

Interview with

JOE HUNT  
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project: Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted at the Hunt's Home  
San Angelo, Texas  
Tuesday—September 23, 2008

Interviewed By: Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray  
Longview, Texas

Present at Interview: Joe Hunt, Linda Hunt, Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray



## Introduction

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**JOE HUNT**  
**TEXAS RANGER, RETIRED**

**NANCY RAY:** My name is Nancy Ray and I'm visiting with Joe Hunt of San Angelo, Texas. This is Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> (2008), and we are in the, the Hunt's home. Present are Joe Hunt, Linda Hunt, Eddie Ray and Nancy Ray. And the purpose

**JOE HUNT:** and Coco and Allie. (*the Hunt's dogs*)

**NANCY RAY:** Say their names again.

**JOE HUNT:** Coco and Allie.

**NANCY RAY:** and the purpose of this interview is to discuss Ranger Hunt's career as a Texas Ranger. Mr. Hunt, do I have your permission to record this interview?

**JOE HUNT:** You do.

**NANCY RAY:** Mr. Hunt, do you understand that this video will belong to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas?

**JOE HUNT:** I do.

**NANCY RAY:** And, Mr. Hunt, do I have your permission to present copies of this video to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools, and once transcribed, to place on the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum's website?

**JOE HUNT:** You do.

**NANCY RAY:** All right. What is your full name?

**JOE HUNT:** Joe Burl, BURL, Hunt.

**NANCY RAY:** And you currently live in San Angelo, but when and where were you born?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, I was born on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1944, in Kermit, Texas.

**NANCY RAY:** Kermit. OK. And is that where you grew up?

**JOE HUNT:** No, actually we were from San Angelo and my dad was a civilian carpenter during World War II and was on the air base at Pyote.

**NANCY RAY:** At Pyote?

**JOE HUNT:** Pyote, which is right out of Kermit, and that's the reason I was born there. Everybody else was born here. I've got two brothers and a sister and they were all born here.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, so...

**JOE HUNT:** I would have been too had it not been for him being out there.

**NANCY RAY:** So, did you go to school there or did you come back here?

**JOE HUNT:** No, as soon as the war was over we moved back here.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. All right. Well, did you have any favorite subjects in school?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, playing hooky, I guess.

**NANCY RAY:** Playing hooky, that's a first one. Usually it's recess. Did you get caught very often?

**JOE HUNT:** Actually, no. I had a pretty good gig when I was in school. My dad was the maintenance supervisor for the schools here in San Angelo and he's got a pretty unique signature. I probably shouldn't be saying this.

**NANCY RAY:** No, that's fine.

**JOE HUNT:** He had a pretty unique signature and all the requests that went in for building maintenance went to him and he would approve or disapprove them so his signature was pretty well know throughout the school system. So especially when we got into high school, uh you could write out your own receipt, I mean excuse, and just have your parents sign it so I'd... "please excuse Joe because he was sick yesterday." And I'd take a check from my Dad and put it up to the window and copy that signature. And I skated until just nearly out of my Senior year before they caught up to us.

**NANCY RAY:** Um mmm, and that began your law enforcement career?

**JOE HUNT:** Yes. But uh, boy we had a good time.

**NANCY RAY:** What did you... what was fun?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, we, I had real good buddy named Ray Roberts and we hunted and fished uh all the time and that's mostly what we did. Matter of fact, back then where we're living right now, this was all pasture land. The lake was pretty new and gosh, we'd come out here and spend the day hunting, fishing, of course...

**NANCY RAY:** But you did eventually graduate, is that right?

**JOE HUNT:** Barely.

**NANCY RAY:** What did you do after you graduated?

**JOE HUNT:** What did I do?

**NANCY RAY:** Uh huh.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, I went in the National Guard. We started college and decided we didn't... there was about thirteen or fourteen of us out there at the college, decided that wasn't what we wanted to do. So, we joined the National Guard. We left here uh, we all joined the unit here in San Angelo and there was about thirteen or fourteen of us left here in about February of 1964 for our basic training, and our six-months training. Come back here in the summer of '64, went to work. We got married in December of '64, and I went to work for the state in March of 1965 at a fish hatchery in Devine, Texas. And uh, we were there two years and uh I got accepted into the DPS Academy in uh February of 1967.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, before we go into that, let me ask you. What were your parents' names?

**JOE HUNT:** Uh, my father was John C. Hunt and my mother was Willie Mae Hunt. Her maiden name was Williams.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. WILLIE?

**JOE HUNT:** *(Nod)* Wild Willie.

**NANCY RAY:** Wild Willie. OK, and tell us your wife's name?

**JOE HUNT:** Linda, LINDA.

**NANCY RAY:** And do you have children?

**JOE HUNT:** Two boys. Uh, Mark is 40, Brian is 38. Both of them married. Mark has two daughters and Brian has one.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. All granddaughters, huh... very good. OK. Well, back to the National Guard, did you go anywhere during that service?

**JOE HUNT:** No, my whole six years was here. Like I said, I went in there in about February, February of '64 and I come back... I went to OCS, got my commission as second lieutenant then I resigned that commission in oh, about May of 1970 to go in the Highway Patrol.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. OK. So, you went to Austin to the Highway Patrol and...

**JOE HUNT:** No, we went to Austin to the school. Actually, when I come out of patrol school...

**NANCY RAY:** Tell us about patrol school. Do you remember... do you have your monitors, do you remember them?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, yeah.

**NANCY RAY:** Who were they?

**JOE HUNT:** Mine was uh, Gardner, gosh dang it... see if you hadn't of asked me I could've told you right off. I want to say Sam Gardner. He was a Highway Patrol sergeant. Uh, there was Ollie Clark, uh was one, uh Sergeant Wells, I can't remember his first name. Uh, Goodwyn, uh dang there's one more I can't, I can't think of his name.

**NANCY RAY:** It will probably come to you in a few minutes. You can just say it then, that'll be fine.

**JOE HUNT:** I've got it all over there in my... I got my personnel file when I retired so I've got all that mess over there.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, tell us about the school... was it hard? Like basic training?

**JOE HUNT:** Uh, um, it was probably comparable to basic training. It was uh, you know the physical part was certainly tough. Uh, I had a little bit of a plus I guess at the time because I was going... at the same time that I went through DPS school, I was going through OCS training. And the OCS training at that time, the Officer Candidate training, you could go two ways. You could go for a, like a 12-week course at Fort Benning, Georgia... and I couldn't get off my job to do that so I had to go, you went, started with a summer camp and then did one weekend a month all year long and ended up with another summer camp in Austin. But those weekends were pretty physical, well they were pretty... I mean the academics was good too but... so I had already, I started that OCS training in the summer of '66, so I already had about six months of that kind of physical training uh before I went DPS so it uh, it wasn't as hard on me as it was some of them. I mean it was hard but uh, I guess I was a little more prepared for it.

**NANCY RAY:** Other than the physical training, what stands out in your mind that you learned at the school?

**JOE HUNT:** At the DPS Academy?

**NANCY RAY:** Um hmm.

**JOE HUNT:** Ooh.... Oh gosh I don't know. Uh,

**NANCY RAY:** One of the examples I've heard was talking about uh, from a safety standpoint, you know even when you're doing a traffic stop, how you...

**JOE HUNT:** Oh yeah, I mean those, of course they taught a lot of that kind of stuff. And you know they tried to teach you I guess uh... well I mean of course all of that stuff and that's good, yeah, but they also uh... the interaction between people I guess, because they realized... I never will forget, our first day uh, we reported in on a Tuesday afternoon, it was Valentine's Day of 1967. And they just had the council there greeting us and if your hair was too long they sent you back to a barbershop and bla bla bla. Really wasn't nothing you know being... they told us we'd get up in the morning and go to breakfast then we'd go to orientation in uh, the uh, auditorium at 8 o'clock. So we did that, we all got in the auditorium and they... they had all the instructors that were gonna, or most of the instructors, that was gonna be in the uh Academy, you know teach us, get up and say something. I remember like Floyd Hacker was our uh PT instructor and they asked Floyd, do you have anything you want to say to them? He got up and said no, I'll... what I have to say to them I'll say in the morning on the PT floor which was, would have been Thursday morning. We had another instructor named Shaw and I can't remember his first name now. We called him Old Blue, he was an older guy. And I never will forget. He got up and the first thing he said, he said OK, I want all of you wetback blankety blanks to stand up. You know we're... look around at each other and there was some Mexicans in our class, five or six, you know. He repeated it you know, you sorry, no good, lousy, dirty, slimy wetbacks and... I mean he just, you know he just... I just sat there thinking boy, I'm sinking down in my boots... my gosh I never, I've never experienced this you know. And he carried on like that for a little bit and they finally stood up, all of them stood up you know and I thought boy, now that's pretty humiliating to make them do that. And then he kind of broke into a laugh and he said all right, I'm proud that all of you stood up and that you didn't cause a scene, that you didn't rebel or anything because he said, that's exactly what you're gonna run into out on the road. Said when you stop, being a Hispanic, and you stop a influential White guy, you're gonna get that and you showed me a lot just by sitting there and holding it, you know. He turned out to be a great instructor and everybody just loved him. But, I mean that was the kind of point that he was trying to make, that uh, you know in that training instance, he's trying to tell you, you know, you... times are gonna be different than you're used to out there you know. There's some things you're gonna have to take that you normally wouldn't take. So that kind of training, I think, you know, of course like you said, there was the safety, how to drive, how to shoot, all that. But, I think that they did try to instill into you too. You know, the DPS had a very reputation. I'm not so sure

today they do. And that's sad to say but the reputation of DPS when I went in was in very good shape and it was because of the guys that had gone before us. And you know I know they had a seven-step violator contact they drilled into us in that school and it was how you contact the public you know. Nobody likes getting a ticket, and you don't really I mean... it's hard to give somebody a ticket... well it's not hard but it's not pleasant you know because it's... it's just not a pleasant deal. But by treating them nice and treating them the way you'd want to be treated and being respectful to them when you do that you know... and I don't remember all of them now but it was like the greeting, you know... how are you, I'm Patrolman Hunt. The reason I stopped you... for speeding. Do you have a reason? And then tell them what you're gonna do. Are you gonna warn them or you gonna give them a citation and then explain it. And, you know in the years I was in the Highway Patrol, I can probably tell you on two... just ten instances I might have somebody really bow up and do that. And I think it was the respect that they had for the Highway Patrol. Now I can tell you I backed up many a sheriff's deputy and many a city police that had a fight just because of the way they contacted the public, you know. You can, you can pick a fight about every time you want to but the DPS was so much instilling in you uh... and then after you got out of school, uh, it was the same way. They uh, you didn't mistreat people. I mean, you uh, you were firm and you were fair but you didn't mistreat them. And, or at least I've never worked for a supervisor that would let you do it. So, it was great, I mean. I think the DPS had a very excellent reputation back then. Like I said, I'm not so sure today uh

