

GENE SEIBEL

TAPE 1, Side 1

August 8, 1996

M.O'R.: This is Michael O'Rourke for the Washington County Historical Society beginning an interview today with Gene Seibel. It's August 8th, and today's interview is taking place in Gene Seibel's home in - where is this?

G.S.: Helvetia.

M.O'R.: Helvetia, okay. Great.

Well, I'd like to start just by asking a little bit about your background. First of all, where were you born?

G.S.: I was born in Portland, Oregon.

M.O'R.: Portland, Oregon. Okay.

G.S.: Portland, Oregon, and we moved out to Cedar Mill, the family moved out, in about 1948, I guess.

M.O'R.: And what year were you born?

G.S.: I was born in '41. And they lived - our house set on the property where Teufel's Wholesale Nursery is on Barnes Road.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah?

G.S.: So we grew up in Cedar Mill. Went to Cedar Mill Grade School and Beaverton High School.

M.O'R.: And I guess maybe you started grade school while you were still in Portland; is that right, or -?

G.S.: No. Moved out here - yeah, I did. I started first grade in Kennedy Grade School in Portland over on - I think it's on 33rd. I don't think it's even running as a school now. I think it's a bed and breakfast and brewery and stuff now.

M.O'R.: Oh, right. Yeah, I know exactly where you mean. That was near where you lived then in Portland?

G.S.: Right. Real close. We were on 32nd.

So we moved out here, and I think it was the second grade I started at Cedar Mill.

M.O'R.: And what did your folks do for a living?

G.S.: My dad was a foreman for ESCO, and my mother was a housewife. My father worked for ESCO for a little over 30 years before he passed away.

M.O'R.: And what kind of a person was your father, personality-wise?

G.S.: Type A, I guess. My father was a real worker. We had a few acres out there. We had eight acres and a small farm. Had some milk cows and chickens and hogs and, you know, just everything we needed to be called a farm. But he worked long hours at ESCO. He worked in the cleaning room; he was foreman of the cleaning room and had, you know, nine-hour, ten-hour days and half a day on Saturday as long as I can remember.

And when he was at home, we ran the farm: cut our own hay and milked and that type of thing. We were growing chickens and beef and pork and -. So we - you know, it was a struggle to get along. We had four kids, and everything we could do - raise ourselves was a big benefit.

M.O'R.: And that's mostly what you did on the farm was just raise ...

G.S.: Oh, yeah. Just strictly for ourselves. Sold a little milk and a few eggs, but mainly it was for ourselves. Big garden. We had a big apple orchard; I think we had 30 apple trees and pear

trees and plums and that sort of stuff. So it was just - and that was back in the days where small acreages, you could make a pretty good living - I mean, for yourself; you couldn't do anything else, but you could have the benefits of it.

M.O'R.: You could feed yourself, anyway?

G.S.: You could feed yourself pretty well, right.

M.O'R.: And your mother, what was she like?

G.S.: My mom was a housewife. Both my parents - both my grandparents on both sides immigrated from Germany to Russia to the United States.

My father's family came down through Canada into the big bend country of Washington, the Odessa, Lind, you know, that area just - I guess it would be a little bit south of Spokane. My dad was born and raised on a wheat ranch. And he got tired of the wheat ranch, didn't want to stay on the ranch all his life, so he came to Portland and went to work for ESCO and met my mother.

My mother's family did that same thing. They immigrated from Germany to Russia, and then they came in through Saskatchewan into Scotts Bluff, Nebraska before they came out here. So both of them had similar backgrounds, but didn't know each other until they both came to Portland.

M.O'R.: Did they meet at ESCO, then?

G.S.: No, they met - it was kind of a funny deal. My father came down from the wheat ranch [where] he lived with his sister, and they were very close to my grandparents. So he met my mom that way, they were like two or three houses away.

M.O'R.: And so when you were growing up, what kinds of things did you do on the farm as a kid?

G.S.: Oh, gosh. You know, a little bit of everything.

[telephone rings]

We'll just let that go.

M.O'R.: Okay.

G.S.: A little bit of everything. You know, my job was - when I got in high school, and in grade school, too, I played sports. So when I got to - I would do all the milking in the morning and do the chores in the morning, and my father would get home about four o'clock, so he did the things in the evening.

But it was my job - you know, we cut hay; we had the old mowers and the old dump rake, and we brought all the hay in loose with a pitchfork and a bale wagon - I mean, not a bale wagon, just a hay wagon - and threw it loose in the barn. Feed the chickens, that type of thing.

Of course, those were the days you could go anyplace, walk. We - I don't know if you remember, Cedar Mill Grade School used to have - every Friday night they had - or Saturday night they had something for the kids. I forgot what they called it, but it was a parents deal and the kids and stuff. So we had dances and games and stuff up at the Cedar Mill Grade School, and it was about a two-mile walk from my house to - from our house to the school, but you never even thought twice about walking it.

And then when I got a little older and went to high school, it would be nothing to walk from our house to Beaverton. You never walked very far because you knew everybody, and somebody would come by and give you a ride, you know.

The old Wilkenson store used to be on the corner of Cedar Mill and Cornell, which was about a mile away, and we'd walk to the

store. You just never thought about anything but walking every place you went. Of course, there were some - some of us guys ran around together. They'd be within a half mile or a mile apart. We'd always walk to each other's places and do something.

M.O'R.: So a different era, eh?

