

An Interview with F. Carl and Vicki Pence

Boise, ID

August 11, 2022

NMFSH Accession No. 2021.074.024

0:00:05.7 James Wall: Okay, today is Thursday, August 11th, 2022, and we are in Boise, Idaho. And we are interviewing Carl and Vicki Pence. Am I... pronouncing that right?

0:00:18.1 Carl Pence: That's correct.

0:00:18.9 James Wall: Not those Pences, but these Pences... Not Mike Pence. You're not related to Mike Pence, are you?

0:00:25.3 Carl Pence: It's possible. I never did... [chuckle] I like to claim I am. Okay? [laughter]

0:00:32.1 James Wall: Well, that notwithstanding, we're interviewing you for the National Museum of Forest Service History and a few disclaimers obviously, if you want to stop the interview, take a break at any time, totally fine. If you find that this is just not to your liking, you can end the interview [laughter] and we'll just toss your footage in the garbage. Haven't had anybody take me up on that yet, but it is well within your rights. And the big thing, of course is, what I already told you off camera that is, I will send you the whole footage unedited, raw. And then if, you know, at minute thirty you say, "Hey, you know, Lynne Sprague is a real jerk." [laughter] And then you watch that and you say, "I don't know if we want that preserved for all time." You just let me know, we'll wipe it out of there. Before it ever becomes a public document, it is within your editorial powers. But Carl, if you could tell me when and where you were born. We'll just start from there.

0:01:31.9 Carl Pence: Yeah. I was born in 1943 in a little town called Mackay, Idaho, Big Lost River Valley. Pioneer family that homesteaded in that area back in the 1880s or so. And our family was fairly large. I'm one of five sons to Tom and Eva Pence, who were both pioneer sons and daughter of people that settled in that big valley. The house I was born in was a stockade style log house. I was attended to by a midwife. There was no doctor available at the time, but successfully so, and apparently my mother birthed five healthy sons, no daughters. Our father was a avid outdoorsman. He and my mother ran a family grocery store, small mom and pop grocery store in Mackay for fifty some years.

0:02:48.0 Carl Pence: And raised those five sons and each one of us were inspired to go to college, get a degree in Natural Resource Management from the University of Idaho and hopefully become either members of Forest Service or BLM [Bureau of Land Management] or SCS [Soil Conservation Service]. Three of my brothers, including myself, became Forest Service employees. One brother was a Soil Conservation Service, a National Resource Conservation Services, as it is called now, employee. And so we all five had careers in natural resource management and graduated from University of Idaho College of Forestry. So that childhood was an awesome place in Mackay, in Big Lost River Valley for boys to be raised. We could hunt, fish, hike, ride horses and really truly enjoy the natural environment there, a very rugged area. We were inspired all of us by an old Forest Service ranger called John Wick, who ran a forestry 4-H Club.

0:04:06.0 Carl Pence: And being part of that forestry 4-H Club was really an inspiration. And John Wick was the epitome of the old Forest Service ranger of a small ranger district and in a small community. He was a member of... Head of the PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] all the time. He was there, very active in all the community and the community loved him. And we wanted to become like John Wick, and we did. All my brothers and... Became managers in our respective

fields. I had started attending college in 1961 in University of Idaho College of Forestry and graduated from that institution in 1965. My senior year is where I met this lovely lady that's sitting beside me and was very fortunate in meeting her and she became a lifetime partner in my career with the US Forest Service.

0:05:19.3 Carl Pence: I started work on the Salmon National Forest, which was kind of a neat thing because she... Her parents had an outfitting ranching business just outside of Salmon. So, as I graduated, I was able to work my way into her heart, I guess. And she decided to become my partner in this 40-year career that I had with the US Forest Service.

0:05:41.5 James Wall: Wow. So, I don't know if I've ever heard a story quite like this, and I've done a fair bit of interviewing of that many brothers, [laughter], going to the same school in the same program. And how far apart were you all?

0:06:03.3 Carl Pence: My brother Ned was the oldest, and I was, you can almost go down. Two years later, my brother Dan was born and then two years later my brother Lou was born. And then I am... I was born and then my brother Guy, he was kind of the afterthought, that surprise that our parents had. And he is six years younger than me, so all of us are about two years apart except for brother Guy who was six years younger than me.

0:06:35.1 James Wall: So, did the professors say, "Oh God, not another Pence." [chuckle]

0:06:39.4 Carl Pence: Well, it gets a little worse than that because all except for me, Vicki and I have two children. I didn't encourage my children to go into natural resource management. They've made their own choice there. Our son didn't. Our daughter works for the Bureau of Land Management now, and all my other brothers have daughters and sons that are actually currently working for the Forest Service, or the Bureau of Land Management.

0:07:16.6 James Wall: Well, it's just a family business.

0:07:18.2 Carl Pence: Yes. It was kind of a joke at University of Idaho for quite a while. The Pences were running roughshod in the University Forestry College.

0:07:27.8 James Wall: Y'all were multiplying. Yeah. [chuckle] "Oh, and there's another Pence. There's another Pence." [chuckle] So Vicki, could you take us to where you... Y'all meet? Where did you grow up? Oh, if you could say when and where you born.

