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Interviewed by: Dr. Peter Klingman  
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K =Dr. Peter Klingman  
I=Pam Iorio

**K:** Good morning. I'm Peter Klingman, from the University of South Florida's Oral History Program. And in our series of interviewing Hillsborough County prominent individuals, I'm pleased that we have this morning with us Pam Iorio, currently the Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections. Good morning, Pam.

**I:** Good morning, Peter.

**K:** I think, unlike a lot of situations where we do interviews, we ought to at least for the viewers who will see this tape in the years to come, probably pause right at the front end and suggest that the normal oral history interview is with somebody who has reached the end, or sort of at the way, at the finish of their career. And you clearly are not there.

**I:** I hope not.

**K:** Yeah. And I think one of the things that we ought to stress about that is that we're going to concentrate this morning on your County Commission career. We'll come back at some point in time and talk about your supervisor of elections career, although I suspect it'll be impossible to keep it completely separate. We ought to try for that kind of a focus this morning. In the process, and I can appreciate from your point of view being interviewed about your life at your age is kind of an odd circumstance as well. But when this tape is used, and people do research and they want to discover, and write the biography of Pam Iorio, they need to know some things. So we're gonna start with those personal things, if that's okay with you.

**I:** Okay.

**K:** Growing up. Where you were born, and raised?

**I:** Well, I was born in Waterville, Maine. In 1959. My father was a professor at Colby College there. And then in 1963 we came to Tampa because he got a teaching position at the University of South Florida. One of the first faculty members to come here, when it was just a sandy university with a little two-lane Fowler Avenue, and we came and lived in Temple Terrace. And that's where I grew up.

**K:** What did your father teach?

**I:** He was an English professor.

**K:** Oh, really? How interesting.

**I:** At USF.

**K:** What caused the desire to move, from Waterville, Maine, from your folk's point of view?

**I:** Well, I guess if you lived in Maine, it would probably be pretty obvious, with all the adverse weather; I think they felt cramped, and three children--I'm the youngest of three, I have two older brothers--and we were all very young. And I think they felt that Florida was a new opportunity and I'm glad they made that decision. I've been back to Maine and it's a beautiful state. But I think in terms of raising a family and the openness and the new challenge of a new university, I can understand why they made the move.

**K:** And I suspect that you, growing up in Temple Terrace and your father being a part of this university from its early days, as we sit here today in June, 1998, this place looks a great deal different to you than it did when you were a kid, I'm sure.

**I:** Oh absolutely. I can remember as a young girl being here at the university quite a bit. And it always struck me just how sandy and hot it was. But it was always a lot of fun, too. We came to the university for quite a few things. And I have very good memories of it.

**K:** That's good. I suppose we ought to say on the front end of this tape that what we, in the community know about you. And that is that you ran for the County Commission at a very early age, and we'll deal with that later. But I suppose it's fair to ask, Pam, how and why, and what generated such an interest in public service, government and politics, at home, for a young kid?

**I:** I've always considered myself very fortunate Peter in that I knew at a very early age what I wanted to do. I have two children right now, ages eight and 10, and I can really say that when I was their age, I knew what I wanted to do. And I know that that's not typical. Because even as I was growing up among my peer group, you know most folks are just not that directed at an early age. And who knows where it came from, although I have to say I think probably a large part of it came from my family. My parents were politically active. They made sure that we talked about issues all the time in our family. At the dinner table. I can remember, I mean, one of my memories of childhood are our family dinners every night where we talked about issues. We talked about the Vietnam war, we talked about the kind of job the president was doing, we talked about major social issues. My two older brothers also had a real interest in politics and debating, and so I was here the youngest and would sit and listen to this, and then put in my own comments, and you have to hold your own--with a family of talkers, heh.

**K:** Heh heh.

**I:** And heh, a very good training ground. My parents, I can, they supported Eugene McCarthy in 1968 when he ran for president. And when he came to town, we were part of the Eugene McCarthy motorcade that went through town. And I met him at Curtis Hixon. He came, and I was, what was I, nine years old at the time. And I remember meeting him.

**K:** What do you remember about him?

**I:** I remember he had a gold tooth, which you know when you're nine you remember odd things like that. But he was very tall and silver-haired and had a gold tooth, and smiled and patted us on the head, and we were all holding our McCarthy signs, and I remember the excitement of the motorcade. And there's a place in Temple Terrace that is, it's a Spanish building that currently I think is just used for a variety of small businesses that come and go. But back in 1968, it was the Eugene McCarthy headquarters. And we used to ride our bikes up there and get bumper stickers and buttons and literature. And my brother Paul and I used to distribute the literature around the neighborhood. So I have to say that politics is something that was really our family interest from a very early age. My parents were against the Vietnam war and the involvement there. And of course they had um, there were many student-led protests here at the university, and one of the points of progress at USF that I regret is that Crescent Hill is no longer what it used to be...

**K:** Heh heh.

**I:** ...what a lot of people might not realize is that Crescent Hill used to be just that, a hill, a grassy hill, and that's where the students used to meet and have their protest marches and candlelight vigils against the war. And we used to go to those. So, we really--I grew up in a political atmosphere. I think I really benefitted from growing up in an atmosphere where ideas and books and learning mattered. And was really a value that my parents placed on life and important value system in our family, and one that I think shaped the three of us. My brothers, Jay and Paul and myself. Shaped us, rather dramatically.

**K:** Were you inclined, well not you--was your mother inclined to participate in those kinds of discussions?

**I:** Oh absolutely. You know and that's true, that I think you tend to, I've focused so far on my father because it was his job that brought us here--but, you know, I have benefitted from having two very strong and supportive parents. In fact my mother did something, back when I was young--here she had three young children, and she went off to school and got her bachelor's degree and then her master's degree all while we were growing up.

**K:** Wow.

**I:** Not an easy thing to do.

**K:** Not an easy thing to do today, and I would think an extraordinarily much more difficult thing to do back then.

**I:** That's right.

**K:** Absolutely. With all of the need to do it in a very traditional way, that would have been a, quite a battle.

**I:** Right.

**K:** Back then. Tell me something. Two older brothers.

**I:** Um hum?

**K:** Were you protected? By them? Or were, did they ignore you, did they, how did that work?

**I:** I wish they had ignored me.

**K:** Heh.

**I:** Heh. You know? No, they didn't ignore me. You know, we were all two years apart, and so we were closely bunched together. And you know, we just fought all the time, and they were supportive and yet we fought. And I think really--and I know this sounds like a joke, but it's not--I think one reason, one reason--just a peripheral reason, but--I can be successful in politics and can develop somewhat of a thick skin about certain things, is because growing up, I had to, I had to...really deal with two older brothers who, it was not one of these protective little sister type of thing; it was like you know you really have to hold your own within the family in order to get by. And you know, it was fun. It was really fun. And I have a lot of respect for both of my brothers today, and the kinds of people they were. But when you're all bunched together at an early age and all thrown into it, boy it can be really rough. But I appreciate the kind of upbringing I had. Because it was not a situation where, you know they looked upon it in a protective sense. So, looking back I can really appreciate that.

