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An Interview with Patricia and Lamar Marchese

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

The Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV
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The transcript received minimal editing that includes the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator. In several cases, photographic sources (housed separately) accompany the collection as slides or black and white photographs.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director
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Preface

Pat Marchese grew up in Johnston, Pennsylvania, and Lamar was reared in Tampa, Florida. Pat was raised on a farm surrounded by relatives. Lamar takes pride in his mother heritage, which can be traced to Tampa Bay, Florida, in the early 1840's. Pat and Lamar graduated from the University of South Florida and relocated to Las Vegas in 1972.

Pat's remarkable 30-plus year passion includes working for the city of Las Vegas and Clark County, Nevada. She created numerous art and cultural programs which consist of the Civic Symphony, Charleston Heights Arts Center, Rainbow Company Theatre, along with consulting work for the Allied Arts Council. In addition, to her creating art and cultural agendas, she became a budget analyst and chief lobbyists for the county, testifying before the Senate Taxation Committee. She implemented through the public arts program, a Mural Arts Series, the Parks and Recreation Cultural Division, and culture on the Strip. Pat executed the grant that ensured the necessary funding for the expansion for public broadcasting radio stations throughout California, Utah, Arizona and Nevada. She's certainly worthy of her title "Queen of Las Vegas Culture".

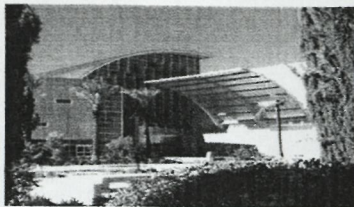
Lamar's amazing 30-plus year's calling comprises putting into action an abundant number of libraries programs for the State of Nevada along with establishing the first public broadcast radio station in Nevada. His library accomplishments include merging the City's libraries branches, library programs, shows, concerts, unification of academic libraries and public libraries and the first reciprocal borrowing agreement for the State of Nevada with the Nevada library card. He consolidated Las Vegas Libraries and the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. He also sold bonds for the development of future libraries.

Lamar's broadcasting achievements consist of incorporating the Nevada Public Radio Corporation with State of Nevada, serving as Chairman of the board for NPRC, constructing broadcasting translators and radio stations throughout the tri-state and enveloping the State of Nevada through public broadcasting.

Combined, Pat and Lamar Marchese have served the Las Vegas community for over six decades. Thanks to the Marcheses, broadcasting is thriving throughout the tri-state area, libraries are blossoming and cultural programs are flourishing. They are looking forward to retiring, traveling, spending time with loved ones, and most of all, Pat and Lamar time together.

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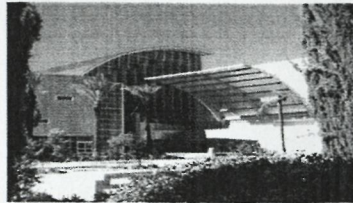
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Patricia Marchese 1-16-08
Signature of Narrator Date

Claytee D. White 16 January 2008
Signature of Interviewer Date

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Lamar Marchese 1/16/08
Signature of Narrator Date

Claytee D. White 1/16/2008
Signature of Interviewer Date

I'm Claytee White. This is January 16th, 2008. I got it right. And I'm with Lamar and Patricia Marchese here in the Reading Room of Special Collections.

So how are you today?

Fine. Thank you. And you?

Wonderful.

Very good. Very good.

Okay, good. Because I have two people, this is going to be a little different. So who wants to go first?

Age before beauty.

(All laughing).

And we're going to go back and forth. And I can tell already we're going to have a lot of fun.

So because this started with us talking to Lamar --

Right.

So I'm going to start with Patricia.

Oh, okay.

Patricia, could you just tell me a little about your early life? Could you tell me where you grew up and your mother and father's names and what they did for a living?

Sure. I was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. I lived on a rural farm with my grandmother and grandfather. When each of the kids got married -- and they had 12 of them I think or 11 of them -- they got a big parcel of land and built a house. And so we lived in a rural area with all my relatives.

My dad's family was from Pittsburgh. His name is Walter John Davis. And at the time he worked in the steel mills at Bethlehem Steel in Johnstown running a crane. And then later on we moved to Florida when I was about ten. And he got a job at the telephone company as an equipment installer. Let's see.

And your mom?

Oh, yeah. Poor mom, right? My mom was Julia May Brannigan. And so she was the one with the big Irish clan that we all lived with. And when we lived in Pennsylvania, she was a mom, but she

also worked in like a Walgreen's counter. She was a waitress.

She met Gene Kelly there.

Yeah, she did. He's from Johnstown, too. And his mother's dance studio was right across from the Walgreen's where she worked. And she was very pretty and had gorgeous teeth. She was a billboard for Sunkist one time. And then, anyway, when we moved to Florida, she started her own business after my brother was born. It was a childcare center called Tiny Tims. And she did some waitressing here and there, as well.

So now, with the kind of career that you've had, did your mother working outside the home influence that at all?

I think it did. I think it influenced the fact that, you know, I could see that it was okay for women, you know, not to necessarily choose housewife as a career. And because my family was from Pennsylvania -- we weren't in poverty or anything. But we did live, you know, in Appalachia, in that general area. And so I was the first person in my family to go to college.

Wow. That's exciting.

Yeah. My dad had gone for two years in Pittsburgh.

So where did you go to school?

USF in Florida, University of South Florida.

Okay. Good.

Degree in humanities and fine arts.

Fantastic. Okay. And we're going to talk a lot more about that and where that took you.

So, Lamar, would you tell me the same thing about your childhood, how you grew up, your parents?

Well, I was born in Tampa, Florida. My mother Catherine, last name was Palmer, her maiden name, was from an old, old Florida family that went back to the foundations of the city of Tampa. Her relatives were Robles who were of Spanish decent who came to Tampa Bay area in the 1840s and were a pioneer Florida family. So that on my mom's side.

My dad's given name was . He went by Tom. But his given name was Gitano Marchese. And he was a son of a -- my grandfather emigrated from Sicily in about 1905. Came over. He was a barber originally and then was a storekeeper. And my dad was one of four children. He

dropped out of school in the sixth grade, never was an educated man, had to go to work. So he always had been -- he was storekeeper. He had all these combinations of -- sort of odd combinations of, you know, bar, grocery store, fish store, kind of weird combinations of things.

And, anyway, we grew up in a very sort of middle-class neighborhood. We knew all of our neighbors. We grew up with a group of friends that were neighborhood kids, you know, that ran together all the time and went to the same schools together. I had an older brother two years older than me and I had a sister that was one year younger than me. So I was the middle kid. Middle kids have to try harder, you know.

And they're not supposed to be well-adjusted. Is that true?

I don't know. I think I did okay.

Okay, good.

I guess I did all right. So I went to neighborhood public schools. Walked to school down the street to Broward Elementary School where I met this one right here, my wife. We met in the sixth grade.

Oh, wow.

She came down when she was coming down from -- when her parents moved down from Pennsylvania. She lived in the same neighborhood. And it was a group of -- I went to the same junior high school, the same high school. So we were all in the same neighborhood. And I think I had a pretty good childhood.

My parents, unfortunately, got divorced when I was about 16. And there was some tension there in the household. And I think also it wasn't helped by the -- in that period of time when my parents were married it wasn't acceptable for Italians to marry white girls. And so they were -- so I think my parents were rejected on both sides of the family. From my dad's side, you know, they had married what they used to call a cracker, a Florida cracker. So they didn't like that. And then her parents didn't like that she had married an Italian. So there wasn't any real support I think from the family side for their marriage. And there are cultural differences. And so that didn't work out very well.

Anyway, they got divorced. And they actually got remarried and they got divorced again, which was not a very --

They got remarried to each other?

Yeah.

Oh, wow. Okay. But there was some love there, real love.

Well, there was. But there were just a lot of other things going on. My dad used to drink, unfortunately. And he was a wonderful man when he wasn't drinking. When he was drinking he was not a nice man.

Okay. You know, it's funny how when you say an Italian marriage -- you know, when I think about race relations in this country --

Right.

Right. Right.

-- I forget that there are other problems other than --

Oh, yeah.

-- black and white problems.

Right.

Yeah. Yeah. Well, you know, when they got married in 1940 -- so they were dating in the late 30s -- that wasn't accepted. That wasn't accepted. You know, the Latinos had their part of town and they went with their people. And the crackers went over on that side of town and they have their own thing. So it wasn't -- it just wasn't accepted.

Now, certainly it is now. And even when I was growing up, a high school was a mixture of -- because we had a lot of Cuban kids. We had a lot of Italian kids. And by that time in the 50s and 60s, there was no problem with it.

So tell me about college.

Well, I went to the University of South Florida, too. That was the private -- I mean it was the public university in Tampa. It was brand-new. And I wanted to go to University of Florida, Gainesville. My brother was two years ahead of me. He was already in school there. And my mother by that time was divorced and she didn't make enough money to send us to school. And so I stayed at home because I could stay at home and I had a job part-time job. I could make a little bit of money to pay for school. And it was relatively inexpensive to go to school at that time. The tuition was not very high for in-state students. And it was actually a really good school. I got a

good education there. And so I lived at home and went to school and graduated in 1964.

Now, what was your major?

I had a degree in social sciences, a general degree in the social sciences.

Okay. That's wonderful. So now, when and how did you come to Las Vegas?

Well, we came to Las Vegas in 1972. Pat and I were living in a small town in Kentucky. I was working at Morehead State University, which is in eastern Kentucky, and living in another town further to the west called Mount Sterling, Kentucky. And I had been there for about three years. And it was a federally funded project that I was working on that was soft money and it was funded from year to year. And the money was going to go away. We knew that it wasn't going to get re-upped whenever money ran out. And so I started looking for work.

