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TM: Today is September 14, 2016. We're at the home of Jim and Jodi Wurgler in Williams, Arizona. My name is Tom Martin and this is Part IV of Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History Interview with Jim and Jodi. Jim, last time we were talking about a number of different things that were happening at the Yosemite Clinic. One was the changes of time to care—the advancements in care in the field versus the “throw and go”. We were talking about some troubles with the DEA, Cheryl Pagel, and the Good Sam takeover of the clinic. Some of the things we left with at the end of Part III.

JW: Okay. I'm sitting here thinking, “Which one of those do I tackle first?” I'll go first with the issue having to do with the advancement of “out of hospital” care which really has been a revolutionary thing over the past 50 years or so. It's still going on because of the increased stability of technology, just the notion even that an EKG can be done in the field/in the back of ambulance and transmitted to the base station and somebody competent can read it and prescribe medication based on what they see there. That's been going on for about 10 or 20 years and they just keep getting better at being able to provide these things. I mentioned earlier that I had tried to make sure that I had nursing staff who were certified in mobile intensive care nursing. I subsequently learned that it's more important to have nurses who were open minded, who were eager to learn, and capable of learning new things and putting them into action. So I didn't worry so much about it. When I had good nurses, they were good in every area that we provided and that was more important than just having initials behind the name.

I'll mention that at one point the DEA showed up one morning. This is fairly long-winded. We took off one day a week. Then every third week we would take off a weekend plus a day on each side of the weekend. So it doesn't sound quite as bad. We would have either have a four or five day weekend once every three weeks. But then the rest of the time it was just one day off at a time which we valued, treasured. We usually went without shaving or combing the hair or putting on decent clothes. The staff called me and said, “There's some investigators here. They want you to come down immediately.” They then made it clear that I didn't need to stop and brush my teeth or do anything to make myself more presentable. They wanted me there right away. So I went down. It's important to note here that our house was 100 feet behind the hospital clinic so it was readily accessible, very easy to get back and forth. One of the joys of living there. I could have access to the family and still do a full day's work. I got down to the clinic. Went in the back door. Went into the drug room. Here were two guys sitting in the drug room and the staff looking a little intimidated. They were counting pills. The way we operated the drug room... There are pills that can just be sitting out anywhere and they don't really need to be guarded or kept track of because they did not have any potential for abuse. Anything that belonged to the tranquilizer area, the sedative area, and particularly opioids, anything that had Demerol, codeine, anything related to these types of medicines, had to be under lock and key.

TM: So things that would be readily available on the counter would be steroid dose packs, anti-inflammatories, fungicides, cardiac medications—just trying to think about what was readily available versus what was under lock and key.

JW: Antibiotics, anti-inflammatories. Anything that could not be out on the shelf, that were not considered “over the counter” medicines. That’s a whole different category. You walk into your Walgreen’s or any pharmacy and you have miles and miles of shelves that have all sorts of things available. Different names, frequently similar ingredients, but they don’t require a prescription and they don’t require that you have to have a doctor’s order for them. Then there’s the next level up and those are called “legend.” If it says on the bottle “Available by written prescription only,” that’s the legend. So the legend says it has to be behind a counter. The patient can’t just walk in and say, “I want one of those.” You can do that in Mexico which is one of the reasons people go to Mexico, because they do have ready access to the kind of things that are not necessarily available here. But then there’s also the medication that is considered a narcotic and they are treated under a separate legal system. They’re called Category I, Category II, Category III, Category IV, and Category V drugs. Category I is not even available to physicians. It includes marijuana. That’s one of the big issues these days. The Feds say that marijuana is illegal because it’s in Category I in the Federal list of drugs. Whereas the states have chosen to say that the state law supersedes Federal law in certain categories. It also includes heroin, for example. Nobody can walk into any drugstore in America and present a prescription for heroin. Demerol is a derivative of heroin and any of the other narcotic medications are in some way a derivative of heroin, which comes from poppies. It’s a whole study of its own. We really were very careful about keeping track. Opioids now are one of the big items that are considered to be a scourge. Oxycontin in Appalachia is being wiped out practically by the scourge of/overuse of opioids. Those still require a prescription, depending on what state. People from the West Virginia area are noted... It’s notorious that somebody will go down to Florida which is notorious for having these prescription mills where people line up 50 to 100 at a time. They walk in and request the drug they want. The doctor writes down something that says constant pain or something to justify this. They’re strictly just a mill and they’re a disgrace. In terms of our situation, we ran a drug room. The closest pharmacy was an hour away in Oakhurst through mountain driving or an hour away in Mariposa, mountain driving. Were not open at night, were not open consistently on weekends. So we had to be in a position to be able to provide medications, particularly for pain medication. We saw 400 fractures a year in this clinic. Most of those people are going to need some kind of pain medication. And they always occurred at inconvenient times. We ran a drug room which had a pretty full service component of medications available. The opioids were kept in a locked box. Each category of medication had a separate location in a notebook so that at the end of every shift—we ran 12 hour shifts—the two nurses who had been on and the one coming on duty would sit down and one would count the pills and the other one observed the counting of the pills to see did they agree. Then they would check it against the medication list that was in the book that said how many pills were left at the end of the last shift and how many are they starting the next shift with.

TM: Was the health care in Yosemite Valley, when these guys showed, up 24 hours a day? Because I’m assuming people need medications at any time of the day or night seven days a week. At that point you guys were on call or being called out?

JW: There was always a physician on call—24 hours a day, seven days a week. And, there was a nurse in the building, actively awake and alert presumably.

TM: So this story, as you're recounting it, was happening when the Yosemite Clinic was still a hospital or had it been downsized by then?

JW: This was after the hospital was closed, but it was also during the time when we still were available and accessible 24 hours a day. So that's how we would wind up having these things available at all times.

