

AN INTERVIEW WITH GREG PHELPS

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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

**This is Claytee White. It is November 15th, 2017. I am here in Las Vegas with Greg Phillips—Phelps?**

Phelps.

**Greg, could you please pronounce it correctly and spell it for me?**

Yes. Greg Phelps; G-R-E-G, P-H-E-L-P-S.

**Thank you. Could you just tell me a little bit about—were you born in Las Vegas?**

No. I'm from Southern California.

**How long have you been here?**

Since '02.

**What brought you to Las Vegas?**

Work.

**So work that you're in now?**

Yes.

**Tell me a little about it.**

I work for an accounting firm here and I do financial planning work, but my career has all been financial planning, financial adviser work. Then I opened my own practice, Red Rock, in '05.

**Oh, great. A good place for business?**

Yes, it's been good. I feel blessed.

**Good. What brought you to the event on October first, the festival?**

My wife has been asking to go for years, the last two or three years, but they're always so expensive. This lineup was really enticing to me and my mom, who you also spoke with. Her husband is suffering from Parkinson's, and so her request for her birthday was just to get her out and go do something fun. That was her birthday gift, so the three of us went.

**That's wonderful. You had to go for all three days?**

We did. You don't have to, but we did.

**Tell me about that first day; what was that like? That was Friday.**

My wife and I, we like to go out and enjoy a few drinks, and so we Ubered from the house. All three days we took an Uber. She's more of a country fan than I am although I'm a pretty big country fan especially now for some reason; it's the only thing I can listen to. So we Ubered down there. We met up with my mom at Mandalay Bay because she's on the other side of town and kind of connected with her. I got into the venue. Probably the funniest thing was my mom was the one who was angling to get closer to the stage. It was my seventy-two-year-old mom that was the one who was darting in between people to get closer and closer.

**But she looks like she's about fifty maybe or forty-five.**

Yes, I know. She definitely takes care of herself. It definitely helped us getting out of there; that's for sure.

But, yes, so we got there. All three days we got there not as early as gates open, but I would say five o'clock, four to five o'clock; somewhere in that range, so we could see the main act. We'd go see three or four bands a night. That first night was Eric Church; he was the main headliner. We stayed all the way until everybody was done that night. Saturday night was very similar. We did the Uber thing and met up with Mom down there and walked across the street and just did our thing and enjoyed it. It was amazing. I think that's part of what hurts the most. It was one of the most fun times we've ever had.

**A few minutes ago you said the only thing you can listen to. Explain that to me.**

My musical tastes are very diverse. I listen to everything from classical to pop to rap to you name it. I've always listened to country. I'll go through my little stints. I've always had an affinity

towards country ever since I was little, but I wouldn't necessarily say it was my favorite genre. But, yes, after the shooting, I can't listen to anything else; it's just what I want to listen to; it's just I'm stuck to it and I don't know why, but it's just one of those things, I guess.

**Can you tell me about Sunday night? What happened that day?**

Getting there was very similar. We met up around the same time, four or five o'clock. We always ended up gravitating to the same spot.

**Describe the venue to me. Put me there.**

As you walk across the street from Mandalay Bay, you literally walk across the street and you're very close to the stage although everything is fenced off. Then you have to walk kind of left down Las Vegas Boulevard maybe a couple of hundred yards, I guess. I'm just shooting from the hip there. So as you walk down there you get to the entrance and then they've got their wandering metal detectors and all that stuff. There was never any really long lines. It was always very peaceful. It was one of the things that was probably the neatest about this is you can go to other concerts and you see fights and people get angry, but it wasn't like that at this one.

**But twenty-two thousand people and no lines?**

Yes. Yes, literally. I think that's because it was open all day, so people probably filtered in throughout the course of the day and a lot of people didn't show up until eight or nine o'clock. But, yes, twenty-two thousand people. At any point in time who knows how many people were there?

So you go through the entrance area and to the left there is some stage; I think it was Straight from Nashville is what they called it, with some smaller bands performing in between the bigger bands on the other side of the field, what was called a field. Then they kind of funnel you; you go past that and there's a whole row of food trucks and beer service areas and as you

get past that now you're headed down towards the main stage.

**So if I'm standing on the main stage looking out at the audience, my back is to where?**

Your back is to McCarran Airport, almost. Your back is south.

**So I'm facing north.**

You're facing looking down the Strip.