While I was working I had met some people that were in the library field through some writing I had done and some research I had done when I was at the university. So what happened was a person that I had met through these associations put me in contact with a fellow named Charles Hunsberger, who was the director of the Clark County -- at the time it was called the Clark County Public Library. And the library had just gotten started about a year before that. So she told him about me. And I was in Kentucky. He called me from Chicago where the ALA, American Library Association, was having a meeting and called me up and said could I come up and talk to him, interview with him. So I went up and talked to him.

And he was looking for somebody that wasn't a librarian that had a background in media that could sort of do all the things he wanted to do in a library that were nontraditional because he was a very -- he had a very expansive view of the libraries, I thought a very innovative mind and a guy who thought that libraries were places where information was kept, not books. That was just one form of information.

So anyway, he interviewed me and offered me a job. And I accepted and came.

So, Pat, were you already married at that point?

Oh, yeah.

Yes. And our son had just been born. So we came across the country in a U-Haul trailer with an 11-month-old baby -- and he's going to kill me for this -- who had the worst case of diaper rash you've ever seen.

He'll never know. We won't tell him.

Well, he had always had cloth diapers. When he was a little baby --

Right. My grandmother actually made him diapers when he was little.

In cloth diapers. So the first time he had ever had on Pampers was when we were moving because we were -- you know, you had to -- you couldn't wash them out and do everything you did with cloth diapers. So he got this terrible case of diaper rash.

But, yeah, anyway, we were married in 1966. So this was several years later.

'72.

'72. *Right.*

Well, yeah. We moved out in August in '72.

Ooh. How did you like the weather when you arrived?

*Not so much. In fact, I kind of came kicking and screaming because one of the things I was doing was -- Rolling Stone had just serialized Hunter Thompson's **Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas**. So I'm reading it, you know, in the seat of the U-Haul, saying to him, "Turn around, turn around."*

She wasn't too happy with the idea.

Right. So it was really hot. And he turned one years old August the 23rd. And we were staying at the U.S. Motel on the corner of Fremont and Boulder Highway. Is that called the Four Corners or something? Anyway --

Five Points.

In this little motel. And his birthday party was a match in a cupcake. He was perfectly happy.

But, yeah, he didn't know.

That's great. Tell me what it looked like. Compare it to the other places that you'd lived because you had lived in Pittsburgh. You were from Pennsylvania, Florida, Kentucky and now here. Could you compare?

Yeah. It was really almost a culture shock to me because I was doing a lot of artwork then at the university in Kentucky. And I was doing the graphic work for the university. It was just part-time. So coming out here, having left all that lushness and green and almost, you know, tropical splendor that you have in Kentucky and Florida and then the various seasons, you know, it was like coming to a dirt pile.

The first thing she asked me when I said we're going to come to Las Vegas, she said, "Do they have trees there?" We had never been here. We had never been to Las Vegas. We had been to California. We had driven -- no. That was later. No, no. That was when we were in Gainesville. *Oh, yeah. We had camped across the country.*

When I was in graduate school, we drove across the country --
To San Francisco.

-- because we had friend that lived in San Francisco. So we had driven across northern Nevada. We went through Reno. And I remember we go through Sacramento and over to San Francisco. But we had never been to Las Vegas.

So was there anything that you found fascinating about it when you first arrived?

Well, I was -- yeah. I was pretty much not real receptive about the whole thing. But I did sign up for some classes at the university here because I did silk-screening. And it was an opportunity for me to be able to use the studios and to do some work. And then we became fast friends with Tom Holder, who's still with the university, and Cathy --

Art professor.

He's an art professor. Right. And Cathy Kaufman. So they became, you know, the first kind of like a core group of people that, you know, our group that we worked in.

So it was really hard for me to appreciate the subtlety of the desert at the time. And it was very small then. And somehow or another I thought it was going to look like, you know, adobes, kind of like Santa Fe. As you know it doesn't -- or didn't. So, yeah, it took me awhile to adjust I think. And especially -- and I mention the art because I think the effect on not just me coming to a completely different environment, but also coming and seeing the inspiration of the landscape, which I didn't think was much of an inspiration. You know, it was kind of like a one-two punch. But I got over it.

Good. So how does it feel to be labeled now "Queen of Las Vegas Culture"?

Well, you know, it's an honor. I mean I think my whole career has been pretty much of a privilege.

Could you tell me about that? Could you tell me about going to work for the city and then the county? Could you just give us an overview of what you --

Sure. Well, I started -- I answered an ad. The city was looking for somebody to do cultural

programming as part of their recreation department in -- '73 I guess it was, right? Two?

Yeah. I think '73.

So August of '72 you arrived.

Yeah. Right.

Right. Yeah. Right. So it was '73. Anyway, so they had all these people that were involved in the arts in town, which was mostly the Watercolor Society and the Allied Arts Council, sitting on this interview panel. And I remember the tests that they gave us like, you know, who painted the Mona Lisa? It was obviously written by somebody who wasn't really deep into the arts.

So did you do well?

Yes.

Okay, good.

So I was offered the job and I took it. And this base they had for me to program at the beginning was Reed Whipple, which the city hall had just vacated because they had used it as justice court. And then they gave it over to the recreation department and said, well, okay, make a cultural center out of it. Of course, there was no money at the time.

It was the temporary city hall, too, when they were building the city hall.

Right. Right. And so, anyway, I worked there. And I formed a bond with the Allied Arts Council because they were pretty much the only sort of umbrella group for the arts in town. And I did a lot of work with the Watercolor Society. Then, you know, the classic I didn't know I couldn't do it, so I did it. We formed the Rainbow Company Children's Theater with Jody Johnston, who is Totie Fields' daughter.

Could you just talk about that company just a bit?

Well, actually it started with Joan Snyder, who did a lot of work here at the university. She was an actress. Her husband built the shopping center up here on Maryland Parkway that now I think has theater in it. And it was originally built as a theater. It was a theater in the round. I'm trying to think of what else was in that center. But I think there --

So not the Boulevard. You're talking about the --

No. Up here south and on the right side of the university on Maryland Parkway. And there's like a shopping center. And in the corner of the shopping center right here was an actual theater that

was built for Joan's company. So she asked me to be on the founding board of the company, which I did.

What was the name of her company? Do you remember?

No. I don't remember right off the top of my head.

Anyway, we talked about -- we would have like meetings and talk about what was the mission and what we were going to do. And one of the things that we were interested in doing, but yet ultimately sort of rejected it because we had so much else to do with theater in Las Vegas because, you know, I mean it was a massive task -- and we thought about doing children's theater. So that didn't happen.

So then with my job, one day Jody walked in and said, you know, I'd like to have a job. And we talked about it. And she had done children's theater in Texas. So anyway, we just clicked. I mean we just really had many of the same ideas. She's hysterical, has a great sense of humor. With a mother like that, you would expect it. And we just kind of built it from the ground up.

And the idea was to be a company where children could not just act, but could learn all the craft of theater. So the way it's structured is they have open auditions for the performances. But then they also have open auditions for what they call the ensemble. And if you make it into the ensemble, then you do lighting, sound, costume, scenery, the whole business. So you learn all the parts of the craft. And I mean the kids really do it, too. It's not like somebody's standing there and they're watching.

Anyway, so it just -- it took after. She was very talented. We had Brian Kral, who was a friend of hers and came to work. He was a playwright. So he did, and I think still does, a lot of original work for the Rainbow Company.

Why the name Rainbow?

Well, we were brainstorming. You know, what do we need to call this thing? We wanted to brand it that it's something fun and kind of magical and something kids would kind of get involved with. And we were originally going to call it the Peanut Butter and Jelly Players.

PB and J.

PB and J. Right. And then we decided nay. So we did the Rainbow Company. And then I did the logo and the photos and everything for the brochures. And they got the kids involved. From the

beginning it was excellent theater. And by that I mean, yes, it was children's theater and there were children in the plays. There were also adults in the plays. But it was the best theater in town.

Wonderful.

No hands -- you know, no hands down.

It won a bunch of awards.

Yeah. They were invited to go to the Kennedy Center in Washington. And they were given an award as best children's theater company in the region. So anyway, you know, it was a lot of fun.

That's fantastic.

So I also got to get involved with starting the Junior Symphony, which later became the Civic Symphony. I worked with "Tasi," which was a local community theater group. Anyway, and we did a lot of galleries and things. And we built the Charleston Heights Arts Center, which was supposed to be a combination of library and art centers, which is what we did.

And I think that's really innovative because throughout the city you have those libraries and then you have the art centers beside them.

Right.

I'm always over at the West Las Vegas Arts Center and Library. And I just love what you guys do.

And they seem to be doing a great job over there. West Las Vegas was not built when I left.

So anyway, I got to be in kind of I think on the ground floor. And I remember one time sitting at the table with one of the architects. I was only in my 20s, you know. And I'm sitting there and I'm thinking you know what? If Ms. Barron, my fifth grade teacher, saw me in here, she'd come in and take me out of here and say what do you think you're doing?

But if she could see you now.

Yeah. So anyway, like I say it was pretty much of a privilege to be able to do that.

And then when my daughter was born, I didn't go back to work. I stayed with her for a little bit and did some consulting work with the Allied Arts Council. And then when I went to -- you want me go on with the county?

Well, I have some specific questions to ask. But when your daughter was born and you got

out of there, is that when you went into politics just a bit as a lobbyist?

No. That was when I went to work for the county.

Oh, okay. So you went to work for the county. So it was -- what? -- five years with the city, or six years?

From '73 to '80.

No. Julie was born in '79.

Yeah. But I officially left in '80 because I had maternity leave. And then I stayed home for about a year and a half or two years and did the consulting work for the Allied Arts Council. We did a business in the arts study.