0:07:39.2 Vicki Pence: I did grow up in Salmon, Idaho. My folks had a grocery store in the beginning years, and then we moved to the... My dad had asthma really badly and was allergic to most things. And in those days, the farmers brought their produce into the store in the raw state. So the asthma attacks were becoming so bad that we did move to the country. And my dad became an outfitter, and we had cattle and raised horses so that we could train the horses the way we wanted them for the outfitting business. We also had float trips. Everything that went with outfitting, hunting, fishing, float trips on the main salmon, the middle fork, weeklong pack trips, cabins, you name it, we did it.

0:08:36.5 James Wall: Wow.

0:08:37.2 Vicki Pence: And we did work almost twenty-four hours a day. [chuckle] Because in those days you had to be commensurate with the amount of land you had for the, if you had a range allotment, you had to provide the feed for the animals in the winter and prove that. So, if you weren't changing an irrigating pipe or cooking for someone, or riding on a day trip, giving someone a day horseback ride, which we did also. And on these two ranches, one ranch did not have a road into it, it didn't have electricity into it, so everything was packed into it. And I was cooking for the hay crew [laughter] by the time I was 14. [chuckle]

0:09:23.7 James Wall: Wow. Well, I don't know if you could have made a prep school for being a Forest Service wife any more than you did. That sounds like you were already doing the work that you were going to be doing as a kid. And how interesting you both grew up in Idaho in small town, smallish towns and your parents both owned stores. [chuckle]

0:09:45.5 Vicki Pence: We did. But he did introduce me at the University of Idaho. In the fall, all girls had dorms and sororities had to line up against the wall in a large room in that institution. And all the boys paid a nickel for every 15 minutes that they danced. It was a mixer so that we could get to know each other. And he introduced himself to him... To me, and I said, "Oh, no, a Pence." I'd had some of his aunts as teachers. And those were... There's some ideas you form in your mind and you say, "Oh no, run." And I did turn him down many times. [chuckle] It took him a while to get my attention that his brother, oldest brother had married a girl from Salmon. And she was a friend and her sister was a friend [chuckle] and somehow we kind of got to the dating.

0:10:50.8 James Wall: Well, what was it about this young man that gave you pause? You said it took you a while before you came around.

0:11:00.9 Vicki Pence: His last name.

0:11:01.0 James Wall: I assume his first impression wasn't exactly the best, huh?

0:11:03.3 Vicki Pence: His last name was Pence and I knew his relatives.

[chuckle]

0:11:09.3 Vicki Pence: And I thought, "Oh, no."

0:11:11.9 James Wall: So, Carl, were your brothers rabble-rousers?

0:11:18.1 Carl Pence: No. Some of my uncles and aunts were, but we were pretty straight guys. dad and mom did a really good job of keeping us in line and out of trouble. But I confess that particularly my side of... My father's side of the family, they had some rabble-rousers in it. And... But I can't say that I swept this young lady off her feet, it took me a lot of work to get approval from her and her family. Of course, my first permanent job was on the Salmon National Forest and it was really handy. They lived outside, eleven miles outside of town. And so I spent all my free time trying to sweep this young lady off of her feet and I had a lot of stories in that regard. She was a gem in my mind. I mean, gosh, with that background I was very impressed. In fact, she was very impressive physically too, I was smitten from the beginning.

0:12:30.8 Carl Pence: One of the neatest stories, though, we were riding horses. She and I were, up

to their upper ranches, they called it. And there was, in those days, there was no road up to this remote place, and we were riding up the trail and there's a rattlesnake along the trail rattling. And of course, we declared war on rattlesnakes. And I jumped off my horse and was trying to rock the horse or the... Rock the rattlesnake to death and doing a really poor job at it. And she said, here, Carl, this might help. And she handed me a big limb that had broken off the tree, and she said, "You could club him to death." [laughter] And I thought, "I need this woman. She is... She is my soulmate." [laughter] And I... I really worked hard at trying to get her parents' approval.

0:13:20.5 Carl Pence: Her father, as she mentioned, was an outfitter, and they had a lot of horses, sometimes about twenty or more horses. And I was listening to, oh, about a dozen of...looking at a dozen of her father's horses in this corral. And I was a farrier. I could shoe horses, and I heard one of the horses had a loose shoe. So I pulled it out of the corral and my father had taught me to reset all four shoes. One shoe was loose, the others needed reset too. So I reset the shoes on that horse, and then I turned him loose in the corral, and there was another loose shoe I could hear out there. So, the long story short, before the day was over, I had shod about four or five horses. And before I quit, and I thought, surely, her father will come and say, "Oh, Carl, you can have my oldest daughter or maybe a..."

[laughter]

0:14:16.9 James Wall: "Here's our antique wedding ring, my mother's wedding ring you could use."

0:14:20.6 Carl Pence: Yeah. But all he said was, "Well, you might be kind of handy to have around."

[laughter]

0:14:24.4 Vicki Pence: Before...

0:14:25.4 James Wall: So, he basically said he didn't hate you.

0:14:30.9 Carl Pence: Yeah. That's true.

0:14:31.5 Vicki Pence: But see, there was a stigma there because he was in range management. And I rode home and said, I dated this guy. My dad said, "What in the world are you doing dating a range manager?" I mean, farmers and ranchers and outfitters...

0:14:48.9 Carl Pence: Oh, yes.

0:14:49.6 Vicki Pence: I mean, they had a relationship one way or the other, whether it was a working relationship or an antagonistic one against the Forest Service. It was there. So he had to work his way into it. But any person that dated me had to work. [laughter]

0:15:07.2 Carl Pence: Oh yeah.

0:15:08.9 Vicki Pence: Our dates were working, whether chasing cows or horses or whatever.