**I see. This is the first time I've understood how it was set up.**

Oh, yes. So as you walk down this aisle, you stop and you grab a beer. They have a lot of little things to do and eat, whatever there, little stores. And as you get into this big open area, if you take a right, it's just a lot of seating; that's where all the seating was. If you were lucky to get there early enough, you could get a seat, but you're way back from the stage.

**This is VIP seating?**

No, that was just regular. I'll get there. So you get that and then behind that is a set of bleachers. They've got a whole bunch of bleachers. So as you're looking towards the stage and you're kind of in the middle of the venue, to the right there's a bunch of seating area and then bleachers behind that to the right and back. And then to the right-right as you're in the middle, there's more restroom areas and there's more bars and food kind of set up in a couple of different U-shaped things. In the center they had more of the bars and they had the sound booth and stuff in the very dead center of the venue. Then going up a little farther, you had area around to where you could go on either side of the center or in front of the center, and to each side of this area you had the VIP tents and the VIP bars and all that stuff, the bleachers and those things. As you work your way up to the stage, there is just a whole big grass area, separate; it's like chunks of fake grass, I guess, separate by a twenty-foot concrete thing, but it's just all standing.

So we ended up making our way—every night we ended up very close to, I would say,

the center of the whole thing and a little bit closer to the Mandalay Bay side, so right in front of the VIP tents on the Mandalay Bay side.

**That gives me a good idea. You've already talked about your feelings and what a great event it was and how everybody is so happy.**

Yes.

**And this applies to your wife and mother?**

Oh, God, yes. They were both on cloud nine; all three of us were, yes. Yes, it was a very amazing event. Every night we'd meet—we ended up meeting some of the same people because they all gravitated to the same. So we became literally friends with some of these people to the point where by Sunday they're leaving their purses with us and stuff like that to go to the bathroom and stuff like that. But, yes, it was a really neat experience. The music was amazing. The sound was amazing. The beers were really expensive; the food was expensive, but it's what you would expect.

**Yes.**

But it was just so much fun.

**So you're standing there and you hear these things like firecrackers. What happens when you realize they're not?**

So first, I do firearms, so I know. We shoot, so we know a bit about this. I've heard fully automatic and shot fully automatic. At first it was just those few pops; it was just three or four pops or whatever it was. And I thought, *boy, it sounds like firecrackers, but it doesn't sound right; something just does not sound right*. So immediately I'm looking up and to the left because that's where I'm hearing it come from. It was just that pop, pop, pop. Then it was that first stream of however many it was, twenty or thirty shots in a fully automatic style of fire, and that's when I

said, "This is bad." Then about that time as I'm saying *this is bad*, Jason Aldean runs off the stage.

But initially I think everybody thought it was firecrackers or fireworks or something wrong with the sound system and I can see how people would think that. The one thing that I think is oddly misleading is the videos that I watch now, when you hear the gunfire, it sounds much louder than what it did to both my wife and myself while we were there, and maybe it's because there's music going. So you've got these giant sound systems coming at you. But it wasn't as loud as—and it's probably because it's so far away as well. Then you watch the videos and it's so loud in the videos, I don't know if that's misleading because of the way that they record. But, yes, that's I think part of the reason that it was really odd to a lot of people is because it wasn't like somebody's next to you shooting, in which case everybody would have scattered immediately. It was off at a distance and having shot a lot of firearms in my life, it was odd.

**Tell me about the experience of firing firearms. Were you military at one time?**

No, no. My grandfather was Navy for thirty-two years and he kind of raised me. I think I got my first rifle, a twenty-two when I was around eleven or twelve and he taught me a very healthy respect for all firearms, but he never shied away from it. It's just what we did; we'd go out on the weekends and we'd go shoot clay pigeons or plinking. So over the course of years I have kind of stuck with that. I have a CCW; I do conceal carry. It's just a part of our life.

**Did you have it that night?**

No, no, you couldn't get in with that, and it wouldn't have mattered if I did. There's nothing you could have done in that situation. But, no, I knew I couldn't get in with it.

**Getting back now to that evening, now you know it's gunshots.**

Yes. When you see...The second that—you're kind of waiting. It happens so fast, but so slow. You're kind of waiting to see, is this really what I think it is? And you don't want to believe it. You don't want to believe it. No, it can't be; it's not possible; not us, not me. I remember her saying that when we were on the ground at one point, "Why? Why?" Once you realize that this is legit and people are getting shot at and you don't know the extent of it, it's hard to process; it's hard to fathom. It's one thing, I think, if you're in the service and you're very experienced. Being stationed overseas and you're used to the gunfire and stuff; that might be quite a bit different for us. We're just going out to drink some beers. Of course, this is later and we've already had several beers and just enjoying the music and loving on people and having a good time.