I'm going to break the chain of events a little bit to explain why these guys were sitting there. It turns out our chief law enforcement officer, a year or two before these guys showed up, had thought that he was doing us a favor. Because a couple of law enforcement people showed up in his office asking questions about the Clinic and me personally and the people who worked there. This chief law enforcement officer saw that they were questioning whether or not we were dealing drugs. The reason they were thinking this is because I personally was the person whose name was on all of the orders for any kind of medication that was in one of the categories of opioid. We used a lot. We had three doctors. I provided the medication for the people on board the ambulance and for people at Badger Pass. They had a cache of some medications they could give if they needed it, on approval, from talking to our Medical Control. That was the advantage. Medical Control was at the Clinic, so all around the park, 1,200 square miles, wherever there was a ranger who had radio, they could basically call the Clinic and talk to a nurse or a doctor and describe the situation and determine whether or not they needed an IV or needed transportation or whatever was available to provide a level of care that was above the old Red Cross staple things. Either put a splint on it, very basic things. They had come to Yosemite anticipating that they were going to do some kind of an investigation. Kind of with the idea that the Medical Clinic, and me in particular, were in violation. They were looking for an opportunity to hit somebody for being a dealer. He basically told them, "No, no, no. You don't have to worry about the folks over there. They're all upstanding citizens and would never be involved." But then the folks who were looking at us were saying, "Okay, in the month of June they received 1,000 pills of Tylenol 3," or something of that nature. That's the way it works in California even though we technically were not under California law. Yosemite is in an area which is called "exclusive jurisdiction". So I didn't even have to have a California license. The doctors I hired and the nurses I hired didn't have to have California licenses. They don't have to at the VA either. This is just your standard difference between state and Federal rules and laws. The only person that I truly really had to satisfy was the Superintendent. If the Superintendent was unhappy and if we really got into it as far as being in conflict, eventually it could've wound up with the Superintendent saying, "We need to put this concession contract up for bid and technically speaking this person is not going to get the bid." California even then had the reputation for a high level of regulation and we're talking 1970s. It was always a pleasure for me to be able to say, "I'm free to practice medicine in the best way that I think possible." If there's a conflict somehow between the regulation that California has set up to make sure that the folks who are practicing in large cities and in large hospitals don't really apply to us and we can't be in compliance with what they're doing, we will take what they say needs to be done and we'll modify it to be able to work in our environment. So that's all useless information which doesn't have any... You and other people who are listening to this are going to say, "Get on with the story."

TM: No, on the contrary. It makes sense. Yes, you have the liberty, working at a Federal facility, following Federal law to avoid state law, but that was never your intent. So that's an important background piece here. I can appreciate why the head of law enforcement at the park sitting with these guys would say, "It's a clinic. They deal with drugs because it's a clinic."

JW: And we knew them personally. We interacted with them on a daily basis if not multiple times daily. They had the closest kind of interaction. Law enforcement and the medical facilities don't always get along. Some people in the medical community are not really comfortable feeling like law enforcement has any jurisdiction over them. We went through this on one of the prior tapes talking about how I finally had the Zen moment when I was talking to the Chief Ranger and realized, "Yeah, they have authority to basically tell me that there are certain things I have to do to comply with their rules." That opened the door for the rest of my career for being able to say, "I just have to keep them happy and we all will be happier. We'll work together and that gives us a better result."

So back to the story about the guys. They left. The law enforcement officer never even let us know that these guys had been there—that's part of the story. He never shared with us that these folks had been there and that he had taken care of the problem and he had basically sent them on their way. These people went back and ultimately, a couple years later, they keep looking at these drug orders that are coming in from Yosemite for injectable Demerol and pills. They basically just said, "Okay, these guys are up to something,"--at least fishy if not illegal. So they decided they would take a different tack. Rather than going to the law enforcement people they would just go directly to the Clinic and find out for themselves without anybody intervening. So I walk in, like I said, my hair uncombed, unshaven. My grubby "day off" clothes on. I walk in and here are these guys—very official looking. They weren't in uniform, but they also had that law enforcement attitude. The nurses were sitting there counting out the pills and fortunately they had just done it a few hours before and everything was right. All the counts were normal. There was nothing abnormal about that. They weren't satisfied with that. They spent a week at the Clinic. They spent a week going through medical records. They went, "Okay, where's your box of prescriptions?" Well, we don't write prescriptions we write it on the chart or we write it on the actual bill. The bill then would say "office visit" and then there would be a prescription written on the bill because it was going to be charged to them on that bill. That was the equivalent of a prescription. It was in writing and it became part of the permanent record and that's all that's required of a prescription. But it was nothing like they were used to looking at in your average pharmacy which was run by a different set of rules. The pharmacy people have their own hierarchy. They stayed for a week and they did have some criticism. They felt that we should be more attentive about keeping the door closed to the...it was a half door, it was a Dutch door. There was a constant flow... That's where the radio was for communication to the rest of the park. It was where the nursing staff kept all of their stuff that they would use in terms of... particularly taking care of the medications. If a person came in and we sent them out with three different medications, the nurse was the one who counted them out, wrote out the label for the bottle, kept track of everything. So there was this constant flow of people in and out. There was always a ranger hanging around. The rangers would come into the...they'd listen to the radio and talk to the nurses. It was a family type. One of the rangers once even told me, I was kind of offended by it, he referred to the clinic medical services as a "Mom and Pop" organization. That was a real put down as far as I was concerned. Anyway, that's what it was to a large degree.

TM: Did he mean that as it was a friendly place to be?

JW: No. He meant it as I needed to tighten up my ship. He was in law enforcement. It wasn't like this was just out of the blue. When the guys from the DEA left, they had sort of an exit interview with law enforcement just to make sure that the law enforcement people were aware that they had been there and they did have some recommendations. But for the most part they had no charges, no nothing. It wasn't until after that in conversations with a variety of people...first off, that I learned about the situation where the guy had run them off two years before and secondly, that these guys had pretty much made it clear that they figured/they were almost drooling at the possibility that they were going

to take this doctor out in handcuffs. Because it was clear to them that there was no way that we could justify the number of prescriptions for the type of medications that required a prescription and were in the opioid category, that we could justify that.

