

Interview with
JIM PETERS
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project: Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted at Mr. Peters' Home
New Braunfels, Texas
Wednesday—April 22, 2009

Interviewed By: Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray
Longview, Texas

Present at Interview: Jim Peters, Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray



Introduction

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JIM PETERS
TEXAS RANGER, RETIRED

NANCY RAY: My name is Nancy Ray. I am visiting with Jim Peters of New Braunfels, Texas. Today is Wednesday, April 22nd, 2009. The purpose of this interview is to discuss Ranger Peters' career as a Texas Ranger. Ranger Peters, do I have your permission to record this interview?

JIM PETERS: Yes.

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

JIM PETERS: Yes.

NANCY RAY: And 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?

JIM PETERS: Yes.

NANCY RAY: Let's start with a little bit about you. Would you tell me when you were born and where?

JIM PETERS: I was born way back in 1927 in Chicago, Illinois. My folks were traveling folks. Had a brother who was born in San Diego, California... And we lived in Florida, we lived in Arizona, we lived in Georgia, just almost all states in the southern part. And we wound up in San Antonio. When the war broke out, my dad and I were in a car getting ready to go fishing, sitting at a service station. Well, Dad said we're not gonna live here at the coast... we were in Jacksonville, Florida. So he packed up and moved to San Antonio. And I joined the Marine Corps following San Antonio. Went over to China for a couple of years, back in the 40s. Came

back, they were living in Austin when I came back, and I went to work as a Cadillac mechanic in Austin. Did that about five years. And they brought a service manager in one day and said Mr. Martin, you're getting too old for the job... here's your gold watch. And I thought about that. I had a friend, a Highway Patrolman. He told me about the Highway Patrol and I said that's what I want to do. So I joined the Highway Patrol and I was stationed in Alice, in Jim Wells and Duval Counties, for ten years. Transferred up to Giddings and was there for two years. Applied for the Ranger Service and was promoted to Ranger in '69.

NANCY RAY: I show you entered the Ranger Service October 1st, 1969. When did you enter the Highway Patrol?

JIM PETERS: 1957.

NANCY RAY: And you said you were born in 1927. What is your birth date?

JIM PETERS: October 2nd.

NANCY RAY: October 2nd... that's my birthday too. George Frasier's birthday too. OK, and what were your parents' names?

JIM PETERS: Well, my dad's name was Chester. Mother's name was Anna Mae.

NANCY RAY: OK, ANNA? And you said you had one brother?

JIM PETERS: Yes, I had a brother nine years younger than I am and I've got a picture of him and I up there on the wall together. He's a Highway Patrolman.

NANCY RAY: Both of you...

JIM PETERS: And he developed cancer in a kidney and just barely made his 20 years before he had to retire. And he passed away shortly afterward.

NANCY RAY: My goodness that's bad stuff, isn't it? Well you said you were a traveling family. What did your dad do? What kind of work?

JIM PETERS: He was a Ford mechanic. And he worked somewhere for six months or a year... come home and say let's move, let's go somewhere... He'd get to a fork in the road and he'd ask Mama which way do you want to go? They'd go somewhere.

NANCY RAY: Well where did you finally graduate from high school?

JIM PETERS: I didn't graduate.

NANCY RAY: You didn't graduate?

JIM PETERS: No, I joined the Marine Corps and missed out on the graduation. I took the GED test in San Antonio.

NANCY RAY: So that's how you graduated, with your GED. Well, when you were in the Marine Corps, what was your job?

JIM PETERS: I was in a motor transport supply company.

NANCY RAY: And did you work on vehicles or...

JIM PETERS: No.

NANCY RAY: But at some point you learned... to work on...

JIM PETERS: My dad was a mechanic all his life and it just fell natural to me.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well when you entered the Highway Patrol then ... tell us a little bit about the school. Did you go to the current academy or Camp Mabry?

JIM PETERS: Current academy.

NANCY RAY: OK. They didn't do motorcycles, is that right?

JIM PETERS: No. They quit doing motorcycles right before I went on thank goodness.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us a little bit about your experiences with the academy.

JIM PETERS: Well the academy back then was pretty rough. They made you duck walk up the stairs... make you do small feet in a circle where they laid you down, put your feet up in the air and moving like that (*he demonstrated with feet*). You boxed. When you whipped one well you had to whip another one. When you whipped that one then you had to whip another one.

NANCY RAY: Good gracious. What was the hardest part to you... of the academy?

JIM PETERS: I didn't find any of it hard. I enjoyed it... great academy.

NANCY RAY: Well how many people started and how many finished in your class?

JIM PETERS: I'm not sure on how many finished. I believe it was about 65.

NANCY RAY: But more than that started evidently.

JIM PETERS: Yes.

NANCY RAY: What made people drop out... in your opinion?

JIM PETERS: I can't understand why anybody would want to drop out but it just too rough on them, on the physical part.

NANCY RAY: The physical you think is the part? Well what else did you learn in the academy? I guess there were firearms and what else?

JIM PETERS: There was a tremendous amount of things... Accident investigations, highway... how to handle people on the highway, many things.

NANCY RAY: What about handling people on the highway? That looks like it would be very difficult to do. You never know who you are stopping, how do you decide what to do?

JIM PETERS: Back in those days, when you told somebody something they listened to you and we got along fine. Nowadays, I wouldn't want to be a Highway Patrolman the way people treat you.

NANCY RAY: Well I've heard that, some of the Rangers that we've interviewed said they felt like a Highway Patrolman has the most dangerous job. Do you think that's true?

JIM PETERS: Yes.

NANCY RAY: Well where did you go when you became a Highway Patrolman?

JIM PETERS: I went to Alice.

NANCY RAY: OK, that was your first station.

JIM PETERS: That was my first station.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us a little bit about experiences in Alice.

JIM PETERS: I had a real good partner, Willie Stafford. And I also had Oren Moore who became a Highway Patrol captain later on. But we got along good. We never had any fights or any problems at all. And it was just a... just wonderful to go to work. I never can think of a day when I didn't want to go to work. I loved it. And arrested a lot of DWIs. Of course I might give out a hundred warnings to five tickets.

NANCY RAY: What made you decide to give a warning rather than a ticket?

JIM PETERS: Knowing the way a person looked, his attitude, what we stopped him for. I know when I was transferred up to Giddings, I'd been giving everybody 9 miles an hour over the speed limit. Anything like that they got a warning. But when I went up to Giddings, Highway Patrol sergeant there... I stopped someone 8 miles an hour over the speed limit and I gave him a warning. I got back in the car and he said did you give that man a ticket? I told him I gave him a warning. Do you know what the DPS tolerance is? He says 5 miles. Yes sir. That's what you'll stick to from now on. Yes sir. *(laughter)* As long as he was in the car.

NANCY RAY: Well a partner is a very important person. Is that correct?

JIM PETERS: That's correct.

NANCY RAY: And I understand that when you first become a patrolman that the senior one is called the lead. What did you learn from your lead partner? Did you have one at first?

JIM PETERS: Yes I did. That old boy, he was... he was really good... taught me a lot of things... and was real good with people.

NANCY RAY: So you learned how to handle people or continued that I guess.

JIM PETERS: You treat everyone like you want to be treated and you'll be treated the same way. And I don't care how bad it was, I'm gonna treat him with respect. Of course somebody might have to go to jail whether he wants to or not but I never had any problem.