So at that point in time when I realized we are seriously getting shot at, it gets very foggy to me. But to the best of my recollection, my mom was in front of me and my wife is a few feet over, I'd say probably three or four feet to the left of me. My mom was pretty close. My recollection is I knocked her down to the ground, got on top of her, looked straight to my left to get..."Katrina, get under me; get under me." So I'm laying on top of my mom. I know the shots are coming from my right. So I'm kind of trying to cover up as best as I can both of them. This is where it gets real emotional, like this is how I die. That's what goes through your head, *I'm done, but I want them to go home.*

So I got both of them underneath me as best as possible and we kind of waited out the first barrage—or I think it was probably the second barrage. There's people all around and I remember vividly the second it stops, my mind is, *we're gone; we're not staying here; we're gone; we could get trampled; we could get shot; whatever; it's safer just to run.* I yelled, "Go," or something to this effect, "Let's fucking go." This guy next to us, he's laying on his belly and somebody is laying next to him and he kind of pops up a little and he goes, "No, stay down, stay



down." Pardon my language, but I said, "F that. We're out of here. I'm not going to stay and get shot. At least if I get shot, I'm going to die trying to get us out of here."

So, yes, I grabbed my wife, I made a human chain with my mom, and just booked it left, which would be east, pretty much straight east. I remember thinking to myself as I'm running past this guy on the ground, people at the front—because we were about dead center—people in front of us were kind of trying to get out towards the stage area or that back—I would say it would be the southeast corner. And then people behind us in all the seats and everything and in all the bleachers, they were trying to get out the exit. People were scattering, but it seemed to me that people were going one way or the other. And we were kind of—in my mind, the way that I envision it—I have a snapshot in my head and it cannot be reality because we've got pictures of us not too terribly long before and we're shoulder to shoulder with twenty-two thousand people or whatever; I mean, it's packed, but in my mind I remembered that sound booth and the bar in the middle and it was I want to say maybe thirty or forty yards. It's hard to remember. But I didn't see any people. In my mind, I didn't see any people. It felt like a fully lit up football field and I knew I had to go that way.

So when we get to this bar area—and I think I lost my wife at one point in time, probably dodging somebody or something, just for a split second. I'm yelling for her, "Katrina, Katrina." We hooked up because she was only five or ten feet away, but, of course, in that moment it feels like it's a mile. She's still got my mom. We got to this bar area and there's a bartender there and he's going, "Go back here; go through here." Basically it was a back kind of way to get to the other side of the field. So at this point we're dead center of everything, literally dead center of everything. Then he was trying to say the tent had a way to get through so you could keep going that direction; that east direction. So thank God for him; otherwise, it would have been, what do

we do now? We would have figured something out eventually, but he had actually pointed us, "Go that way."

So we got through there and just kept on making a beeline as fast as we could east just to get to that side as far away from the shooter as possible. Of course, the lights are on and we're wide open targets. But in my mind I'm thinking, *he's not going to aim for three people running; he's going to aim for this group of a thousand people that isn't moving*, which there was a lot of them that just didn't move. My only thought was, *I've got to get us out; I've got to get my wife and my mom out*. You were going to ask a question.

**So many. Do you think that there was no one in that big space, or do you think that you were just being guided?**

No. My mom said that there were people that we ran by. I just feel like I didn't see them. To me it was tunnel vision. It was a lit up football field and there was nobody until we got to that bar. Then there's kind of scattering people here and there, but I don't really think too much about that. But the guy who was right by a beer case—and there was just all of these beers that he was selling full of ice—who had said, "Here, this is the way; keep going that way." No, it's very odd to me because it's not possible that there was nobody. There was just too many people shoulder to shoulder. But that's what I remember.

**When you threw your body on top of your mother and then your wife, what made you do that? What in your background, in your upbringing caused you to do that?**

I couldn't even tell you. My grandfather being a navy man and always being kind of a man's man of very proper. It comes from West Virginia; this is just the type of thing that we do. So I couldn't tell you what it was. It was just instinct; just like getting up and running at that point in time and going that direction was instinct.

**So now you're going in this direction. Did the shots start again when you were running?**

Oh, yes. Oh, God, yes.