The Park Service had maybe three ambulances dispersed throughout the park. Yosemite was so much different than Grand Canyon in terms of the athletic type activities that went on. There was climbers up in the high country. The concessioner actually had a climbing school at Tuolumne Meadows. So they ran people through all kinds of... A lot of activity up there. Meaning that a lot of people up there either bent something or would break something or would have an injury that was going to have to be... And occasionally there were some really serious injuries where people did fall and sometimes die. So they had at least three ambulances in different places throughout the park, all whom had to have a certain number of medications on board. This is all standardized. One of the rangers was the official liaison between the medical facility and the rangers who provided in the field things. It all got complicated, but this business with the guys who wanted to take us away...there's a funny ending to this. Do you remember the team of guys that were in Miami? One of them was African-American and the other was a white guy. The white guy was Don Johnson.

JoW: Oh, you mean a TV program.

JW: A TV program, *Miami Vice*. You're too young for that. *Miami Vice* was very popular. Everybody knew that there was this team of a black guy and a white guy who did all this vice stuff. So guess what? These guys that showed up at my office, one of them was black, one of them was white. In Butte County in California, African-Americans... There may have been one or two kids in our kids' high school, which had 400-500 kids in it, that was African-American. They were unusual. One day, these two guys were in the pharmacy in Mariposa. I got this story from another source, obviously. The law enforcement people of Butte County...

JoW: You don't mean Butte. You mean Mariposa?

JW: Sorry. Scratch that. Not Butte. That's another story. This is in the County of Mariposa. The Mariposa County Sheriff's Department noticed these guys around town and they noticed the car that they were driving, got the license number, and ran it. It came back basically with nothing to be able to say who it belonged to or what it was. These two guys were in the pharmacy doing something, just shopping.

JoW: Down in Mariposa. The Rexall Pharmacy.

JW: In Mariposa which is a town of 4,000 maybe. Something like that. A couple of sheriffs strolled in and walked up behind them and introduced themselves. "Are you the owners of this vehicle?" and then described it. "Are you driving it?" They said that they were. Then they pointed out that there was no identification. That the license plate did not match to anybody and would they care to explain themselves. So they basically had to, in essence, explain to a law enforcement organization which had nothing to do with me or with the park. They worked in the same county and they worked as colleagues together, but the authorization and the hierarchy of the organizations were totally separate. There was no opportunity for the Park Service people to have called up the folks in Mariposa and said, "Why don't you check out these guys that are making trouble." But I have to tell you, I can laugh about that and not feel a sense of really being threatened because I knew that there was nothing that I was doing that was wrong. Perfectly justified. We made sure that we followed the law. That it required people listening to

what we were doing and said, "Okay well that fits this. That fits that." One of my partners who hadn't been with us that long, he saw it as being just intensely threatening to his future, his livelihood, his having to go to jail, his being castigated.

TM: His medical license.

JW: Oh yeah. He never really quite got over that. When I left and went to Grand Canyon, he was going to be the senior physician. He always was a little apprehensive about being willing to sign for all this stuff that I used to sign for and that I trusted. A lot people would say, "You're too trusting." My attitude about being potentially threatened, by being sued, by possibly pushing the envelope in certain areas just because it was required to make things function in the environment we worked in... Same thing is true of Grand Canyon. I always felt totally comfortable saying I have no difficulty sitting down in the witness stand in court and justifying or explaining my actions. Never had to do it. Gary felt that he did not have that adventuresome attitude. Anyway, that's the story about the DEA and my experience.

TM: Did you ever have a loss of control? You've got medications at certain stations all the way around. Did the numbers ever not count somehow and something happen that you had to be taking action against someone who was just squirreling stuff away? Anything like that?

JW: I understand the question and maybe I just got lucky. First off, the nursing staff had all kinds of interactions with the ranger. You're aware of the difference. In the Parks there are three categories of people. There's your law enforcement and firefighter group. And there's the maintenance department. Those two groups don't talk much to each other. As a matter of fact they have a substantial amount of conflict. That just goes with the territory. The third part is the hierarchy: the Superintendent and the various district rangers, the Chief Ranger. They kind of make up their own separate organization.

TM: The administration if you will.

JW: Yeah. Just the administration. Sure.

TM: Today there's the Interpretive Rangers.

JoW: Right.

JW: I kind of left that out because there's another... As providers of medical services, we had virtually no interaction with interpretation. They were their own separate entity.

TM: But they would come to the Clinic for health care. It wasn't that you worked with them collegially for medical control and first aid recovery because it was the law enforcement, fire, high wall rescue people that were taking care of that type of activity.

JW: Right. The health safety and welfare aspect are the ones who had the most of a relationship with our nursing staff. The nursing staff, they were my guardian angels. They were out there in the field, had their eyes wide open. This was not done in a vacuum.

JoW: And I have to add that the nursing staff for the most part were unmarried. A lot of the rangers were unmarried. Several nurses married rangers. There was that type of interaction/relationship.

JW: There was this really cohesive group of people who kind of kept an eye on each other. Anybody who really tried to be outside of the trustworthy group...nobody wanted to...and if they did, they got recognized pretty quickly by somebody else who would say, "Let's keep an eye on that one." That sort of thing. I never felt threatened and as far as I'm concerned I never was punished for being too trusting.

TM: So the visit by the DEA guys ended, it sounds like, in some recommendations which in a way you were very comfortable to embrace.

JW: Yep. It was appropriate. It wasn't like they were forcing me to do something that was going to totally interfere with our ability to function. When they left, they were gone. They never came back. There wasn't any shall we say "push back", "fly back", nothing like that.

TM: How many other clinics operated in the entire state of California like that Yosemite Valley shop? Were there any others?