**NANCY RAY:** Well, things change, so... Where was your first duty station as a patrolman?

**JOE HUNT:** Actually, uh I went to San Antone in Drivers License for the first three years and the reason I went to Drivers License is because I had not finished my OCS training when our school graduated. And about the only way I could do that and finish my OCS training was to go into Drivers License... because Drivers License had... At that time, DPS had a two-part patrol school. You went uh, I think it was thirteen weeks. Everybody went thirteen weeks to a basic school and then if you went into, uh whatever service you went into had its own specialty school. And Drivers License and uh MVI had a two-week specialty school. Highway Patrol and License and Weight had a four-week. And I had to take the two-week school and there was no openings... well there was one opening in MVI but uh it was in Houston and I didn't want to... certainly go there but... Uh the only other school that had a two-week school or two-week class was Drivers License and I graduated the DPS like on Thursday or Friday and was in summer camp like Saturday. I mean that's how tight that schedule was. So, and it worked out because then I got my commission in the Guard and finished another two and half years I guess.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. So in San Antonio, you said three years, approximately, you stayed there?

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah, we went there in uh June of '67, and I left there in May of '70.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. So, does anything really stand out about the time you were in San Antonio?

**JOE HUNT:** No, not really, not in Drivers License. We... I got a little college time in at Odessa College, uh, other than that, no. I did make the... probably one of the few times I made the Associated Press in my whole career in the DPS uh was in Drivers License. We were there when the law changed in September of '67 from, the age limit I guess went from 14 to 16. Well about a month before or so that that happened, all the kids that were gonna be affected by that come in for their driver's license. And we were so swamped with driving tests that we could not start them at the office, we had to literally go up into a neighborhood and line the cars up and they'd be lined up for about three or four blocks. We would go out in the morning and take the, take the car and there'd be three or four of us in that car... and we'd take an ice jug with water and uh we would just go up there and park and we'd start those driving tests up there. Well, of course they're all lined up and uh, I get through with my last test and I come over there and it's a convertible, it's a little White boy and uh he's in a convertible with a console shift, you know the park or... So I get in. He's got the top down and of course there's cars behind us but there's nobody in front of us and I'm telling him, you know, how we're gonna do the test... go up here and turn left. We're gonna go for a while, we're gonna... I'll tell you to stop, back up, we're gonna parallel park, then we'll come back here. You got any questions? No sir. OK, go ahead and put it in gear and let's go up there and turn left. Well, he revved the motor up before he reached the deal and when he started to pull it down, he pulled it out of park and when he hit reverse... he slammed into the car behind of us. Knocked the hood up on that car, caved his trunk in and of course he flunked the test right there, you know, but. And that was in the San Antone paper, one of them. Made the Associated Press about this kid.

**NANCY RAY:** (laughter) I feel sorry for him. I remember how scared I was.

**JOE HUNT:** You know, out of all the cases I worked and all that, you know, I don't know... well the girl out here at the base may have made the Associated Press, probably did, I don't know.

**NANCY RAY:** And what was that for?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, it was a murder. A girl was kidnapped off the air base here. The guy took her home, kept her overnight in the closet, raped her, and took her out before morning and killed here... actually up in Coke County.

**NANCY RAY:** Now were you DPS at that time or...

**JOE HUNT:** Ranger.

**NANCY RAY:** Ranger. OK, we'll come back to that then. Well, when you left San Antonio, where did you go?

**JOE HUNT:** Went to Highway Patrol in Odessa, Texas.

**NANCY RAY:** Odessa.

**JOE HUNT:** Now that's kind of an interesting story too. I was, I wanted to be in Highway Patrol so bad... but my, really the OCS, I mean the National Guard kind of kept us from that. In those days, they didn't really want you to be in the National Guard and be in the Highway Patrol, in the DPS. You could be in the Guard but they really didn't want you to uh... because everybody worked weekends. Uh, you were guaranteed one Sunday a month off, I think it was. And they wanted you working weekends in the Highway Patrol. So they were reluctant to send anybody to Highway Patrol that was in the Guard or in a reserve outfit. And so in order to really have a chance to transfer to Highway Patrol, you had to be out of the Guard. And I wanted Highway Patrol so bad, but I didn't really have a choice because my enlistment was from 1964, February of '64 to February of '70. So, uh, when my enlistment time was up, I started trying to transfer to Highway Patrol. And I was being pretty picky, I was wanting either San Angelo or Abilene and there were just no openings ever come up here. So in about April, really a couple of things was happening. I was uh, uh I was a second lieutenant and was fixing to promote to first lieutenant and uh the whole time I was in the Guard I was able to stay here in San Angelo. I was, actually I'd become a split element commander here my last probably year and half over a motor pool company. And, but anyway, it was coming up uh for my promotion and it was an automatic deal from second lieutenant to first lieutenant and they had a transportation company in San Antone that did not have a company commander and uh the pressure was on and I was gonna have to do it. I was gonna have to transfer to that motor pool company down there. And I didn't really want to do that plus I wanted to be in Highway Patrol but I couldn't get the towns I wanted. So, I finally come out here in about April and... I'll back up. We had went on vacation one year out of San Antone, come through here and got my mother and we out to the Big Bend country and come back. We come back up through Odessa, I don't know why we come up that way, I don't know because it was out of the way. But I remember when we went through Odessa, it stunk so bad, the oilfield you know, the oil wells, and we all kind of commented... gosh, who would ever want to live here, you know as bad as it stinks, you know. Anyway, we come on in. Well when I finally was trying to get into Highway Patrol and couldn't get here, about April of '70 I went out to the regional office there in Midland and the Major wasn't in but the Captain of Highway Patrol there at that time, uh was the acting Major, uh Bailey was his name. And I went in and told him I'm Joe Hunt, I'm a Drivers License patrolman in San Antone, I want to transfer to Highway Patrol, and I will go anywhere in Region 4, anywhere in Region 4... from El Paso, to Abilene to... I just want in Highway Patrol. He said the only opening we have right now in Region 4 is Odessa. I said I'll take it. And, so we ended up seven years in Highway Patrol in Odessa. Stinking town... but it turned out to be a really great town as far as people, it just... and after you got used to the smell you know...

**NANCY RAY:** OK, so you're working traffic, is that what you're doing?

**JOE HUNT:** Uh huh.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, what were the main problems that you had to work?

**JOE HUNT:** In Odessa?

**NANCY RAY:** Um hmm.

**JOE HUNT:** Odessa was really kind of unique in the Highway Patrol in the fact that Odessa at that time, I would say it was pushing probably 90... 100,000 people. It was bigger than San Angelo, well maybe 80-90,000, I don't know. We had eight patrolman stationed there, four cars, five cars. Uh, eight patrolman and uh probably... ooh, not half but I'd say at least a third or maybe more of Odessa is outside the city limits. When you go north out of Odessa to about 47<sup>th</sup> or 48<sup>th</sup> Street, everything north of there is outside the city limits. But it's still just residential town and then when you went west uh past the loop, everything out that way was in the county... more residential... and a little bit east. So, consequently, uh, a good portion of Ector County, a lot of residential area, was worked by Highway Patrol. And at that time, the Sheriff's office would not do one thing to help the Highway Patrol. They wouldn't even stand by at a wreck, they wouldn't direct traffic at a wreck... uh they really would have nothing to do with Highway Patrol. And I don't know why, I guess the sheriff there at that time didn't like the Highway Patrol. Uh, so gosh, we worked lots of wrecks. You can imagine uh... well if the population was 80,000, I'd say at least 20-25,000 lived out in the county in just, I mean residential areas. Four-way stop signs, yield signs... so we worked a lot of wrecks.

**NANCY RAY:** So not... they weren't necessarily Interstate wrecks?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, no. My gosh, it was just like being a city policeman working those kinds of wrecks. And then on top of that, Odessa had the reputation of being the oil... the lower-class oil people, the roughnecks and stuff. And, that kind of held true in the fact that lots of beer joints, lots of DWIs, uh we worked a lot of DWI traffic in Odessa. We would go to work on nights at 5 o'clock, uh and especially on weekends, and literally stay out all night chasing drunks and working wrecks, getting drunks off the road. Uh, I don't even remember now but... I arrested like four or five in one night... and they were all legitimate drunks, I mean. You just uh, it was very common to get on weekend nights to get at least three... three separate DWIs. You could actually go up on 385 North in Odessa in the very early days and there was a median down that road for about, oh, a mile and a half to two miles... a curved median that you could park in. And we would go up there and line those patrol cars up and when the bars would turn out, just peel off like you're peeling off uh in a parade. I mean, and all of them I mean, just weaving and... all of them drunk. And those people up there, the roughnecks, they didn't, they didn't mind getting put in jail because they, they were working for a drilling company... if they didn't make it to work in the morning and they got fired from that drilling company... right next door to that drilling company was another drilling company that would hire them. So, they served their time or do whatever, get their bond if they didn't have a job here they just went next door and started working again. I actually had a kid one time uh, arrested him and all the way to jail... and the reason I arrested him was uh no driving license, I believe. He wasn't drunk, no driving license but he was an oilfield, didn't have a good address so I was taking him to jail. And all the way to

the jail, he was saying you know... oh, can't you just write me a ticket, can't you let me go, da da da da... That should have been my clue, right there, that something was wrong. And during those days, we didn't handcuff them and they rode in the front seat with us. He was just... oh please, can't you just write me a ticket? No. So we pulled up in front of the jail at the courthouse. He opens up the door and takes off running... *schew*... man he's gone. And I chase him but I lose him. Of course I got all of his information and the next day I get to looking for him and I find him that afternoon, uh in West Odessa, and he's just fixing to leave town. I get him, and get him back in custody. Well, turns out he was AWOL from the service. Ad at that time, if you were gone so many days you stayed AWOL. If you went over a certain amount of time, then they considered you a deserter. And I had caught him, he liked just two or three days being a deserter. If he got the deserter status, he was automatically sentenced to a year at Leavenworth Penitentiary... Now this is... I got this out of a... after I got him in jail, an FBI agent.... And at that time, the FBI come and uh interviewed all those people, AWOLs and all. And I'm sitting there listening to this FBI agent interview this kid and he, the FBI agent asked, why'd you run, you know. He said, well, he said by being put in jail now, I lose that status of being called a deserter. If I can stay out three or four more days, I can turn myself in as a deserter, go to Leavenworth for a year, and I'd be out in less than a year and I'm back home. If I stay in, my enlistment's for three years or something like that you know. So, he had it figured out where he could get out in about a third of the time. And that FBI agent said, son, uh don't, don't you realize what that's gonna do to your record, your future, being a deserter? He said I don't care. He said I plan to work in the oilfield the rest of my life anyway. I mean, that was his attitude. That's the way a lot of them was, just... you know go out and get drunk tonight... if you get caught, go to jail, get out in the morning, pay your fine, go to work somewhere else.

