

Interview with Jerry Karr, by Janice Huston, May 11, 2017

Kansas Oral History Project, Inc.

*[This interview was reviewed by Dr. Ed Flentje and used with the interviewer's permission.]*

May 11, 2017, This is Janice Huston's interview with Jerry Karr, former Senate minority leader representing the Kansas 17<sup>th</sup> District from 1981-1998.

JH: Jerry, could you tell us something about your experiences in Sierra Leone prior to your work in the Kansas Senate. Especially, did the university reach out to the country, or did the country reach out to the university? How did this all come about?

JK: The African universities, or the established universities in Africa in the other less developed countries was initiated by the countries and the US AID. In Kansas's case we had ??

In Sierra Leone this is as new country that came into, all these newly independent countries particularly in Africa were trying to figure out how to train their future workforce, and one of the institutions that was involved that obtained a USA contract was the University of Illinois. Theirs was to develop an agriculture training college and a science teaching component for future science teachers in west Africa. The effort was a joint effort sponsored partly by the university and partly by USAID which I was under contract for and other countries. We had a number of other countries participating in this including soil scientists from Holland, CUSO volunteers from Canada, Peace Corps volunteers from the US that were not part of the USAID. The University of Illinois had a contract that started in the early '60s, and basically they had identified a British agriculture station in the central part of this small country about the size of 1/3 the size of the state Kansas. They had not found a person to bring along the economics portion of the curriculum. They were in their third year. I was interviewing at the University of Illinois at that point for the line position in Champagne, Urbana. I had been working with African students at Southern Illinois and had been looking at some overseas opportunities. They said , "Well, wait a minute, we've got a job we haven't been able to fill."

That led us from a position working for Central Missouri State suddenly to a position with the University of Illinois as a contract staff member. Initially a two-year assignment. We were to go and start their program work in the fall when it started. However, they had problems. They couldn't find a replacement for the economist that they had with the international monetary fund from the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta. He hadn't been able to go home on leave. So, the provision was that the country said, "Well, if you'll send someone in July, not September, to replace this fellow so he can go home on leave, we'll house him, and he'll fill in at the central bank." We ended going at that point to Sierra Leone, to Freetown, the capital city and staying there for a couple of months prior to going upcountry to the agriculture college. But it was not a program that was initiated under the USAID programs.

JH: What does AID stand for.

JK: Agriculture...USAID programs. They're still in existence. At that point we were in the middle of a Nigerian civil war. The University of Michigan had staff persons that had to be evacuated out and we had two or three agricultural staff members that joined our staff that had been working in Nigeria, one in science education and one was a ? We had other contract people come from different schools to work. There were types of contracts with the governments. The government would try to plant someone in math. They would advertise in New York. One came in from Massachusetts to teach math. An Irish priest was there who taught chemistry who had been a missionary there for a long time, so he taught chemistry. A very diverse group. At one point we had 27 different nationalities in teaching the student body of this little agriculture school of about 350 students. We were isolated in the sense that we were 130 miles from the capitol city. NO phones that worked. None of the communications, although because we were USAID, we had radio contract directly with the embassy. We had a great experience from the standpoint of not being concerned but being able to learn all about everything from Sri Lanka to the soils man from Holland, to the individuals who, a Nigerian who had married a ? who then go back to Nigeria and was working there. So, we had a very interesting combination of faculty and the students because we had a ? education program teaching a local area agriculture based countries sending students to this college.

JH: Was there ever concern about spill-over from Nigeria? From the Nigerian war.

JK: No. Africa was so big. You would probably have more worry about it in Kansas. Most Kansans have no idea that Africa was actually more than one country. That is a sad thing. We would come back and most people didn't know that there was a – Sierra Leone, where's that? They didn't know that there were lines that were based on colonial history and wars. It's very hard for Americans. Americans do a very poor job of understanding the geography of the world. We're lucky if we know...

JH: I love it.

JK: I do too. And of course, our granddaughter does too, now. She's traveling.

JH: All of your granddaughters. Bob's granddaughters.

JK: Bob's, Marion's. On and on and on. We have so many on the road right now. In Japan; Brad's daughter just got back from Nepal.

JH: Brad's daughter.

JK: It's not just... We have a nephew in Mexico.

JH: The time that you were in Sierra Leone, did you have any idea or were you beginning to think that you might like to become involved in public service when you got back to the United States?

JK: I don't work that way. Basically, I always think that there are going to be a lot of opportunities, most of them you do not know what they're going to be. My philosophy has been if you're willing to consider and think about other things, a great opportunity may occur. It occurred to us after my service in the Army and college. We ended up in Illinois. I'd never even heard of the school. We ended up there because we were open to opportunities. So political involvement...we saw that in the 1960 election when we were in Sierra Leone, the provincial election. We were pretty much just standing around looking at the project not really involved in it. There's no linkage at all between...no direct linkage.

JH: So how about Sierra Leone? Have you ever thought of going back there?

JK: I've been back there. After I completed two years, we extended a third year. And then we came back.

JH: This would have been 1968-1969.

JK: 1968-'69. I worked on graduate degrees to finish with a research student I had worked with. A few years later with the World Bank, I was on a task force with the World Bank, so I've been back. We've kept an active involvement with the volunteers who continued to be in Africa. We continued to have linkage.

JH: Does the University of Illinois still have that relationship with Sierra Leone?

JK: No. Again, your interest in geography – you should also be interested in what's happened.

JH: I know there have been all kinds of civil war in Sierra Leone.

JK: We were there, I went back with the bank. We set up a 5-year plan. Then war evolved in Liberia. It spilled over, primarily over diamonds. This movie is actually what was going on in Sierra Leone to some extent while we were there. There was a 10-year war that literally destroyed some of the infrastructure, the college. We have worked with some of the Sierra Leone Peace Corps volunteers and have been involved. We went in the past year to another reunion. We are continuing to follow the progress there. It has been slow and painful because of ...

JH: Were there things that you wanted to talk about in the early '70s before you returned to Kansas.

JK: We had another enlightening experience. I was in a major budget problem when I got back. Temporary staff instead of contract staff could not continue, so I got the opportunity in 1972. A situation evolved with a Quaker College which I knew nothing about Quakers. We had the opportunity to join that for a large agricultural farming program and a kind of floundering academic program in a liberal arts college in general agriculture. We went to Wilmington and brought one of the staff members who had been working with us in Sierra Leone, a retired ag. education person, who was a crops person, and so we brought some of our Africa roots along with us to Ohio. We had really a, from a religious experience, we learned a lot about the Peace churches. Even though we had been involved with the Church of the Brethren for a short period when we lived in Warrensburg, but we really didn't understand a lot of the history and tradition, particularly with the Quakers. That was a really positive experience. It gave Sharon also an opportunity to get some field work done in her field. She just loved being on the edge of the farm, from the standpoint of, particularly Kevin. Suddenly, he was right in the middle where he could farm from his back door. And we had a great staff. We were a school that was kind of formed in the format of the Land of the Ozarks school or Berea College in Kentucky. Basically, we were called blue-collar Quakers. Most of our students had to work. Erlin, the white-collar school in Indiana just across the border, basically they were all going to be preachers, and all had a lot of money. Our students worked on the farms and we also had initially a very complicated plan for our students to work to work at Erlin Agri-bits. They made agri-bits there, and the students could work at nighttime.<sup>1</sup>

JH: What's that called?

JK: Erlin Agri-bits. It's a national company. You know, like drill bits. So, we historically had that opportunity. We had a student body that came from very traditional Quaker experiences in Pennsylvania, and then we had this work experience. I had a staff. One year I had 50-some students working for me, part-time, filling in vacations. I counted the number of people I had working on farms for the horse program, the dairy program. We had a very complicated, very good farming country. I managed that and then was head of the department of agriculture.

JH: And that was for how long?

JK: And during that period of time, I did a return to Sierra Leone with the World Bank. I also did a return to England because we were writing a book with two guys from ? on Sierra Leone agriculture. So, I spent a month or more between Oxford and ? working on that project.

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<sup>1</sup> This may be Earlham College, an historically Quaker school, and their sustainable Agriculture program in Richmond Indiana.

JH: Does that take us up to your move to Americus?

JK: At the end of '76, we had been considering options to be closer to the grandparents for our kids. An opportunity came up, actually two different staff positions came open, one in counseling and one in psychology. Sharon went in to interview in two different positions and ended up taking the psychology position. We bought this farm, and the kids were thrilled to death, so they could suddenly be back where they were close to family. We had been away from family, out of state for about 15 years.

JH: And Kelly would be 10 and Kevin would be ?

JK: He was an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. It was not an easy time for kids at that age because they were newbies. Even in small school, they were newbies. But they did pretty well.

JH: Now let's go to your notes. Your first campaign.

JK: First campaign was in 1980, and shortly after we moved, the agriculture economy was having major problems. A new movement started called the agriculture movement which was to try to get all the farm groups together to address the crisis in the agriculture area in the late '70s. Interest rates were super high; crop prices were low. We set up a local office here in Emporia involving different farm organizations. There were tractorcades that came through. Then we serviced the tractorcades that came through out at the Lyon County fairgrounds. We put together a bus caravan to go into Washington, D.C. I went on that, and we had our first big lobbying effort. I had been to Washington, D.C. before when I was in the Army, but not in this capacity. We had a great time until we got about halfway home when we hit the biggest snowstorm that had ever hit Indiana. Our bus happened to be close to Indianapolis and we were able to get to a hotel because some farm group had scheduled a big convention there. It was all cancelled, so suddenly we were there and locked in for three days. The Indianapolis Star. We had a number of people from Lyon County and from the Wichita area and others were on that bus. It was panic city as so how some people, particularly the teenagers, reacted because they couldn't get home. We had adults who were equally as bad. We had a traveling group that was going to Chicago that was putting on plays. So they put on a play for us. I remember Kenny DeDonder and Art Shepherd, these were some of the people from Lyon County, the staff at the hotel. Everybody was locked in, including them, and they weren't getting any sleep, so we started bussing tables. Then we got bored with that and went down and folded laundry, and we had the play. Finally, the airport opened up, so all the teenagers ran down and called their parents, particularly those from around Wichita. "We've got to have plane tickets." So, they flew, and of course, the roads opened up too. We went by the airport in Kansas City and they were just landing. We were home before they ever got home.