NANCY RAY: Well is there anything from when you were in Alice that stands out in your mind that you want to tell us about?

JIM PETERS: Well, George Parr, he was head of Duval County. And he always liked a fast automobile. And I remember one night I was working a little one-car rollover just outside of Freer. The highway... two highways come together there and he failed to make the curve and turned his car over. Outdoor movie picture show was right across the road and it let out. Everybody came across the road wanting to see blood which there wasn't any. And here came a car out of Freer at a high rate of speed. I jumped out there with my 5-cell flashlight to slow him down with all them people there. He didn't slow down. He went through there in a blue Chrysler 300. I said... told my dad was riding with me that night... I said that was George Parr, let's go give him a ticket. We jumped in the car and about two miles out of town we run up behind him. And I had a '57 Ford and I'm sorry, '59 Ford, V-8 Interceptor, overdrive. I turned on that red spotlight, that's all we had. I turned that on well the race was on. It was 26 miles to his home in San Diego. Going uphill, I'd lose a little bit. Going downhill, I'd catch up with him. And he never would stop. About 6 miles out of San Diego, I started floating the valves in that Ford, had to shut it off. I called Bill McCoy, my sergeant, to see if he could set up a roadblock. But he didn't get there quick enough. So George went to his house. You go into George's driveway it's a pretty good ways down to the house. And you've got a garage with a whole bunch of, a whole bunch of garages there together. My sergeant said I sat out there on the road with my field glasses and watched him. He left the garage door open about 2 or 3 feet. Said he made 12 trips from the trunk of his car into this house. I don't know what he had but it must have been bad (*laughter*). So he talked to him the next say. He said sergeant, that won't happen again.

That was my wife driving last night. I told her Honey, you need to stop, that's a Highway Patrol... she wouldn't do it (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: And you believed him?

JIM PETERS: yeah (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: ... as you give a little grin. All right... Well did your dad ride with you often?

JIM PETERS: Quite a bit. He loved to ride.

NANCY RAY: What did he enjoy the most?

JIM PETERS: He just enjoyed riding. He enjoyed the chases. Of course we had a lot of chases back then.

NANCY RAY: How come?

JIM PETERS: People just liked to see if they could outrun them Plymouths. In '60 I got a Plymouth. That's the last time I was ever outrun. Them Plymouths would run 140 miles an hour.

NANCY RAY: So the Ford was the last time you were outrun?

JIM PETERS: *nodded*

NANCY RAY: OK. Did you ever have any crashes?

JIM PETERS: Nope.

NANCY RAY: None? Very good.

JIM PETERS: I spent 30 years in the Department of Public Safety and I only had one little minor incident where I hooked the front bumper of a Suburban with the rear bumper of mine. Didn't even put a scratch on mine... Just bent the bumper a little bit on the other car. That's the only wreck I had during my 30 years. I was real fortunate.

NANCY RAY: You were. That's a good record, surely is. Well when you went to Giddings... tell us about Giddings. How was it different from Alice?

JIM PETERS: Well Giddings... when I asked the Highway Patrol captain for a transfer up there to Austin, he said Austin was completely full and had people waiting to get in Austin. He said I'll put you on a list. When it comes available I'll let you go to Austin. I'm opening up at Junction. I'm gonna open Junction, there wasn't a patrolman there. And I'm gonna open Giddings. He said I sent one patrolman to Giddings... he didn't last six months and the sheriff ran him off. He didn't want anybody over there. Giddings is only 20 miles from a good friend of mine so I went over to Giddings and talked to this old sheriff. We got along real well. We become just like brothers together over there. I enjoyed working in Giddings. Good old German community.

NANCY RAY: Sounds like your people skills you just kept using all through your career.

JIM PETERS: I never had any problems.

NANCY RAY: That's good. What kind of... did you have a lot of traffic problems there or DWIs or what at Giddings?

JIM PETERS: No, just traffic back and forth.

NANCY RAY: All right. What about... were you ever drawn on? Did somebody ever draw their gun on you?

JIM PETERS: No.

NANCY RAY: You're a fairly large presence so they probably didn't want to push you either.

JIM PETERS: On the Highway Patrol I never did have anybody draw a gun on me.

NANCY RAY: That's good. Well are there any other incidents as a patrolman you want to tell us about? Maybe something humorous or something stands out?

JIM PETERS: Well, my partner and I, we were working radar about 10 miles north of Alice. And I had a car stopped and here come one over the top of the hill and skidded to a stop. Said *my baby, my baby not breathing, help me, help me*. So I grabbed the little baby and my partner was driving. We took off for Alice, wide open. I was giving that baby artificial mouth-to-mouth... We got into the edge of town there

in Giddings, I mean in Alice. The little kid went limp. I thought my God he just died. And lights were shining and I could see him blinking his eyes. He made it.

NANCY RAY: what a relief.

JIM PETERS: Makes you feel pretty good when you save a child's life.

NANCY RAY: And that child... how old would the child be now?

JIM PETERS: Ooh...

NANCY RAY: An adult for sure.

JIM PETERS: yeah.

NANCY RAY: Well as a patrolman, then you never knew what you were gonna face when you went out.

JIM PETERS: Every day was a new day.

NANCY RAY: What was the most unusual thing you did as a patrolman... or incident?

JIM PETERS: Can't really think of an unusual thing. There was always something... rescue somebody stuck out in the mud... and try to walk across a big field and I had to go out there and carry this gal out of there... just little things like that.

NANCY RAY: Did you ever train someone? Were you ever the lead patrolman?

JIM PETERS: Yes, I broke in... I broke in 4 Highway Patrolman. Every one of them turned out to be a real good patrolman.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet. How did you make that happen? What did you tell them or what did you show them?

JIM PETERS: , I just showed them how to talk to people, how to treat people... of course how to write the reports. And none of them had any problems. Captain Oren Moore, he came there and I broke him in... in '62. He'd been a city police officer down in San Benito so he knew how to treat people and he was real easy. All he had to do was learn DPS policies. I left there, he was transferred to Freer. He made sergeant and then he made lieutenant in San Antonio and he made captain. And we were still friends. I

retired and he retired shortly afterward. I got him to go to the Criminal Investigation hypnosis class to be one of my hypnotists because I started doing hypnosis work. And we taught together at the sharpshooter and I had developed a problem with my heart so they had to operate on me... put a piece of cow in there for heart valve. And so I was off work and I got him to take over the two classes a month that we did. I got where I felt like I could teach again, well he took them one time and I took them the next. And I've been teaching in Corpus up until just a few months ago... it got to be too much for me driving down there and teaching Friday night, all day Saturday, and driving back home. And he took over all the classes. But he was one swell fellow.

NANCY RAY: Well you said you were involved in hypnosis. Was that as a patrolman or a Ranger?

JIM PETERS: As a Ranger.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well we'll come back to that then. What made you want to become a ... a Ranger?

JIM PETERS: I worked with a couple of Rangers there in Giddings and on criminal investigation cases. And I did a couple of criminal investigations on my own up there.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us... tell us about those criminal investigations before we move on then because that's not normally what a patrolman works on. Is that correct?

JIM PETERS: No, this was when I was in the Ranger Service.

NANCY RAY: OK, I'm sorry.

