



Oral History

of

William Julian

Interviewed by

Denny Holland and Paul Tritaik

Part 2 of 2

Name: William Julian

Date of Interview: November 1, 2012

Location of Interview: Caddo Lake NWR, Karnack, TX

Interviewer: Denny Holland and Paul Tritaik

Years worked for Fish and Wildlife Service: 30 + years.

Offices and Field Stations Worked, Positions Held:

Bolsque del Apache, New Mexico (as student assistant); Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, Louisiana (GS3); Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Louisiana (GS9-manager); Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Arkansas (GS7-acting clerk, assistant manager); Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge, Tennessee (GS9, assistant manager); South Florida Complex including Loxahatchee, Key Deer, Sanibel, Pelican Island, Florida; Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge, Georgia (manager); Blackwater National Wildlife including Mason Neck, Glenn Martin, and Susquehanna, Maryland (GS12); Felsenthal National Wildlife, Arkansas (GS12).

Most Important Projects: Obtaining 3,000 Acres next to Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge from an estate holding.

Colleagues and Mentors: Mentor: Vandiver L. Childs;
Colleagues: John Ellis, Joe Withers, Tommy Wood, Otis

Mouton, Claude Lard, Walter Stieglitz, Nell Prior, Clyde Lee, Walt Price, Johnny Lynch, Walt Gresh, Ira Westbrook, Even Rude, Vick Kay, Roystm (Rudy) R. Rudolph, Curtis Wilson, Jack Watson, Larry Givens, Carl Farminic, Jack Perkins, George Garriss, Denny Holland, John DeLime, Stanley Marshall.

ABSTRACT: As a young man, William (Bill) Julian joined the military and spent time in Colorado and Texas before going to Italy. After being discharged from the military, Bill decided to go home and farm before he figured there had to be something better out there. He then started taking wildlife management courses at A&M and worked at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge as a student assistant before graduating in 1951 and attaining full time employment with the Fish and Wildlife Service. He discusses his time spent with the Fish and Wildlife Service, including some of his experiences, fellow employees and stories.



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DH: Okay, do please continue.

WJ: After we got there, went to see the doctor of course.....[break in tape]...the oldest son was born and we got pretty well terms with a local doctor who was particularly good country doctor.

PT: This is Delta.

WJ: Delta; and he says "You need a real first aid kit." So he gave me, he rigged up a complete, penicillin the whole works. And that hunting season I got a call from him and he says "Is there any way you can get Pilottown tonight?" And I said "Yeah." Well he was in Buras, which is above Venice and there's one boat with radar in that whole end of the Delta then and it was off shore in a solid fog; I mean one of those dark, dark fogs. And I said we can go and he said "The (unintelligible) son, he shot a goose and caught it and had a broken wing and it jabbed into his arm." Said, "He's got an arm with red places going up and down, he needs penicillin tonight." I said, "We can get there." So Otis and I went down, it wasn't any problem going down, we could go to a point where he had a marker. So we went on down the board walk and went on to his house and the kid had the goose bone had gone in his arm down in below the elbow

and he had red streaks past his elbow. So gave him a shot and then Otis and I navigated, by now I had a compass in every boat so we bumped our way back up the bank.

Pilottown was where the bar pilots changed, when an ocean going vessel came into the bar off the Mississippi, the bar pilot got it, came to Pilottown and then the bar pilot stopped and a river pilot took it on up to New Orleans. Anyway the pilots on the banana boats would usually give the pilots a stalk of bananas, so we wound up occasionally with a whole stalk of bananas at on time. We had the last fresh water going down that the local fishermen could use, we kept the water hose where they could use it and we'd go down and sometimes there'd be a sack of oysters on the dock, something like this so that worked out real well. I got to where I didn't like, you'd go to shuck them, you'd eat all the little ones and save the big ones and if you get a bunch of oysters with a lot of little ones on them you can get plenty of oysters. Robert Gilmore, who was there as a trainee, summer worker and he went on into the Fish and Wildlife, but anyway we bought a cistern to put up (unintelligible) hard cypress cistern and hard cypress wood and had all the pieces and everything to assemble and all notched and ready. He came in and sat there and (unintelligible) looked at him one day and he was down there making



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a spear gun out of one of them. So Gilmore didn't like it but he ordered a special stove so we wouldn't have a partial cistern.

DH: That wouldn't hold water.

WJ: But the boardwalk in the old days, before we got there the story was there was there was two bars in Pilottown. And if you could walk from one bar to the other without falling off of the boardwalk, it was all right to go.

DH: Speaking of pilots and so forth, river pilots operated from there to New Orleans, which was a distance of about 80 river miles.

WJ: Yeah, and another pilot would take it to Baton Rouge.

DH: Even though air miles it wasn't all that far to Delta, but river miles was circuitous.

WJ: But when we moved, I don't know if I covered, I don't think I did, when we moved from Sabine to Delta and filed for a moving expense, we got our minimum rate and then Milt (Name), the administrative officer from Atlanta called and says, "I

think you might be eligible for Island moved rates." So we looked in the manual and it says for an island you could get an extra rate but he said "You've got to be sure you make a payment, don't take a donation boat and do it." So finally I got the Texas Company to take \$100 for barge rental, they didn't want it, I mean the California Company and I finally got them to take it and I applied for island rates. And it was turned down and I appealed to GAO, they turned it down; found out it was ruled we were not living on an island.

DH: That's nice to know.

WJ: I lost \$100 out of it. Oh and on the state hunting area out at the edge, opening day I told Otis I said, "Look hunters had to leave mid-afternoon to get back up river." And so I told Otis, I said "There's going to be some geese out there with broken wings that we may not have time to hunt, but I'm sure we can pick us up a couple of cripples for supper." And he says, "That's fine." So as we were working the area, we found a group of hunters just, the refuge line was right here the whole marsh was the same for miles almost, they set up right on the refuge line, had their decoys inside the refuge and a pile of about 12 or 13 geese inside the refuge. So we seized the geese and anyway



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the hunters all left and we wound up killing two or three cripples and we had about a 26 foot boat with a cabin **close** and a seat on each side and the geese were all piled on the back. And our geese on one side, but just before we got home Otis walked up to the front of the cabin said, "Bill" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Where these geese go?" I said, "Well they'll go to the orphanage." He said, "Bill, you think them orphans would mind if I swap three geese."

DH: Probably not. Well let's get you to the next duty station from south Florida.

WJ: Okay.

HJ: We got a little kid born south Florida.

DH: You had a kid born down at...

WJ: Yeah the last of our kids, sons was born there and then when we moved from there to Piedmont. Well as it had happened, after Mr. Givens the regional supervisor had told me that that crew knew how to spray by now, they didn't know and for me to go with them, leave them there spraying; I did. They sprayed one day and I was spraying one day, and we were putting out 2-4D by the barrel, I mean dozen, dozen

barrels at a time. I looked out the office window and the wind was blowing a little bit, so I **(unintelligible)** and told them to stop, but they should have stopped a little bit earlier. And we got a heck of a drift that went out on some peppers and some eggplant and some beans and one of the neighbors, a few days later, came down and says, "Have you sprayed anything?" And said, "Yeah." And he said, "Well I think I've got some damage." And I said, "Well let's go look where we sprayed." We went down the levy and here right towards his bean fields he had peppers mainly. So this pepper field man it had knocked the willows, it hit them; there's no doubt he got a load. And the only way they could get compensation, it was so big they had to file a suit to get it, there was no way you could just arbitrarily settle it. So it wound up, there was about eight or ten, eight I guess farmers claiming; part of them justified and part not. The U.S. Attorney assigned two lawyers to the case and a FBI accountant. And the attorney, one of them, was one of the most brilliant men I've worked with, the other was one of the most do-do's I've been around. But when we first started the lead attorney said "We've got two jobs: one, pay the ones that were hurt; two, don't pay the ones that were not." He said, "Let's go to work." And we went to work, and we also hired, as a consultant, a retired Ph doctor that had worked with



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had with all of the plants all of his career down in that area as a consultant. We took pictures of the plants in and out and we set up, the farmers got a sort of so called independent expert from USDA from one of the, I forgot which plant station he was in that area, but he was good and then we met every two weeks we had a tour. The farmers and him, the outside expert and us so we made a tour of the field, everybody made their notes and we took pictures and what have you. And we wound up, rather than a jury, they decided it'd be a whole lot simpler for a judge to handle it. So about two years after this happened, we wound up in West Palm Beach in federal court and it lasted a week, I spent about two days on the stand and then came back a time or two in between. And the lawyer, our lead attorney was so good that as the case ended some of the ones suing us, one in particular, the biggest one said, "I want your card if I ever have trouble, I want you." He did a bang up job for us, but I don't know how many (unintelligible) we pay him, but it was a heck of a payment. After this happened, I told Helen "We might as well pack our bags, somebody's got to go and I'm it." When the next performance rating came, I got an unsatisfactory rating and on the part it was based on my lack of supervision of the spray crew. And the result was a mandatory transfer to

Piedmont. Let's see we were (unintelligible) at South Florida was set at a 12, Piedmont was still an 11.