Then we were at a social gathering. And the gentleman, Bruce Spaulding, who was the county manager at the time, said, well, you know, okay, Marchese, when are you going back to work? And I said, oh, I don't know. I'm thinking about it. He said, well, why don't you come work for me? So I said okay. Or I said I'd talk to him about it.

So I went and got a job as a senior budget analyst because I had done a lot of budget as like -- by the time I left the city my cultural thing was a division and it included the arts and special events. And we ran the city libraries under a contract with the county district library. We had historic preservation. And we had community schools, which was the first situation where we used the local junior highs as recreation centers for people. So when school closed we sent staff over and it became a recreation center. And it's still running. It's Fremont Junior High. So, anyway, that was kind of like the breadth of what we did at the city.

And before we talk to Lamar just for a moment, the Allied Arts Council, that's part of the city?

No.

No. It was a local nonprofit that was an umbrella group for arts groups.

So tell me just a little more about that and how that's operated, what they do.

Well, it's no longer in business.

It's defunct now.

Yeah. And it was basically an organization that was to help the arts groups to work together and help them to market, help them to have visibility in the community, help with getting grants, sort of

being a liaison with the State Arts Council for funding and that sort of thing. So it was an organization that was here long before we came here. So it was like one of the oldies.

But as soon as we got here we got -- I got on the board not very much longer after that. You know, it was a much smaller community there. And the arts actually -- people sort of met on a monthly basis and would talk about what they were doing. And it was like the dance company, the symphony, the visual artists, the theater people, you know, the whole sort of breadth of --
Dance.

Yeah. That would get together and talk about what they were doing. They put out a newsletter. So it would sort of publicize what was going on artistically in town so that people would come to the events and whatever.

So is there still a need for something like that here do you think?

Well, the State Arts Council seems to think so. And I know that they're working to try to get something put together that would serve that purpose.

And would the two of you become involved in that?

Possibly. I mean the concept of arts council is one that many communities have. The one here I think went out of business -- what? -- how many years ago? When Constance was running it.

Right.

Five or six years ago at least, maybe more.

Right.

And, anyway, it just went out of business because of funding difficulties. And then nobody's ever gotten it back together again. There have been some efforts. Like Pat said the State Arts Council, which is the state agency which is up in Carson City, you know, they would like to have an arts council formed for their own purposes, whatever. But it has to be one of things which -- it can't be imposed by them. It has to come from the roots. And nobody seems to be willing to put it together or make it happen. So it hasn't.

And that's why I think it kind of faded away because the arts organizations themselves started getting stronger. And so they didn't need somebody to market for them or fundraise for them. In fact, it was competitive if it did. So it sort of died a natural death I think.

But when we moved here it was a viable organization and one that had a purpose. I think over the

years as Pat said the organizations themselves, the major arts groups, grew to a point where they had their own market people. They had their own PR people or grants writers or whatever and didn't see a function for an organization that was doing -- you know, repeating what they were doing.

Tell me how the job at the library morphed into NPR?

Well, the job at library was kind of really amorphous when I got here. Charles Hunsberger wanted somebody to do things that most libraries didn't do. And at that point when we got here in '72, there was only the Clark County -- it was then called the Clark County Library District. The city had its own library. And it was downtown. And you had to be a property owner to be able to borrow a book. You had to live in the city and you had to be a property owner. So it was very restrictive.

So when Charles got here, one thing he started doing was talking to the City of Las Vegas about merging the libraries. And he first did it by contract. So there was a management contract. The city still ran the libraries and owned the libraries. But then it was managed by Clark County. *That's the arrangement when I came onboard.*

And then later on they actually merged. That was the Las Vegas Clark County Library District. *Right.*

But anyway, so back to my job, he just wanted me to sort of do things that were going to bring people into the library that might not come for other reasons. So at the time the Flamingo Library was the biggest library. And they had some branch libraries out in neighborhoods like in storefronts. There were lots of those storefront libraries that were just rented space. And then we had libraries out in the rurals, out in Goodsprings and out in all the little -- Blue Diamond and places like that. In fact, one was in an old converted bread truck. I mean --

That was Blue Diamond.

Yeah. It was. It was in an old truck. And they had trailers. And they had a book mobile to take the books around to the rural communities.

But anyway, so I basically got to sort of follow my interests. In the foyer of the library as you came in was a big open space. So I started booking art shows and would have shows. As you came into the front of the library, there was a gallery space. And I remember the first show we

did -- we had come from Kentucky. We had friends in the eastern part of the state in the mountain part of the state where the coalminers are and the poor people are. She had worked with a group of rural women to do quilts and then market and sell the quilts.

She, Pat?

No. This woman is a friend of ours that was still living there. So when I came here, I contacted her and said, you know, pack up 10 or 12 quilts and we'll show them in the library. And then we sold them. And we sold every quilt in the library. Every quilt that was in there was sold. And there were some beautiful --

Amazing work.

Yeah. There were some beautiful -- in fact, there was one quilt that we still kick ourselves we didn't buy.

Right.

Anyway, and then the library had a small theater that seated about 200 people. So I started programming the theater. So we would do silent films and have a piano player come in and play music to the silent films, or classic films. And then we would have lectures. We would have concerts.

Las Vegas at that time was ripe with musicians. This is before the strike when there were lots and lots of musicians in town, wonderful musicians that had classical training or jazz training, whatever. And they were looking for a place, an outlet, to play when they weren't doing what they did every night on the Strip. And so we'd bring in groups to come in and play.

And then we would get the library people to come in and do bibliographies that were doing. For instance, a series of films on westerns or whatever. So we would have the library do all the western books and hand out bookmarks that had all the books on it where if you like this movie, here's this book that's connected to it. So we tried to bring that connection in between the books and the programming.

Anyway, so I was doing all those things. And we also started a collection then -- this is before videotape. We used to collect 16-millimeter films and then lend them out to the public. Generally it was mostly institutions like preschools and private schools that didn't have a collection like the public schools did borrow a lot of our films. So I'd get to select the films and

put them in the film library and do all that.

But anyway, when I came here in '72, I had graduated from -- two years before that I was in Gainesville. I went back to graduate school and went to graduate school and got a degree in communications from University of Florida. And when I was there I did a lot of work with the radio station that was at the university, a public station.

So when we came to Las Vegas, after the first year or two, I said, you know, there's no public radio station in Las Vegas. And I was interested in that. And so I talked to my boss, Charles Hunsberger, again, and said why don't we -- and there were actually a couple of examples I think mostly in the South. Louisville ran a public radio station. I think somewhere in Alabama. Huntsville it may have been. Anyway, there were a couple of examples of libraries that were actually the licensees of public radio stations. So it wasn't completely off the wall then. You know, a library -- which I thought it was a connection. You know, it's information. What better way to get information out to the public than have a radio station?

But anyway, so I talked to Charles. And Charles says, hey, you know, I think it's a great idea. Let's go for it. But fortunately in hindsight, the library board had other ideas and didn't -- they were much more interested in building libraries, you know, bricks and mortar libraries and expanding the collection and all that because that needed to be done, obviously. So basically the library board rejected the idea of becoming a licensee.

So in December of 1975 it was, Pat and I and three or four other people in the community incorporated the Nevada Public Radio Corporation with the State of Nevada with the express purpose of becoming the licensee of a public radio station, but independent, not part of any institution. And so we started in '75. We incorporated. We had a board. And I became the chairman of the board of directors. Pat was on the board. And we started working outside of our jobs to put a public radio station on the air.

And Charles, you know, he sort of winked at me a lot because he knew what I was doing, you know. So it was okay with him to sort of --

Was he on the board?

No, he was not. But he was very supportive. He was very supportive. And the public radio station would not have happened without the library support at that early stage where Charles

basically let me sort of -- gave me time to do it on the sly. Yeah, I was still doing my job, but he knew I was also doing this.

So it took us four and a half years from the time we incorporated till we actually put it on the air in March of 1980, you know, because it's complicated. You just don't put a station on the air. You've got to go to the FCC. You've got to get permission. You've got to get the money. You've got to get a transmitter site. You've got to get all this kind of stuff. And we had our fits and starts. But slowly, you know, we built the board up and built up the support of the community.

And by '79, it was pretty clear it was going to happen. Before that it was kind of iffy. And in that time I thought, you know, I'd like to do this. I was really interested in -- even though -- so when it came to the point that the board was going to hire a general manager, I resigned from the board and became an applicant for the general manager's job.

And I resigned from the board so it wouldn't be a conflict of interest.

And she resigned. Yeah.

Who were some of those other early board members? I know you won't remember all of them.

Eddie Escobedo.

Eddie Escobedo. Eddie actually is the publisher of El Mundo, which is a Spanish language newspaper, and still is the publisher, editor and active in Hispanic politics in town. A guy named Lee Winston, who at that time worked for Channel 10.

He did public affairs and then he went to KCEP.

Yeah. And then he worked later on -- African-American gentleman. Later on picked up a guy named Bill Laub, Junior. His father was the CEO of Southwest Gas. And then a lawyer by the name of Steve Morris, who's still practicing in town. And we got some support from the Junior League of Las Vegas. They were one of the early supporters. They gave us some money as part of the quid pro quo. We had to put some Junior Leaguers on the board, which almost gave me the willies. But, oh, that's -- anyway, so I mean it was part of the whole community building of trying to get wide support from a lot of people.

But by '79, I'd say it was clear that it was going to happen. So I became the candidate.

They hired me. And I had left the library district I think in December of 1978 and became the general manager of Nevada Public Radio in January of 1979. So I was the sole employee for a while.

And then we hired a development director who was a woman that used to work with me at the library. I hired her away from the library district. Virginia Mulloy was her name. And then we hired a program director, a guy named Bob Dambach, who came in from -- Wichita I think it was? Wichita, Kansas? Anyway, started staffing up. And finally put a station on the air in March of 1980.

What was that day like?