**Can you see them? Can you see the...?**

No, I cannot. My wife, she says, "I could hear them hitting around me." There was another couple that we made friends with. In fact, we're still friends and we're very close now. We're going to go to a (Colson and Dale) concert here in a couple weeks. They called me up last night and said, "Hey, we got tickets for you." They were telling us when we met up with them that there was a person right in front of them that was actually hit, so I know we weren't too far from whatever was happening. She'll tell you that she could hear the ricochets not far from her and she'll say, "It felt like they were chasing me." But me personally, I just heard the shots, but I didn't even care. It was just, I've got to do this.

**So continue.**

Then we went through essentially—I can't remember if we went around the second set of bars, the bar areas or through it. I believe we went around it. There was a fence. Here's a big bottleneck of people. So you've got this giant group going out right, you've got this giant group going out left, and here is another group that's not as big, but it's a lot of people there. And that's where in my mind I'm like, *oh, God, we're going to get trampled*. Somebody had pulled a fence apart from a block wall, so somehow they had gotten it to like an angle. It was anchored at the bottom against the block wall, but they were able to pull it apart maybe three feet so you could squeeze through. I am so impressed that everybody was so respectful, polite. I can't think of a better word for it. Nobody was trampling people that I saw, and I'm sure it happened. It's going to happen in that situation. But at this particular spot it was "you go, I go; you go, I go." We must have gone through that thing in a split second. Actually we made it out pretty quick while there

is still shots going off. Thankfully he took these long breaks, for whatever you can be thankful for in this situation. But those breaks got us those opportunities.

**Where did you go once you got through that gate? This gate is now on the eastern side.**

We are now on—I believe it's Giles. Is that the back road there?

**See if any of this makes sense.**

Oh, yes, it will. So there's Reno and there's Giles, so this one is probably—yes, it was Giles. We had gone from right here dead center because this is where—actually, we were up here a little bit closer—we had gone from right here through this section of bars. And then I don't know if it was here or there, but it was one of these two areas where there was an ability to get out. So once we get there...I'm trying to think of where the...

**Greg is looking at maps.**

Then you have the church on your left. I'm trying to remember exactly from there because there are some businesses there that we ran by as well.

**Right. Some apartment buildings.**

There's some apartments there and there's some businesses and I can't remember exactly how we got from the exit there. I believe we cut straight through to these buildings with the businesses and then there's apartments. I remember thinking, *I've got to find walls; I've got to find walls.*

Because you don't know what's coming next.

So at some point in time we got down to Reno, which isn't on that one. At some point in time we got down to Reno and we were...There's Trop. Yes, there it is. So there's Reno. At some point in time we get down to Reno and there is some apartment buildings there. They're two stories. I remember seeing a stairway and it had walls on both sides and I'm like, *thank God; that's what I want; I want walls on both sides; just give me some more shelter, more shelter.* So

we get down there and I'm like, "Let's go up the stairs." I remember getting to the top of the stairs and thinking, *oh, shit, there's nowhere to go now*. I mean, I got walls, but if somebody comes up these stairs, we're in big trouble.

Thankfully there was a group of people; there was nine of them, I believe. They were there selling their shirts and hats and stuff, so they were working. A younger couple started this company that did clothing and stuff and they had brought a bunch of people, so they had rented this thing and they're going into their room. They're like, "Do you have anywhere to go?" Katrina and my mom were like, "No, we have nowhere." They're like, "Just come in, come in." So they took us in at that point in time.

Once we get in there, they've got this gigantic heavy marble-top table; we just barricaded the door. Then at that point you kind of reassess what's going on. We literally just sat in the hallway on the floor for quite a while.

**When do you find out what had happened?**

Yes, that's a good question.

**Do you have your cell phone?**

I had mine. She lost hers. We never got it back. I had mine. My mom had mine and, fortunately, I had given my mom a small charger thing, so we were able to charge and stay on our phones. But I went on Facebook and I put, "Active shooter Route 91." I think that was the second thing I did or third thing. The first thing I did was I texted my kids because they're at home and we don't know if they're awake and it's like ten—I looked on my phone and it was like ten sixteen at this point. So the shooting had just subsided, I guess, but we didn't know that. I said, "Hey, mom and dad are okay. Love you very much." My kids, they had no idea what was going on. But that's all I wanted to say. Just in case they did know, I wanted them to know we're safe. Then I texted

Jeremy who works for me who lives about a mile away.

**He lives a mile away from?**

From our house. From our house. I say, "Get to my house, please." So him and his girlfriend went straight to my house to stay with them until we got home just in case they needed—my kids are fourteen; they're twins—just in case they got upset, so they could be there for them.