DH: You got a lateral reassignment.

WJ: I got a lateral mandatory because memories were short. Anyway I got the straight word that I was going to be fired from Washington and I made up my mind that I wasn't going by myself. I wrote Walt Gresh a restricted memo, the regional director, of the facts and I never did get any; we'd went on to Piedmont. And when we got there George Garris was the assistant manager so he said, "Listen" just about the first weekend he came down to the house, he and his wife and five kids in a little station wagon. And we had three boys, he said "Let's go make a tour of the country, ya'll need to see that." So we filled that station wagon up. We were making the tour and all of a sudden here in front of us is a vehicle, said "Just Married." George said "Hey kids, roll the windows down," said, "I'm going pass this vehicle I want all of you to wave at them." So we waved at that couple and I think they turned around and went back home, I don't know. Anyway George on giving me a tour of the refuge, there as an area off to itself a little bit that refuge aid was supposed to look after and George wasn't worry about that, so anyway we went down to



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look at this beautiful little five acre lake. We pulled up to it and here was a hole in the damn with weeds in it waist high. And George says, "What we going to do about it now? What we going to do about this?" I said, "Nothing George." I said, "The next time it thunders we're going to have a four inch rain and it's going to just blow this whole damn out." And that's what happened and we got the damn fixed. Then they had just finished construction on a water control structure on a 30 acre lake that SCS engineers had designed the stop log structure with the intake on out into the lake and then the rising deal with the notches in it to the boards where you regulate the level. So right after I got there we started, we dropped the boards in and starting filling the lake. Well the end of the structure came up with us and the end of the intake, it floated.

DH: Floated.

WJ: And we let the water back down and Joe Adams, the aid, said "Well that's a mess, Bill" said "you wanted to go down there and take a picture before we tear it out?" I said, "Joe I don't want to document how stupid we were, let's fix it and then take the picture." So we put a load of cement on the end of that thing and took a picture.

DH: How long were you on Piedmont?

WJ: About four, four and a half years. Went from, let me see...we jumped around too much, but thank goodness I missed part of this too. Well he had a 15 acre cornfield that sort of looped around on a little slew, we knocked the corn down and flood that slew. Well anyway the coons, had a duck trap in it, and the coons were giving us problems on the duck trap so I called the grocer and told him I wanted two cases of stale eggs and he didn't appreciate that either. Said he didn't sell stale eggs, I said "Well they'll be stale after I hold them a while, let me have two cases of fresh eggs." So he sold me fresh eggs. We put the eggs out and it worked on the coons, and the crows, the first two days there were dead crows all over the place and then about the third or fourth day we had a cannon net step up. I went down to watch it one afternoon and I saw the crows were still around the area and still a lot of eggs. And I made a nest where the crows were working five or six eggs, those crows would not eat an egg. A day or two later we got a good shot on the net, I shot the net and all of a sudden I heard whooping and hollering and car horns honking and what had happened we had some neighbors that run cows that came on the refuge part time and they also had a still, and they thought, the family thought the still had



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blown up. Then a few days after that I looked down and in that area there was some smoke coming up, so I called the revenue boys told them I think I found you one. So they looked for the smoke and half the night and finally found it and lightening had lit a dead tree.

At Piedmont we issued about 4,000 permits, this was before the day of deer hunting permits; there were 33,000 acres on Piedmont. And had quite a timber program (unintelligible) were the foresters, but we issued 4,000 hunting permits manually. And the first year I was there we had trouble, they send an application in and you couldn't read some of them. So the next year the permits that went out, we said be sure your address is right because this will be your permit and it will be mailed with an envelope window, and you'd be surprised how much the penmanship grew. But anyway the clerk was a retired Navy Yeoman and he, in the Navy he had been over in east where all the fireworks is going now; all the trouble with Arabs and what have you. And he was a recorder in high level conferences where he had a mask and a voice recorder and voice recording everything. And he had a memory like you wouldn't believe, so he and I worked over these applications of 4,000 hunts and we started getting duplicates. And we wound up with one bunch of eight had, you could apply as a group or as individual and when we drew,

and when we drew the number, if the group was drawn we got 8, 6, 8 or whatever, drawing one at a time. But anyway this group of 8 had sent in 8 individual applications. Then they had sent in applications for a group for all eight of them. And it wound up, I think we had 64 applications all from (unintelligible), 72 I think it was, applications from this one group of 8 people. And we held them, we didn't tell them they didn't get a permit, we just held it. And finally one of the group came to the office one day to ask about his permit. And Walt Price, the agent, happened to be in the office that day and this fellow says, "I applied for a permit and I hadn't got it." I had it in the hold stack, and he said something else. And Walt Price says, "Fellow did you think we we're stupid?" (Unintelligible) we were.

Anyway one of the neighbors called his dog, had a hound dog and caught it hunting inside the refuge and called and told him we got your dog. And he came after it and he was unhappy his dog had never been on the refuge, on and on and on. Anyway I gave him his dog back, he says "There sure going to be a lot of fires out here." And I said, "Well good!" I said, "Just set them either at night or on the weekend 'cause I get double time fighting on weekends and at night." I said, "Don't set one in daytime, that's just a regular job." We never did get a fire, but he also had a bunch



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of cows that were running. They owned about 10, 15 acres and he had two barb wire fence around it and his cows get out all the time. We called, put them up, called him, put them up. Finally they came by close to headquarters; one ole cow was pretty gentle. I got in the back of the pickup with a rope, I roped her and took her on down and we put her in the pen with many others went on in the pen. I called him and told, I said "Got your cow down here in the pen." "Well we'll come drive them home." I said, "No." I said, "I don't want them driven home they might get lost on the refuge. They going to be hauled when they leave here." And he hauled them to the sell barn.

Anyway after, one of the most shocked people that I saw, was driving one day and there was a fellow by the road and he was just standing there, you could see just sort of in shock. And I said, "Need a ride?" "Yeah." He got in, I said, "What happened?" "Well," said, "I was tired of hunting, hadn't seen a deer. I let my bow down, I looked and there was a deer walking across my bow."

This was where we had an archery, it was an archery hunter killed. We got a call that there'd been a death up on the corner, so I went up and when I got there they already had the body out in ambulance. Anyway, I took pictures of the corpse, an arrow had hit right, exactly missed the bone but right centered in

the throat. And I got one of them to show me, I said "I want to see where this happened." So one of them went back and showed me where he was sitting. Well the next day I took Walt Tillman, was a young man then, and I said "Walt I want you to go with me and we're going to reenact this thing." So we went to the spot and his hunting crew said that he had a cough and he was a heavy smoker. And so I was up to where he was sitting, there was a pool of blood with yellow jackets in it, cigarette butts, and one cigarette crunched. So I said, "Walt sit here and I'm going to go over here and get in this," there was a lean-to tree. I said, "I'm going to get in that tree and see what I can see." So I did and then I told Walt to cough and I visualized what happened. The fellow was sitting there, smoking, and (making coughing noises) and the fellow thought he was a pig. He said when he shot him, he said he thought he was shooting a hog, which would have been legal. But anyway when I got back after sitting over there and I got back to Walt, he was able to stand up but he had gotten paled sitting over that blood with those yellow jackets. I told the report, sent a report in and then I got a phone call a few days later from Gresh and he said, "I don't know what you're doing but quit right now and all those pictures and you mail them to me." He said, "I think you're going to get a subpoena for those pictures." And he



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said, "Let them get them from me so both sides can have them." So anyway I mailed him the pictures.

DH: Did you hear any more about the episode where the guy...?

WJ: No, never did hear any more.

DH: Okay so it was presumably it was ruled an accident?

WJ: Huh?

DH: Presumably it was ruled accidentally?

WJ: Yeah.

DH: Did you open the deer season, the first deer season on Piedmont?