That was kind of a political inspiration in the sense that we were dealing with national issues. I had been involved with a couple of political races. John Carlin had been ?? [elected] about the time I returned. John Carlin, later Governor. I had visited with him a few times in Topeka. Bill Roy, this was the first time we saw a real ugly campaign, ran against Bob Dole. And that's the first time I ever heard of it where there were church pamphlets, about Roy as a doctor. There were wedge issues that came in, the abortion issue. It was the first time I had seen the abortion issue. And it was nasty. Roy barely lost. I hadn't been involved in any political, real activity. I knew that in the case of the local state senate the only person who had run against Crofoot [E.C. Crofoot] who basically got an appointment was Rich Porter's mother. Resigned from the seat. It was a fluke that he got the job. He had one challenge from Ivan White who later was part of the Kansas Farmers' Union. He lived in Clements which is a little tiny town in Chase County. So, he didn't have much base. I got more encouragement to run from people in Chase County, but the local county chairman was just trying to fill seats, I think. I ended up suddenly on the ballot.

JH: What was that like campaigning for your first time?

JK: Oh, we had...our daughter particularly, Kelly just loved it. Kevin loved farming, so that was second to him. We got to visit all these little towns that had all these ethnic historical backgrounds: Czech histories, Pilsen, interesting background, a little tiny Catholic town, Hillsboro, with all the Mennonites, as well as the Russians and Welsh in Osage County, so it was kind of a different, well it was different but in a sense it was like what we'd been doing in graduate school where we'd been working with international students, and overseas. Suddenly we were working with all these people who still spoke with German accents.

JH: Couldn't do that much anymore.

JK: They still do, if you go out there, if you go to Ramona they still do. We got into looking at little towns in depth that we had never heard of before. We started momentum in our campaign. It grew, and Crofoot didn't do much. The interesting part of the campaign was that we had a group in Emporia that had taken over the former College of Emporia, called the Way College. They had fixed it up. The infrastructure had been really gone to pieces for a while. So, I went out there. Because they all voted. Not all of my advisors recommended that I go there. But I went there anyway. All of the students were in a great big lunchroom on two floors. I had ten minutes to give my pitch. I didn't think it made much difference. But they knew my name.

JH: Name recognition.

JK: Then I went back because I had a final card that I was handing out as a neighborhood card. I thought I should give these out to the folks at the Way College. I went to see the PR man.

"Can I hand out this final card? This is what other voters are getting." Well, he said, you can't do it here on campus. "How many are going to vote here?" He told me a large number. I'll take care of it, he said. He was big into fishing and hunting, and he was telling me all about his fishing and hunting experiences. Here were my cards stacked there. I walked out of there and I thought that bunch of cards was thrown away. Come election night, I actually won that precinct. It included some other voters from around St. Marks. I had some very strong neighborhood supporters. I won that vote, but the key person to win that vote was the same person who had just been involved in the other campaign for Bill Roy. Dole gave a speech and declared that all the people at the Way College were a bunch of cults. He thought that's what they like to hear out here. Crofoot gets worried at the end. We had the final parade, the Homecoming Parade for Emporia State. So Crofoot decides to have Dole come in and give a big PR splash to help him and walk down the street with him. My conclusion was with Dole in town, they (the Way College people) are going to vote against Dole. And that's apparently what happened. That might have not been the case, but they may have voted for other reasons. They were very bright people, interesting people, but they were characters.

So, the first campaign came with a surprise in the sense that I won. I won big in Lyon County. I struggled in Marion County. The Mennonites were very difficult to find a linkage to. I did very well in Osage County. And broke even in Morris County. Chase County was not a big factor anyway. I had a chairman who was a Mormon street salesman. He knew everybody all over the Flint Hills. I was running against somebody from Cedar Point. Part of the campaigns are often to the point of... this was a new part of the district and Cedar Point is about as....

JH: Do you think it was to your advantage that your address was Emporia?

JK: Yes. From the standpoint of the vote, yes. And that may be wrong too.

The election turned out a surprise. It was the year Carter was being upset by Ronald Reagan. Statewide there were only two who upset incumbents. Myself and a lady from the Wichita area were the only Democrats who upset incumbent Republicans. The previous election after the Watergate thing, Democrats had won all over the place. Scandal in Washington sometimes affects Kansas. Nixon's shadows had almost elected a state senate. There were sixteen Democrats in the state senate.

What do we do when we get to Topeka? We're the minority of the minority. You're one of the two youngest, so we get the last office, the last of the pick of committees. But it's reality. So, I ended up on an agriculture committee, which was logical. They needed somebody, but no one liked banking and so I ended up as the ranking member on?? And a series of other minor assignments. So, I had a little extra time. So, I started attending, because I realized right away,

that the system operates on figuring out a budget because you've got to do that. I started briefing myself by attending budget meetings right away in my spare time, and that was very helpful.

Then I come up with my first bill which upset everybody.

JH: The first year you had a bill?

JK: Oh yeah, you can throw in bills any time. But the first year I threw in a bill that basically said something to this effect, that the Board of Regents which was then only addressing the six regents schools, should be in charge of post-secondary education, particularly the two-year schools. The Board of Regents was at that point only influencing and directing operations for the six regents schools; the two-year colleges were out in limbo. They were supposed to be under the Board of Education, but they really weren't. So, I came up with a bill. I throw it in, and my friends on the other side of the aisle laughed at me. Then finally they decided they would have a hearing. We'll give you 15 minutes in front of the Ways and Means Committee. After three hours of people coming in testifying for and against the bill, they decided to close it down. That bill never passed ...until about 18 years later. Now the Board of Regents is responsible for all post-secondary education.

So again, I threw in an idea, and like when we're going to Africa, you throw out your ideas and the culture wasn't ready, the timing wasn't ready, it just wasn't time yet to develop or understand. Maybe the timing I put it out wasn't good, but that was one of the first things I did.

JH: Sounds very successful to me.

JK: But it took 18 years. It didn't really pass until after I was leaving.

The second issue that I thought, because I was on the agriculture committee, Kansas had a jerry-rigged operation going. They had the Secretary of Agriculture who was not appointed by the Governor. In some other states it wasn't elected. In Kansas it was basically a person selected by one farm organization, Farm Bureau. They had drawn up some rules that said you had to have X number of members. I had become active in the Farmers' Union. They had no voice in selecting the Secretary of Agriculture. NFO, National Farmers' Organization – no voice in selecting the Secretary of Agriculture. The Governor had no voice. The Legislature had no voice. So here they were basically enforcing about 60 some laws and regulations, everything from gasoline pumps, and ice cream and inspection of restaurants, but there was no administrative control over them except Farm Bureau. I started looking at this and I wrote this amendment that said that here we have this large group, because they look at the numbers.



You had to have so many members in your county to be part of it. I looked at the number of members that were in the co-ops, particularly in the western part of the state, and they met the criteria. So, I introduced the bill that said they had to have some representation from the co-ops in the broad ag committee that selected the Secretary of Agriculture. And it passed.

JH: So, this was your first bill to pass.

JK: This was only the beginning of addressing a more complicated issue which later went on to a lawsuit of one-person-one vote. Here was a person that???? They basically threw out the Kansas law. Finally, my final Governor Bill Graves got to appoint the first Secretary of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture became ?? they were not nice. They were the only part of state government that was really disappointing as far as being run....Chemical division. It ended up some of the Farm Bureau resigning, and we had to authorize protection for the Secretary of Agriculture. It was ugly. When you get money involved... but that wasn't the case in any other part of state government. We went from just introducing a bill to get the coops on the board to a point where we finally had a lawsuit that meant the Secretary of Agriculture would be appointed by the Governor. It started in the '90s.

The next big farm issue that came out of the crisis of the...first, when serving on the banking committee right away as a ranking member... there was an immediate effort on the part of the large banks, particularly Oliver Hughes of Wichita, he wanted branch banking all over the state. And the small community bankers, including their outstanding lobbyist who was a banker from Phillipsburg. This is the kind of people we were coming into the banking ...such diabolical opposites. We went through a number of versions of that bill before it was finally resolved into the current banking laws. We also went through major bank failures every Thursday. Every Thursday morning the bank commissioner would come in to tell us which banks had closed overnight during the agriculture crisis during the mid-1980s. Land devalued, went from \$1,000 an acre down to \$500 an acre in just a few years. It was that period following 18% interest in farm loans. All that just accumulated. We had people losing farm ground. We had farms closing particularly in the western part of my district. And even the final big crisis when Tip Top Credit failed, which was a credit union that failed based out of Hillsboro, with branches in Salina, Ramona.

We saw a lot of stress. That stress evolved into an effort on the part of a number of people in the Senate, particularly Wint Winters from Lawrence who wrote in that we should set up a long-term planning committee and should get involved in Economic Development. And Eco-Devo became the by-word of the mid '80s. I happened to be on the tax committee at the time, and we set about writing what turned out to be a series of constitutional amendments that were some of them related to that, but they involved classification of property tax which still

exists, state lottery (these were all to be voted on), liquor by the drink, and parimutuel betting. All sins that were passed by the bitter voters of Kansas, not by the legislature. And the lottery money particularly was earmarked for economic development and to help pay for reappraisal which occurred shortly after that.

Unfortunately, people still ask me where did all that money go that was supposed to be for education. We voted for it because we were told it was supposed to go for education. It was never ever designed for that. There are people who still think that. Even as recently as two weeks ago somebody asked me about all that lottery money that was supposed to go into education. Some of it did go into technical education, justified as economic development, and some of it did not go there. The surplus of it went into the general fund. We put a cap on it, so that after we reached \$125 million or something, the rest went back into the general fund. So, it's been a supplemental tax, not exactly a fair tax because of who pays it.

JH: It's been shown to be very effective in other states. Is that why Kansas adopted these?

JK: People are looking for money. Yes, there was a heavy demand on the part of the citizens for lottery. All these items, classification was kind of a different version. It's a classification of property by types and it has been passed as legislation. But vacant lots, agricultural land, using the use-value formula and commercial properties.

JH: These had never been classified before?