**K:** That's good.

**I:** No, we had some, we would--my one brother, we would, make speeches about the Vietnam war, and he would try them out on me, and I'd sit and listen, it seemed like forever. And then I'd have to bring up points of disagreement; we'd argue back and forth. And they both had really great minds--and have really great minds--and so you really had to be pretty sharp to come up with arguments that could counter their arguments. Good training.

**K:** Um hum, absolutely.

**I:** Yeah.

**K:** It could cause you to have to listen well, too I suspect.

**I:** Right.

**K:** And not just be able to articulate well. In the process, are you close with your brothers today?

**I:** Yes. We're a very close family. Very close family.

**K:** That's good; that's nice.

**I:** Real nice.

**K:** Where'd you go to school?

**I:** Well, I went to school in Temple Terrace: Riverhills Elementary. And then went to--the first year of bussing--I was part of all that; went to Sligh Junior High when they had a 7th grade center. Then went to Greco Junior High. And then graduated from King High School. And then it was time to go to college and I told my parents I wanted to go to college in Washington, D.C., because it was political city and that's where I wanted to go. So I chose the American University and spent four years there.

**K:** And what did you major in?

**I:** Political Science.

**K:** Okay, and as you went off to American University, which is one of the premier places to go for that kind of a career, what did you think of yourself as doing? At age 18 or whenever you went off to do that.

**I:** Right. Well I thought that eventually I would run for public office. I really wanted a life of public service.

**K:** Did you expect to come back here?

**I:** Yes. I did.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** I did.

**K:** Never thought about the foreign service, or national politics or...? Working as a staffer on the Hill--all those things that kids do when they go to Washington universities.

**I:** Right. That's right; which I did, I mean I was an intern on the Hill which later turned into a job for a congressman. And...

**K:** Who'd you work for?

**I:** I worked for Tom Lucan of Ohio.

**K:** Hm.

**I:** Who I had no respect for. At all. I thought he was just a terrible congressman, when I worked for him as a college student. Because he didn't treat the staff with any respect, and he just yelled at everyone, and he had you know, the big head syndrome--which we see in politics a lot...

**K:** Sure.

**I:** ...something happens to people sometimes when they get elected, and they just develop this great big head, and tremendous ego and they just, they're so unpleasant to be around. And he was such a good lesson for me, because here I was a college student working for him, and I certainly could see what I didn't want to be. As an elected official one day; I didn't want to be anything like him.

**K:** Um hum. You, it's kind of interesting as I'm listening to you Pam. You grew up in an era in which people would have been--that you were associating with, if I understand it correctly--anti-government. Because that's what the Vietnam era was about, and the protest it was, it became an evolution of people thinking government doesn't tell the truth and "I don't agree with it's policies." And then you go to work for a congressman who you don't like. And none of that dissuaded you from the idea of having a career in public service?

**I:** No, because going back to my upbringing, while there were events in history that might have turned people away from government and certainly during--and even in 1974 I watched the Watergate hearings with great interest. And I can recall watching the hearings every single day during the summer of 1974. And you might think that those combined events in history might turn someone off. But first of all, my parents' attitude was never of anti-government; it was how you can work to make things better. And that's really the important point. Not that you turn off to the system, but that you look at the system and you figure out how you can make it better. That's what's really important. And...

**K:** But you know, and I know that back then, there were folks who were in that protest movement, and moving further and further away from institutional acceptances.

**I:** Right.

**K:** And the question I felt back then, when I was at college and...in the sixties and in graduate school in the seventies, that how you reconcile a group of people on the left--that's the term we would use...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...with those who were just "I don't agree with the government but I support it" to those who wanted nothing to do with it. And from those who would eventually become total dropouts in the process. That spectrum was rather large. And I assume you, like I, met new and encountered people from all ends of just that left spectrum. How did you keep, how did you keep yourself, when you were, how did you keep yourself from falling--I guess maybe becoming more disillusioned, more negative about government?

**I:** That's a good question. I'm not sure I've ever given it too much thought, other than I've never been disillusioned by government. I guess I've always seen my role as one--even from a very young age--of a participant in making it better. So it's never turned me off. You know, when Robert Kennedy spoke in 1966, when he went to South Africa, about how very few people can really shape history but that all, that all of us, can have a role in affecting someone's life and then--of course I'm paraphrasing him--but that, and that you don't know how your efforts then have this ripple effect.

**K:** Right.

**I:** And how it, it really can change...

**K:** That's right.

**I:** ...the way our society operates. And at least change one person's life. Well that's, that's what participation is really about. And that's how I've always viewed it. And when you see problems that are problems that might even speak to our structure of government and the caliber of our elected officials, that has never made me cynical or disillusioned. That's only made me realize how important it is to be involved and to try to counteract that by your own participation.

**K:** Good. So you came home from Washington, and American University, in four years. And...21?

**I:** Right, right.

**K:** Something of that sort. And decide I guess, for lack of a better term, how did you pick the office that you were going to take your first crack at?

**I:** Right.

**K:** How did you get to the concept that "I'm gonna run for County Commission," at such an early age?

**I:** Well, first I came home and I became active in politics.

**K:** What did you do? And that's a really important question because there are gonna be folks out there watching this tape and presumably--and hopefully--some of them will be young ladies in their teenage years who will say gee, if she can do it, I can do it. And they always want to know the same thing: how did you get started. So let's talk about that. What did you do to become active?

