

Shirley Love

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Interviewer: Emily Hilliard

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Shirley Love

Shirley Love (May 15, 1933-July 17, 2020) was a native and resident of Oak Hill, West Virginia. He was a radio and television announcer at WOAY, known for his role as the announcer and host of the popular independent professional wrestling program, Saturday Nite Wrestlin' (aka Saturday Night Wrestling). He served in the West Virginia Senate, representing the 11th district from 1994-2008. He served in the West Virginia House of Delegates for one term starting in 2016.

This interview is part of a series of interviews with independent professional wrestlers and individuals related to the wrestling scene in West Virginia.

Interview with Shirley Love

SL: Shirley Love

EH: Emily Hilliard

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SL: And I told, I told the sponsor, I said, look, you can save a lot of money by getting these local fellas to do your jingle for ya, and I told him about it and he got the job. So I had written this little poem. One time my sister said to me, "I can't..."

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SL: "I just can't wait for my vacation in the mountains." Catchy isn't it?

EH: Right, right.

SL: The song title. So I, when I was selling advertising, I was riding along and I did the lyrics to it. I put it in my glove compartment and I stayed in there a couple years.

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EH: Oh nice.

SL: Well this fella, I saw him and he said...

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SL: You know, I got that job. He said, "What can I do for you?" I said, you can't do nothing for me. I was just, you know...you may as well get the money and keep it in town than send it down to Nashville. So, but I said there is something you can do for me. I said I wrote a little silly West Virginia song and you can put some music behind it and, you know. He said, well what do you want behind it? I said oh, a mandolin would sound good. Mandolin and maybe a guitar with it. He said, I'll do one or both if you want. And I said, well, we'll use your discretion. So I laid down the soundbite of the song and then he, he put the music under it and that's the way it was. And I put it on--they used to have on Facebook or YouTube, not the YouTube but Facebook, they have contests of different songs, and it went like #1 real quickly. So a buddy of mine liked it, so he put it on YouTube and that's where you can get it.

EH: Got it! I'll take a look.

SL: I think you'll like it.

EH: Nice.

SL: It's silly. But the words are real good. It depicts West Virginia.

EH: Well why don't you introduce yourself and tell me your name, where you're from and when you were born?

SL: Alright, my name is Shirley Love. And I was born May 15, 1933 in Oak Hill, WV. I went to Collins High School in Oak Hill from there when I was very young I was fortunate enough to audition for a radio announcing job at WOAY, which then it was WOAY FM, well they were AM and FM, but at that time FM wasn't very predominate. In other words, it was sort of a step child to radio music and broadcasting. No one had FM radios, very few. But it caught on real fast. And working at WOAY radio, I graduated up to the AM part of the station, which I became one of the news men and emceed different shows--Bebop shows like one called Jukebox Review, which a lot of kids this day wouldn't even know what a jukebox was. But anyway, it was a very popular song. It was a request show where kids called in and wanted to play a song for Johnny or Mary or whatever. And it was very popular.

EH: What kind of music was that?

SL: Huh?

EH: What kind of music?

SL: Okay, that was the from the Elvis era to, well we played, it was a variety. We played the top 21 from what we called Billboard and from Billboard we played the top 21 on Friday we played the top 10 with emphasis and interviews and different things that I would collect and keep for the week. But then I graduated over to WOAY television, which was adjacent to the studio of WOAY. You had 3 sections, you had the radio studio, you had the television studio. Then you had what we call the TV Lanes Auditorium which held, they had about 1,000 seats, 1,001 seats to be exact. In there I did a TV show called Jukebox, or West Virginia Bandstand. It was a spin-off of course, Bandstand. And the various kids from the schools would come out and dance in the evenings to the usually the same songs I played on the Jukebox Review--the top 21 from Billboard and I would interview them and pick a couple to lead off the song and it was real popular. And something for the kids to do and not smoke pot to be among their peers. And from there I did various variety shows for WOAY, or emceed various variety shows, like on Friday night we had what we called a Friday Night Barndance and that gave the talent in the area, and I'm talking about the tri-county area, which our coverage then was enormous for a TV station. It was non-directional, we had 100,000 watts. You could pick us up in parts of Virginia, Kentucky, and all over southern West Virginia. All you had to do was stick out a coat hanger and you could pick up Channel 4. So really they watched us whether they wanted to or not because then it was the, not the only station they could get, but it was the only station in this geographical area of southern West Virginia. The only other station was Channel 3 in Huntington, which broadcast into Ohio, Kentucky and then West Virginia. So we were really the predominate TV station and the pioneer of television in this area, to be truthful with you. And 'cause when I first went on television, I'd say, hey, seen me on television? They'd say no, we don't have a TV set! But then they started manufacturing the TV sets and the local merchants started selling them and then the antennas went up and it became, television became very, very popular and I started in 1954, 53-54. It was the only job I ever had other than when I was in high school I ran a dry cleaning route, which that was popular too!

6:52

EH: Why don't you tell me about Friday Night Barndance and the bands that you would bring in. When you're talking about the 3 county area, is that Fayette, Raleigh and what would be the third one?

SL: Well the tri-county area actually on the Neilson and Arbitron ratings, we were number 1 in Nicholas County, Greenbrier County, Summers County, Raleigh County, Wyoming County, Fayette County, and we had high ratings all over because like I say, they, it was the only station they could get other than if they had a sophisticated television or antennae with a rotary on it, then they could get like Channel 3 in Huntington. Then later came on Channel 8 in Charleston and Channel 6 in Bluefield. But we had the edge on them because--and the tower which you can look out and see from here it's a--they had the 100,000 watts which was very unusual for a television station to have that many watts. Mr. Thomas, R.R. Thomas Sr. at the time, he applied for it through the FCC and fortunately he got it! Which most other people with television stations didn't. And this was the only one-man owned television station in the United States. He owned it, he ran it, he was the boss, you did what he did, or whatever.

And that brings me to a point when, well I did a program called Live Saturday Night Wrestling. Now this was in the what we call...

EH: Before we get back to that, could you tell me more about the Friday Night Barndance?

SL: Yeah. The Friday Night Barndance was--it was a program to where we would have a main band, a house band so to speak, and they would be the feature band. And then different talent. Homer Jones who played a fine fiddle, he would be a guest, so he would do a song. You'd have a quartet from Quinwood or Rainelle and they would do a song. A solo from Johnny Jones from Mt. Hope and he would be--they would have a different variety. And they would come in and give us their names and what they did. Sometimes they would audition. One of us or the other of us at the station would audition them and you could tell right away whether they were good or not. So you'd say, yes and put 'em down. And I exceeded that. On Saturday afternoon we had 2 hours--it was called the Saturday Jamboree, which we have 15 minutes to each group. And they could do whatever they wanted to with it. And that was on for 2 hours. And it was very popular too because...and you'd be amazed the talent that Southern West Virginia had, or you had in that field of bluegrass and country and western because this is, this is bluegrass country, really. So television it went on...