JIM PETERS: Well I'll tell you about it. Every once in a while on the Highway Patrol... this lady was burglarized and I helped find who did it and where the rifles and pistols went. Cleared that case up and I had a couple of other cases up there at ... the Ranger sergeant worked on and I came over and helped him. I became really interested in becoming a criminal investigator. Of course when I went on Highway Patrol I was 30 years old. So here I am 42 years old and I thought well I'd like to get into something different. Criminal investigation sounded like what I'd really like to do. And so I applied for it and made it.

NANCY RAY: OK. Who was your first captain, your first Ranger captain?

JIM PETERS: Captain A. Y. Allee.

NANCY RAY: , I've heard of Mr Captain Allee.

JIM PETERS: *This is Captain Allee (imitating the captain). (laughter)*

NANCY RAY: He was a rough character.

JIM PETERS: He was quite a character.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us a little bit about him.

JIM PETERS: Well he had a ranch and we had our meetings there in town at a little Ranger office he had there. He had a back door and a front door and his office was in between. And I remember one time he had a meeting and we all showed up but Joaquin Jackson didn't show up. He grabbed that phone and called Joaquin and said *you're supposed to be in here... company meeting. Get in here now!* Joaquin came running in that front door and he ran all the way through and out the back door before he could stop *(laughter)*. Captain Allee... he didn't believe in any nonsense.

NANCY RAY: So do you remember... what was your first case as a Ranger? What's the first one you remember?

JIM PETERS: Well, I was single then and moved into an apartment there in Corpus Christi and John Wood was the Ranger sergeant there. And he and I worked together on several little things. And my first case was really, really interesting. It was ... I'll be darn... Randy Farenthold murder. And they had several FBI agents working on it, the city police was working on it, the Sheriff's Department was working on it, constables... everybody was working on it. And I got involved in it. Went around interviewing people and Ken Bung was a lieutenant for the Criminal Investigation section of the Corpus Christi Police Department.

NANCY RAY: Was that last name ...

JIM PETERS: BUNG. I said come on. Let's go up to Huntsville to the penitentiary and talk to an old boy up there. He had been in the penitentiary for a while. He killed 12 people but he said they all needed

killing. The last one I killed didn't need it but he got it (*laughter*). So we went up and talked to him and he didn't know anything. I said tell you what. Robert Walters is in jail up here. Let's go by and talk to him. Well Robert Walters was from Corpus Christi, a well-known burglar. And I'll tell you why he went in there later.

NANCY RAY: OK.

JIM PETERS: But he was in the penitentiary up there. We went up there and sat down and talked to him. Told him we could help him in a lot of ways if he would help us. He said let me think about it. We left there and about a week or two later we got a letter from him saying come on up, I will talk to you. So we went back up there and he told us all about how he and his brother bought the boat, bought the motor, rented the boat storage slip, rented the boat storage bin, rented cars... everything they did in preparation for Randy Farenthold's kidnapping and murder. So you know... we had the case then. We had it. And he said my brother won't talk to you unless I tell him it's OK. And his brother was in the federal penitentiary. So we made arrangements for him to talk to his brother in the federal penitentiary from Corpus Christi, I mean from the penitentiary there at Rosharon where he was at. FBI later said no way you could get a telephone conversation between two criminals... one in the pen and one in the federal. I said we did it. So his brother cooperated and Robert was arrested. He was driving down South Presley Street there... no, St. Mary Street... anyway, Bung and I arrested him. And he gave us all the information. Everything we needed. But he had to go back to the penitentiary. His original reason for going to the penitentiary... there was a fellow in the Rosharon Penitentiary up there wanted to get out. And he made arrangements with a Corpus Christi fellow for him and Robert Walters to break him out. He spent quite a while getting clothing together like tee-shirts and he dyed them with shoe polish. Guard pants...

NANCY RAY: Did you say shoe polish?

JIM PETERS: Um hum. It's to make the shirt black. And he kept this stuff hidden outside underneath an old telephone pole. And they were playing basketball in the gymnasium every night. So he made arrangements for Walters to go over to this girl in Houston, give her a rent car to use there, pay her to come over at a certain time on a certain night and drive up outside the penitentiary. And the guard that makes the rounds... attract him to come over and talk to her. Tell him she's lost and keep him occupied for a couple of minutes while they made their break. They fixed an old piece of board and stuff where they could put it up and climb over the fence. Well the first time the guard didn't want to talk to her. And besides that, the boss at the pen wouldn't let them play that night. So it all went to pot. So they called and said OK... called the girl and said next Tuesday or Wednesday, whatever it was, will be the night for you to go over there and do it again. Well she didn't go in a rent car she went in here Volkswagen van. Flashed the lights and the guy came over. And he wouldn't talk to her. He starts going over there and they tried to make it across the courtyard and the one guy, the main guy, he made it across the wire. The rest of them were held at bay with rifles and shotguns by the guards. Well Walters was sitting about a quarter of a mile away with his Buick. Picked him up and took him on to Corpus. But the girl, when the siren went off, she backed off the road and got her Volkswagen stuck and had to leave it there. So naturally they go talk to her and she admits it. So the case is solved and he went to the penitentiary.

NANCY RAY: Well how did you arrange the phone calls between the two brothers if that was such a hard thing to do?

JIM PETERS: No, they... the chief there at the penitentiary called up there to the federal pen and said we'd like to arrange this talk between these two brothers... told them why and they were able to do it.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well let's back up. When did you marry?

JIM PETERS: 33 years ago.

NANCY RAY: OK. And your wife's name?

JIM PETERS: Lydia.

NANCY RAY: And I know you said something about a daughter. So what about children?

JIM PETERS: I have two daughters. One of them lives in Dallas and she has a 5-year old, a little girl. The other, she's single and she lives in Florida now. She went to the big high school as athletic trainer and she met this wonderful guy and he got transferred to Florida to head a company over there so she went with him and they're getting married in July.

NANCY RAY: OK. So you'll be going to Florida this summer.

JIM PETERS: She transferred down to Florida. Got down there and they said no we can't hire you. Busch Gardens wanted to hire her but she didn't have a license for Florida. She has a Texas license. They said no, we're not gonna give you a license. You'll have to go through all the school again. She said the test is the same. I can answer the test just give me the test. No, no, no. So she hired an attorney and the attorney talked to six people involved and two of them didn't want her and four of them did so she did get her license.

NANCY RAY: Is this for horticulture or what kind of license is it?

JIM PETERS: Athletic trainer. They're just almost like a doctor. You can talk about any part of the body and she can give you all the description and everything. She's good at it.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet she is. Let's go back to when you became a Ranger. did you have to take a test or how did they... or what was the process when you were becoming a Ranger?

JIM PETERS: Go before an oral interview board.

NANCY RAY: Did someone recommend you first? How did you get to the board?

JIM PETERS: I applied for it. And you go before the board and there will be a couple of Ranger captains, and a Ranger, and maybe a couple of other heads of the Department. And they all ask you questions and they make their decision. I've sat on an interview board myself... very interesting.

NANCY RAY: We haven't talked to someone who was actually on the interview board. Tell us how you go about deciding who would be a good Ranger.

JIM PETERS: Before that old boy comes in, we know he's good. Unless he messes up, he's gonna get the job. Like when I went, they said we looked at all your records. You never had a complaint in 12 years. I said well, treat people right and you won't find any. What would you do if such and such happened? Well I'd do so and so... don't talk about it (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: Well who was on your interview board? Do you remember?

JIM PETERS: No I don't remember now. I'm sure Captain Allee was probably there... the head of the DPS, the head of the Ranger Service and about six people.