**I:** You know I think getting started is a mixture of your own initiative and then just luck.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** You know? It's a mixture of both. One, you do have to take some initiative. I knew that I wanted to get involved politically, so I would ask well how do I get involved here and there, and people would give me names. Well then I would go and meet these folks. I mean you just have to do that. Knock on their door and say hi I'm, you know, Pam Iorio, and I'd like to meet you. And, you know, to a person I found people very receptive, once you explain what your interest is. At the time, back in 1981, 1982, there was an organization called the Hillsborough Women's Political Caucus.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** And it was an organization that was dying out, only five or six members. And I had teamed up with and made friends with a few of the women who were active there. And we thought why don't we start a new organization. We'll call it the Hillsborough Political Caucus, and we'll be dedicated to issues, and we'll be more action-oriented than the League of Women Voters. Even though I think the League is, can be very action oriented. At that time we felt we would be more of a pro-active organization. And drop the "Women" out of it and make it for both men and women. And we'll start this, and so one thing that we did was we started this

Hillsborough Political Caucus, a small group of us. And it really took off. I was president of the organization for a couple of years. And we quickly grew to a membership of about 150.

**K:** Who is the "we?" Who was there?

**I:** The "we." Well, one person who was really instrumental, and that was Doris Weatherford. Doris, I knocked on her door one day when she worked here at the university and introduced myself. And we've been great friends. And, she had been part of the Women's Political Caucus. And so together we really helped to put this group together. Another person who was instrumental in the beginning was Dr. John Belohlavek, who is currently chairman of the history department. But John took a real interest early on in that organization; it was very helpful--at one point he was even president, after I left to run for the commission. Another--and this is where luck comes into it, I think--I hosted a cable show in Temple Terrace. Because no one else wanted to do it. You know, heh, that was really it.

**K:** Heh.

**I:** It was back when cable was just starting off, and...

**K:** In its infancy.

**I:** ...and, so I had this T.V. show, and they said you can do anything you want with it. So I said great, I'll interview local politicians and public officials. So I would call them up and say would you appear on my show? Well they didn't know it was a program that nobody watched. So they all came. And that's how I met Fran Davin, who was on the County Commission at that time. Little knowing that back when I interviewed her in 1981 that it would be just a tremendous friendship that has lasted for many, many years. The next year, she left the commission and decided to run for the State House of Representatives, and she asked me to coordinate her campaign. And so, she really became my political mentor. And of course later my friend, and she--and that's where you, you might begin by taking some initiative, but then that luck comes into it--because it was luck that Fran took an interest in me. In that she felt that I might have something to offer one day. And she really guided my early development in politics and in political life. I worked on her campaign; I learned a lot there. And then a couple of years later, I was running for County Commission, and she was able to really help guide me through that first effort. And help me mature. And become a good candidate, and help me become a good public official.

**K:** Well you certainly have carried out that, over the years. Tell me what you

learned, running your first political campaign. What were the big lessons that you were shocked at the discovery of, if any, in the process? I realize you went to school in political science, but that doesn't teach people the practical reality of...

**I:** No, not at all.

**K:** ...coordinating a campaign.

**I:** Well I was terrible at asking for money. And I still don't like to.

**K:** Right.

**I:** And I hate that part of it. You have to go up to someone--I don't mind going up to someone and saying, you know, will you support me for this job, and I promise I'll do a good job. But when you have to turn around and say, and will you contribute to my campaign--it seems to cheapen the whole process so terribly. And I hated it. So I never asked for money. Instead, I formed a finance committee of people who didn't mind asking for money and asked them, would you please ask on my behalf, which they did quite successfully. Of course I realized how prepared you have to be. And I didn't mind that part, because I really enjoy the issues, and I think politics is about ideas and issues. And so that part of it, I really soaked up, and enjoyed giving talks, and--or I didn't mind standing up and giving my views and being in a debate format and answering and so forth.

**K:** The dinner table prepared you for that.

**I:** Exactly, the dinner table preparation, heh.

**K:** Heh heh.

**I:** It was--I would have to say that the biggest learning curve for me was the press treatment. I was unprepared, I think, for negative press. And I'm really glad I received a lot of negative press initially.

**K:** Because of age?

**I:** No. Well, I don't think I received negative press because of age so much as I did--one thing that surprised me, initially, was that if somebody, if an opponent said something about you, it simply was picked up and reported and that became the article. And I always thought--naively--and initially, that gee if someone said something about me, well then they would put it in the context that this was a

political statement and they would actually, you know, search out the facts and get your viewpoint and that sort of thing. Of course I said my share of dumb comments, too. I would say things off the cuff, and so that was a real learning process. It was very hurtful to pick up the newspaper and read your own dumb comment, for starters, and say why did I say that? And then why did they report that? That's not really the issue. Well, you know it's like wake up, Pam. That's the way it is. And I'm glad I learned that early on. My first race was very much a rough and tumble race. I had eight opponents. Once the opponents figured out that I actually might win, they were appalled. You know. How could this be, this young woman? And so you know, they really came at me. And I became the focal point for all their criticism. Every time there was a candidate forum, they ignored each other and focused on me. That means that you're the frontrunner. But given my lack of experience, I probably was not ready to be the frontrunner. And all of a sudden here I was a frontrunner, under attack and that sort of thing. So I had to learn pretty quickly, the way things worked. And I mean at the time I hated it, but looking back, it was a great lesson. A great lesson. And it worked out very well for me.

**K:** If you were going to go before a classroom of young folks--I guess we'll use that term today...

**I:** Right.

**K:** If we were gonna go before a classroom with young folks, and we were gonna talk about what it's like to be a political candidate and press relations...is there any other way to learn it? Except to go through what you went through? Is there, are there messages or heh practice exercises, or things that one can do that make you better prepared for that seeing your name in print in a negative form?

**I:** I think it always comes as a shock when it first happens, because you don't view yourself that way that the article is portraying you. I think a lot of it is just experience. You've got to go through it. I think you've got to realize that the journalists have a job to do--you have your job and they have their job. And some, I mean their job is, it's not going to be to make you look good--that's what you wish it, you know heh when you're the candidate you hope everything is flowers and nice and all that. Well that's not their job. I think the best advice thought that I can give, after being at it for some years, is to, as the words are coming out of your mouth, think about what they're gonna look like in print. I mean, it's one thing--even this interview--in a written format, I would cringe at many of the things I've already said.

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** But when you speak, which is like oral history so, so useful...

**K:** Absolutely.

**I:** ...you are freer, you're less cautious. You're, you know you just, you're in a conversation. Well you're not in a conversation when you're talking to a reporter. Or you ought not to be. And that's a lesson--you've just got to learn that through experience. And so that was a little--and so that's what I would say to a class.

**K:** I did have a politician tell me one time that they, they literally always carried a series of quotable quotes with them. And...