EH: Do you remember any of the band names?

SL: Huh?

EH: Do you remember any of the band and musician names?

SL: Yeah, there was Red Lilac and gee, what was their name? A lady in her husband was named Red Lilac. Well, the Parkers, let me think of her name. Gee, it's been so long.

10:50

It was the Parker Family. I'll think of her name in a minute. Uh...then we had, we had a group called Eddie Seacrest and the [His] Rollin' Rockets. Now there were sort of ahead of their time. He did the gyration like Elvis did and they played in the various joints around the area, but they were very good. And I know they came out with a song called "Shaking with a Flavor." It was sort of an Elvis type thing and this Eddie Seacrest, I mean he could play with that guitar and move those knees--if you didn't know he was Elvis you'd think he was Elvis. And they had a guitarist who played--he went on to play in Nashville for several of the other stars. And another banjo/fiddle player. His name was, oh gee whiz. I shoulda wrote this down before hand. Anyway, he played for various bands in Nashville. There was Russ Hicks from Beckley, you may have heard of him. He played guitar, steel guitar for I don't know, Johnny Cash and different stars. And Charlie McCoy, I know you've heard of Charlie McCoy. Charlie played the

harmonica. And Charlie, he would do features for us when we would do a telethon for like the March of Dimes or cancer or what have you. The boss's daughter, one of his daughters had polio and he catered it to helping the March of Dimes campaign. And different stars would come in and we'd feature them, like Charlie McCoy. And WOAY did very, very enormous amount of those things. No charge, and we would do them either in the studio or over at the, one of the hotels in Beckley.

And getting back to the wrestling show, Mr. Thomas, he didn't subscribe to Neilson or Arbitron, which gives you your ratings. And I was a salesman and as an example, someone from Ford Motor Company would call me and they'd want some avails. And I'd say well, we don't have avails.

13:40

And what I mean by avails, that gives you the demographics of ages from 6 to 12, from 12 to 20, from 20 to 60 and on up. And they thought that was crazy. But if you're the only one on the air, that's how it is, 'cause the boss doesn't subscribe. But one of the local newspaper owners, he played golf with Mr. Thomas and he said to Mr. Thomas, you know that wrestling you do is very popular. It tops all the ratings and I'll tell you how you can get your, how you can get your ratings is, run Shirley for delegate to the National Convention. That was in 1972, or 1970, I beg your pardon. At that time the Democrats could run statewide and later they changed it to where they had to run within their respective district. But now the Republicans can still run statewide, but the Democrats, the DNC changed it. So I didn't want to run, you know. I was scared. But he said, you know, the boss said run. I said man, I'll get beat! I don't want to get beat! Nobody wants to lose! I said that's silly! And he said, well I'd run anyway if I were you. He's the boss, he wants you to run. So I ran and I won! I got 49,000 votes in the Tri-county area and I was 9th in the elected 9 and so I went to Miami as a delegate and I found out I could win, so then I ran the next successfully, and I've been elected to every Democrat National Convention since 1970. I think it's about 14. Some guy told me I probably would, could be in that World Record, Guinness World Record for it. Consecutive, consecutive wins. And I'll probably run again this summer. Hope to go again. My wife and I, we sort of made a vacation...

15:56

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EH: Okay, wrestling.

SL: Tape 2, continuation of interview about wrestling with Shirley Love. So where was I, I was on to wrestling right?

EH: Yeah just starting on the wrestling--how that came about.

SL: Oh, okay. It started, let's see, shall I finish about the National Convention?

EH: Sure, sure.

SL: Okay. Anyway, as I said earlier, it was, I'm 9 elected and I was number 9. I got 49,000 votes in the tri-county area and this was a pretty good indication of our demographics from the counties. So anyway I found out I could win. I continued to run, but then I had to run in the respective congressional district and Fayette at that time was jockeyed around, you had, now you only had 3 and back then you had 6, so you had 6 different districts, so as they eliminated, they put Fayette in another district. But anyway, I ran and I

won and a lot of good experiences, for instance in 1980, the convention was held in New York. It was also held in 1976 in New York, but in 1980, I was, I and 2 others were chosen to participate in exploiting or raiding, or the finer restaurants on Park Avenue. And they had a drum which had 50 states in it and they had another drum that had 50 celebrities in it. Talking about ball players, movie stars, celebrities. So I and this guy who was with me--he was a union man from up north, a delegate.

02:18

[Log: Explains encounter with Dr. Ruth]

08:34

EH: Okay well yeah, let's talk wrestling. So how did that show come about and your involvement?

SL: Started. Wrestling got started on the TV station here, nearby Fayetteville, they have what they call the Sailors and Soldiers, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building. It's an auditorium. It holds 5,000 people. And the gentleman there named Bob Kemp at that time, he was the general manager. And he had a contract with an association of wrestlers out of Ohio and wrestling is like--they're almost like a mafia. They have certain groups and you don't infringe on their territory. I mean in other words, if they have Southern West Virginia, they have Southern West Virginia. No other wrestlers comes in and goes on the air. So anyway, they held the wrestling matches there, beginning at 8:00 on Saturday night and the station owner cut a deal with 'em. He said, look. after you wrestle over there, you come over to my TV station and do some matches and I'll give you 2 free plugs as to where you're going to wrestle in the area next week to amplify, get you a better audience and let them know you're coming. So they readily went along with that and they had some great wrestlers at that time. And I say at that era, compared with what they have now. I mean now you've got jump off the Empire State Building.

But this was strictly wrestling on a comeback. It had been dormant for years--it wasn't very popular. In other words, if you attended a wrestling match, it was like a carnival. They'd have a wrestler and he'd take on anybody that was there. It hadn't gained popularity. But when it hit the TV station here, now Channel 3 in Huntington--they rebroadcast some matches that were held in Cincinnati and some of that infiltrated into the counties up here. The ones who had better antennas so to speak, with the rotary. So on Saturday night, we started doing the wrestling at 10:00. At 10:30, I beg your pardon, following Gunsmoke. And Gunsmoke was on the air 22 years, and we were on the air 23 years, so...

