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INTERVIEW: JANE AYLWARD (REVISED)

Q: Jane, when did you serve in the Kansas House? From what years to what years?

A: I was first elected in 1978, so my first term began in January of 1979 and I served through May 23 of 1990 when I resigned to take on the State Board of Taxes.

Q: So that is three terms, then?

A: No, we have two-year terms. Six terms.

Q: You are a Republican. Can you just kind of give me a little background on why you ever affiliated with the Republican party in the first place and how long have you been a Republican?

A: Well, I've been a Republican all of my life which was fairly short before I was elected to the legislature. I was fortunate enough to win the primary election when I was 21-years-old and was then elected when I was 22. So, really, the fact that I was a Republican at that point--and it's changed over time--but at that point it was probably based on the fact that my parents were. I grew up in a Republican household and, frankly, my parents were Republican because years ago back in the fifties, I had an uncle, my mother's, sister's husband--Joe Crouther, who was in the legislature a term. When he ran he had a primary and my parents had been Irish Catholic Democrats. My father's ancestors came out on the railroad and all that. Joe was a Republican and he had a primary and they switched parties to vote for him. So my parents were Republicans the entire time I was growing up and at the time that I filed for precinct committee with the Republican party. I'd like to say there is some grander reason, but that's probably why I started where I did.

Q: It sounds like a real common reason. A lot of people have that same background. When you were first elected, can you describe your first election and why you decided to run? What were the circumstances surrounding that decision and the people surrounding it?

A: Well, that's a question I get asked a lot because I was so young and I always wish I had a grander answer, but the truth is I had graduated from college with a degree in Animal Science in May and had decided that I wanted to be involved in our farming livestock operation. I loved the cattle and still do, still have cattle. I hopefully always will be able to. But I got out to the farm and had just graduated from college and was living with my parents and found that living with your family and working with your family day after day, I needed a little variety in my life. My father had always been active--not in local politics--but they were precinct



committee people and my dad had been on a lot of planning and zoning commissions and chairman of the parochial school board where I'd gone to school and that sort of thing. He had done things like that. At that time my state representative was a gentleman named John Carlin and he decided to run for Governor and my father belonged to a group called the Saline County Tax Payers Association. I think he was treasurer. They had become a little bit disenchanted with state government and that sort of thing and were looking for a candidate to run. My dad went to several meetings to talk about who they could talk into running for the legislature. And always came home kind of empty-handed because such-and-such didn't have time or whatever the reason. They couldn't find a good candidate.

By then, a couple of people had filed and I kind of watched that and thought, gee, if they could do that, I could. I'll never forget the day...my folks have a ranch style home and my bedroom is in the basement and I still remember the bathrobe I had on. My dad and I always got up in the morning early before anybody else did and we would visit. We are kind of early morning people and we'd talk about the issues of the day before we went outside and I remember coming upstairs one morning in this green bathrobe and saying, 'You know, Daddy, I think I found a candidate for you.' And he said, 'Well, who's that?' I said, 'I'm going to run.' And after I scraped him up off the floor and stood him back up, we really discussed it and I said, 'Well, the fact is if I don't get elected people around here will know that I am interested in being involved in other things, so maybe I can get involved in Farm Bureau and some of those kinds of things and they'll know I am here. If I do get elected, well, great!' So I ended up with a three-way primary and two Democrats ran, so there were five candidates. I worked real hard and went out and saw everybody. I think I drove them all to distraction. They finally decided they would vote for me if I'd stay out of their front yard and I won the election.

Q: Well, was there anyone encouraging you? Who worked for you and advised you? During decision time and actual election?

A: I am not one of these people who came out and got heavily recruited and being in a Republican primary you were fairly well on your own. There are some things that I do recall. A fellow named Ben Vidricksen was chairman of the Saline County Republican Party and, as you know, Ben's a Senator from there now. Ben wasn't the Senator at the time but my folks knew him since they were on the central committee. The Smoky Hill River Festival was going on and Ben has a restaurant and barbecue deal and we decided I needed to go over and visit with him. So I went over and tapped on the backdoor of his little trailer that he was serving stuff out of at the Smokey Hill River Festival and here came Ben with his apron on as you still see him a lot, serving things. And I visited with



him and I think Ben maybe--he has never told me this but I have always suspected he was a little skeptical at the time because he had this kid standing there that was all hot on running for the legislature, but he encouraged me.

Then the person that I give the credit for really helping me in that election, and truly I don't believe we could have done it without him, is Morris Kay. Morris Kay was Chairman of the Republican Party at the time and he came out and spent hours and hours and I guess just decided that I was a candidate that could win. My family had been there forever and I had been in 4-H in that community and people knew us and we were farmers like the district. Morris really worked with me on what I needed to do. I remember him saying, Janie, now, the first thing you need to do is go talk to the influential people in the community before you file and see what kind of response you get from them, and he had me make a list of the 100 people in Saline County that I thought had some influence and what I didn't realize at the time and he didn't tell me, was that I was fundraising. So I went in and visited with all those people and got them sort of brought around to my side before I ever filed and it gave me some encouragement and confidence. I had set that base and then Morris would come out again and say, now, we're going to put your brochures together and what you're going to do is go back to those people and say I need some money. And he provided an awful lot of encouragement.

Q: Did you go door-to-door, then, pretty much? What style of campaigning did you carry out?