WJ: Oh no, no!

DH: It had been an on going....?

WJ: When I got there, they'd been doing it for years.

They had brought, in the early stages of it, they had

brought some Wisconsin deer in and George Garris commented that for the first year or two, after those Wisconsin deer came in, how much difference there was in the size of the deer that were bought in. Leon Tugle told me one day, in the hunting season, "I want to show you something." So we went out and we parked, he said "See those slags?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Let's go." We made a big loop, here was a blind set up. He said, "See where that is?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Let's go to the truck." It wasn't 50 yards to the road to the truck, the fellow had made a great big loop and got lost and put the blind up right by the road.

DH: Okay, you replaced Don Ambrosen?

WJ: No

HJ: Martin.

DH: Tom Martin, no Tom...

WJ: I'll have to come up later with it.

HJ: It wasn't Martin?

WJ: No, he replaced us; Martin replaced me.



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DH: Tom went from Piedmont to South Florida.

WJ: I went from Tennessee to South Florida, and then after the 2-4D Deal, went to Piedmont.

DH: Right.

WJ: And then we were at Piedmont like five years, four or five years.

DH: See Tom was sent to Piedmont, sort of like the deal that you had. He had got into a problem at Santee so if was a....

WJ: Tom had, Martin had used government equipment on...

DH: On private land.

WJ: ...private land and when the local people wanted him to do some work on the park, it wasn't available for public use. I guess Givens memory had come back or something, but anyway I got a call from him and he says, "About sending you to Blackwater?" So I said, "Well that's fine with me." So we moved from

Piedmont to a house, three story house that was built in 1800's and replaced Wallis, what was...

DH: Key.

WJ: Key Wallis there at Blackwater. The problems at Blackwater, a lot of what we had were deer hunting problems that the agents said, well let's put it this way, the enforcement had not been very stringent. And they told me, said "If you want to work on those deer hunters, we'll help you." So we did and there was about two miles, about a mile and a half of a public highway between the headquarters, the visitors center and on by, and it was a headlight alley. We had set up on each end of the drive, one observer there, on at the other end and one in the middle. And when I was in the middle, a car stopped, I said "Well we've got, we're going to have a walker." So it stayed there a while, stayed there a while, nothing moved, no headlight, no walking headlight; everything just calm and peaceful, car sitting there. About 10 minutes later, I saw someone walked in front of the head lights. He started to go off and I told him to go ahead and stop and get back in the car; we didn't know what was going on. And looked in the car, here was about six or eight grocery sacks filled with corn, he's been out in our corn field harvesting corn to bait his duck



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blind. And Larry Thurman was in the group and so I was talking to the man, said "You were going to bait your duck blind weren't you?" He said, "Yeah I guess I was." I said, "Well where do you usually hunt?" He told me and Larry Thurman started grinning, he was watching for hunting over bait; **he had already peeked him out.**

But just before we left, Paul my oldest son, and youngest son came down to the house, the house was about 300 yards from the office. He said, "Wally", Stewart the maintenance, this is after hours, said "he's at the office. There's a fellow down there that hit a deer and he's really sort of asking a whole lot of questions or acting up a little bit." And I went down and here was this fellow, "Look at my car, water running out of that radiator. Government going to fix my car, your deer did this! You're going to fix my car!" "No, can't fix your car." Well he ranted on awhile and I said, "Well," I said, "look, if you want us to take you somewhere we will. If you want call somebody, there's a phone in here." "Phone, use your phone! I got a number! My number is..." And he gave me his phone number, I didn't call him. But anyway this went on and on and finally Wally and I figured that it wouldn't heat up until he got out of range of our help. So we got him going, we sent him off down the road. But he told me where he hit the

deer and then later on that night a friend stopped at the house for something. And I said, "Do you need any deer meat?" The state had authorized the meat to release any deer like that to anybody that wanted it. And I said, "You need any venison?" He said, "Yeah I could use some." I said, "Well I know where we can find some." We went down to the spot and started looking and I looked over there and I thought there was a bunch of brush, turned the light back and it was antlers. When I looked a little closer I said, "The body's yours but the head's mine." And anyway that's how it worked up and I still have the head, that thing was 170 on Boone and Crockett. But that was not the biggest, there were two big deer on the refuge that you could see from the visitors center off and on; this was number 2, it wasn't number 1.

PT: Do you have any Wisconsin deer at Blackwater?

WJ: No but I wrote Boone and Crockett and there'd only two Boone and Crockett records of antlers from Dorchester County.

DH: One of the things that you did there at Blackwater was get into bee keeping.



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WJ: Yeah, I illegally, well not illegally I just by the side I kept bees.

DH: They were pollinating plants for you.

WJ: I was pollinating the refuge plants.

DH: Of course.

WJ: And I didn't, didn't need to give me a permit to do that. I wound up with 60 hives; I used some of them on the refuge, part off. And I worked on weekends part-time as state bee inspector, and built up some social security. The bees really helped then, on one instance; let me start with Russell Train when he was EPA or whatever.

I got a call from John Gottschalk, Director of Fish and Wildlife; he was one of the best we ever had. John says, "I hate to ruin the weekend but we need some help. Russell Train needs some help on his farm. Can you go up one weekend and meet with him?" "Sure." So I said, "Just set it up, I'll go." So we did and one of the men and I went up on the weekend, we met with him and he said, "Let's just walk the place out." We did, first thing when we got there, right down from his house the kids were feeding ducks; right just a little further down was a duck

blind. We walked out from the house into a cornfield that had been mowed, he said "There wasn't much crop here this year so we just mowed it." So he said, "What do we need?" Well I said, "The first thing to do is let me call Larry Thurman and let him come over and you and him talk because," Oh he said, "I want to be right, I can't be caught." I said, "You were just lucky that you were not caught 'cause he got two things that are glaring right out." And I said, "Let me contact the game agent and let him come over and meet with you and you can get it right." "Okay." And we looked and in the middle of his corn field there was some swag just (unintelligible) just right. And I said, "I'd like to contact the SCS and bring an engineer out here and let him design you some low level water control structure here, low level dyke, real simple, and fix you some ponds out here in the middle of this. So he say's "That's fine." So we did. Well everything went, this was fine and then Buh Bowling was his assistant at that time, B U H, Buh Bowling. Bowling had a hunting club, not a hunting club, but hunting area on Hooper's Island on down south beyond the refuge. And he'd stopped occasionally with the kids at the visitors center, but he called one on like a Friday and he said, "My kids want to come down, we want to come down to Hooper's Island for the weekend and is there any chance of program at the



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visitors center Saturday?" And I called Nell, Nell Prior who was in charge of it, they were booked solid. So I said, "The visitors center is booked solid but I've got a couple of hives of bees out here that are real gentle. We can go to those bee hives and work them over." He said, "That sounds great." So he bought the kids down and these two hives of bees were super gentle, so we worked them, I mean we pulled call frames and found the queen and went through the whole shabang. And then when the wilderness hearing, not long after this the wilderness hearing was coming up. And the Wilderness Society had set out to put a big part of Blackwater into wilderness. And the Regional Office had sort of verbally committed five thousand acres, didn't say where or what, but they sort of made an indication from what I could gather. They said they wanted to come in and let's talk wilderness, and went in and met with Jim Gillett, and he says "We're going to go down to Bowling's office and talk to him." And I said, "Well you have any trouble with Bowling?" He said, "Well not really." He said, "Sometimes he's a problem." We walked on down, went into Bowling's office and secretary let us sit down out there and his office was over here; she went in, sat us down and went in. In a little bit, he came out "Hello Bill, how you doing? I had some of your honey for breakfast this morning." Gillett just sat

there. Anyway we talked and the problem with the wilderness restrictions were going to let nutria just tear that place totally up. And we went into this, pretty much detail, and he said, "We're going to fight it." So we fought it and won, we didn't get it.

Then about a few months later, or a year or two later, anyway my next door neighbor was Senator Fred Malkus, who was (unintelligible) of the Maryland Senate and a real good buddy. But anyway Fred came down and says, "Bill, I'm managing the heirs of the Jarrett land, Jarrett Estate." Said, "There's 3,000 acres right south of you, joins you; a lot of timber, old timber on it and some good marsh. Are you interested?" So I sent it in, they said they that's just not high enough priority. I told Fred, "Just give me time." Finally he sent a letter in to the Department of Fish and Wildlife, "Do you want it?" And I got a letter from Bowling, it was a draft to him to be signed by our Director. And the note stuck on top of it said, "Bill, do I need to sign this?" So I called Bowling and I told him, I said "The Fish and Wildlife doesn't put that on a very high priority," but I said, "Blackwater does! Puts it real high!" That's all I needed to say, so I got; Fred in the meantime, the estate was putting pressure on Malkus to get this thing settled. So Bowling put the pressure on our outfit and we wound



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up buying 3,000 acres. So I think that was one of my major accomplishments if I ever had one.