Well, it was a big disappointment. I can tell you what happened. After all this struggle and everything -- we were supposed to sign on the air March 23rd, 1980. And we had a big party. And at the time the now chancellor of the university system, Mr. Jim Rogers, was married to -- Cheryl.

-- Cheryl Rogers. And Cheryl was on our board. And so we decided to have this big hoopla party. And Cheryl decided -- I mean she graciously said we could have it at her house. So the plan was at eight o'clock on March 23rd, 1980, we were going to flip the switch. And so we had this whole entourage of people having food and drinking and a hoot going on.

And I remember my engineer called me and said, well, the transmitter just blew up. So we're not going to sign on the air today. So I had to announce to all this assembled multitude guess what? You know how we've all been waiting for four and a half years? We're going to have to wait another day.

And in putting it all together, some tube burned up or whatever. So they had to send off to the manufacturer who air shipped it in the next day. And so we signed on the next morning. And the first thing we played was Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." The first thing we played was that so that we would -- but, yeah, it was kind of a disappointment it didn't happen on the day it was supposed to happen. But it happened the next day.

And so what was the format? Was it classical music and news?

Well, back in the day, back in that time, public radio stations were really trying to be all things to all people. And so the format was all over the place. But the anchors were always NPR News.

So the "Morning Edition" was always on from the beginning. During the midday's we would do classical music. And then we'd go to "All Things Considered" in the afternoon. And then in the evenings we did jazz. After eight o'clock at night was jazz overnight. And then on weekends was, you know, a mishmash of blues and spoken word and bluegrass music and Broadway music.

"Hearts of Space."

"Hearts of Space," the ambient music.

I found "Hearts of Space" when I was lobbying in Carson City. I would come in on Sunday nights, fly back up on Sunday nights and sit in the office and read the bills for the next day. And I found this thing on the public radio station in Reno. And it was called "Hearts of Space." So I called him. I said, ah, you've got to get this. This is really cool. And it became very popular.

So what was that like? I've never heard of that program.

Ambient music, sort of like --

It's kind of spacey music. It was a syndicated program out of San Francisco. But anyway --

Andreas Vollenweider and stuff like that.

Anyway, so the format was really kind of all over the place I can tell you trying to serve all particular needs that weren't being met by other radio. But over the years -- the university station came on the air in 1981. And so we started making changes based upon what was going on in the marketplace.

And in 1989, there was a big major change because we had been growing every year both audience-wise and money-wise. And then we had met this plateau in the mid, late 80s. The audience wasn't growing. It kind of had just leveled off. So we commissioned some research; had some people come in, look at the audience, and did some focus groups and whatever. You know, the thing that people said that what they knew us for primarily was the classical music and the news. And those are the two things that people said they wanted more than the other things that were going on because at that time the UNLV station was starting to do jazz.

So in 1989, we commissioned this research and decided to change our format and got rid of everything except classical music and news. And that made a lot of people mad because either they were used to -- you know, the bluegrass people wanted their bluegrass. And the blues people wanted their blues.

Yeah. We almost got divorced when he took the blues off.

But, you know, you have to -- the marketplace changes. You have to change with it or you're not going to survive. So we made those changes. And the audience again took a dip for a while. And then it started to go back up again.

But you worked with the university station and gave them your entire jazz collection --

Yeah, I did.

-- so they could continue.

Yeah. Well, that was part of -- part of the transition was -- when we talked to the guy then who was managing the station, they were beginning to play a lot of jazz on KUNV. And we were doing jazz. So I said to him, look, we'll give you our entire jazz record library if you promise you'll continue to do jazz. And then we'll tell our jazz audience it's over there. It's still there. It's just not here anymore. And that helped get the transition over from the jazz audience. And so the university station started doing more jazz. And we gave them all of our records. At that time it was all vinyl. So we gave them all of our record collection. And they did that. So that helped us with the transition to the more focused format of just news and classical music.

But even with that, you know, it became clear after the first couple of years that you're doing two things. The music lovers want more music. The news lovers want more news. And you're always trying to weigh and balance between how much of this and how much of that and when to program it and when to interrupt something. So like, you know, if there was a presidential election, you know, you would interrupt the classical music and put on a debate. Then you're going to catch hell from the music lovers. And so even in the early 90s, we started looking at, well, what's the solution to that?

Well, the solution to that is to have two radio stations, which is easier said than done because, again, you've got to go through the whole process of going back to the FCC. And the spectrum by the early 90s was much more crowded than it was ten years before because all these stations had come on. As the city has grown, it became a much more lucrative market for the commercial guys. And you've only got so much space on the dial.

But the idea came in the early 1990s to see what we could do about getting another radio station so we could separate the formats and have a 24-hour classical music station and 24-hour

news station. And we actually applied in 1996 to the FCC to separate and have another radio station. And it took them until 2002. Yeah. Nothing happens quickly. It took them until 2002, six years.

But that was more time than the first go-round.

Right.

Yeah. Yeah. It was. It was complicated because the only way that we could do it was -- KNPR's at that time frequency was 89.5. And there was a station at 88.1. KCEP was at 88.1. And then the next station up the dial from us was 90.5, which was the Christian station, KILA. And then there was us. So what we had to ask the FCC to do was get rid of 89.5, the frequency we were on. Move down the dial to 88.9. And that would then open up this new frequency at 89.7.

And the FCC doesn't like what they call contingent applications where this is contingent upon that. So they'll only do one thing at a time. So they said, okay, we'll let you move down here. But when the second station opens up what they usually do is say -- when a new frequency becomes available, it becomes available to everyone. So anybody and their grandmother that wanted to apply could have applied. And there was no guarantee that we were going to get the second frequency.

But we decided to take the risk. And we did it through some wonderful legal work. We have these great lawyers in Washington that were able to massage this whole process. We were able to get both stations. And then we made that move in 2003 to separate into two stations, KCNV for the classical station and KNPR, moving down from 89.5 to 88.9.

Wonderful. And thank you for that great overview.

I have a question, though, going back real early. You talked about those little libraries.

Yes.

Could you describe one of those tiny ones?

Well, I remember there was one, the one that springs to mind. There was one that served sort of Spring Valley. It was called the Charleston Heights Library. It was in the shopping center that's behind Arizona Charlie's.

Okay. Decatur and something.

Yeah. Decatur off of --

**Evergreen.*

Alta would be the closest.

Evergreen's back in there, too, because --

Anyway, it was a storefront. It was like probably maybe 2500, 3,000 square feet. But it was always very busy. There was another library on Tropicana that was a storefront.

And one of the things that Charles did was, after he did the consolidation with the Las Vegas Library so it became the Las Vegas Clark County Library District, he started getting the library board to approve bond issues and then going out to the public and selling the bond issues. And he was successful several times getting \$80 million or whatever for construction of the libraries. And then he started buying land.

And his concept was at every library he wanted to have a performance facility. He wanted to have a gallery. He wanted to have a theater. He really wanted to make them more community centers than just libraries.

I remember there was a library in West Las Vegas on D Street. And it was in the a little free-standing building. Ruby Duncan --

That's correct.

-- was I think -- she had this thing called Operation Life. And we were renting space from her in this little space there on the west side. And I remember going over there because I was not just in charge of programming the Flamingo Library. I was in charge of programming all the libraries. So if we were doing a film show or I would do a concert or whatever, if there was space in these little libraries, I would move these things around there and put them over there.

And then these limit rural libraries, you know, Blue Diamond and Goodsprings and those libraries, I remember going around to those little towns and I remember showing movies outside at night in the summertime; putting a big screen up. And people come out and sit down on the ground or out in the little playground and we'd show movies out on the big screen in these little towns.

Well, you know that they've taken your idea now and they show it in The District now on the side of a building.

Oh, really? Oh, okay. Cool.

Yeah. Oh, yeah.

And didn't you serve Nye and Lincoln at the time, too?

No. I think we had some agreements with them to do some things because I remember going up to -- because Charles -- again, I think he was really ahead of his time. The libraries in town -- you know, you had Las Vegas Clark County. Then you also had Henderson. And you had Boulder City. And you had North Las Vegas. But they all had separate library districts. And he talked -- actually not just the city -- he talked the entire state of Nevada into having a reciprocal borrowing agreement. And at one time there was a Nevada library card. With that library card you could borrow materials from any library in the state, public libraries. And he also at one time talked -- UNLV Library was a part of it.

So the academic library and the public libraries were altogether. So with this one library card, if you were traveling wherever you were, you could borrow material. He had this system where he had all the books got piled into a van and he would drive them around and drop them off -- you know, if you dropped off your book, let's say, at Flamingo Library that was a North Las Vegas book, it was okay. And he would take the book back to North Las Vegas.

So he was very innovative in getting what had been -- you know, it used to be like, okay, if you didn't live in North Las Vegas or you didn't live in Henderson, within the boundaries of those little borders, you couldn't borrow a book. And so he was very innovative in getting the libraries to work together and then also with this bond issue money starting to build libraries all over this community.

So all these libraries that you see all over the place now, you know, the Rainbow Library, the West Las Vegas, the West Charleston -- the one out on West Sahara, rather -- all those libraries all over the place were built when he was there. So he did a wonderful job.

Unfortunately, he got involved in some politics because -- I think what happened in my view is that, you know, the government, city and county commissioners, they didn't care about libraries. It was basically a nuisance. And as long as it was small and nobody -- but when Charles started doing some politics about getting a portion of the property tax and part of the tax money to go to the libraries that meant money that now didn't go to the city didn't go to the county.

I see.

There's a constitutional cap on how much property tax you can charge that's a combination of all the entities.

And the same thing with getting the bonds. There's a bond limit. So if you get bonds for libraries, that's bonds I can't get for the hospital or for something else. And I think that he got -- and the way that the library board -- because it was a city-county, half of the board was appointed by the city commission and a half was appointed by the county commission. So it was a political board. And I think what happened was some of the politicians got crossways with him and appointed people to the library board with the vision of get rid of Charles.