JK: What had happened before was that all land, all property was evaluated by the county appraiser, and then the county appraiser was supposed to be fair and equal, whether it was a vacant lot or a Tyson plant, it was all valued equally and the mill levy applied. The classification basically said, we've got some land that we'd want to pay less, in effect, homeowners, so we get your \$100,000 house, and it's written into the amendment that 11 ½ % of it is used for the mill levy. That means instead of paying the mill levy times 100,000, it's mill levy times 11,500. If you had commercial property, and that was the sticky wicket. There was a 30% and utilities were about the same. And that made people unhappy. Suddenly commercial property was paying a little bit more, and homeowners were [paying less.] Basically the attempt was to get the home owners who were getting by, the high end home owners were getting by, by paying less because the appraisals weren't good. Complete reappraisal of all land in Kansas, and all homes and a lot of land was not even in some counties on the ? tax [rolls]. Think of the Katy railroad. What do you see? That land was sitting out in no-man's land. But somebody was farming it or somebody was building a house on it. If there was a building on it, it usually got taxed. But it was out in the middle of nowhere. And so we could find lots of property. This became the demise of the second governor I worked with: Mike Hayden. Because we had a

reappraisal, and all this frustration about my commercial property in Americus. The mayor in Americus John Bohm was a man who came to speak in Topeka. He had been a physical plant worker, and he was into photography. They had convinced him he should represent the people of Americus. He shows up in September. There was a big protest against the Governor, in the old Supreme Court room up on third floor. His aids told him to go hide. Here's Trump today. And he did, and he got unelected the next year.

JH: They were telling Hayden to disappear?

JK: Yes. In the meanwhile, here's John Bohm and all these guys traipsing up to the joint ag/ joint tax committees hearing all these complaints. Here's John Bohm coming in from Americus. He was testifying behind the city manager from Overland Park, who was an African American who was really slick, all dressed up, with charts, handouts. There was a guy in Americus who had a little computer business, named Olson, that came with John. So, I went back and talked with him because he was not going to speak. This guy Olson had written out whatever Bohm was going to say. I told him I would be sitting right there on the end. You just look at me and read the story to me. Bohm turned out to be the most powerful speaker because he was so real. He was such a contrast to the city manager from Overland Park, not that that was a poor presentation. But we were just trying to figure out how we were going to address this issue and see if it was going to work particularly in the post-classification...but John Bohm was there.

JH: So, there was a tradition of Bohms speaking in Topeka. Barbara did plenty of it.

JK: Well, Barbara did a lot of speaking, but I don't know if hers was as effective.

JH: So the Secretary of Agriculture was an issue that we talked about. The other was we got involved with Fred Kerr. Fred was the majority leader for quite a while, and chairman of the tax committee. Really a good legislator. We had problems with the corporate farm law. It had been written in the 1930's during the Depression, and it had been kind of a classic model, how you write to protect buyouts of farmland from large corporations. It hadn't addressed every kind of issue like what about the private college that someone donates some farmland to. What about livestock that is owned by corporations, feedlots? Obviously, there wasn't any feedlot business in the 1930's. Quite controversial at the time was the corporate hog issue. There was a big push by a company out of Kansas City that was wanting to promote corporate farming in southwestern Kansas. So there was a whole series of issues. Even had a fellow in Chase County, and he did get an amendment in, about corporate rabbits. And I saw him on a, he's about 95 years old, and he still talked about it because he had a bunch of buildings, and he got into poultry and he wanted to do rabbits. And he got his rabbit amendment on somehow. But we rewrote the corporate farm law that hadn't been touched since mid-30's. It was again a

committee effort with the agriculture and the tax people working together. That was a very satisfying one that needed to be updated, needed to be clarified, and it still exists in its current form.

Then suddenly on the side a bunch of issues that no one ever talks about or knows about evolves because you pass a law and then, I sat on a committee called Rules and Regs, the rules and regs are then propagated by the department, whether it's the Department of Health or the Department of Agriculture, as to how it will be effectively enforced. So I sat on this committee Rules and Regs. The department will write the rules and regs, they send them to the Attorney General who will see if they are legal, within the framework of the law and the constitution, and then they would generally go through the Secretary of State's office to see if they were semi- readable, and then they would come to the committee. It was a boring committee, to be honest, it was a boring committee, but every once in a while, there'd be these crazy things that would show up. Two or three of them showed up one year early in my tenure. One was the rules and regs about home-made iced cream. The Hays House in Council Grove promoted home-made ice cream, and they got shut down.

JH: I don't remember this.

JK: It was early in the '80s.

JH: So do they do it at all now?

JK: Oh yeah, because of the law. And Governor Carlin who was a dairy man at that point. He had been very popular in Council Grove. So he got hit up with it. So we introduced in the House and the Senate side a home-made ice cream bill. It sounds hokey, but basically it spells out exactly if you did serve and advertise home-made ice cream, what you had to do to make it safe. It all went around the eggs, salmonella, food safety. So we went into infinite detail on home-made ice cream, and it passed overwhelmingly once we got it cleared it up, they could serve home-made ice cream. They had to follow the rules.

And then the fish people showed up. They had found a regulation that they were having all kinds of trouble with. Algae in their ponds. In some states they permit the big-head carp. In Kansas the rules and regs do not permit them, still doesn't. So at their request, we brought that bill up as an agriculture/business. It never passed, but it did open up the whole aquaculture area. Fish culture was not even recognized as a farm enterprise, but we had these people who were growing fish, minor, compared to bigger agriculture, cattle and hogs, and so forth. But they were totally unrecognized, and we did pass an aquaculture bill but we didn't solve the big-head carp problem and it's still there. I became the aquaculture leader.

JH: How did they solve their algae?

JK: Part of it is aeration, and part of it is.

Occasionally, you end up with local issues that just overwhelm you. A couple of them were really easy. Plymouth. The town of Plymouth, and this was a fall-out from the tax area. The whole town of Plymouth was not on the tax rolls. It was an abandoned town. It's where my mother used to teach school in the west part of the county. So Wint (Phil?) Winter put together a bill to help, he was the County Counselor. How do we get this area back on the property rolls? How do we address it? But we had to pass it via legislation. So we had the Plymouth bill.

And then we had an explosion in Reading. The fire district was organized under an obscure law called the Benefit Fire Districts.

JH: Were all fire districts organized this way?

JK: three in the state. But Reading was organized that way. The Benefit District's governing group had been the local high school school board, designated by law. That worked good until unification, so suddenly instead of having three members, you suddenly had only two people elected from Reading who could suddenly set up bonds and build fire stations, and they did. And they had fistfights on the streets of Reading, sadly, and there were some court cases that went all the way to Wichita on this. We had rather interesting rallies in the big gymnasium in Reading, and we heard all the reasons why we needed to solve it. It's a district that overlays two counties, and right now if you live in the Reading area, come election time you vote on a fire ? based on the benefit districts. The one that was most troublesome I ended up having to shepherd that through, and draw up the agreement in cooperation between Osage and Lyon Counties the kind of guidelines to elect a fire council that would then set forth to raise money in bonds and so forth. While other fire district, like in Americus, basically the buildings are...Well, it's even messier right now because it's got the township and the town, and the township owns the building, and the town owns the fire trucks, and it's been a long fight. We're in a district out here that is part of the traditional fire districts that are under the county commissioners. There are all of these little fire districts, and one fellow who worked on one, he later was commissioner of agriculture, George Teagarden, his specialty is rural cemeteries. What happens to rural cemeteries? They get abandoned. And who takes care of them, and who is responsible? You get these little side issues that are important to some people. They're very important to Reading, the fire district, but they're not important to other people.

So you have some of these little issues that I call ice cream issues, or car issues, or even babysitting issues. As presented, it was Irving Niles. I don't know if you ever met him or not.

Our representative who represented Fremont Township and Reading. Parents who worked at Hallmark had a habit of leaving their kids with a lady in north part of Osage County. The county nurse was responsible for these kinds of childcare facilities that were not licensed. We had interesting Sunday meetings in Osage City with parents crying, daycare people crying, television people from WIBW there filming. This was not ever involved in an actual law, but it was all part of the constituent effort to try to solve a problem of childcare, particularly in Osage City, which was not very effective. So you get into some of these slight issues, that are very important to some people.

Now are you ready for big issues? I'll call the first real big one which I had when I had just gone in as minority leader. We had just finished the 1990 census. This meant we had to redistrict [reapportion districts for] the House of Representatives, the State Senate. In Congress we were losing a congressman, going from five to four, and of course, we had to redistrict the 10 offices of the Board of Education. Traditionally, the House would sit down and hash out their districts, and the Senate would do the same, but we had such a population move in that census. So we were making progress, but we were at a point that we had five congressmen. The congressman from southeast Kansas, Robert Whitaker, had agreed he wouldn't run. So we didn't have an incumbent, but we still had, I had two Democrats, Slattery and Glickman, with their aids in my office all the time. We had people from the Kansas City area. How do you split the state up into four districts and come up equal and stay as much as you can out of the political disasters? And it was fascinating. People came up with all kinds of maps. Ron Svaty, you may have heard Josh's name, Secretary of Agriculture. Ron was later a judge, attorney out in Ellsworth County. He came up with the river map. Three districts should go from east all the way to the Colorado line. He had the population perfect. He had the Kansas City area, Wyandotte, Kansas all the way to St. Francis in one district. He had Johnson County, errr, anyway he picked that area. Wichita... He had four ribbons that allowed that every congressman would have to represent rural and urban. Theoretically, it was possible. Of course, it went down, but there were some interesting maps.

Our biggest challenge at that point was that there were certain people that did not want Chase County. What was going on in Chase County? A government park. We'd worked with [Senator] Kassebaum to come up with a little simple 160 acre deal. And so he didn't want anything in Chase County. I had Jim Slattery who was trying to continue to represent in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district all military: Fort Riley, Fort Leavenworth, and of course, Pittsburg had to be put in there, too. That was his criteria. And then you had this sprawling 1<sup>st</sup> district which had lost population everywhere except in southwest Kansas. They were in this mess. The 1st district was moving east. It was a very different one to do because of the congressional things. The state maps, we did finally work them out. I had a good relationship with Bud Burke, the

president, and we had two very strong computer experts, and it worked out, so we did get the redistricting done so we would be ready for elections in 1992. And every time we do this...the last time they couldn't even do it. This was the ironic thing. We eventually did find a way to do it. But the last time they had to give up and had to turn it over and let the courts. It was very time consuming. I had one person fulltime working on maps for almost all session. He was good. He was also good on veterans' affairs.