**NANCY RAY:** No big deal. That's hard to imagine.

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah, but that was it. And, gosh like I said, we all uh, DWI traffic was very high in Odessa.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, how did you, did you have a test or how did you determine that they were, they were DWI?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, their driving pretty well tells you. And after a while, uh there was two or three or four of them up there that you just recognized on sight. I mean, they were drunk all the time. You'd see them and you'd say, there goes old Joe Havener or there's old... uh, Tidwell, I can't remember his first name. He actually got killed in a wreck finally between uh Andrews and uh, next town up, Seminole. Uh, Joe Havener, gosh dang the one that called me that morning... I arrested one one time, uh oh dang, what... Flowers, Darrell Flowers. You got time for all this?

**NANCY RAY:** Sure, go right ahead.

**JOE HUNT:** I arrested this guy named Darrell Flowers. First time I arrested him, I don't really remember much about it. I mean he was just an oilfield drunk. Got him, put him in jail and uh I

had been working nights. Now this is months later after I'd arrested him. I'd, and I'd been working nights and I was off, I mean I was home in bed and the phone rings and I answer it. And it's... conversation is something like Mr. Hunt? Yeah. This is Darrell Flowers, do you remember me? Yeah, Darrell, I remember you. He said I'm down here at the courthouse. He said uh, I'm talking to the county attorney and he said he wants me to plead out to that DWI you got me on for uh, three days in jail, probated for six months, and \$500 fine or whatever it was. I said, well Darrell... he said, what do you think of that? I said, well Darrell, I said it sounds like a pretty good deal to me. And he said, aw Mr. Hunt, he said I can't take that. He said there is no way in hell I can stay out of a beer joint for six months. I said, well Darrell, I guess you're gonna have to go ahead and plead the other way. He pled for three days in jail. He took his three days in jail and got out, no probation, no nothing. And uh to continue on about Darrell Flowers, oh I don't know, it was a year or two or three later, coming down the Andrews... I mean I was going out the Andrews highway and he was coming in. And I didn't recognize him, I mean I just saw the car, all over the road. I turned around, it's Darrell Flowers. Get him out, Darrell, now this is the second time I've got him. Uh looks like you're gonna have to go with us you know, or me, I was by myself... and yes sir, Mr. Hunt. So he goes and gets in the front seat of the car. We start into Odessa and I don't go very far at all and I get behind another car that's driving even worse than Darrell was. Drunk. So I get him stopped. Now I've got Darrell Flowers in my front seat, no handcuffs on... he's drunk. I've got another one that I'm stopping. So I get him stopped, pull him over, and he's as drunk or drunker than Darrell Flowers. So I know Darrell Flowers but I don't know this guy. You know I've arrested Darrell before so I feel comfortable putting Darrell behind me in the back seat of the car. So I tell Darrell, I say get in the back seat and I get this guy in the front seat. And all the way into uh the office, and at that time we did breathalyzer and you had to, you couldn't leave a breathalyzer going. You had to go into the office, get the breathalyzer out, plug it in... took about 15 minutes for it to warm up before you could start giving the test. So, all the way to the office this other guy in the front seat, he's just giving me what for, you know. Cussing me and calling me every kind of a name in the book, you know just really giving me a hard time. Well, I'm just sitting there taking it you know. We get to the office, I get the breathalyzer out and we've got a long table there where we do reports. Well I put Darrell on one side of the table and this drunk's on the other side. That other drunk over here is still giving me the what for you know... you sorry, no good... you know... he was just giving me... That went on for about two or three more minutes and finally old Darrell leaned up to the table and he said mister, he said let me tell you something. Said if you don't shut your mouth, he said I'm gonna get up and come over there and whip your ass. He said that patrolman is just doing what he's paid to do and trying to save our life and he said you shut up. And boy there wasn't another peep out of that drunk. I ended up putting them both in jail.

**NANCY RAY:** Uh uh. Well have they ever heard from Darrell since then?

**JOE HUNT:** Darrell died. Actually, I mean can't say we were friends but they had a uh, a pretty good size robbery in Odessa after... this was after I was in the Rangers. And Darrell I'm sure was an oilfield thief. I mean there's, he just, he had an old junkyard you know... and I'm just sure that probably he was tied up in some of that. But anyway, there was a pretty good

robbery and old Charlie Hodges felt that Darrell wasn't in on the robbery but he ended up with some of the stolen property and anyway I went down and talked to Darrell because he knew Charlie, he had... I don't if Darrell had mentioned my name or what but anyway Charlie called me. I went down and talked to Darrell about that. He never would fess up to that. But he's dead.

**NANCY RAY:** Um mmm. Well, there in Odessa, did you have a partner? Do you remember your partner's name?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, we did sometimes and sometimes no. It depended. Uh...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, did you start out lead or, my understanding is usually you work with somebody.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh yeah, no, of course when you start, yeah. My first partner, the guy that broke me in was named Malcolm Bollinger.

**NANCY RAY:** Bollinger?

**JOE HUNT:** Bollinger. And Malcolm was... come through patrol school in about '47 or '48 and uh he spent most of his time at Sanderson. He was there during that flood and the time that Cooksey got shot. And for health reasons, he had to move closer to a hospital and Medical Center was a pretty hospital so he ended up in Odessa and that's who broke me in. I didn't work... I had worked three years already in Drivers License so I, and uh I'm not bragging or anything but... in Drivers License, you contacted all kind of public and you... you had to be courteous, you know. I mean you had people that was really nice and you had people that weren't so nice, but you still had to put up with them you know and deal with them. So I, I had a pretty, I guess demeanor, on contacting the public. Well when I, when I transferred to Highway Patrol, I already had three years in DPS but not in patrol. So I come in uh, uh May of '70 is when I went back through Part 2 school so I guess June of '70 is when I first went to Odessa. Well, I worked with Malcolm I don't know, two or three months. And uh Sergeant Brookshire liked the way that I conducted myself, handled myself. And I guess Malcolm give me good reports or whatever, I don't know. And there was another patrolman there, and I won't call his name, but he was not doing too good on contacting the public. And so Sergeant called me in one day and he said I want you to take... Walter Venable was fixing to leave... and he said I'm gonna give you Walter's car and I want you to take this other patrolman and I want you to see if you can get him to make contacts like you make contacts. And, so I didn't spend my uh... I didn't spend a full six months on uh you know on training and, actually, in just three or four months had somebody else that I was training and uh I took that kind of as a compliment.

**NANCY RAY:** Oh yeah. Well, the person you tried to train, did you have any luck? (*head shake*) No.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, he actually ended up transferring because he didn't like that situation. He thought he oughta have got that car... he's gone now too so uh... And you know, he was just as good a guy as you could have off duty, but when he put that uniform on he just turned different. Gosh, we visited, ate meals with them, uh he was a really, really good guy but that uniform just turned him into something else.

**NANCY RAY:** Changed things. Well, what got you into law enforcement?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, I, uh you know working in that fish hatchery... I really started out... I wanted to be a game warden and ... that's what I really wanted to do. And uh there was two Highway Patrolman there in Devine, Texas, named Leonard Lewis and Matt...

**NANCY RAY:** What was that second name?

**JOE HUNT:** Matt Gullion and Leonard Lewis. And uh come to find out, I didn't know this but at that time, they were so short of people they were recruiting and I think that if you recruited somebody and he actually made it to the Academy, you got a holiday off, you know, they give you an extra day off. Man they come out to that fish hatchery and they'd tell me how great the Highway Patrol was and all that... And I wanted in law enforcement and uh I had tested for game warden, didn't make it. And it was gonna be like a year before they'd even test again. And DPS was promising uh, like if you went in and tested, you would know within ten days... and I mean the openings were immediate. You went in and tested and within ten days from start to finish, you'd know if you were accepted. And that was about right. Uh, it didn't take long. We went in, took a written test and did our physical agility and all that and then come back after dinner for interview board and then whatever time it took them to do your background, you know. It wasn't much.

**NANCY RAY:** And you were in?

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah.

**NANCY RAY:** And they had a holiday. What else happened at Odessa that stands out, anything?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, nah, just run of the mill stuff. We worked... I guess like everybody else. Had our fair share of fatalities, and good times and bad times, uh...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, was that your last station before you went to the Rangers?

**JOE HUNT:** I made the Rangers while I was in Odessa.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, what, what prompted you to get into... to become a Ranger?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, I think, if the truth be known, if you got down... and everybody would tell you the truth in DPS, I'd say that 99.9 of them in there want to be in the Rangers.

**NANCY RAY:** Why is that?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, because it's just a prestigious, elite group that's uh...