EH: (laughs)

SL: (laughs) So we...and as far as the ratings were concerned, we just had 'em all. Seemed like everybody in the whole darn state watched Saturday Night Wrestling. And the head wrestlers like Gorgeous George, Argentine Rocca, uh...the Sheik, and those at that time were the most popular wrestlers. Gypsy Joe and Vaughn something, the German wrestler. And so they took it up and would bring the wrestlers over here on Saturday night. And we started out in the studio which wasn't too much bigger than this, where we're sitting here today. But we got up about 75 seats around and got the ring up and we'd give 'em away free to people that would write in. And it got so popular the--a couple of business men in Oak Hill built an auditorium and skating rink adjacent to the TV station and the owner, he had a part in it. He owned maybe a third or half of it, whatever. So somehow, somebody didn't pay their bill and he ended up owning the auditorium. So he converted it over to a facility that, where the kids could dance, the dance party, you could have banquets 'cause he had a terraced restaurant, and the wrestling. And it held 1,000, well it had 1,001 seats. That's a lot of people. And usually on Saturday night, it would be all to capacity.

And he just came more popular overnight and as that book [*A Man Called Shirley*], that book had a lot about it. Mannix Porterfield who put together that book, he wrote for the Associated Press and different newspapers--very good at what he does. And so many funny incidents would happen at...went out on the air. In other words, we didn't have a delay on our broadcasting or to where we could stop it and edit it out so if someone got all fired up, and they usually did, I had to be pretty fast to pull the mic and a lot of

times I wasn't fast enough. And that's what made the wrestling show probably as popular was the interviewing the audience between the different matches and the falls. That's how it became so popular.

EH: So how did you learn about wrestling. Did you know anything when you started?

SL: No.

14:34

This is funny. When I went from radio over to TV, the sports announcer, the sports director for radio who did the football games, he quit and went to Texas, got him a better job. So Mr. Thomas, the boss, you just did what Mr. Thomas told you to do. He was the boss and you followed his lead. He said, Shirley, you have to do the football games. Well I never did a football game before. I said, Mr. Thomas, I don't know anything about football other than playing in high school! And he said, well they all got numbers. And that means the numbers, there's a name. So just, so that's what I did. The first game it had to be horrible. If I had a copy of it I'd pay 1,000 dollars for it because the way I did it, number 24 Jones hands off to number 15, so and so and he hits the center of the line and tackled by number 26. It was horrible. It was just horrible. And the next Monday, he chews me out good. He said, you dummy. Those numbers--you're not supposed to call their numbers. The numbers are where you get the name and write 'em down! So anyway. I did about 1,000 more, well over 1,000 football and basketball games. I sort of became known as the voice of the red devils and they inducted me into the red devil hall of fame, which that was an honor. And I always would go down to the last 10 seconds and still could win! But they couldn't. It was like the little old ram that thought he could punch a hole in a dam, but he had high hopes. But it made the game more exciting and people picked up on it, you know.

EH: But wrestlers don't have numbers, so how did you do it?

SL: The wrestling? Now he said to me too, he said, when this guy left, Chuck Balding, Charles Balding was his name. Everybody called him Chuck. I said I don't know anything about wrestling. He said well, he said, they get an arm lock, they get a leg lock, or they get a toe hold or they get a half nelson and a full nelson. He said, just wing it. Do whatever they, and you just announce it that way. And so I did! And I asked about the different holds and I'd make me a note, and even if it wasn't right, I'd do it anyway--nobody knew the difference at that time. But and I did that, I tried to make that as exciting as the football games, like as though they was gonna kill one another. And a lot of times they'd go out of the ring, and they had ways of bleeding that we'd call in an ambulance once in a while to come and get 'em because the door of the auditorium, it had 2 big doors and you could drive the hearse right into the studio. So (coughs) excuse me. So we, and they would come up with all kind of gimmicks--the wrestlers would. You'd think the was gonna day, laying out on the floor. And but I got used to it, I had a table where they'd fall out on the table and they'd tear it up every week. The carpenter, the guy at the station had to put it back together. But the gypsies, or the little men...

EH: midgets?

SL: Yeah, when they'd have the midgets there, they'd get out on the desk and then I'd sort of be nose to nose with them, them standing on the desk, and like they would jump on my back and one would jump on the promoter's back and they'd fight and naturally they'd pop us in the side of the head once in a while in the process, which was humorous for the crowd. It was entertainment.

But when we first started, the West Virginia Athletic Association, they formed this in the state. This was something that the legislature created about mmm...I guess it was 1978, they created what they call the West Virginia Athletic Association. So members of that association came to the TV station and told Mr.

Thomas that they would be picking the referee and they would be keeping the time and all this stuff, he says, no. We're not having any of that. And they said, well, you're in violation of the law if we don't. And he said, no, not necessarily. So what he did, he went out on the marquee in front of the station and he changed it from "Saturday Night Wrestling," to S-A-T, Sat. N-I-T-E Nite Wrestlin' W-R-E-S-T-L-I-N. And then before I went on the air, he handed me a disclaimer that said, I'd say hello everybody and welcome once again to Saturday Nite Wrestlin' blah, blah, blah, we have 4 matches tonight and blah, blah. And I would say, "The following program is pre-arranged for your entertainment." So that took it out of the realm of being an athletic event. And never had any more problems with the Athletic Commission.

EH: (laughs) Do you remember characters who would insult hillbillies and rednecks and that was sort of their gimmick?

SL: Do what now?

20:49

EH: Do you remember there being characters who would insult hillbillies and rednecks?

SL: Oh yes, yes. So this one guy Jan Madrid, he was a past master at getting people fired up. In fact, he would get under my skin sometimes too, cause he'd refer to me as a pencil neck or told me one time if I drank a glass of tomato juice, I'd look like a thermometer. Because then I was real thin. And he called 'em, he'd call people underground coal miners--underground farmers (laughs) because they dug coal. And stuff like that. Oh, he could make anyone mad. One night, there was a little lady sitting right over from me and as he got out of the ring, she said something to him and he took his hand and wiped perspiration off of his forehead and threw it at her and it hit her right in the face. And she didn't react, she acted like a little school teacher and but I remembered her reaction. And she was first in the line to be interviewed when I, after the fall. And (laughs) and I said to her, and this is one of those nights that you can't pull the mic fast enough. I said, I could tell when I was on the air by watching the little red light on the camera, no one else would know I was on the air. So I was watching the camera, the light came on, and I said to her, I said, what do you think of this Jan Madrid? She said, I'd like to smack that SOB right in the mouth. (laughs) And it went out on the air, you know, and people, ha ha ha. And you know, that's when the boss would say to me, don't let those people curse on the air. And I said, well you know Mr. Thomas, sometimes you just can't control it. He said, yeah, but you lead 'em into it. (laughs) So he passed the buck back on me and a lot of times I did. And not in that case, I didn't know what she was gonna say, 'cause she looked like a little Sunday school teacher.