While we were working on this, the school finance thing collapsed. We were allocating money to schools based on an old formula from the '80s that depended on a certain amount of federal income tax going back to the school district. Obviously, a very rich county like Johnson County had rebates coming back on that, and we had certain differences in the evaluation of property because Wolf Creek and all the property evaluation had just been completed in the late '80s. The school finance formula wouldn't work. We had just been coasting for a couple years. We started with this school finance of '92 over in the House because we knew that was going be most difficult thing, and the Governor's office (Gov. Finney –very cooperative). They got together a plan and sent it to the Senate, and we voted it down. We voted down the House bill 18 times. We had looked at 18 different runs on it. Part of it, Johnson County wanted more local option. Wolf Creek, Coffey County didn't want to share any money with any other county even though taxpayers were all out somewhere else. Southwest Kansas because of natural gas didn't want to share any money. So we came up with a formula that resulted in a uniform equal tax that was then redistributed based on student needs, size of district, and at-risk students. With the 4 of us working, Fred Kerr's team, my team working together in the veto session, it finally passed. Once we got that passed, it went over to the House, and with minor adjustments, the Governor signed off on it. We were able to put one that passed mustard, it was challenged in the Courts, and it passed the Court to money in at the last.

Something new happened, but in '92. '90 with redistricting and census, and reappraisal set us up for these two big issues. Again it was one that didn't seem to be of any interest to most of my constituents.

Next was an interesting issue that evolved in the early '90s. We were having major fights on the worker compensation law; in effect, for some people it was their health care program if they got hurt. It came to the state as one of those issues that you have to put together. It was a fight between the trial attorneys and the insurance companies. We had an enhanced joint committee meeting three days and nights straight before we finally hammered it out. Sawyer was the minority leader in the House, and I was the minority leader in the Senate. Our friends in the majority party got tired and went home at midnight, but we stayed because there were some people there that we wanted to keep working. If we were there, they would, and they

did. They finally found a good way to answer the question of who quits and who gets fired. There were a lot of other complicated questions. The workers' comp issue was one in which although I was not directly involved in writing it, I was directly involved in getting the task done.

A third issue that I thought was kind of an interesting one was that early in the '90s, we had a consensus revenue estimate come out early in April and they downgraded the potential revenue, so the budget had been passed and sent to Gov. Finney and suddenly it looked like next year we were going to be \$50 million short. Disaster! \$50 million! Nothing like today! I was sitting in the House with 13 votes and Finney was the Governor, and Barkis was the Speaker of the House, so the thing was thrown to him to come up with "How do you come up with budget adjustments, enhancement of revenue and so forth?" This is how I was very proud of the group. We convened, I, as the minority leader, sat in on it, but it was a House issue. George Teagarden, who later became animal commissioner, was head of Ways and Means, Kathleen Sebelius, chairman in charge of fed and state, Joan Wagnon, she was chairman of the tax committee, and there were three or four others. We sat down with Barkis, knowing that if he couldn't keep all of his members in line, we couldn't pass it. But shortly (this was about 4:00 in the afternoon) after midnight we came up with a plan, a workable budget adjustment package. He got it past the House by one vote. Of course, all the Republicans voted against it cause it was Barkis's plan. So I go to Bud Burke, the president of the Senate. I said, "Bud, I helped them develop it, but don't have 21 votes." He said, "I know you don't. Here's what I'm going to do. This Barkis plan is going to be announced today and they're going to pass, and I'll release a press release that this is the worst plan, that we're tearing into whatever they're going to take the money away from. It was a bad plan." I said, "OK then what will we do?"

"In committee, bring it to the floor," and I said, "I can't even count on all of my members voting." He says, "You get half of your people and I'll get half of mine." In other words, people worked together. We knew we had to do it; he knew we had to do it. He let Barkis take the full blunt of the first vote, and then we got the Senate. It's time to move on. We moved on, the Governor signed it, we walked away. Adjourned.

JH: We have a different kind of Governor today.

JK: Well, there were different kinds of governors. I worked with four governors. They were all very different. They were all very good governors: from Carlin to Finney to Graves. They were all very good, and they all had very good staff, qualified staff, or they were very willing to play their roll. They didn't micromanage the maps as the current governor likes to do. The maps for reapportionment and things like that. The other governors generally stayed out of it because it didn't make any sense. They were four very different governors with very different agendas. Graves was laid back, but he had great people working with him. So it worked out. We could



come up with a compromise and I could then take it over to the Senate, knowing I didn't have enough votes to do anything, but I could get a majority, because we knew we needed to do it.

JH: They're having trouble figuring out that they need to do it now?

JK: They're having a real hard time. I don't know the...You know the income tax bill failed yesterday. They're immature and they're not working together. They're still not working together.

JH: Do you ever go up and try to see someone?

JK: I've been up some and then decided...you've got to be there on such a regular basis. Or you're not really able to do it. You either come in as a specialist in a very narrow area or you're there and the thing waves back and forth.. The tone of the legislature changed in the mid '90s. Some very ultraconservatives coming in who didn't even want to be there except for one issue or two issues.

JH: OK, where do we go now? I haven't even got off of page 1.

JK: Here's some interesting sidebars for campaigns. Not only as minority leader, not only are you responsible for coordinating committee assignments and so forth, but you're also responsible for recruiting new candidates, helping particularly new candidates run for office. I didn't get much help running for office, but I felt I should have. So I got 2 or 3 campaigns that I thought were just fascinating. They all happened to be in western Kansas. One, we had a young lady who showed up and the fellow had been Bob Frey. Janice McClure came home to live with her parents. Very talented. She came back to ask the county. Bob Frey had been in the House, the majority leader in the House. Then the Senator out there quit, and he was in the Senate on the tax committee. Very capable. Had a very ugly divorce and actually lived in Wichita. Minor detail. But here was a candidate who just filed. The district included Liberal and Dodge City. She was running, but we weren't helping her very much. But we were following her campaign. She was the first one to use cable TV in a rural setting. She's in Dodge City. She came up with this very interesting little TV on her desk and a telephone. The telephone is ringing and ringing and ringing. Then she comes on. I don't know if she ever even showed her face. Comes on with it saying, "If you vote for Janice McClure, I'll call back." The city had always been one of our Democrat-type towns. Liberal was totally un? Here's the first use of a little simple, "If you elect me, I'll answer the phone." She was very clear. He hadn't been out. He wasn't tending to his business. He was in Wichita, he'd had all this stuff that only the people in the district followed. People in Topeka didn't know all of this stuff. And we thought that campaign was going over. And she wins! So we suddenly had a second Democrat Senator. We had Democratic Senators all over western Kansas.

JH: How was she as a Senator?

JK: She was very good. She was very smart, brainy as could be. She could be ? It was a sharp learning curve, but she did a good job.

The next seat that was the most disappointing was we had always held a seat in seat in Hays, Hays, America. Hays is Democrat #1 out there, and we had always held that seat. We had Joe Norvell who had been our state senator probably since the '70s, and he decides he's quitting. So we recruit the county attorney from Ellis, Kansas, the most popular, you couldn't ask for a more gregarious guy, you know. Everyone loved him. He had won that county attorney job by massive margins. Trouble was his district, like the 17<sup>th</sup>, was large and spread out. Who were the Republicans going to run? They finally found a law partner out there named Jerry Moran. Here we had the most popular Democrat who could have won, should have won, but he decides, against advice, that all he had to do was just run, not campaign. In other words, you couldn't get him to go to the rural counties, to the county fair, to visit Antelope, to visit...But he was what appeared to be a very qualified attorney, qualified lawyer, but he felt since he had won his home county, that he could win. Moran started seeing him mowing his lawn on Saturday afternoons. So Moran's wife was really a promoter. You could lose by 35%, 40% but you can't lose by not campaigning. Moran was a good legislator and later served as the majority leader. But that was the seat that we lost, because you couldn't convince the candidate that you had to do the things you had to do.

JH: He doesn't sound like the kind of person who should have been so resistant.

JK: Well, but if you think that you've won so easily. Everyone knows me. Why won't everybody vote for me?

JH: He just hadn't learned the lessons of the rural communities.

JK: Well, he hadn't had to campaign outside of one county. He was lucky. Like in Lyon County, he wouldn't think it was worth it to go to Wabaunsee County, Chase, Marion, whatever, all these other counties.

The final one, one that I was real proud of was Janis Lee from Smith Center. She had tried to run for the House of Representatives, and really did a good job. She's up in northcentral Kansas, including Beloit, and she'd come back to the farm. Did contract work. She decided to run for the Senate, but hers was just to flip offices. She was running about the same time Jerry Moran was. She had every small community organized. If there was a newsletter like Americus, she had a month ahead of time the exact time she would be there at Casey's and at the bank. She would have some people there. They had coffee set up or something ahead of

time. She was very organized, and she continued that throughout her tenure. She served as assistant minority leader. She was an outstanding person out there. But when she quit the legislature, we lost that district. When we lose those rural districts, we can't win them back.

Three very different type candidates.

Then the last observation, Wyandotte County is always so interesting. Usually we'd had three state senators that would overlap. They were interesting different people. So I was supposed to go up there and participate in their big Democrat rally at the National Guard . I had been used to going to some of these things, but we didn't have much here; we'd have our picnic. But their place was crowded. Here was my senator #1 over here. He wouldn't speak to the people over here. They wouldn't speak to each other, but only to his group. Here's the Polish club over here who wouldn't speak to the Croatian club over here. All the ethnic elements that make up Wyandotte County are very unique. I had not seen this. I had seen this rural thing, but I'd never been in a room where they took politics so seriously as they do in Wyandotte County. And it was a predominantly Democrat county. They didn't always get along with each other. Some of this went clear back to the ethnic breakdown. So they had all of these different clubs who would support their own candidate, but they wouldn't support the other candidate. It was a surprise to me.

JH: What happened eventually?

JK: I went around and visited each one of these groups, just for my own edification. I wanted to know what was going on there. It was kind of a disappointing meeting because of the segmentation. I met with one of the Wyandotte guys who told me the stories about the different clubs, the political clubs that are so different in the rural areas.

JH: Did you lose that one?

JK: No, we did lose one seat there one year, but most of the time we could win those seats. We couldn't count on them voting for anything. They were always very hard. I had one senator whose initials were BD. He sold marking equipment for highways, signs. His whole mission to the legislature was that K-Dot was not using the right reflective tape. He had every kind of amendment that was reflective. Even an amendment to the agriculture bill had to do with reflective tape.