G.S.: Oh, yeah. I mean, it was - I tell my grandkids now that I used to take off and head to Beaverton, and I probably wouldn't get a half a mile; somebody would come by, whether it was a teacher at school or a friend that was headed that way - you just never thought twice about it.

M.O'R.: Apart from the weekend activities up at the school, what kinds of things did you do just to have fun in your free time?

G.S.: Well, we lived on a little creek, so we always used to spend time down at the creek, either fishing or catching crawdads or swimming, you know, and stuff like that.

A lot of bicycle riding. I can remember every summer three of us guys would take our bicycles and ride out to Dairy Creek and camp out at Dairy Creek for about a week and fish and do that type of stuff.

See, on a farm you never had to worry about things to do. There was always something. Even recreational stuff, you know, you always had ponds to swim in or creeks to fish in or - I lived to fish and hunt, and used to have a bow and arrow and do quite a bit of bow and arrow shooting and that type of stuff.

M.O'R.: Hunting with the bow and arrow, then?

G.S.: I used to hunt quite a bit with a bow and arrow. And then when I got a little older, you know, there's always farm work for kids. I - in this country, there used to be a lot of peas, so

when I got - oh - 14, 15, I went to work for some of the farmers in the pea fields - you know, stacking peas in the trucks, and then bales and cutting hay, and strawberries. I never really picked a lot of strawberries, but I always ended up kind of working the strawberry fields for the owners.

And beans - Chobin's beans - George Chobin down there on Barnes Road, they used to raise celery and bush beans and pole beans. Spent a lot of time moving irrigation and kind of being a field boss for them and that sort of stuff. In those days, there was just nothing to finding a job. If you wanted to work, there was a lot of work around.

Did a lot of work for the Weisenflues. They were big farmers in the area, and a lot of hay and straw that we put up.

M.O'R.: And what was school like for you? Did you enjoy school, or how did it go for you?

G.S.: I enjoyed school, I guess. Coming from a small school into Beaverton all of a sudden in those days was quite a shock. A lot of people.

You know, when I first went to Cedar Mill, there were only four classes, two grades in each class. Then that expanded; I think by the time I was eighth grade, we had the eighth grade that was separate. But being in a small four-room school and then going into a big high school, it was quite a shock.

But I enjoyed school. Made a lot of friends that I still have. High school was fine. I can't say I was the best student, but I got by.

And I loved sports. I really did enjoy all sports.

M.O'R.: Which sports did you go out for?

G.S.: Well, of course football I enjoyed the most. I played football for a couple of years. And basketball. But you know, in those days you had an obligation to the farm, too, and to the family, and there were things that you just couldn't do. I really didn't get into football till my junior and senior year, and I decided that's the only sport I was going to play that year because I did have a job after school, and then the obligation at home, too.

When I left Beaverton, I went to Portland State. I wanted to become a metallurgist. Since my dad had worked in a foundry all his life, I kind of got that in my blood, too, I guess. But I didn't want to just work in a foundry; I wanted to know how the different metals worked and how you could heat treat metals and do different things with it. So I went to school to become a metallurgist.

I was going to night school and going to Portland State, too, and taking accounting and business at Portland State, and ...

M.O'R.: While you were continuing to live at home?

G.S.: Yeah. I was living at home. I was working at ESCO, and ESCO had a big layoff, and I left ESCO and went to Pacific States - or Pacific Steel Foundry down on 19th and Vaughn. And I worked up there to a position called an expediter. An expediter was a person that when an order comes in, you follow that order all the way through and make sure it gets shipped out on the same date. You - you know, you have authority to tell the men to get on this job first, and that type of thing. And I really enjoyed that, but I could see what was happening to my dad. My father passed away at 52 years old with a heart attack, after 30 years at ESCO. I had

gotten married in June of 1962 and decided, you know, this wasn't the place for me to work in a foundry all my life, dirt and grime, and the unhealthy conditions.

So about four months into our - a new marriage, we talked it over and decided I was going to go look for another job. I had - I wanted to be outdoors. So I hit the gas company, the phone company, the power company, and just by chance I happened to walk into the Water District office on a Friday afternoon, and George Cody was the Superintendent then. And I had known George through church and through the neighborhood, so I told him what I was looking for, looking for a job, and he said, "Well, we need a meter reader. So go in and talk to the ladies in the office."

So I went in and talked to the ladies in the office, and they had me write from 1 to 10. And they said, "Yeah, we can read it." And George says, "When can you go to work?"

I said, "Well, I've got to give two weeks' notice." So I gave my two weeks' notice and took a \$50 an hour [sic] cut, and went to work for the Water District in January of 1963.

M.O'R.: But you figured it was worth it just to get out of the ...

G.S.: It was worth it to get outside, yeah. Worth it to get outside. My father ended up passing away about six months later, so it was - he was glad, and everybody else was glad I got out of the foundry.

And it was good. I enjoyed the work.

M.O'R.: Now, did you actually finish up at Portland State?

G.S.: I never graduated. I went four years but did not go through graduation.

When i went to work for the Water District, at that time there were some night classes going on through the water industry in Portland that I went and got - in the waterworks industry there are Certified Waterworks Operators. So I went through and got all of those. There's four different grades, and I got all of those, and I probably went to school till I was 40 years old, but I do not have a college degree.

M.O'R.: Back - just one more note from your childhood, I'm just wondering how much contact you had with the Tualatin at that time. Did you ...