DH: In addition to Blackwater, you had a couple of satellites?

WJ: Yeah, had Glenn Martin and Susquehanna, and then after we got there they added Mason Neck. But Glenn Martin Refuge was on Smith Island out in the Chesapeake Bay, out from Crisfield. And it was, we had one man down there, Stanley Marshall, who was from the area. He was an old, ole timer, grew up there; it was an old family. Stanley was shunned by part of the people, his neighbor and his own brother quit talking to him; Stanley was a real good man. The only case he made was, he caught his nephew with a goose before season. And we were able to prosecute that, and he plead not guilty; it was tried in Baltimore before the magistrate. And he was found guilty and fined, I forget how much, and put on probation. And they told him to wait and your probation officer will be here in a minute. Smith Island hates black people, I mean they are as southern, as far as redneck. And the nicest, biggest, blackest man I think I've seen walks in the door and says, "I'm looking for Glenn Marshall." So he was Glenn's probation officer, so I thought justice had made its circle. And about that

time, right after that, the boathouse burned; the shop burned. And Glenn's boat was seen in the area, we couldn't get (unintelligible) sworn statement, but we knew that; we found out that his boat was seen in the area. So FBI called me and said, "We need to go down there." I said, "We need to go in the state patrol boat. We don't need to take my boat down there." So we got the state police to take us over, a real hot day, and we docked the (unintelligible) agent says, "I've got to carry a gun but it's just too hot for a jacket." So he found a paper bag, so he took his little notebook and a paper bag with his gun and went to the house looking for Glenn, to his daddy's house. Glenn was there, and says "I need to talk to you." And says, "We can either do it here or you can go to Baltimore." He said, "We've had a problem over at the boat house and I need to talk to you about it and it's up to you where we want to do it. You want to do it now or you want to go to Baltimore?" He said, "We'll do it." So we went in, Glenn, anybody could use his boat and of course it wasn't him and he wasn't even in that area at all at that time. About the time we finished, we knew we weren't going to get anything out of him, but (unintelligible) that far. About the time we were finished, the door came open with a big bang, here was Glenn's daddy, who's Stanley Marshall's brother, who was our number one opponent of the place as far



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us period. And he wanted to know what we were doing at his house. The agent said, "We wanted to interview him and they asked us to come in." And the agent said, "Well I think our interview is over, we'll just go." So we left the old man there steaming and went, but later on the agents stopped Glenn for something and he had the spotting scope that he'd stolen out of the boat house.

DH: Interesting.

WJ: Shallow water, it's really shallow around Smith Island, so with their crabbing they'd bring a drag in that shallow water, that's one of their main crabbing methods. And if you don't know the channels, you're not going to go very far but I said some of the agents or somebody might need to use a boat so I put a depth finder on it. Left it on there about a year and was done there one day and said, "Bill if you need that depth finder somewhere you might as well take it, I don't need it." So we took his depth finder. But there was two towns on Smith Island, Ewell and then another one down there Rhodes Point, nearly a mile between them; only road on the island. People that, a lot of them had a car, they'd pay \$25.00 to get it ferried over there; no tag, no inspection, no nothing and they'd drive it until it went and then they put it on

the junk heap. And we went by the junk heap one day and low and behold here was a vehicle with a prop under it, just propped a car sitting there on an angle, I said, "Stanley they wouldn't leave that like that, some kid likely get a problem with it." "Oh," he said, "they working on the transmission."

DH: How did we come by Mason Neck? You were the first...

WJ: I was the first manager. Liz Hartwell and a group of concerned people over there, I don't know how they knew the land was coming up or what, but they got, Mason Neck is right south of Mount Vernon over in Virginia. I just got a call that said "You're now manager of Mason Neck." And I went down and got my job description out and rewrote it and added that to it and suggested to them that that made it a 13, but I don't guess they read it 'cause I didn't get a 13 out of it. It's a real nice piece of marsh and we wound up with Larry **Dunkenson** was the first manager over there, and about the time he got settled in good, they asked nominee's for departmental training, so I nominated him. And got a phone call from Atlanta, and says "Why in the world didn't you nominate Nell Prior?" And I said, "Well Nell's just a 7, she's not eligible." "Well she will be, nominate her." So I did.



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Nell and Larry both, I had two people in departmental training at the same time.

But one of the worse personnel problems that I ever had, when I got to Blackwater Bob Gray was assistant manager and Bob was a good man, a little bit laid back, not real fast and furious but just a good, quiet type operator. And Stieglitz, Walt Stieglitz called and said, "We're sending a fellow named Ken (Name), similar to an assistant manager job." I said, "Walt, I've got one." He said, "Well we're sending him to you." I said, "Don't, it'll do nothing but problems." I said, "You've just given me a problem that's going to be a big one." He said, "Well just solve it." So anyway he sent him there and it was a problem. Part of the staff went with Bob and part was neutral and sort of went with Ken. Had a (unintelligible) on Patuxent, we had to send Bob and (Name) both to (unintelligible) and I don't think that heater in the car ever got it warm, I think in that car, it must have been a cold ride. They had to go back and forth, but they never did. Well they knew it was a problem but what could we do, we just sort of lived with it awhile. And finally Gray decided to go into game management and he transferred into game management finally, and that solved that. And then later Chitwood went to (Name) as manager, but Gray went onto management into Game Management.

DH: Law enforcement.

[Break in tape]

WJ: I got a call from somebody in Cambridge and said, "The geese are dropping in over on that blind and that's sort of an odd spot, too often." They had a blind in the good spot, the geese were going to this other blind in the bad spot. So I called Bob and told him, or called Parke, I said, "Send somebody, need to check that out." So Gray came down and he and I went out and in the middle of that was an old shed out in the middle, opened the door and here was a big pile of corn stalks with the ears still on them, stalk yay long with an ear on it. And toward the blind was a trail, we took the trail and all along here they dropped a stalk every once in a while. We got to the blind and here was nothing but a pile of stalks, that long, all the way around it. So they just took it over and I think they made a case, but the year after we left, on that same blind, they had troubles again and Senator Phil Gramm and some more big wigs were fixing to hunt. Gramm, I think from what I could gather, Gramm was in the party ready to go but wasn't in the blind. But there was quite of a problem and Mr. Gramm was unhappy and there were Fish and Wildlife. When I started, we were very minor into politics but every



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time the administration changed it came down one more political time, and it's like that (unintelligible) said, "The big politic make the big politic and the little politic make the little politic." And it came, look from the director on down to the assistant to the chief of refuges, it's all now tied in political. And a real good example of that was of how weak our outfit is on fighting for what's right. When we got to Blackwater we needed part-time summer help, there were two people that Key Wallis had employed. So I asked the crew, I said, "Which one of them do you want? We don't need but one of them." And they said, "Well we'll take Joe Cornish." So we hired Joe Cornish in the summer, after summer was over I said, "Joe that's it." And Joe wrote Roger Morton a letter, and Roger Morton would write me and I would write him back, we'd don't need him and that was it, and this went on for, I don't know two or three years, maybe more. Then a letter came from (unintelligible), there will be no correspondence from the field to the central office, to the congress.

DH: To the congressman.

WJ: So I got my letter, I (unintelligible) and they said, "Hire him." So I said, "Wait a minute, give me a little time." Roger Morton's number one field man at

Houston was in my Sunday School class at Cambridge and I knew him real well. I went to see him and I said, "Look here we are. Is Morton interested in him?" Said, "Not in the least." Said, "If you don't want him, don't hire him." So I called Atlanta, I called Atlanta and I told them who told me this and I said, "There'd be no problem from Morton." And I got a call back from Walt, he says, "Hire him" when he called me. He says, Spencer Smith had been promoted from Atlanta to acting director and he says, "Spence Smith says there will be nothing done in any way to upset the incoming secretary." So I got stuck with Joe Morton, I mean with Joe Cornish and wound up with, didn't put, put him on full time, didn't put him on leave, wound up in an ACP [Area Consistency Plan] call.

