Kristina got old enough, when Logan turned eighteen, he talked to 'em and told 'em, even though Logan, he had to miss a lot of school, and then once he got in school he was bullied in school, so we actually pulled him out of school in the eighth grade and started homeschooling. And then we tried to put him back in, but he actually has PTSD from the bullying, and not just the kids. There were some of the teachers that were *really*, really so totally unreasonable to this child, to the point of one teacher in particular, when she was told to move him to the front of the class because they didn't want to go ahead and put glasses on him right now, but his eyes were going bad because he had had iritis and he was about to lose his eye, instead of moving him to the front of the class, she put him in the back of the class, turned backwards, facing the exit door. And when I asked him, "Did the teacher move you today," and he said, "Yeah," and he was trying to explain to me where he was, and I'm saying, "No, that can't be right."

And he had a meltdown, and he'd never done that before. And I took him to the doctor because he was crying and carrying on so, and they had to give him something the first time *ever* for his nerves, because he was so totally at wits' ends because he knew but he couldn't communicate well enough at that time to tell us exactly where he was and the way he was telling me. So he literally has PTSD from being bullied by not the kids, but the kids and the teachers. Now, some of the teachers were great. Don't get me wrong. But these few isolated teachers, and it does hurt, and it hurts him really, really bad. But some of his teachers are totally wonderful.

And the community, as I started out before, that Lanny went and talked to 'em and they actually let Logan join as a fire fighter, so he gets to participate. No, he'll never

run into the burning buildings, but he does have his suit, and he feels a part of the fire fighters. And the majority of the fire fighters, they happen to go to Matton's Grove United Methodist Church with us, so when the fire bell goes off or our pagers and phones go off, Logan gets to jump up with the rest of us. When Kristina and I jump up and drop our robe from the choir, we run in the back room, drop our robe, and off we go, because when she turned eighteen and I joined, and so all four of us, we do it as a family unit, and it gives us some way to pay back. You can never pay people back for the things that they did, because people were so, so totally willing to do anything and everything that they could.

While Logan was really, really sick, I ended up having to have a surgery, and they ended up cutting into my bladder and I ended up with a huge infection, and I almost died. And so I was in a wheelchair and had to use a breathing machine several times a day. Matton's Grove [United Methodist Church], the people there brought two meals every day for ninety days, every day. Most people don't do that, but that's the community that we have, and that's why we go to Matton's Grove, because they're wonderful, wonderful people and they try to help not only the people in our community, but they also help the Boy Scouts. They bought a couple goats for some kids over in Africa. [laughs] So we don't do one thing; we try to do lots of different things.

And the Everharts, as a family, we try to do everything that we can to try to help pay back, so when anybody's sick, we try to go and provide a meal when they'll let us, because we have certain days everybody—we send around a sheet [at Matton's Grove United Methodist Church], and everybody signs up, and then we try to do everything we can to try to help out and to try to pay back and do what we can.

[1:01:25.6]

E: Living here in this area, what has it been like to travel to Charlotte and other places for medical care?

[1:01:37.6]

D: Well, with Logan, in the beginning he was in Charlotte and then he was in UNC, so the first two months it was—which I lived with him. I did not leave him. I didn't leave his room. And when we went to UNC, we got there in early August. The furthest I would get is I would walk across the hall where they had popsicles and things in the refrigerator so that he could try to eat a popsicle and different things like that. But I stayed right by him. Lanny stayed here. He took care of the company, he took care of Kristina, and then when they could, they would try to run over and visit with him.

Then when he got out from there, for several months we had to go every day we had to go back because he had so many different doctors, because he had problems with his eyes, he had problems with his ears, his sinuses, all of these things due to the inflammation which was building up to be the arthritis, but at that time it was showing up as different things. At one point in time, he couldn't swallow, and so we would have to go over there for swallowing exercises, and they would have to actually put him in the X-ray machine and watch as he tried to swallow. We did what we had to do.

I had a little Nissan—I'm sorry, a little Kia van, because I got rid of my Nissan car, but I had a little Kia van, where I could strap him down and we'd ride along, and I'd have him looking up at the clouds and everything as we'd drive down the road and him trying to talk to me and tell me what he saw, and I drove and we did what we had to do to get him past it.

Then when he was through over there, and several years later, which he was so, so sick in the beginning that when our insurance wouldn't pay any more and everything, we actually applied to Shriner's, because we had heard they were going to be taking care of the whole kid, but he was so sick, we actually have a letter where Shriner's turned him down when they had *never* turned a kid down. Now, four years later, when he got the bone cyst and the doctors that were working with his bone cyst did get in touch with Shriner's, and they did accept him at that time, but the first time, they said that he had too many different problems, and since they were trying to handle the whole child, that they actually couldn't take him. And they never really turned anybody down, but he was actually turned down because he was too sick. They did come back four years later.