G.S.: Well, we had a little bit. We spent - of course, Avalon Park and Roamer's Rest were big back then, so for family outings and company picnics and neighborhood picnics, usually we always ended up at Avalon Park. And of course you could swim in the river then. I can remember the first year we went out there, and they had the signs posted, you know, "No swimming."

But yeah, we used to spend a lot of time out in that area.

M.O'R.: You were there, though, before they posted those signs?

G.S.: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Matter of fact, it didn't look any different to us when they posted the "no swimming" than it did when we were swimming in it.

Yeah, Avalon used to have ropes and slides and stuff into the river. Quite a nice park. It was quite a nice park.

M.O'R.: Now, Avalon's the one that had the bandstand, also; is that right?

G.S.: Yes. Yes. Matter of fact, ESCO used to have their company picnic out there every year. And they ended up with - you

know, they'd have games and horseshoes and hot dogs and stuff. And then towards evening they'd have a bigger dinner, and they'd have a band play. You bet.

M.O'R.: And did you know much about the other two places that were there, too? I guess there was Roamer's and Louie's?

G.S.: Yeah. Roamer's a little bit. We - you know, when I got older we would go out to Roamer's Rest quite a bit. It seemed like Avalon had kind of gone downhill a little bit, and Roamer's seemed to be the place to go. But I haven't been out that way for quite a while, but I do remember Avalon had the paddle boats - you know, the paddle boats? And of course, being kids, that was a big issue for us to go out there.

We used to go out there - I would say in the summertime we'd go out there two or three times on picnics and that. Then we kind of started going to Roamer's Rest when we got older. We'd date and go out to Roamer's Rest and stuff like that. But I don't remember Roamer's Rest as much as I do Avalon.

M.O'R.: Was Roamer's sort of a similar kind of place in terms of its organization and everything?

G.S.: Yeah. I think Roamer's was - Roamer's didn't seem as big to me. Avalon seemed to have a lot of acres, a lot of things to do and things. And Roamer's was more just a smaller place, and to be honest with you, just kind of a tavern and a little park that I remember, but that's all I remember of Roamer's.

M.O'R.: And they were all right there on the same spot on the river?

G.S.: Real close. Probably within a mile of each other, yeah. Avalon has got quite a few houses on it now, where Avalon Park used to be. A big subdivision in there now.

M.O'R.: Yeah. I think there's a trailer park where Roamer's used to be.

G.S.: Yeah. And Roamer's - I think there's a little - I think there's still a boat launch and stuff at Roamer's, somebody was telling me the other day. I don't know whether that's true or not, but a boat launch, and a - I don't know if there's an eating place, a restaurant, or not there.

M.O'R.: When you were out there, or for that matter at other times during that period, did you have any thoughts or did you observe at all the quality of the water in the Tualatin?

G.S.: No. Back then you never even thought about it.

Where we lived on Barnes Road, Al Teufel owned all the land around us with his holly trees and holly orchard. Well, Al had put three ponds in behind our house. They were big ponds; they were probably 100 feet by 40 feet, and you know, seven, eight feet deep. And they always had kind of a green look, you know. Holding ponds, you know, just spring water stuff. We never thought twice about it. You know, in the evenings we'd go in there and swim. We even convinced Al to put a diving board in so we could have more fun and stuff.

And the Tualatin looked a lot better than the ponds we used to swim in, and so we never even gave it a second thought. It just was good-looking water. We just never even thought about it.

M.O'R.: And you used to - you said you used to fish at Dairy Creek; is that right?

G.S.: Yeah. I used to do a lot of fishing at Dairy and McKay Creek.

M.O'R.: And on the Tualatin, too?

G.S.: Fished a little bit on the Tualatin, not a lot. The Tualatin was quite a ways to go. But yeah, as kids we fished a little bit. We fished around the Scholls area. When I was again growing up I spent quite a bit of time in the Scholls area. They used to be big on blackcaps; they used to raise a lot of blackcaps. So I'd go out with this one fellow, and I'd go out from Sunday night till Friday night and work for him, and every once in a while in the evenings I'd sneak down to fish a little bit, and we used to catch some pretty nice fish in the Tualatin.

M.O'R.: And Dairy Creek, too, I guess was ...

G.S.: Dairy Creek used to be a real good fishery. So did McKay Creek. Both of those creeks we used to go out and catch rainbow trout and brook trout, do real well in those.

We always used to love to go out there after a rainstorm. Seemed like for some reason the fish bit - they were biting better after the rainstorm. So we'd go out there - one of us would talk our dads into dropping us off out there for a couple hours in the evening after a rainstorm, and we did real well.

M.O'R.: And you said you'd actually go out there and camp, then?

G.S.: Oh, yeah. We used to camp right along where Sunset Highway is. We used to ride our bikes out there. Usually what would happen is that we'd ride our bikes out there, and just sleeping bags, and camp and fish. There used to be three of us

that did it. And then one of our dads would pick us up three or four days later and bring us home. Yeah, we did that quite a bit.

And up until recently - by recently I mean eight, nine years ago - we used to go up Dairy Creek up out of Moutaindale and fish quite a bit, my son and I. Never caught a lot, but we had a lot of fun up there. Go up there in the evening just to get away from everything.

M.O'R.: Well, how did your first job at the Water District work out for you, then?

G.S.: Well, it must have worked out pretty well because I started as a meter reader and retired as General Manager.