Of course, [Todd] Tiahrt from Wichita – everything had to do with guns when he was in the legislature. He'd introduce an amendment. If it was a tax bill, here was an amendment. This will save the whole thing having to do with guns.

JH: And he was in the legislature when you were there?

JK: Yeah. When he left, the rest of the caucus said, "Oh, thank goodness, he's out of here." But then what happened? Right after redistricting during that period of coalition using the three major wedge issues: guns, no taxes, abortion, he beat [U.S. Congressman Dan] Glickman. He really made no significant contributions to the legislature because he was so focused on the one issue.

May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017

JH: Let's begin with some of the challenges you had communicating with constituents.

JK: One of the challenges as a legislator is to try to keep constituents aware of the main issues or some specific issues that might be relevant to the area. So generally in the 1980s, we seldom, as a new legislator, could figure how we could get on TV. Social media was not relevant. We were not using email, Facebook or any of the things that are very important now. So how do you deal with radio stations, newspapers, and then find groups that would like to sponsor legislative reports? Because the Chamber of Commerce in Emporia had some concerns about my running in the first place, They were not into these kinds of things in the first place. They had never had legislative weekends or things of that nature. It was not a tradition in Emporia, but I found quickly that this was pretty much a tradition of all the rural counties. It wasn't hard to find a person, a Chamber of Commerce, a newspaper in Marion, Chase. It was a little more difficult to do things in Osage because we were dealing with only Osage City. So we had a pretty good turnout in those areas during the first time. As my district was changed, I added Junction City and Wabaunsee County. Wabaunsee County is a series of small communities that don't relate to each other because of Topeka, Manhattan, Emporia for jobs and shopping. So it was kind of difficult. But Junction City just loved legislative meetings. Junction City was split by two state senators and a state legislator or two, so we always had two or four legislators there. The meetings would turn out 100 people. It was just automatic. I found it was kind of a challenge because I found out they were trying to get more people to these legislative meetings than the city of Manhattan. So Jim Lowther and I were trying to find somebody in Emporia, somebody who would have something in Emporia. We set things up at the Rec. Center and nobody showed up. We set things up at the senior center and nobody showed up, well, maybe 6 people. You didn't even have the political people show up, well, maybe family. Finally, by the fourth year the First Baptist men were having a breakfast at the old Ramada Inn on the north side of town, and they said, "Why don't you guys come out and tell us what's going on in Topeka." That's what we were looking for, somebody that was interested. And they had full house, and so that was such a success that it encouraged others in the community. But we had really strong interesting meetings in Strong City at the Wagon

Wheel, really outspoken questions, very much on top of the issues, whether they had interpreted them right or not.

The newspapers, weekly newspapers, and the Council Grove paper which was not a weekly would print anything you sent because they needed material. You send out a weekly news column every week to all the newspapers including the Emporia Gazette. They are beginning to use them now, just the last couple of years, but they would never print them back then. Now once in a while they would call about a special issue and get a comment or something like that. The local radio station was more interested than the Gazette. So it was hard to find a way to communicate with Emporia constituents in that sense.

We would occasionally have such interesting surprises. I'm gonna tell you about two of them. Duane Goossen, who was later the director of budget and represented Chase County and part of Lyon County and the town of Florence which felt like they were the stepsister. No one ever came to Florence. They would go to Marion or Hillsboro, but they were so separate, there was a magic line. You couldn't go between the two places. So we went to Florence. There was a little restaurant out on the highway, the Town and Country Restaurant owned by Mrs. White. So Duane and I and the local banker who had the bank in Strong City and Florence said, "I'll get the coffee and take care of the things that needed to be taken care of." So we walk in and the place is packed with young women and older women. None of the people I had ever seen before. They had one issue on their minds. Duane and I expected to answer budget questions, ag questions. Well, the problem was that the federal law had been changed on how you report tips as income. Mrs. White, who was probably in her 80's, was bodily messed up with this. She was having a terrible time with it. We heard for over an hour, we listened to individual complaints. It was a good function. I went back to Topeka and was talking to a Republican friend, Bill Morris of Wichita. He was a former representative of the Kansas Restaurant Association. We told him Duane and I couldn't fix her problem. He said, "I know Mrs. White. I know what her problem is." I said, "Duane and I couldn't fix her problem of how she counted for tips." So Bill went there and sat down and explained how she was supposed to enter the tips and how she was not supposed to do it, and it was pretty successful.

The other rather interesting one was that I had a person call me who had Parkinson's disease. He was from Coffey County and he wanted to get into the KU Medical Center and get some sort of experimental operation that would help with Parkinson's. It was really experimental. I encouraged him and then I made one phone call. I didn't think it was going to go anywhere or that it would go anywhere, but it did. He got in. I go down to Burlington to the county courthouse and there's a fairly good-sized crowd. Here's this one older man sitting in back in a baseball cap, and he comes up, "Hey I got this and it worked!" He got into the

experiment at KU and it worked. "I want to invite you to this picnic." The 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic, east of Hartford there's a whole community – Jacob's Creek. I had never been to Jacob's Creek, so I showed up for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic as a result of this meeting. I show up and here he is and a lot of other people, 300 people. They had roast hog. They were doing this every year. Here were all of these Wyandotte County people who had moved to Jacob's Creek cause they loved to fish. They lived there or their relatives came down on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July so some of these little meetings turn into other things that you never know and are very positive.

But communications is always a challenge. Now it's turned entirely upside down. The possibility of communicating with constituents through the news media is now enhanced. It seems like the Gazette needs something to fill some space. They are running columns for the local legislators.

JH: It's all local now. They don't do national

JK: Part of it is the philosophy of Chris which is local. Part of it is I think he's just filling in where he can with new staff and so forth.

JH: You know, he's not even running it. He's gone a lot.

JK: I know he is. Matt Fowler's running it. Two weeks at a time here's an 18 year old. He's doing everything from copy. There's no editor, there's no copy person. But that's a whole different story. Anyway in the efforts to communicate I always found the most informed and least judgmental in Morris County. Chase County was always in a fight among themselves. They always had some challenge. You never knew who was going to be part of it. Fighting about cedar trees or fighting over the government taking over our land, or fighting over whether the schools were no good at all. They were among the top ten % in the state, but they didn't know that. That was the kind of people who showed up at the meetings at Chase County.

But Council Grove, partly due to the way the newspaper, McNeill, handled the newspaper. He really wanted to get people involved. We always had a real informed group of people come in. They were really on top of what was going on in Topeka, and they would ask really good questions. We would get large turnouts of 75 or so. Only 6 people would come to one in Emporia. It was such a contrast. We tried some in Americus at the schoolboard meeting room. Never got much of a turnout. Later after I had left, I remember [Jim] Barnett was in and he tried one there. He got two of three county commissioners. A few people out here came, Jackie Leffler, Connie Boyce came from the bank to serve doughnuts, and Belle Grimsley. There was just no one who was interested. I don't know whether it was the communications in some towns or the schedules of people are difficult. Most small towns it didn't work at all. They would say they wanted to do it, but it didn't work. A few other people had it worked out down

to a fine science. Janis Lee spent two weeks of prepping people and getting them ready and getting them there. She would hit three or four of these small places, Cuba, places like that. She had it down to a science. It took more time than I probably put in correctly.

Legislative reports should have been of interest some to the broader populace. Even now the Eggs and Issues still is not something that the broader base of Emporia is interested in. Now yesterday when we gave away hotdogs, sixteen hundred showed up for food and games. I don't know. Anyway, reporting back and communicating – a lot of work was done through direct mail. Some issues, like we had a group in Marion County who would, church women, get together and would send out packets after packet of postcards.

JH: So did you really do legislative work through them?

JK: At that time I did. Because we really didn't get that much mail.

JH: I remember through the schools, if the teachers had some issue, they would encourage us to send letters.

JK: I think it's that versus nothing. No one out there is interested. But the legislative reports were one of the extras. When I was minority leader, I would have staff in my office prepare a skeleton of a legislative report, particularly for the weekly newspapers. I'd give that to all my caucus members, and they could fill in the blanks of what was important. We had communications going to all parts of the state, and it worked. It was something we felt we still needed to do. And I think it's important, because you might get a blurb on the 10:00 news and maybe you hear something on the radio, but it's overwhelmed by a fistfight in Montana... OK what's next.

JH: Atmosphere. Changes over the years.

JK: The thing that surprised me, I assumed over the years that my ultra-conservative friends were really hard-hearted. I had that stereotype. As I sat in budget committee and watched , Ross going and handling SRS, which compared to now, was handled with a lot of compassion, , by both sides . That began to change in the mid-'90s after reapportionment, really in the mid '90s which you've got these real-world legislators that were there with one or two issues and that's all they cared about. It was kind of disappointing. Not only were they very limited in their interest in insurance, banking, natural resources, parks, agriculture, all the things you have to deal with. They were so focused on their issue that that was the only thing they wanted to do. If somebody came to town, they didn't want to deal with someone who was interested in watersheds. It was not that tone in the '80s. We had groups that came in with not your main interest, but you still gave them time. They had made a big effort to drive all the way from

southeast or southwest Kansas. You didn't brush them off. We saw that beginning to happen in the '90s. It got bad just after I left, particularly with scheduling. They would schedule things on schools to speak. Then they would get up there and decide they didn't want to have the hearing. People who would drive all the way went home with a bad impression of what was going on. That's sad. The idea was, at least my idea was, that this was an ongoing citizens' seminar.

Every day we have all these people walk in to the capitol from the Larry Nielsens with his problem, to the guy who has a gravel bar in southeast Kansas that wasn't properly handled, to the individual teachers, state employees as well as all of the students coming in as pages from all over the state. That was going to be their one day, maybe the only day they were going to be in the state capitol. So I thought it was an on-going educational seminar that we were a part of and hopefully were helping somebody solve a problem, understand a little bit, maybe understand how the process worked a little better. They could go home and feel well, "I don't agree with what they did, but" and the "but" is the most important. And I feel that still is the objective of local and state government – the opportunity of individual citizens to meet to see whether it's in their hometown or whether they were actually making the trip.

JH: Interesting because I think Don Hill is saying the same thing.