NANCY RAY: Well when you became a Ranger, what did... what did they give you? Did they provide a weapon? They provided you with a badge. What else did they provide you with?

JIM PETERS: Well they took away my big, beautiful .357 Magnum, Highway Patrol Magnum... and gave me a .357 Model 19 which was a smaller pistol. And we had to have it in the car along with ammunition but we could carry whatever we wanted to. But if any officer anywhere needed ammunition or needed a weapon he knew there was one in every Highway Patrol car and every Ranger car.

NANCY RAY: What was your preferred weapon?

JIM PETERS: My old heavy .357 Magnum. The last two years I was on the Ranger Service... well we always go and shoot every six months. We went out there and they said now we have .357 Magnum and we qualify with what we call wad cutters... .38-caliber bullet, flat-nose, low-velocity. They get them cheap. They said we're going to qualify with .357 Magnum... in our Magnum. And there was... gosh I forget how many Rangers, I'll say 60 Rangers. Twelve of them just locked up after they shot about 12 or 15 rounds. And we had them cleaned and went out there again and the same thing. I sold mine to a gun dealer (*laughter*). When I retired, I got it. But I don't like them Model 19, .357s.

NANCY RAY: Well you have to be able to depend on it. You don't want it locking up.

JIM PETERS: I carried an old 1911 .45 automatic almost my entire Ranger career.

NANCY RAY: Well what else did you carry? What did you carry in your trunk? When you went... (*he gave me a look*).

JIM PETERS: Well you carry a sleeping bag for one thing (*laughter*). And you carry a first-aid kit. You have fuzees to light on the highway or wherever you need them. Camera, field glasses, always carried a shotgun or rifle and some other things I can't even think of right now. But you have a little bit of everything in there. I had stuff where you make plaster-of-Paris sets of fingerprints, I mean of hand prints or foot prints. Carried fingerprint kit so you could fingerprint people.

NANCY RAY: Now how would you use the plaster-of-Paris kits?

JIM PETERS: Well you go to a crime scene... foot print there in the soft dirt... and we mixed up this plaster-of-Paris and poured it in there. As soon as it hardens, we'd take it out and you have a foot print... different type... different type shoes.

NANCY RAY: All right. So you're a Ranger and where did you say you were first as a Ranger?

JIM PETERS: Corpus Christi.

NANCY RAY: Was that your only duty station? (*he nodded*) Tell us a little about being a Ranger in Corpus Christi.

JIM PETERS: A wonderful city to be working out of. Had a real good police department, sheriff's department... they got along fine with me. I never had any problems. All the local towns around there, the chief of police, and all the officers... I had a habit... you're a deputy or you're a police investigator and then you got a major case. Hey Jim, you want to come help me on this? Sure. And I'll work with you and I'll turn every bit of the evidence I find over to you... take a statement... here, do you want your statement? I don't have to go to court most of the time and you get all the credit for it. I'm happy. But like we had a bank robbery in the little town of Sandia... old bank had two great big old wooden doors in the front of it. An old boy came in there and robbed the bank. Just so happened that I was with this redheaded FBI agent, Leonard Mathis. And we got word of a bank robbery up there so come on, let's go up there. So

we went up there in my car. Went inside and they said well we just caught him. He came driving back by there and he was a local guy. We know who he was. So we were standing there and I said do you want to give us a statement. He said I'm not gonna talk to the FBI. I'll talk to you, Ranger, but I won't talk to the FBI. I said OK. I took him to the back room and sat down, got everything out. I said now my handwriting is terrible. If you don't mind, let me get a fellow in here to write this down for me. That's OK. I said now he's an FBI agent but he's... you know I'll be talking to you. , OK. I let him write the statement out and sign it and he's got his case made and I helped him. Felt good about it.

NANCY RAY: How did you develop the relationship with people so they would ask you to work with them on their cases?

JIM PETERS: Well, I ... go and meet these officers and talk to them and get along fine with them. We go to lunch together, go fishing together or whatever it happened to be. We worked on cases together. They like for you to work on cases, they know you're not gonna mess things up. We had a case over there, copper wire. They was cutting down copper wire off the telegraph pole. And so I started working on it and found out where they were selling it... an old junk place there that buys copper wire, buys trash metal. And I told the old boy that run the place I said... he had some that was laying there. I said that's exactly like what we're looking for. He said well they've been in here two or three times. OK. I want you to get the license plate number and call me as soon as you see the vehicle again. I gave him \$20. He called me and said OK, the car was here. Said they came in, dropped stuff off, and they left. Got the license number... run a check on it and it wasn't a Texas license plate. But it was identical to the color and the numbers. We got to checking around and it was an Oklahoma plate. I said call me next time they come in. They came in and I went down there and arrested them and took them... they'd hit several counties around there so I took them over to San Patricio County, Sinton. Got the deputy sheriff over there to work on it with me and I'd sit there and write out a statement for each place that they hit. They hit several counties around there and all the way up the other side of Dallas. I'd finish the statement and hand it to

the deputy. Call that place, give them the information, and send them a copy of the statement. And he and his buddy both went to the penitentiary. And I let the deputy handle it all you know, his case.

NANCY RAY: Copper wire thefts, that's coming back. They're doing that now.

JIM PETERS: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: did you ever have any gambling cases?

JIM PETERS: Yeah, we had a few of those. One was over in Port Lavaca. The... I forget the name of the club... anyway they had one room in there that was I'd say 8-foot wide and maybe 15-foot long and seven slot machines in there. John Wood, my Highway Patrol sergeant I mean Ranger sergeant, went over and told the sheriff he had gambling going on in the club and he needed to get rid of them slot machines. , yeah, yeah, I'll take care of that. A month later, they were still playing so we got one of our undercover agents to go in there. So at a certain time, he just opened the door and let us in, we didn't have to have a search warrant. So right just a few minutes before we were supposed to go in, we called the local sheriff's department there and had a deputy meet us over there. We told him we were fixing to run in that VFW club over here and raid it and get the slot machines. Do you want to go with us? Well, , I need to talk to the sheriff. Well, you won't have time... we're going (*laughter*). So he didn't go. The funny part about it was a lady in there... she was about eight months pregnant playing the dime machine. Lady, you're gonna have to leave. Lady, you're gonna have to leave. We had taken the serial numbers off all the slot machines. Finally, I had to take her hand and pull it off. And I said if you don't leave, you're gonna go to jail. And she left (*laughter*). We got all the money out of it, out of them, and took them out to the dump... sledge hammer and destroyed them.

NANCY RAY: Well what other kind of cases did you have?