JW: No, and part of the reason is because they were more rigidly forced to follow... There was a rigid behavior on the part of the people who were there...medical control people. The second thing is...I'm trying to think of rural and environments. This is the thing that's unique about a National Park, particularly an internationally famous National Park. They just don't...we covered this in our first conversation. I looked at a lumber camp with 2,000 people in it and realized this is not going to keep me entertained. Or a whole lot of things. The environment...and I'll reiterate, there were three parks in the National Park System. It was Yosemite, Grand Canyon and Yellowstone. Even Glacier, which at one time had a higher level of...kind of like the clinic. These various organizations started out as having contracted physicians from nearby communities who would agree to come in and operate a medical facility on a little bit of a looser basis. As things changed in the Park Service and in the world, they became more and more formal relationships. I've sort of hinted that I've probably outlived my usefulness to a certain degree, but also I hung on to some of the old tradition just because I'd had so much exposure to a variety of nurses and other people and also working with Dr. Sturm. It started there. It started with the guy who was there in 1935 and stayed there until 1970. I learned from him even though I was only with him for a total of four years. Two years of that I was in the military. He was a very good mentor. So I learned. I would just watch him, how he functioned, how he related to people. Mundane stuff tends to make people, at least from my perspective... I've been a victim of making decisions based on mundane things. Now here's something that's mundane. When Abe Sturm was the concession holder for decades, the hospital had to have some form of emergency lighting. Had to have some sort of a generator. Got to have electricity. When the power goes off to the entire Yosemite Valley there's only, in 1960, a couple of places that had any kind of emergency power. The hospital was one of those places. We were the envy of the neighborhood because our electric system in the houses that we lived in, there were two houses right behind and the nurses dorm, was hooked into the hospital's emergency system. So that the houses still had electricity even if the rest of the valley was dark.

JoW: Pitch dark.

JW: When it was dark in Yosemite Valley, it was dark. But the hooker was that the gasoline tank on the generator only held five gallons and Avery told me it was part of my work—part of my job. When he was gone and I was on duty and if the power went off, I would have to get up at midnight or one or two o'clock and refill the gas tank on the generator. Now, how many doctors do you know who considered that part of their medical responsibilities. I was a little hesitant about that. Do I really want to let myself

into a job where I have to do all this other stuff? And, at two o'clock in the morning I got to get up in the winter, in the snow, in the ice, in the cold and go down and put five gallons of gasoline in this generator? That came down finally to the conclusion that yeah, I could do that. While we were there, the Park Service acquired a 1,000 kilowatt generator. The Park Service, through the Army military surplus system, acquired this monster diesel generator. They found a place, we had a shed they were able to squeeze it into. It was always giving us trouble. There was always something about it, you know? Either it wouldn't start automatically. That was the biggest problem. What good is a generator, and particularly if the maintenance guys live in Mariposa which is an hour away and are not about to come into the valley and start the diesel generator. So I made it a point to get with the guy who was the electrician and said, "You need to instruct me how to start this." I had it written down somewhere. There was a sequence of things you were supposed to do. That apparently was not acceptable to somebody in the maintenance department. I never found out who it was. One day I walked out to the generator and there's a padlock on the door. And I didn't have a key. So I thought, we'll see how this turns out. I figured what they've done is given the key to somebody in the valley who's always available in the valley and if the power goes off then they will come over and unlock the padlock and start the engine. No. Basically they had not really set it up that way which I was kind of upset about. I did not care for that at all.

TM: Rightly so.

JW: And so what did I do? I took an axe and knocked the padlock off is what I did. Broke the padlock and they put another one on. And I took that one off. We finally came to a draw. They quit putting padlocks on. We came to an understanding how that was going to work.

TM: I'm going to back up a little bit and say, "Well, gee doctor, why weren't you smart enough to put in a 15 gallon tank instead of a five gallon tank and that way you could've tripled your sleeping time?" in jest. As a matter of simply working with the Park Service to get a key. Here are the people that need the lights on. They know when the lights aren't working. They'll just give you a key and say, "Yeah, you're instructed on how to turn on this piece of machinery." I can appreciate from a liability standpoint they're like, "No, we can't have somebody who's not a Park Service employee and not 'trained' go do this."

JW: And technically it'd probably have a liability potential of some kind and a variety of things. I got by with a couple of... As I look back on it, it's a miracle that I was not penalized somehow. I don't think we talked about the riots in the meadow, did we?

TM: Not yet. Before we get there though, I would like to know a little bit more about Ave, the four years that you worked with him. And I think you might have covered this in some of your other interviews, your oral histories with people. Are there one or two things that you remember about him that might have helped you in your future career or helped you as an individual?

JW: Well, he smoked like a stove. I did smoke for a while. After I got back from Vietnam... I had started smoking again over there. I was still continuing to smoke. Not a lot, but enough so that one of our daughters, after a while, got tired of it. She left a note on my chair down at the office that said, "Dear Dad, this is no joke. Please don't smoke."

JoW: Yeah and, "If you smoke, you'll choke." Something like that.

JW: Anyway, it was a sticky note, a small sticky note at that. I figured, oh well, okay. I won't smoke. If that's bothering her to that degree and she feels that first off that this is her best way of communicating with me, that's something to be at least considered. How is our level of communication? That was the end of my smoking. I didn't smoke after that.

Back to Ave. He was a Renaissance kind of a guy. He was a doctor. He was highly respected in the community. When I first went there and kind of got into the...was there for a year or two, I realized that there were people coming to see him for their medical care from two hours away. They would drive up from Mariposa or even part way to the Central Valley, where there were doctors everywhere. In 1935, and in the late 30s, the medical care that could be delivered at Lewis Memorial Hospital in Yosemite was pretty close to being on par with what could be delivered at Mercy Hospital in Merced. There was just not that much going on. Ave did C-sections if necessary. I was trained to do C-sections under the most extreme circumstances and avoiding them at all costs. He did hernia repairs, which I did, too. He actually did orthopedic surgery which I didn't do. He just was comfortable.

JoW: Wasn't he highly respected, orthopedic-wise, with other doctors in California particularly the Stanford group or Palo Alto Clinic group?

JW: Yep. That's very true, particularly with Stanford. One of the people that he had...I don't know if he'd actually gone to school with him or had some other kind of relationship. Stanford used to be...the medical school used to be in San Francisco way back in, I don't know, the 20s maybe 30s. They moved it from San Francisco down to Palo Alto which is where Stanford University was. A lot of the people that Ave knew...he went to UC San Francisco for his medical school training so he had this network of docs that were in the Bay Area and who knew him from their past experiences. They respected each other. He was an exceptionally smart guy. I think he started his college training when he was 16 and graduated from medical school when he was 21 or 22 something like that. He was an exceptionally bright guy so I really admired that. He just had nerves of steel. Never had a depressed day in his life. I swear. He said it. It was like, "Ok, I don't understand that."

TM: So when you use the term "Renaissance" do you mean that he was multi-faceted as a physician to be able to do Ob/Gyn, orthopedics, elder care, pediatrics, the entire turnkey of medicine at the time and keep all that together?