JK: Probably the saddest one was that there was an older couple from Hope, Kansas. They were the volunteers in charge of representing rural water districts. They really put their heart and soul, they were in their 70's or 80's. They would bake homemade cookies and they would rent a place downtown, like a motel, in Topeka. They would get the Soil Conservation to put up some exhibits and K. State and others that were into water and water quality. Generally, all the ag committee and the natural resources committee and others were invited. So they'd go out to this after hours where they had their cookies and coffee. It was really low key. I had been on the ag committee so I had gone most of the time and knew them pretty well. As that transition happened in the legislature, the couple brought all their paraphernalia in, working so hard and dedicated to educate, and only two legislators showed up. Their hearts were broken. There were some others from soil conservation and some water people showed up. It was obviously a total disappointment to them. Did they have a significant message? Was it a waste of time? You have to balance it out. How much can you attend? If you have other work in the capitol, sometimes committee work....I thought it was important to attend enough of these because whether it's youth or car dealers or soil conservation or some other that were particularly lower priority. But they didn't have any money. It wasn't a big deal, but they did have a message. I would always meet more people who were on water shed districts. For example, you'd run into this guy whose watershed district was just being put together in lower



Chase County or Jacob's Creek. They were very late in the game, and that one meeting, the guy seemed like a life-long friend because I came to hear the story and heard all the problems. Later on they did have a problem with some bill about watersheds that did affect Chase County.

JH: I remember when I visited your office, how welcoming you were. You showed me all around all the different parts of your office, where the interns were working and the projects they were working on, introduced me to your secretaries. And then you took me into your fancy office.

JK: I did have space and I had really good staff. We had people who wanted to come to work for us. And these were not high-paying jobs. I particularly remember Heather Gray, one of the best to work for us. She'd just graduated from KU. She was a top graduate in political science.

She had been around checking for jobs. "Do you have any jobs? I want to really get inside. I want to see how things work." She was looking, and I said, "Heather...." Her resume was outstanding. I had an older lady who was answering telephones that quit. That was all I had. That was the first person you see. Answering telephones? It's almost minimum wage. She said that was alright. "I just want to get in here," she said. By the time she left, she was the top ?? in the minority leader's office. She later on married ??? She was one of those extremely capable people that we came across. The city prosecutor in Lawrence started her career, Tony Wheeler. Challenging cases.

JH: Was it a big leap for you to being just a member of the caucus to becoming minority leader?

JK: No, it wasn't. I made a transition after the first full year. There are other offices. There is assistant minority and there is caucus leader who was organizing the caucuses to discuss and research bills and explain them to the members, so I became a caucus chairman. We changed minority leader in the 80's. I worked with the minority leader very very closely. I kind of had an idea. The responsibility became obvious and the conflict, because you assign committees. We had some people who wanted to be on specific committees: the money committee, or the education committee or the tax committee, or we still have all these other claims against the state and governmental organizations. In other words, not high priority. We had to fill them out, but I had a good caucus willing to take on all responsibilities. You might get a lead committee, but you still had to pick up two or three extra because the Senate had ?? committees. A few challenges you had there. Another challenge you had in that office. I had one member and Bud Burke, the president of the Senate, had one member who would go on a trip and they would come back and they wouldn't present a very skillful (expense) report.

Administrative services would send down, "We've got problems." Bud Burke and I would sit down together.

He had one person and I had one person who had a history. One was a time when they decided they were senior members and they had seniority, so they wanted to go on a trip in Florida. The rules were that we pay air fare and motel. That person decided he had a lot of relatives in New York City, and they would go by car. Take the family, to traveling expenses. You have to sit down

On the other hand we had Sandy Praeger, a moderate, chairman of Public Health and Welfare committee who had twenty committees all over the United States. Her husband was a doctor and she had her own resources, and she wanted to be on top this stuff, and she was, but she had resources and we had other individuals who didn't have that kind of resources.

The other real strange one, if you have some minor leadership role, you may have some parking issues on the north side of the Capitol. One member Bud and I had to deal with had a Mercedes that wouldn't start in cold weather. He had dangled a lot of extension cords out of his office upstairs down to his parked car. It was very logical from his standpoint. Bud and I would have these issues to solve, and we would wonder why in the world...

Another responsibility of the minority leader's office was to find new candidates. To find candidates, whether they were walk-on candidates or whether they were good or needed help to raise money. I had a couple of candidates who went way overspent their budget, and I didn't have enough money. I had to go back to the state party. There were other issues that came up. All part of the job.

There was a series of unusual things that we had to deal with in the mid-1980s. I was the ranking member in the banking committee to start out. We were having bank failures all over Kansas. So we were seeing bank failures reported to us every Thursday. Banks all around us in Madison or Strong City would fail one night and open the next day with a new name. They would report those to us. Facing this challenge was, how should the banking structure be after the restructuring in the 1980s? It was affecting the banks, but critically it was affecting the failures of the Savings and Loans. There was one bill. The chairman of our banking committee was very much against Savings and Loans. He didn't like Savings and Loans. He was from a banking family, a small commercial bank. Cap Fed was technically a Savings and Loan. They basically were failing. Columbia Savings and Loan was the big one in Emporia at that time. We had a bill that would basically allow Savings and Loans to set up as mutual funds type. It was just a minor change. Our banking chairman didn't like it. But it seemed like the only logical way to get started on solving the problem. My seatmate from Goodland, a Democrat, made a

motion to take it to the floor. We're gonna have a "Who's in favor?" Well, two of us raised a hand. "Who's against?" He raised his hand. The rest of our 11 member committee. He was just fuming. He said, "Alright, you guys are going to have to carry this to the floor, and if you get two votes you'll be lucky. I'm gonna just...." So we put this on the calendar. It sat there for a while and I finally talked to the majority leader, Fred Kerr, into bringing it up. He got up and he went on and on, and he also had a little problem starting too early in the day with imbibing. That was his downfall. We finally replaced him with a Democrat because of this personal issue. He went on and on about this being the worst bill in the world. He got his seatmate to go with him.

JH: So you do influence your seatmate?

JK: Yes, you do. Yes, you're sitting there two people together. A lot of times you don't know the details of the bill and that person is in the banking committee or the ag committee, or that person is from Wyandotte County and didn't have any ??? What is it? What is it? If you think about it for a while, if you're sitting there with a guy from Wyandotte County who really is on the fed and state [committee] and knows all about criminal law and had been a policeman and a baseball player, but agriculture is over here. If you got up and said this is an ag bill in the caucus, you could influence a lot of people in your caucus, both caucuses. But you might influence somebody right on the floor. Because this is by both sides. What do you think? The last person you talk to might be your seatmate.

JH: Seatmates and folks in your caucus. How much are you influenced by lobbyists.

JK: They're there. They're trying because that's what they're paid for. But if you get a real thoughtful letter from home, that throws a new light on it, but again for the home folks it's so hard for them to know what the bill is because it's been amended five times. Maybe since you had a meeting in Strong City and they're not interested in that kind of detail anyway. So it's real hard for the average constituent to really have significant impact on the bill as it changes, so the lobbyists really have a better advantage because they know what the current form is, or what they think the current form is, and they're there. Some of them are really high dollar paid, and some of them represent 15 different groups. So the lobbyist, or associates, as they're called, are really all over the place. Of course, the universities also were all over the place. KU had two people on the ground all the time. K State had one person. Emporia State would send up a person for a couple of weeks. A couple of time Harry Stephens would come up. Hays, you didn't know where they were at. You didn't really get a really strong...they knew the timing. They did a good job of lobbying. A new chancellor came to KU from Kentucky. This must have been in the early '90s, in the summer. We were having summer committees. I had to so much work in the office that day and a lobbyist from KU wanted to take me to lunch with the

Chancellor. I said, "I'm really on a tight schedule today. The only chance I would have to talk would be walking through the tunnel to the state office building, Docking State Office building.

JH: Were you pretty careful about accepting such invitations?

JK: Time was always the factor. You had just limited time if you were really concentrating on this. I told him I just had an hour because I'm working here until noon, and I have a meeting at 1:00. Let's go. So here come the lobbyists. Maybe it was both of them. They were really good people, so we went to the elevator and go down and walk through toward the state capitol to the cafeteria. We'd hear the story, meet, and understand something about his background. When it came time to pay, the poor Chancellor didn't have any money. They didn't accept credit cards. The lobbyists didn't have any money.

JH: Ha Ha. So you had to fund them all!

JK: So I fortunately had enough money. I didn't usually carry all that much. But I bought their lunch. They were so appreciative. It was not the way you plan it. So that was the year that we had promoted in the legislature that instead of KU and K State and Wichita always going and getting these little Delaware junior college teams for pre-season basketball games. That was what they had been doing. So we had been encouraging them indirectly to arrange for bigger teams to come in to make some money. They were paying Delaware \$50,000 to come in and play basketball. I don't know what it was. Why not? That was the beginning of the bigger games. So the Chancellor, I was so close to the Chancellor now, Sharon and I got to sit with them. He invited us. We went over and had a little reception at the house with a lot of other people and some Emporia State people. Some of those were very unique experiences, accidental, meaningful. If you turn these people off, like the new legislators, turn them off totally, if you wouldn't talk with them, if you were only interested in guns or abortion and basketball was not your thing, then you missed making these connections. You just wouldn't talk to them. I'm only interested in guns or abortion, and KU is not my thing.

JH: Why you. You're not a KU graduate. Why you? Because you were minority leader?

JK: I sat on the subcommittee for KU. Dave Kerr and I. We were on the Ways and Means budget committee, and we tried to divide up people to divide up the work. Regents was set up with two people on the subcommittee who would hear all of the infinite detail on the budget. And then we would go back to the full committee as we were doing the Regents budget.

JH: Were they intentionally pick up people>>>

JK: Another real fascinating Ways and Means job. Alicia Salisbury and I were on a subcommittee for the fire marshal . The state of Kansas didn't have any fire dogs, detector dogs. Some city in Missouri had a fire dog and they were having budget problems. And wanted to sell some fire dogs. We had a subcommittee meeting and they brought the dogs. They came in and said, "We're going to demonstrate this. We'd like to have this added to our budget." We went and walked around the whole room and found a place clear in back behind chairs. We were there and in come the dog and the trainer. There was hardly anybody there. The fire marshal didn't think anyone was interested. Dog found it. So our subcommittee recommended, the full Ways and Means, to allow the fire marshal a supplement to buy a fire dog. This was in the spring.

JH: So the fire marshal serves the whole state?