A: That is absolutely the style I carry out. In fact, I think we kind of started a new trend. I know you're from the farm so you are probably familiar with the Farm Bureau Township maps that you get. I could have never won elections without Farm Bureau's township maps because my district was basically a rural district and I would go through the voter registrations and mark off which houses had registered people and what party they were and all that kind of stuff. The first election, before the primary I don't think there was a Republican household we didn't go to. And then we went back around and drove door-to-door out in the country. My mother and I probably have spent more time together than any mother/daughter team in the country. We fought off more dogs together, but my mother was always my driver out in the rural areas and we'd just take days and say this is the day for Elm Creek Township and we'd start in the morning and go to Elm Creek Township and drive to every house we could drive to.

Q: Did you have other people going door-to-door besides yourself and your mother?

A: The first time, no. I thought it was very important that people get to know me, so we covered....I'm sure that there is a house somewhere that we missed, but our aim and goal,



and I believe we accomplished the goal, was to hit every house in the district and that's how I always ran campaigns. I have noticed everybody that has run against me has made some stab at that but the fact is it requires a heck of a lot of time and being in the farming business I could arrange things to do that. A lot of people simply can't. I think the ultimate way to win an election is to be at everybody's door and I don't think anything will change my mind on that.

Q: You just had small hometown newspapers mostly, but did the media play any part in your campaign? Did you advertise in the media, either newspaper, radio, or TV?

A: Yes, I did. Actually, my district didn't take in most of the city of Salina. It was reapportioned during my 10 years, so when I started out I had Ellsworth and Saline County Rural Areas and a little bit of the city. Then I switched over and most of the time I served Dickinson County and rural Saline County and part of the city and now it's reapportioned back and it's back to where it was when I started with Ellsworth County. I did use the media to a degree. I ran ads in the small town papers. I used radio and I believe, the first time, I did all the radio ads myself. Later on, I ended up having people do some endorsement ads on specific issues. You know when you are an incumbent, you've got a record. People can pick on things. If you are getting nailed on a farming issue, you go find a farmer everybody knows in the county and get them to do an ad for you. But I did use newspapers some. Being in the Salina area, we did have a cable TV station there and I did some ads with it when they were doing that sort of local thing. They don't anymore. I bought ads in the bigger newspaper which was the Salina Journal but their circulation goes clear out to the Colorado border and they are darn expensive, so you don't buy a whole lot more than you have to.

Q: Well, who were your opponents in your first election? You said there were five of you--three Republicans and two Democrats. Who did you end up running against and how close was it?

A: It was an interesting race. I guess statistics aren't really important to me. I don't remember the vote split. I believe it was about 60/40 the first time. The newspaper, in fact, gave us some free publicity because I was young and, of course, I'm blonde. My opponent was a year older than I was and he was blond, the fellow that won the primary, so they called it the Barbie and Ken Doll Race. There was a newspaper article with our pictures together with 'The Barbie and Ken Doll' race and, fortunately, he was in law school and going back to Washburn, so he didn't have the time to campaign that I did but he was much more politically astute because his father was chairman of the Democrat Party locally, and I think they had intended, with John Carlin the



Democrat going out, that he would walk right in. But that was the kind of opponent that I had and at that time it was probably very fortunate because I was so young but they couldn't use it against me because he was, too. Although in the primary election, now, one of my opponents was a pretty well-known farmer and age probably played the other way on him because he was in his 70s. Didn't get around as well and my other opponent in the primary was a fellow that lived out in Ellsworth County away from the population base. It just worked out okay.

Q: Kind of unusual circumstances. How about your other elections and did you have any uncontested years?

A: I had one. It was nice. I did have one year where I didn't have an opponent but, considering that the district was John Carlin's district....It was one that the Democrats envisioned they could get, so I generally was opposed in the general election. I never did have another primary. I never did have one after that. I always had a general except, I believe, in 1984 or '86. I escaped and didn't have a general election. Now I know why people want to be in the Senate. If nothing else it's for the four-year terms. I had some tough opponents. The fact is, Barbara, they used to joke with me down here because I am so paranoid when it comes to elections. I'd be on the phone every day saying, 'I'm going to get beat! I know I'm going to lose.' Because that was always my attitude and that kept me going, to work harder so that I would win.

Q Well, then you felt very competitive and you were willing to put forth a lot of energy and time to be elected. Would you say that is very important?

A: Absolutely. I think that's the most important, getting to know the people.

Q: Did John Carlin work against you? Did he endorse your opponent in that first election or subsequent elections?

A: I don't recall that he came out and endorsed him. I don't know why. I've never talked to him about that. I would assume probably...of course, he was running for governor and he was probably so tied up in his own race that he just didn't have time to fool around in the other ones.

Q: And he didn't two years later either?

A: You know, I never really noticed that there was any involvement. I always expected it but didn't see any tracks of any involvement.

Q: Your district did change slightly? You were redistricted once, weren't you?



A: As a matter of fact, I had some major redistricting. I got elected in a district that was all of Ellsworth County and all of rural Saline County and the very north end of the city of Salina. The next year that I ran, in 1980, the district had been reapportioned because, of course, federal government requires that every ten years. I had lost all of Ellsworth County, picked up about 2/3 of Dickinson County clear over and took in Herrington which is an old railroading town, pretty Democrat area for a Republican. That was kind of scary. I picked up Solomon in Dickinson County which is another Irish Catholic Democrat area. But what they didn't know when they did that--well, the Republicans knew it because I told them. Solomon was okay. They kept looking at the voter registration saying, 'gosh, Janie, can you survive that one?' I said, 'Solomon is okay because that's where my Dad grew up.' So we had a lot of ties with the Solomon area and then I kept all of rural Saline County but instead of the north end of Salina, then they came in and gave me about 4000 people in the south end, so my district was about 60% new when I ran for re-election the first time.

Q: That's a disadvantage.