JW: That and he also...I do not remember him as a person who was widely engaged in academic interests or art and literature. He was on speaking terms with it. Here he was a senior physician and I was a "wet behind the ears" basically and thought about the world from the perspective of resident still learning and still needing a lot of assurance that I was capable enough to do this stuff.

JoW: He was the epitome of *the* country doctor that you see on TV from *Marcus Welby* or those other guys from the movies or TV. He was your country doctor and the country doctor wasn't afraid. They did everything and they weren't afraid to. If they were afraid to they didn't survive. They went somewhere else. I've always thought of Jim as being your country doctor, too, because of all the things that he did and all his capabilities.

JW: One of the things that we got by with, which they probably stopped as soon as I left up there, the business of a person coming in with a dislocated joint of some kind, you've got to sedate those people. You've got to provide them with adequate pain relief and be sedated to the point of very close to being in a level of anesthesia, right on the verge of that. We did it and the nurses were good at it. They came

up with oxygen saturation devices which we didn't used to have. Previously it was check the blood pressure and are they breathing? We really never had a disastrous result from anything like that and it was so rewarding to everybody involved. A person with a Colles fracture, we would reduce that and get it into a proper splint.

TM: An alignment. Check it on the X-ray.

JW: Yeah. Particularly the ability to do conscious sedation, as a term that evolved into in an environment where there was no anesthesiologist, no anesthesia machine. In today's current environment we were totally inadequately equipped to be even approaching putting people to sleep. I was prepared to defend that when you compare the length of time to get from Yosemite to Fresno or from Grand Canyon to Flagstaff. If I had to sit in front a jury to explain these things, I felt that I could explain them satisfactorily. Maybe if they were a jury of other doctors they might have said, "You really are exceeding the limits of your capacity." So that's why I figure sometimes I got out just in time.

TM: And Ave was, sort of, the driver of that. He was comfortable with that type of medicine that was being practiced at the time.

JW: Absolutely. And I have to say this to blow my own horn. I had a couple of years of surgical training, of some sort, so I did a pretty good hernia. My partner, Roger Hendrickson, even told me one day that I did a better hernia repair than Ave did.

TM: That made your day.

JW: Yes. I learned from him, but also learned from him in terms of things, "Well, I'm not going to do it that way," or "I think can improve on that." I became his doctor. When he retired, then he would drive up to Yosemite so I could take care of him.

JoW: He moved down to Mariposa so it was within an hour's drive to come up.

TM: Anything you remember about him that endeared you to him or was charming? Is there some story you remember?

JW: He was a raconteur. He and his wife gave these parties on their patio. His wife was this person who would hang lanterns and decorate the place. We never accomplished that. That's not our forte. Ave and Pat came from that era of when entertaining your neighbors and friends was really a big deal. When we got invited to those parties, I can tell you it was a big deal for us.

JoW: We felt honored.

JW: We were honored that we had been accepted into the community as people who were worthy of being included in a dinner party at the Sturm's and there were other people who did it too.

JoW: And let me interject. Imagine that Pat and Ave were two little short people, probably 5'5" and diminutive. They weren't round. Ave had this little pencil mustache and Pat was just smiley, happy, someone you'd love to have as a grandmother. Both of them. That's the type of people. They didn't put on airs. Well-loved.

JW: Not just respected, but well-loved within the community and were very supportive of the community. It was a reciprocal appreciation.

JoW: And when we talk “community”, definitely the concessionaire—the Curry Company. Everybody mixed in those days. You didn’t stand off, this was your group and this one over here is your group and never the twain meets. Everybody mixed it up and it was one big happy family in the valley.

JW: We had it at a very appropriate time. We used to hear stories about what it had been previously when there was more of a divide. There was the Park Service people and their enclave and the Concession people and their enclave. There was a certain, almost like a caste system. The Concession people tended to look down on the Park Service, I think is a fair statement.

JoW: Even in the same administrative strata?

JW: I think they had a good ability to work together. But there was a question, “Are you going to let your kids play with these kids?” There was some of that. So it wasn’t all beer and Skittles. You haven’t been around enough years to realize that back in the early part of the last century there was a distinct “have and have not.” We’re sort of seeing some of that now to a certain degree. So we’re going through some of the cycle. Teddy Roosevelt was a huge influence on, from my perspective, I wasn’t alive when he was around, but reading about him and also because my parents very definitely belonged to what was called the Progressive Movement. I got really brainwashed with that. So anyway, back to Ave. He was a mentor and a person who I tried to be like. I tried to take on the good qualities that I saw in him and not adopt the qualities that I felt maybe were not as endearing.

TM: Like hernia surgery.

JW: Yeah.

TM: Sounds like Ave had the ability to cross those dividing lines that may have separated Concession from Park Service or stratify Park Service or stratified Concessionaire. He was able to cross-bridge everybody.

JW: He was. Without getting off too much in the weeds, Yosemite in the years just before we got there, particularly I would guess after World War II. So ’45. Maybe before that, but I don’t know if anybody...because even Michael Adams. Michael Adams and I were basically the same age. We were one year apart. I was born in ’33. So in 1939 I would not have gone to Wasatch. You’re familiar with Wasatch. We talked about Wasatch. I think the wholesale diversion of kids to Wasatch started pretty much just after 1945. They wouldn’t have been going over there during the war. Things I think were just too difficult.

JoW: During the war, people weren’t in the valley. It was the Navy. The Navy took over the valley pretty much.

JW: We didn’t talk about that. Its part of the history of Yosemite that...

JoW: It was supposed to be a rest and recuperation place for the Navy.

TM: Grand Canyon was that way during the war as well. Yeah. Al Richmond is studying up on that.

JoW: I have no idea how many concessionaires remained in the Park during the war because a lot of people were going off to war to fight, not do something else. I don't know what the rangers...if they still had a place in the Park then.

JW: I suspect they had a relative skeleton crew.

TM: But certainly in the second half of the 40s, all through the 50s, the Wasatch School... Basically you would run out of the ability to school your family/your children at the Park. You had to basically send your kids out away from the Park, either a short distance or a long distance and the Academy was centralizing the Park Service families and the Concessions families at that one school.