But when his bone cyst started, he actually broke his arm twice, and we had no idea because with Logan having been born a seven-and-a-half-month baby, he was put in a laying-down room. He was not expected to live. He was never bottle-fed. I'm sure they must have give him IVs. But one of the nurses or ladies that worked with him there told me that a couple times a day, and him a premie, seven-and-a-half-month gestation, a couple times a day they would actually try to give him a little bit of broth, but that he couldn't suckle, and so I'd never realized that if a child never learns to suck, if they aren't breastfed or bottle-fed, they don't learn how to chew, and so he actually had to have three and a half years of chewing, eating, and speech because the chewing, the eating, and the speech all has to do with the same muscles and the tongue. And to this day, he has to get up in the morning and wake his tongue up, so he has to do special exercises, just [demonstrates], almost like he's getting ready to sing opera. If he doesn't, he starts

talking and you can't understand him. But then after he wakes his tongue up so it will move sufficiently, then you can understand him.

[1:06:35.3]

E: It sounds like you and your husband do a lot to take care of other people. Are there things that you do to take care of yourself?

[1:06:43.8]

D: I take care of them. Since I took cosmetology, I actually have always cut their hair. They've never gone to a barbershop or beauty shop. I did have Kristina's hair washed one time at Walmart, and she was so amazed that you could lay back in a chair and have your hair washed, but it was the day that they had Crazy Hair Day at school, and then we went to have a doctor's appointment, and she was so embarrassed standing in Walmart with her Crazy Hair Day, and when she cried, I took her in and let them wash her hair to wash the craziness out of her hair.

But during Logan's problems, we actually had a small saltwater pool put in the backyard because he needed water therapy, and it was easier to do that than it was to take him on a daily basis, plus the fact if you take him other places, and with all the different problems and surgeries, he could get all kinds of infections and different bacteria because he has a very low immune system from having all the problems he's had. So I get to exercise in the pool, and that's the one thing that I do for myself.

Lanny, he likes to go to his fire meetings and his medical meetings, and really we get a lot of relaxation out of helping other people. So that's a lot of what we do is that Kristina and I sing in the choir, so we have our choir practice, and that is very relaxing to get away from home and to get there with the ladies from the church. And when we go on

Monday nights, every other Monday night we go to the fire station and have our fire meeting, and normally we'll go out and grab a bite to eat, and we do that as a family. And so that's always something to look forward to, and really watching them and watching the progress that he's made, that's a big benefit to me.

[1:09:07.2]

E: Well, thank you for sharing all that. In thinking about how long you've been in this area in Misenheimer, I was wondering if you have any comments on how it's maybe changed over the years or stayed the same.

[1:09:28.9]

D: A lot of the people have stayed the same. They build new houses. Our road used to be dirt, and they paved it right after we adopted Logan and Kristina. One of the main changes around here is every—it must be about every twenty years, they come through and cut almost all of the trees because of the tree-farming thing and the people who planted trees, I guess versus planting different vegetation or vegetables, whatever they were growing at the time. And so this past year, it seems like all of the trees around Stanly County and Rowan County, they're all cut down. So it's so hot because you don't have the coolness, the breeze blowing through the trees.

But mainly—it stays a lot the same. We actually, when I had my dairy bar in Richfield, we actually had two gas stations and one bank, and now, which we still have the one bank, but we've got about eleven different restaurants, Bojangle's, Kentucky Fried, Taco Bell, Wendy's, about anything that you could want to eat, Subway and a Food Lion. So everything in Richfield has totally changed, but you still walk in and you see the people and it's like nothing ever changed.

[1:11:24.2]

E: What do you think is the best part about being from a small town or a rural community?

[1:11:29.2]

D: It's because you have so many people that are willing to help other people. I mean, it's like in our Fire Department, we're volunteers, so nobody has to do anything, but when that pager goes off at 2:00 o'clock in the morning and somebody's having problems breathing, you're gonna see about everybody in the Fire Department's gonna show up. Or on Sunday when the preacher's getting ready to preach and everybody's there and they're running the audio and they're running the video in the church, and all of a sudden somebody else has to jump up if they're going to run the audio or the video because the ones doing that are in the Fire Department, and so we all have to take off and leave, because these people that we've depended on are depending on us. And so it's one of those things, that there's so many people out there that you can count on.

[1:12:31.4]

E: Do you think there are any challenges facing this community right now?