0:15:15.9 Carl Pence: I remember one night I spent at their house and I was trying to get some sleep after a long day helping out. And here Vicki and her mother were up cooking meals for a boat trip down the Middle Fork, a horseback trip into the Bighorn Crags, and a hay crew putting up hay at the same time. They were trying to... And I thought, "Do these people ever sleep?" And she was raised... I mentioned I was raised in a small stockade log... Stockade style house. She was raised in a regular log, small, both of them, very small houses. And so, whatever was going on in the kitchen, you heard in the adjacent bedrooms. And I thought, these people, "I don't know how they do it."

0:16:07.9 James Wall: Yeah. Well, Vicki, could you tell me about your mom? About your mother, what... She sounds like she was pretty tough as nails in her own right.

0:16:16.2 Vicki Pence: She was.

0:16:17.6 James Wall: Where was she from and how did she get on this ranch?

0:16:19.9 Vicki Pence: My mother was born and raised in North Dakota in a very small town of Baker. So, she went to school in a covered wagon and lived through the blizzards and all of that kind of stuff. And she was in college... Her first year of college when her dad was killed in a buckboard accident. He was out in the field working. He... It was during the Depression, and he had had a huge lumber yard and was the architect and sold all the lumber and all that. But so many people owed him money that they burned his lumber yard down. And so, she was called home. All the kids were—there were eight children—were called home to help with the issues. My mother was the third oldest, the oldest girl. And so, and her mother had a rheumatic fever when she was 40, so she had heart issues. So, my mother became the mother of her siblings. So she would bake eight loaves of bread before she went to school in the morning. And... You know, she knew how to work, and we followed suit.

0:17:44.2 Vicki Pence: She taught us how to do it. And during this time, we were working on this growing up. She was also our 4-H leader, which she was for fifty years for all the Lemhi County kids. And so we all had at least ten 4-H projects that we worked on throughout the summer [chuckles] and so, I mean, you learned how to juggle things.

0:18:07.6 James Wall: Right, right. And remind me, your brothers and sisters, how many do you have?

0:18:13.5 Vicki Pence: I have... I'm the oldest of four and I have a... My brother is next who is now still caretaking for those ranches and working on his own ranch. And I have two younger sisters.

0:18:31.6 James Wall: So the ranch is still in the family?

0:18:33.5 Vicki Pence: Yes.

0:18:34.0 James Wall: Wow. Well, that... That's pretty rare. Usually, you know, after... It's hard for big plots of land to make it through intergenerational, those times. So your mom was a hard worker and your dad was a hard worker. You know, the thing that's interesting to me, because I've done a fair amount of these wives interviews, this is totally backwards. Usually it's the [chuckle] guy is the more outdoorsy one. And then he plucks the girl out from some eastern college or something, and then moves her over the mountains to Montana or whatever. And then she has to...

0:19:12.1 Carl Pence: Adjust, yeah.

0:19:12.8 James Wall: Get up to speed, right? And there's a real... But it sounds like opposite. You're actually... You were more outdoorsy, super outdoorsy, and you know, there was no process you had to go through. You were already there.

0:19:26.5 Vicki Pence: Well, there were... Once we got down to the point that he might be a prospect, and he at that... At one point he proposed marriage, but I said, "If I choose to marry you, you have to promise me you will never be an outfitter." And he did promise me in front of my mother and two sisters, and I said, "And I will not cook." And he promised he would eat TV dinners the rest of his life. [laughter] Which he has probably eaten two, and that's when I wasn't home. [chuckle]

0:20:12.3 Carl Pence: Well, that's one promise you keep bringing up to me. And I keep saying I cannot be held to something I promised when I was suffering blood shortage in my brain.

[laughter]

0:20:26.6 James Wall: So, you were just trying... You were just trying to close this deal no matter what.

0:20:30.7 Carl Pence: Absolutely. [laughter]

0:20:32.1 James Wall: She could have said, "Promise me a house made of gold," and you would've said, "We'll find a way."

0:20:37.9 Carl Pence: Yeah. I knew I had a real gold nugget there.

[laughter]

0:20:42.9 James Wall: So, what... You made him promise not to be an outfitter. Now what was it about the outfitter life that you didn't want to continue?

0:20:51.9 Vicki Pence: Oh, you just work. The amount of... You don't just have the outfitting you... You have people, you have to take care of the deposits and the advertising and all the book works, the office work. But then you have every... All the equipment has to be repaired all winter long, all the... I mean, it just never stops.

0:21:24.8 James Wall: So, you decided to...

0:21:26.2 Vicki Pence: You had the horses to deal with. You had the hay to deal with. [laughter] Yeah, I mean, you just... Outfitting is not my thing. And if I had my choice, I would not have been an outdoor person. I was interested in design, that was my interest. And home economics gave me... Which I was majoring in in college, gave me such a huge overview of all the different elements of life. You can design clothes, which that's how I started designing. You design... You did interior decorating, and just everything is incorporated with that. I mean, you almost have a science minor. You're into math because you've got to figure out carpet and fabric and all of that kind of stuff. So I

did have a well-rounded background.

0:22:33.9 James Wall: So that's interesting. So you were kind of a prisoner against your will in this outdoorsy world of outfitting.