Yeah, I went to work in '63 for the Water District, and it was really - I guess I didn't know what I was getting into. because in those days the Water District did not have enough water to meet the summer needs. So we'd work all winter long putting pipe in the ground and adding new customers, and then we'd worry all summer long whether we had enough water to meet the needs. And I got so frustrated I quit two or three times, and the Board would convince me to stay and come back.

Matter of fact, I quit one night in frustration because we were out of water up in the Bonny Slope area and Cedar Mill area. In those days there was only 12 of us employed by the Water District, so we took turns being on call. Well, I don't know how it ended up, it must have been in a weak moment, but I agreed to have my phone number put in the phone book under the Water District. So you looked - at that time it was Wolf Creek Highway Water District, you'd have the office number, and then after hours my phone number. And that was that way for ten years, and every summer my wife would

start - I'd be out on a call for some reason, and my wife would be getting calls all day long or all evening long because people were out of water.

M.O'R.: And this was - you were head of the Water District?

G.S.: No, I was just a meter reader then. I went from - from there I went - from a meter reader I went to construction foreman. Had a small crew and installed pipe and water meters.

Then shortly after that the District - George Cody retired, and the District hired a new General Manager - well, Superintendent they called it then. They hired Cicero Smith, who was Public Works Director of Forest Grove. Smitty has since passed away, but a lot of the things that I know about the Tualatin has come from Smitty, because he was born and raised in Forest Grove, and he would talk about the times when his mother would talk about the sternwheelers going up the Tualatin. As a matter of fact, he brought some pictures in he had at one time that showed us the Tualatin and the sternwheelers on it. And the Indians, the Tualatin Indians, and how they used to come through Forest Grove on their annual trip to the market.

And he used to tell a story where the Indians would come out of the hills, and they'd camp someplace around the Forest Grove area, and the men would be gone for like a day-and-a-half. And they'd come back and they had enough gold to go purchase their stores that they needed for the rest of the winter in Portland. And we've always wondered, you know, since it was brought up, where did they go? You know, they couldn't have gone very far in a day-and-a-half to be able to find this gold and this sort of stuff.

So Smitty was quite a historian on the Tualatin, and I learned a lot from him.

But back at the District, when they hired Smitty he brought me in as his assistant. So I worked a number of years as his assistant. Then when he retired in about - '76, I guess, they accepted his retirement or his resignation and just turned around and said, "Well, you're the new manager, Gene." So I took over in '76.

And the first thing I was going to stop was this being out of water every summer. And we were. We were out of water; every summer we'd be out of water.

M.O'R.: Well, you know, I interrupted you in your earlier story about that. You said your wife was getting phone calls ...

G.S.: Oh, my wife would get phone calls. Matter of fact, she still - this - we haven't had water problems for 16 years, and she still gets a Christmas card from some people that got to know her - never met her face-to-face, but just on the phone. She would answer the phone calls and say, "Well, Gene's out working on it," you know, Mr. So-and-so. And they got to get some pretty good friendships over that.

But we did change things around after '76. We made it a part of the employment, any people coming on had to take the duty for a weekend and had to be on call, so I was able to not have to be on call 24 hours a day for all that length of time.

M.O'R.: Now, when you talk about running out of water, this is water that people were using in their homes, or is this the irrigation water, or both?

G.S.: No, we were strictly all domestic use in the homes. And back in the late 30's, '38, I think, there was a bunch of

people - not a bunch, about six people, six families went together, and they formed what was called Barnes Co-op. The Teufels and the Peterkorts and some of those people, and they built a 4-inch water line from Portland out here. And it grew, and shortly after that they started the Water District, and they hired George Cody to manage it and add people to it.

And they went from a 4-inch to maybe an 8-inch, and then to a 12-inch line, and then up to a 24. Well, as the growth kept going, there just was not enough line capacity to get all that water out from Portland to meet the needs in Washington County.

The reason for being out of water is that people don't realize that summertime use is probably two-and-a-half times more than it is in the wintertime. So although nine months a year we had plenty of water, we had an abundance of water, but those three months a year where people were watering their lawns and irrigating their gardens and, you know, running through the sprinklers and stuff, causes some problems.

M.O'R.: And so the supply from Portland - was it supplemented, then, with other sources?

G.S.: They would supplement it - not at that time. That's all we had was Portland.

M.O'R.: So it was Bull Run water, then?

G.S.: It was all Bull Run water. Then in 1973, Aloha-Huber merged into Wolf Creek Highway Water District. And Aloha had two wells, but they were having groundwater problems. The state water engineer came through and, rightfully so, put a moratorium on any new wells and limited the amount of water that could be pumped out of existing wells.

So all of a sudden the Aloha-Huber Water District was in trouble. They were growing faster than we were, and they didn't have enough water to meet their needs, either. So the two districts merged, and we were able to supplement a little bit, 600 acre-feet a year, out of the wells and the rest was on Bull Run. So what we did was hold those wells off until the summertime and pump the total that we could out in the summertime to meet the needs.

M.O'R.: I see. So even though you had a larger demand that came along with the wells ...

G.S.: Right.

M.O'R.: ... you were able to supply that?

G.S.: Right. Because we used it in that three-month period when it was needed. We'd pump it all out in that three-month period.

Well, then we negotiated with Portland, and we built a bigger line in from Portland and brought a second 24-inch line in from Hoyt Park. Hoyt Park - matter of fact, the connection is right there where the zoo is now. The initial service, the initial transmission line coming from Portland came up Barnes Road to Miller, and part of it went down Barnes towards St. Vincents, and the other one went across and down Cornell Road.