But there was another time that was very funny. There was a little boy who had a hat on, and this is how you get yourself in a cramp as an announcer and don't know how to get out of it, unless you're quick witted, and this particular time I was. He was about 9 years old and that's the day of the Davy Crockett, and you know, the hats, and the movie, the TV show. (sings) Davy, Davy Crockett, you know, king of the wild frontier. But anyway, he had this little hat on with a coon tail and everything on it and I asked him his name and he told me. I asked him where he's from. And I said, man, that's a good lookin' hat you have there. And his eyes just shined, you know. And I said, "where'd you get it?" He says, grandpa found it in the trash dump! (laughs) Well that put me (laughs) What can you say? I mean he was proud of it and his grandpa found it in the trash dump too. I said would you do me a favor? He said, if I can! I said, when you go home tonight, you tell grandpa, if he finds another one like that to save it for me, cause I want it. So that's about the only thing I could do. But in that little book that was written by Mannix Porterfield, it's called A Man Called Shirley, you'll find numerous, numerous incidents that happened.

EH: Yeah, I remember one where you had asked for ramps on air.

SL: Had to what?

24:42

EH: You asked for ramps on air... Wild leeks? The ramps? You know the plant ramps? (laughs) that grows wild in the woods?

SL: Oh, ramps!

EH: Yeah!

SL: Oh yeah, I, those things smell like the back of a bear going north or south. Anyway, all I had to do was...the boys at the station they liked 'em. If I ate 'em, I had to stay away from my wife for at least 3 days you know. I liked 'em too, and sometimes I'd eat 'em. But she'd keep me out of the house. She said, don't come in! I don't want--she couldn't stand the smell. But anyway, if those guys would say, mention ramps, Love, somebody will bring you one. So I said, you know, I'd like to have a good mess of fresh ramps, you know. Well the next week, here come 3 or 4 bags. We'd call 'em pokes. In West Virginia slang, a bag is a poke. So there'd be 3 big pokes of ramps. So I give 'em to the guys that worked at that station. They liked 'em. They'd mix eggs with 'em and bacon and they'd go fishing--good to eat on a river bank. So anyway, this one Saturday night, somebody brought a big bag and I had left them in the studio inadvertently, I didn't think. Somebody set 'em down, but you have to remember the auditorium would stay open or it'd stay closed all week and it would get hot and it would get cold, you know, hot and cold air--the heat would come on. And then next Saturday night when we went across, oh Lord, that studio, it was rank! It had to I didn't want to go in it to announce, go in but much less to go in it to announce the wrestling matches. And the people that started coming in, you could (sniffs) you could see they'd sniff their nose, you know, what am I smelling? (laughs) But anyway, that's when the boss told me, he said look. One more time like that (laughs) and you're out. Whether he meant it or not, I don't know, but I believe he did. But with friends I worked with, I didn't have to have many enemies. One night they took a bag of the ramps and put them on the manifold of my automobile. I sold advertising and they laid 'em up on the manifold of my automobile. Well as my motor would get hot, the ramps would smell. So I'd go out and stop by a merchant and I'd go in and everybody would say, what's that smell? You know. I don't know--there were ramps on top of my motor heated up! But anyway, I didn't discover 'em, I pulled into the service station one day and asked the guy, I said, check that oil for me, will you? He said yeah. And he said, "Love, what are you doing with all these weeds on your manifold?" (laughs) Then it came to me what that smell was coming from.

And there was three ladies from Intercourse, PA that I had an interview with. Which, I didn't know there was such a place as Intercourse, PA. But the first lady she, she brought a lot of laughter from the crowd you know. So I got rid of her as fast as I could. The second lady, and what's your name? And she says, so and so, and I said, where are you from ma'am and she said, "Oh, I'm from Intercourse too!" Well that didn't help matters. A little louder laughter. So the 3rd lady--this is where I would have liked to have had a video of it--the 3rd lady, she steps up and I look at her and I just shake my head up and down. And she shook her head up and down, "Yes I am from..." So I gave her whatever I had got away from her. Then there was a big old tall boy in the back of the room and I asked him if I could interview him on the next round. He said yeah. I was, he was from Eccles, WV, but I was afraid if I asked him where his name was, you can imagine what he might have said, and then I would have just closed up.

EH: (laughs) Who were some of the local West Virginia wrestlers?

SL: What now?

EH: The local West Virginia wrestlers?

29:23

SL: Yeah, a lot of West Virginia wrestlers. There was one called, he's a coal miner, he called himself Black Diamond. And then this Chief Black Eagle. He wore his headdress and he'd go on the warpath and when he went on the warpath he'd really sock those guys around the ring, you know? And there was a guy named Pedunovac (sp?) Steve Pedunovach, from, I think he was from down Logan, in Logan, WV. And there was Pat Clancy, he was a local one, and he was good. He was one of the smaller wrestlers, well-built, but in height, about 5'5". But he was a local wrestler. And from Boone County they had The Scufflin' Hillbillies. They wore overall pants. There's a picture in there of them with their, all laid out on the floor, and that night we called the ambulance and took 'em to the hospital because they were bleeding so bad from being socked around by whoever their opponent was. It was a tag team match.

EH: So were they good guys or bad guys?

SL: They were good guys. Yeah, they were the good guys. And the bad guys put it on them that night. And the local mortician, Joe Tyree, Tyree Funeral Home, he loved for us to call the ambulance because he got a lot of publicity out of it. Because back then they didn't have emergency vehicles like they have now. They used the hearses, they used the hearse if they went to your house to pick up a body, or you were sick to take you to the hospital. They put you in the hearse. And so he liked that. He'd get some publicity out of it.

31:29

EH: Let's see. Oh, who is still around? Are there any of those West Virginia wrestlers still around?

SL: The only one that I--the last one I had any contact with was the gentleman you mentioned a moment ago.

EH: Richie Acevedo's dad?

SL: Richie? Yeah. Richie Acevedo. Richie's father, he was a Cuban Assassin. And he stopped by and saw me, it's been about a couple years ago. Stopped by my house. And he was still wrestling. And one they call Gene Madrid, he was about 70 years old and he was still wrestling in Canada. And I mean he was, he looked like he was 30 as far as body build. But those guys kept themselves in good shape. They did athletic things that the ordinary person couldn't do. I mean you know, like jumping off of a turnbuckle, hitting one of the wrestlers and grabbing him by the neck. I mean you and I would kill each other if that happened to us.

EH: Right.

SL: But and popular--the lady wrestlers were, and the midgets probably, were probably the most popular as far as wrestlers, extra-curricular activity about the wrestling was concerned. And you had one lady called Slave Girl Moolah.

EH: Right.