0:22:42.1 Vicki Pence: [laughter] That's right. [laughter]

0:22:42.9 Carl Pence: And little did she know that some of those elements that she was involved in in an outfitter's daughter transcended into the career that she had with me. [laughter]

0:22:53.9 James Wall: I was about to say, you know, the funny thing is that you didn't want to do that, and so you thought to yourself, "Well, let's marry into the Forest Service, that'll be less work." [chuckle] And I don't know if there's a job with more work on Planet Earth. But, anyway, we'll get to that. So tell me about the proposal. So you finally broke through her dad's objections?

0:23:15.8 Carl Pence: I did.

0:23:16.5 James Wall: And at what point did you... You used the term "prospect?"

[laughter]

0:23:24.1 James Wall: When did you know that it was going to... He might be in this for the long haul?

0:23:31.7 Vicki Pence: It was quite a war in my mind. [laughter] And it took two and a half years to work through that war. And I thought, "Okay, I guess love could be a little deeper than I think it is." [laughter] But, so it kind of just happened.

0:23:58.3 James Wall: Now, Carl, how long were you planning and waiting for the moment? And when did you know that it was okay to pop the question? I'm sure you must have had to ask for permission.

[laughter]

0:24:11.0 James Wall: Or did you?

0:24:12.9 Carl Pence: No, I didn't. I really didn't. And that was... But of course I'd been working, like you say, almost all my free time out at the ranch. [laughter] I helped put up hay, I tried all those things that I could do to impress her mother and father.

0:24:32.2 James Wall: Pro bono, right?

0:24:32.8 Carl Pence: Yeah. And I understand that they even... They could see this romance maturing. And they even went to one of, their pastor, and, "What do I do here? This federal employee of the Forest Service, for crying out loud, is getting really serious with our oldest daughter." And so, the pastor asked him some questions and they said, "Well, he really is a pretty nice guy, you know, a hard worker. I mean, [laughter] what's the problem here?" [laughter] And so, they were not surprised when Vicki came home and said, "Hey, I've been proposed to." And they

knew, I guess, in spite of the fact I was a federal employee, which was bad. And I often joke, her parents had a really tough time because their oldest daughter married a Forest Service employee. Their next oldest daughter married a Idaho Fish and Game Department employee. And [chuckle] then their youngest daughter married somebody from a religion that they didn't really care for all that much. [laughter]

0:25:53.7 Carl Pence: And so, poor... The poor [laughter] The poor parents, they just had a tough time finding the ideal husband for her.

0:26:05.2 James Wall: Everybody bringing the enemy home.

0:26:07.7 Carl Pence: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

0:26:08.0 James Wall: Reminds me of an old Ronald Reagan joke where he said the most terrifying phrase is somebody showing up at your door and say, "Hi, I'm from the federal government and I'm here to help."

0:26:18.1 Carl Pence: Yeah. Well, I got lectured to by her mother in that regard, because I was always referring to the livestock operators as "permittees," and she said, "We're not permittees, we're God's people." [laughter]

0:26:36.2 James Wall: That's great. I've never heard that before. But yeah, that's, it's not... Especially with Range Con that's never been an easy job to do in the Forest Service because most of the people don't want you there. [laughter]

0:26:49.2 Carl Pence: That's true. That's true. And they resent you telling them what... How they're to manage their livestock and that was a tough one. And I tried... In my career, I did... When I graduated from college, I tried to be as multidisciplinary as I could. I took as many credits in timber management as I could and wildlife management. So, when I grew... That was a... Actually, being a multidisciplinary type of person during my career was very important in your career. You could help set up a timber sale, manage wildlife stuff. Whereas in today's world, the Forest Service is divided into specialties. And I do think that's one of the weaknesses in today's Forest Service.

0:27:44.0 James Wall: Yeah. So tell me about getting into the outfit. What was your first seasonal assignment? Or did you just jump right in?

0:27:55.5 Carl Pence: Oh yeah, when I was a sophomore in college, but between my freshman and sophomore year, I worked for the Challis National Forest as Headquarters Guard for fire. And associated with that, I helped. And along the Challis National Forest. There's a large wilderness area. There wasn't wilderness that time. It was Idaho Primitive Area, later became Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. But it was an Idaho Primitive Area then. And I, fortunately because I... My abilities with horses, got involved in the trail crew and, horse... There was nothing more fun than riding up a Forest Service trail with a pack string behind you and cutting trail, cleaning trail out.

0:28:43.4 Carl Pence: That was not work in my mind, it was a just a fun thing. And so, I started out as a temporary employee. I had a couple years temporary summer employment with the Challis National Forest. And then my last summer before I graduated, I had a temporary employment on

the Salmon National Forest, which helped lead to my permanent assignment after I graduated from college.

0:29:16.2 James Wall: So, safe to say that you were going on the track towards the Forest Service, the BLM and Soil Conservation and all these other, that you got kind of hooked, well, as a lot of people do on their first seasonal job. These beautiful... I always say that the crazy thing about the Forest Service is that you're doing a job a lot of the time that people pay to do.

0:29:39.3 Carl Pence: To do. Exactly oh, yeah.

0:29:40.9 James Wall: Pay to do exactly what you were just describing is these pack string trips.

0:29:44.8 Carl Pence: And... In my career, I tried... Often refer back to my philosophy was I was a "dirt-level forester." I loved those kind of assignments and tried to do as much of that stuff in my career. Even when I became a ranger and a forest supervisor, I surprised my employees by maximizing my chances to get out in the field and work with them. It was awesome and I always loved those days.

0:30:16.9 James Wall: So, was this the part of Idaho and the time in history where the outfit was waging the how to put it, the pyrrhic war against the blister rust, were you on any blister rust crews?