Well, early 70's, 73, 74, we put another connection in at Hoyt Park and brought a 24-inch water line down Skyline and tied in, and that supplemented things real well for quite a while.

But about 1978, we were growing by leaps and bounds. We were putting in 60 to 100 meters a month. So we started negotiating with Portland then to build a major transmission line, and we suc-

ceeded in two things. We negotiated a long-term contract, a 25-year contract, with Portland. And we convinced Portland to fund a 60-inch water main into the Wolf Creek Water District.

That water line starts out on about 162nd and Holgate. It comes off of Bull Run into Powell Butte, from Powell Butte down a - a 60-inch main. It crosses the Willamette real close to the Sellwood Bridge, Oaks Park. Then it comes up Bertha-Beaverton and over to Canyon and comes into the district on Center Street.

Well, that meets the needs for a considerable length of time, but Portland water is pretty expensive. We were able then to - our water rights were 72 cents a hundred, and that was the wholesale rates to Portland. By putting this new water line in, we could do it all gravity. We didn't have to put any pumps in it. So we were able to bring our water cost down to roughly 30 cents.

Well, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that if you can save that much money you can pay for a pretty good-sized bond. So what we did is we negotiated with Portland. They sold \$20 million worth of bonds, and we agreed to pay it back through water revenue. So we paid the debt service ...

[end of side one]

GENE SEIBEL

TAPE 1, Side 2

August 8, 1996

M.O'R.: So maybe back up a sentence or two. So you ...

G.S.: So the 60-inch line is still pretty adequate to meet the district's needs, again, nine months a year.

But in the 90's with the growth starting in again, you know, it wasn't unusual for the District to put in 150 new services a month. And the district has always been very futuristic. That's one thing I've got to say is I had the pleasure of working for elected officials that were always 10, 25, 30 years ahead of the rest of the public in looking for future water sources.

So knowing that there was going to be need for water, we applied for water rights on the Willamette River in 1973 and received a permit for 150 million gallons a day out of the Willamette. To this day that water hasn't been used, but the District still holds that permit.

Well, then Hillsboro, Forest Grove, Beaverton, started talking about - and USA started talking about adding on another 50 feet to the Barney Project, and that made a lot of sense to us. The District had been involved in the regional water study that's going on now; it's been going on for three years, and in that study we looked at 26 different sources, everything from desalinization of the ocean water to bringing water over from Detroit Reservoir.

Now, we knew there was more water available to Barney, so we began negotiating with Eldon Mills and Rob Drake and some of those people, and we were allowed to buy into the Barney Project.

M.O'R.: This is the dam that already exists on the Trask?

G.S.: Yes. The Barney Project was built in 1970. It impounded 4,000 acre-feet, and the new Barney, what I call the Barney Project now, is to increase that storage to 20,000 acre-feet.

So the district negotiated a 35 percent buy-in of the new project, and they also bought 10 percent of the existing project. So when that project is done - and the comment that I made to the Board is - my commitment to the Board is that they will not have to worry for water for 30 years. With this new project when it comes on line, we should be in very good shape.

We'll still buy water, the District will still buy water from Portland, but they'll also have a secondary source coming from the Barney Project.

The district is located geographically better than any district could be in the metropolitan area because we're right in the middle between Barney and Bull Run. So by having water coming from both ends, we should be able to handle most emergencies, you know, when the project is done.

M.O'R.: And you still have that Willamette ...

G.S.: Still have Willamette water rights, and there is some interest in the Willamette, a lot more than - well, the regional study that was done by all the agencies within the tri-county area, and everybody was involved in this study - how that got started is the City of Portland took a look to see what their future needs were and found that they cannot serve the whole metropolitan area out of Bull Run without some major improvements at Bull Run. And that's a good possibility, but with the environmental issue that

are around us now, expanding Bull Run could be - you know, it could be a 30-year project even before you move a shovel of dirt.

So when they looked at all these different source options that could be available, we narrowed it down to four or five options - Bull Run being one, the Willamette River being one; the Clackamas River has got some more water available in it.

Then a project that excites me real much is something called re-use storage and recovery. That's where you drill wells, but you put water back in the ground - wintertime use, when water's overflowing in Bull Run, you take that water and put it back in the ground to store it, and then pump it back out in the summertime.

So we've found two sites in the metropolitan area, one out in the Powell Road area that looks like it could handle it, and one on Cooper Mountain that looks like it could handle enough water to pump 20 million gallons a day out. So the district is doing some testing on that to see if that project will work.

But there is some interest in the Willamette from the smaller cities: Canby, Wilsonville, Sherwood, and possibly Tigard need water pretty sudden. They've got to do something within the next five years, and the Willamette maybe makes sense for those people to go to that right away.

Tualatin Valley Water, which it is called now - I should go back a little bit.

When I first went to work for the Water District, we had 4800 services and 12 employees. When I left the Water District, we had 73 employees, and we served 48,000 services. So we grew quite a bit.

The water rights that we hold on the Willamette were taken for all of Eastern Washington County. Matter of fact, we cover part of West Portland, all the way to Lake Oswego, to Tigard, not just our water district. So the District has been very willing to give up some of those water rights for the people that need it. So we've been working with the Wilsonvilles and Canbys and some of those cities to see where they will be going in the future, with the idea that we would relinquish some of those water rights for those folks.