A: Well, it was a tough district in that Salina is metropolitan enough. There is a lot of development outside the city so you have a lot of rural people that live out there that aren't farmers. And then I had, all of a sudden the district had about 18,000 people in it, and all of a sudden here are 3 or 4 or 5000 people that live right in town and sort of upwardly mobile \$70,000 home range. And then all these people over in Herrington that were union railroad, so I really.... It was a difficult district to represent because when it came to urban/rural issues you were split 50-50. And you always are between the devil and the deep blue sea. Do you go with the ag people and have the city half mad or go with the city people and have the ag half mad? So it was a difficult district in school finance measures because I had one large school district that took in about half my people and then I had parts of ten small school districts and the way the school finance plan works, if it was good for the big one which took in half the people in the district it was bad for the rest of them. It always works inversely so you always kind of had to pick the plan that was the least bad for both types of district. It was kind of a tough situation.

Q: Unusual district too, I think. It was redistricted again just before this election?

A: Yes, just before this one. So, frankly, I was gearing up to run for re-election and this opportunity for change came along and I had done a lot of mailing back in Ellsworth County again. It was back there, but I was amazed at how many people had remembered me from ten years ago.



Q: Why did you decide to do this instead of run again? You were appointed before your term was up and before the elections even?

A: I found out about the first of May. I had gone in and talked to the governor about this and really it was just one of those opportunities. The area that I had sort of carved out as my major area of interest and the one I tried to develop an expertise in the legislature was the tax area. One thing I had always looked at and thought I'd really like to be on was the State Board of Tax Appeals. Your chances of getting on that and having a governor who will appoint you and they are 4-year terms and appointments expire....Of course, we're appointed by congressional districts so you only have a chance at going for one slot, the one from your congressional district. And I always thought it was one of those dreams I would like to fulfill but it will never happen. I'll never be in the right place when that comes up and all that. And the legislature has reached the point where it's really a full-time job with part-time pay and trying to juggle being at the farm and being in the legislature and being at everything--all the extra stuff people expect me to be at. Going through reappraisal, being on the tax committee and active in that area, I reached the point, in Salina, where I would walk into a grocery store and feel like I needed to say, Representative Alyward will be by the lettuce for the next 30 minutes to answer your reappraisal questions. So, even though all the city of Salina wasn't my district, when people had tax things I think they called me. So I ended up with my whole district plus these other 50,000 people that didn't live in it so it really kind of wore you out. I have been there 12 years which is longer than the average. Then, all of a sudden, I discovered that Keith Ferrer, who is my person on the Board of Tax Appeals decided he wanted to retire.

Q: Right at that time?

A: Right at that time. I thought that is absolutely the opportunity that I've been looking for. And I went in and talked to the governor and he thought about it awhile and they called back and said, ok.

Q: So you never really got into that election or filed?

A: No. I knew, in fact, before filing time came along. I was pretty certain during the veto session that it was going to work out. As soon as I got home from the veto session they called and said, ok.

Q: Well, you mentioned the tax and education issues? What other issues were important in your district? Ag issues I assume, too.



A: Agriculture issues were very important. Probably one of the biggest things that happened for my area was passage of the multi-year highway improvement plan. 81 Highway, even though it turns into I-35 in my district, it is the length that leads us to the north and right north of my district it switched into that really dangerous two-lane. And that's going to turn into a four-lane under that plan. In Saline County we have lots and lots of rivers that go through there. That's providing a lot of bridges out in the rural area. Being an ag community, those old bridges, you couldn't get farm equipment across. That's really important to them.

One thing that I got to start with a little bit before I left was the merger of Kansas College of Technology and K-State. That's a real plus. I was involved in getting the international training program for pilots there in Salina before I left and we are training pilots from all over the world now. Those were some of the interesting things there.

Q: Those are important, too, for the communities I would think, for employment and the number of people involved.

A: I was Vice Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and we did a number of things to help attract some businesses in our area.

Q: Were there any of these issues that people would generally identify with women's issues? That women were expected to respond to or carry them?

A: There were some, and there were some that stance probably would surprise people on. Of course, the main one that comes to mind is...my last two years I was Vice Chairman of the Federal and State Affairs Committee when the abortion issue came up in front of us. You know, that was one that women responded to vehemently on both sides. So, you know, as a woman, that was a tough one for me but I came down on the pro-choice side of that. Certainly one that women got interested in, though. One of the other issues I can think of would be the gender balance bills that we've dealt with over there to require women--equal number of women--on all the boards and commissions. Those sorts of things. That was one that surprised a lot of people because I was one of the very few women who opposed that. I really felt that I opposed that issue for a good reason. The fact is, I wouldn't want people out there to think I was appointed to the Board of Tax Appeals only because they need a woman up here. I want to know myself that I was appointed because I was the best choice that they had, not because they had three men so they had to put a woman on. I really believe that women have made the strides to the point now where if they are qualified they get those appointments.

Q: If you were going to describe yourself as a liberal or conservative on most issues, not just women's issues, but



just across-the-board issues, how would you describe yourself?

A: I think how I'd describe myself and probably because I tried to represent my district and I think that was the attitude in my district, I'm sort of a moderate conservative. I am pretty conservative when it comes to spending money. It made a lot of people unhappy over the years when they'd walk in the office and say, we need money for this and I would say, fine. What tax do you want me to increase to get it for you? We don't have the money and if it is not there, I can't do it. However overall, I'm not a conservative who was right of Genghis Khan. There are conservatives who fall into that bracket and I wasn't. I voted for the multi-year highway plan and the tax increases that went along to fund it. So, voted for things like the margin of excellence. It's not bare bones, but I felt that it was important to do those sorts of things. I think maybe moderate conservative would be the best way to typify me.