0:30:32.5 Carl Pence: No, that was white bark... White pine. Yeah, white pine in northern Idaho. We didn't have any of that species where I worked in, you know southern part of Idaho.

0:30:46.1 James Wall: Well count yourself lucky...

0:30:48.5 Carl Pence: I know, I know, that was quite a story.

0:30:49.9 James Wall: Because that sounds like the worst work that you can get in the Forest Service.

0:30:52.4 Carl Pence: Absolutely. But I did a lot of trail work, built fences. The positive thing about it was I often had the ability to use horses, and that tied in with my wife's [laughter] heritage with her parents. And so, I truly tried to stay on that level a good share of my life. We... And those—there's something I wanted to mention that a lot of people ignored.

0:31:29.1 Carl Pence: During the first ten years of my career you didn't apply for jobs. There was this godlike committee that looked at all the young foresters and range cons and whatever down there and said, "Oh, ole' Carl, he would benefit by some different jobs." And so, the first time we got "the blue envelope," we always called it, you'd get this blue envelope that would say your next assignment is in Bridgeport, California.

0:32:00.8 Carl Pence: For example, that was when I got my first blue envelope was—and within thirty days you need to report to your new job in Bridgeport, California—and that you will be the Recreation Staff Leader of that district. So it was... They were molding me to become more multidisciplinary, which I loved to have that kind of a varying experience and not be specialized. And, those blue envelopes, it was, in those days, the Forest Service was more military organized. Most of the leadership in the Forest Service were actually veterans that... From either the Second

World War or the Korean War or both.

[recording paused]

0:32:45.0 Vicki Pence: [describing her high school experiences] Trouble her.... She was sort of irritable, that kind of stuff. And I had, I mean, I did well, but I had scarlatina. And so, I was out for weeks... And so, she gave, I wasn't there for the, final... The semester test. And she gave me an incomplete on my test and I said, "Well, can I make it up?" Well, when you live out in the country, she said, "Yes, you can. And you... Right after school on this certain day." So I was there and I had to make arrangements to get a ride home, which my mother had to get the car to come in to get me. And the teacher never showed up. And then my dad was on the school board at the time and my mother called her to see when we could reschedule.

0:33:43.5 Vicki Pence: And she thought my mother was bawling her out or something. And my mother was a teacher, so she didn't... She didn't feel she was bawling her out. But anyway, she made the comment, "Well, your dad's on the school board, you feel like you can do anything you want." [laughter] And then it was an antagonistic type situation from then on. And then his... One of his older brother's wife was the new...

0:34:16.4 Carl Pence: Oh, this is funny.

0:34:17.4 Vicki Pence: PE [Physical Education] teacher at Salmon High School and PE wasn't my thing, but you had to take it, but you didn't have to take it your senior year. And that's when she came. So I opted out to be office help [laughter]. This teacher, everybody... Is the first "dress down teacher" that we had in PE. The teachers were all prim and proper when I went. They wore their skirts, they had their whistle around their neck, [laughter] and that kind of thing. His sister-in-law had shorts on, can you imagine? And everybody said, "The new PE teacher's here in shorts." And everybody went to the gym to look. And boy, she... PE took a whole different turn, [laughter] at our school. And I was so thankful I was in the office. [laughter] So, and I thought, "Oh." And then I did have one teacher, there was another lady. She was actually my Sunday school teacher, but we learned everything but what we should have been learning. And she was out to make the dollar and who she could undermine and that kind of thing. So. [laughter]

0:35:39.0 James Wall: Wow.

0:35:39.6 Vicki Pence: I thought, "there is no way..." [laughter]

0:35:42.3 James Wall: Yeah. Like, "this is not, not working."

0:35:45.5 Vicki Pence: No.

0:35:46.7 James Wall: Wow. So, let's see. So this thirty day notice, that's actually not too bad for the Forest Service. Some people had much quicker turnarounds, but, when you got this job, where were you in your relationship? Had you proposed, or...

0:36:03.6 Carl Pence: Oh, we were married when I got...

0:36:05.4 James Wall: Oh, you were already married?

0:36:07.6 Carl Pence: Yeah, we got married and, and I had my, Range and Wildlife Sub-Staff position there on the Salmon National Forest. We had that for about two years before we got my first blue envelope that said, "You're moving to Bridgeport, California."

0:36:27.7 James Wall: So, she... Did you know what you were getting yourself into at that point?

0:36:33.1 Vicki Pence: No, I expected to probably live on another ranger station someplace like Leadore. I was familiar with that type of thing. Or maybe even live in town because his job had been in town. And that was kind of neat to live in town, be able to walk any place you wanted and... [laughter]

0:36:51.6 James Wall: Electricity and all these...

0:36:52.8 Vicki Pence: Electricity. Yes...

0:36:53.9 James Wall: Fancy things.

0:36:54.7 Vicki Pence: It was exciting. So, that's kind of what I thought it was. The Forest Service people I knew and were involved, or I'd been in school with, it was a normal 8-to-5 job.

[laughter]

0:37:11.0 Vicki Pence: And I thought, "Oh, I can handle that."

[laughter]

0:37:15.2 James Wall: Wow. I'm not sure which Forest Service you were... That you were aware of, but yeah.

0:37:20.3 Vicki Pence: One of the hardest parts was learning how to cook for just one other person [laughter].