**I:** Oh gosh, no I don't do that. Heh heh that's kind of canned, isn't it? Heh.

**K:** ...yeah. And that they did that.

**I:** But, maybe they're effective.

**K:** The process of running a race at your age--and you were, starting out, eight candidates--there were a lot of issues. And we should, I think, spend some time talking about those early eighties, and...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...Hillsborough County, and--the difficulty. The issues that caused you to run beyond personal desire to do that.

**I:** Right.

**K:** There were things wrong. In Hillsborough County.

**I:** Right.

**K:** And we should talk about those. What were they? Give us your...?

**I:** Okay, Hillsborough County needed a change in leadership. The year was 1984. In 1983, three of the five County Commissioners were led out of the courthouse in handcuffs for taking bribes for zoning decisions. Leaving just two members of the Commission. The governor had to step in and appoint three commissioners so that there would be a functioning County Commission. And he did, he appointed John Polk and Matt Jetton and E. L. Bing. E. L. Bing being the first black to then ever

serve on the County Commission. And they were joined by the remaining members, Jan Platt and Rodney Colson. The county was in turmoil. You know you had the majority of the County Commission that had been, for many years, corrupt. Taking money. For zoning decisions. And so you know, I think the public was simply disgusted with county government. And I think their disgust was probably heightened by the fact that all you had to do was look at the way county government--or, I'm sorry, Hillsborough County--was growing, and see the lack of planning, the lack of foresight, the lack of imagination. The lack of infrastructure, and say hey, folks, what are you doing to our community? Nothing but strip malls and no roads and no sewers and no environmental protection and this is just the pits. And so I think the voters were very much ready for a change. And so first, the first change was in 1983. In September of, an election was held to pass a county charter. And the charter didn't make sweeping changes, but it did call for seven county commissioners instead of five; four elected by single-member districts. And three elected at large, whereas prior to that all five had been elected at large. And that we would hire a professional county administrator who would run, and that we were not to get, intrude on the administrative side of the shop and just concentrate on the legislative policymaking. And so the first election to elect this new board was to be held in 1984. Well, first of all the fact that this, there were now single-member districts helped someone like me, who at age 25 and with no personal resources available to me-- to run a countywide campaign, it would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. But when the county is carved up into fourths, then I could just look at a quarter of the county, I could say well I can do that. Particularly since the district included Temple Terrace where I grew up, the USF community where my father was affiliated for many, many years. The Carrollwood area where I lived, and so I felt very, very comfortable with the district and felt that it was one that I could easily campaign in. So, that's the backdrop, you know. So you had a lot of candidates running; everyone viewed this as a new beginning for county government. And it was an opportunity for a new beginning for county government.

**K:** Who were the seven opponents? Let's have a quick test.

**I:** Oh gosh.

**K:** Heh heh. Can you do any of them? Do you remember?

**I:** Yes, I do. On the democratic side, there was Delores Kruks and Carolyn Meeker. And Rod Godan. And George Seral. And on the republican side, there was Don Meade and Janet Dougherty. I think I've got them all.

**K:** You passed.

**I:** Yeah.

**K:** That's very good; I don't think I could do that. The race I take it was sort of framed by the newness and the problems.

**I:** Yes.

**K:** So every one of the candidates would have been talking about their fitness in the new charter or the new environment or how to clean up corruption and those kinds of standard themes would have been there. What separated you from the pack, do you think? I Well, development issues were in the forefront at that time.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** First of all, should there be a northwest expressway built. Today we call it the Veteran's Expressway and we ride on it, but back then you couldn't have had a more controversial issue. I had to decide early on how I felt about that; it affected my district because it would go through Keystone.

**K:** Right.

**I:** And after looking at that, I concluded that for the long term prospects of a transportation system for our county, that we should have this road. This toll facility. Well, that--you know I ended up winning; I suppose that the majority of the folks agreed with me, I don't know. But it was a very controversial stand to take. And some of my other opponents were vehemently opposed to the road. And so the road became a real wedge issue.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** And in many respects I think unfairly painted me as a pro-development candidate. And that was one of the things that really bothered me about my first campaign. I mean my time on the County Commission, I think I was very even-handed in my zoning decisions and I did many things to try to protect the environment and consider myself very much pro-environment. And yet in that first race, I think primarily because of the road issue, my opponents tried to paint me as well she's gonna be very much pro-development. When actually you're looking at infrastructure. I mean that's the real issue, in that if you're going to have a growing county, you've got to plan for the infrastructure. And I think, where we're talking in 1998, someone viewing this film in 2020, the Veteran's Expressway is going to be

clogged. And they're gonna--you have to close your eyes for a minute and imagine it not being there.

**K:** Right.

**I:** And I think as a public official, you've got to think in those terms. You've got to think really, really long-term. In your decision making. But development issues framed very much the debate. Because my district was an area where a lot of people didn't want any more development--in Lutz and in Keystone. Impact fees were brand new. The Commission was, for the first time, implementing impact fees on new development for transportation and parks, and so forth. And that was--and I supported the impact fees. But that was a big issue. And so, I would have to say you know, we were, here we were at this crossroads; it was the corruption issue and then there was the development issues. In our race there was the age issue. I mean, you know I'd go to the forums and they would attack: how could you be qualified, you don't have the experience and so forth. And I was a single woman, and they were correct that I didn't have much experience. But you know, I'd say well that's true, I haven't had much experience. But perhaps in this environment that will be a plus. I mean, perhaps what we need are people with a fresh outlook, who don't, certainly don't have any experience being corrupt.

**K:** Heh yeah right.

**I:** Heh heh like the fellows who left, heh. And that was an issue; it definitely was.

**K:** Gender an issue?

**I:** I think gender was an issue to some extent. Again, being a single woman, it...

**K:** Yeah, you didn't fit the mold of the typical politician.

**I:** Didn't fit the mold, right. Even the other women who had already won office, they had been married with children and...

**K:** Right.

**I:** ...you know, had that stability there in the public's eye. So this was something different. Although I really have to say that, I think in my first race, that being a woman was helpful to me. Because of the women who had come before. Betty Castor, who first served on the County Commission in 1972, followed by Fran Davin in 1974, and Jan Platt in 1976: their reputations on the board as being good

government, watchdog, really outstanding public officials, I think set the stage for other women to follow. Because the voters looked at those women and said yeah, they are the ones that have stood out. They're the ones that have really done a good job and have looked out for the taxpayers and for the citizenry in general. And so, when it came time for me to run in 1984, the fact that they had blazed the trail, I think, really helped me.