JIM PETERS: Well I had ... the Captain called one day and said you need to get up to Karnes City. We've got a hostage situation up there. So I called my partner and said... where you at? I said go by the DPS and pick up our helicopter pilot... meet me at the airport. So on the way up there, Sergeant

Narramore, a Highway Patrol sergeant up there said don't fly over the town. Land out on the highway. I'll pick you up there. The reason for that was a news helicopter out of San Antonio flew over the jail and he didn't want no helicopter over the jail... the crook. So what happened, the sheriff got a bench warrant and went up to Huntsville and brought this fellow back. He was about 40 years of age... macho weightlifter... tried him on another case. And he wasn't getting along with the other prisoners and he made him a knife out of an air conditioner louver. And he kidnapped the jailer. The jailer hollered for Ms, little Miss Villanueva who weighed probably about 75, 80 pounds... the sheriff's secretary to get some help. She misunderstood and came in so he grabbed her, put the knife to her throat. When we got in there, I said OK Sheriff, what'cha you got? He said it's all yours, Ranger. I said what is it? He said it's a hostage situation in there and he told me about it. The old boy said if a Ranger showed up, he would kill her. He wanted an automobile and two sets of handcuffs and I told him no, you're not leaving the jail. I said well sooner or later he'll get away from her and when he does, you go and jerk that door open and I'll go inside and protect the little gal. And my partner, Steve, I said you go in there and protect the jailer. Sergeant Narramore, you go in and capture the prisoner. The sheriff said we've got a problem. I said what? I don't have a key to the jail. I said you what? (*laughter*) He said yeah, the jailer's got all the keys to the jail. Who made this jail? San Antonio Steel. Let's call them. Tell them to make you a key. Helicopter pilot... get on your way to the airport up there. Call up there... Highway Patrolman, pick up the key and deliver it to the helicopter. A little over an hour later, we had a key. The sheriff slipped up there and it worked so we're back in business. In the room they were in were solid steel walls...r had two doors. One door in the back part of it went into all the other cells. This one here had a speaker system and a glass look-through at the sheriff's deputies. In that room was a desk and a chair over in the left-hand corner... used for breathalyzers. Back on the left side on the wall was a pay telephone. He'd been calling his daddy in San Antonio and his daddy was supposed to come down there but he never had made it. But that was a few hours... A little while later on the little gal came in there and said OK, he's on the telephone... he's away

from her. I said let's go, Sheriff. Sheriff jerked that door open. She went between my legs on all fours screaming. And the jailer was right there by the prisoner and the jailer started running to me. It just so happened I had a 16-round Beretta in my hand and I was waiting to shoot the guy. But the jailer was running to me and he (*the prisoner*) was running to the jailer with the knife. And he cut his throat a little bit, not too bad. And I was ready to pull the trigger as soon as that jailer was out of the way and the jailer went around like that and he froze... just about where you're at. Just as I was pulling the trigger, I stopped. I'd made a mistake. I didn't tell the sheriff to keep everybody else out of that jail. Here came Highway Patrolmen, Drivers License, constables, sheriff's department, police department, and even one game warden... all of them with their guns. I said ya'll shut up. And they all shut up. I told that old boy I'm Jim, Peters, Texas Ranger. I said it's all over with now put the knife down. He said no, I'm not gonna surrender. He said you get everybody else out of this cell except you and I... he said I'll talk to you. I said OK, everybody outside. They left and he still hadn't moved a muscle. I told him, time and again, I said put it down, one of us is fixing to get hurt. And it's not gonna be me because I've got this Beretta with 16 rounds and you've got a homemade knife. Well, I knew that after all my experience with hypnosis... you talk to people right and you relax them and I was relaxing him talking to him. I said tell you what you do, you back up against that door and I'll back up against this door. We'll have some distance between us where we can talk. So he did. We talked on a little while and no, he said, he won't let me go back to Huntsville... won't let me talk to my daddy. I said sit down on that bench over there. I'm gonna sit down on this chair. I'm tired of standing up. He did... that relaxed him some more. We sat there for a little bit and I told him, I said the sheriff is gonna do exactly what you want. Let me prove it to you. Sheriff, come in here. He came in and I said tell him what you're gonna do. He said well, as soon as his daddy gets here I'm gonna let him talk to his daddy for a while. And I've got a car backed up to the door out here ready to take him back to Huntsville. I said isn't that fair enough? Yeah. So he gives me the knife and the jailer's

billfold and the keys to the jail. I give him to the sheriff and I said 'bye and I left. They sent me a clipping from up there. They gave him 75 years for that. I think he wishes I had of shot him.

NANCY RAY: So he got 75 for taking the hostage and the ... there in

JIM PETERS: And cutting the jailer. I had another case over in Ingleside, a little town just outside of Corpus. And good old Ingleside... a guy needs some help over there at such and such address. I got over there... a real nice district... two-story homes. Must have been about 30 officers surrounding the place. And Captain Moore was there. I drove up there and I said what's going on, Oren? He said well, a guy inside of there, a local doctor's in there with him now. I said what happened? This fellow, he worked for NASA and ... no he'd been in the military before that and then he worked for NASA. He'd developed a disease that caused him to just jerk and twist. He had a wife and three teenage daughters... nice home. And he had an old van he was using to do carpenter work. He started to build some sort of structure near someone's residence and they didn't want it built. So they went down and got a court order for him to stop building it. So he went over and physically threatened these people. They filed charges on him and two San Patricio deputy sheriffs went over to the house to arrest him. Each one of them had a county car and one of the county cars had a cage in it. They knock on the door and he comes to the door. They said you're under arrest and the battle was on. He bit one of them severely in the forearm. They finally got him handcuffed behind him and put him in the back seat of that cage car. And just as the officer started the engine... they hadn't searched him. He had a five-shot, .38 revolver in his pants. And he pulled it out and *BOOM* through the back seat and into the dash. Didn't hit the officer. I don't know why, the officer jumped out and opened the door and let him out. And he went back in the house. The doctor came out shaking his head. He said ya'll have a real problem. He wants to die so he'll come out shooting at ya'll so ya'll will shoot back and kill him. I said well Doctor, take my identification back inside and tell him a Texas Ranger wants to come in and talk to him... I will come in unarmed. I don't think that'll work! I said well hell, go try it. He came out again and said yeah, he'll talk to you. I give the captain my gun...

walked inside a little hallway... a flight of stairs... about a 12-foot open balcony. He got that little pistol cocked and he's up there jerking and twisting. And I started asking him questions. That relaxes a person... asking them questions... easing up the stairway. I got to the top of the stairs well I tell him... uncock your gun, Warren, before it goes off and hurts you or I. He uncocked it. A few minutes later, he said it's time for me to end this now and would cock it. I said wait, let's talk a little more. His wife came in and said could I give him some medicine? I said sure, come on up and join us. She came up there and gave him medication and she left. I told him... I said Warren... I'm getting tired of standing up. Why don't you sit down there. I'm gonna sit down on the top step. So he did. I said now I'm gonna make you a promise. I'm gonna promise you I won't jump you and take your gun away from you if you promise not to shoot me. So he said OK. So we got a little rapport going there. I explained to him you shoot somebody, I said then they can't take care of their family like you can't take care of yours. You don't want to do that. Well I'll just go out and shoot their cars. I said you've got four bullets left. You shoot their cars, that last bullet they're gonna come over and jump on you and beat the crap out of you. You don't want that to happen. So finally he surrendered and gave me the gun. I gave it to the sheriff and I left. Two weeks later they subpoenaed me to testify in his trial over at Sinton. *(short pause to change discs)*

NANCY RAY: OK, we're back and you were telling us about a trial at Sinton.

JIM PETERS: Yes... went over there and I'll call him by his first name. Warren was there with his wife and three daughters, teenage daughters. I testified and everybody testified and they found him guilty. And they said now Warren, go on home. We're gonna have a pre-sentencing investigation to find out what we can do with you and for you. He went home and took a .357 Magnum and blew his brains out. He was serious... all because they didn't search him. That's one thing I've always been real strict on is arrest somebody and search them. I've had handcuff keys hidden in their clothes, guns, knives.