JoW: The good thing about that was that the kids at least stayed with their friends.

TM: I see.

JoW: This is how I see it.

JW: They were there by themselves. They had their own clique I think. First off it would be Park Service kids then there would be the Yosemite kids, would be their own...

JoW: As opposed to sending your child off to San Francisco to a boarding school.

TM: Where they had no connections to anyone.

JoW: Where you wouldn't have a friend with you at all.

TM: That's a good point. I had never connected that together, that there was collegiality amongst the school children.

JW: And if they did decide that they were going to keep the kids at home and go to the local school past the eighth grade, it meant going to Mariposa whose academic standards were really suspect at that time. So the parents probably made a pretty reasonable decision. We can afford to send them to Wasatch. That's what they would do to properly give their kids and education.

TM: I'm not sure how we got there from Ave.

JW: Because his kids. He had three kids, two girls and a boy. The boy wound up going to a Catholic school in the East Bay in the town of Livermore. All that area was rural. It was agricultural.

TM: Livermore, very much so.

JoW: Was it connected to the Christian Brothers in Moraga?

JW: It doesn't matter. The point is that Danny went to that school. I don't know where the girls went. In any event, life in Yosemite before our time came around... The Sturm kids had horses and they were stabled...

TM: In the valley.

JW: Yeah, with a concessionaire. Remember I told you a night in the hospital cost \$20 back in those days. Stabling a horse at the concessioners was going to be kind of the same level of cost. This Bracebridge Dinner which costs \$1,100... When we were there we could go have a meal at the Ahwahnee Hotel. The regular price was \$6 and we were able to do it for \$4 and it was still an extravagance.

JoW: We even went to the Bracebridge Dinner. How did we get to?

JW: We pulled some strings. Strings were pulled for us. We got to go one time just as part of the things. Then we got to go as a couple of the people up here at the head table.

TM: As performers?

JoW: As guests.

TM: Guests of the head table. Oh my.

JoW: Right.

JW: There was a lot more kind of elegant stuff in some regards. Ave really loved to tell about the fact that the girls would get their horses and unaccompanied, ride the trails up to the falls/the back country. They would do it by themselves. They would come back down. They would ride to the house. They'd tie them up at the backdoor.

JoW: One of the trails went along the backside of our house, up about 100 yards or so.

JW: This is the kind of stuff I just thought, "Man, we were born too late." But you know how that is. There's always two sides to that question.

TM: That's right.

JW: The thing is that Ave and Pat, we admired their ability to be really gregarious and...

JoW: Socially adept and enjoyed it. They really enjoyed having people. They were the type of folks that would...if you came along down at the Clinic and Ave was talking to somebody and it turns out it was lunchtime—"Oh, come on home. Have lunch with Pat and I." It's that type of thing. I can remember my grandmother. It was that era, my grandmother and my aunt would do things like that too. If you came to the door and it happened to be lunchtime—"Come on. Sit down with us. We'll pull more out of the refrigerator."

JW: I can't think of anymore revelations concerning Ave.

TM: Then unfortunately it's a hard transition because the next thing I'm curious about is the '70 riots and how did that happen? What sort of set the stage for that?

JW: What set the stage was that the Hippie Movement came to San Francisco in the late 60s. So there was this incredible movement against authority, free living, free sex, and free drugs. This revolutionary behavior on the part of a large number of young people. Haight-Ashbury was *the* place starting about '68, '69. I had to go to the military in '68. We were already seeing the influx of people/counter-culture people. By the time I got back from the military in 1970 it was in full bloom. We were aware. We were hearing more and more discontent on the part of people with families, people who were accustomed to going camping in Yosemite for the glorious experience, you know, camping in Yosemite. They didn't have any kind of a system of making reservations. It was first come, first serve. Most of the campgrounds weren't even designated campsites. It was like, "Here's a big campground. Find a space that's big enough to accommodate a tent and it's yours." The counter-culture people then started kind of becoming more and more present in the so-called "organized" campgrounds. The folks who were really outraged by the sexual behavior, by just simply the freedom in all aspects of their lives, were more and more offended by this. We appreciated that. The kind of things that went on right next to a campsite that had a bunch of kids, teenagers or less, whatever they did was pretty much out in full view of everybody. There would be these little skirmishes. There would be people who would object to the behavior of the counter-culture and there would be sometimes words or just confrontational behavior. Not necessarily fights and that sort of thing. Finally it got to the point where the counter-culture movement had gained so much of an impact in numbers that they were spreading out of the campgrounds into the meadows. There was one particular meadow, Stoneman Meadow. At night it was becoming more and more a hippie territory. Just basically a party with many people out in those meadows. The Park Service, the rangers were increasingly trying to maintain some kind of control. There was one person there. Was Bob Superintendent then? Bob Barbee? He was not Superintendent. That's a big deal.

JoW: He came in afterwards.

JW: He was one of the underlings who was trying to make peace. There was a guy by the name of Bob Barbee who was a guy who was trying to learn about what was going on. He would dress up. Put some beads on and just regular clothes, not wear a uniform and so forth, and go out in Stoneman Meadow and sit down with people and talk to them. He was learning. He was far outnumbered by the group of people who were outraged by the lawbreaking.

JoW: The noise.

JW: The people who were in violation of just simple basic civil behavior in light of those times.

JoW: What the campers expected.

JW: Not just the campers.

JoW: Okay and the rangers.

JW: The campers and the rangers and...

TM: The social norms if you will.

JW: Yeah. Okay.

JoW: Even the concessioners. If they would come into the stores they were probably suspect of are they going to...?

JW: And they were guilty of shoplifting.

JoW: Because they felt it was their right.

JW: Their behavior in every respect and every regard was in violation and opposition to the social norms of the day at every opportunity. They had basically kind of taken over Stoneman Meadow. I don't remember the exact sequence. You can Google it. There have been books written about it so you can find out exactly what led to what. The cowboys, the wranglers, who were the stable people... Curry Company had, I don't know how many horses they had in Yosemite Valley in their stables, a hundred. Something like that.

JoW: Trail rides all the time.