DH: Complaint.

WJ: And I went to Atlanta, I went to Boston and we talked about that for a while with Griffith, he was the...

DH: RD [Regional Director].

WJ: ...coordinator or what. I was found not guilty of racial problems but as soon as he said that, the next



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thing he said, "Bill, how long have you been at Blackwater?" I said, "About 10 years." He said, "Don't you think you ought to look on the green sheets?" And I said, "Well not particularly unless something special comes up." And Howard Woon was with me, and when we went back, we went back into the refuge section I told Woon, "I've got one request. You write in details this conversation because if I get a mandatory transfer I'm going to complain." I never did hear any more of it. Then I got a call from Vick Schmitt, I forgot what his level was.

DH: Deputy Director.

WJ: The what?

DH: [Louder] Deputy Director.

WJ: Okay, we got a call from him, Deputy director to his office; come to his office for a week's detail on the eastern shore. Went to his office and here was a biologist, I think his name was (Name), I'm not sure, and an illustrator from the Atlanta Office. He said, "You're here to go to Roger Morton's place over on the eastern shore, make a wildlife plan." And I said, "What in particular does he want?" He said he wanted a (unintelligible) garden he could see from his

upstairs loft. I said, "Is there any chance we could meet with him when he's over there and talk about it?" He said, "You will make up the plan and you'll bring it here." And I said, "Well we met with Russell Train once," and I said, "we worked with SCS and they really did a bang up job." "You will not work with the SCS, if you need engineering, you will call me! Do not contact anybody else!" "No sir, I won't" So we headed for the eastern shore, went over to Morton's place, talked to his caretakers; he showed where the barn, showed us the boundaries. And we were going over, saying "What do we do to come up with what?" And finally I said, "Let's do it in stages. Let's put it as it is, step one, step two, and then the (unintelligible), and where you can turn the pages and make an overlay." So that's what we decided to do. So first thing we did we went into the barn and what we had asked Schmitt is there any limits, do you know of limits on development? He said, "I don't know of any." We opened the barn door and the whole bottom floor of that barn was one ocean going red racer with about 4 sets of chrome axels under it, and I looked over I told them, I said, "Boys we don't need to worry about money, let's just do our thing." So we laid out some of it, there was an old (unintelligible) silo that you could see across the draw from the upstairs barn, and I forgot what kind of vegetation we covered that



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with. And did a few things and anyway worked up an overlay like I planned and gave it to Schmitt. And got a call from him and he says, "He doesn't like the vegetation on the silo's, says he wants to put cedars there." So I called a biologist and I said, "What do you think?" He said, "Well just ask him how big a black roost he wants." So that, as far as I know was the end it, I mean he got his plan but the difference between the time Gottschalk called me and says go meet with the man eye ball to eye ball and Vick Schmitt saying you will not and it's got to go through channels and blah, blah, blah, and that and Spencer Smith's ruling on Joe Cornish, I mean I don't know how rotten politics can get but we have reached a level that Louisiana was when I started and I didn't think anything could get that low.

DH: It has changed.

WJ: In Louisiana, (unintelligible) survey we had to go make surrounding areas, like drag line operator or mechanic or what, we had to make an area survey and then put it all together and come up with a wage. So the state highway department had about as much similar stuff that we had some of. I went to the state highway department to get some help and there wasn't

but one person in the office, this was two days before election, the whole staff was out electioneering.

PT: How were you associated with what happened over at Blackwater when Gramm's hunting buddies got caught hunting over bate? I know Don (Name)...

WJ: ...can't hear you.

PT: You mentioned Senator Phil Gramm and his hunting buddies over at...

WJ: After this happened, Don (Name) took my place. Don got instructions, he would not patrol off the refuge under any condition. John Green, the area supervisor supported Don, he got transferred and just pure rotten politics.

PT: Yeah Don got transferred to Okefenokee.

DH & WJ: No Chincoteague. [Speaking at same time]

PT: Chincoteague, okay.

DH: It was open at that time.



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PT: Okay.

WJ: Don was given strict instructions *not* to patrol off the refuge *period*.

DH: Bill....

WJ: Let me get one more. Okay at Blackwater, YCC [Youth Conservation Corps] was going big. There was a special funds, they got a whole pile of money to be spent YCC. And regional office picked me and an engineer, I forgot; Bombay Hook, I can't think of his name. We were to go to all the refuges, including New York on down, to see what funds YCC, where to spend these YCC funds. So we went to each one of them and we'd told them for them to have some ideas to kick around. And Don (Name) was manager on one on Long Island, well Don started his career at Blackwater as an assistant to Nell Prior at the visitors center. And he was a good man but his heart wasn't in the visitors center, and at first performance rating I told him, "I'm not going to give you a year's rating, I'm going to give you 6 months because you're better and can do better than what you're doing and I don't want to put a long years mark on your record. We're do this again in 6 months and it's going to be better." And before the 6 months was up, they transferred him

over to Long Island. And so we go to Long Island to go over his YCC stuff and he had the best layout of all the others. I mean he had it down on a spread sheet with what this would do, where it would go, I mean perfect. Then Don went on to Brazoria, I don't anywhere in between, he wound up to Brazoria in Texas and then into Albuquerque; I think he wound up as refuge supervisor in Albuquerque. This was one of the better, he had the best plan we saw, it was done right.

DH: I want to get you from Blackwater to Felsenthal.

WJ: Okay.

DH: You stumbled into that one.

WJ: About this time, we'd been in Blackwater 10 years, and after what the regional director had said, well actually two things. I'd been at Blackwater too long, it was time for me to leave. In all my career I've seen two refuges managers that were problems, one was the fellow that was there before me, and one was the other that followed me. I mean some of them were not the brightest people you've ever run in to. Basically I had done my thing at Blackwater and it was time, as far as the service was concerned, it was



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time for me to go. And I was perfectly ready too, I guess, I don't know, we thought about settling there but the price of real estate was so high we couldn't. Then started looking, Hagerman opened up in Texas; we were two, three years from retirement. We'd set to retire at 55 because we wanted to plant pecan trees, and peach trees, and this, that and the other; so we had said at 55, we'd take the cuts and retire. So Hagerman came up and I applied for it, and through contacts outside the channels I was selected and just waiting on the formality to come through and nothing came through. So I made a contact, they said, "Well," said, "it's been filled." I said, "I assume it's been administratively filled." He said, "I don't need to say anything." So there was somebody in regional office wound up in Hagerman. I also came out, there was a place for, in central Oklahoma on the Canadian River there was going to be an acquisition and a program and establish a refuge. And it was going to be done through Albuquerque, not through regular channels, one man out of one the assistant supervisors was going to be the one running it. And I like that, so I put in for it and talked to the man and told him I can be stubborn but I can also when I'm told to hush and do it, I can do it. So I felt like I had a pretty good run at Canadian and then all of a sudden the powers that be decided that we're not going to put one there. When

they first proposed it the Fish and Wildlife contacted the delegation and they were for it, so they set it in motion. And once it got in motion and dribbled back down to the land owners, they got in touch with a congressional delegation and the wind changed. So the congressional support fell out and Fish and Wildlife fell out. And then this place at Felsenthal, Felsenthal came up...

DH: In Arkansas.

WJ: ...in Arkansas, so I put in for. The one in charge of refuges for the area was a fellow named Holland, and I had some dealings with him, had heard about him. I said, "I can get along with him, I guess." I applied for it and somehow I managed to get it. And Felsenthal was quite a hot spot, the Corps of Engineers had taken the land and then part of it was a refuge. But prior to this is all big land holdings, and every little group had its own domain. And this other little group had that one, this was all though timber company lands. And if you weren't in that group and you parked your car there, you were told to move it or you wouldn't be able to move. So it was a real strict private groups of hunting all through that whole country. And when the government took over Felsenthal, we took over several of those groups and



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they were unhappy. When I got there we were told two things, they would be the most liberal hunting regulations (unintelligible) area, liberal public use areas that I'd ever been on. So I said, "Okay." And the proposal, when I got there, was so here's the map of the refuge and it was marked like this, we will close a fourth of it every year. I looked at that and I said, "Man in four years, we've got everybody mad at us." So I got down and I said, "Let's figure out a spot in the middle that we can set some boundaries that we won't be changing every year. Let's get a spot in the middle." So we did, we made a proposal. Well up here at the north end at Warren, Warren was a real hot spot opposing the refuge. And there was a lawyer up there that was leading the group. So I got my maps and went to see him and laid them on his desk and I said, "Look, I've got to close one fourth of the area. I cannot give, that has got to be done. Now if we close this part, is there enough access for your people," there's not many accesses on the north end. And I said, "Is there enough access for your people to get in?" We looked at it and then we, we moved the line a little bit here and a little bit there but then he and I drew the lines. We parted very happy, I mean very friendly and all; we had a public hearing in Warren. And I told (Name), I think was the name of the assistant there at Felsenthal; (Name) something, can't

think of his name. But I said, "We're going to Warren to a public hearing." And I said, "I want you to set at the back of the courthouse, in the back of the room. Don't you take your eye off of that car 'cause it's a hot spot." Well he did. And the ole boy, he opened the meeting, he says "I have never fought against anything as hard as I fought against this refuge." And then he said, "I lost." He said, "It's here. I'm glad Bill that you're it's manager."