JK: He serves the whole state. There are fire marshals in the cities, but there is a fire marshal office for the whole state. That next month there was a lumber yard on the west side of Lebo that burnt down. The first job for the fire dog that we authorized. And he found it. A guy from Lebo who was a disgruntled employee had put down some gasoline. Sometimes you see results from one little drop of gasoline. Should we do this? In relationship to the budget, it was nickels and dimes, but it was a new dimension and we had to take care of it. So they had to have some more money, and the first place they had a fire it was in your district. Not that this was planned, but..well, that's another problem that members had. "Is this a bill for my district?" I wanted to be sure that I did the very best for my district. If we're dealing with school finance or any other issue, you get into this budget thing, and I want to make sure that I have done the best for my district. That's very important. Everything you were passing a law for the state of Kansas, so you had to stop, particularly for my caucus, and I know Republicans thought the same problem, step back and say, "Wait a minute. This would really be great for Strong City, Kansas, but it might be disaster for the rest of the state if you made this into a law." There was this constant – Am I a state senator, or am I a senator for the 17<sup>th</sup> district?

JH: And did you feel that you had to be constantly educating new legislators about that?

JK: Yes, that was particularly difficult for new legislators as they came in. They were justifiably thinking about I am from Hutchinson or I am from Garden City. This is where...and it would work for Garden City, but the proposal was generally always statewide. Generally everything you're doing. Occasionally you had something that had some local features to it, such as a local sales tax for a jail in Neosho County or something like that. Yes, that's local. A jail tax – might be relevant, I wonder if we could get a jail for Lyon County if we put a sales tax...It was a problem for new members. It was a problem as looking at this as a role of a state senator or a state representative or a representative for this little corner of Wyandotte County or this very

large area southwest of Garden City. And these were very real. They were hard ones to sort out.

JH: I would think there would be that constant tension between the big cities and the rural part of the state.

JK: There's some of that and it gets worse as the population shifts. Let's be honest. The money was coming in from Johnson County to subsidize North Lyon County. Part of the school finance issue was basically a way of taking monies from the successful parts of the state, those 13 counties, the growing areas, Sedgwick, Riley, the growing parts of the state and distributing it among the other 90 counties. To some extent, they were trying to argue that and argue it in the context that we're educating those people in St. Francis, but they're not going to stay in St. Francis. We need to make sure they can read and write. They're going to come to Johnson County to work. You try to justify some of the reasons you do the distribution.

JH: Was there a lot of pushback?

JK: Yes, it was difficult particularly in school finance. Particularly Johnson County. To pass bills we never had a Johnson County vote. Because they were financing it. They wanted more because they had resources and they could do local options. But there was pushback. But not always. But philosophically we understood because they were getting so much pressure from home. And then you had other areas growing equally as fast that also had some wealth factors such as suburban areas around Wichita and that area, but they didn't have a very strong representation. They looked at Wichita in a bigger sense than Maize. Johnson County, they're good people and they want to do right by their students, and they want to do right by the state, but they are really quite a bit ahead of the rest of us financially. So that was an issue you dealt with periodically.

The farm depression, of course, came about in the mid '80s. We had a lot of farms going out combined with the bank crisis. A couple of other real interesting ones that are still going on are the water fights. The first one started out as an attorney general suit against Colorado on the Arkansas, and it went on for years. [Robert] Stephen was the Attorney General coming ....It went on and on. That one that is still not quite resolved, but it's been going on for a long time. It is the one on the Republican River. Nebraska has such different laws. They have no state-wide water plan. It's all local. Then you have this other issue with Hays always running out of water. Can you transfer water from one basin watershed to another? What they were wanting to do was buy water rights from south, from the Arkansas water basin so they could survive. They did do something. This was a question that many of us here were not as intimately

familiar with because water here is not as critical. But it still continues to grow as an issue there.

JH: Did you deal with some of the aquifer issues that are present now?

JK: We were dealing with aquifer issues since I was an undergraduate at K. State in the 1950s. There were people doing their master's degrees about what was going to happen. It became more and more challenging as both the natural gas and water levels dropped. The natural gas came in as the irrigators had been getting free gas, and now the gas pressure had gone down in the '90s, so they were having to pay to pump gas out instead of getting free gas. The water was getting harder to pump as the water level went down. Both of those issues are depletions of natural resources that are going to be and still are issues that will have to be addressed in the future. A major part of the economy that operates in that part of the state is going to change dramatically.

The other issue started out in the very beginning. Remember when I said that the secretary of the Department of Agriculture was selected and we went through that whole period of trying to find a way to go through broader hoops to help elect the secretary and then we went through the courts situation to get one-man one-vote. Then we got the first secretary of agriculture. An issue had developed about weights and measures, and our first secretary actually received physical threats. She was a lawyer appointed by Graves. We had issues there...And I had the same thing when I led the wind task force. We had death threats. This was in Wabaunsee County people who lost their ? meetings in Manhattan and El Dorado. We had to get the police involved. Death threats with the secretary and in this case with the promoters of wind generation. We were threatened by people with good intentions who wanted to protect the land, but when they started to do that, we had to use an entirely different format when we did the wind things. This was after I was in the legislature, as part of the Governor's task force. In order to make sure that we had safety and to make sure that it wasn't one side just chanting turning it into a rally. And we did. We turned it into a different format that we used, and it worked. It was not received well. Particularly the anti-wind people were unhappy with myself and the chairman, the other co-chairman of Kansas Inc. We had some interesting challenges to figure out how to maneuver around that and get our final report done.

OK. Where do you want to go now?

JH: Do you have suggestions?

JK: These are broad philosophical. I already mentioned the district versus the state of Kansas issue. I call that broad philosophical. The other one - I use this when working with some people. Sometimes you have to pick your battles. You're not going to win everything. Dale

Davis. Dale got elected, and he learned to use that term. His first big thing out of the chute was to pass an ordinance against roosters in Emporia. Do you remember that one?

Well, Dale Davis from down southwest, Sauder town. He got a lot of complaints about roosters in Emporia. Well, after they passed a ban on roosters. Where did the roosters go? Down toward Olpe. Ha Ha! Down Lockerman Road, up the Allen Road, and then he starts getting all these complaints. I said, "Sometimes you have to pick your battles." He also.

I thought was very important with our intern program and the staff I hired. We had a wide range in the skills and abilities of people that I was able to hire. I was very lucky. I hired very good people. My predecessor did, too. They understood the philosophy of what we were doing. Generally, I had staff who communicated real good with the majority party staff. We knew what was going on. That was part of communicating with the majority. When you are the minority party, they set the agenda. They can put it on. You can be a part, or you can just vote No. There is a way to be involved in formulating legislation, particularly at the committee level. We knew how to do that. We had strong enough people on the committees who knew the topic and were able to do it. They had to be willing to take some jobs. Somebody is going to decide that that prisoner in Lansing, who lost his socks or tennis shoes because the guard flushed them down the stool will be reimbursed. We had claims against the state. We met in the summer. A large number of them were farmers. The farmers knew that they would have to come to ??? Farmers buy gasoline to use. They could turn in their receipts and get their tax money back, but they forget. The law says that they have to turn it in at the end of the year, or it's null and void. We had all these farmers who forgot to turn in their receipts. It wasn't that much money. They were all over the state. They forgot to turn it in. They were one month late, or they were two weeks late. And there wasn't any "maybe" in the law. We'd have to look at that.

And then we would have the prisoners. Some were very interesting. Some were just objecting that something was taken by the guards. The classic one was a guy from Kansas City. He had a family at home, and he was pretty good at knitting little Teddy bears. His family would bring him yarn. I don't know how in the world he knitted things or put them together. We were doing all of this by telephone. We didn't go there. We didn't go to the prison. But anyway some other prisoners or the guards got mad at him or threw these away. Anyway here we are with a bill for \$34.50 to replace his yarn. Here we are on this phone call. To make it even more complicated, the chairman was a senator who had never been in 4-H and had never chaired a committee, and we had all these thing that had to come before this joint committee of House and Senate. I was filling in for someone else that summer. I sat alongside the chairman, and a House representative, a lady attorney from Leavenworth, sat on the other side of her, and this



lady, who was a K-State graduate, didn't know how to run a meeting. We sat there and coached her –“ you need a second. OK, does anybody second?” We sat there and coached. She really caught on. She was missing 4-H. You saw this in the legislature all the time. Here was somebody who had been in 4-H, and here's someone who hasn't. This person was chairman because she was in the majority party. This is the chairmanship that was allocated at a lower level. Good chairmen would do a good job, but sometimes you were sitting there coaching the majority party just so you could get through the meeting.

JH: And the last thing she wanted to deal with was someone's knitting materials.

JK: Well, we could handle that. We had a horse, this guy out in Colby. He had a horse and interstate 70 went through there, and he felt the highway department hadn't done their upkeep on the fences. The horse got out on the highway and got killed. That horse got more and more valuable. Apparently, it was a \$25,000 horse.

JH: Stud horse with potential for years of service!

JK: It had everything. Its value started out real low and it didn't get settled. It started out at KDOT level and then was referred to the legislative committee. You had some very interesting looks into people's desire for money and some dumb mistakes. Whether farmers forgot to turn some stuff in, or a guard got mad at this guy and threw all his knitting away. Some of these are not front-page stories but very memorable personal stories for somebody. We had to make sure we had people there from our caucus as the other caucus did, too, that understood that no matter how seemingly boring these stories are, they are important because they had an impact on somebody. Or maybe it's nothing more than they get to tell their story. Where do we go now?

JH: OK, this is broad philosophical. We have [to] pick your battles, interns, educate new legislators.

JK: Take jobs on committees that you don't necessarily want. You need to do this to keep the whole process moving. Another class is Rules and Regs. Most Kansans don't know when a law is passed, it basically says to the Department of Agriculture or whatever it is, that you need to have some kinds of speed limits or something like that. The speed limits are not spelled out in law. There is a department then that regulates rules and regulations to implement the laws. They pass that by the Attorney General to see if it's constitutional, if the Rules and Regs fit with the law. They pass it by the Secretary of State's office to see if it's "readable." Lastly it comes to a committee on Rules and Regs to prove it. This is a boring committee, because you're down to the minute fine details of how to make something work. It's the one that's going to affect people in the long run. The broad law, some sweeping things, "may" or "shall", whatever

words are put in there are important, but when it gets down to the final making it work, the department that has to implement it, the department of agriculture has to implement how to regulate a law that says you shall inspect restaurants. What does that mean? Soft ice cream things. The details of exactly how we do it need to be more clear to the people who run restaurants. When they come in and say you're expect to have A, B, and C done to meet health standards. This all comes to the committee on Rules and Regs.