M.O'R.: So the Barney Reservoir will mean that you'll start in effect taking - well, it's really from the Trask, I suppose ...

G.S.: Yeah, it's the Trask, and then it drops into the Tualatin.

M.O'R.: It drops into the Tualatin. But it will be Tualatin water, the same source that Hillsboro's had for all these years?

G.S.: Right. Exactly. Exactly.

M.O'R.: Over the years have you interacted much with the Hillsboro Water District?

G.S.: Oh, quite a bit.

M.O'R.: Has there been any sharing of resources before now?

G.S.: Yeah. Not in great detail, but over the last ten or 15 years - I've got to go back, Michael.

Early on, the District was one of the sponsors - I don't know if you remember the McKay Creek Project? Has that come up at all?

G.S.: No, it hasn't.

M.O'R.: Well, there was an idea, I guess, by the Bureau of Reclamation to build a dam just west of 185th and West Union Road, and back water up across Cornelius Pass, across 185th, behind the

Rock Creek campus of PCC, to back all that water up and to store water there. It would have been recreation plus a possible water source.

M.O'R.: Now, this was not part of the analysis that was done that led to Scoggins Reservoir? It was separate from that?

G.S.: It was separate. It was a separate project. And it went quite a ways. I mean, there was a lot of money spent and a lot of time and effort. The thing that killed the project was that there was - the soil conditions did not allow footings to go in to build a dam there. There was just - they couldn't find a good foundation material to build a dam.

So everybody - and there was a lot of sponsors. There was a lot of sponsors: Hillsboro, Wolf Creek Highway Water District, City of Beaverton. There must have been six or seven different sponsors of that, and I think we all threw in \$20,000 at that time to do the engineering on it.

And I feel sure that's why PCC got built there because they felt they would have a lake view and everything, and it just never happened.

So while that project was going on - gosh, that was back in the late 60's - there was the same - the Scoggins Project was going on simultaneously, but they were two separate projects.

M.O'R.: And that one would have provided some water for the district, too?

G.S.: Yeah. That would have been a nice project, would have been a good project for water.

M.O'R.: What about the quality of water from these various sources?

G.S.: Well, first of all, I'm a water works person, and I know - I've seen the changes over the last number of years. I think the quality's changed; there's no doubt it's changed. But I'm not so sure that a lot of the things we're finding in water sources now haven't been there forever, but we're - we've got our instrumentation down to such a minute science now that we can detect things that we didn't know were there before.

And I also truly believe that with the technology they have today in the water treatment field, we can treat just about any type of water there is. It's going to make it more expensive if you have to go through different scenarios of treatment, but the district for three years has been running tests on the Willamette River, and we know that we can - we've put a - oh, what do you call it? - a model treatment plant that we - we got a grant from the American Water Works Research Foundation to do a study on giardia. And in that study the District added another \$300,000. We brought a trailer in from Portland that was built into a treatment plant. This trailer was just a mobile treatment plant.

So we worked with different types of treatment, and we found that we can treat the water with - water from the Willamette with a number of things that - I dare say that people could not tell the difference between that water and Bull Run water. But it would be more expensive. It would be more expensive.

M.O'R.: Is giardia one of the things that you have to worry about with Willamette water?

G.S.: Giardia's one of them. You've got all the pesticides and herbicides and everything now that are in the river. But through activated charcoal and things like that we, can do away

with those. And with a filter media we can guarantee that that's not there.

The biggest issue on some of the rivers - the Tualatin, the Willamette, and to a degree the Clackamas - is public perception. I mean, we in the valley and in the metropolitan area have heard nothing but Scoggins and Bull Run water for years and years and years. Bull Run is not treated a bit. There's chlorine added to it. And Scoggins is fully treated. And there's no - there's an air about those water sources they're - you know, they're pristine water sources.

So we've got a big public perception to overcome on the Willamette, for instance, that's going to take more than it is to build the treatment plant. The regional study that was just completed that will be out probably in September says the Willamette should be tapped somewhere between 2030 and 2050 for a major water source.

Now, that means there's going to have to be a lot of work done in public meetings and stuff before then, and it means that there's a lot of things that can be done with that. The metropolitan area is very fortunate with the water sources they have available. For instance, the Willamette could only be run three months a year, in the summertime, and shut off the rest of the time. Or, you know, you could serve some of the outlying districts off the Willamette and keep the major for Bull Run. There's a number of things that could be done yet that haven't been worked out, and that's going to be up to the water utility managers and the elected officials in the years to come on how that will all work together.

M.O'R.: Now, did you just say that the public perception is that both water from Scoggins and from Bull Run are high quality sources of water?

G.S.: Mm-hmm. I think the public is, yeah.

M.O'R.: But you said there's a difference in the two in terms of the treatment they require?

G.S.: You bet. Scoggins is fully treated. Scoggins is probably - well, there's no doubt, Scoggins water is purer than Bull Run.

M.O'R.: Purer?

G.S.: You bet it is, because it's fully treated.

M.O'R.: Oh, but not as it comes out of the reservoir?

G.S.: No, no. Bull Run water, as I said, is just chlorinated. It's a controlled - Bull Run is controlled, you know. No recreation, no logging, none of that. Scoggins you've got boating and everything. Barney you don't have any of that, but Barney water is dropped into the Tualatin River.