SL: Her picture may be in this. And she went on to train wrestlers until she was I think 72 years old. She made it a business. But it was...one night a guy--this is true. One night I always parked my car to where I

could get to it because we had a drive-in theater, a drive-in, just a drive-in where you order stuff. And cars would park and sometimes I'd get tangled up. So I parked my car in a certain spot so I could get out. And I was walking to my car, and this was after the wrestling was over. And I was walking to my car and I passed this car and there was something sticking out of it and I noticed it wasn't a stick and it looked like a gun barrel, which it was and here sat a guy inside there with a shotgun single barrel shot gun and as he had come out of the auditorium, one of the wrestlers had spit on him or threw perspiration on him or told him he would, you know, I'll beat you up or whatever. Well, this old boy, he wasn't afraid of nobody. And it was the first day of squirrel season, and he had his shot gun in his car. And he was sitting there with it partial, sticking about that much out of the window, and I knew him and I'll think his first name in a minute. And I said, "What are you doing there?" He said, I'm waiting on that son of a gun to come out of there. He said, I'm gonna show him he ain't gonna throw spit in my face no more. And I said, no, you can't do that, you'll go to jail. I said, those boys, they'll all get in the same car and drive up down together. I said don't do that. Biggest mistake you can make in your life. I said let's just don't do that. And I said, I'll tell you what. You put that shotgun away, you let me break that shotgun down, and I said I'll give you tickets to wrestling from now on, as long as you live. But I don't want you shooting one of these guys because this could cause you big trouble and bad publicity for the station as well. And so finally I talked him into giving me the shotgun. So I broke it down in 3 pieces and I put it in the back seat of his car under the seat. And asked him if he would leave when I left. And he pulled out and he went to town and didn't go back. But I don't know what would have happened. I knew the guy would--he would have shot him or probably, maybe not killed him, but he would have pretty well burnt him depending on what kind of shot he had in the shell, he had in the gun. But he had the shell in the gun. I took it out too. But...

EH: Jeez. Do you think...oh go ahead.

SL: Those things happened like that, you know. Another guy got in the ring one time with a knife and the guy that's sort of the bouncer, always had a bouncer beside of him, it was usually one of my buddies. In this case it was our artist at the TV station, John we called him. His name was Cimmaro (sp?) we called him cinnamon roll. So John had to jump in the ring and take the knife away from the guy and in the process, John cut his hand bad. Had 4 or 5 stitches. It was one of those--I still have it at home. I kept it as a souvenir. It was a hawkbill. What you call a hawkbill knife. And nice little souvenir to remember things by. But if he had got to the wrestler, he would have--he was serious. He wouldn't have gotten in the ring if he hadn't have been. And another time, they dressed up a lady who worked in the restaurant of the TV Lanes. And they put lipstick on her and made her look like a rogue and old hat and gave her a pocketbook, and they had it loaded down with I don't know, rocks, or what. But anyway, everybody was in on it except me. So they had had the wrestler would come over in front of me in the ring and he'd say something of the bad guy. Well she was sitting behind me. Well she came by and she'd swing it and instead of hitting the wrestler, she'd hit me!

EH: Oh no!

SL: Well after 3 or 4 times, I couldn't stand it anymore, man. I wanted to get...I was wanting to get out of there myself or get her out some way! Well there was a lady across on the other side, she was watching. And she came over and she said, "Shirley, you want me to slap that B?" and I said, "Yes ma'am!" Well the promoter he was on it, he heard it, so they hustled her out real quick because she, that lady would have done exactly...

And another time a lady threw a shoe and it hit another lady in the face on the other side of the ring. She threw the shoe at the wrestler, went all the way across and hit this lady right in the face. And the lady didn't react. She just was very calm, picked the shoe up, put it in her lap, and watched the other side. And she could tell who did the shoe. She went around and the lady didn't have but one shoe on. And she said to the lady, "Honey is this your shoe?" And she said, "Yeah! Thank you." And she went whap! (laughs)

You could hear it in Oak Hill. I mean she popped that leather on the side of her face like crazy. But those things were a little things that happened that you know, made the show funny as far as the announcer is concerned. 'Cause I didn't have too many funny things to laugh about.

EH: Do you think people. Hold on. Do you think people thought it was real or they just got carried away with it?

39:40

SL: No, they thought it was real. And they got carried away with it too. But particularly elderly people. They liked it. It gave them I don't know, let's put it this way. If you went to a psychiatrist...well they'd come in to the station. And you'd catch their eye and they would be people that you had to almost catch their eye and keep their eye to nod hello or how are you or hi. So they come into the studio and they're very reserved but get their seat and they just sit there, you know, until the wrestling match was started. And after about 15 minutes, they were moving a little bit. Another 15 minutes they're (pounds table) you know, and another 15 minutes they're on their feet with (makes jeering expression) good rascal! In another 15 minutes, they're ready to get in there and fight, you know. And when they left they would be as yap, yap, yap, yap, yap, yap. So I always wondered how long it would take a psychiatrist to get out of those people what an hour and a half did at the TV station with that Saturday Night Wrestling.

EH: (laughs) So you think they were like working out their anger?

SL: (didn't hear)

EH: You think they were working out their anger and stress?

SL: Yeah! I think so. At home and you know, somebody with 10 kids and a mother, she comes over to watch the wrestling. I think it gave her, or elderly people that are all cooped up and you know. It just gave them a way to let off steam, you know. And at home too. I had a lady--there was a preacher at our station on the radio--and I worked radio and TV too. And this particular day I was working radios and I had to introduce this program, it was called The Good News Hour, Rev. Earnest Barley, that was his name. And there was a lady that was in the little studio that he was preaching from--she came over and she said, Mr. Love could I bring my grandfather over and introduce him to you? He wants to see you. And I said sure! So he comes over and he tells me who he is and I shake hands with him and I think I gave him a record or something we had--a lot of goodies we gave away all the time at the station. I gave him maybe a 45. Anyway, the little girl, his daughter, or granddaughter said, "Grandpa, tell Shirley about the TV set." No, he didn't want to talk. She says, well if you don't tell him, I'm gonna tell him. She says, grandpa was watching the wrestling a couple of weeks ago and the referee he couldn't get the referees attention to see the bad guy rubbing the whatever it was in the good guy's eyes and said every time grandpa would say, "Now there he is!" The referee would turn his head. So grandpa went in the back room and got the shotgun and shot the television set! And she said, I told him, grandpa you didn't hurt that referee. And he said, well you don't see him anymore, do you? (laughs) So that's the things like that happen.