**K:** But there had to have been some differences. I mean, forget the uniqueness of Hillsborough County's politics for the moment. Politics, in most places, involves a network of friends, money, influences. Leadership, credibility, contacts, exposure. All of which at age 25...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...you were lacking. And I don't mean that in a critical sense. I mean it just seems more an observable fact than otherwise. There was no network...

**I:** Heh.

**K:** ...there was no, you know, well gee Pam's running, as she might today if you were to run for another office, there would be just a huge fan club of support for you. That had to be different. That had to be--or maybe being 25 you could ignore all that because you didn't even know it was important.

**I:** Maybe that's part of it. But we had a great organization. I mean, I look back on that year-- that campaign year--as just one of the best times of my life.

**K:** Who was your organization?

**I:** Well, heh, my organization was--gosh, what can I say--I was active in politics. You know I had this Hillsborough Political Caucus. We had 150 members. They were a broad spectrum of people from you know, League of Women Voters types to the University of South Florida, to some of my friends who just were my friends, you know; people who I worked with. As I've already mentioned Fran Davin and that connection. Through her campaign in 1982, I had met a lot of her supporters. And then her supporters became my supporters.

**K:** You were way ahead of the game by 25, in other words.

**I:** Sure. It, it's all the--you know, age is a funny thing. It doesn't mean that much; it's really what you've done. It's all your, you know, your accomplishments up to that

point. And I had been a busy person really, politically.

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** I, this was my life. And, we had the greatest campaign though. We had about 300 volunteers. And every Saturday we walked door-to-door. We had phone banks. We were limited in funds, so when it came time to do things like direct mail, we did all the bulk mailing ourselves. You know nothing went out to a direct mail house. My parent's home was the campaign headquarters, and any time I'd drop by there, there was always a volunteer doing something. My father kept them all fed. You know, he's a great Italian cook and so he was always making something. And, that's probably why I won--everyone enjoyed the food. It had probably nothing to do with me, they just wanted to eat, at the house, heh.

**K:** Right. I'm sure. Heh heh.

**I:** And, you know there was just a great sense of family. That we were just one, big extended family.

**K:** It cost less. Back then. By virtue of inflation, but probably also by virtue that the political system has changed.

**I:** You know, the political system has really changed. And I want to speak to that because it really has. I've been now at it for 14 years. And in 14 years I have seen a tremendous change in the way politics at the local level is conducted. And it's unfortunate. And this is the change that I've seen: back when I ran, you put together your organization. You figure well, I might be able to raise forty-thousand dollars. And you make out your budget. What you're gonna spend it on. And you look at your opponents: you think, you know, they might be able to raise ten, twenty-- maybe this one can raise sixty. You know you try to gauge what you think their support is. And this--[is] how I think the issues are gonna come out. And then you go at it. That's not the way it is, today.

**K:** Un unh.

**I:** Today, you can think well I might be able to raise this, and this is what I think the issues are gonna be and now we'll go at it. Well meanwhile at the, you know, six days before the election, the party--the political party of your opponent--decides to come in, and dump one-hundred-thousand dollars into the race. And they produce the most negative television ads that you've ever seen. On an issue that you hadn't even thought of. And that might not even have any relevance to the campaign. And

they might say things that aren't even true. Or they dump direct mail pieces that are just horrible. Accusing you of all kinds of things. It's the world of independent expenditures that has really changed the equation. And it's this level of vicious, personal negative campaigning that has entered the local political scene that I find very distasteful. And of course when you, you know, look at the candidate and say look at this direct mail piece, it's completely wrong and then they can throw up their hands and say, gee I had nothing to do with it; it's my political party that produced this. This corrupts the process terribly, and sets such a negative tone. I think it's one reason why people get tuned out to politics in general. Because they are bombarded with the negative. And that wasn't--I know negative politics has been around since the beginning of time, and I'm not--it's not that. But when I started out in Hillsborough politics in 1984, it was negative just to the point where you debated the issues. And you talked about, well, it was considered I guess that they produced a flyer--like one of my opponents' that said don't vote for Pam because ten years ago she was in high school.

**K:** Hum, heh heh.

**I:** Well, that was true.

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** You know. That was, that, I mean that, that's child's play compared to what they put in the mailboxes today. So, it's really changed and I really do see that the independent expenditures--which are allowed under election law and which the courts have upheld as being something that you can't change, because of free speech and so forth--they've really corrupted the process. Very unfortunate.

**K:** Would you be one of those who would argue, as Hillary Clinton did, that there should be a zone of privacy and restrict--if we could get some kind of popular cultural notion to do that? That there's a--it shouldn't be personal? I mean where do we draw the line? If we can't say change negative campaigning and independent expenditures, then perhaps it can at least be reshifted back to arguing about an issue.

**I:** I think you ought to have to tell the truth. That's what it's all about. I mean a lot of the negative campaigning that goes on, they're just untruths. I mean I've seen things here on the local level--direct mail pieces--that are falsehoods. And that's, that ought to be the litmus test. I mean we ought to be talking about issues. And if you're going to convey to the public what someone's stand has been, it ought to be a truthful analysis of their stand. And I think that ought to be a basic, underlying value system in any campaign.

**K:** I can envision--not being 25; I have real trouble remembering being 25...

**I:** Heh.

**K:** ...but I can envision somebody running, somebody running for political office the first time at age 50. Because they've had a career in another life...

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** ...and done other things, and now they either have the time or the financial circumstance, or the interest level has changed, or whatever, and run for, particularly for local office.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** I think we have seen that a number of times among candidate motivations. A person who's had a career prior to running for office which, with all due respect at 23, 24, 25, you haven't done it yet.

**I:** Right.

**K:** Which means, among other things, that you haven't committed a whole lot of controversial acts. You haven't made your mistakes. You haven't said or done enough things to make a lot of folks mad at ya.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** Whereas if you were 50 and had been successful in whatever prior career as a candidate, you probably got there without all those roses and nice things being said all the time. In other words, if you were successful, presumably you made enemies as well as friends, that you said controversial as well as diplomatic things--and we've all as human beings presumably live our lives every day, making mistakes. All of a sudden you run for a political office at age 50, and that becomes fair game.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** Should it?