Q: As a freshman legislator, did you have any contacts or any person you would say was a mentor or someone who really kind of helped you get on the committees you wanted and helped you find out how to do things? You were younger than most of them and probably in a different situation than a lot of them.

A: I really was and really, I think I was so young when I first came up here that almost everybody took me under their wing. I had lots of mentors my first couple of years because I reminded so many of them of their daughter or some of them their granddaughters that they wanted to make sure that I got around okay. One of the people who really helped me when I first came up was Jerry Simpson who was also a freshman legislator from Salina. And I think because he was from Salina...in fact, Wendell Lady was Speaker and Wendell put Jerry and I in the same office together. They had put three legislators in one office and Jerry and I were in the same office. I'm sure looking back on it that was by design because he knew I would be comfortable asking Jerry questions and that kind of thing. However, Jerry wasn't here too long. He resigned to take a federal appointment with HUD. Then there was absolutely one individual that was my mentor, my best friend, my seat-mate my entire legislative career, came in the same year I did, and that was Rochelle Chronister. Rochelle's someone who I've always admired and looked at the way she deals with things and I know in a lot of ways tried to pattern the way I responded to things.

Q: I think you mentioned some of the committees you served on, but lets get a summary of what committees you served on your first term and if they changed after that.



A: You're asking me to go back to ancient history. My first term. I had a number of committee changes while I served. My first term I served on the Ag and Livestock Committee because I thought for my district that was important. And I served on the Federal and State Affairs Committee and I believe I was on Special Claims Against the State. I think I am correct with that. Then, my second term, I had the opportunity to serve as Vice Chairman of Ag and Livestock Committee which was an interesting time. As you'll recall, that is when the Grand Marketing Compact was big and everybody was driving their tractor to Washington with the American Agriculture Movement and all that. So we had some pretty interesting meetings in Ag and Livestock back then. I served on Federal and State Affairs most of the time I was in the legislature and became Vice Chairman of that eventually. When Mike Hayden was Speaker of the House, I chaired a committee that Mike established called Communications, Computers and Technology which was a really interesting committee for me. We were going through some Mainframe Computer acquisitions at the state level. I had very little background in computers, but you really didn't have to know how to use them. It was more an overall theory. We also got into a lot of work with cable television, public television, who should be able to sell and resell telecommunications services. Chairing that committee for a couple of years was a real learning experience.

Q: Does that committee still exist?

A: No, it doesn't. I was on it for two years and then Mike made me chairman of it for two years and then, when Jim Braden came in as speaker, Jim determined that so much of the funding that we established also needed to be done by the Appropriations Committee, and we had lost a number of Republicans and were spreading people awfully thin. So Jim abolished the committee after that. I thought we did some real interesting work while we existed. It sure taught me a lot. I served on the Tax Committee, I believe, for eight years, and served on the Reapportionment Committee this last time. I knew what had happened to my district the first time they reapportioned and I wasn't on the committee, so one of my number one requests was to be on the committee this time and I was and got to help draw the lines on my district this time. One of the things when I first came in, I remember meeting with Wendell Lady, who was Speaker, and I told him that I wanted Federal and State Affairs because it sounded interesting and you got such a menagerie of things in that committee. You had betting, all the liquor bills, and, of course, we were still not a liquor-by-the-drink state at that time. We had everything that kind of came in from every direction and ended up in that committee, so it was pretty exciting. I remember talking to Wendell about what other committees I'd like to serve on and he said, 'Well, you know, some of the people like to serve on Public Health and



Welfare.' I said, 'The last thing you will ever do is put me on Public Health and Welfare. I can promise you that. I don't want to be there.' So I never did that. I served on the Rules and Regulations Committee which was an experience. About three days before your committee meeting every month the UPS driver would pull up and bring you a package of proposed rules and regulations that probably weighed 20 pounds. It would be a stack oftentimes 10 inches high that you were going to go through at your next set of committee meetings, so that was an interesting committee to serve on. Without question my favorite one was Tax. Absolutely

Q: When did you start serving on the Tax? That wasn't your first term.

A: No. I didn't get on it right away because Jerry Simpson came up at the same time I did and he'd had so much more experience. Jerry got the Tax Committee, but then when Jerry went out, I got Jerry's slot and I think that was about 1981. They wouldn't put two people from Salina on the Tax Committee.

Q: Did you hold any other leadership positions besides the committee chairman and vice chairman?

A: No. I didn't. I did have an opportunity, though, because of my committee chairmanships and vice chairmanships to be on our National Conference of State Legislators Group and I served on a couple of those and I went to meetings lots of places either on Telecommunications or, later on, I served on the Transportation Committee.

Q: There were several different leaders of the House during your twelve years there. Can you describe that power structure? How did it change? What was it? I guess the different people made a difference.