**NANCY RAY:** Those are the words I've heard before.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, I think that's the truth and uh, it, they just got a... or did have and I guess they still do... just had a uh mystique about them that everybody respected. Uh, not just in this state, but nationwide.

**NANCY RAY:** Who was the Ranger there that you, that you saw on a daily basis?

**JOE HUNT:** That I saw?

**NANCY RAY:** Uh huh, in the Odessa area?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, they were out of Midland so I guess Charlie Hodges, Jesse Priest was over there, Al Mitchell for a while, uh J. P. Lynch, uh Jim Riddles. He's dead now, he was the captain... so

**NANCY RAY:** OK, so you applied and...

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah. The first time around I didn't make it. I applied I guess in '75, went to the board, and then in '76 I did make the list and made in it '77. July '77.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, so tell us about the interview board.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh... I didn't like interview boards. Uh, I never did think I did good on interview boards. I have trouble, I think, selling myself or what. I mean I know I can do the job... but I didn't have trouble doing that... but really the second interview board I went to, uh, wasn't all that bad.

**NANCY RAY:** Do you remember who was on it?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, not really. But I do know uh

**NANCY RAY:** You can see them in your head.

**JOE HUNT:** Dadgum it... Lewis Rigler.

**NANCY RAY:** OK.

**JOE HUNT:** Was the Ranger and uh... you know I had went the year before and it was oh, I don't know, I just, I wasn't prepared I guess. And every time you go to another interview board you're a little more prepared because you kind of know what the questions might be or what their philosophy might be. But the first year was bad. Well, the second year, uh, I had a real good friend in Odessa, and he's still alive, and we're still good friends. Matter of fact, he's the reason we got that little dog right there. His name is Jan Brooks. And uh Jan had a wrecker service in Odessa when I went there in Highway Patrol. And he had become friends with a Ranger captain named Frank Probst. Frank Probst had been a Ranger captain... I didn't know Frank in the Rangers, I met him after he had retired. I met him through Jan and Frank lived between Midland and Odessa. He owned a trailer park and Jan was real good friends with him. Jan helped him do a lot of things building that trailer park. They leased some uh mule deer country, hunting out in Trans-Pecos area and Jan would go out there and help him on that deer lease. So, they were pretty good friends. Anyway, second time around, uh Jan asked me, said you want me to contact, you know get a hold of Frank Probst and see if he can help you on this interview board, you know, or put in a word for you. I said well I'll take all the help I can get you know. So, anyway, uh Jan did call Frank Probst. Frank I don't think, I don't think I ever talked to Frank, I think Jan just called him and said you know I've got a friend that's a Highway Patrol going to the interview board, put in a word for him if you can. Well, come to find out, Lewis Rigler was on that board and uh uh, and come to find out later, Lewis was a real close friend of Frank Probst. So I guess Frank knew that, and I don't know this for a fact, but I guess Frank may have known that Lewis was gonna be on that interview board and called him and told him about me. Well when I got in there, uh Lewis had very few questions. Matter of fact, I can only remember one... do you think you can get along with uh sheriffs and policemen if you're a Ranger and you're working with them? I said yeah, I can do that, you know. Uh, the other questions were you know like uh, if you know that there's two trucks parked in a warehouse and one of them is full of stolen property and one's not... but you know which truck it is, would you break into there at night and look and see you know... or would you go in there uh... and you know most guys would think well no, that's burglary of a building and I'm not gonna commit a burglary to go in and see. And you'd tell them no, no... and then they'd have you, you know. They'd say well, you know you come down to this interview board, you drove down from Lubbock or Pampa or wherever, did you obey the speed limit all they way down? Well, no we didn't so... so you're sitting here telling us that you committed a Class C misdemeanor coming to this interview board but you wouldn't commit a Class C misdemeanor to go in there and see if there's a \$100,000 worth of stolen property on that truck. Well the point being, you wasn't burglarizing a building, you were just trespassing, you know. You wasn't going in with intent to steal anything, you were just going in to pick up a tarp and look and see if there was stolen property under there. So, questions like that, you know. But after you've been there a time or two or hear the guys talk, you know that's what they're... would you do that. So, really the second interview board I didn't think was very rough at all. Matter of fact, I left out of there thinking boy, they already got their minds made up you know, there wasn't no need for me to come down here. And it turned out

that I was one on the list. I was actually the last one on the list that year, they put five on the list and I was number five.

**NANCY RAY:** Do you remember the other four?

**JOE HUNT:** And three, three of them made it right out, three of them made it that day. And uh, then that list is good for a year. That list come out like in, I don't remember, the very end of November. So it was good until the next November. So three of them made it like on January 1<sup>st</sup>, and then uh Joe Wilie made it in about April which left me number one on the list. So I had from April 'til November to see if there was gonna be another opening and...

**NANCY RAY:** And what year was this?

**JOE HUNT:** This, well the interview board was in '76 so November '76 to November '77. But anyway, in about May, I guess, wasn't just a month or two after Joe made it, I got a call from uh, I don't remember if it was Captain Wilson or, probably Captain Wilson who was the senior Ranger. He said, I just want to let you know, that in all probability, you're gonna make Ranger no later than September 1<sup>st</sup>. And I said well, how do we know this? And he said, well, he said, Lewis Rigler has been in my office and told me that if it looks like you're gonna die on the list, that he will retire for you to make it. And I thought boy, now that's something, the guy only asked me like one or two questions. Never met him before in my life and now he's telling them that he'll retire early if it looks like I'm gonna die on the list. And uh, anyway, come to find out, there was another Ranger that was in some discipline problems and they was gonna move him to another station and he wouldn't move so he just quit and that was my opening after that. So Lewis... Lewis did go ahead and retire but uh, I had made it before he did.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, I've heard people say that they had sponsors. Did you have one or was Lewis Rigler yours?

**JOE HUNT:** I guess Jan Brooks was mine. I mean I, I didn't know nobody other than Jan and I really didn't know Frank Probst all that good. And I certainly didn't know Lewis Rigler. And for them to call and tell me that you know, that Lewis has said that he will retire to make you, or to be sure that you make it. No, I used to tell people. People would say well who's your sponsor? Who got you in there? And I'd say Lady Bird Johnson... I knew her real good and... oh really, you know? I left a few of them with that lie. Some of them I'd tell no, that's... I really didn't have a sponsor.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. And you really didn't know Lady Bird?

**JOE HUNT:** No. You know, I really think, you know other than Jan's help, I think and you know I hate to say this... I'm not bragging, but I had a really good work record. I had a good work ethic, uh. I think my sergeant helped me a lot, uh, my Highway Patrol sergeant. Uh and my lieutenants over there... Let me answer this...*(short break)*

**NANCY RAY:** OK, we were talking about uh when you were getting into the Rangers. Did anyone make it with you, you said you were number one on the list.

**JOE HUNT:** No, I was number five on the list. There was five on that list, the first... like the year I made it there were three openings and they put two more actually on the list. So the, but they make a list of five so the first three made it outright. Jim Mull, Ralph Wadsworth, and uh Eddie Almond. Those three were one, two and three so they made it on January 1<sup>st</sup>. And Joe Wilie was number four and I was number five. So on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Joe Wilie become number one on the list and I become number two on the list. And then in April, Joe made it so I become number one, or the only one left on the list. It was good up through like the end of November of '77.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, at that time, was there any special training you had to go to or...

**JOE HUNT:** No, and I probably, and I don't know this for a fact, but uh in the summer, early summer, I think, or it might have been... It was before I made Ranger, I was still in the Highway Patrol. But uh, I guess they knew that they were gonna have the opening for sure so they called out there and uh talked to my captain, my Highway Patrol captain, and said hey, you know unless he turns it down, we know he's gonna make it. And they've got an identi-kit school coming up but it will be before he makes...

**NANCY RAY:** Now, what kind of school?

**JOE HUNT:** Identi-kit, it's a deal that puts uh composite picture together out of a foil deal. Anyway, they said this school's coming and we would like, we're trying to send all the new Rangers, or becoming new Rangers, and we'd like him to go to this school. And uh, but we understand you know, understand he hadn't made it and it would have to come out of ya'lls budget and all that. And anyway, they sent me. I got to go to that school and it turned out I did a real good deal on that, I'll tell you about that one.

**NANCY RAY:** Well all right, go ahead.

**JOE HUNT:** Well it was after we got in the Rangers.

**NANCY RAY:** That's all right, just go ahead.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, I did go to that school. What this identi-kit is, it is just a bunch of what they call foils, transparent foils. And it's a bunch of lips, a bunch of noses, a bunch of eyes, different configurations. And when you have a crime, you go to the person and they sit down and they say well he had a long narrow face, well it's got a face that's long, narrow. And well, he had bug eyes so you put bug eyes. A big nose... and then you let them look. No, no, no, the eyes are too bugged so you go back to a different eye. Uh, the nose needs to be a little narrower and you do

that. You keep going until they finally say it looks good, you know. I had been in the Rangers... I went in in un July '77 and probably at the end of July or the first part of August, I was responsible for uh Crosby County, up in Lubbock, Crosby County...

**NANCY RAY:** So your first duty station was Lubbock?

**JOE HUNT:** First duty station was Lubbock. Crosby County, Dickens County, uh Kent County, and Garza County. Four east counties and then we all shared Lubbock. But uh, I hadn't been there... I don't know, two weeks, three weeks. Got a call of an aggravated rape of a White lady in Spur, Texas, by a Black.

**NANCY RAY:** First case?

**JOE HUNT:** First case, first big case, well probably the first case, I don't know. And I mean, all I've ever done is accident reports and accident investigations. And D. J. Green, Ranger sitting over here, he's got several years of experience. He said, I'll go with you. And I'm thinking well he'll go with me and he's gonna help me on this deal, you know. He didn't do nothing except sit out there and eat peaches off of a tree. I'd come out and ask him, am I doing all right?