[1:12:36.5]

D: Well, not really many challenges, I don't think. It's the people like me, we keep getting older, and a lot of the older people are the ones who have been running the majority of a lot of the good things, and there's a lot of the younger ones that are not following suit. I think a lot of the younger ones tend to move away, which a lot of times, like myself, they come back, but it might take several years for 'em to decide to come back, and the biggest change is that you see, the people getting older, and some of the

establishments that were there, you've got new people coming in because the older ones have passed or moved to Myrtle Beach. [laughs]

[1:13:46.7]

E: And would you say this is a healthy community?

[1:13:53.6]

D: I'd say it is. Like every other community, it has some of its own problems, I mean with the problems that they have now, with the drugs in the area, because the Fire Department, we're called out on a weekly basis, you're going to have several calls. You always hate to see that, but then on the other hand, it's part of the world around us. And with us being right here at Pfeiffer College, it seems like the only bad things we used to have was somebody would come in and pull a fire alarm at 2:00 o'clock in the morning after they'd gone out drinking at some of the little establishments that were out there.

[laughs] But now it's not fire alarm. You end up with somebody that's done whatever, laying on the front lawn at Pfeiffer or out in front of one of the buildings somewhere, and we have to go out and rescue 'em, and that's such a sad situation to see that happening. But then again, you have all of the good things that's going on, too, so you have to take the bad with the good.

[1:15:14.7]

E: If you could describe this community to somebody who's never been here before, what would you tell them about it?

[1:15:24.4]

D: I would say that the majority of the community, and especially if they come by our church, Matton's Grove, has open arms, that they're willing to accept you as you are,

they won't try to change you into somebody else. They're willing to accept people into the area and bring you a basket by or bring you a few flowers or ask you if they can help you out in any way.

It's really a good little community to come to, and I've never regretted moving back, even though I did enjoy the South Pacific and I did enjoy Europe, and I love to travel. Kristina and I went on a cruise down to the Bahamas back in April, and a year ago—which, now, when I went on the cruise, Kristina and I went with the choir ladies and we actually took the preacher, so we were the choir ladies and the preacher on the cruise. [laughs] And we had a blast. And we told everybody where we were from and that we were the choir ladies and that was our preacher. [laughs] And the year before that, I had taken my older daughter, Kerry, and we had gone on a cruiser to the Bahamas also, and at that time, I actually took her with the choir ladies. [laughs] We really had a good time, and we're planning on all going back next year, and we're hoping this time Kerry *and* Kristina can go.

[1:17:13.4]

E: Well, thank you for sharing all the things that you've talked about this afternoon. Is there anything that I've left out asking about or anything else you'd like to share?

[1:17:24.6]

D: The one thing that we didn't get into, and I had mentioned to you before, was the accident that Lanny had back in 1984. That was the year right after we had gotten married, and he actually had a truck that went off the mountain up in South Pittsburg, Tennessee, and he had his right leg, the ball joint was broken over 100 pieces. His left thumb came up through his hand. He had both shoulders, one fractured, the other was

broken. And when they went to—they really thought he was gonna die in South Pittsburg, Tennessee, so I had him transferred to Winston-Salem Baptist (sic) [Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center], and Dr. Poehling, whom (sic) had done knee surgery for me the year before, and he said he would take him on as a patient, and after staying up there for twenty-four hours and looking at him going into renal shutdown, he was dying.

And so I called the bank and told the bank that I needed some money, and they had the deed to my house, and they told me to write the checks. And that's what small towns are all about, and that was the Bank of Stanly, when they were in Albemarle. And so I had to rent doctors, nurses, helicopters, a jet, and we got him—and ambulances—and against the wishes of the doctors at South Pittsburg, Tennessee, those doctors pulled him out for me and we got him to Winston Baptist (sic), and they had three teams of surgeons waiting, and Dr. Poehling was waiting at the door when we brought him in from the helipad, and I had to sign a paper and they took him directly in for surgery. And I signed the paper stating that I knew that they were going to put glue inside his body, and that had never been done before. So he is affectionately known as “the glue man,” because they had only done glue inside the body of cadavers before that.

His knee, they actually took his left hip, and so that meant that he had nothing that moved at all for months and months, but they took his left hip and used it as pieces to refashion his leg to go into the right knee, and put his leg back together, and he actually walks—I mean, he's literally a miracle. He walks without a limp. But when I signed the paper, he was either gonna come out without a leg, with a stiff leg, or with a moveable leg, and he can run. So Dr. Poehling did a fabulous job.

As a matter of fact, a couple of months ago, I had to go to the doctor and have a cortisone shot put in my knee where they had done my surgery on my knee, and as I was talking to the doctor and he asked me who done my arthroscopic surgery, and I said, “Dr. Poehling,” and he said, “Oh, my god, he is my nemesis (sic), and I am going to see him in November. They’re having a big party there, and he’s having a party.” And he said, “He’s wonderful.”