Fortunately, they never really quite caught on that night what had happened. They caught on eventually. They've been different.

**Different in what way?**

Well, one of them—I assume this is his coping mechanism—and they're twins—one of them is just kind of like, you lived; get over it. So we just kind of give him that space. I took him out golfing a couple weeks later and I said, "You still feel like that?" And he's like, "Well, Dad, you're here." I'm like, "I just hope you never have to go through that. But you're going to have to understand something. Mom and I are going through some emotional stuff, mental stuff, so you're going to have to give us our space. But you can say whatever you want. Just do me a favor and just keep it to yourself." The other one was loving and caring, but not crazy overly. Knowing him he just didn't want to make a huge issue out of it. So, I don't know, I didn't quite expect that reaction from them. I expected a little...

**If you'd like to use any of these services for your children as well—**

I appreciate that.

**—please, please do.**

Yes. So that was just a little—I had kind of hoped it would have been a little bit more, wow; thank God; I love you; I'm glad you're here. Instead of just kind of like, eh, whatever. But anyway, again, I'm giving them their space to do that.

**And you men are so different.**

Yes. It is what it is.

So I did those two things. Then I went on Facebook and I said, "Active shooter Route 91." One of our really good friends, a couple, he is in North Las Vegas PD. He's been in SWAT and he's served and been stationed overseas and everything. He's a stud. That's how he found out about it was my Facebook post. This is literally very quick after it all happened.

**That's true.**

It might have been ten seventeen, so the shooting had barely stopped and it only started ten minutes earlier or whatever. So his wife says, "Oh my God, a shooter, you've got to go." He gets dressed. Finally he gets the call like five minutes later, you've got to come in. So then we started texting. He's like, "Stay there. I'll let you know." So we just hunkered down and we traded a few texts throughout the night. He went and did his police thing, helped out whatever way he could.

About three thirty he came and got the three of us. He picked us up in his cop car and dropped us off. Like, *just get me to an Uber, somewhere where I can get an Uber; that's fine; I just want to get out of downtown.* So they got us to the airport. We literally had to wait like an hour to get an Uber because if you're an Uber, you can't go anywhere; the Strip is shut down; everything is shut down. So it took us quite a while.

**That's right. What was it like in the airport?**

It was a ghost town. It was about four o'clock in the morning. It was a ghost town. I don't think there were any other survivors at that point in time. It was just a few people traveling at random hours. It was relatively quiet.

**So not in the airport, anyway.**

Yes.

**So you referred to this area of the Strip as downtown.**

Well, it's not technically downtown. We don't go to the Strip much. Anything down by the Strip is just...

**What do you call old downtown?**

That's downtown. That's downtown. If I say downtown, to me it's just if you're going down to the Strip, it's downtown.

**Okay, good. That's interesting. When you finally got home—so an Uber driver finally took you home?**

Yes. We got home about four thirty.

**What was the conversation like among you, your mother and your wife once you got out of the apartment? You're in the police car. You're at the airport. What is the conversation like among you?**

That's a good question. I think we probably cracked a couple of silly, stupid jokes. My wife's shorts were all dirty from falling down and I made a couple of silly comments about that. I don't really remember. They went to the restroom and I sat there by myself for a few minutes. Then we finally made our way to get the Uber. I don't really remember what we talked about. I'd be curious to see what Mom said.

**You will be able to read both. We're going to have these transcribed. What kind of impression did you have of Las Vegas before this, after this; any changes in your perception of the city?**

I have always thought that we are a—in fact, I told my wife, I said, "Oftentimes I wake up on New Year's Day just hoping nothing happened the night before." It's such a soft target; it really is and I've always thought that. It hasn't changed my opinion of Las Vegas at all for the negative; it



doesn't affect that at all. From a positive standpoint I'm very impressed at how well people came together, how many heroes there were and a lot of people were out of state; if I had to guess, it was probably half of them, if not more. But everybody. I think that whole genre of country music is just kind of a different animal. I think those people...Like I said, there were no fights. I didn't see a single fight all weekend. Everybody is happy. People would walk up and talk to you. They would talk to you in line, just chitchat. It was just this chill, have-a-good-time atmosphere. Then you hear these stories about these people and what they did for people they don't even know. It's like for all the evil that there is, there's so much good.

**Oh, yes, yes.**

Then the blood bank lines and the donations and all that other stuff.

**And we want to talk to those people as well, who stood in those lines. Do you consider yourself a hero?**

No.