**NANCY RAY:** Do you need to get that? (*short break*)

**JOE HUNT:** Well anyway, got over there, the Black had wore a little old mask, a green colored kind of, not a stocking but a mask. She couldn't identify him but knew he was Black. And uh she was a, in her I guess late 30s, 40s, best I remember. And uh anyway that was about all we could determine that he was a Black male and, and... Got that deal done and uh we really didn't have much to go on. We followed some tracks across the cotton field showing which way he come into the house and run from the house. And uh anyway, didn't have a whole lot other than that. Nobody saw anything. It was kind of outside Spur, in a, uh a few miles out of town so nobody said they seen anything. Well, a month or two later, there was a similar rape of another White lady by a Black in Slaton, Texas, only this time uh she got a look at him. He didn't have a mask on. And uh so we go over there and actually, I'm the only one at that time in the Lubbock company, Company C, that had been to this training. It was fairly new training, a fairly new deal and I was the only one in the Rangers that had been to it in that area. We didn't even have an identi-kit... I mean, we'd been to the training but we didn't have an identi-kit. So, uh, they asked me if I could meet her, her name was Basinger, at the sheriff's office and do one of these identi-kits if they could get an identi-kit. I said, yeah, I can do it so... We ended up borrowing an identi-kit from somewhere, I don't remember where it come from. But anyway, it showed up at the sheriff's office. So I'm in there and she described him you know. And you start out on this uh thing with the basic. You start out with just a basic face and a hair, you know they tell you it's a Black male, you start off with a basic face and the short, curly hair. Uh, I don't remember if she put a nose on it or what. But anyway, and then they get to tell you oh no, that's way too fat or you know you just start going... Well anyway, we worked on that thing, worked on it and worked on it and the... What you do is every time you get one that you know, she'll say well the

mouth looks good or the nose looks good but the eyes still don't match. Well you leave those, the nose and mouth together and start changing eyes. In a little bit you get it all together. Every time you add one, you put a paper clip on there to keep the others in line you know as you're moving them. So, you get it done, you've got two or three paper clips you know. So, I'm sitting there at the desk and uh she's sitting over there. We'd been doing this for a while... well what do you think now, Ms. Basinger? Well, that's sure... that's as close I think as we're gonna get you know. I've got that foil sitting here on the corner of the desk and talking to her. And she's saying you know well it looks pretty good. Well the sheriff's office in Lubbock had two or three offices. You went through the first office and then went on in there was a second office, and then a third office. You had to come out of this office and this office to get to here. Well, Ernest Richtor was in the second office, he's a detective for the Lubbock County Sheriff's office, on a totally different case, nothing to do with us. We're in this front office, me and B. J. Green and another investigator from the sheriff's office there, and Ms. Basinger. Anyway, we're doing this and Ernest... I've got this sitting on the corner of the table and Ernest walks through. He don't know, I don't guess that we're doing... I mean he may have known we were doing the rape deal. But he, the words that Ernest said when he come through, he didn't say how are you doing, kiss my foot or nothing, he just walked by the corner of that table and when he does that, he said that's Herbert Trotty and just keeps on walking.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, who's Herbert Trotty, you know? He's a Black that lives in Slaton. And sure enough, go down there and get Herbert Trotty in and he confesses to both of them and we end up trying him on the one in Slaton, I mean on the one in Dickens, and he got a good amount of time out of that one. But that's how accurate that thing was I guess, on that particular deal. He said that's Herby Trotty and just keeps going.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, you just looked at him?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, thank you, Ernest.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, what other cases did you have there in Lubbock or the Lubbock area?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh my gosh, you ain't got time. Uh, there's so many cases.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, what kind were they, just a variety or...

**JOE HUNT:** A variety. And I'll tell you, as a Ranger, I found that you pretty much... if you got an old sheriff that wants you to help him, you better help him on all of them. Don't... I felt or I found that if you tell them no, I can't come down on your six pieces of pipe but just call me on the good stuff, pretty soon they're not gonna call you on anything, you know. So you better to be ready to go on all of it. And, after a while, I mean, if you work with the sheriffs and the deputies long enough, they will eventually not call you on the little stuff, you know. They, the stuff, I mean you... I never had a problem with that.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, how did you, how did you get your relationship built with the sheriff?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, you just go start visiting. I mean, I showed up in Lubbock uh, I was there maybe a day or two in the office and the captain came in and said you ought to get in your car and go meet your sheriffs. I'm not gonna go with you, I mean he didn't say that, nobody's gonna go with you. And I did that. I got in, I drove over to Carlson, I met with Fletcher Stark. Uh, left there, went on over to uh Dickens, I mean that's... I'm the new Ranger in town, new kid on the block, call me if you need me and uh... It takes a while for them to really accept you and too, you know, there for a while you think, gosh dang it, am I ever gonna get a call you know. Like B. J. had worked there, he worked the same territory that I worked and the calls would come in and they'd want B.J., you know because they knew B. J. But you, after a while, you know, it got a point... gosh dang, I hope they don't call me, you know, because you'd get too many.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, who was your Captain?

**JOE HUNT:** When I first went there, it was Walter Werner, W. A. Werner. And then he made Assistant Chief and went to uh Austin and Charlie Moore come. And after Charlie, I guess it was Bruce Casteel, and Joe Wilie, I guess.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, how long were you in Lubbock?

**JOE HUNT:** Little over 16 years.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, Did you spend all of your time there in Lubbock?

**JOE HUNT:** No, I come back here (San Angelo), my last five years. I was a little over 21 years in the Rangers. So, I transferred here in uh October of '93 and retired in November of '98.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, thinking back over all these cases that you had, is there one that maybe gave you a lot of satisfaction in solving?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, gosh, there's so many, it's hard to pick out just one.

**NANCY RAY:** Nothing stands out?

**JOE HUNT:** There is so many.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, is there one that maybe you didn't solve, that just stays on your mind, like really wish...

**JOE HUNT:** There's a robbery in uh, murder-robbery in Crosbyton, found a clerk at a convenience store, behind the counter, shot in the head. Uh, I think, or in my mind I'm pretty well satisfied it was two Blacks and a White man. And we did a lot to get to that but that's a uh

major U.S. highway through there, they could have been from anywhere, uh... We could put the Black, I mean the two Blacks in a van in Crosby County on that road, close to that road about the time. We could put the van at the convenience store about the time uh... There were just several things that sure indicated that it would be them but we never were able to, to uh solve it. And like I said, it was a major highway from East coast to West coast.

**NANCY RAY:** It's wide open.

**JOE HUNT:** So it could have been anybody. And then I've got another lady that uh you know we're pretty satisfied who did that. Matter of fact, we *know* who did it. Uh, she's missing out of uh Garza County. Uh, and it's one of those deals he knows as long as he keeps quiet it's not one thing can be done.

**NANCY RAY:** That has to be frustrating.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, yeah. Sure is.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, what about the investigative... the procedures you go about investigating a crime. How are they different now to what they were when you first started?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, my gosh. Well, I'm not really qualified to tell you on now because they do so much now with computers and uh DNA and all that uh... It's just changed.

**NANCY RAY:** So, if you got called on a case, say a sheriff called you in and uh you had uh, say it was it was a murder. What would be your first step at that time for trying to find out who did it?

**JOE HUNT:** Well, they're all different. Uh, it depends on I guess what you, the background you get off of uh, off your initial investigation. I guess, say... and too from experience you know... and I'll tell you this. There's some, not just Rangers, but there's some law enforcement officers that don't want to... I don't think this is so much the case with Rangers, maybe some but not a lot of them. They don't really want to take the extra time or the effort to uh, to do what needs to be done. And that's especially true in local, city and county. Or I found it to be in my case. I can give you just example after example where uh that's the case. But as you uh, you know just like that first rape I worked, I'm sure I missed a lot of things on that that I should've asked or done. Uh, I never will forget. One time I worked a murder, double homicide of a farm couple, a man and his wife. And uh I went to the autopsy with it. At that time, we didn't do forensic autopsy. We did a, we had a pathologist in Lubbock that was a clinical pathologist and I never even thought to get head hair samples from the people. Well, after they were buried and gone, that become an issue because we found a hairbrush at another location that could have probably helped us, you know, tie in. So I mean you learn on things like that. But I guess one thing that the Rangers could do that local, and I'm gonna clear up a little bit on the city police and the deputies... they are so inundated by calls, like my deputies are and my investigators.

They'll come to work in the morning and there may have been two or three or four burglaries the night before. And they don't have a choice, they have to work those. Where you know after a while, the deputies and the sheriffs wouldn't call me on those kinds of things they'd just call me on the major stuff. So I did have the ability to kind of weed out some of my investigations. And I could spend more time. And before FLSA, the Federal Standards Labor Act, or whatever it is, uh, we worked hours like you wouldn't believe. Like this farm couple I'm telling you about that was killed. We worked like 23 or 4 days straight, I mean no Saturdays, Sundays off. And we would work from like as soon as we could get up in the morning and start interviewing. Or maybe even get up earlier than that writing reports. Stay out interviewing until it was too late to interview people then come home and write reports. And we did that for like 23 or 24 days straight to get that case broke and resolved. And we did. Uh, we ended up solving that thing. Uh, but in the Rangers, we had the uh flexibility to do that. We, I'm gonna tell you that the Texas Rangers... and I'm the sheriff of the county and uh I love being the sheriff of the county and it's uh probably, I mean it's probably in retrospect, in the respect a little better honor for me to be part of the Sheriff's Office than it was the Rangers. But I will tell you this. That the Texas Rangers is the very best law enforcement job, investigative job, you can have in the world. There is not another, there is not another agency or division or department or service that had the freedom and the flexibility to go that a Ranger had. Your captain expected you to take care of your area and you just had the freedom to go. You, uh if you needed to go to the next county, go to the next county. If you need to go to the next state, go to the next state. If you need to go to the state of Oregon, Michigan, just try to do it as cheap as you could. You know, let me know you're going.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, say you were going to Oregon or Michigan, would you be accepted up there pretty well?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh my gosh, everywhere we went.

**NANCY RAY:** Is it the badge?

**JOE HUNT:** I'll tell you this. We had a burglary one time. Oh, I'm gonna say it anyway. We had a burglary one time in uh Kent County of a ranch headquarters. And actually these kids had come in there and worked like a day or two, uh day working, and then they left in the middle of the night. They left with saddles and bridles and equipment and all kind of stuff. They were from uh, what state was Elvis from? Tennessee?