That's too bad because one of the things that impressed me most about the city was the libraries when I moved here in 1992. I couldn't believe it.

Yeah. I think basically Charles was the one that was responsible for all of that. And Charles was kind of a -- you know, he wasn't subtle. And he was kind of a bull.

And he probably had to be to get all of that done.

Yeah, he did. And a lot of people didn't like him because he was a bull and he was tenacious. But he got things done. And he was very -- I remember he was quoted one time -- because he had this idea about libraries. And somebody at the R-J had said to him something about books. And he said you want books, go to the bookstore. Go to Barnes & Noble, you know.

So eventually the library board really hounded him out. I think he made a deal basically to say, okay, I'll leave, but pay me off and do whatever. And he left. And unfortunately since then, I think the libraries haven't had that same kind of vitality and innovation that he had when he was here. And it's been -- you know, it's been political.

Well, certainly, for example, with this administration while they have the facilities for performance and exhibit and that kind of stuff, they pretty much don't have the staff that does it anymore. So it's available for rental to the community. So I'm sure arts groups and things --

Well, the kinds of things that I used to do was actually programming the library and putting on -- you know, the libraries produced themselves. Now like Pat said they've said, okay, we have these facilities. They're available for use. But we're not going to program them. If you want to come in, you know, mister community guy, and you want to rent our space and put on a concert or a

show or whatever, you can do that. And we encourage it, but we're not going to do it ourselves. *But, see, the City Cultural Recreation Department does do that still. They do the programming over at West Las Vegas.*

Because I get a calendar every quarter.

Yes. The RQ. So they do the programming at Charleston Heights and West Las Vegas, all the libraries that are in their jurisdiction. It's not the library district that provides that service. But it's a good partnership.

I want to know more about your work with the county. What were some of your favorite things that you did at the county?

Well, I started at the county as I said as a budget analyst. Then I spent one and a half sessions as one of two chief lobbyists for the county.

What was that work like because that to me is so different from some of the other things that I've heard about you?

Well, the gentleman that -- Bruce Spaulding, the guy that was the county manager that suggested I come over and work for the county for a while, was the kind of boss that had a talent for figuring out what people could do even if the people didn't realize they could do it themselves. So he picked me to lobby. And I thought he was crazy. And not only that, but I was in charge of taxation. And you're talking humanities major here. Even though I was in the budget office, you know, it was a lot of distance information.

A funny story -- well, two funny stories. The first session I lobbied was the session that was the big fight about taxes. And that's when they put together this formula that was a combination of property and sales tax and when one went up the other went down. And it was in my humble opinion not a very good move, but they did it.

What session was that? Do you know what year it was?

'83? 81? I forgot what I was going to say.

I'm sorry.

That's okay. Oh, so anyway, they put me in charge of taxation. And I was working for a gentleman by the name of Guy Hobbs, who is a brilliant economist and really knows everything there is to know about taxation in Nevada. He worked for the county at the time, but now he's out

and has his own consulting firm.

So I said, well, you know, I don't want to go up there and do taxes. I don't know taxes. He says, oh, it'll be okay. You go up there. And when you have to testify, you just call and I'll send somebody out to do the testifying and they'll know about taxes.

Well, my usual Sunday evening I'm sitting in my office and reading the bills that are coming up for the week. And it's just bunches of taxation. So I call up and I say, Guy, you've got to get somebody out here. He said, oh, no, you can do it. I said what do you mean I can do it? He said yeah. And I said, well, how am I supposed to do it? He said, well, you know, just read the law and compare it to the tax system? I mean it's like learn art in the Renaissance. So I was so ticked off. I mean if he had been in the room at the time, I just would have punched him out. But I did it and it was one of the biggest favors that he ever did for me. So I learned a lot about government and about how government works and about -- not just from what's in statute, but from how the process works, how people work and that sort of thing. So it was really an amazing thing.

In fact, I was just so green. You know, I really didn't know. But I had to testify before the senate taxation committee. And my boss had said to me under no circumstances are you to compromise. So I got into the meeting. And it was a difference between whether or not there was going to be a property tax election or whether we would be allowed to make a little bit of flexibility on our own.

So the chairman of the committee was Jim Gibson and was a major legislative person in the state. He was "the" person in the state at the time. And he asked me during the presentation if I would consider -- if they allowed us to do like four pennies on the dollar or whatever, which generates a lot of money -- but if we were allowed to do that, then would we give up this whole thing that we were doing? And it just popped out of my mouth. And I said, Senator, you're asking me whether I'd rather be shot or hung.

And the next morning newspaper headlines: Lobbyist said this. And I was afraid to call because I knew I was going to get fired. And I finally connected with my boss and he just thought it was hysterical.

Okay, great. I love that.

So it was really an amazing experience. And the other thing I learned -- I don't know. You probably have people who have done things in the archives about Jim Joyce, who was a very prominent political --

Kingmaker.

-- kingmaker, basically. And I thought, oh, boy, I'm going to get to see Jim Joyce in action. And now I'm going to know how to do this. So when I first got there and there weren't that many hearings, I would go to whatever hearing he was going to just to see what he was doing. So after about four hearings -- and at each of those four hearings, he sat in the back of the room and worked a crossword puzzle -- I thought, you know, what's this?

And then, finally, it dawned on me that he sat in the back and worked a crossword puzzle, but previous to that he brought up the hotshots from Las Vegas to testify, you know, suggested what they should say and blah, blah, blah. So he was sort of like the choreographer and they were the dancers. And I thought, oh, okay, I get it. It's not about him being prominent. It's about him using prominent people to make his case.

Anyway, like I say it was a very interesting experience and I learned an awful lot about government and about people and taxes.

You worked with a public arts program. Tell me about that and how that works.

Well, actually, I was doing quite a bit of that with the city. We did a big mural project that was on most of the libraries around the city at the time including the one that was in Ruby's building. We brought a guy down named Bob Beckman, brought him down from Seattle through a grant from the State Arts Council. And he did murals with kids from schools throughout the city community.

So is that a continued thing or did that just end?

The city's still doing public art.

Yeah. That ended. But before I left I put together the legislation for the city to have a city arts commission. And they didn't act on it before I left, but several years later they did. And that commission is still doing public art murals.

And then when I went to the county -- well, after I did the lobbying and worked in the budget office, then I was given a new department to found. After that I went out in the private sector for about a year and a half and then came back when Pat Shalmy, who was the county

manager at the time, said he decided he wanted the county to get into the cultural business. So I became part of Parks and Recreation in the cultural division. And then while I was there, over that period of time, I then took over recreation, park maintenance, and the museums. And we did a lot of environmental stuff. And that's something I'm very proud of is the environmental work that we did.

Give me some examples.

The Wetlands, which is 2800 acres of land out in the southeast part of the valley. It's the Las Vegas Wash. It's probably one of the most significant environmental projects that this community will ever see. In 2003, it won an award from Harvard University as one of five best environmental projects of its kind in the world. And it's still in progress and we've gotten a lot of Bureau of Land Management dollars from the auctions to be able to do that.

And we have 2400 acres out in the northwest part of town where we're doing -- it's a wildlife area and we're doing a recreational shooting park as part of that. And then we acquired about 1200 over at the base of Red Rock to be kind of a buffer from Red Rock to the community.

Keep the apartments out of Red Rock Canyon, right?

No, that wasn't it, unfortunately.

Or casinos.

Yeah. Exactly. I forgot where I was going with that. Oh, public art. And so part of what I did at the county with the cultural division was we started a public art project. And we've been doing a number of projects where we're putting art in public places and art in the design of some of the parks, you know, just kind of melding it into the community. I think it's pretty important that we look like what we are.

And I want both of you to answer this. What do you say to people -- and they say this to me all the time -- but there's no culture in Las Vegas?

They should have been here in '72.

How do you answer that, Lamar?

Well, I mean I think that there's plenty of culture in Las Vegas. Yeah. Pat said it's bigger, it's better than it was many years ago even though I liked the town a lot better when it was a lot smaller. But, no, I mean if you pick up a newspaper or just listen to a radio station or whatever,

there's plenty of things going on all the time. There's more things than you could even do, really. If you think about all the stuff that goes on -- I don't dismiss all the things going on the Strip. All that stuff is art, all the Cirque du Soleil shows. I mean, you know --

And UNLV.

Yeah. Absolutely.

UNLV, certainly.

Back in the day when it was struggling to get the arts recognized, I used to joke and say, oh, heck, you know, this community is never going to accept the arts until the casinos get involved in it.

Well, they are. We have the Guggenheim. We have Broadway shows that are coming in town.

We have the Bellagio and all that kind of stuff.

And I think the other factor that really helped it to grow was early on there was an enormous array of talent here in town because people came here as dancers and musicians and performers. And they could stay here and have a family and not have to travel all the time. So you had musicians that trained at Juilliard. You had dancers that were from prominent dance companies in New York.

Should I tell her my story about the trumpet guy?

Please. Let her tell me.

When first I started with the city, there was no place to put any of the events. So I started this program called Artworks. And I put performing events in like areas all over town out in the streets. It was called Artworks and it was like public works. So one of the groups that I worked with was the Las Vegas Jazz Society, which was another long-time organization. And at the time Monk Montgomery, the jazz guitarist, was the president. And Jay Cameron was vice president. And Chico Alvarez was head of the musicians union and also on the State Arts Council board.

Anyway, so I was working with them. And we had this concert going. And it was in city hall in the plaza. And this group was playing and everybody was out there. And I was feeling pretty good. And I leaned over to Jay and I said to Jay, boy, you know, this is a good group. That guy that's playing trumpet, I said, boy, he's going to go somewhere. And Jay looked at me and said, yeah, he's the lead trumpet player for Blood, Sweat & Tears. So there was a time in Las Vegas when you got the top for the community.