DH: I am too.

WJ: Anyway he said, "I'm glad he's manager. Talk to him, he is our guest." And that was it.

DH: Bill made me look so good because I knew I needed an old, experienced person, manager, to take that, make it come together and a refuge that we can all be proud of today. The previous manager wanted to go in there with battleships and shoot, fight, everything but I needed somebody to calm it down and start working and make it happen. Bill Julian did that.

WJ: The Corps of Engineers was going to put a boat ramp in and we went to put the boat ramp in and low and behold we were disturbing, were going over where there had been some old archaeological stuff.



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And so they stopped us and somebody Hester, what was her name; I can't think of her name. And she Arkansas archaeologist and she was a bob wildcat. She stopped us from putting in the boat ramp and I called her and I told her, I said, "Look we've stopped from putting in the boat ramp, but there's going to be some people here that are very; we have put out the word and I'm going to spread it that we were going to have a boat ramp but ya'll have stopped it." And I said, "If you wanted the public pressure of stopping the boat ramp, that's what's going to happen or we can work something out." And I said, "Can we move dirt in and put a layer of dirt." "No you can't do that, that would bring in foreign material." Then I said, "Well what'd you going to do?" I said, "Can you send somebody in and dig with us and if we find something we stop, if we don't we keep digging." And that's what she finally did, they sent an ole boy from, I can't think of his name, he was a real, reasonable type individual. And we started digging, he was right with us, we didn't hit anything so we went on and put the boat ramp in.

DH: You started with raw material there, Jim, Jim Howe...

WJ: Jim Howe, alright Jim Howe was a forester.

DH: He'd been there from the get go.

WJ: From the beginning.

DH: With the Corps of Engineers Acquisition. And we didn't have a presence there except Jim.

WJ: Jim, yeah. Jim was there, the forester but he was really Fish and Wildlife and did a good job. Later on before I left, we were doing some burning, across the Ouachita bottom there's about a 7 mile strip across there that fog, when it gets foggy traffic stops. And we had done some burning on up the creek, a day or two or three before, and not the day before but earlier and we got a heavy fog. And a fellow driving a load of logs caught that high bridge over the Ouachita River, there was a big cement truck loaded with cement stopped over a foot of the bridge on the inside, stopped dead. And this truck barreled over this bridge and hit that truck and knocked it about eight or ten feet, and it was a heavy loaded truck and the load of logs killed a man. The widow of the fellow, of the one that was killed, right after I left there, decided to file suit. And Jim called me said would I come back as a witness if I needed to, and I told him sure. The lawyer was one of these money hungry and real sharp, he filed for like fifty, seventy-five or hundred



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thousand dollars so that the service would settle it without fighting it and he wouldn't have to work up a case. But in the meantime when it happened I went to the highway department and got all the reports and there were three, three different sets of accidents, each one involving several cars in that whole deal.

The hogs there, the local people in setting up territories, they said they had hog territories. The Joe Smith clan had from the highway to Oxbow Bend, the other one had from Oxbow Bend to the high ridge and then on up; each clan had its own block. And these weren't wild hogs, I mean they'd bring in (unintelligible) boars and when they set their traps they'd castrate the young boars and turn them back loose; it was a business. They were very disgruntled, their hog traps they'd rent them, they'd have a big catch pen with the gates and then a holding pen in the back. And they'd water the ones in the holding pen for two or three days and catch all they could catch, but when they'd go to bait the traps instead of putting a lot of bait out the man would take a bucket, just a little bucket and he'd drop a grain of corn several feet apart. Said if he put it too close, squirrels would get and something would pick up the line, but he said the hogs could follow those single grains of corn several feet apart way up from the trap.

DH: Interesting. Tell us about the water levels in the river and periods when it would flood...

WJ: All right, well....

DH: And (unintelligible).

WJ: The Corps had several water control structures up and down the Ouachita River, and the agreement was that at a certain time of the year the level would be raised up, come to a certain points. And when I got there the plan was to raise it a little bit at a time and I tried to change it, I don't know if they ever did or not. I wanted to flood it as high as I could to begin with to keep the black birds from eating up all the acorns and then bring it down a little bit at a time; I don't know if that ever happened or not. One time we got a call that the Corps of Engineers were running a VIP trip up the Ouachita from Monroe all the way to the road there through the refuge there. So I was invited to go on the VIP Corps of Engineer deal, and they had a tug boat all fixed up clasp with a ship, all the trimmings. We started at Monroe and (makes a noise) on up the river, and at one point we were coming to a bend and I was up in the cabin with the boat operator and he hit his horn for whether he was coming inside or outside around that bend. Radio came back said, "Captain, I



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ain't got no horn, but you just consider I gave two toots."

DH: Two whistle pass. The river would flood that whole bottom, it was quite extensive. And mayhaw were loaded on the trees and Bill would take a boat out and then shake them, mayhaw bush; fill it up and bring it back and Helen would make jelly out of it. It's still the best jelly I have had, they lived off of the land; every opportunity.

WJ: When I got to Crossett we knew, two years roughly before retirement, and the manger before me lived in a sixty-five to seventy thousand dollar house. Man those real estate people, they said, "Here's fresh meat." So when I got to him I said, "Look," I said, "I want a house I can sell in two years. I'm not interested in something fancy, I just want clean living for two years." And we wound up buying about a nineteen thousand dollar house in a FAA subdivision, and spent about five or six thousand dollars on it, and sold for thirty something when we left.

DH: Did a nice job (unintelligible). Ms. Helen, tell me something. How did you enjoy all of these different places you lived?

HJ: Well I enjoyed them. We always moved with the idea was home, we're going to like it, and we did. And the children enjoyed it too. The one trip we made back to Delta, when the two older boys were, you know bigger little boys, and they wanted to move back down there; they thought that would be so much fun, but of course we didn't. But I think refuges are great, it's a wonderful place to grow boys. They all enjoyed the outdoors and learned a lot with just messing around being little boys.

DH: You lived on refuge housing everywhere...

HJ: But Paris, Tennessee and Crossett.

DH: And Crossett.

HJ: We (unintelligible) and rented in Paris.

WJ: We chose to avoid the moldy chambers. The first chance I had to go to the chambers was when we got to Big Lake, been there awhile, and got a phone call from (unintelligible). He said, "Would you be interested in changing into personnel, we've got an opening and we like to have you come in, in personnel." I said, "Thank you sir, but I want to stay outside." And then every so often we'd get this deal,



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“Please file a career plan. Please file a career plan.” So the only thing on the career plan, my goal was to be an assistant supervisor in region 2, which I knew I would never obtain. I was stupid enough and smart enough and smart enough to avoid area office, regional office, and central office, even after they came down with the ruling, “You will not be promoted to a 13 unless you serve a sentence.” And I didn’t want a 13 that bad, and I’m glad I didn’t and I think the boys are.

DH: You’ve had an extremely interesting career, and as I told you, I want to say it again, how much I appreciated the work that you did particularly at Felsenthal because I was very much involved in all of that and I knew that you could do it, and you did.

WJ: And one time at with Rudolph, see Rudolph and I were close at Sabine, lived together. We didn’t cook together because Rudolph on cooking french fries (makes noises), one quarter each direction; I’d cut them up. So one of us would cook and the other wash dishes, but we wouldn’t cook together. We were together when I was dating Helen in Beaumont and then she had neighbor in the building with her across the hall. And it’s a long drive from Sabine to Beaumont, over a ferry and a shell road and I needed a

partner so I got Rudy to go with me and he got to go in with the gal across the aisle, and they eventually married. And we stayed close all through the years, when we were at Piedmont, Rudolph was in Atlanta. And we would swap kids, (unintelligible) the kids stayed at Rudolph’s a few days in Atlanta, came back and what he said, “Nothing back black birds and...”