A: I remember the first year that I came in there was a bloody, bloody battle for Speaker of the House between Carlos Cooper and Wendell Lady. Of course, Wendell ultimately won that and one thing that I was really fortunate with the entire time was that--and some of it probably was intuition or good judgment, but I have to credit some of it to just blind luck. I always voted for the right person so that always helped with your committee assignments. I voted for the person who won. And they did have different leadership styles. They had to have different leadership styles because the people in the legislature changed dramatically during just the twelve years that I was there. You are dealing with a whole different kind of people and attitude today than you were when Wendell was Speaker. I think probably the most hard-line, strongest leadership I saw was under Mike Hayden. Mike would say, 'Alright we need this passed. This is going to be Republican and who can't vote for it?' And I remember a few



times I was dumb enough to stick my arm up to say I can't and I'd end up back in the Speaker's Office and we would discuss whether I really couldn't vote for it or not. Ultimately, if Mike Hayden believed you really couldn't, for political or philosophical or whatever reasons you had, he'd say, OK. We will find somebody else to take your place. Mike also had an advantage in that Republicans had a larger majority then, and he had more people that he could let off the hook. Jim Braden was probably the most patient leader I have ever met in my life because we had the group of House rebels all of whom purported themselves to be conservatives, but we kept a tally of their spending and they outspent me about 2 to 1 on everything. Honestly, how he kept his sanity and even attempted to run the House under those conditions when you're being blamed for being in the majority but you don't have 63 votes. And nobody could have done that. I really enjoyed Mike's leadership as Speaker, too.

Q: Well, you talk about the rebels and you weren't a rebel. Were there any groups or coalitions that you did participate in? I remember last year reading in the newspaper about a Woman's Coalition or that was the newspapers name for it. The women in the House. Did you participate in any kind of formal or informal groups like that?

A: No, not really. I did participate in some groups, for example, when different people were majority leaders or whatever, they kind of established a group that would go off and have dinner or get pizza one night a week. And you kind of served in their cabinet where you'd say, well, you know this is what I'm hearing or I can talk to these people. So I belonged to some of those kinds of things. I remember one when we had a majority leader one time that liked to have meetings at 6:30 in the morning and getting up early has never bothered me. Being somewhere at 6:30 in the morning was early but I always made those, too. Those gave you a real feeling of being able to have some influence on what direction the House went in. As far as the group that evolved last year, the women's group--I think they were tagged as Steel Magnolias or something, after that movie--I think there were three women in the House that didn't participate and I was one of them. I understood what they were doing in trying to prove a point. Essentially, what they were trying to prove, and it's something that I said over and over, is if there is this group of men who're going to pass more restrictive abortion laws, they better be ready to put their money where their mouths are and provide more money for foster care. Those sorts of things. I believe they are absolutely right. I also knew we didn't have the money to spend and I thought what I'm going to do is fight the more restrictive laws on this side and not overspend here and that was the decision that I made.



Q: Can you identify three or four major issues, debates, controversies or victories or things that happened that stand out in your mind, that fall into those categories?

A: There are a number. The first one, of course, everybody remembers the first bill they carry. I remember the first time I went down to the well with a bill and I was holding it in my hand and I thought I'm shaking so much people clear back there in the back of the gallery are going to be able to see this. Really simple little bill that came out of Federal and State Affairs Committee. Neil Whittaker was Chairman at the time. I walked down there with this simple little bill. Didn't do much of anything because that's what they give you for your first bill and they did to me what they do to everybody. You have the white lights up there, people want to speak, and I said, Mr. Chairman are there any questions, and I turned around and every light on the board was lit up. Then, eventually, people started turning theirs off and there weren't any questions, but one question remained. Another woman legislator came down and was carrying an amendment to ban massage parlors because there was a real problem with massage parlors in her district. In my 22 years of experience I had no clue in the world as to what a massage parlor was and I remember going over to my Chairman and saying, 'Neil, what do I do?' and he said, 'Janie, just keep your mouth shut and let her put it on and we'll take it off in Conference Committee,' and I said fine. I later learned what a massage parlor was. I probably would have been more embarrassed had I known at the time. I didn't know what I had.

There were a number of others. When I was Chairman of the Communications, Computers and Technology Committee, and it is one of few bills I remember the number on, Senate Bill 226, was one that dealt with resale of telecommunication services. That was a bill I worked on very, very hard. Very controversial matter and took a lot of debate on the floor of the House. I remember I got it through the House, squeaked through the Senate with one vote and then John Carlin vetoed it. I had spent two years on that bill. So I'll never forget Senate Bill 226. That will be one that remains in my mind forever. The other ones that stand out to me, probably in more recent memory are the tax bills that we had last year. I ended up as chairman of the subcommittee on the bill that would have closed all the sales tax exemptions, a bill that I was opposed to. It was Joan Wagnon, the ranking minority member on Tax had the bill and she was another member on that subcommittee. There were three of us and the third member was not real interested. So Joan and I ended up having most of the hearings, but we had full-blown hearings on that. Ended up with a proposal which I still told Joan, 'I don't think I can support this. It's not my idea, but I am trying to do for you the best I can to get something out there.' And we ended up putting together something that proposed--in fact, it was my idea, I'll take credit for that



--sales tax on services. It's amazing that it's come back around in the governor's message this year, so it's kind of fun this year to sit back and say, well, I know exactly how much that would raise us and I know what closing that exemption is going to do. So we went through a lot of debate on those issues. There was another one that dealt with the reappraisal moratorium last year that I carried on the floor three times and finally got passed. You know, I suppose they stand out more because they're recent memories, but those are ones.... And I had an opportunity to carry the Taxpayers Bill of Rights a couple of years ago and that was a kind of interesting bill to have. I am sure that there are more. I'd have to think.

Q: When you started in the House, there were how many women? There weren't very many.

A: I think there were seven when I came in--seven or nine--and a number of us came in at the same time. I think perhaps there were.... Barbara, I don't remember.

Q: I can probably look that up. How many in when you retired?

A: I would have to go back and count.

Q: I think it was thirty-three.

A: That sounds about right.

Q: So, you saw a huge increase in the number of women. Do you think that made a difference, having more women in the House? You probably, of all the people there, you may have a better idea of that since you were there during the years that the increase occurred.