**NANCY RAY:** Tennessee.

**JOE HUNT:** Tennessee. He was Memphis, Tennessee, so they were from Mississippi. They left out of there and they went up the interstate through Dallas/Fort Worth area, out that a way. And got over to Mississippi and got caught. They called and said we got them in jail, there's two kids. So me and a deputy out of Jayton left to go get them. When we got there, talked to them, they admitted it. Where's the stuff? Well, we sold it on the way out, you know. Do you remember

where you sold it? Well, pretty much, you know. So, OK, we're just gonna start in the morning and we're gonna go back the way ya'll come and you just show us where it's at, you know. So we get into Memphis, Tennessee, and it's about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. And they said well, we sold... I believe it was a gun there or something, I'm not sure. Sold something there, it was in a pawn shop downtown. Said, can you show up where it's at? Yeah, so they go turn here dadada. There it is right there, that pawn shop. So, we're at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Elm, I mean that's not the street but I don't remember what the streets were. So, I go to a pay phone, we drive to a pay phone and I call the Police Department. A lady answers and I said yes ma'am, this is Joe Hunt. I'm a Texas Ranger out of Lubbock, Texas, and I'm in your town. We're down here by a pawn shop at 4<sup>th</sup> and Elm and we've got some stolen property we think is in there that happened in our country. And we'd like, could you have a police officer meet us over here. Yes sir, I will. There was about seven police cars showed up at that, at Elm. I said galdang, are all of ya'll working this area? And they said no, he's the one assigned this area. But said we just wanted to come see a Texas Ranger. And anyway, they got there and this old guy wanted us to stay that night, the one that actually worked the area. He said, certainly ya'll can spend the night because now it's like 5 o'clock, you know. And I said nah, I said we really need to get on down the road because we had some more stuff over in Arkansas. And he said man, if you'll stay, said I'll show you the sights of Memphis. You know I'm thinking, well he's gonna show us Elvis Presley's deal. And I said nah, I don't know, I said I think we better get. He said I'll take you and show you where uh they shot Martin Luther King and all that. I mean the stuff that I never even thought about, that's what he was proud of. Anyway, uh, yes, everywhere we went, uh I would... I cannot remember a place that we didn't get any respect. I worked a murder out of uh Bakersfield, California. They didn't even know they'd had a murder, Kern County. I called out there and asked them if they had any unidentified bodies and they said no. And I said well, why don't you drive north about a mile to a deal that's got some guard rails... yeah, I know where you're talking about. I said turn right there, go down until it dead ends, turn around and walk out in the brush there and you should... just a little ways out there you ought to find a body. In about 45 minutes, they called back and said yeah, it's there. So I mean, and we ended up going out there. She (Mrs. Hunt) went with me one time. We went to the Grand Jury and then we went to two separate trials and when they overturned the death penalty, nationwide, one time there or had something to do with it, I had to go back for the boy's penalty phase again. So I ended up going out there four times and every time boy it was just as...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, how did you know to call Bakersfield and ask them if they had a body?

**JOE HUNT:** There was some kids come through Post, Texas, and there was a boy and a girl, about seventeen and nineteen year old. Seventeen year old girl and a nineteen year old boy. And they had a pickup with a Labrador retriever in it. And they took a wrong turn, got out there on the road and a reserve deputy stopped them and they had some beer. So he got to talking to them about... and there was a duffel bag in the back of this pickup that had the name of Wedemeyer on it and neither one of these kids' names was Wedemeyer. One of them was uh Yaws, YAWS, and her name was Miller. Well, where'd you get the pickup? Well, we bought it from a guy at Winnemucca, Nevada, you know. Anyway, things just didn't add up so he calls me, uh Bobby

Dean was his name, was the reserve's name. Uh he said I'd like for you to come down and talk to these people. So I go down there and you know you can tell just right away something's just not right on this deal. So but they're both pretty... you know they stick to their story... we bought it at a casino. Uh, I had found some papers in that truck on a lady that lived up in there somewhere. So I called her and I said do you know Lewis Wedemeyer? Oh yeah, he's my boyfriend. Do you know where he's at? Well, no, he checked out all of his money out of the savings and he was going to Alabama or somewhere to work in the oilfield or something, you know. I said well, uh would he have sold his truck to somebody in Nevada? She said, very possible, you know, he was that way. If he got drunk or was in a casino or something and needed money... very possible. And she said, let me ask you this. She said, is there a dog with them? And I said yeah, there's a black Labrador. And she said, well then something's happened to him because she said he would do anything, he would sell that truck but he would never part with that dog. She said something's happened to him. So anyway, we just, I kept on talking to them, the kid, the guy wouldn't talk and so I kept talking to the girl. She finally broke and said he had picked them up hitchhiking and they got down by Mojave and he got drunk, let them drive. And he had showed them a gun that he had in the truck, they shot him in the head, took his money and his truck. So, and it's, she told me just exactly how to get to that body. And, like I said, in 45 minutes, they'd come back...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, being a Ranger, or being in law enforcement at all is a dangerous profession. Uh, I know you downplay a lot of it and there's no way in this short time you can tell us everything. But the people you were dealing with, just like those hitchhikers just shot the man, whatever. What did you do to separate your life, that type of your life with your home life? You know, how did you keep balanced and have a somewhat normal personal life?

**JOE HUNT:** I don't know. I never thought much about it at home, is that what you're talking about?

**NANCY RAY:** Yeah. Were you active in church, were you active in the community, did you like sports or...

**JOE HUNT:** Uh, we uh, actually, we spent a lot, I mean I did a lot with my boys, with our... We did a lot of hunting and fishing. We probably come back to San Angelo at least once a month ever month that we were gone. We were gone 28 years. Uh, we spent at least one weekend a month usually back here. Like I said, we did a lot of camping, hunting, fishing... my kids were real... we did a lot of that. Uh, I don't know, just seemed to work I guess. Linda didn't work, she took care of the kids at home.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, you also mentioned you'd be gone, you'd be gone quite a bit. You would work long periods of time when you didn't have to go by 40 hours a week, it wasn't an 8 to 5 job. Uh, so your wife had to have a big responsibility with that.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh sure, yeah she did. You know that uh, I don't know, when I retired, I wrote her a little letter and it uh pretty well summed up what I got to do and (*Mrs. Hunt showed me the letter*) it's, that's as true as it can be you know. She got to stay home and do the washing and drying and cooking... didn't really have a good time and I got to have a blast. I mean I could go chase bank robbers, killers, uh I mean we just had a good time.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, OK, being a Ranger, I mean you're well respected, it's kind of a serious kind of a, you have to be focused, but there's bound to be some fun in there somewhere, you just said it. Did ya'll play pranks on each other?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh gosh yes, all the time.

**NANCY RAY:** All the time?

**JOE HUNT:** I mean... in Lubbock we had uh, not so much on Rangers, I... I didn't pull much on other Rangers but just people in the office. See, we were, especially in Lubbock, we were in a regional office and we had uh... of course you got Rangers, Motor Vehicle Theft investigators, Narcotics agents, Criminal Intelligence officers, uh uniformed people... so you're all, I mean there's a lot of people. Yeah, we did a lot of things.

**NANCY RAY:** Can you think of one?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh gosh yes. I can think of a bunch of them.

**NANCY RAY:** Do you want to tell us about one?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh man, which one... We had an investigator there by the name of, Motor Vehicle Theft investigator by the name of Jerry Johnson. And Jerry was uh, he was a big cut up, a big prankster, until you started trying to prankster with him and then it was all serious business, you know. The first time I ever met Jerry Johnson, we were in a school in Austin. I had just made Rangers and he'd just made Motor Vehicle Theft. And we ended up in a uh fingerprint school together. And every time we'd go on break, you know we'd take a break once an hour, I'd get up and I'd come back and my glasses would either be smeared with uh Coke or my pencil lead would be broke out and it was Jerry Johnson doing it. So I spent the next... that was like a two-week school, and I spent the next 16 years getting even with him. He was deathly scared of snakes. He'd uh had a snake wrap around his leg as a kid and I guarantee you, you could take that little old coil off the phone cord, and go in his office and shut the door and turn the light off and throw that on him and you can't believe....She (Mrs. Hunt) dropped a rattlesnake rattler on him one time, he was at our house eating, he was stretched back watching football and she dropped that rattlesnake rattler on him, and I thought he was gonna kill himself trying to get out of that chair. But anyway, Jerry Johnson... you got time for this?

**NANCY RAY:** Yes.

**JOE HUNT:** There was a sheriff in, or a deputy in Lubbock by the name of Sonny Cazee (sp?). Sonny Cazee was a great big man. He got elected sheriff in 1981. The first thing, and Sonny was one of those kinds of sheriffs that's adversarial with his commissioners. He wanted to be adversarial. He, and a lot of sheriffs are that way, they just don't like commissioners. Sonny started off adversarial. The very first thing when he got elected, he went over and he wanted them to give his deputies a raise and he wanted them to buy him a great big chair for his office because he was a big man. They told him we won't give you the raise for your deputies but we will buy you a new chair. He said don't give me the new chair if you can't give me the raise. And they made the Lubbock news, TV, it made the, the newspaper, Sonny was a publicity hound too so it was, the chair was pretty widespread news, and the pay raise. Well the next Christmas, his employees took up a collection and they bought him this big chair. Well, that made the news. You know, Sheriff's employees take up collection and buy him this chair. So, we think, me and Warren Yeager, another Ranger there in Lubbock, and a polygraph operator by the name of Ron Rogers. We're sitting around the coffee shop one morning right after they get this new chair for Sonny. We think boy, it'd be neat to just go over there and steal that chair. So we have a surveillance van in the Rangers, an old green van, Dodge van. So we go out there and get in that van and we go over and the plan is Warren is gonna go down to the jail which... the sheriff's office and jail were all in one but it took up an entire block. The jail was on one end and the sheriff's office was on the other end. Warren was gonna go down to the jail and tell the jailer you know we're gonna steal Sonny's chair, we need you to call and tell him there's a problem down here to get him out of his office to come to the deal. So he does, that works. We were sitting down the hall watching and we see Sonny come out his office and head down toward the jail, you know. So as soon as he clears... (*side conversation*) As soon as Sonny clears out, well me and Ron run in there, get that chair, wheel it out to the van and take off, to the office. And we pick Warren up on the way. Well, the sheriff's office and the DPS office ain't but about eight or ten blocks apart. We make the block and we get over in front of the Avalanche Journal, we meet a deputy, he's the sheriff down there now, David Gutierrez. David was a warrant officer at the time. By this time, Sonny has got back up there and realized his chair's gone. Well, the ham that he is, he goes down there and gets to put out on inter-city radio, inter-city radio which broadcasts to everybody and to all the scanners, all the news – *be on the lookout for a green van, occupied by three guys, they just stole the Sheriff's chair from his office* – and uh, David Gutierrez at that time is meeting us. And he gets on the radio and he calls the sheriff's office. He said, I just met that green van and it's headed toward DPS. So, they say well the Sheriff's on his way to DPS. So we go into the DPS office, get that chair out and we take it down and we put it Jerry Johnson's office, the Motor Vehicle Theft guy. He don't know nothing about nothing, he's, he's not even there. He's not in the building. We put that chair in his office and we get into our office and about the time we do all this and get it all done, Sonny shows up, the Sheriff, and the news media starts showing up with their cameras. I'm talking about the TV stations. Sonny comes in, where's my chair, you know? What are you talking about, Sonny? I know you got my chair. Well, we saw Johnson rolling it, or rolling a chair down the deal, you know. Where's Johnson, you know? I don't know. And this wouldn't happen again in a million years, but at that time we had radios on the, like a telephone on uh, the girls had them there at the office. And I picked up the radio