But another incident when I was campaigning for state senate, I was up in a little place called Hacker's Valley. Hacker's Valley is a little hamlet in the, I would say the northern part of Webster County. It's about as far north as you can get without heading south again. So anyway, I admired those people up there because they were gonna close their school and all the people in the community got together and bought material, rebuilt the school, and it's still up. But anyway, there was an old abandoned farmhouse, beautiful--like an antebellum type home, and you could tell it was old. And had been a lot of activity in its time. But it had fields around it and it had brush and--I like to hunt rabbits and I have a rabbit dog that likes to chase rabbits. And I wanted to find out who owns it to get my rabbit dog and come over and

rabbit hunt sometime. So I told the lady, I said ma'am, I said that farm, that had to be a beautiful farm one time. Well she says, well you relate to that farm! I said, well how would I relate to the farm? She said, well, when she was a little girl and her brother was a little boy, the fella who owned, we'll call him Mr. Brown, Mr. Brown owned the farm and he had the only television in the valley. And he would give her and her brother 50 cents to follow the antenna to the top of the mountain, 'cause if a leaf fell on it you'd get snow and you couldn't see the television. Or if the wind blew and it kept blowing, you had to stabilize it or you got wind. So they were in charge of the antennae. And she said they would, folks in the community would come up and they would each bring a dish, like chicken and green beans, mashed potatoes, whatever. And she said they had 3 tables and 2 of 'em they would put on the porch and one in the yard and they would have, as she described it, dinner on the grounds. (laughs) That's a West Virginia slang.

EH: Like after a shape note sing! Yeah.

45:46

SL: But they'd have dinner on the ground and she said she had her little spot over in the corner where she could see the TV set, and they'd all watch Saturday Nite Wrestlin' and she said there would be, the porch would be full where they could peek in the windows and then the inside too. But that was, it was sort of a heartwarming story, you know.

EH: Yeah, yeah, I like that.

SL: And I've heard several tales like that where people...actually I think Channel 4 invented cable television because like that gentleman there in Hacker's Valley, he would have a daughter that would build a house and she would hook on to his antenna and then maybe she would have a cousin or something at another house, so it became cable. It was cable TV!

46:39

I suppose that's how it got started.

EH: Uh-huh. Yeah, so one thing I saw in the book is that there was a labor dispute by the wrestlers. Will you tell me about that?

SL: Yeah, one time the wrestlers went on strike. They wanted more money. And the promoter wouldn't give it to them. So they went on strike! And here they are, the folks have already bought their ticket, got their seats, and we don't have any wrestlers. So I go in the back and the promoter says what are we gonna do? He says, you have to give their money back. And I said, you don't know Mr. Thomas. (laughs) If I say he has to give every one of their money back...he...first of all he wouldn't have that kind of change back there 'cause they only charge like 50 cents or a dollar. I said he wouldn't have enough change for 50 cent pieces. I said he'd hang me out to dry and you guys too! He said, well what are we gonna do? I said well, a buddy of mine is an auxiliary police man, and he just may could put on a show with Jan Madrid, the promoter. If Madrid didn't hurt him and you had an extra pair of trunks, we could get a little dialogue going as to he's my bouncer and so and so. And his name was Bob Mason, he was very popular among the United Mine Workers. He was president of subdistrict 3, which was located in nearby Rainelle, and like I say, he was a very active United Mine Worker official. So I talked to Bob, I said Bob, we're in a real predicament here tonight. I said the promoter says he'll give you 100 bucks, he'll buy you a new shirt if you need it and also we had to be in on it too, me and my cohort, Sandy Higgings. Who, Sandy Higgings who worked at WOAY--he went on to become the head man of the United Press International in Germany, of the European Theater. He was personally escorted out of Iraq by Hussein and he was a good

guy who worked there. I remember he asked me, would I loan him enough money one day to buy a book. And I said sure Sandy. And what it was was how to speak German. And he took that book and he learned to speak German and he got that job in Heidelberg, Germany and he was smart enough and later on he became head of the bureau. And he wrote several articles for different magazines, different things.

But anyway, back to the auxiliary policeman. His name was Bob Mason. I said Bob, all you got to do is just play with him. He'll play with you. He won't hurt you. I'll guarantee he won't hurt you for anything. He said, yeah! I've been needing a new shirt! (laughs) So he agreed to do it. So the dialogue went something like this, he came out and he was sitting beside with me and Madrid, the promoter, the bad guy comes out and he says, who's he? I said, that's my bouncer. And he said, well who's he gonna bounce? I said he's gonna bounce you if you don't behave yourself. And he said he ain't gonna bounce nobody. So he gives him a push you know, and he comes back with a push and I said, hey hold on fellas, we got matches lined up here to wrestle tonight. I said you guys are trying to put on on yourself here. I said, you're not afraid of this guy are you Bob? He said no, I'm not afraid of him. I said you heard what he said, you insulted him first. I said would you want to get in the ring with him Bob? And he said, I'm not afraid to get in the ring with him. I said well maybe we could arrange that. I said you got another set of trunks back there Madrid, yeah? So one thing lead to another. Anyway, they had the 3 matches and the first match we disqualified Madrid, so the second match, Madrid won. So then the third match, that was the deciding one. That's for we was in a pickle. We had to do something. So what happened was Adam Tony who was the manager of the TV Lanes auditorium and he was a member of the legislature at that time. He--we took razors and cut our shirts so they'd come off real easy. And Madrid at the end of the match when he was supposed to have lost, but he won, that's when he got in with us, with me as an announcer, and the other 2 guys were backing me up and he grabs our shirts and pulls 'em off. But the funny part was, Tony, the manager at the TV Lanes, he had a sweatshirt on under his regular shirt and Madrid was shaking his head, the sweatshirt wouldn't break. So he got under the ring and crawled to the other side and left us all. But Sandy and I, we continued and he tore our shirts off and there we are, it may be in here. Bare shirt and everything. So I say to Sandy, I said, Sandy, we come out here and try to be as dignified as we can and professionally as we can do a wrestling match and here we have to put up with guys like him. I said, look at you and look at me, here we are bare chest. I said I don't know about you Sandy, but I said I'm going home. I'm gonna quit. And he said well me too. And I said, well folks, that it for the Saturday Night Wrestling. We'll see you again next Saturday night. But we got all of our commercials in, didn't lose a commercial won, and they enjoyed that more it seemed than if they had had the regular matches that they had lined up for one fall match or two falls.

EH: So did the--was it local wrestlers who went on strike or was it guys...

SL: (didn't hear)

EH: Was it local wrestlers who went on strike or was it guys on the circuit?

SL: It was the...you want to call 'em the syndicate, but they were the wrestlers out of Columbus, Ohio. And they had this section of West Virginia in their territory so to speak.

EH: Did they get their money?

54:17

SL: They did next week! (laughs) Because they found out that you know, things could go without 'em and they didn't want no more of that.

EH: So they didn't get their raise?