A: I don't know. Yes, the legislature has changed tremendously and the attitudes and the way people deal with issues over there has changed tremendously. I don't know whether to attribute 0% or 50% or 80% of that to the fact that the greater percentage are women.

Q: But there might be some influence you think?

Q: I think there could be some influence. Very frankly, in the legislature, and you have to understand you're talking to someone who is an Animal Science grad who farms, so I am used to dealing with men a lot. In the legislature I never felt like people noticed what gender you were as long as you were there and did your work. Perhaps having more women there put more concentration on some of the social issues, but I don't necessarily know that that's true because some of the biggest proponents of the social issues were men.



Q: We've kind of talked mainly now about your terms in the legislature. We are going to talk about you a little, personally. Are you a native Kansan?

A: Yes, I am. In fact, my mother's grandfather--we have long generations in our family--my great grandfather was the first settler in Saline County. There in 1856 which was 100 years before I was born. His brother was scalped by the Indians and they left, but he lived. And then they came back in 1857. So he doesn't get all the credit for being the first settler because they had to leave because his brother got scalped.

Q: Did your family farm that same farm?

A: I grew up on some of the land that he homesteaded back then. He ran a ferry across the Saline River and he ferried people across but he accumulated a lot of land. We still farm part of it. There are all kinds of stories of...Salina is 13 miles from Solomon and they say that you used to--now you have to zigzag back and forth a little bit--but you used to be able to walk from Salina to Solomon without ever getting off Grandpa Schippel's land. I don't know if that's true or not.

Q: What was his name?

A: Goddard Schippel.

Q: You grew up and went to school there all the way through? Can you describe your early education experiences?

A: It's a little different for somebody my age. I'm 34 now. We lived there on a section that Grandpa Schippel homesteaded about 1/2 mile away from the old house. He had a house down there and a grain elevator and all that. Somebody burned it down on us a few years ago. There was wallpaper in it from the 1901 World's Fair. It had gotten dilapidated and nobody had lived in it for years. I grew up not too far from that. I started out in school in a one-room school that sat down on the same quarter that our house was on, so I used to walk across the field to school every day. I had the largest class in the school. There were three. My older sister was the only one in her class, and it was a basic one-room school and they had the old 'board of education' with holes drilled in it and when someone went behind the piano with the board of education, they'd really done something wrong. Our major entertainment over the noon hour was to go down in the basement because there were cracks in the cement basement and we could get ringneck snakes and play with them. I started out there, but then it closed when I was in the fourth grade. In the third grade, my parents decided we probably weren't getting the best education that was available, not that the teachers weren't good, but education had progressed. So they



moved us in--we're Catholic--they moved us up to a parochial school. I went to Sacred Heart all the way through high school and, then, they adopted a modular system when I was in high school so you could take classes and finish them early. So really my senior year I had American Government and Band, the only classes I needed to take. So then I went out to Marymount College and got a lot of credits my senior year. Then I transferred up to K-State and majored in Animal Science up there and graduated in four years. Pretty concise life.

Q: That's interesting, your early education particularly. Did your mother work outside the home?

A: No. Before they got married, my mother was a college graduate, graduated from Loretto Heights out in Denver. She did work as a Social Worker before they were married, but after they got married she has been a homemaker. She does work outside the home when it comes to hauling milo, helping somebody round up cattle and drive the pick-up. She does all that. The one place that she drew the line is that she refuses ever to learn to drive a tractor because then she will have to.

Q: Did you drive a tractor?

A: Oh, I ran a tractor a lot. Even down here, I took a week off during harvest time and went home. We have got an 86/30 John Deere, big 4-wheel drive. And I love it. I can go out and put my jeans on and boots and get on that thing. The phone doesn't ring, nobody bothers you. I can listen to the radio all day and work ground and I love it. I spent a lot of week-ends doing that.

Q: But your mother didn't do that?

A: Not the tractor. But she can run about anything else.

Q: Do you belong or have you belonged in your life to any organizations that you think contributed some of the inspirations or ideas or skills necessary for being in the legislature?

A: Absolutely. One organization I credit a great deal with me being in the legislature today is 4-H. I started out as a 4-Her when I was 8-years-old and, of course, my big deal was to show cattle. I love to show cattle. In fact, I showed them on the circuit some for open class breeders. The other thing that my mother insisted on when I was in 4-H was that I always give talks and speeches and participate in county 4-H day. When I went to Sacred Heart to school we didn't really have debate or forensics, so the only public speaking training I ever had was 4-H. I was an ambassador in 4-H when I was in college. I was in 4-H until they threw me out and



said you're too old to be in 4-H anymore. You can't do this anymore. But I did an awful lot of public speaking in 4-H and, fortunately, did real well and learned how to do demonstrations and come up with creative ideas for that sort of thing. In fact, when I went to K-State, everybody has to take a 3- hour class in oral communications. I found out that they had a quiz out in that and I went and they would let you draw out of a hat and you'd get three topics and then you could narrow it down to one of those three that you wanted to give a speech on. I think they give you an hour to sit down and prepare a speech and I did that and got a B and said that's good enough. I don't have to go to class all session, or all semester.

Q: Based on 4-H?

A: That's the only place I've ever had that experience.

Q: That's great. You are the first one that has mentioned 4-H.

A: I absolutely would not trade that background for anything. And I was club president. I worked from being reporter, and you learned how to write things. That was real helpful when it came to my newsletters I was writing. In fact, I was on the House floor one day--I can't remember what representative it was, it was a Democrat--came over and handed me something that he had found in an old 4-H Journal. I had sent it in to the State 4-H journal and it was written by Janie Aylward, reporter for the 'Willing Workers 4-H Club.' It was an article that I had written probably 15 or 20 years ago.