I said, “Well, he did my husband’s knee.”

And he said, “He had arthroscopic surgery?”

I said, “No, he glued his knee back together and he was the first person.”

He goes, “My god, your husband is ‘the glue man.’”

And I said, “Well, yes, I guess.”

He said, “Oh, my god! Do you know how many times I’ve heard about ‘the glue man’? I’ve got to meet this man.” He says, “Will you bring your husband over here, and I will give him—I will check him, I will check his knee, I’ll check him all over and give him the results, and I will not charge him a penny if he will please, please come and do that so that I can tell Dr. Poehling I saw ‘the glue man.’”

And so I said, “Well, I’m sure he probably would.”

So I called him. He said, “Yeah, if they’ll give me the results.”

So he told me he’d put my shots in my knee the next day if I brought my husband back. [laughs] So I brought my husband back. So Lanny walked in with me, and I got up and I sat down on the table, and my doctor came in and he said, “Would you mind setting over here a little bit?” He says, “I have got to talk to your husband for a little bit.”

And so I sat there, and he talked and he worked and he checked his knee and he X-rayed him, and he did all kinds of papers on him, and I'm setting there in the corner with my hand raised, "I have pain here." And it's okay, he had "the glue man."

So when he finally got through, he then finally put the shots in my knee and told me how absolutely amazed he was to meet "the glue man."

And when Lanny asked him, he said, "Well, how wonderful am I doing?"

And he said, "Well, the only problem is," he said, "I think the nerves must've died in and around because of all the trauma, and most people with the condition of your leg would come in the door in a wheelchair, screaming for pain meds." And he said, "But you seem to be doing fine."

And Lanny said, "Yes, I was doing fine until you told me that." [laughs] He says, "And now I might have to rethink my situation."

And he said, "Nah, I think you're gonna be fine."

So the orthopedic doctor got to go see Dr. Poehling and regale to him about "the glue man," and Lanny got to find out that his knee's not as great as he thought it was, but he doesn't even walk with a limp. And for a guy who was possibly gonna lose the leg or come out with it stiff, he does great.

[1:24:02.9]

E: How did you know to get him to Wake Forest Baptist rather than keep him in Tennessee?

[1:24:11.2]

D: When the doctor came in and looked at him, and I had looked at the X-rays, and the X-rays, I mean, it didn't look like a knee. It looked like a vase if you'd crushed it and piled it up. And I asked him, I said, "Now, you're an orthopedic doctor?"

He says, "Yes. My name is Dr. Bone."

I said, "Oh, is that your nickname?"

He says, "No, I had the name, so I took the profession." And I started getting weak-kneed, and literally when the lights went low that night and they had decided that it was a good thing in the medical industry at that time not to give somebody with real bad trauma a lot of pain medication, they were using electric shock, so they had put a machine on his leg that was shocking him, and so he was dying. I mean, he was going into renal failure. His heart was starting to act up. He'd never had heart problems. His blood pressure—everything was going crazy.

And I knew Dr. Poehling was so great when he done my knee in the orthoscopic surgery, and I was so happy with everybody I had talked to over there. My father, having been a welder, he had two bad accidents at different times, and we had had him transferred back to Winston Baptist [Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center], and both times they saved his life. And so I thought, "You know what? If I can get him to Winston Baptist (sic)." I knew Dr. Poehling was on the leading end of so much discovery on knees or bones in particular, and I really felt if I could get through to him, that he would take him.

And the hospital at South Pittsburg, they're like, "No, you move him, he's gonna die."

And I knew I had to do everything I could, and so when I called and told ‘em how you got the title to the house, I need money, and so they said, “Go ahead,” so I did what I had to do. I got in touch with Dr. Poehling, he returned my call, he said, “You get him here. We’ll be waiting.” And we got him there, and they did a phenomenal job.

And [Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center], to this day, I would recommend to anybody. I know CMC [Carolinas Medical Center] has grown and has gotten so big, and they are leaders in so many things, but—and which Dr. Poehling, I’m not sure he’s even teaching at Winston Baptist, but I think he owns a lot of the different things there at Winston Baptist because he’s made so much progress in the industry of working on the bones, and so he came through. He did a fabulous job.

[1:27:44.9]

E: Well, thank you so much for adding in that story. Is there anything else you’d like to share?

[1:27:52.3]

D: I think I’ve about touched on everything. [laughs]

[1:27:58.4]

E: Well, thank you. It’s been such an honor to sit here and hear your stories, so thank you for sharing.

[1:28:04.0]

D: Oh, you’re welcome.

[End of interview]

Edited by Caroline Efird, July 17, 2018

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