SL: They didn't get it that night, no.

EH: Oh, okay.

SL: No, we got it for new shirts and me and Sandy and Adam all got a new shirt. And I got 100 dollars, he gave me 100 dollars for putting on--I had to put on.

EH: But the next night or next time, did they get more money?

SL: Oh yeah.

EH: Oh, okay.

SL: Yeah, they came back. They settled their little grievance. But the funny part about it, this Bob Mason--his wife was a war bride. She was from Germany and she spoke German fluently, and she was a nice lady and I liked her. And I saw her a couple of, 3 days in the local grocery store and I said Mrs. Mason, how did you like your husband wrestling the other night? Oh, she got all--she started speaking German, she was calling me every SOB you could think of in German. And I said hold on, you know, I said I don't speak German. I said the only thing I know is guten nagen [nacht] and guten morgans. And aufweidersein. I said be kind to me a minute, Mrs. Mason. She said if I was a man, she started speaking English then. She said, I'd whip you all over this store! And she said I'm still gonna whip him! Talking about Bob, her husband. But he had a hard time for a long time after that. But she nailed me good. (laughs)

56:06

EH: So because they didn't take numbers, you don't really know how many people would watch on television?

SL: Well, we know this. Our rating was like for the news, if you had a, if we had a 25 oh for Bluefield or Channel 8, I mean this was high. We were high. It was like, if I remember, it was like 80, it was Neilson it was almost as high as it could go. Because we were on every cable TV in Southern West Virginia that you could be on. I mean the cable system, a lot of privately owned cable systems then. And they didn't dare not put them on. I mean to go with network or some other programming, I mean they wanted their people. It was only cable--they wanted wrestling. They wanted to see it.

EH: It was cable? You had to pay extra for it or it was just on every...

SL: No. Cable, the people who had it paid extra for it. You know, if you lived in say, Grundy, VA, Grundy, VA had that on their cable. You paid that company that had the cable system. The TV station didn't have to pay anything.

EH: Yeah, I know.

SL: They got our programming for free because, they could, the FCC had arranged it that way, all cable companies could hook on. In fact, we solicited a lot of cable companies to put us on for news and stuff like that so it would amplify our ratings on Neilson and Arbitron when they sent out the county books and things like that.

EH: So anyone who had cable in Southern West Virginia, they had this show.

SL: Oh yeah.

58:02

EH: What can you tell me about the Black Diamond wrestler?

SL: Okay, he was a coal miner. He was just an ordinary guy that got with some of these wrestlers that rented some house, rented an apartment close to them, and they liked him and he was very athletic so to speak. You could tell he played football when he was younger, before he worked in the mines. And they taught him the different holds and he was very, very good. I mean he almost looked professional. So they integrated him into their group and when they couldn't get some of the top wrestlers out of Ohio, then they would call Black Diamond. And a lot of 'em wrestled under a mask.

EH: And he was from Beckley, yeah?

SL: Mmhm. Beckley, yeah. And there was a justice of the peace, his name was Burl Holloid (sp?) and he lived at Cabin Creek. And he was a justice of the peace, but he always wrestled with a mask on his face you know. He didn't show himself because it was close enough, Cabin Creek was close enough to Oak Hill that people would have, I guess he just didn't want them to know that he was a wrestler.

EH: And did he have a persona?

SL: Hmm?

EH: Did he have a persona?

59:28

EH: A wrestling persona?

SL: Oh yeah, yeah.

EH: What was his wrestling name?

SL: Let me think. I think it was a skull. (laughs)

EH: Oh, cool!

SL: Yeah, those guys with the masks, they had all kinds of funny names. But I remember, I think he was the skull. Yeah. Then a lot of times too, you'd have your referee, and they'd be short on wrestlers and the referee, he would referee and then he'd go back like for the last match and he'd put on a mask and he'd wrestle. And most of the referees were good wrestlers too.

EH: And were the referees from this area?

SL: Huh?

EH: Were they from this area?

SL: Yeah, the referees were, one was called Loader Lowery. He was a policeman in Charleston, and he came up and he would referee the matches. And then sometimes the last match of the thing, he'd go back, and it was short and he would wrestle. So that was... but it was quite a weekend!

EH: Yeah, I bet. So I just have 2 more questions. Do you go see wrestling now at all?

SL: No (laughs). No. No, they inducted me into the wrestler's hall of fame, which it was quite an honor.

EH: Is that the WWE Hall of Fame?

SL: I don't know. I have a picture--I don't have it in this--in the other album. I have a picture of it. But it's I don't know if it's the same group as Jeanie, or the Assassin's son.

EH: Oh yeah, Richie.

SL: Richie, yeah, I don't know whether it's his group.

EH: Oh, I bet it's ASW maybe?

SL: Yeah, yeah. Anyway, they had a big match over in Bluefield and they invited me over. The plaque, I still have it at home.

EH: What do you think, why do you think it was so popular, especially in West Virginia--why were and why are people so into wrestling?

1:01:49

SL: Well one thing, it had violence to it, you know. (laughs) It's like why is deer hunting so popular in West Virginia? Squirrel hunting? I don't know, it's just the people like violence, whether it's true or not. If you're sitting here in a restaurant and there's a fight outside, somebody says "FIGHT!" and everybody gets up and goes out and watches it, you know what I mean. So basically that, I don't know what the word for it is, but they just, it's a way of life! You know, they just violence. They just like to see somebody hit somebody in the jaw and that one come back and retaliate and being wrestlers too and bouncing off the ring and the different techniques that they used, it keeps one occupied continuously for a period of time. And I would say that's what it is. Elderly folks again, like I told you earlier, I think they gave him attention, and always told them on Saturday night, be sure to go to church and Sunday school tomorrow morning and I've had several of 'em tell me, well, I knew it was alright to go be because you always remind me to go to church and Sunday school and I thought that was quite neat. I did that for 23 years. That was my last byline going off.

EH: But it's also contained violence so it's safe, and they can know who's gonna win and cheer for the good guy. So they have some control over the violence.

SL: That's true. And then they would leave it continuing to next week, you know. This guy would be maybe disqualified and he'd say you be back here next week, I'll tear your head off, see. And he'd be back next week. And they'd go at it, but it would draw a crowd and it would keep the audience on TV fired up too, waiting for Saturday night.

EH: And when you say violence is a way of life here, you mean like it's a hard place? Or what do you mean by that?

SL: Well, maybe I didn't phrase it just right. Violence is a way of life. You have a tendency of so many people coming here. They come for one reason. And that's the violence of the show. One socking another one in the jaw. (laughs) And with him bleeding real blood or some other kind, I mean that's what they like it. And they come back if...I mean it doesn't mean they're bad people.