Q: He had found it in his research?

A: Somewhere he had come across this old 4-H Journal and cut it out and I think it was something I'd written maybe in 1972 or '71. But, you know, I learned about leadership and I got to be on county 4-H council and that's good training.

Q: You lived in Topeka just during the session? You didn't try to commute back and forth?

A: No, it's too far from Salina.

Q: You said you went back once to work the fields or plant?

A: That's since I have been on the Board of Tax Appeals. When I was in the legislature, that was my other job. I'd get up every morning and put my jeans and boots on and go out to the farm and do whatever it was. The cattle are my favorite part. You know, you have to do the other stuff.

Q: I was going to ask you a little bit more about what helped, hindered, or shaped this ability. Now you've mentioned 4-H. Can you think of anything within your family? You talk a lot



about your father in his community service. Do you think there was anything there that influenced you that you haven't mentioned maybe?

A: I had so much support in my family for anything that I wanted to do. I always knew with my parents whatever I decided to do was okay with them. But they are the kind of parents that you wanted to please. I'd do things because I wanted them to be happy about things that I did. I think that's reflected in my brother and sister, too. My father was real involved in all kinds of stuff. They were the kind of family that, if it required some extra effort on their part.... An example is the school bus for the public school drove right by our house. My mother would put us in the car and drive us to parochial school every day. I mean, they always made that extra effort to do what they thought needed to be done for you. I can never think of a thing that I got involved in or that I volunteered my mother for, and I was great at volunteering my mother for things, that they'd say no to. I think just the overall support. I really grew up following my father around. In fact, they laugh at me up here because I walk so fast. They say, 'well, Janie we can always tell this was you coming down the hallway because you walk so fast.' I was so thrilled when they carpeted this and you couldn't hear me walk. But I really grew up kind of following my dad around and my dad is a perfectionist. Absolute, positive perfectionist. I think I learned a lot of that from him, although you couldn't tell it from looking at my desk right now. We are very thorough in everything that we do and if we decide, we're going to do it to the very best of our ability and that's a trait that I learned from my father and my mother.

Q: Do you think your service in the legislature affected or changed you in any way or the way people treat you or...? I'm sure twelve years, at your age and everything, that must have been very influential.

A: It definitely was. In fact, for me it's hard to tell you how it affected me because that is how my adult life has always been. I don't know what adult life not being in the legislature would have been like because I didn't live it. I tumbled straight out of college into this, so I know that there's no question that it did. Otherwise, I don't know where I'd be today. Who knows? I could be off in some other city working somewhere. I might be out on the farm running a bigger cowherd. There is no question but that my farming interest didn't grow more because of my involvement in the legislature but, you know, it's nice to go home to Salina and walk down the street and every other person you see will say, hi Janie. You know everybody. I do have to say when I made the transition from the legislature to the Board of Tax appeals...and I mean this is a very responsible position, not as visible. And I'm living year round in a town where you



don't know everybody. It was a real transition for me because I was so accustomed to being Representative Janie Aylward. I really don't think I ever got arrogant about that. I don't think there's any reason to because you are at the mercy of all those people out there all the time. But there's a certain stigma that's attached to that and all of a sudden you turn around one day and you are not. You go to the grocery store and nobody knows you. In fact, I griped about all the multitudes of phone calls during reappraisal because I would go out and work on the farm 12 hours and come home and crawl in the shower about 9:00 and I'd look over at the answering machine and the light would be flashing 20 times, and I'd think, how can I ever do all this? But when I made the transition and moved up here and discovered I'm in a quasi-judicial position, I can't talk to people about their cases. You know, I have to have our attorneys talk to people about their cases because I'm making the judgments. And all of a sudden, I started going home at night and I would go to the store and I wouldn't know anybody and I'd walk in and not a call had come in on the answering machine and it really was a switch for me. You know, now I am getting to know people. And, frankly, you know, in the last couple of weeks the legislature is back down so I am getting to see lots of old friends now. But I'm beginning to learn what life is like for a real person.

Q: So instead of it affecting you, your change back has affected you probably more than...it was more of an adjustment than going into the legislature?

A: Honestly, when I went in I was like a lot of people of a lot of ages who get elected to the legislature. You're elected and you say, now what do I do? I just kind of grew up in that.

Q: How do you think being in the legislature affected your family?

A: I think it had a pretty major impact on my family. Like I say, they had been involved in the farming community around there and lots of things, so they knew people throughout the community. I remember my mother making the comment several years ago that she had made the transition from being Norma Aylward to being Janie Aylward's mother. Everywhere she went they said, 'Oh, you're Janie Aylward's mother?' So I think that had an impact on them. It had a major impact on my brother because he met his wife through me. It was because I had met her mother through Republican politics. So I think that...and I know it had a big impact on mine. Now my sister's son, my nephew, has decided he wants to be a tax attorney. I think that may have something to do with what I'm doing now. So, it's put my family more in the spotlight than they would have been.



Q: And there is no one in your family that you know of that was in the House or Senate before you?

A: Only that uncle that I mentioned earlier in this interview. But then the other impact that it had, of course, when I came on the board I had to resign. I'd been through both sessions but you know there was an unexpired term to be filled. So now my father's been the State Representative. The precinct committee people elected him to fulfill my unexpired term.

Q: Oh, I didn't know that.

A: So now my father is a former State Representative. I really worked on him to run for that seat. I just know he would have been elected had he run.

Q: And he didn't run.