**Why not?**

I don't know what constitutes being a hero. I don't know that I would even comprehend what it for me personally to be. No. No, I just did what I did instinctually just to get my mom and my wife out, so that is just part of doing what I would think most people would do.

**You were a person who knew guns prior to this. When you think of this event, pro or con, did any of your ideas about guns change in any way?**

That's a really good question and I'm glad you asked that because I wouldn't have thought to bring it up. Immediately in the week to two weeks following the shooting—first of all, I'll just go on record and say I don't believe it was bump stock. If you're familiar with what it is and you're familiar with the sounds, I don't really believe that. I believe it was something that is much

harder to get, but that's just my own personal opinion. I've heard bump stock. I've heard bump stocks fire and they're pretty inconsistent. They don't rattle off a consistent stream for eighty or a hundred rounds. You would have to be so well trained to be able to do that, it would take a Navy SEAL type of guy to do it. That's just my opinion.

But I will tell you going back to the question, I thought to myself—and then Hillary sent out this Tweet and said, "Oh, can you imagine if there were suppressors?" And I was, yes. I was thinking to myself outside of the bump stock issue, if there were suppressers, we wouldn't have heard it as much. Now granted, it doesn't take all the sound away. But even if...And that's my point is, it wasn't as loud as you would think, anyway. I'll bring this full circle. So my reaction was I agree with her. If he had a noise suppressor on these things—which wouldn't have worked for that many rapid fire, anyway; it would have gotten too hot—it would have been much more devastating because people wouldn't have heard the shots to run, or it would have taken longer to hear and know what was going on. So you've got that issue that was coming up and then you've got the bump stock issue. I thought to myself, I looked at buying a bump stock five years ago. I was going to buy one and add it to one of my long guns. It was just a silly novelty thing. Nobody takes those things seriously. Nobody would ever use them to go into combat. They're just completely off the wall and it's like a novelty thing. It's a goofy toy for people who like to shoot things. My impression back then was, why would I want to spend this much money just to blow through a dollar a round? I can go through thirty rounds inside of ten seconds. What's the point? It's just wasting money. So I never did it, but I did look into them.

But my thought to myself in that first couple of weeks, *yes, this is ridiculous. There should be more controls on some of these things. Why do you need a bump stock? Nobody needs a bump stock. Well, it's true, nobody needs a bump stock. Why do you need a noise suppressor?*

*Nobody needs a noise suppressor. What are you going to use that for?* I said this to one of my friends who's ex-service and very much pro-gun, and he said, "You know what? I live in Texas. I shoot the wild boars that kill my livestock." He's like, "If I have a noise suppressor, I can shoot a lot more of them." Then you hear the other argument, *hey, I want to save my ears; that's why you want a noise suppressor.* It doesn't erase the sounds; it just lessens it; it dampens it. I think people have this impression that it's silent. Like they hear in the movies, you just don't hear it, which is not the truth.

**That's what I thought a silencer was.**

Yes. And it's really not. I went through this whole emotional thing. I would never want gun control to the extent where you can't have this or you can't have that; but, yet, in my mind I'm sectioning off these two things and these two things I think are unreasonable. But the more I got to talking to my buddy who came and picked us up and the more I calmed down a little bit—I even took my kid out shooting the third week after I think it was; he wanted to go—so the more I did those things, the more I realized the guy had Tannerite in his car; he had fertilizer in his car. He could have killed more people by driving across Las Vegas Boulevard and through that fence, because it's just a chain-link fence, and lit that thing and killed thousands of people. The guy in New York with the truck. If somebody wants to kill you, they're going to kill you. If they're willing to sacrifice their own life, there's nothing you can do, if it's a plane, if it's a...So trying to take away the 99.999 percent of people's rights with a firearm of whatever capacity, it seems so illogical for the .001 that are going to have a mental health issue and lose their minds and do something crazy like this.

Bringing it back full circle, I went through a very emotional stage where I'm like, *yes, this is ridiculous; get rid of these things.* I even went on a little bit of a Facebook rant. "I'm a

pro-Second Amendment, CCW holder, but this is ridiculous." Then after that couple of weeks I kind of backed off on it and I realized that it just doesn't matter. So that's kind of where my gun thoughts have changed.

**That helps a lot.**

It helps?

**Me.**

Good, good.