HJ: Starlings.

WJ: “...nothing but starlings and blue jays.” Or something.

HJ: He wasn’t impressed.

PT: Well do you want to make sure you cover some of the things that you wanted to cover before...?

WJ: Okay at Tennessee Refuge we had a summer worker come in, good ole Texas aggie boy. And he came in the office one day and he said, “I want to talk to you, I’ve got about a problem.” I said, “What’d you do?” He said, “I gave a hot check here in town.” And I said, “Well how much was it?” He said, “I don’t know four or five dollars or something.” I said, “How many more did you give?” He said, “I’ve probably got three or four more out.” I said, “Well let



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me give you a check and you go to every one of those places and tell them now that there's a hot one coming and that you're take care of it." So he did and he paid me, Helen took his check to the grocery store, it was hot.

[Laughing]

DH: Was that a good Texas Aggie?

WJ: Yeah he never did make a career in the Fish and Wildlife. Every time a supervisor would come through you'd always drag out your old equipment to survey it. And at Tennessee we had, there was Farminic was making the survey one time, he and V.L. they got to a tree with chain, some kind of a hoist in it. He said, "V.L. next time you survey that hoist put it someplace else."

Horseshoe Lake in southern Illinois, every year would lose about twenty-five or thirty thousand geese at the time of the national survey, and this has happened over a consistent bunch of several years; nobody could find the geese. So they set a, Minneapolis and Atlanta made a deal to where Minneapolis would furnish a pilot biologist, Atlanta would furnish me from Tennessee. We would fly the whole area from Illinois to Alabama every two weeks

all season. We turned our figures in, we didn't consider any, we didn't look or particular ask the man on the spot how many he had, we just asked him where they are. Anyway we did this all winter and there were two events. One: one time we got trapped with, airport was closed where we wanted to gas up and we couldn't gas, had to go on. And he said, "All right, I'm going use, I'm going to turn off this gas tank we're on," he said, "It has a few gallons in it I know we're get us somewhere where we can get on the ground." Said, "I'm going to put it on the other tank and run it dry." So he says, "When the motor quits after a while, don't jump out, I'm going to switch back to where there's some gas." Anyway he didn't have to switch back, but this was Ross Hansen, he also flew transects in Canada and the same time Ducks Unlimited; this was when Ducks Unlimited and Fish and Wildlife were not always agreeing on anything. And Ross said that he never could understand why Ducks Unlimited found birds he couldn't see, said he flew some of the same transects, said, "I couldn't see birds they found."

The one time we got in Wheeler Refuge in Alabama and weather caught us, we were hung there for four days, couldn't get out. Finally one day there was one range of hills that we had to get over to get out to where we could be clear. And he said, "Well,



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we can do it.” He said, “We’re going to try,” and he said, “when we leave, you turn around and you watch the airport.” He said, “When you can’t see it, you tell me and we’ll turn around and find it right quick.” So that’s what happened, we turned around and found the airport, but at the same time reading a newspaper, right above us somebody had been flying there was a big crash and flying in the bad weather but Ross wouldn’t fly that bad weather and I didn’t want to fly if he didn’t want to. Before this flying, I have, always had a real active bladder and I’d cut down on my liquids before we’d fly. But sometime in the deal, about the time we were through, Ross said, “Of all the people I’ve flown with, you’ve got the biggest gut and the smallest bladder of anybody that I’ve ever flown.”

HJ: Let me add something, after we retired and sort of got a few things accomplished. (Name) said, “I think I’ll get a pair of geese, Canada geese.” Well he did, and there must be a hundred plus now in that area.

WJ: We have been responsible establishing a goose, rat; we have put non-migratory geese all over that area and...

HJ: They nest everywhere.

WJ: We started with one pair of **Canada** geese and then let everything fly. And a little over a year ago, part of them come back, part of them don’t, and some of the come back periodically, but a little over a year ago we had ninety geese in the yard. And we have five nesting pair that nest...

HJ: On our two ponds.

WJ: ...in our ponds.

PT: Can you tell us the story about the alligators at Delta?

HJ: No at Sabine.

PT: It was at Sabine?

HJ: Oh you mean in the sink?

PT: Yeah. Was that Sabine?

HJ: I came home from school one day and the kitchen sink was full of baby alligators.



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PT: Can you tell the story again about when you first showed up Loxahatchee and went on first patrol and checking hunters?

WJ: Well the, we had an area that was closed for hunting when they had a hunting area. And the enforcement had not been real strict at Loxahatchee and finally on opening day, the ninth hunter, there were two people I contacted. When we stopped him, I just told him, I said "Fellow, I've been looking for you all day." And he did like this and I said, "Look," I said, "You're the first honest hunter that I've checked." And literally he was the ninth party. But when you make a case we're supposed to turn it over to the game agents to handle. All right, I sent him to Jake (Name), who was the game agent, no action; sent him some more, sent some more. Finally about a year and a half later, Jake came into the office with that whole stack and he says, "You can handle these, I'm not going to." So I took the stack and called them to about 50 and we had three solid days, of commissioners court. And a little bit later on, frog hunting; from an airboat you put a tow sack at the bottom and a shoot going to the tow sack and the shoots between your knees. Take the frog gig and you just gig the frog and drop them in that sack. And these are not the big (unintelligible) or whatever, these

are, I forgot what frog. But anyway, you can just fill up the sack, there's smaller frog than the big bull frog. I was recovering from some surgery and the crew, there were some boats inside, they staked them out. When they came back, they jumped right over the levy with the airboats and they shouldn't in a place they couldn't; they weren't at the spot where they'd jump so they went on over and went to their landing. They went on, they bought the boats in, they covered up the numbers on the rotor that had the registration number and all that. Anyway we prosecuted them and won the case. About a year later, one of those men came in and he said, "I got shot at the other day. I want to tell you about it." I said, "Go ahead." "Somebody on the refuge shot at me." I said, "You know who it was?" "Yeah." He said, "Would you prosecute him?" I said, "If you're swear, if you can identify him and swear that that was him, we'll do it." "You mean you'll take me as a witness?" I said "Yeah if you'll tell the truth, we're go." So that's what we did and the old boy got thirty days for shooting at him.

PT: You have any other stories that you wanted to cover?



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WJ: Oh at Tennessee, there was a private development right next to the refuge. And one of the people that built a house there, we knew him; visited with him every once in a while. He came by the office one day and he was just very unhappy. Said, "Mr. Childs, I've got a problem." V.L. said, "Well what is it?" He said, "You know, in that development I'm in," he said, "I've had a real good goose pit over there." And he said, "They sold that lot," and he said, "somebody's now using that for a septic system."

PT: Did Tommy Wood, when you were the manager, get some pig frogs to introduce onto Sanibel.

WJ: Did what?

PT: Did Tommy Wood get some pig frogs to introduce to Sanibel?

WJ: I don't know, not when I was there.

PT: Okay.

WJ: Oh we had a, I got a call from a newspaper at Delray Beach. They wanted me to come up and be an observer 'cause somebody had developed a (unintelligible) eating machine. And they were going

to demonstrate it and they needed an audience. Well I went up and the fellow that had made the machine was the fellow who had invented and patented flashing lights on airplanes. The machine would chew them up, but so what you've just got that many more pieces to sprout. Anyway I went to his house, he had a Japanese house boy, or what, went into his house and he had about a half-acre inside with a garden; I mean his whole house was around a pool and all kinds of stuff, Japanese caretaker or what. And we talked a good bit and finally one day the Jap came out and he said, "Can I bring somebody out to see an airboat?"

And I said, "Sure come on." Well low and behold a little while later here came three or four cars up and all kinds of television equipment, this was official Japanese, nationwide TV wanting; there was a local movie going around *Lincoln Vail of the Everglades*. Lincoln was the warden with the airboat and he chased over the everglades catching all kind of bad people, but this was a series that was on TV, and they were running it in Japan also. So we went out, we took that delegation out and they set up and we ran airboats all over and around them, but this was oh let's see. Oh Chesapeake and Michener, go to that? Okay, Michener....

PT: James Michener, the writer?



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WJ: Yeah.

PT: Author.