I don't know if you're familiar with how Barney works. It's really a unique set-up. There's about - and don't hold me to this - maybe 2,000 feet of pipeline that comes out of the dam. It goes into a saddle. The water runs across the top of the ground, just like a creek bed, over the saddle and drops into the Tualatin Basin and actually flows on top of the ground near the Tualatin River. Then it's picked up out of the Tualatin and treated and sent for domestic use.

So, you know, I don't know what the quality of the water coming out of the reservoir is, but I would think it would be very, very high quality. The problem with that water is that it runs

across the surface and into the Tualatin and then is picked up again. The Tualatin's actually used as a conduit or pipeline to get water to the treatment plant.

M.O'R.: Although it's - the withdrawal point's fairly high up?

G.S.: Very high up. Very high up. The biggest problem you have there is the high turbidity of the water because of heavy rains. But organics and stuff like that, I wouldn't be worried about that at all.

M.O'R.: Now, I wonder about - well, the Scoggins Reservoir - the Wolf Creek District isn't using it, or is it?

G.S.: It is now.

M.O'R.: It is now?

G.S.: It is now, right. Right now the District uses probably about 24 or 25 million gallons a day, average flow, and about six million of that is coming from the Scoggins.

In the future, that will increase up to about 18 to 20 million a day as growth comes.

M.O'R.: Now, what percentage of the Scoggins output, then, does the district use?

G.S.: Fifteen - well, right now it's about ten percent, and will go up to 35 percent.

M.O'R.: Now, some of that water is also used for irrigation, right?

G.S.: Right. Henry Hagg is used for irrigation.

And that's another issue - I shouldn't say issue, but that's another item that needs to be discussed. Right now there's more water in the dam that's allocated - than is allocated for irriga-

tion. But the way of the Bureau of Reclamation projects work, when Congress allocates that project for irrigation, flood control, recreation and whatever, that's pretty well set in concrete. So to get it re-allocated, it has to go back to Congress.

Before I left the district, Bill Gaffey from USA that's taking Gary Krahmer's job, and myself and Tim Erwin, the City Manager of Hillsboro, and the Manager of - Joe Rutland from the Irrigation District, met with the Bureau of Reclamation to see if there was any water available for domestic use in Scoggins that's not being used for irrigation now, and there is. There's a considerable amount of water.

So when I left, the idea was to follow up on that to see if the Bureau of Reclamation would be interested in working with us so they could get some of that water re-allocated for domestic use.

Now, I'm going to go out on a limb a little bit because I've had an idea, and Eldon and Gary share this idea, that why don't we take the Water District's water rights on the Willamette River, use that water for irrigation for the farmers, and take all of Scoggins and use it for domestic use? Make a trade. I think you'd solve the public perception issue, and you'd have enough water to meet the needs for the future.

M.O'R.: And is the Scoggins then a better quality source for you than the Willamette?

G.S.: You bet. And there's a treatment plant already there; you would not have to build another treatment plant. You'd have to add to this one, but you wouldn't have to build another treatment plant. You would have to build major transmission mains from the Willamette into the irrigation system, and that would be very

costly, and I think the urban area would have to pay for most of that because you'd be making a trade. You wouldn't ask the agricultural community just to give up their water at Scoggins and you go build it this way, so you'd have to find a way to help finance the majority of that project.

But I think it's a project that shouldn't die. I think it should be kept on the front burner and see if it's possible. I think we've got to move fast while the state of Oregon has still got Mark Hatfield there with a little bit of clout back in Congress.

M.O'R.: That's right. Well, in the next three months or whatever ...

G.S.: And we have talked. There's interest there. They've done a similar project in Kansas, so we know it's do-able.

M.O'R.: You mean from the legislative point of view?

G.S.: Mm-hmm.

M.O'R.: Well, that's interesting. I hadn't heard about that plan.

Well, let's back up just a little bit in terms of the history of the area - although it doesn't sound like you at the Wolf Creek Water District were directly involved in any of these developments, but there's been an interesting history with respect to the Tualatin for the last quarter century or so in terms of issues having to do with not only water use but also water quality in the river itself. One of the big events was the building moratorium here in Washington County in 1970 - early 70's, anyway.

Do you remember when that came down?

G.S.: You bet I do. Within the Wolf Creek Highway Water District there was probably seven different sanitary districts, before the moratorium. And of course people relate water - they relate sewage as water, too. So although we were not directly involved, we had - we got a number of the calls, too, with toilets backing up and basements flooding and manholes blowing out on the street because a sewer was backing up and that sort of stuff.

So we - although we weren't directly involved, we were involved.

M.O'R.: You were handling a little bit of the traffic, eh?

G.S.: Right. Right.

And I remember - I guess the thing that comes to mind, Governor Straub put the moratorium on, if I'm remembering right. He's the one that put the building moratorium on.

M.O'R.: Yeah, that's probably right.

G.S.: Yeah, I think it was Straub.

But what I remember most of that is a fellow by the name of Dick Milbrot was County Administrator then, and as far as I'm concerned, Dick single-handedly put USA together, because anytime he could get two people together, he was out there talking about the need for a county-wide agency to handle the sewage.

And I remember him coming to the board meeting and coming to public meetings that I was involved in back then, and the man never slept till the election of it. He'd just talk to everybody he possibly could, and sold them on the idea.

Back then, and even to a point now, some of the smaller entities don't like their domain being taken over by bigger government, so it wasn't an easy sell. It was a pretty hard sell. The

moratorium helped. When they put a moratorium on and said, "No more building until something's done," that helped a lot, but you still had the local government officials fighting big government, so it was kind of a dog fight.