0:37:25.9 James Wall: Just one. And then later on you're probably cooking for a whole army of people. What did your parents think when you told them that you're moving to California?

0:37:41.9 Vicki Pence: I don't remember that they made a lot of comments other than it was a long ways away. And they would be, because I did go back while we were living in Salmon and helped them and did a lot of cooking at our house for them. So they were going to lose some help.

0:38:02.0 James Wall: That's probably what they were most worried about.

[laughter]

0:38:06.2 James Wall: If they missed you, they missed your labor. So, Carl, you were on the recreation staff, is that.

0:38:11.9 Carl Pence: At the Bridgeport Ranger District.

0:38:15.0 James Wall: And where is that in California?

0:38:15.8 Carl Pence: Well, it's along Highway 395 between, Reno, Las Vegas and Bishop, California. Right about in the middle, along that major highway at the highest point in that highway. And so, it's in the High Sierras.

0:38:36.5 James Wall: So those are probably pretty brutal winters?

0:38:39.5 Carl Pence: Oh, absolutely. The first winter we had there was not too bad, and I was, we were living... That the first winter we were living in this tiny little trailer house with louver windows and pilot lights. The harsh wind often blew the propane refrigerator and heater stove out. And it didn't... It wasn't a bad winter, we thought well... But during that winter, Vicki got pregnant, and we were looking... The promise that we'd been given was that we would be... In a short period of time, be able to move into a small old office building that had been converted to one bedroom and a living room and a kitchen, basically. But it was a very small house, but it was very much like what we moved out of in Salmon, Idaho. And we could have had an infant child there in that, but the promised house that the YCC [Youth Conservation Corps] was building, the schedules that they had set never were met.

0:39:55.7 Carl Pence: And we were facing that coming summer... Our first summer there at Bridgeport, we were facing a situation where we were going to have to do something because we were going to have this child, and we couldn't... There was absolutely no room in that tiny, tiny little 8-by-18-foot bunkhouse trailer to raise a child. So we bought our own trailer, a larger trailer... What was it, Vicki? A 12 by...

0:40:24.3 Vicki Pence: 10 by...

0:40:25.1 Carl Pence: 10 by 60 foot...

0:40:26.9 Vicki Pence: 50 or something.

0:40:27.8 Carl Pence: It had, actually had three small bedrooms. But after living in this little tiny bunkhouse trailer for nearly a year, the big trailer was awesome. It felt like a castle. The complicating factor, living in Bridgeport, that next winter was a winter very similar to what the Donner-Reed Party suffered trying to get over Donner Pass, as it's called now. And it snowed. And it started snowing in middle of November. And we had weekly... Sometimes two-week-long snowstorms, almost all winter. And the snow got so deep before, when middle of January came on, our house was totally buried in snow. It was like living in a cave. You would have to go down and the windows were always covered with snow. We were worried about the roof collapsing, in fact, you got a little scary at times because New Year's Eve, that winter, I had appendicitis and had to get my appendectomy. And I was... I remember laying in bed one night there and I could hear the roof creaking with the pressure of the snow on top of it. And it was only about a week or so since I'd come home from my appendectomy. But I said, I got to get up, and I pulled enough snow off the top of the roof to be safe.

0:42:11.3 Carl Pence: It was serious because many, many trailer houses in the area were collapsed. One of the big things, there were several families that were asphyxiated when the snow loaded on

top of the trailers clogged this circulation of their propane stoves and they were asphyxiated. So, it was a complicated winter. It was really tough. Our infant baby was a preemie, and Vicki and he were not doing well physically, and recovering from the birth. And so, we actually had a tough time because the snowstorms were so big that the avalanches had destroyed the power lines leading into the valley. So we were out of power for three weeks or more during that critical period of the winter. We kept our house livable... Or our trailer house livable by using the propane stove to give us enough heat, and of course we had to be very careful about asphyxiation in that. And our little infant son slept in our bed with us so that we keep him warm. And there was some hazards in that regard, we had to be... And I don't think either one of us got much sleep during all that period of time, but it was very intense living.

0:43:43.3 Carl Pence: And the whole compound that we were... Forest Service compound we were living in, we didn't get much work done except shovel snow. And those days it was snowing so hard that it was kind of hard to... You could hear the snow coming down with a little kind of...

[Carl makes "whoosh" sound]

0:44:02.4 Carl Pence: Sound, and you could watch it just build up. In those days, many people didn't have clothes dryers. Now in today's world, imagine, we had cloth diapers too. You didn't have paper diapers. And so we had all these cloth diapers and infant son. We did have a clothes washing machine in the trailer, but there was no clothes dryer. So, at the beginning of the winter, I dutifully built this clothesline outside, but with all the snow coming down, I'd end up... Every day I'd have to shovel the clothesline out. And so, you walk down into the clothesline. But when I got my appendicitis operation, I could not shovel it out. And it was snowing so hard, that finally I just gave up on it. And you can imagine we would tie ropes around inside our trailer house and hang diapers and our clothes to dry them in the trailer house. And it was an interesting winter. We had had a couple assignments somewhat like that, where we came to a situation that we felt that we had to leave.

0:45:14.0 James Wall: Yeah.

0:45:14.9 Vicki Pence: Let me take you back...

0:45:16.1 Carl Pence: Okay. [chuckle]

0:45:16.6 Vicki Pence: To the beginning. [laughter]

0:45:17.1 James Wall: Well, Vicki, I was wondering if you could talk about being pregnant on that district.