JH: And this is where people are concerned about over-regulation.

JK: Then there's the other side of it, yeah. As these Rules and Regs are propagated, that's why we have the 3-step check on the rule in Kansas.

JH: Do all states?

JK: I think so although I can't be sure. For example, on the budget we use the consensus revenue estimate. You've heard the ? in April to project the revenue for the next year. We are probably the only state that has a total consensus estimate. Louisiana has 5 budgets, revenue targets. The Governor's office projects the budget for next year. The Senate Republicans, Senate Democrats... Now Nebraska has another way of doing it. They pass a budget in their unicameral system, and after they pass the budget, there's a broad ? in the governor's office that adjusts the facts right, after the fact. They have a law that permits this finance group to change the income tax to fit the budget that was passed the previous year. That wouldn't go over at all in Kansas. So each state has its own way of doing it, but generally the concept of a law and Rules and Regs are ?? What else?

JK; There were some very interesting travel experiences. Remember I said the one to Quebec was one of the more interesting because it was legislators from all of South American and Central American countries and Canadian provinces. For the whole period of 18 years, I did get to go to a few of these kinds of meetings. I did go to Washington a few times, and I went to Puerto Rico once for a very...all of these were where you do get some idea of what other states are doing. Later on when we passed the value-added law to try to promote farms and encourage agriculture. Ag in Kansas is mainly exported, 90%. Fred Kerr was Senate majority leader, and we passed a bill that the center was going to be at K. State. We did a trip, Fred and I, and a couple of other members just to see what other states were doing, something very specific. Neither one fit our needs. What we did finally put together did not work in Kansas, unfortunately.

Another real interesting trip – we were in a fight over corporate hogs. A corporate farm bill was passed in the 1930s. This was primarily an issue because Seaboard Corporation was wanting to build a lot of corporate hog farms in southwest Kansas. Then majority floor leader

in the House – Robin Jennison, got a project together for about six of us, at least three from the Senate and three from the House. We went back to North Carolina where they were having all kinds of challenges with the rapidly growing corporate hog operations. The insight into hearing from people on both sides! We were going to try to avoid that, and to a certain extent I think we did. It was one of the more valuable trips. We spent time with people who were really in the corporate hog business, and with people who were trying and halfway in between. They had gone so far and so fast because they were trying to replace tobacco. That was the goal. Hogs, any special analysis we were doing at the University of Illinois had been done in space and location. For hogs it was west of the Mississippi and south of I-70.

JH: Was this helping your operation – just the knowledge you were gaining from it?

JK: Not really. No, no it was for the research team when we came back from Africa. We were doing this special analysis, one guy, it was his special analysis. He was predicting where the growth of beef and hogs would be.

JH: Not in North Carolina?

JK: Not in North Carolina. Now what was the difference between Kansas and North Carolina?

Well, first, North Carolina felt they had to do something to replace tobacco. They hired 20 extension people, swine specialists to help promote. When we got back to Kansas, we had one, one older person who was not very promoting. And so there was no promotion here. There had been none. They had put state effort into it. But they had gone too far. They had trouble with their soils. Waste disposal. We didn't know it was the middle of deer season. They hunt out of the back of pickups there. These were people from Florida. We were in these back areas where we were going to visit stream quality to show how bad. We were going around this corner and running into these pickups with two guys with shot guns standing up or running up and down the rows. What in the world is going on? This was not the hunting ethic we have here in Kansas. But it was in North Carolina. We thought we better get down out of here. We've heard about these...

JH: We might get shot!

JK: Exactly. Actually that was exactly what we thought. We were with this environmental group who wanted to take us off the road down to see the quality of the water, when all of a sudden we hear sirens everywhere. We'd already been through the hunters, and we get down there and we hear sirens everywhere. Here come all these different sheriffs' cars to see what this bunch of foreigners were doing in there looking at the water.

JH: You had been reported.

JK: We probably were technically. Probably a little lady with glasses was saying "There's a whole bunch of people! Call the sheriff! There's a whole bunch of people down there. I don't know what they're going to do!" I don't know, but suddenly here was all the local law enforcement. They came in, "Oh, that's all right" and they escorted us. "Maybe you ought to be..." "We're just finished. We're leaving..." Some of these little field trips had a little value.

JH: Did you ever go to Canada or South America on trip?

JK: I've only been to Canada twice. Once when I was an undergraduate.

JH: So none of it was part of your office.

JK: This whole book is on Canada, We were in Canada, Quebec.

JH: So you did go to Canada.

JK: Yes, as a state senator. I represented the state of Kansas.

JH: Well, you should have.

JK: Well, the US states were not as interested. It was really a big thing that the Canadians had promoted. And they had helped set up this for legislators to go to places like that. It was really a fascinating...and the book is in three languages: Portuguese, Spanish, French. This book is in 4 languages, English.

JH: And you refer to it often?

JK: No but it was more the people.

JH: And for you it is always the people.

JK: Isn't that what it's supposed to be? (laughter)

Now, let's close out with some challenges. First, doing, whether it's county commissioners or state legislators, it's time spent versus the effect it has on both your family and on your business. It doesn't balance out. If you try to do it purely from a logical standpoint, there's no amount of money you're going to get out of it that's going to amount to anything. That's one thing in recruiting candidates that's seen as a challenge. Whether it's a local candidate or the school board, they're going to get a lot of grief. They're going to spend a lot of hours and they're not going to make anything. It's been worth it. I'd like to pass that on to our son who's on the local watershed boards, his wife has been on the water board. It's something that more

people get a better understanding of what's going on if they participate a little bit. It does have an effect on your business. It does complicate...I missed my son's only effort at acting.

JH: You missed his play!

JK: It was one of those veto sessions...

JH: I got to see it!

JK: I know and I ...It was a Friday and a Saturday night. We were really into something. We were overtime. I could have, if I could have made it. I could have got down here on Friday night.

Easy, we'll be done on Saturday night. Well, Saturday night we didn't get done until 2:00 a.m. Sunday morning. There was no way I could leave with my responsibilities. Those are factors.

The other thing is that most of the state and local jobs are really seen by the public as part-time. You're going to Topeka for 90 days or you're a school board member that only meets once a week, but in reality you're on call. And on call has continued even to today.

JH: 19 years!

JK: Yesterday I was getting ready to go down to work at the KISS thing. And I stopped and this guy came up saying, "Oh I haven't seen you! You were up at Harveyville! You were at a meeting up there. I've gone into the sheep business." I had no idea who he was. And that was 20 years ago! He says, "Come here, sit down. I want to tell you about our sheep." I didn't know he was in sheep. But, and the same thing will occur. People will come up to me.

JH: But you make yourself available, and I'm sure...

JK: I'm sure most legislators will, if they're really good. If you're going to do it, you have to reckon with it as a reality. You're on call, and the on call seems to continue. You did get that there was a legislative retirement thing, if you serve long enough. So that was a little benefit. We did get some health coverage during the time we served. But if you didn't serve 10 years, you didn't get any retirement. I think it's still that way.

The opportunities...this is a benefit. Getting to speak at the Reading graduation with Nancy Kassebaum, which was fascinating, and because of that I got to know Nancy well. I have great appreciation for her speaking at 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduations.

JH: Nancy Kassebaum spoke at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation!

JK: At Reading, Kansas. The Reading people are and continue to be, when you're struggling, they want to do the best. Wilsey graduation

Belle Grimsley was teaching out at Wilsey, Kansas. Could I come. The little town of Delavan - her mother was involved. Could I come? Sure. I don't know if you've ever been to Wilsey. That old tin building they called a school, it's all closed now. It was hot. It was late in May, and so I talked with the girl who invited me. "Sure glad you've come. I've tried several people." I asked her who she had asked to come. "Bill Cosby. We couldn't get a return" so I was asked. Second place to Bill Cosby. Then I got real involved with Kids Without Parents, a national program. I must have sponsored a bill or something. They had a national conference in Kansas City. I was co-speaker with the Mayor of Kansas City who is now a state representative. He was a tremendous preacher. I gave my little short presentation, but after listening to him, I wondered what I was there for. He was really inspirational.

And then occasionally you get asked to wheel and deal on things. One was at Hartford - John O'Connor. John and Peggy Mast were pretty close. They had a big meeting for all the high school students. Constitution Day. He was going to set up a Constitution Museum. I don't know if he got it done. Anyway they went on and on about the Constitution. So I changed my speech. All of these high school seniors. I started out "How many of you are registered?" Nobody in Hartford was interested, the teachers weren't. I had a whole stack of voter registration forms in my truck, so I turned this whole thing into voter registration. As soon as we get done giving the book that Peggy had brought, that she had gotten from ALEX or somewhere, I ended up registering all these voters in Hartford. The government teacher said, "I should have been doing that." I had other schools that were doing that. But he had not been involved.

We both were invited to a FACTS class at Emporia High. It was about half boys and half girls. I don't know what the pitch was supposed to be. How to get involved as a citizen, or something like that. Well, Peggy showed up with a skirt that hit about here. I mean, that's alright, but the choice. Then she gets into a true life story that wasn't really appropriate. This is before Hamilton and before that divorce and this divorce. But that seemed to be real life facts. She was interesting.

There were some very interesting people that I served with. Irving Niles was such a sage from Osage. Very thoughtful. He came from a farm over by Lyndon. Very thoughtful. He'd go to the floor in the House, and when he spoke, everyone listened. He only came up to put the capstone on something when it was needed. And Anita Niles, his sister-in-law, was a hard worker. Ray Luthi from Madison. He only got to serve a couple of years. It was a Republican district, but he upset someone. Duane Goossen from Goessel was an outstanding legislator, and

continues to be. There were some really good people you get to know. Jim Lowther was a solid legislator. I served a little bit with Lloyd Stone. Didn't really get to know Lloyd that well, but he was very good. Emporia has been really fortunate to have pretty good representation as a whole. Some of the other representatives that Lyon County didn't know they had. Steve Wiard was a good representative, but he was never invited to Emporia. And Don Rezac.

JH: We're about out of tape. Do you suppose this is the end?

JK This is the end.

JH: Thank you very much, Jerry. This was a fun interview, and very educational for me.

JK: I'm glad it was.