**I:** Well, you know it's hard to say. It all depends on what a person's life has been like. Again, I always go back to politics being about ideas and issues and that's what my focus will always be. But clearly in politics today, that is not the focus. People

are drawn to the personal. And that's what they want to exploit. I tend to think though, I mean voters are all of us. We are voters. And I think that people in general are very forgiving of some things that you might have done in your life that weren't, you know, exactly, something you might be proud of. I think what voters are not forgiving of is a pattern. You know, and I think that's what you've got to really look at in a candidate. I mean it's not so much that one time they danced with a lampshade on their head and, you know, drank too much at a party and said some stupid things. Because most people can look at that and say well yeah, I guess I might have done that too. It's a pattern. I mean if every time the person goes out, they act in an inappropriate way, if every time they have a drink they start saying inappropriate things--and I think that's really the test. I don't think we can ask for perfection in our public officials. Because our public officials are just a mirror, they're a reflection on all of us. And perfection just doesn't come heh heh easily...

**K:** Heh heh heh.

**I:** ...to most human beings, heh. It's just not there. But I think what you want in an elected official--I know what I want--and I want someone who's intelligent. And honest. And caring. Caring about all people. And a good listener. And who can articulate their position. And who will study the issues. Now. In terms of their personal life, I also would like it if they led a very nice, good personal life. And--but I, you know, I think that sometimes as a society we're getting a little bit too focused on personal indiscretions. And again I think it's whether or not something's a pattern. So I guess what I'm saying too is that I'm not sure that if someone at age 50 decides to embark on a career in public office that they ought to...look at maybe one thing that they've done wrong and say well this will disqualify me. Because I think the public tends to be pretty forgiving.

**K:** If the public's forgiving, perhaps the press is not.

**I:** Right.

**K:** And perhaps when they find a single flaw, or issue of less-than pleasant nature, they can repeat it, harp on it over and over and over, day in and day out. Does it really matter if it's a pattern or a single issue?

**I:** Hm. You have to look at that case by case. I think a lot of it has to do with how the person under attack deals with it. Again, the press has their job to do. And I think the person under attack needs to recognize that. They've got their job to do, now how am I going to respond? If you respond in a defensive way, chances are, you'll read about it in the paper more than once.

**K:** Um hum. Yeah.

**I:** It all depends on how I think you respond, as a person. We've seen cases--you and I could talk...

**K:** Sure.

**I:** ...aside from this discussion about cases where people have handled their problems real well, and people who have just done a miserable job of handling their problems.

**K:** There is, as you know--and you and I have seen it; we occasionally have talked about the importance of ethics...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...and being in public office and public trust. You came in to the process on the heels of a rather profound display of the lack of it?

**I:** Right.

**K:** There's a public standard, there's a phrase, we've all used it, we all try to believe--and I think all of you who are elected officials try to carry out that standard--it's called I don't, it's the appearance of impropriety...

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** ...standard. How do you advise a young person looking at a political career? Wanting to do what you've done. How should they live their life, if, within the context of reality? You have to make mistakes as you grow up, and...

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** ...continue to make them as human beings. How, how do you prepare for being held on a pedestal, to a standard, that is almost non-human?

**I:** Well first of all, you do make mistakes in life, but you learn from them. And that's one of the key things--you've got to learn from them. You've got to learn from them. You've got to show some growth as a human being. But secondly when it comes to the subject of ethics and public office, I've never quite understood the brouhaha over it because it's-- I've, I've never understood how, why it's so difficult. To do the right

thing. You know if you're doing the right thing. It's not complicated. And ..

**K:** Heh heh.

**I:** It's just not. You know. You just, you just deal with things in an honest and straightforward way. And you don't accept you know, gifts or favors. That's just basic. And you don't view public office as a way to enrich--you ought to view public office as a way to give. So how difficult is that? It's not difficult.

**K:** Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely.

**I:** Yeahh.

**K:** Does it corrupt?

**I:** It can. It depends on what kind of person you are. As I mentioned, the congressman I worked for, sure. It did. But I don't think he was a very nice person to begin with. And I've seen a lot of local officials who, they are elected and they get some power, and they just become, agh, just terrible. But they probably were a little bit terrible to begin with. And then I've worked with a lot of people locally. It doesn't matter how much power they have, they're just wonderful human beings.

**K:** Are you saying Pam, that you've never been in a situation where doing right conflicted with what might be in your best political interest?

**I:** Doing right conflicted with my best political interests. Sure. Yeah, I think it did. I mean sometimes you take stands on things that are harmful to you politically.

**K:** But then you took the stance on the side of right?

**I:** Sure. Well you have to do what you think is right. But I guess what I was saying too, that it's not difficult to know what the right thing is to do. I don't think their ought to be, sometimes a lot of...you know, I can remember my first day as a County Commissioner and our administrator was Norm Hickey. And he took the five of us into this room--I mean it was a public meeting--and he lectured us. On honesty. I was just really offended by it. Because you don't need a lecture on how to be honest, if you're honest.

**K:** Right. Good point. Let's shift gears in the same time frame. Let's talk about the development issues.

**I:** Okay.

**K:** When I first came to Hillsborough County, a friend once said if you want to understand Hillsborough County, and all that happened back then, you need to understand Ken Good.

**I:** Oh.

**K:** And all of that development mania.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** That was in the early eighties. What it about? From your perspective.

**I:** Well.. You know, we're a community that developed without a plan. That's just the way it is. I mean those are the facts. There were some attempts at growth management. When Betty Castor was elected in '72, and when Fran Davin was elected in '74. But they were always in the minority. So we're a community that developed without a plan. And consequently when you develop without a plan, you become reactive to individual proposals. And..

**K:** Hm.

**I:** ...that's Tampa Palms. That's the Tampa Palms story, where a developer comes in, and says I'll do this. And government reacts. And that's the story of Hillsborough County and the way in which it's developed. We have always been very reactive to individual proposals, schemes, pipe-dreams, and--and sound development. I mean we have--all-- there are examples of good development in Hillsborough County, there's examples of very poor, urban sprawl development, where infrastructure is not there. You know. So, so it's a real hodge-podge in our county.

**K:** When I was on the Hillsborough County Charter Review Board in 1990, as a real newcomer...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...to Tampa and to the county, a lot of folks who came before the Charter Review Board had, and a lot of comment on from the members, was about the lack of planning. And--or good planning, I guess that would be more appropriate--is it still bad?

**I:** Well we're talking 1998 now.

**K:** Yeah.

**I:** It's a lot better. It still lacks imagination; was one of my real frustrations when I was on the Board is that I felt that we were just doing the same old, same old, without really thinking long-term. Subdivisions of just a lot of homes and streets and sidewalks just laid out, you know, heh, not that much different from Levitt Town, heh.