Anyway, so I think the fact that there were a lot of practicing artists here in the beginning had a lot to do with how it later grew.

That reminds me of another connection. You know, you're talking about the library district being the birthplace for the radio station. The other one that really helped us get started was the musicians union. And the union then was really quite strong. This is before -- there was a strike, you know, in the 80s when --

That canned music came in after that.

Yeah.

Yes. Yes.

Right. Yeah. And before that every casino had a house band. And so there were lots of musicians all over town. And the union was very strong.

So there was this little transitional period when I left the library. And before we had a building of our own or a place to go, the radio station staff, of which there was only three or four, we needed a place to be. And so the musicians union, they used to have a little office over on Duke Ellington Way and Tropicana, which is now over there where the Hooters is.

That's right. It's in that area.

Right.

Yeah. Well, they had a building on the corner of Duke Ellington Way and Tropicana. It was their own. It was an office building. And then behind that they had a big performance space. And the musicians used to come there to rehearse. So you'd hear great music going all the time, people coming in just to use the space.

But the union wound up renting us like four little offices because they had some space in the building. So I quit the library in '78. And in '79, we moved over and we were actually in the musicians union building for about a year before we moved into our next place we moved in over our little building on Sam's Town.

But the union -- there was a guy named Mark Tully. He was the president. And then Chico Alvarez was one of the officers. And he was a musician and he was with the State Arts Council. So we had a bunch of people there that were very supportive of the radio station because they knew we were going to do classical music and we were going to do jazz, which was going to

help them, you know. So they were very nice to rent us these spaces for a nominal amount of money.

And I think we even had an agreement with the union that once we got on the air that we could do any concerts in town -- we could tape them and not have to pay the musicians as long as it was this local broadcast only. Or we can have concerts in the studio, bring people in, and the musicians would play for free. And we wouldn't have to pay the union.

Later on that changed as things got -- you know people changed. The people that were in the top moved on. But they were one of the early, early supporters of the station, too, was the union musicians.

Tell me about the support of Bill Boyd.

Bill Boyd. Well, what happened was, when we were scratching around looking for a studio space, we originally were looking to rent. And we looked around town trying to find rental space because a radio station has a very special acoustical needs and electrical needs. And it's difficult to find rental space where you can go into and convert it. But we initially looked at rental space. So we looked around town various places and really couldn't ever find anything adequate.

And so the board decided, well, why don't we look at building something for ourselves? So then we had to have land. And, luckily, this fellow I told you about, Steve Morris, who was on the board at the time, was a local attorney. And he had been in town quite awhile and done a lot of work with the casino industry and somehow knew the Boyds.

What was happening was, when we were in formation, they were going to build Sam's Town out on Boulder Highway. That was the first casino out in that area because at that time there was the Showboat, which was down much closer to town, and there was nothing on Boulder Highway. There were no casinos on Boulder Highway. So it was kind of a stretch to build because it would be way out there on Boulder Highway.

Out in the "dunies."

Out there. So anyway, Steve Morris went to the Boyds and said, you know, I'm on the board of this organization and we need a little place to build our radio station. Would you, you know, consider giving us some land or leasing us some land or whatever? And they agreed.

And, initially, it was a 20-year lease. And it was like a half-acre of land. And it was then

right on the edge of the property that they owned. And we had set some money aside for the down payment. And we had to go borrow the money. And we went to Wells Fargo Bank to borrow the money and they turned us down, as naturally any bank would do because, you know, it's a little fledgling non-profit organization that's not even on the air yet. But Bill Boyd personally guaranteed the note because I think -- the building costs like \$250,000. And we scraped together like \$50,000 for the down payment. And we had to borrow \$200,000 to build this little 4500-square-foot building out in Sam's Town's parking lot.

But without Bill, one, leasing us the land and letting us have a place to be and then guaranteeing the loan so we could -- because otherwise they wouldn't lend it to us. So he was basically putting himself on the line saying I'm putting myself on the line for \$200,000 that these people are going to make it. So he was really instrumental in helping us get started because without that we wouldn't have had a place. So that was very important to us that we had.

And then we were at the union and we wanted to go on the air as soon as possible. And so at the time you had a guy on my board named Len Hornsby. And Len was the head of the convention authority. And at that time the convention authority managed what is now the Silver Bowl, where UNLV plays its football games. But it was owned at that time by the convention authority. It later became part of UNLV. But then the convention authority owned it.

And so I said to Len do you have any space that we could use temporarily, while we were building our building? And so he said, well, I think we've got some space out at what's called the Silver Bowl. Now it's the Sam Boyd Stadium. He said I think we've got some space out there. Let me see what I can do for you.

So he let us use -- it was 800 square feet in a former janitor's closet underneath the stadium where we could put our studios. And we could broadcast from there. And then we would still have our offices over at the union. So we had offices at the union and then we the studios were underneath the stadium. And so we signed on the air in March of 1980 from that little 800-square-foot space. And we broadcast from there from March of 1980 -- and we moved into our new building in December of 1980. So from March through December we were broadcasting out there in the stadium for that eight months or however long it was.

And then we moved into the new building of December of 1980. And then we were in that

little building till 1998 when we moved to the community college.

So he was one of those people that just came along at the right time and had enough faith in us to put his name on the dotted line. He guaranteed the loan and gave us some space to build our building.

So did you have any other casino families that helped out along the way?

No. Well, we didn't have a lot of support from the casino industry at the time. Later on we had some support from the Four Queens. There was a girl named Jeanne Hood, who was the only woman head of a casino hotel at the time. And she was supportive. And Elaine Wynn over the years has been on and off supportive of the station with some funds and one thing and another. But most of it depends upon -- it depends pretty much on who the -- like who the person is, if they have an affinity for what we do as far as news goes or the classical music.

But, no, I think the Laub family -- again back to the Laub family -- it would have been Bill Laub Junior first and then his father later came on the board. And I always joke to them about it. I say, oh, you're following in your son's footsteps, because the junior was the first one on the board. And he had gone to school and gotten in radio when he was in undergraduate school. And he came on the board. And he worked for Southwest Gas. His dad was the CEO. And his brother worked there. So it was a family business. And they were very supportive. We got a lot of support from Southwest Gas early on in the 80s.

But I think casino business outside of Bill -- not really.

You might want to mention Reynolds.

Well, yeah, the Reynolds Foundation, of course, you know, helped us. But that was later on when we built the new building.

So now, the building at the community college -- well, not community college anymore.

Now it's the College of Southern Nevada. But it was the community college then. Right.

But that building, is that a separate building from the college?

Yes. Yeah. That was a deal -- again, when we signed the -- we had a 20-year lease with the Boyds for that little piece of property. And we signed it in 1979. So it was going to expire in 1999. And, you know, when you go 20 years, that's forever. And it's a dollar a year, you know.

So as time wore on what happened was we were on the edge of the property. The Boyds

bought everything from where we were all the way down to the next casino, which was the little Nevada Palace, which was the next casino down. It was all just raw land. So then they built this big RV park. So now instead of being on the edge of the property, we're smack down in the middle of the property. So they had told us by the early 90s, they said, you know, we're probably not going to renew the lease because you're right now in the way. We want to expand. We can't expand. So they had told us. They gave us plenty of time.

And so by the early 1990s -- we knew the lease was going to expire in '99 -- we had to do something. So I started scratching around and saying, okay, you know -- we did it right. We built our building because by that time we had paid off the loan and the building was free and clear. But we didn't own the land.

What happens to a building when you don't own the land?

Well, they wound up taking it over. It was their building because the lease says at the end of the lease if you don't move it -- you can't move it, it's it was a cinder block building -- it becomes their building.

But, luckily, what happened was the president of the community college -- Dr. Richard Moore at the time was his name. And Dr. Moore, when I read about him coming to town -- I did some research on Dr. Moore and saw he came from Pasadena Community College -- no -- Santa Monica Community College in California. And I knew that on the campus of the Santa Monica Community College was a public radio station because it's a small group of people, you know, and I've been in it 20 years. So I knew all these people. I knew there was a station there.

So I set up an appointment with Dr. Moore. He had only been here for a few weeks or a few months. And I came over and met with him and told him our situation. I said, you know, what we're going to do -- we need to build a new building. We'd like to build it on your campus. And so we talked and within an hour we had a handshake deal.

So we went out and kicked the dirt and said okay. He said which campus do you want it on, because they had separate campus sites? I said I want it on the campus that's in the middle of town, the Charleston campus. And he said how much land do you need? I said I'll need like an acre. So we sort of went out and walked around. We said, okay, this looks like a good place. We wrote up a lease. It had to go to the board of regents and have it approved. It's a 99-year

lease. I don't do 20-year leases anymore. I learn from my mistakes. So it was a 99-year lease. And they gave us some things; we gave them some things. So we signed the lease. So we had the land. That was the first part of the deal.

And then what we thought we were going to have to do is go out and do a big capital campaign to raise the money. But luckily again, Bill Laub Senior was a friend of the chairman of the Reynolds Foundation, Fred Smith. And they were old republican politic buddies. So Bill went to Fred and said, you know, here's what's going on with the station. We need to build a new place. Would you guys consider a grant from the radio station? And they said, sure, submit it.

So I had been writing grants for 30 years. It was the hardest grant I had ever written because it was one of these grants that say, okay, you've got to give us all this information. You've got one page. One page. That's the preliminary one. And you have to submit a preliminary grant application and justify and have a list of things. You've got to tell them about. So anyway, I sent the grant in. And then they came back and said, okay, we like that. Now you have to send us a full grant. And you can now do four pages. They didn't like a lot of stuff. Like I say I've written many, many grants in my years. But that grant probably got revised about 40 or 50 times because you had to keep paring it down and paring it and paring it down because we were asking for four and a half million dollars.