NANCY RAY: Something like that wouldn't take much to put you at a big disadvantage if you didn't do that.

JIM PETERS: Well anytime you have a knife in your possession with a blade over 5 ½ inches long, it's illegal to carry it. Of course if you're going hunting or fishing that's different. But down Jim Wells and Duval Counties, I'd stop some unsavory-looking character... have a big old knife stuck in his belt or laying on the seat beside him... I'd explain I can arrest you and take you in and put you in jail and have a wrecker come get your car. And you have wrecker fees and you have storage fees on your car tomorrow while you're in jail. I don't know what the judge is gonna do to you. I'd let him sweat for a little bit. I'd say now, I can make this knife legal and you can go on right now. What do you want to do? , make it legal! Stick it down the window sill and pop and hand him the handle back. Can't do those things anymore (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: Times have changed a little.

JIM PETERS: Between Alice and San Diego on the Highway Patrol... red light comes on... beer can (*makes motion of throwing it out the window*)... I'd tell him you pick up the beer can and I won't file on you. My partner, Willie Stafford, he was sadistic... he'd make them pick up beer cans for damn near a quarter of a mile (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: That brings up... something Rangers have said. As patrolman, we made our own fun. Is that how?

JIM PETERS: yeah.

NANCY RAY: Can you think of some ways you made fun?

JIM PETERS: yeah... we had different ways of doing that.

NANCY RAY: Is there anything you want to tell us?

JIM PETERS: Well, I didn't do this, but Glenn Krueger did. He had a partner that would go to sleep on him. He pulled up to the side of a culvert and he got out of the car and he took his pistol... hollered let's get him... *boom!* That old boy jerked that door open and fell about six feet down into the "bar" ditch.

NANCY RAY: Well let's go back. Tell us about the hypnosis. How did you use that?

JIM PETERS: We had a federal grant and nine of us Rangers went to hypnosis school put on by Michael Boulch.

NANCY RAY: Do you know how to spell that last name?

JIM PETERS: BOULCH I believe it is. He just passed away with cancer of the liver. He became a real good friend of mine. Anyway, we went to school over in Richmond. Holiday Inn had a great big upstairs we used in a one-week school. And it was extremely interesting and I became very proficient. I did right close to 450 cases, criminal investigations. Many, many, many, many hundreds of cases for people for everything... and five people had cancer that I used hypnosis... all five of them survived. anyway, it was real interesting to place someone under hypnosis and like this lady had a horseshoe driveway that goes around and behind her house and back out on the highway. They lived out on a little ranch. And she pulled in and here's a guy loading rifles and shotguns into the back of his car. So she chased him. She couldn't remember anything so I put her under hypnosis. And I've got her driving down the highway again chasing this guy. Had her read me the license plate number (*laugher*).

NANCY RAY: really...

JIM PETERS: But it's amazing how they can remember things you'd think they had forgotten.

NANCY RAY: Well you said 450 cases. Were those from all over the country or Texas or where?

JIM PETERS: Here in Texas.

NANCY RAY: And what kinds of cases?

JIM PETERS: Well, of course burglaries if they saw something... thefts, a lot of cases of rape, kidnapping... just all sorts of things. We were so fortunate of having this particular thing to use and the

officers became really reliant on it. Accidents... a lady was going to, I think she was going from the Valley to Houston. She got in a heavy rainstorm somewhere and ran her car off the road into... into the water. And she swam out and hitched a ride on in to Houston. The Highway Patrol searched the rivers, creeks or whatever you want to call them... they were flooded. Searched them and couldn't find her car. So he had me hypnotize her. She described the bridge... she described the broken fence on one side of it, and described a few other things. And they went to that place and sure enough, that car was in the water but it washed a little farther down. So it was real interesting when they pulled them suitcases out. Her going from the Valley... she had a car, no she rented a car. Somebody thought well, narcotics. No it wasn't... wasn't anything in the suitcases except her clothes.

NANCY RAY: So nothing illegal then. Well in... what about kidnappings? Did you ever have any of those that you had to work?

JIM PETERS: I'm trying to remember. Yeah, a young girl, I don't remember her exact age. Probably around 12 years old. A lady drove up to her and says I'm trying to find my puppy, it's lost. Would you help me? And got her in the car. She went down the road and picked up her boyfriend and they drove all the way to Victoria and kidnapped this little gal. When they got to Victoria, they went to a motel. Stripped her, tied her on a table, and did all sorts of things. Then took her back to Corpus and dropped her off at the T-head, an extension that goes out in the water. Of course she called and they picked her up and took her to the doctor and everything. And I worked on that thing. Finally found the room and got several pictures and showed her. None of them were her. But I did get quite a bit of information on different people. She moved to Dallas. And I got a picture of a guy and another person said he's the guy who kidnapped the girl. So I took off from Corpus to Dallas and I stopped at Waco and picked up the captain, Highway Patrol captain, I mean Ranger captain. Said come on go with me. We go in up there... showed her the picture and she said that's him, right there. The statute of limitations had ran out.

NANCY RAY: How long had it been?

JIM PETERS: I'm thinking two years. It changed to five years and I don't know whether it was two or five years. The statute of limitations ran out so we couldn't do anything about it.

NANCY RAY: Well that has to be frustrating when you work so long on a case and then something like that happens and they get off.

JIM PETERS: It was the same way with the *My Judy II*... shrimp boat supposedly stolen from Port Aransas. I got to checking and I found out that he had two shrimp boats seized by the government. And he owed a lot of money on this one, *My Judy II*, and it disappeared. I talked to a lot of people and I found one guy that made friends with him and he said yeah, we sunk that shrimp boat. You did? Yeah. He told how they went out there with two shrimp boats and they pulled the pit cock on it and let it sink. He said it didn't sink the first night. Said the shrimpers were shrimping right by where we were at. We just knew one of them was gonna run into that black shrimp boat... but they didn't. So anyway, the shrimp boat went down. He said I didn't look at the Loran reading which tells you... he said but I know it's in 19 foot of water. So I had a... a friend of mine had a big boat. We went out there and searched for it... fished. We got , the government had a boat over there and we rented an apparatus, looks like a little torpedo... you pull behind the boat that registers anything... it goes down deep. It registers anything on the bottom. And we hung the thing on something, hopefully it was the shrimp boat, but it broke off. So I finally decided we had to have a side-scan sonar and the only one I knew of was on the party boat there in Corpus Christi... in Port Aransas. So I got the old boy to agree to take us out there. And ... heck... an FBI agent there in Corpus Christi and his brother-in-law was a Ranger. Both of them were divers and they took their equipment. And you got FBI camera man to do a picture underneath the water. And we went out there and sure enough, ping, ping... went right to it. It showed a diagram, perfect diagram of a shrimp boat laying on its side down there... 19 foot of water. That was gonna be our shrimp boat. Because every one of them has marks and everything that's dangerous... shrimp nets. So they rigged up and got down in the water to go down there and the current was so swift they couldn't make it. So we came back and had to

disregard. And he said that cost like \$1200 for me to bring y'all out here, I can't do it anymore... I've got business to take care of. So the FBI, they were going to get a boat, Navy ship or something. They piddled around there for a while and the statute of limitations ran out on it.

NANCY RAY: Well what was your most frustrating case then? Would it be one of those where you had worked and you were... the statute of limitations ran out or what?