0:45:22.9 Vicki Pence: This—Bridgeport had a hospital that had fifteen beds in it.

[laughter]

0:45:27.5 Vicki Pence: It was a tiny little hospital...

0:45:28.9 James Wall: That's not a hospital...

0:45:30.1 Vicki Pence: A few miles away.

0:45:32.0 James Wall: That's just somebody's house. [laughter]

0:45:32.7 Carl Pence: Yeah.

0:45:32.8 Vicki Pence: And I spent... It was a very problematic pregnancy, and I spent a lot of time in the hospital. And then when Corey was born premature, things intensified and I actually had to be resuscitated. I died on the delivery room table, and they were able to bring me back, and then... Because there was also a flu epidemic at this time...

0:46:09.3 Carl Pence: Good lord, yes.

0:46:10.2 Vicki Pence: They couldn't isolate us in this small hospital. They had no preemie, no NICU [Neonatal Intensive Care Unit]. The doctors were just general practitioners and they... It was out of their expertise. And when the flu epidemic hit, they said, "We've got to... We just have to send you home for protection." So, Carl had to take care of us and fortunately, the office wasn't too far away from our house, so he could walk back and forth, a coffee break and stuff, and take care of us, but it wasn't working out really well. [laughter] But anyway, we did survive that and the snowstorm just kind of added—everything we did [laughter] in this place, it seemed like there was a problem. And so now we were isolated with the snow and of course our baby had to eat every two hours. We had to set an alarm clock so that we could get his birth weight up and he was sleeping between us so that our body heat, when we had no power or no heat, so that he could stay alive. So it was a real picnic, I'll tell you. So, and then the... This winter that... And Carl's emergency surgery, it is a very interesting time that we just have to praise God that we both lived through it.

0:47:52.5 Carl Pence: Yeah, it was a tough one. I got to the point worrying about her and our infant son that I visited with the doctor and said, "What should I be doing?" And he was honest with me, he says, "Yes, you have some serious trouble. You need to get your infant son and your wife to a more friendly atmosphere to them." So I, fortunately, I was... I started looking for alternatives and I was thinking about going back to college to get a master's degree, but again, I had an infant son that wasn't doing well, a wife that wasn't doing well and somewhat miraculously, my brother Dan, who was a ranger or an Assistant Ranger on the Cobalt District of the Salmon National Forest got a transfer to a ranger's job. So a job opened there back on the Salmon National Forest. And I knew the forest supervisor and as following doctor's orders, I called and said, "Hey, is there a chance I could fill in behind my brother as Assistant Ranger on the Cobalt District?" And I got that.

0:49:08.1 Carl Pence: It was really awesome to return back to this more friendly attitude, atmosphere where my... Vicki's family was there. The Salmon National Forest, living on that forest was good for us to recover. Now living in the Cobalt Ranger Station though, was another compound living situation. It was called... In those days the foresters had a number of situations like that where it was a "in-and-out" ranger station. You would move out to the compound in the summertime and then back into town in the winter. So that was kind of an interesting atmosphere, and it was a very, very remote ranger station. It took you about two hours to drive the sixty miles from Salmon out to the remote ranger station, a dirt road, very windy road, logging trucks, mining trucks and all that stuff out to the ranger station. And in those days, communications was not all that good with the Forest Service. Our most reliable one, it was the old ground return phone line, a party line. There were miners on the party line, ranchers on the party line, and the Forest Service were on the party

line as well.

0:50:35.6 Carl Pence: And so you'd get this ring, two shorts and a long, which was your ring, and you'd answer the phone and then the others could come and listen to your phone call. Of course, the wives had a significant deal there because if we were out in the field as the ranger, the forest supervisor or ranger, the assistant ranger or anybody else were out in the field, whether we're on a fire, or whatever, then the wives, when they got the two shorts and a long ring, would answer the phone. It would ring into our residence as well as the office. And so, it was always... There were some interesting things that happened in those days with that phone line. The other thing, the other communication were with radios, but they weren't all that... The ranger station was in this very steep valley and radios were not reliable in those days. We were transitioning to some relay things on high mountains but that was not very reliable often. So again, we had a... Actually that ranger district had a hundred miles of ground return phone lines, which was also our responsibility to maintain that single wire that went out through trees and what have you, to keep it viable. And it was kind of a...

0:52:06.6 Carl Pence: I learned how to climb trees with the spikes on your feet and keep that line up. We would get a bad rainstorm and there would be a wet limb leaning over the line, which would short the line out and you would get poor reception, whatever. And there were mines and ranchers that were like thirty miles further into the backcountry than we were, and we'd often get emergency calls from them to try to get to the Salmon to talk to doctors or get help, and then we'd have to relay that message because we were closer to Salmon. That was an interesting set of... We were kind of the central communication center for the ranchers, miners and others, recreationists, in that particular area.

0:53:03.5 James Wall: Wow. So, Vicki, I'm wondering if you could take me through a day in the life on this district, so this is the Salmon National Forest. What district on the Salmon was this?

0:53:13.3 Vicki Pence: The Cobalt.

0:53:14.0 James Wall: Cobalt. So what's it like raising a toddler or a young infant on one of these "in-and out" districts, and did you have any other wives there to help you out or were you just doing it all yourself?