M.O'R.: And Dick Milbrot, was it?

G.S.: Milbrot. He was County Administrator at that time.

M.O'R.: And he saw the need for this even before the moratorium, then?

G.S.: You bet. You bet.

M.O'R.: And what was his argument?

G.S.: Oh, the argument was the pollution. I mean, the smaller plants weren't handling it. Most of the time a small plant was run by a part-time sewage operator. A lot of them had second jobs - I mean first jobs. A lot of them were firemen, that type of thing, and they'd run these on the side. They weren't educated. You know, they didn't understand. They might have known the mechanics of how the pump runs and that sort of stuff, but other than that - you know, they did the best job they possibly could, but we didn't know that much about it, and these people just - all they wanted to do was make sure the things didn't overflow.

And technology got better, and the industry didn't keep up with training their people well enough. So there were some real pollution problems. And you know, we've fallen underneath the umbrella of health hazard; I'm not sure there was a health hazard, but I think it could have gotten to be a health hazard if something hadn't been done.

When USA came in, they saw the need and they - you know, I can't think of a better run organization in the county than Unified

Sewerage has been. I mean, they took a real negative and turned it into a positive.

M.O'R.: Now, when the moratorium came down, would this be about the same time that you recall noticing the signs at Roamer's, or was this even earlier?

G.S.: No, it was earlier. The Roamer's thing - I can't remember exactly when - well, I can, too, if I go back. It seems to me that the Roamer's issue was in the middle to late 60's.

M.O'R.: So a few years earlier, anyway?

G.S.: Yeah, I would say maybe even five years earlier.

M.O'R.: And this was because there were some hepatitis cases that were linked ...

G.S.: That's what I recall. We didn't have the DEQ then; it must have been the State Health Division that found some hepatitis cases and traced it back to the river.

M.O'R.: And I guess, at least by one account, that that was maybe the final blow to Roamer's.

G.S.: Yeah, I think Roamer's and Avalon both that was the final blow.

The public - you know, you start talking about something that could endanger kids and expectant mothers and stuff, they're going to just shy away from it, and I think financially that's what happened with both Avalon and Roamer's. It just died.

M.O'R.: But you said yourself, though, that you didn't - even though there may have been some changing quality, you didn't really see evidence of it?

G.S.: No, as an individual and younger, I didn't see any or notice any at all.

You know, public perception again: We call the it the Tualatin River. There's not very much drop in that river. It's really the longest lake you've ever seen.

M.O'R.: Pretty slow-moving.

G.S.: Pretty slow-moving, and I've forgotten now, but I did know how much drop per mile, and it's just a very little bit, very little bit.

M.O'R.: Once it gets down here to the valley floor?

G.S.: Oh, yeah. When it's from Tualatin on, it's not much.

But again, I think you've seen some big changes in the last ten years on the river. I was involved early on with a committee that worked with the DEQ to do some tests and that type of thing on the river, and back in 1988, I guess, we formed a group of Washington County people called [indiscernible] to do a study on the river to see what was needed to make the river more public-acceptable, I guess. And although no agency or one person has jumped in and done it all, I think you've seen a number of improvements on the river. There are people canoeing on it now, and I've even floated the river and stuff like that.

I think you're going to be able to see some more changes, more public acceptance. The more it's being used, people are going to see that the river isn't near as bad as people think it is, and a lot of that's contributed to the treatment that USA has.

You know, a big issue in the water industry that's coming through the nation is re-use water. Dual water systems where you have - you know, all of us could get by with a five-eighths, three-quarter meter to your house for domestic use. It's the irrigation that we need more water on.

Well, there's a big push in the Southwest and Southeast to use treated sewage water for irrigation water. And that sounds great, but I'm not so sure it would work in Washington County because my concern is if we formed a partnership with USA to deliver treated sewage water, or re-use water as they call it, for all the greenways irrigation, and for school irrigation and golf courses, and maybe even to the point where they'd deliver it to your home for irrigation, we'd probably dry the Tualatin River up. Sixty-five percent of all the water that comes into this basin is imported, either from the Trask or from Bull Run. That water is being used, it goes into the sewer system, and it gets released into the Tualatin River. If you take that out of there, what's the river going to be?

So I was successful in the regional water study, and re-use is a big issue there, is to say that it can't be used for domestic use where there's another need. In our case, the Tualatin River needs that water.

M.O'R.: So back to the story about the formation of USA. All the small sewer districts closed down, and we had the formation of USA.

G.S.: Well, first of all, USA - yeah, when it was formed, USA then ran those small - they just didn't automatically stop. They ran them until they could do the construction for the major treatment plants.

M.O'R.: Right. And at that time there was some federal money out there, too?

G.S.: A lot of federal money. And major trunk lines were built in order to bring sewage from - for instance, the one that

sticks in my mind is Upland Sewage Agency that was up about 90th and Leahy, in that area. I remember a major trunk coming down the hill and out to the west - you know, I think it ended up going to the Rock Creek plant.

And then there were some combinations - there used to be one in Uplands, there used to be one in Marlen village, and out through Aloha there was numbers of them; you could buy a package plant, and a developer could build a subdivision and put a package treatment plant in, and he could go.

M.O'R.: So there were a lot of really small districts out there?

G.S.: You bet.

[end of tape]