**K:** Right.

**I:** You know? Other than the fact that the homes are bigger and--and no sense of trying to draw these communities together with any kind of community centers? Access to mass transit, you know--you go to Europe and I, I really benefitted from being able to live in Italy during part of my growing up years. I lived there when I was 11. And I lived there when I was 17; my father went over there to teach for a period of time. And you know when you look at the European model of piazzas.

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** And the way people come together--and interact. Well, what a great way to live. You know, when you have those options of walking out of your home and walking a couple of blocks and here you're in a piazza where you can sit down and have a cup of coffee and see people and interact, and something going on. And yet, we've built communities of isolation. Where the homes, you know you have the garage fronting it, and you come in, you drive in, and the garage seals shut and you walk into your air conditioned home and that's it. You don't see your neighbors, you don't talk to them. I know there are some neighborhoods that are different, and there are attempts at different standards of community planning--hopefully we're trying to change that--but I often found, truly, that the staff was resistant to change. That they were just very comfortable in that let's do a suburban plat mode. We had a, one subdivision that wanted to do things a little bit differently up in the northwest. First they wanted to save a ton of trees. They wanted it to be a real treesy subdivision. And of course our subdivision regulations say that you have to have sidewalks on both sides and this sort of thing. And then they wanted to have a series of cul-de-sacs where people came together. And it was really neat. And I went out and looked at it, and--but they needed, they needed permission from the staff to not build sidewalks on the other side of the street because they just couldn't save the kinds of trees that they wanted to do, and also their streets were gonna be slightly smaller?

And they wanted permission to you know, maintain their own streets. And I thought it was pretty innovative. You know, here's a subdivision that's gonna be a little bit different. And boy, it was rough to get that thing passed.

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** Because planners, at least when I was on the Board, they wanted to think, and, and just, you know, they felt comfortable within the context of the regulations that they knew. Now I think that that's changed somewhat. You know I left the Board November of '92.

**K:** Right.

**I:** And from what I can tell, I think that they are branching out, and changing and looking at some more innovative forms of development. But gosh a lot of our county is already built out. A lot of it is already this sorry mess.

**K:** Right.

**I:** That's part of the problem.

**K:** This county is unusual in a number of ways, and I suspect that one of the more unique political issues significantly impacted planning while you were on the Commission. And that is, that you have a huge physical landmass.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** Inside county--inside county government--that is not incorporated. How difficult--let me rephrase the question: if this county had consolidated early in the eighties and would have made at least for more uniform planning, do you suspect things would have been better?

**I:** Yes. Which allows me to talk about one of my favorite topics, right Peter?

**K:** Um hum.

**I:** About how the lack of leadership and that structurally we have a problem with the way county government is organized. You know you have very strong leadership and accountability within the City of Tampa structure...

**K:** Right.

**I:** ...with the mayor. But the city's only 250,000 residents. You, we have 700,000 residents in the unincorporated part of the county. And who are they led by? They're led by a committee. A committee of seven. Who hire an appointed administrator who -- most people don't even know who he is. We all know that it doesn't work. I won't say we all know. But we know that committee structures tend not to work real well in terms of providing strong leadership. And I have been a real strong proponent over the years of having an elected county executive that can lead the county. And provide some real focus and leadership and accountability. That's what county government lacks. When you have seven county commissioners and each is trying to get their own agenda through and then you, they don't want your agenda to go through because you'd get the credit and--and then you've got county administrators who come and go, and they're appointed, and the accountability is simply not there. We are larger than the state of Rhode Island. We are a big, big county. And the growth is going to continue to be in the unincorporated part. People watching this, you know, they're gonna think yeah--right now the unincorporated is a million-and-a-half, it'll be one of these days you know?--you can't operate county government under a committee structure with this appointed manager--who comes in from out of town. Who doesn't even know the community. You really need someone who can provide the political focus and the leadership, and holds themselves accountable to the public every four years, and I really do hope that in my lifetime that we will see that change come to Hillsborough County. Because it will make a difference.

**K:** I think we got close--we at least got a charter passed. In '90, and from the Committee even if it didn't get to the public ballot box. That might have provided something. I like that option...

**I:** Right.

**K:** ...as you well know. That, that issue of Hillsborough County and this growth and the lack of leadership and the counterbalancing against the mayor's accountability and power in the city: do you see consolidation at any point on the horizon?

**I:** No, I don't see consolidation at this point. There might have been a time for it back when I was, you know, riding my bike in Temple Terrace growing up, but no, not today. You've got the power bases entrenched and lines too clearly drawn. I don't see it happening.

**K:** How about further incorporations? I mean is there a point when Brandon should

become a city, or Carrollwood should become a city?

**I:** Well, those were big issues when I was on the Board. Brandon wanted to incorporate. Even Lutz wanted to incorporate at one point. I always felt that those requests for incorporation were directly, the result of dissatisfaction with county government in that same issue--of lack of leadership and accountability. I don't think those sentiments would be there if there was an elected chief executive who was held up for his or her record every four years for the public to review and to comment on. But when you have a lot of buck passing within county government--oh it's not me, it's this, it's not the commissioners, it's the county administrator and the county administrator says well it was the policy of this, you know it's, it's like recently we've had in the news, you know the garbage thing hasn't worked out--well who's accountable? You know, in the city people would say it's Mayor Greco. Garbage is not picked up, the contracts weren't written right; it's one person. In county government, who is it? Is it your district commissioner? Is it the Commission collectively? Is it that the Commission passed the right thing, but that the administration screwed up in implementing it? Is it, are the staff members saying no it's the Board members who meddled at--you know. It's a problem. It's really a problem.

**K:** We've got about 15 minutes left. And--see I warned you that it would go quickly.

**I:** Heh.

**K:** Let's talk about water.

**I:** Okay.

**K:** Because in 1998 there is some major movement on the horizon with desalinization plans. What were the water problems that you could perceive when you were on the Commission?

**I:** Well...

**K:** That were significant back then.

**I:** Let me talk about water and sewer. When I first got on the Commission, the previous Commissions had simply not--and Commissions and administration--had not kept up with the infrastructure needs of the county; not in the area of water and sewer, not in the area of transportation, not in any of our important infrastructure

concerns and areas. And we had no sewer capacity for new development. And the sewer plants that were on line were all under environmental--were all facing environmental fines because of the way in which they were operated. It was a real crisis situation. And this is what we were faced with right away as a new Board. We had to embark on a very aggressive program. We borrowed a great deal of money. And embarked on a major program to build sewer capacity and to fix the environmental problems at the plants. Major, major issues in the eighties--'85, '86, '87--really dominated our work. And I think we did a fairly good job with it. Not as good as, in hindsight I think we could have done. But they were real problems. Water problems, we, but we, we were addressing some of the water problems even then. I know that today we have a historic--finally have a historic agreement between counties. But we helped lay part of the groundwork for that by buying some of these major new well fields. Including the Cohen Ranch out in the northwest part of the county. So I think we did a lot of good work in that area.