**Because I hadn't thought about it like that. I had not thought about somebody shooting the boars that are killing their cattle. I don't think about that. I live in a city. I don't think about somebody with cattle.**

I know. I never thought about it either until I said it. He sent me a message. He said, "I'm sorry, I'll take it down." He's a good friend of mine. He's a salt of the earth guy. He's like, "You're going to take away my noise suppressors? I'm not out there doing something crazy." Then my buddy who was in the service and who got us, he said, "Greg, the guy could have driven across the street with his ammonium nitrate, lit it on fire, lit it up, and he could have killed a thousand people and there's no gun involved in that at all. So what do you want to take away? You want to take away Home Depot assault trucks? It doesn't matter. If somebody wants to get you, they're going to get you and there's crazy people in the world." Unfortunately it's true.

**I like the fact that you're getting ready to go to another concert.**

Well, we actually did—I'll tell you the first one was real hard.

**Oh, you've been to another one since.**

We've been to a couple since.

**Tell me about the first one that you went to after.**

It was like a week and a half after. It was on a Thursday night and they had what was called Night of Healing. It was Big & Rich and Rascal Flatts showed up. It was awesome. That was over at the Orleans. I developed somewhat of a—I don't know how to describe it—but a little bit of claustrophobia with these things. We went with a couple of friends and we met a few other survivors there. We had these seats and I'm in between all these people and I felt so uncomfortable. I went and got a beer and I went and sat four rows back where nobody is sitting. And I tried to get my wife. I'm like, "Come back here, please; come back here; come back here." She didn't quite get the message.

But, yes, that was a really emotional, hard thing to go through because it was still very fresh. But we decided that we're going to get back on the horse, so we actually flew to Nashville last weekend and we went to see the Country Rising Benefit Concert. There's I don't know how many people there; it was huge, Bridgestone Arena. Yes, we did that and that was a lot easier than the first one. Hopefully the next one in two weeks will be even better.

One thing we did do is we were supposed to run the half marathon, the Las Vegas half. The first thing that came to our mind is, do we really want to run down the Strip with all these big buildings again? Are we ready for that? It runs right by Mandalay Bay. We didn't do it. We just decided, we're going to Nashville instead; we'll face our fear that way, but we're not going to run out in the open right now; it's just not okay for us now.

**I think it's smart and it's great that you have somebody to talk to.**

Yes. Yes, I'm lucky that I have Katrina. We've talked a lot in different ways about this and different times. I'm lucky because I run my own business and I've got Jeremy, so we took a lot of time off. We're just now starting to get back into a normal type of routine. But it's been good. My relationship with her is probably like a whole new level. For a few weeks there we couldn't even

be apart.

Then we did another trip. We went to an Oklahoma football game. We go every year because we're Oklahoma fans. I had to go to Dallas before for a conference. The day I left, I'm like, *I don't want to go; I don't want to go; I don't want to go*. Basically it was because I was alone and away from her. I go down to this conference floor and there's just people everywhere and it's loud and it's noisy. I spent the two days in my room. I spent thirty minutes down in the conference—and then I was supposed to meet her in Oklahoma—I just couldn't be around all these people and I was just struggling because I wasn't with her. It was like, *what am I doing? My sidekick is not here*. But it's definitely taken our relationship to a new level.

**That's wonderful.**

Yes, yes.

**Even though this is probably one of the saddest, most tragic things we could ever imagine, you've told me so many good things that have come out of this.**

Yes. We're doing...I don't know how to phrase this. We're good people and we're generous and we take care of other people, but I would say that's kind of a whole new level now. There's this lady on the street in Nashville and she's what I call shelter challenged, but she's selling these two-dollar pieces of paper in Nashville. I'm like, *she needs food and clothes. I'll give her twenty dollars for a two-dollar paper*. It's just little things like that that I'm like, you need it more than I do; you need the help and I want to help.

There's a group of us who are doing a toy or a needs drive for some of people who died, for their families. We all have two or three families that we're trying to make contact with and say, what do you need? So I'm going to reach out and raise money for you three families. What can we help you with? We made it home. These kids, their parents didn't. There's little things

like that that we both want to do more to give back.

**I love that. I want to give you some extra business cards. Your friend, the police officer from North Las Vegas, I would love to interview him.**

I'm sure he'd be happy to do it.

**If he is willing, I would love to talk to him.**

Oh, he's one of the best guys you could ever meet.

**We have not talked to a police officer yet. We have not talked to a first responder. We talked to a person who monitored one of the memorial sites, your mother. We've talked to another woman who was an Uber driver who helped people get to the hospital.**

Speaking of Uber, I got a phone call on Tuesday morning. It was my Uber driver from Saturday.