A: No. We have cows and our heifers will start calving any day now, so he decided that he needed to stay and do that. It had that impact. I know I could have never gotten elected without my family and my father and mother's reputation.

Q: What was your uncle's name?

A: Joe Crowther. He was there just a very short time and it was when I was either a very small child or before I was born.

Q: So you had no real close contact with him?

A: No, I talked to him a few times. They live in Newport Beach, California, and I will call and he'll reminisce about the legislature with me.

Q: Do you think that during these twelve years would be important to measure women being in the legislature and the expectations that there'll be more women and more women? Do you think that has changed and why? Why have women gotten into the legislature, been elected? Can you put your finger on anything that happened?

A: I think there are a variety of reasons and some are good reasons. Some are kind of sad reasons. A big piece of it is the fact that more women are getting out and doing more and it's accepted for them to do more. I think that's a pretty obvious reason. You know, women are involved in more local government kinds of things and they tend to move their way. They've sort of made the transition from being the cookie bakers, bring the refreshments, to being the ones making the policy decisions. And the general public is more amenable to women making policy decisions and, in fact, over half the voting population are of the female gender. So they're going to elect more women. I think those are all good, solid,



substantial reasons for having more women. As I mentioned earlier, I was on the National Conference of State Legislatures and had an opportunity to attend a lot of national meetings and talk to other men and women legislators from other states. Kansas, the last time I saw the statistics, I think ranked about 14th in the percentage of women in the legislature. We were very high in our percentage. And, really, in analyzing that I think some of the bad reasons in why that's occurred is because, particularly through the new Federalism, the states have been handed back so much responsibility, the legislature is full-time. There's no question about the fact that you've got a full-time job there. But it doesn't pay much. So you tend to get retired people running, where it's a second income or you get the second income earner in the household running because it is a second income. It is not a bad second income. It just reached the point where you don't have the candidates out there who are the primary breadwinner because they can't take the time away from their business to do it.

Q: Interesting.

A: And women can take the time away a little better. The public's beginning to accept women with younger children coming up here. They don't believe that that's a desertion issue like they would have ten years ago. I think that really is one of the reasons. When you look at the national numbers, and you can analyze this yourself, the states that consider their legislatures full-time, like California, don't have as high a percentage of women, that I've seen. The states that have legislatures that meet as long as we do.... Because people think we come down here for 90 days. That is so untrue. I spent half of my time when we were out of session, without question, with legislative stuff. You know, attending meetings or answering mail or phone calls. Without question, I'd spend 4 to 5 hours a day doing that when we weren't in session. Not all legislators have to do that in my district. I felt like I needed to, but I think a lot of it is simply that unless the primary bread winner is in a unique kind of job where in one way or another it would help their reputation to be a legislator, or in such a high managerial position that they can get away and turn it over to somebody else while they are gone and have other people take care of their mail, they simply can't afford to do it anymore. I think if you look at the demographics of the candidates, it shows. Well, and more women are also running because more women are getting recruited because you can take --and I don't know why society votes this way--but you can take a 50-year-old man and pit a 35-year-old woman against him and nine times of ten she's going to win. Parties recruit candidates who will win and that's who they recruit.

Q: Why they win is an interesting issue, too.



A: I don't understand, aside from the fact that if you take a 50-year-old man, he's probably the primary bread winner and he can't take the time away from work to put on the kind of campaign as a 40-year-old woman who is a homemaker who for a short term decides maybe the kids can spend a little more time at the babysitter. I don't know whether there are other reasons than that. I am sure that there are. But if you look at the demographics over there now, you've got semi-retired people, you've got lots of women, you've got a few primary bread winner kind of men, who in one way or another it's beneficial to the business to be there, and then you've got some real young people like I was when I came in.

Q: Were you the youngest at that point?

A: Well, you know, I think and I haven't ever researched it, but I was told at one time that I was the youngest woman that's ever been elected in Kansas. I don't know that for a fact. I would have been the youngest person to come in except the year I was elected a young man from Wichita was elected that was 19 years old. I don't think anyone as young as he or I have been elected since then, but it just so happened we both came in that year.

Q: Was that the year we changed the voting age?

A: No, because I'd voted in an election before that and otherwise I wouldn't have been able to vote before that. So, it would have been a couple years after that. But he ran and I think got real frustrated with the process. I don't know what all his reasons were. He didn't ever run again. He just ran that one time.

Q: That is probably why I can't even remember who it was.

A: John Sullivan. As I understand it, he's an FBI agent in Washington, D.C., now. But I think he got married and had a family to take care of and decided it really would be a good decision to go on.

Q: At 19, he was just out of high school.

A: Or in college.

Q: Is there anything I haven't asked you about that you would like to talk about? I always try to end with this because maybe I didn't ask the right questions to fit your situation.

A: I don't know, Barbara. We've discussed so much. When you ask me questions about the legislature, it's not asking me about a piece in my life, it's really asking me about my life as I remember it. My life would be so totally different if I had not ever been there. Who knows, I may have progressed a great deal more in my career and be off somewhere in corporatedom if



I hadn't done it, but on the flip side it's an experience that I would never trade for anything in the world. Some days I get a little melancholy about it and start missing it, and I think well, Heaven's to Betsy, Janie, you are 34 years old. Nobody says you can't go back. You could go back 20 years from now. And I might. Or sooner. Who knows? But it would be fun to go back at some point, knowing what I know and move into leadership in legislature and that may be a goal that I set. And those are always options that are open. The fact is I love politics. I love government. I love good government. I get tired of the flailing. I have been disappointed and disenchanted with the success of negative campaigns in the last few years. But you know, all in all, it is an experience I wouldn't trade for anything in the world.