JW: Trail rides. Five or six trail rides in the valley per day. With trail rides up to the various places up in...half-day rides, all day rides. That meant that there were the people who led the rides, who took care of the animals. Can you imagine a group of people more different in their...? Starting with the long hair. I'm sure you must've heard stories about how people with long hair visited the wrong bars and saloons in the west. Jackson Hole was notorious for this sort of thing. Taking people out and giving them a haircut. It was a big item. It caused a lot of angst and at least conflicting concepts, to say nothing of people wanting to do something more concrete in the way of conflict. So I don't know if it was the cowboys or if the cowboys and the rangers somehow got together and decided that they would clear out Stoneman Meadow with a bunch of mounted riders. I don't know how many they had, at least a dozen. Maybe 20 or more riding in a line basically trying to say they would herd these people in front of them. Hey, they herded animals all day long. Why couldn't they herd people? They basically started out by trying to take back Stoneman Meadow.

JoW: I think they wanted them to go back into the camp or into the forest area.

JW: That was the main object to get them to do that. Just to get them out of the meadow and sort of disperse them. Being a group who would behave like a group like a crowd/crowd behavior.

JoW: Had the big thing in New York, the hippie...?

TM: Woodstock.

JoW: Had that occurred yet?

JW: Oh yeah, because Woodstock occurred while were still at Fort Devens. Never knew it happened. That was late '69.

JoW: Therefore you wonder if the rangers and the people were thinking is Stoneman Meadow going to turn into a mini-Woodstock?

JW: I'm sure that was part of it. And people were saying, "We've got to get control of this before it becomes a Woodstock thing." They tried to control the crowd, herd the crowd, disperse them and they

weren't cooperating. It had been sort of a cavalry charge. Instead of just being slow motion walking along, it turned into a... And I think there was some hitting of people maybe with sticks and stuff like that. Trying to enforce...

JoW: Weren't the young people also throwing rocks back at the Rangers?

JW: They did. They were throwing rocks at the horses and at the riders. It pretty quickly deteriorated to just open warfare. That's when the rangers put out the call to neighboring communities for assistance.

JoW: You mean law enforcement.

JW: Law enforcement, that kind of assistance. So over the next couple/three hours, there were dozens of law enforcement people descending on Yosemite Valley. The law enforcement people congregated. They had built by that time the visitor center. It had a big auditorium kind of an arrangement, seating for 100, 150 people. I was not actually on duty. My partner Roger Hendrickson was the person who was on call for the Clinic. That left me so that I could be engaged. I went to the dispatch office to listen to some of it.

TM: How did you become aware that this was all happening?

JW: I may have gotten something from the radio at the Clinic. The nurses may have given me a call. Rumors spread.

JoW: Probably the nurses would have called you up and said that there's a riot in Stoneman Meadow and maybe we'll need your assistance to help Roger.

JW: I don't remember the exact sequence, but I wound up attending this midnight briefing with all these law enforcement guys. I swear to God it was one of my most disturbing events ever because they had these law enforcement people from these rural communities, Modesto, Merced, and all, who were just itching for, they couldn't wait to bash some heads and really teach these people a lesson. And the testosterone was simply unbelievable. Guys sitting in their chairs with their shotguns and jacking the slide. It was the undisciplined nature, to me, of what was happening that I found very troubling, very disturbing. So they went through what they were going to do. They were going to split up into teams and they were going to be going through the campgrounds and pretty much identifying people who might fit the description of somebody who would conceivably cause trouble. They would arrest them. They would triage them into the auditorium where then they would be assessed, evaluated, and determined whether or not/what they were going to do with them. How many people could they transport to put into jail and so forth? As I read these reports and read some of the subsequent after-action reports, there was obviously an investigation. The people who investigated went on for months. These people submitted their reports. I get mentioned in there, but never in a way that... Now it makes me feel really... I was just fortunate somebody didn't come along and put the hammer down on me. My official job at the auditorium was to evaluate people to see if they were hurt. Did they have injury? Did they need to be taken over to the Clinic to have lacerations sutured or have an X-ray? Over the night, turned out there were 12 or 14 people who had enough of reason to be sent over to the Clinic. Roger took care of them, but I was the one who pretty much assessed everybody who was brought into the auditorium. What I was seeing was that here were these... Anybody who looked... A girl who wasn't wearing a bra or who had a long skirt and long hair, and something in her hair, was with a guy, both of

them barefoot. Just the typical... You have to have seen enough pictures to know what these people look like.

TM: This is racial profiling you're talking about.

JW: Not racial. Social profiling.

TM: Social profiling. Race is not the word. They're probably white. They probably look like this. Go get them.

JW: You've seen *Easy Rider*. The communes, and the way that Peter Fonda, and the way the other guy dressed, and their motorcycles. You would look at them and there would be an immediate thought process that labeled them. These people came in labeled, their hands behind their back, with zip ties as substitutes for handcuffs pulled very tight. They were really miserable. Here they were. They were dragged out of their sleeping bags. It's not as if they were still rioting. That's my point. They were going through the campground and anybody that looked suspicious, that might have been involved, or might have wanted to be involved, or might have indeed been involved, they were going to handcuff them. Law enforcement was bringing them in. I started releasing them. I was cutting their zip ties. As I look back at it now, it was like I was this violator of the law. Law enforcement had brought these people in as part of a "legitimate law enforcement engagement" and I was sitting there releasing them from their handcuffs.

JoW: You weren't sending them on their way.

JW: No. I was just releasing the source of their discomfort.

TM: They were probably pitifully grateful.

JW: They were happy to be released and made no effort to bail. During all of this, by the way, when the congregation of law enforcement people was taking place, one of the sheriffs from Mariposa came roaring into the valley, lights and siren going full bore. The way the road system works in Yosemite, there's a one-way road coming in and another one-way road going out. He came in on the one-way road, made a turn, and right there beside Stoneman Meadow is a bridge over the Merced River and it's got a fairly steep approach.

JoW: A stone arch type. Stoneman Bridge.

JW: And he hit that bridge. How fast? I don't know, maybe 60, maybe 70, or 80, and became airborne. Became airborne, came down, and rolled it. It was one of those moments in life that was kind of incredible.

JoW: It's like out of a movie.