He's like, "Oh my God, are you okay? I know I dropped you off down there. You just seemed like such great people and I just wanted to make sure you're okay."

**Oh my goodness.**

It's funny, right? But, yes, that was sweet. The best part is—we both have a lot of guilt—but the group of people that were in front of us were from L.A. area, Long Beach area, and we had talked to them; every night we hung out with them. When it all happened, like I said, that tunnel vision, I didn't even think about anybody else. It was like, *I got my two people; I've got to...*

So we lost them and we had never gotten a chance to exchange Facebook and stuff. So I get a call from him Tuesday morning. He's like, "Hey, somebody called here and said that they might have been with you at the concert." So I called immediately. He was like, "Yes, I was Googling Greg and Katrina and then I saw the twin boys on your website." He's like, "I found your business and then I called." So he's like super detective. I think my wife still talks to him almost every day. I reach out to him and he reaches out to me a couple of times a week. You get

these friendships that are—I'll probably never lose touch with them.

I feel kind of...They went a different way and they got exposed to a lot more stuff than we did. But, yes, you always look back and you think, *should I have gone back? Should I have grabbed him?*

**You did the perfect thing. You did exactly what you were supposed to do.**

Well, I hope so.

**You did.**

I guess God will be the judge of that.

**And I think that judgment has already been made. I'd love for you to—**

I'll get Mike to give you a call.

**Yes, I would love to talk to Mike.**

It's interesting our relationship with them. We've known them for years. I coached their kid in baseball for years. Our relationship with them, we see each other every weekend now. That relationship is so much different. Then you've got these other relationship that you're kind of like...Like I told her, I said, "No one will ever know." He'll know, but he's lived it. He's served. Like you said, it's one thing to go into a gunfight with a gun, it's another thing to go to a concert with a beer. But nobody will ever know. You've got these friends that don't reach out. You've got these other friends that will, "Hey, I'm glad you're okay." Then you've got these friends that are like, "Oh my God, are you okay?" Every day or every other day. Or, "When can we come over? Let me bring some food." I said, "You can't hold it against those people that don't reach out or they don't maybe reach out to the level that you feel you would like them to because they don't know. They weren't there." That terror...I will tell you there's a lot of things that have changed about us, especially me, ever since, but nobody can ever put that into...Unless you experience it.



It's interesting because I'm a very type-A person. For some reason it's made me incredibly emotional. Even me thinking about you coming in this morning has been like, am I going to be able to hold it together? It's very, very hard. Friends want to know and want to talk about it. There's a period of maybe a few days I'm like, yes, I want to talk about it because I'm angry. I have a lot of anger. There's a period of time where I can't talk about it because I'm just going to start crying. I think it's made me much more emotional. I don't know. I hope that kind of subsides a little bit over time because I'd like to be able to function normally. But little things.

**Maybe this is the new normal.**

Well, it might be. I hope not because it's hard. I would rather go back to not being so emotional.

**What is that picture? On your wall you have the Las Vegas Strip.**

This picture...I used to sit in your chair. I can't sit in that chair.

**Oh my goodness. So I'm facing this beautiful picture of the Las Vegas Strip on his wall.**

It's almost the exact angle where we were at. When I would sit on that side of the table to meet with clients, I just couldn't function. I had to stop looking at it. So we switched everybody and now everybody sits there. I just can't. It just takes me off my routine. I've got to do a job for people and I can't be thrown off by looking at the Mandalay Bay and the Luxor right in front of me. I told her, "Should I get rid of it?" I'm like, I'll just try to sit on the other side.

**It's so beautiful.**

It is. It's really pretty.

**Is that from a photograph? What is that?**

Yes. Our old neighbor takes these pictures and he does these big prints.

**But you can't even tell where he put it together. It is just amazing. So it starts at the Mandalay Bay and goes all the way down to...Is that the Wynn I see?**

This is Aria. No, you're right, that's the Wynn.

**All the way down to the Wynn. That's magnificent.**

Yes, it is a cool picture. It's just too hard to look at. Even going down there, we've gone down there a little bit, it's just like, *ugh, do I really want to go down there?* But, yes, it has gotten better.

**Good. Those are some of the resources that we have available.**

I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

**Well, thank you so very much.**

Hopefully this will help somebody else.

**Yes. That's what we would like to have happen.**

I really appreciate it. If you need anything further, let me know. But I'll reach out to Mike and I'm sure he'll be happy to do it for us.

**Thank you.**

**[End of recorded interview]**