**K:** I can remember in the seventies, before you were active, there was a book written in Florida history that dealt with water in Florida. Of course most of the State's history as you know has been a matter of trying to pump water out of the ground and get it out of the way in Florida. Hamilton Disten in the 1880s and the cross-Florida barge canals and all kinds of things about water. One of the interesting propositions was the idea of running pipelines to the Suwannee River and bringing all that fresh water down here. When you were on the Commission, those kinds of thoughts would have been out of bounds?

**I:** Yes. We didn't talk...

**K:** Why?

**I:** Well we already had the West Coast Regional Water Authority in place. And SWFMD. And so we only really looked at solutions that were within the confines of those organizational structures. And that wouldn't have been one, heh.

**K:** Same problem with development.

**I:** Um hum.

**K:** The necessity--and that's really the point I'm getting at--that--did you ever feel, while you were on the County Commission that you were restricted? As bright and as innovative and as creative as you are, that I know you to be, did you ever feel as though sitting there for those hours and you know in the chair, dealing with the bureaucratic side to these issues was somewhat frustrating, limiting...?

**I:** Sure.

**K:** Hassling, whatever would be the right term.

**I:** Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. You know I think most people in public office, in legislative functions, have to feel that way, that every once in awhile they're just bumping up against a brick wall. You can come up with a good idea, but that doesn't mean that idea will ever be implemented. For a whole variety of reasons. And people can relate to that in all walks of life; if you're, even in a corporation. Um, but it can be very frustrating on a political level, because many times ideas don't go forward. Not because they're not good ideas, but because of a lot of political reasons. And that's, that can be very frustrating after awhile. But overall though, I have to say when I look at those eight years, I think that the Board collectively did a lot of good. Trying to move the county from you know really, a county that was, a county government that was not well managed and not well led, and didn't do any planning for infrastructure--to a county that tried to operate in a more businesslike manner in terms of planning and appropriating funds, for roads, for libraries, for water and sewer, for criminal justice needs to build the jails and, and so forth; even to build the office buildings needed for government. These are issues, these are concerns that I think are basic expectations on the part of citizens. And where county government really let them down in the early eighties was that complete neglect of infrastructure needs. And what the boards I served on in the mid-1980s through the early-1990s tried to do, was to really address those basic needs, and to say that these capital improvement projects were important, and it's one of the primary functions of government, and we're gonna do it, and we're gonna do it well. I was very involved in transportation issues while I was on the Board that became a real area of expertise for me. And for the first time, our county embarked on a road building program. I mean, when I was first elected, every single road--county road--in the northwest part of the county was a two-lane road. Every road.

**K:** Wow.

**I:** You know, county road. And after five years, after an investment of sixty million dollars, you know, we have a viable, working transportation system. This is what the public expects from government. This is a basic expectation. And I think that we really moved county government to the point where, you know the citizens could look at county government with some degree of hope. And feel that their tax dollars were being well spent. And that's a good feeling.

**K:** Pam Iorio's biggest success? Is what?

**I:** Oh gosh, I think that's really hard to answer. Even though I've been away from it for a number of years now and probably would--ought to be able to answer that in thinking about it. Because you could pick an issue here or there and I could go on and talk about one issue or another, and I've mentioned transportation and the infrastructure and so forth. But you know you don't want to sound too parochial heh in naming just one issue.

**K:** Okay.

**I:** But I would have to say that my time on the Board, I tried very hard to..to have people believe in their county government again. And to, to let people know that their participation would make a difference. And that county government could be honest and straightforward. And, as I mentioned earlier when we started to talk, I think that even when you operate and do that on a small level, on a one, one person at a time, that it does have a ripple effect that really makes a difference in the long run. And I really believe in public service and what it's all about, and I think that if you can convey that to people and make them see the value of public service, well then that really is an accomplishment.

**K:** With the time that's left, and we don't have a bunch, but I think it's real important that you get an opportunity to put it on tape. What do you want to tell somebody--in a world in which politicians are often considered right down with used car salesmen...

**I:** Right.

**K:** You have spent, with all due respect to your age, you've spent a good bulk of it in public service. Already. At your still-young age from my point of view.

**I:** Right.

**K:** What do you want to tell folks about becoming a politician?

**I:** Well it's an honorable profession. It ought to be. It's giving, it's service. There's no reason for people to be turned off of it. I can understand, I shouldn't say there's no reason; there are bad people in public office. And because of that, they taint the whole profession. And we talked earlier about the big head syndrome and the large egos, and that taints the profession. But there also are a lot of really good people in public service. And I go back to the founding of our country and the system that was you know created at that time. And the kind of respect you really have to have

for those who sat and fashioned the Constitution and fashioned our system of government. And then the admiration for how our country has evolved, and how our system of government has evolved through Supreme Court decisions and through interpretation of the Constitution and it really is a thing of beauty to see, to see our system of government--which is widely admired throughout the world. We even went through a civil war. And remained, you know, came out as an intact nation. And so, I have a lot of admiration for where we are as a country--a lot of respect for our history. And I think understanding our history is awfully important to understanding how you can do a better job in the future as a public official. I think, I go back to the fact that public service is an honorable profession. And if you conduct yourself honorably, it is. And it's something that I would hope many people would want to do in the future--and give of themselves, because you really can make a difference. And you can look around your community and you can see things that are there because of your participation that have made life better. A library that people now go to, and can spend time with their family--a parks system in place, environmentally sensitive lands that have been preserved, roadways that are safer. Water that is available. Gosh, I mean it's just a wonderful life, if that's how you choose to spend it and if the voters want you to do it. It's, it makes life very meaningful.

**K:** I know an awful lot of folks who think that you've done it extremely well.

**I:** That's nice.

**K:** And I know an awful lot of folks who hope that you will continue to do it for a very long time to come. And I'm really glad we had the time to do this, this morning. And I appreciate your taking the time from your busy schedule--as Supervisor--to reminisce about what it was like to be on the County Commission back then. Thanks, Pam.

**I:** Thanks Peter, I enjoyed it.