What a difference, 250,000. Wow.

Yes. Yeah. So anyway, we finally submitted the grant to the Reynolds Foundation and got a letter one day that said it's yours. Unlike most foundations that give you money, they have these matching formulas. The Reynolds if they like what you do, they give it to you a hundred percent. So everything you want -- so everything was there, four and a half million bucks. So we got the grant I think in 1996 -- yeah, '96 -- and went under construction in '97 and moved in in '98. Now, we are on the community college's land. It's their land. But it's a 99-year lease. So it's going to be there quite awhile.

And one of the things that the Reynolds Foundation did do is they make you set aside a percentage of the grant, which in our case would have been about a million dollars, for an endowment fund. And we hadn't had an endowment before. So we decided to go ahead and do a bigger endowment fund with a goal two million dollars. So we raised that two million dollars. And we still have that

money now. And that creates more than that now. And the idea of those dollars is that it's restricted for upkeep of the building. So, you know, you've got a ready source of funds right there. So if we have roof leaks or the air conditioner blows or you need to replace all of the electronics or whatever, there's a ready source of cash. You go there and just take the money out of the -- you can't touch the principal, but you can get the earnings. And so the earnings have been doing okay.

And right now, in fact, we've been in the building ten years. It's hard to believe, but ten years. And I was just at the station yesterday. And they are repainting all the walls. They're putting in new carpeting. They're going to repaint the outside of the building. And they're all using the endowment money for that. So it's money that you don't have to go out and raise. It's money right there for that purpose.

So the Reynolds Foundation was another, obviously, integral -- I mean a very key part of our growth was that they were there to -- because we were at the stage where we really needed more room and we really needed to expand. And we just didn't have the fiscal capacity to do so. But once we moved into that building, we've got huge performance space. We've got lots of -- the technology is state of the art. And we've been able to maintain that not just by replacing equipment as it ages. Technology changes as it does all the time. So I mean we've really built a top of the line facility.

And one thing I also wanted to mention is, you know, during the 80s and into the 90s -- we had built KNPR in 1980 sort of following Charles' example of construction and building. So we started expansion across the state because our name was Nevada Public Radio. But at the time there was really only service in Reno. They have a station at the university there, and then Las Vegas. The rest of the state was uncovered. And the other reason why is we wanted to go to the state. We wanted to go to the state to get some funding from the state legislature. Well, if you're only serving Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada, all those rural legislatures say, well, what's in it for me?

So we started building first what they call translators, which is a device that picks up the signal and rebroadcasts it. And we built them in Tonopah. We built them in Beatty. We built them in Searchlight. We built them in Laughlin. We built them in Mesquite. And then we started building stations. There's a station on the air in Tonopah. There's a station on the air in a Panaca,

which is in Lincoln County. There's now a station in St. George, Utah. There's a station in Ely. Lund. Ely.

Lund. Ely. Right.

She has the station calls memorized.

So now we have six radio stations that belong to us and about ten rural translators. We have one in California serving Ridgecrest, California, and one at Lake Havasu City, Arizona. So we're really serving this sort of tri-state, you know, where Arizona and Utah and Nevada and California all come together. In fact, we just applied, because the FCC just had a window right before -- for four or five other locations -- and that will depend on what the FCC does -- because there's still parts of the state that are not well served.

So we continue to be very entrepreneurial as to look at the opportunities for expansion and for more coverage because the idea of if you want -- you've got to have a signal before you can get any service. So that's the first thing is to get a signal available out in the rural parts of the state because, you know, they pay taxes, too. They should have the same access to public radio as people that live in the city.

So we built this whole rural network. And we got a lot of grant support. There were federal grants available, and still are, for some of those expansions. So we were able to use those federal funds to expand our network. So now I'd say we've got -- we're serving about a 50 -- no -- about a 40,000-square-mile area of the states of Nevada, Arizona, California and Utah.

That's amazing. That's simply amazing.

So, Patricia, what do you see as the future? When you look at what's happening in the county and city now when it comes to our cultural affairs, what would you like to see happen in the future?

Well, I think it's important that local government gets involved in helping these things to grow. And I think it's equally important that nonprofits become a partner with local government to see that these things happen. And I think that's pretty well established. I think that's pretty well set in stone, both of those local governments, anyway. And Henderson has a section of cultural programming, too. But they're pretty much a part of -- recognized as part of the quality of life services that local governments are to give.

I mean I always used to joke and say, you know, with parks and recreation and culture, most people don't want to have to have government service. I mean nobody wants to have to call the police or to get their tax bill or call the firemen. But they do want what parks and recreation and culture does. So it's a good way of reaching the community and serving the community for local governments in addition to what they do with the other kinds of services.

So I think that's probably what's going to continue to happen. I think the nonprofits will get bigger and better. I think the casinos are probably going to get more involved in the arts. I see a lot of the organizations that have been here for a long time returning and are obviously going to be -- I mean Nevada Dance Theater and the symphony and the Fine Arts Museum, the Las Vegas Arts Museum at Sahara Library, all of them are obviously moving into areas where they're more mature, more serving of what the community does.

You know, you asked me how I felt about being the "Queen of Culture" and I feel pretty good about that. But I also feel pretty good with the work that I did with recreation and museums and environmental stuff. And I think being able to pair things on a local government level with each other is support for all of them. I mean it's like protection for all of them. But it also gives the arts a much better view of what could be available to them in terms of performance venues, in terms of visibility and experience. I mean we do an aviation museum at the airport. Thirty million people come through. So you've got huge amounts of opportunity I think when you are combined with other kinds of services to be able to provide that. Whether it's a library or a recreation center or a sports facility or a park or whatever, all of those things can be venues for the arts, both performing and visual.

Good. What time do we have?

I have a quarter to 12.

Okay. So about 15 more minutes?

Okay.

Now, you guys decided to retire at the same time. Now, how could you possibly do that to the city?

Well, it's time for Lamar and Pat to have a little Lamar and Pat time. Yeah. You know, this is not something we did lightly because we both have jobs that we really enjoy and jobs that we're

committed to and are causes as much as they are jobs. But, you know, we had both been at it for 30-plus years. And neither of us is getting any younger. And we love to travel. And we want to see more of our kids. And we want to have more time to ourselves.

The jobs are pretty all-consuming. You're up early in the morning. You're going to all events in the evenings, during the weekends. You're always -- and the radio -- if the radio's on you're working because you're listening to what -- uh-oh, what was that dead air? I have to call the station. That was ten seconds of air. What's going on? So if you're listening to the radio station, you're working, you know.

So, yeah, we talked about it. And I had told my board some years ago, probably three or four year ago. I said I'm not going to be there forever and you need to go through some sort of succession planning process. And so the board agreed. And we hired a consultant. And we did a whole internal succession planning process to try to identify if there's going to be an internal candidate, which we did. So we went through that whole process of making sure there was a smooth transition. And I had more control over that than Pat does because she works for a government where I work for a board. And I can go to the board and we can talk to them and they can make decisions easily.

But, you know, March of 2007 was the time when Pat had 30 years in with the retirement system. And that was a key date. You can retire with the maximum amount of money you can get from the system. So that was the date we decided on. And I had to really twist her arm because she kept saying, well, I've got so many things that need to be done and this project and that project. And I said, Pat, it's the nature of being a manager or an administrator that it's never going to be done, ever. There's always going to be something else. So you just have to sort of pick a date and just jump.

And I was really concerned because even though she was head of Parks and Recreation, she doesn't recreate well. She's always busy doing stuff, got things going and all that. But I have to admit she's taken to it. She's taken to the idea.

That's great.

So like I say it took a lot of thought. And I had built a staff at the radio station that I was very pleased with and I knew that could take over and do what I was doing. I mean they would do it in

a different way, take a different direction, of course, because they're different people. But I knew they were competent and we had competent people in all of the key positions. I had a good working relationship with the board.

There's one thing that Charles Hunsberger taught me. When I was green and was watching him at board meetings because I would sit in on the library board meetings, I would see what he did and what he didn't do. And Charles was -- for all of his wonders, he used to hide things, not tell people things. And then they would find out and they would be mad at him because he didn't tell them when he knew because he was -- so one thing I realized early on --

Full disclosure.

Yeah. Yeah. So one thing I learned early on is to communicate with the board constantly especially if it's bad news. Tell them first because they're going to find out anyway. And make sure you have really good communication with the board because in a nonprofit -- where nonprofits get into trouble is where boards are starting to take on staff functions versus board functions. As long as they understand what their role is -- and they're not there to operate the radio station.

In fact, when I would take prospective board members, the board people would come with us. And I'd tell them early on I'm going to use the F word. The F word is fundraising. You're expected to do it. And also I would tell them by tradition and agreement the board does not involve itself in programming or day-to-day operations. So that if you want to -- if there's something that you don't like about the programming, you have the same right to complain as anybody else because I listen to anybody. But I'm not going to take your decision, say, over anybody else's because that's not your job.

But anyway, it worked out fine. The transition went well. The board was involved from the get-go. They put a committee together, a subcommittee of the board, to do the whole process of recruiting for the job. Flo Rogers was the person that was the internal candidate. And we always told her you're going to have competition. It's not going to be just you. And we're going to look at people from the outside. But, ultimately, it came down that the board chose her to be the successor. And I think she'll do a fine job -- I think she's doing a fine job.

So it was just one of those things where you just said, well, it's time. It's time to do

something else.

It was hard because the board of county commissioners had approved a 20-year plan. And we were swimmingly in terms of realizing that -- I mean when I left there were thousands of acres of parkland that was added, new recreation centers, new buildings and some of these preservation projects. So it was really hard to walk away from a lot of things being on the drawing board.