EH: Right.

SL: It's just, it's like you and I right now, if there was a big fight out there, you and I would probably go out and watch it.

EH: Yeah, yeah.

SL: (laughs)

EH: It's drama, right?

SL: And you'd say did you see that guy with that right hook, you know? That's I dunno, it's--and this is God country and 12 gauge shotguns and 30 odd 6 high-powered rifles. Because it used to be on the 1st day of squirrel season in this area, it would sound like Vietnam. I mean there was a bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, everywhere. Now that has subsided I've noticed in the last few years. Squirrel hunting and, but deer season is still as popular or more popular. You have upwards of 30,000 deer hunters in the woods the first day of day season, and throughout Thanksgiving week and it's probably the biggest reunion, family reunion in the United States because here you had uncles and cousins coming in from other states and they're all cramped in a little place like this with a potbellied stove to keep 'em warm and a coal stove or a Coleman heater to cook breakfast with and they don't care what it tastes like. They eat it. And I'm one of those freaks, I mean... (laughs) I like it too. My grandchildren the same way.

EH: Well thank you so much. Is there anything else you want to share?

1:06:32

SL: No, other than hmm...I interviewed a lot of celebrities on there. One time I interviewed Jay Rockefeller.

EH: On the wrestling show?

SL: Uh-huh. Yeah. Yeah, he was campaigning in this area, and one of the guys, one of the guys told him to hang around until Saturday night and he would, and I think it was Mr. Tony who was in the house of delegates. Politically himself, and sure enough, here he is, big tall guy, yeah. I ask him, hey, you having a good time? Well it's different, let's put it that way, I remember him saying. I said, did you ever wrestle? He said, I wrestled a little bit in college. Not much, I mean. He was throwing it in there, yeah, which I doubt if he did. But having him on you know, it created, surely--Jay Rockefeller, this was before he was governor. This was when he was running.

EH: He probably knew a lot of people were watching so he wanted to...

SL: Oh yeah, he knew the statistics. He knew the statistics on it because we were in the cable, what they call the Capitol cable in Kanawha County, which covered all of Charleston. And below. St. Albans and, but we had a terrific audience. But I remember interviewing Jay. The first time I ever met him, I was doing a football game on the radio, WOAY in Fayetteville and I was sitting on top of a concession stand.

And you know, at half time you have a lull between the football, you have about 15, 20 minutes there, unless you've got somebody to talk to you, you've got nothing going on. So I told my spotter who was Quin James (sp?) to find me someone to talk to. So he gets down off the ladder, off the top, and he hollers back up, you want to talk to Jay Rockefeller? At that time, Jay Rockefeller was secretary of state. You know, I didn't know Jay Rockefeller from ? [unintelligible] So he comes up, he sits down and we talk football and his big long legs sticking up (laughs) in the air and it was an interesting interview.

EH: Who else was on? Any other celebrities on the wrestling show?

SL: Yeah, yeah. We had a lot of, we had a lot of 'em, I can't remember. Like I say, if one was in town and he was secretary of state, running for secretary of state, I think, John Perdue (sp?) one time I interviewed him. But I've interviewed several, I just can't remember their names.

EH: Lots of politicians?

SL: Yeah.

EH: Do you ever remember the Morris Brothers having a show on WOAY?

SL: From Clay County?

EH: Yeah.

SL: Yeah! In fact, I have a picture card in my album. They, I remember their theme song?

EH: What was their theme song?

SL: (sings)

EH: Soldier's Joy? I think John's told me that was their theme song.

SL: (sings) I'll see you in the morning da da da... they were sort of bluegrass. They were good.

EH: John's still around.

SL: And they would have every week, I say a bushel basket full, but a box and they would have a box full of mail. But they sang the old bluegrass, the old bluegrass traditional West Virginia songs. I mean songs that were handed down from generation to generation. That was their type of singing.

EH: Yeah.

SL: Some would call it cornball, you know. But to me, I liked it because they had a lot of bluegrass. In fact there were several people in Clay County that had a lot of talent. Trying to think of another group from Clay County. One thing I remember about Clay County, there was a young girl down there named Shirley Love.

EH: (laughs) Really?

SL: One time I was doing the dance party and Clay County High School was up there, and she was one of my interviews and I asked her her name and she said Shirley Love. I said, don't kid me! But it really was.

EH: Yeah, John is still around. John Morris is still around.

SL: Is he?

EH: Yeah, mmhm. Yeah, still playing.

SL: His, I guess it was his father maybe was a carpenter or had a construction company or something.

EH: Oh, yeah, yeah I know they were both teachers but they might have done some other things too. Did they have other people on?

SL: I'm trying to think of the other guy. There was one guy that sang with them...

EH: Oh David and John and then maybe...

SL: I've got a picture of him.

EH: I think maybe his name was John too. I can't remember.

SL: Yeah. But out of all of this I got selected to the West Virginia Broadcaster's Hall of Fame. That was an honor.

EH: Right. Well you have a really great radio and TV voice.

SL: Ah thank you, that's a compliment. I just got over pneumonia a couple weeks ago. It took a little, maybe a little frog here and there in my throat.

EH: You sound good.

SL: I appreciate that.

EH: Well I don't want to take too much more of your time. But thank you so much.

SL: I got plenty of time. Anything else you want to talk about I got time.

EH: I should probably hit the road back to Charleston.

SL: Now this is gonna be a in a what, a magazine?

EH: So it's in a book I'm writing. And then we have our, it will go to our archive of the West Virginia Humanities Council that will be at WVU.

SL: Will you send it to me once it's out so I can buy it?

EH: Um, a book?

SL: Oh yeah, I definitely will.

EH: And then I can send you the recording if you want.

SL: I'd like that.

EH: Yeah.

SL: If you would like, I have some pictures of I don't know what you could get out of here since it's not wrestling.

EH: Oh yeah, well I have a copy of that book.

SL: Huh?

EH: I have a copy of that book.

SL: Do you?

EH: Yeah.

SL: There's that lady.

EH: Oh yeah, yeah.

SL: This was our auxiliary policeman. Here's the guy that wrestled. Right there.

EH: Oh wow.

SL: Bob Mason. But I was skinny then. This is the guy, the Madrid guy.

EH: So were Jan and Gene Madrid--they were brothers?

SL: Yeah, Jan and Jean. Yeah, they wrestled as brothers, they weren't really brothers. But everybody thought they were brothers. They weren't.

EH: (laughs)

SL: But people are still buying this book.

EH: Yeah, it's good. I liked it.

SL: But I passed a lot of good legislation!

EH: (laughs) Nice. Well actually I might take your picture.

1:14:25

END OF TAPE

END OF INTERVIEW