JIM PETERS: Well, it didn't actually get frustrating. you know that's the way it is. Can't do nothing about it.

NANCY RAY: Just deal with it and go on, huh? Well what about ... did ya'll have oilfield thefts in or any kind of oilfield crime there in Corpus or is that out of your range?

JIM PETERS: No, I worked on those. First started out back when they used liquids... ..Mercury, liquid mercury, and they were stealing that liquid mercury. They all used plastic jugs. It was so heavy if they put it in a glass jug it might break. And I arrested several people with stolen mercury. Then they got to stealing pipe and we recovered some, several batches of pipe we recovered. But ...

NANCY RAY: So you had a variety of crimes. Just a wide range, is that right?

JIM PETERS: yes.

NANCY RAY: What about serial murders? Did you have any of those in your area?

JIM PETERS: Yes. What was his name?

NANCY RAY: Was it that bad one? Lucas?

JIM PETERS: Yeah. Henry... Henry Lee Lucas. You know they had him up in Georgetown in jail up there. And I got together murder cases, had about a dozen of them and took them up there and sat him down in a cell. He sat there and yeah, I did that one. No, I didn't go that one. No, I didn't... Yeah, I did that one. He named about five that he'd supposedly done down in Corpus Christi area. Wound up the ones he was talking about, all but two of them are on down towards the Valley. One of them was a gal, early 20s, found dead on Park Road 22 which is the highway that goes between Corpus and Port Aransas

parallel to the Gulf. She was found, been shot in the head one time with a .22, laying in the brush in the “bar” ditch. I asked him, I said did you kill a girl on Park Road 22 near Corpus Christi? Yeah. I laid about six pictures out there. That’s her right her right there... picked her out. The other one was a female prostitute just off of the highway there in Corpus... winding road, business was over here on the left... storage sheds. Off to the right was a trucking outfit and a whole bunch of trucks. So I brought him to Corpus and I said OK, show me where that woman is that you killed with a knife. And he took me down the street and he said turn here. And we turned and he said stop right here. Before he’d told me there were a bunch of trucks and some big buildings over there so we were in the right spot. So he said right out there is where we left her. What did she have on? She just had a pair of socks on. So I was convinced he did that one. OK now the girl. I’m going down South Padre Drive. I said you tell me where to go. Keep on going across the bridge. We went over the Intracoastal Canal. Said turn left right up here. We turned left and about a mile outside of town, or maybe two miles, there was a road goes back to the park there, the state park. She was killed about a hundred yards this side of that road. On the right-hand side there’s tall weeds and brushes and she was found in there. So I’m driving down the road there about 50, 55 miles an hour. We go right past that place and I thought he’s pulling my leg. He said now at the next bridge up here, after you cross the bridge turn to the right. Get down there. I crossed the flat and he said stop here. He said we drank a couple of beers here, smoked a little marijuana. He said go on back toward Corpus. I’m driving along and right before we got there, he said there’s a little road that goes up the hill there. He said stop just about there. That was right across from where she was found. He thought for a little bit. I said where was it that y’all left her? He said on the other side of the road. I said OK what did you kill her with? Twenty-two... How many times did you shoot her? Once. Where? In the head. Which side? Well let’s see, we were standing on the side of the road and she was facing us... it’d be on the left side of the head. We threw her over there in the tall grass and brush. Identical... identical. The sheriff’s department

said , we don't believe that. (*he gave me a look*) The other cases I turned them over to the other Ranger to solve.

NANCY RAY: Well describe Lucas. What do you remember about him?

JIM PETERS: He had a heck of a memory. He was really good at memorizing things... real quiet, easy going. Loved to smoke those cigarettes and drink that coffee.

NANCY RAY: Do you remember how many he was actually charged with doing?

JIM PETERS: Did Joaquin tell you about the one he solved for Joaquin up there?

NANCY RAY: I'm not sure.

JIM PETERS: Anyway, Joaquin told us about it. A lady goes to the drive-in store. Odis and...

NANCY RAY: Toole? Odis Toole?

JIM PETERS: Durn, I can't think of his name now.

NANCY RAY: Was it Odis Toole?

JIM PETERS: No, you get old your mind...

NANCY RAY: It will come to you in a minute.

JIM PETERS: Anyway, the two of them were together. They saw her and said that's what we want. So he got her, took her down the road. Walked the road down... there was a big tree there... laying down... a dead tree. And she was found laying over that tree, she had been raped and murdered. Joaquin said I had Odis Toole in my car. Said we were driving along that, he told me which highway it was... we was driving along there about 50, 55 miles an hour. All of a sudden he said right back there, go back there. Went back there, he said was a big tree down there and she was laying over that tree. Just identical.

NANCY RAY: Too bad he channeled his energies that way. To have a memory like that he could have done so many things.

JIM PETERS: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: Well what about... were you ever in a gun battle or a standoff... were you ever shot at or what?

JIM PETERS: No, I shot myself.

NANCY RAY: You did?

JIM PETERS: I don't have a right eye.

NANCY RAY: , well tell us about that.

JIM PETERS: When I was in Alice, a friend of mine gave me an over-under RG Rome , ROME, derringer. A little short thing, two barrels about that long... .38, one over the top of the other. Had the prettiest little silver handles on it, I mean ivory handles on it. And I, every once in a while I'd stick it in my car for a spare gun. I was single then living in a two-story apartment there in Corpus Christi. And Detective Sergeant Richard Hawkins was sharing an apartment with me. I had a little excursion to go on one morning real early. I had two boxes that I was gonna take. And I got dressed... about ready to leave... pistol laying there on the table. I picked it up and stuck it in my belt, no I stuck it in my pocket. It stuck the two handles... I mean the two barrels in my pocket and the handle hanging out. I carried the box down, opened the rear door in my car, put the box down on the other side, backed out and that thing fell out of my pocket. I had a half-cocked safety on it, like a .45 automatic or just like an old single action. You pull the handle back so far, click, it locks right there that way... firing pin is not on the, not on the primer of the bullet. Well that thing fell out of my pocket. The half-cocked safety broke... .38 slug took out a bunch of my bone right there (*pointed to right side of his face*) and my right eye. Knocked me on my butt and I tried to find a gun to fire through somebody's plate glass window because here it was before daylight and nobody around. There I am, bleeding. I found my gun and I said shoot, I can get up. So I got up and walked upstairs and woke up Hawkins. Walked back down to the doctor, I mean to the hospital. Dr. John Sohocki worked on it... .fixed all the tear glands, the muscles and everything. The doctor made me a plastic eye and I went back to work just about three or four weeks later.

NANCY RAY: Well how did that affect you as a Ranger... shooting and...

JIM PETERS: It didn't affect me.

NANCY RAY: It didn't! You didn't have to compensate with just one eye or how did you...

JIM PETERS: The only thing I had to compensate with is up close. I go to pick up this here (*motioned to a coaster on the table*), I have to make sure I've got that instead of just reaching over and grabbing it. If I pull my car up to an object, it looks like I'm just getting ready to hit. I'll get out and look and I'll have two and a half more feet to go. Up close... there's a little bit of a problem there.

NANCY RAY: My goodness. What about shooting? Did you shoot... did you sight with your right eye or your left eye before your accident?

JIM PETERS: I don't know. Never did... just... didn't affect my shooting.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well things happen.

JIM PETERS: Didn't affect my work.