But I used to tease Lamar and say that the yogas say that the last third of your life is supposed to be for yourself. So at some point you have to say, okay, if my lifespan is X, do I have a third left?

Okay, great. So I know that part of the plan is to travel. Where have you been so far?

Well, right before we left my swansong at the radio station in March was a station trip to Vietnam and Cambodia.

That's right. I heard about it.

And it was pretty wonderful. Twenty-one people went with us. So we spent two weeks in Ha Noi and then in Saigon and then over into this little town called Siem Reap, which is right next to Angkor Wat where all the Cambodian temples are. And that was just an incredibly wonderful, wonderful trip.

And then we went to New Zealand with our kids. When we travel we always like to travel with our kids.

That's wonderful.

And so we all go in a big entourage. Actually, there were six of us because my daughter has a boyfriend and my son has now a fiancé. So there were six of us that went on the New Zealand trip. And that was a wonderful trip. And when we do that we say, okay, everybody gets to pick one thing they want to do. And then we pick the route on where we're going to do based on what people want to do.

And we just got back from a 3700-mile seven-state road trip. We went by car up to California, Oregon, Washington, and then over to Idaho, Montana and Wyoming and made a big loop. And we stopped along the way, visiting friends that we have all these various places.

And the next big trip we're planning would be probably next year to Egypt.

Oh, how wonderful.

It was going to be '08. But our son's getting married. So we figured we would postpone it for one

more year so that they could come, too.

Oh, that's wonderful.

We've been all over.

We bought a house at the beach. So we'll be in Florida for the summers.

Yeah. We just bought a vacation house. But we've been to Hong Kong and we've been to Bangkok and we've been to Tahiti. And we've been to Europe. We've been to --

Morocco. I loved that.

-- Morocco, which was a very nice trip.

Portugal, Spain.

So there's a lot of places we've been, but a lot of places we want to go.

That you still want to go. That's wonderful.

This issue of Smithsonian Magazine has 28 places you should go before you die. So we're checking those off.

And we've only done a third of them. So --

Have you seen the Bucket List yet?

I haven't seen the Bucket List. But that's pretty much -- that's it, you know.

Now, are you still involved in organizations, civic organizations and social organizations here in the city?

Yeah. I was on the founding board of the Outside Las Vegas Foundation. I'm still on that. I'm also on the founding board of the Las Vegas Springs Preserve that's over with the Water Authority.

And he's got lots of stuff that he's doing.

Not that much. I decided to -- there's a program that the courts have called CASA. It stands for court-appointed special advocate. The juvenile courts have volunteers that are assigned a case, basically a family that's in a foster care system. And so I went to the training last summer. And then they assigned me a case. And I've been working with these boys that are in foster care with their grandmother. So I've been in and out of juvenile court, which has been kind of an interesting experience of sitting -- anyway, and I have a soft spot in my heart for kids. And I'm also interested in the legal system. So it's a good way of sort of marrying those two things together,

keeping up with these boys. And you keep up with the case until it's resolved. And once it's resolved, they give you a new case. You only have one case. But sometimes it can be pretty heavy duty, depending on the case.

So I've been doing that. So I've been in and out of court several times. And things are sort of on hiatus right now until April because the courts have given the parents a list of things they've got to do to get the kids back. So they gave them six months. And then in April they'll bring them back into court and say, okay, here's all the things you were supposed to do. Did you do them or didn't you? So I've been doing that.

And then I'm in Las Vegas Rotary Club, which is the old Rotary Club in town. And I'm on the board of the Rotary Club.

And then there's an organization called Las Vegas Literary Society. I'm on the board of that. And that's an organization that brings in authors once every six months. And they have a luncheon with the author and you get the book and you get to talk to the author about the book. So I've been interested in that. Pat and I are both great readers. So, you know, we like to read. So you get to read some things that I normally might not read because it was sort of things that are on the list from the book club. And you go, okay, I might not have read this. But usually they're pretty good literature stuff.

And then I was -- I still hang out at the radio station. I find the time to go down and harass the staff and whatever.

That's great.

But those are sort of the things I've been doing.

That's wonderful. My last question -- and I'm sure they'll be here to take you to lunch anytime -- explain how you felt on the night of September 19th, 2007, when we had the big awards dinner for the two of you. You go first.

Well, it was -- it was really incredibly gratifying I think, you know, to have 600 people sitting out in the audience that are willing to pay the money to come and sit through it because lots of those things can be just dreadfully dull. But they did a really good job of planning it and it moved along really quickly.

Our children were there. All of our -- we have this gang we call "The Big Chill" gang.

And these are people that we went to high school with, some from junior high and some elementary school. So these are friends of ours we've known for 20, 30 years, 40 years. So we had like 21 people come in from out of town. Nine of them were staying at our house. So we had this whole -- so we had all the local people we know. Plus we had all of our family and friends that came in from out of town.

And I had to -- talking about wrestling people, I had to twist this woman's arm because when the station said they wanted to do something for me, I said I want to do something for us. I want to do something for us because Pat is much more -- she's more of a background kind of girl. She would rather sit in the background and manipulate than actually be in the foreground.

I learned that from Jim Joyce.

That's right. That's right.

And you did well.

Thank you.

Right. In fact, what happened was I said we want to do this event and I really want you to do it with me. And she said no, no, I don't want to (indiscernible), no, no, no, no.

So then I sick Melanie, who works at the radio station, on Pat. And Melanie took her out to lunch. And she said no, no, no to Melanie. So then Melanie, devious little person that she is, called Pat Shalmy, who is now the president of Nevada Power, but used to be Pat's boss. So Pat Shalmy calls Pat and says, Pat, we need to go to lunch.

No. He said, Cheese, I'm taking you to lunch. You know Pat. He talks like Sam Elliott. He's great.

So he took her to lunch and prevailed upon her that she should be involved in this.

And they sicked Betsy Fretwell on me, too.

Yeah. So finally she agreed that she would do it even though she was kicking and screaming the whole time that, you know --

I just -- you know.

And I really wanted --

I'm a backstage kind of gal.

I just really wanted it to be a celebration of our careers because they were intertwined. There were

all these things that we've done together over the years. She was on the founding board. And then when I was working with the library and she was working with city, there were all these projects we did together because the city and county were doing these things together. So it was very -- and, you know, basically, we're both in the business of building community. That's the big picture. The radio station and the Parks and Rec were all about building a sense of community and a place where people are all from similar ilk's and they come here and they don't have anything in common. You have fences everywhere. You know, what are the things that we have in common together?

So I think we had these intertwined careers. And I really wanted that to be our swansong, you know, recognizing what we had done. And Pat and I are always the first to say, look, we could never any of us do these things by ourselves. We've got to have all these people, the boards and the staff and the volunteers of people that have helped us all over the years. I mean you could be the conductor of the orchestra waving your arms around. Well, unless you've got an orchestra playing, there's no music.

So it was just -- I was very proud. And I was very humbled at the same time that people would come out. And it was just a wonderful program. They did a tribute video. It was very nice. Rory Reed was very funny.

He was a hoot. He took me along, right?

This is wonderful. This is wonderful. You have any more comments about that evening?

Well, I would just say that -- you know, I said earlier that I thought my career was a privilege. And I do. And I think having people recognize it was -- it was a lot of fun. I didn't expect it to be, that evening I mean. But, yeah, it was really humbling to have people that you admire and you respect to do something for you.

And Lamar always used to say -- you know, his family going back to Florida past the Civil War -- that in Florida if you want to be on the symphony board, you have to wait for somebody to die. And here you can start the symphony. And we did.

That's right. That's wonderful.

So just having the privilege of being in a community that's young enough and vibrant enough to be able to actually help build institutions that people are going to benefit from further on is a gift.

It's not anything I gave to the community. It's something the community gave to me.

So that drive cross-country with the little baby --

Well, occasionally I'd say to myself, okay, now wait a minute here. Do you think God really wanted me to go come to Las Vegas and bring culture? Do you think he really wanted me to come and build parks in the dirt? But I guess he did.

I think so. I think so.

Well, I think the lasting legacy is what Pat just said. We've both built institutions that are going to survive us that are going to continue to provide services to the community because when Pat came the city didn't have any kind of program for cultural programming or the county didn't. She built those things and many other things. You know, the county amphitheater; that was all part of her.

That's right.

So that you can have those facilities. So the institutional building that we did is going to survive is. So 20, 30, 50 years from now, those things will still be on the air and they will still be providing services that we helped foster. So that's really I think the important legacy, if we have one, is we were able to build those things in a community that was young enough.

I mean the thing that I liked about Las Vegas then and I like now is that there's that whole spirit of if you want to do it, do it. If you can do it, if you can pull it off, go ahead. So nobody's -- there's always going to be the naysayers, but there's that possibility.

For me the radio station was my possibility of being able to say this is something that we can do. We can build it and we can make it better. And we can continue to improve it. And we can serve more people and, you know, all these things that you'd want to do, and build an endowment fund and build a new building and all those things that we did.

And for her the same thing. She's got museums and community centers, that whole Desert Breeze one?

Uh-huh.

That's thanks to her. But she doesn't toot her horn very well.

That's okay. That's why we have each other. This is wonderful.

So I toot it more for her.

He's very kind. A couple of months ago the Rainbow Company celebrated its 30th birthday and

we went. And that was to me -- I mean when you take a look at something like that that benefited children for decades, you know, that's the kind of thing that I think is a privilege to have been able to have been a part of and to leave as a gift to community.

This is so wonderful. And I appreciate this so very much.

Well, thank you. Well, thanks for talking to us.

We're honored.

Thank you for doing this. And I'm sure that Patty is now on the edge of her seat because she wants to make sure she goes to lunch on time. So this is wonderful.

Oh, okay.

All right.