and I called for Jerry Johnson, and he answered. And I said Jerry, uh there's some people here at the office need to see you. And you know he's real dignified on there... I'm ten-six at this time, can you just get some messages and I'll call when I get back. And I said Jerry, I think they really need to see you now. Ten-four. He was over by Texas Tech which wasn't very far from the office. So, anyway, OK, I'll come back in, you know. Well, when Jerry come through the back door of the office, it's back here, there's a long hallway, his office is over here. And Sonny is standing down by his door and the news cameras are behind him. And when Jerry Johnson comes in, he ain't got a clue about nothing, he don't know nothing's going on. When he rounds that corner, Sonny's standing there with his hands on his hips and when he turns that corner, well they turn the lights on those news cameras and start filming him as he comes up you know. And Sonny says, I want my chair... What are you talking about? He said, I want my chair that you got. Sonny, I don't have your chair. And uh, he said well let me... and we had gotten the key to Jerry's office from the janitor, you know the master key. So, old Sonny said well let me... you mind me looking in your office? No, I don't mind. Of course Jerry's just confident that chair's not in there. Jerry opens that door... when he pushes that door open just a little bit, and the cameras are rolling. Channel 3, Channel 12, all of them... Jerry pushes that door open about that far and he says, oh shit, and he pulls the door to.

**NANCY RAY:** Oh no, poor Jerry.

**JOE HUNT:** And actually on the same day, Major Bell, he's fixing to retire, and the new major, Major Cawthorn, is in town and he's here in the office. Well they see all this commotion going on and they ain't got a clue about what's going on. But anyway, Sonny finally gets his chair back and Johnson gets ridiculed for it. And, but I mean we were doing that kind of stuff.

**NANCY RAY:** Did they, did Johnson ever figure out who did it? I know he suspected you.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh yeah, he knew who did it. But I mean we were always doing stuff to Johnson. Well, he was always doing stuff to us. I, I mean it was just a constant...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, was part of that to kind of compensate for all the serious work you had to do?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh yeah, you have to. Uh, that's absolutely... You know people would talk about how you could go out to where there was... and you really went to some horrific scenes, or at least I did. You know you just can't imagine what one human being will do to another. And you go out there and you're walking amongst that, and walking over them and making jokes uh, I mean... But you have to do that just to accept what you're seeing and what you're dealing with. It just uh...

**NANCY RAY:** Yeah. I know that one of the interviews that I helped with, the man said if it was an adult, you know, he treated it as property, I mean it didn't bother him. But a child, that was hardest.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh gosh yeah.

**NANCY RAY:** So it was the same for you.

**JOE HUNT:** You'd always... it would just tear your heart out. I remember I hadn't been in Lubbock very long at all and we went to one that was a uh, a little boy had been sexually abused, killed, and dumped off in a crevice out towards Buffalo Lake. And we finally found him, of course he was naked and when he dumped him, well he just kind of vee'd and was stuck down in that crevice and... You know I think my youngest, Brian, was about his age at that time and you think you know, gosh dang... But you know that's...

**NANCY RAY:** Well, comparing your time as a Ranger, your days, and you retired what year?

**JOE HUNT:** Uh, I retired November '98.

**NANCY RAY:** '98. Uh, how do you think it will be different for a person becoming a Ranger today? What will be the biggest difference that he will face?

**JOE HUNT:** I think just the technology and stuff that they have now. The, oh you know the AFIS system, the Automated Fingerprint, the DNA, all of the uh technical inventions they've made in the chem lab, the computer, uh... I fought that computer for a long time and actually it made it a little easier when I finally did start using it. But I think there's so much of that now they've, they have to do it. It's just, I mean you cannot probably get along without a computer nowadays, you're just... And I still to this day don't do email in my office. And now pretty much everybody knows that and I know I'm just old, behind the times deal I guess but I don't want to do it. They know to email either the chief or the captain and they'll get it to me you know. If you want me, call me or come see or walk up the stairs and talk to me. I've actually got people that'll be in offices right next to each other and they'll email each other instead of talking, you know. I can't even understand that. You know.

**NANCY RAY:** Let's go back to that case you mentioned earlier, you said it was the second time you were in the paper and it was a case here in San Angelo.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh yeah. Well, we had a girl kidnapped off the base here. Uh, Tracy McBride, and (*side conversation*) Uh, she was kidnapped by a uh ex-Army sergeant, he was out of the military at the time. Went on the base, kidnapped her, took her home, locked her up in the closet, raped her, uh got spooked, took her out before dawn... and this was like in, I don't remember... I remember it was icy cold. Uh took her just over into Coke County, killed her, dumped her under a bridge there. Uh, I took his statement and then we searched his house and did all that. Tried him in Lubbock in Federal court and he got the death penalty. And he was about the second one they executed after the Federals started back with the death penalty.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, are a lot of the cases in this area related to military people, more or not?  
(*headshake*) Nope?

**JOE HUNT:** No, the last case I worked here, major case, was a fireman. Uh, his, he was dating a lady and the lady's ex-husband lured him out in the county and killed him. Like I said, it would just amaze you how uh some people can do other people, how brutal they can be.

**NANCY RAY:** Right. All right, did you have any honors or special recognition that...

**JOE HUNT:** I kind of dodge that kind of stuff.

**NANCY RAY:** I didn't figure you would tell me but I thought I would ask.

**JOE HUNT:** No, really, I don't uh. I made a Chief of Police in uh, he's dead now too, T. O. Egner, I made him extremely mad at me one time. He called me and asked me what I was gonna be doing on a certain day and I said, well I don't know, you know. And it was like months ahead of time, two months or so. He said well, you need to be in Idalou I believe it was, or somewhere. Uh, the whatever club... Elks Lodge... the Masons. Uh the... you've been nominated and we're gonna select you as "Officer of the Year." I said T.O., I ain't gonna be there. Oh yeah, yeah, you will be. So he called me in another week or so and said, now you are gonna be there? I said T.O., I told you, I'm not. I don't do that, I don't like that, I don't want to do that. And that time, there had been an officer, a deputy, jailer, shot in Lubbock. He had taken a prisoner to the dentist office. They'd, him... this old inmate and his girlfriend had planned uh this deal that he'd ask to go and go on a certain day. Well she put a gun in the men's room, hid it in the bowl of the toilet and this jailer made a mistake by letting him go in there by himself, not go in there with him. He come back out and he shot that deputy like four or five times. Didn't kill him but... only reason he didn't kill him but the only reason it didn't kill him was just the grace of God. I mean, when I got there they were still, he was so bad they couldn't even move him. He was still in the hall, they were still working on him, the EMTs were. Uh, just trying to get him I guess stable enough to put him in an ambulance. And uh, but anyway, he survived it. And I told old T.O., I said if you want to give that "Officer of the Year" to somebody, I said give it to that deputy that was shot, you know. Anyway, I didn't do it and old T.O. got pretty mad and uh, he was mad for a while.

**NANCY RAY:** He got over it?

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah, he got over it.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, even though you didn't show up to receive it, what did he nominate... why did he nominate you?

**JOE HUNT:** I don't know, Because he thought I was officer of the year, I guess. I don't know.

**NANCY RAY:** Maybe your wife could tell me why.

**JOE HUNT:** I don't know, no, I mean... I don't think I'm nothing special and I did... I will say this. I think I worked hard as a Ranger and I took my job very serious and I, I loved the challenge of trying to get things solved. I didn't get them all solved, uh but I think I did probably go the extra effort and spend the extra time to try to get it done. Uh, I really prided in that. And when especially when you get to working on a uh major case, you can't believe how you become entwined with the family, the victim's family. And in some cases I guess, the perpetrator's family... But mostly the victim's... And it becomes really, or it did to me, you know, uh, you really just kind of take on an air that you're, you've got their burden on your shoulders to get this thing resolved. You know, I mean they're the ones that lost the loved one but man they are looking toward you for some resolution on this. Find out who did it, get it done you know, and get it to court, get them...

**NANCY RAY:** It's a huge responsibility.

**JOE HUNT:** And it really, you really uh make a bond with those people that's really kind of indescribable. I've got friends uh from I guess the very first cases that I worked that we're still friends today and uh, I mean you just uh... just like this fireman. Uh, all of his family I would say uh, we're just close to them and they're close to us. It's just uh... Because they were so reliant on you know... well relying on me. They uh, the reason they called me to begin with is because they felt like the local police wasn't doing anything. And really they weren't.

**NANCY RAY:** So in that case, the family called you in?

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah.

**NANCY RAY:** OK. Well, once you retired, is that when you became sheriff?

**JOE HUNT:** I run for sheriff uh after we retired... I retired November '98 and we started running uh for the 2000 election, I took office in 2001.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, all right. And you have a Ranger, you have Rangers that help you now, is that right?