WJ: The book Chesapeake was about to come out. The ABC was going to run a series of interviews with Michener over several days, just a short few segments, consecutive days. And Dave Hartman and his crew were the MC for this nationwide series. And he called and says, "I'd like to come down and get a few shots of the marsh and a little bit of outdoor material to go with this." So he said, "Can I come down the day after tomorrow?" I said, "Yeah come on." So Michener had sent me a copy of his book, and so the next day I took it to the office and told Carol, I said "That door's closed, I don't get a phone call, I don't get a visitor." That book's that thick. And I worked all day just in and out on that book. The next day then here was Hartman and his crew, and a little bit of idle gossip and then he says, "How'd you like the book?" And I said, "Well, I thumbed it and..." And they just roared, that's what they had done too; they hadn't read the book, they just thumbed it. Also I got a, there at Blackwater and I forgot where else, stuff sent by *National Geographic* to verify that this was done on the refuge. And they sent one, one came done from *National Geographic* for me to verify. And I looked

and I looked for that tree and that eagle, and I looked and I looked and I looked, and I finally got into the tower with the field glasses; he'd taken a long range shot of one way out in a tree. If all the news was as good on checking facts as *National Geographic*, it would have worked.

At Blackwater we had a trainee came in and wanted you to fill out a report on what you do. And in his report, he filled it out, and I had him working in the flower bed, the rest of us were too, we just set up a cleanup; we all worked in the yard. He said, "You want me to send that in?" I said, "Yeah." So I got a call from Farminic said, "We didn't send him down there for that." I said, "Well, he ain't no better than the rest of us, and the whole crew was out there digging weeds out of the flowers. That's the only ones that could do it." This kid had a lawn mower with clutch with a forward/backward pedal, and he was mowing the yard. And we had a hedge, a little hedge, we'd haul dirt in or (unintelligible). He ran the mower right through that hedge, cut down the little bush about 2 feet high. I saw him do it and didn't say anything, he got off the mower, backed out through the hole, took the bush set it back in the hole. And I didn't say anything, he didn't either. But one day we were over at the shop, and I don't know where the trap came from or what, but there was a steel trap over



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there that would've done for an ordinary small bear. It had about an 8 or 10 inch spread on the jaw; it's hanging on the wall there. And I just asked him, I said, "You ever set a trap?" "No sir." I said, "Well let me show you how." So I took it and we went out, we dug a hole, we buried and we covered the pan, camouflaged it and what. I said, "You think you can set one now?" "Yes sir I think so." "Well look, there's a gopher cut a bush over yonder in the yard. I want you to take this trap over there and see if you can catch him." He said, "Uh, uh, uh I was going to talk to you about that."

But in that bunch of violations, that first bad hunting day we caught so many, then that very next day had a knock on the door; (unintelligible) on the drag line. Okay a knock came on the door and a young man came in and he handed me a letter, he had been admitted to the Florida, to the Wildlife Department. He said, "What's this going to do to my career?" And I said, "Well it's up to you." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "What'd you going to do this summer?" He said, "I don't know, why?" I said, "Come here and work." And I said, "We'll see how things go." He did a good job. So I recommended that we keep working him, he went to White River and fell out up there with the (unintelligible). One of the men, he was working with

one of the men and they got, anyway this boy named Greg, got to discussing oral sex with him and this maintenance man said, "You know I've been drinking out of the same canteen with that son of a gun." But anyway he didn't survive White River.

At Loxahatchee the state had a management area right joining us, big management area. And the state and Fish and Wildlife decided to have a joint development and put in a concession stand there; a concession boat, a real nice one. And Joe Reese was the big number one or number two taxidermists in all of Florida, and he was going to sponsor and be a class concession. Our part was to provide a fill so we put a drag line down there and started making the fill, and the local outlaws, this was one of their made entrances into the state area and into ours before it was a refuge, and they very unhappy with it. And drag line crew came in one day and somebody had put some sugar in the drag line and locked the engine up. So Atlanta says, "We're going to repair it, but you're going to have to put a watchman down there." I said, "Okay I'll find one." So I sent the word out and needed some watchman for him, fellow came in one day and says, "I heard you need a watchman down there on the drag line." I said, "Yeah," said, "we got some sugar in it," said "we've got to have somebody down there for all dark hours, all night." And I said, "It's going



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to be a problem on book keeping, that I can't (unintelligible) but for eight hours in any one day. I can't show you more than 40 hours in a week." And I said, "You need to get somebody you can trust to work with and you are work out your hours. But I don't want anybody more than 40 hours, anybody more than 8 hours a day." He said, "All right. I know brother so and so." Said, "He'll work me." I said, "Well send him up." And a few days later a knock came in, he said, "I'm so and so and I'm looking for a job as night watchman down there." I said, "Yeah." He said, "Yeah brother so and so said somebody bastard put sugar in your drag line." Curtis Wilson and somebody else was sitting there, but brother so and so had, had it right somebody, some bastard had put sugar in our drag line. When Clyde Lee came there and was clerk, his last job had been personnel assistant with Tom Atkeson, the blind manager at Wheeler. And one of Clyde's stories was that he and Tom, when Clyde first started there with him, they were out on Wheeler and Clyde said, "I wasn't real sure where we were." And he said Tom just turned and said, "Clyde, what does our good eye see?" He said, "I told him and he told me which way to go." But Tom had that refuge down in his mind 100 % every turn, every bump in the road...

DH: Every gate, everything.

WJ: ...the whole refuge, he had it in his mind. And one time I went from Crossett, I went to Wheeler, well I was working up a series of slides (unintelligible) and I wanted to go to Wheeler and screen their slide file. And in doing this we went to an auditorium in Wheeler and whoever with us said, "Wait a minute, let me turn on a light." Tom says, "Don't bother I don't need it."

DH: He had a sense of humor too.

WJ: But at Wheeler, next to the office, on the wall on the door, there was a whole series of marks where his mark had, his hook had hit that wall. Went to a YCC workshop and he was, he was at the shop and at a lull he said, "Let's drive around." So we started driving and he said, "What are we seeing?" And if you want to be humble try to describe what you're seeing to a blind man, and it makes you really feel.

DH: He took me on a tour a couple of times at Wheeler. Dad was stationed there in 1942 to 1944 and Tom was wounded in 19', during the time we were there so that was...



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WJ: Can't hear you.

PT: But DU [Ducks Unlimited] was reporting them?

DH: I said Tom was wounded during the time that we were living at Wheeler, so it must have been about 1943 when this mine blew up on him. But he took me, and this was in the '70's, and he says, "Okay Denny, now back when you and I were looking at this sight, that tree down there would have been pretty small." It was, of course to back your mind up 35 years makes quite a difference, but he said, "Okay now they tell me it's quite tall and bushy...." Sure is and it was that way all around the headquarters at Flint Creek Island, which is where the headquarters was located. And he was then living in the small house, the small refuge house where we had lived. And I didn't realize that house was so tiny but it was 2 bedrooms and a full basement, but it couldn't have been over 1200 feet per floor; very small. Just something totally different. Amazing memory!

WJ: Do what?

PT: DU was reporting them?

WJ: They reported, Horseshoe Lake reported a population of so many geese and then just before this national census, they said, "We've just lost 25,000 geese." They did this every year. We never did find 25,000 geese, they had just used that to inflict their figures. What am I missing? Four o'clock?

DH: Yeah.

WJ: I don't work for the government anymore, I can keep on going.

DH: Well I think...

PT: Tom.

PT: Did Pelican Island transfer to Merritt Island...

DH: Yeah.

WJ: After me.

WJ: (Unintelligible) with Ross Hansen, the geese were in only the imagination of Horseshoe Lake. We never did find those 25,000 geese.

PT: ...after you, okay.



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DH: One question, is there any memorabilia or anything that you would consider donating to the National Conservation Training Center Museum?

want you to take care it. Would you take care of it?"
Hold its head up, it's dead.

[End of interview]

WJ: (Unintelligible) you want to go?

HJ: I'll send you.

[Laughing]

HJ: We talked about that and we couldn't come up with anything.

DH: That's all right.

WJ: The one thing I have, that I didn't bring, I should have showed it to you but you might of wanted it is a wire duck holder that came from Mason Neck that you put a good duck you killed in, you put it in this holder and its...

HJ: Holds its head up.

WJ: Oh one of the stories on ducks, a neighbor brought in a dead duck, and holding it like this and said, "Something happened to this duck in our yard." And he had a little kid with him, and he said, "They