NANCY RAY: Good. I can tell that. Well are there some other cases you'd like to tell us about that stand out in your mind? Did you ever have any white collar crimes? Or being in Alice and Duval County, any political crimes or anything like that?

JIM PETERS: No, I left that to Ray Martinez and Rudy Rodriguez. That's about all they did in the Ranger Service is paper work. But ... Jack was real good. He said I'm not sending you to Duval County, you continue working over here. Had an armed robbery there in Alice... so I jumped in my car and go over there to the grocery store they'd robbed. They'd tied the old man up and left him laying there. Turned around and here's Glenn Krueger. What're you doing over here? Well I heard they had an armed robbery over here. I said yeah, they sure did. And a little bit later, Glenn's phone rang. He answered and it was Captain Allee. What are you doing over there in Duval County? Well, they had an armed robbery over here. Ranger Peters and I are over here. *What (mimicing Captain Allee)? Two Rangers over here for one robbery? You better get the hell out of there! (laughter)* Captain Allee was funny. He didn't want you

riding in another Ranger's car. He wanted you both, each Ranger... We had our meetings over at Carrizo Springs. I'd drive my car. Sergeant Wood would drive his car. Glenn made the mistake of leaving his car in... a little town where they had a coffee shop... some 30 or 40 miles before he got there. Left it there and rode in with another Ranger. And Captain Allee asked for something and Glenn said it's in my car. Well he said go get it. Well my car is over at... boy! (*laughter*) He chewed him out.

NANCY RAY: Well what about any manhunts? Did you ever go on manhunts where they used dogs or horses or what were your procedures then?

JIM PETERS: We had an incident down at Duval County, at Freer. Bubba Reed was a big macho game warden. Andres Hassatt was a deputy sheriff down there. They were in Peck Café one night and there was two guys in there and they felt suspicious about them two guys. So they get up and they go outside and they look in a car and here's a shotgun and a bank bag laying in the back seat. So when they came out they said come here. Well the little one, he turned and ran. The big one, muscle and macho but he was crippled in one leg and he couldn't run. So Bubba Reed took off after that little one and they get out behind Peck's Café... and Bubba Reed was wearing a .45 single action. And he empties his .45 at the old boy because the old boy had emptied his little .25 automatic at him. Nobody hit anybody and he got away. Hassatt got the other one. They called me and I got down there. Sergeant McCoy got down there. They said take this big one down and put him in jail. Well the big one got in the car and he said unhandcuff me, I'm sick. No, you're not that sick. Stop and let me vomit. Hang your head out the window. I'm sick, I need this medication. If I don't get it he said I'm gonna die. So I took him to the little hospital they had there. Got inside there and he said come on, take the cuffs off of me now. I said no I'm not taking the cuffs off of you. I took one and cuffed him to a big steel pipe there. He said what kind of medicine he had to have and the nurse called the doctor. The doctor said he wanted to talk to me. I got on the phone and the doctor said no, it's something he takes everyday, won't hurt him to do without it for a few days. Put him in jail. So he was disappointed because the jail in Freer at that time... an old building...

The jail was about... I'd say 10 foot wide and 30 feet, 25 or 30 feet long... 20 feet long. Had three wooden bunks one right over the other. Had one cell, I mean one window up there about that big (*he motioned*). No glass. No screen, just bars. Duval County didn't like screens or glass because it kept the mosquitoes out and it doesn't let the heat in, and let the mosquitoes in (*laughter*). That was Duval County. So anyway, we get to the jail and I say OK lay down on the bottom bunk and put both arms around that four-by-four. no he said, I'll get sick and I'll vomit. I said OK get up on the top bunk and fasten one handcuff to one of those bars up there... one handcuff to one of the bars. He said help me up there. I said hell there's a chair, get up there yourself. So he got up there and he put the handcuff and I got up there and checked. Everything's fine... went back out to the area. About 20 minutes later I said I'm gonna go back and talk to the old boy some more. I walked in and he was loose. He had a pair of strong cutters in the heel of his shoe. He cut that handcuff key, the handcuff chain rather. Had three of those bars out of the window and he would have had the rest of them out in another 30 minutes. So I got to ride horseback the next day looking for that old boy. After he was captured, he said well, there was one of those officers rode up close to me. I was huddled down behind some brush and if he'd a looked at me, I'd a shot him. I don't think it was me but somebody.

NANCY RAY: Well I show you retired August 31st, 1987. Is that right? (*he nodded*) What have you done since you retired?

JIM PETERS: Well I started out doing my favorite and that was fishing, guide fishing. And I had... while I... just as I retired, my old partner, Willie Stafford, I'm sorry, my ex-partner... Anyway, we built a houseboat. He was fantastic. He built three shrimp boats out in his backyard. He even put the rigging and the motor in one of them. He built an airplane from scratch. He could build anything. He was a Highway Patrolman, went through school with me and then he became a polygraph operator. And we still work together. And ... trying to remember...

NANCY RAY: So were you leading fishing trips out into the Gulf or where were you going?

JIM PETERS: No, we were fishing in shore and had a big houseboat down there. That becomes a lot of problems taking care of people, taking care of bait, taking care of everything. So I quit that and went to work as an investigator for Central Power and Light Company. And did some for Jim Walters Home Corporation... two or three attorneys had me do something for them. Then this concealed handgun came into effect and I said that's what I want to do. And that's what I've been doing ever since they started. I've trained over 10,000 people in concealed handguns. Down in Corpus we'd have, we might have 20 to 30 people Friday night and 20 to 30 people Saturday night... twice a month. We did a lot of that. And that's what I've been doing since then.

NANCY RAY: OK, very good. Well, retiring in '87, that's not quite 22 years ago but it's getting close. Um, what kind of changes have happened to the Department, to the Ranger Service since you left and what they have now? DNA I know is one of them for sure.

JIM PETERS: Well, when I first went to work for DPS, stationed in Alice, they brought this Hispanic fellow over there and said this is our first Highway Patrol Hispanic. Now half my Ranger company is Hispanic. We got a Hispanic now that is head of the Rangers. And ... good officers, dress neat...

NANCY RAY: You're talking about Tony Leal?

JIM PETERS: Tony Leal. Yeah when he first made Ranger, I went over and took him a tie tack to put on his tie (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: Well let me ask you about your badge. When you put that Ranger badge on, can you describe the feeling that you had?

JIM PETERS: No, just... I know that badge means a helluva lot. All our Rangers... they hate to see a Ranger come into it, all the crooks do. Not that we're any better investigators than a lot of sheriff's departments and police departments. But that Ranger badge has a tremendous effect on them.

NANCY RAY: Well you've mentioned there were times when an FBI agent would be with you but the person would not, did not want to talk to the FBI agent... they said they would talk to you. Why is that?

JIM PETERS: Well, we're good old Texans (*laughter*).

NANCY RAY: True. OK. Well are there any other cases you'd like to tell us about? There's no way we can capture everything about your career but are there any other cases you'd like to talk us about?

JIM PETERS: Offhand I can't think of any. My mind has... I'll be 82 in October and my mind's not as good as it used to be I'll tell you.

NANCY RAY: Well that's... that's part of life I would think. Well, I want to thank you for our time, for your time with us today for this interview. And thank you for your service to the state of Texas. And anything else you want to share before we wrap up?

JIM PETERS: No, I just really was proud of being able to serve 30 years in Texas as an officer.

NANCY RAY: Well, thank you again for your time and for your service to Texas.