JW: I'll just reiterate one more time. I realized at the time and I said, "The hell with this. These people are being treated poorly. This is not a correct way to treat a prisoner regardless of what's going on." Particularly for this situation which is much more of social war than it was really a true physical encounter.

JoW: They weren't being belligerent or combative.

JW: They were throwing rocks.

JoW: I mean when they were finally in the auditorium.

JW: Oh, they were very subdued in the auditorium. By the way, the person who was the Chief Ranger at Yosemite at that time was Dick Marks. Dick Marks was actually one of the progenitors if you will of the Stoneman Meadow riot, which has stayed with me. One of the ironies of life. Heads rolled after that episode. I think the Superintendent was a fairly benign guy. But boy heads... Kind of like the situation now with the thing going on with the river people [GRCA, Colorado River]. Several underlings are paying the price for what went on. Probably didn't have a whole lot of influence over it, but because they were part of the administrative structure, they're gone. Dick Marks is one of the few people that I'm aware of who got out of that and was promoted.

TM: Yes, but that's not uncommon in the Park Service to move people along.

JW: Absolutely, but that public... The Stoneman Meadow riots was a major event. Every day there's people screwing up in one way or the other and who ultimately have to pay the price, or a price of some kind. It catches up with them sometimes, sometimes not. There's always this constant flow of people in trouble, out of trouble, being punished, being promoted—almost by accident. And in this case, he dodged the bullet and became Superintendent of Grand Canyon.

JoW: Would that have something to do with a change in the Director of Park Service?

JW: Could have. I don't know. Who knows? People are still writing books. That document that I gave you...she's the one who wanted to publish a book that went into the effect that the Stoneman riots had, in general, on the Park Service operations.

JoW: The influence it had?

JW: Yeah. Of course I failed her. I don't know if she ever wrote the book. Because we never completely finished it. I never proofread it. She didn't feel like going ahead with it without my proofreading it I guess. I didn't talk to her. So where are we?

TM: We're talking about the riots here. I'm looking at the time.

JW: I'm going to give you a little bit about the change of going with Samaritan.

TM: Let's finish up the riots, maybe take another ten minutes for that. That's probably going to end our interview for today and then we can pick this up with Good Sam.

JW: Okay. Because, also, we still got the Becker thing to go through. And that was between the riots and Good Sam.

JoW: The riots were 1970 and Good Sam wasn't until 1986.

JW: Fourteen years.

TM: We'll go Chris to Good Sam. But at this point, what did you do with the people that came into the auditorium? You had to triage them. Some went to the Clinic, some might have been released at the time. When law enforcement realized the doc's letting our people go. Or, you weren't letting them go, they were staying, they were just getting freed out of their bondage/their handcuffs, if you will.

JW: Nobody said a word to me. I was never punished or had any sort of retribution. The folks who went over to the Clinic, I identified the people who I thought needed something more than an aspirin.

JoW: How did they get to the Clinic?

JW: The rangers took them.

TM: What was the worst injury you saw?

JW: I don't remember. Nothing really serious. Nobody had to be sent out for further care, like to Fresno or Merced or Modesto.

JoW: No horses broke any limbs or cut anybody with their hooves?

JW: Not that I can remember.

TM: So the next few days... You make a point that the Park Service, certainly law enforcement, is about control. One could say that they regained control of the meadow or not?

JW: It was something that went on for several years, this rather constant back and forth. The counter-culture people eventually took over a walk-in campsite over by Merced River: Yellow Pine Campground.

JoW: Did they take it over or did the Park Service decide that they would go ahead and designate this is where you can congregate?

JW: They took it over. I think the Park Service designated it after they'd taken it over. Basically, it was the kind of place where people would go and it became such a... There was fear on the part of the Rangers, none of them would go in there by themselves. When they did go, just to have a presence, they would go as a group. And then invited me to go along one night. I was just basically an observer/a ride-along with no particular duty. It was one of those, an armistice? The people who went over there, for all practical purposes, kind of confined their activities to Yellow Pine.

JoW: And it was removed from all the other campgrounds. Really removed, off by itself.

JW: And from any civilization. It was still in the valley, but an isolated area. There was no enforcement regarding marijuana, alcohol. Pretty much they were self-policing if there was such a thing.

JoW: They might have. Maybe that was the arrangement.

TM: What was Barbee doing at this time?

JW: I don't really know. He'd kind of given up on it. I will say this, when he left Yosemite, I can't remember if he went directly to another park, but he ultimately wound up in Redwoods National Park, right after Redwoods had been declared a National Park, which you may recall was a very unpopular thing in the redwoods. Anybody who sets aside an area like that gets blamed for whatever bad... Like with the coal in Appalachia now, the EPA is being blamed for being the bad guy. Redwoods...they were running out of redwoods.

TM: But the loggers would have looked at it as taking of their jobs.

JW: Yep. So Bob was made Superintendent. When he left they gave him an award. The community.

JoW: The Redwood community.

JW: Yeah. I can't remember what town. The people living in that area gave him an award called the "Walking on Eggs Award". That tells you how good Bob was. Bob was able to take a really inflammatory situation... A hardcore guy could've gone in there and basically... Dick Marks would have been a great example of somebody who would have said, "Hey, I'm the law here and you've got to do what I tell you, the way I tell you." Bob managed to put together an organization, they never loved each other, but they were able to live with each other. Bob was able to do the work that needed to be done to get the new national park underway and functioning and all. And did it in such a way that the community respected him and admired his ability to do that. I kept track of Bob, just in terms of what's he doing, what's he up to? And it never changed. He was always widely respected within the Park Service and outside the Park Service for his ability to work with people despite having some real serious differences in their approach to what they thought was best for them and their organization and/or their community. So that's the Bob Barbee story.

TM: Awesome. Alright. So with that story tying up Bob and talking about Ave Sturm and the 1970s riot, maybe it's time to call this section a day and we'll pick this up again back to the Clinic with Chris Becker and Good Sam.

JW: Okay. That'll cover some territory. I have to admit that I don't remember a lot of really outstanding things happening between...Becker came in '78.

TM: This may go fast and suddenly we're launching off to Grand Canyon. I just want to know where we're going to land again and then we'll make a run for it and see where we get. Does that sound like fun?