**JOE HUNT:** Um hmm.

**NANCY RAY:** So, how is that different?

**JOE HUNT:** Took three of them to replace them.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, you're kind of humble, right? Well, what kind of working relationship... I mean you're on the other side of the fence now, how, how is that?

**JOE HUNT:** I hardly ever see them. I mean they work with our guys, but I hardly ever see them. I just try to stay out of their way. I don't, uh, you know we've got an Investigation Division uh and uh I've been out on a couple of cases that I knew were happening... I mean they call me on the major stuff and I, I usually don't go. The only time I'll go is if uh you know I think they might need something. Do you need, you know... have you got everything you need equipment wise, do we need to borrow stuff, do we need to try to buy some stuff... you need food... sometimes you get out there uh, it takes longer than what you think and you end up with no water, no food, and those kinds of things.

**NANCY RAY:** Well of course not long ago San Angelo was in the news with the Mormon issue. Were you involved with that?

**JOE HUNT:** Yeah, a little bit. Not as far as the investigation but of course once it come here, uh we were heavily involved in security. And we were involved down there. Our SWAT team went down there uh first day, first thing. And uh, and then we ended up sending some other officers to help with the uh, moving those kids out and putting them in that compound, I mean the Community Center down there and then getting them up here. But, once it moved here, we have a Command Center trailer and we used it, we took it down there. DPS worked out of it and uh, you know we were... One time, probably about, ooh, probably a third of my commissioned officers were tied up on that down there. But I mean, we're proud to do that. We, we work uh, we work great with other agencies here in this county, or community, I mean surrounding counties too.

**NANCY RAY:** OK, sure. I think what I've heard is just nearly every interview is that the relationship with other law enforcement agencies is probably one of the most important things that you have... to build. Well, what would you... are there any other cases you'd like to talk about or anything else that's popping into your mind?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, we can sit here for two or three days talking about different cases. It's...

**NANCY RAY:** If you were thinking of somebody, you know 50 years or 100 years looking at this video or reading this transcript, uh what do you think would be interesting to them?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, I don't know. Uh, there's just so many aspects of that Ranger job that, I mean there's uhn... You know, not only the investigative part that you get to do but it opens up so many other doors for you like uh how many people ever get the opportunity to drive the governor around... or the governor's wife.

**NANCY RAY:** So you did that?

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, gosh yeah. All Rangers do.

**NANCY RAY:** Which governor, which one...

**JOE HUNT:** Well, to tell you the truth, the only governor I ever had set foot in my car was uh Ann Richards and George Bush. I didn't really like that duty and in Lubbock, there was three Rangers. Uh, and I always... if you just kind of hesitate, the Rangers that really like to do it will go ahead and come up to the front you know. So all you have to do is kind of hold back and the others would take that. And then it got to the point uh, I got to doing some uh stuff... I guess it was Fifth Grade, and Seventh Grade, or Fourth Grade and Seventh Grade classes have Texas History... and we got to getting a lot of requests for uh school programs. So I put together a little ole slide program on the Rangers uh and cases and equipment and stuff we used, about a 40-minute deal. And it was really a pretty good deal. And I didn't mind doing that, I didn't mind getting up and telling them kids about the Rangers and the other guys didn't really like to do that. So I made a deal with them... I'll do, I'll handle most of those, ya'll handle the governors. So I actually never had a governor sit in my car for the 16 years I was in Lubbock. Now when I come here, of course I was the only Ranger here then and... I know the first time when Ann Richards come to town, uh Calvin Cox was the Ranger in Abilene and he come down to help me because they usually had two Rangers, you know one to carry to the governor and one to kind of be the backup guy, I guess. So I pulled that old trick on Calvin, just kind of laying back and thinking he'd go out there and get her but he wouldn't do it. So since it was Angelo, I had to go. So, so anyway I ended up carrying her once or twice and Bush, oh Bush several times. Bush was, I really liked Bush. Uh, I'm not political one or way the other on him but uh he was a down-to-earth guy. Ann Richards was, she was maybe a little different in the car than she was out in public but Bush was... Matter of fact, ole Bush, uh the last time I carried him... I retired in November and in about October, he come out here. And they always send out an advance guy from the governor's protective service the day before and we go over the route and make sure the hospital knows and dadada you know, that kind of stuff. And uh that particular day that that governor's security guy was out here, we were about the same age and we were talking about retirement. And I already knew I was gonna retire the end of November. And we were talking about that and so, you know and he was asking me what kind of plan I took... three quarters pay for her and dadada. You know we're just talking DPS retirement talk. Well, the next day, Bush and his wife both come in and they go to an event, I think we were at the Cactus, yeah we were at the Cactus Hotel. And uh, anyway we get, uh he had two events, one at one part of the Cactus Hotel for 10 or 15 minutes and then he was gonna go to another part of the Cactus Hotel and do another 15 or 20 minutes or whatever, then go back to the airport. Well, we had to move him from this point to this point, I mean we get him into this point and that's when he first sees the guy from Austin. You know, in other words, I picked him and her both up at the airport and drove them in. And then when he gets there, the guy from Austin is already at the Cactus Hotel, he's waiting there to get him. So during that first event, that guy tells him that I'm fixing to retire. So he comes out of that first event and he comes to the, to the uh, going to the second event, we're leading him, and uh he makes a comment to me, he said I, he said Ranger, I understand that you're fixing to retire on us at the end of next month. I said yes sir. He said, well when we get in this other event, said I'll get us a picture together, we'll take a picture... (*Mr. Hunt asks his wife, why don't you get that picture off the deal in there*). And I said, well that'd be nice, you know. And we did. We had a Standard Times guy take our picture. Well, we uh got

through with that event, got back in the car, and as... again uh him and her, they're in the backseat. And this time, there's a Times, a Times photographer, he's gonna catch a ride with them. He, he didn't come in with them but he's here and he's gonna catch a ride with them and they're going somewhere else. So they're gonna let him go on the plane with them to wherever it is they're going. So we get back in the car and we're headed out there and he's in the backseat and he says, Honey, that Ranger up there is fixing to retire on us next month. And she says, oh really? And she hands... they had given her a dozen yellow roses at this event so she uh she hands those roses up and she says uh, here give these to your wife. And I mean that's just the kind of people they were so, so we did. Well anyway, then this Times reporter said well, when we get out to the airport, he said uh, I've got some film, slide film left on my camera. He said if you want, I'll take your picture with the Governor. I said, well we'll do it again. So this one (*picture*) is from the airport and... but I mean that's just the kind of guy he was. He took time out to take this picture, she give me those roses, uh... Every time he was in my car, and that was probably three or four times you know, that uh, just normal conversation, just a good guy.

**NANCY RAY:** So you did get an opportunity, it did open some doors for you to do things.

**JOE HUNT:** Oh, yes. Uh, we had a deal one time, John Montford was the District Attorney, got to be District Attorney right after I went to Lubbock. And I don't know if you know John Montford, but he uh was District Attorney and then he got elected to the Senate and he become the uh Appropriations Chairman for the Senate, like the head guy in the Appropriations. And he's a real good friend of the Rangers and a real good friend of ours. And uh he got to, oh I guess them Senators, each one of them get to be at one time or another, get to be governor for the day. And they, it was his turn to be governor for the day which is a weekend deal, it's like a Friday, Saturday event. Uh, and this was while that Branch Davidian deal was going on as a matter of fact. Oh, uh anyway he was gonna be governor for the day and he asked me and Jackie Peoples, another Ranger there in Lubbock, to be his honorary security for that deal. And they approved, I mean DPS let us go, and me and Jackie, we went down there for two or three days. They rented us tuxedos and all kind of stuff. Linda got to go, Jackie's wife got to go. And uh we just got to hobnob and be around... go in the Senate chambers while he was the governor of the day and all that. Uh, so like I said, there was a lot of things you get to do. Gosh, it just opened so many doors for you, you know. Plus, I tell you what... just the short time I was here... Of course we never really left San Angelo. I mean we left, we were gone 28 years but we were back every month, and I've got a lot of family, extended family here, she does... got a lot of friends here. So even though we were gone, we still kept connected. And then when I come back, just the cases that you work in the Rangers, you meet so many different people. Uh, the support I had when I run for office uh, a lot, well there was just a lot of it that resulted, that was the results of cases that I'd worked, just in the five years I was here. Uh, you can't believe how many people you meet through those investigations that really become uh loyal supporters. I mean they get to know you and... just like this Nandine family, uh there was uh two or three sisters and a couple of brothers and gosh, they campaigned hard, they campaigned hard for us, did an ad for us in the paper uh, uh got some very good contributions off of some very big names here of cases that I worked when I first come here. Uh, oh it was just, like I said, the Rangers is just a unique organization.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, quickly what would be, what would you want people to remember you for, your career and your life?

**JOE HUNT:** I guess just uh being a plain old guy, nothing special but just trying to uphold the tradition of the Rangers and do the best job that we could, uh, you know, no matter what it took, the time or the effort, or the sacrifice and I did. You know, there was times that I was away from my family uh that you know you don't ever get that back. But by the same token, you get the satisfaction of knowing... and you know it's not the money you make, it certainly never was the money. But when you uh, when you get a call that a kidnapped granddaughter is in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and you know that the grandparents are... they've been just devastated by it and now they're gonna get to jump in their car and go get her, and you know that uh... satisfaction that you get out of that and uh... I had a major heart attack in uh, in uh 2004, and after I got out of ICU, I remember, I was just kind of semi-conscious in my room one day, everybody had kind of left and I was getting a little bit of rest. And they were trying to really curtail the visitors but I heard this voice, Joe, how are you doing, and it was this granddad that I'm talking about that we had worked the case and chased the old daughter... his uh daughter-in-law had come and kidnapped the kid, it was parental. They had custody of her but the mother come got her and took her off to the East Coast and got a call...

**NANCY RAY:** Money can't pay for that.

**JOE HUNT:** No.

**NANCY RAY:** Well, let me thank you very much for your time and for your service to the state of Texas too.

**JOE HUNT:** Well, thank you.