0:53:26.0 Vicki Pence: Well, the other wife was there during the summertime, during parts of this time because they had school-aged children and so she would often stay in town so that she could get the kids to school, but you know, we were the backup secretary in the office and did that, we got mail two or three times a week. The mail would come in a canvas bag, the mailman would throw it out and grab the other canvas bag with the outgoing mail. If somebody would knock on your door and be hungry, you would feed them. If anybody came to visit, a dignitary or higher official in the Forest Service would come, you would be required on a moment's notice to feed them, they would go on their pack trips, somehow got roped into providing food for... That would go into these like the cookies, the menu, those kind of things, the guys were a little hard on doing that...

0:54:44.3 James Wall: And remind me of the promise that he made you. What was it, no cooking, right?

0:54:50.0 Vicki Pence: Yes, you're right, no cooking and you shopped once a month, you would go

to town. And I learned to fix flat tires because a tire couldn't hold up on this rocky nasty road that we drove. If you survive going around the corner and missing a logging truck or whatever, some places it was a one lane road.

0:55:17.4 James Wall: And on top of all of that when you're not doing all that work, you have a human being who's learning to walk and talk and... You have to raise a child, right?

0:55:31.2 Vicki Pence: You did, and you know the locks on our doors were the little hook-and-eye, that was the only thing that locked our doors, our screened-in porch had been boarded up to keep the bears out, and so to wash a load of diapers or clothes or anything, I had to walk down this hill, use the bunkhouse washing machine, put it on the community line, and get back. Well, we did do one of our monthly shopping trips and there was an old easy washing machine in front of this hardware store. We bought it for twenty-five dollars. I thought I was in heaven. And we could put it in our basement, and I could wash the clothes during nap time, or get the clothes washed during nap time. I would run them down the hill to hang them on the line, and one particular day, I was in a hurry to make this nap time schedule, kicked open the screen door with this load of clothes that I had in my arms, and there's a snake coiled there, and I was going too fast to be able to stop, so I just went airborne, and I crossed over the front porch step there was, and I did not lose one diaper.

[laughter]

0:57:02.0 Carl Pence: She has an interesting story about... I was on a fire and my younger brother was on an adjacent ranger district and there was a fire, I was gone on the fire... You finish the story about...

0:57:15.5 Vicki Pence: And in the middle of the night, I heard this rumbling in our... And somebody going through the things in our back porch, and I thought, "is that a bear?" And our son's... Our baby son's room was just off of that back porch, and I thought, I mean, everything's wood, you can't see a thing, and there's no lock on this door, and I thought, "Oh, dear." And I thought, "well, if there's a momma bear looking for food for her baby... There's a mean mama in the inside of that door." I had a gun and finally, I thought, "okay, I'm going to find out whether this is human or animal," and I yelled out, "Who's out there?" And it was Carl's brother Guy, and it had started raining, and he was looking for a raincoat that Carl might have left as he was on the way to the fire. [laughter] But it had its issues, but anyway, you just learn to deal with those things [chuckles]. And probably my childhood was conducive to that type of thing, not that I planned on doing it very long, but we got through it.

0:58:42.1 Carl Pence: I might want to add there—compound living in some of those little remote compounds—some of them were good and friendly. The one in Bridgeport was not a positive thing. We had, the ranger on the Cobalt Ranger District and us, his wife and us, we had a really good relationship. We would often share dinners together, play... They were card players. Vicki and I never ever tried to get into pinochle, but they were determined to teach us how to play pinochle [laughter], and it was a failure. One night we were sitting there, and this is a story about the remote phone system. We were sitting... They were trying to teach us, and we could hear... And it was probably about nine o'clock at night. And we could hear a weak ring on our telephone that was trying to get to Salmon. That ring was a long... You'd ring long you'd... Make... And that was to get to the operator in Salmon. But this... There was something shorting. It was a Yellow Jacket Mine. It was about thirty miles into the backcountry from our ranger district headquarters.

1:00:06.9 Carl Pence: And I picked up the phone and asked, "Could we help you? Your ring is very weak." We could... I could ring long into Salmon and get the Salmon operator for them if they... And offered them that. But it was some miners at the Yellow Jacket Mine, and they were not friendly to the Forest Service because, well, there were water quality problems that the mines were leaking heavy metals into the Panther Creek which was the main drainage there. And it was hurting anadromous fish and Salmon steelhead runs. They were... And it basically, the runoff from those mine at us were actually killing all the aquatic life in Panther Creek. So, we were trying to get the miners to deal with that pollution. And it was a very unfriendly situation. So when I made that offer to help them get into Salmon, I said, "What's the problem?" And an old miner, eighty-some year-old miner had broken his femur and they were trying to get ahold of a doctor in Salmon.

1:01:28.1 Carl Pence: And so I said, "Well, I could make a call in to Dr. Blackador and get help for you." And they said, "No, we'll deal with our own." So they kept ringing this long ring for—it was just a half hour or more—until they finally rung our ring. And I said, "Okay, can I help you?" And they explained the problem. And so, I called Dr. Blackador. Dr. Blackador had actually given me... That was before EMTs and all that stuff, but I was a first aid instructor and I talked to Dr. Blackador about it, maybe him helping me teach others. And he said, "Well, yeah." And he gave me a special course in backcountry...He says, "You can be my representative." So he gave me vials of Demerol and additional things about what to do. And so, when I got ahold of Dr. Blackador, he said, "Oh, okay, Carl, I can't get out there." Here it was by that time, ten at night. And he said, "It would take me three or four hours to drive out to Yellow Jacket Mine. You've got to go and take care of that old miner and use your Demerol injections and whatever until we get a helicopter in to rescue him." And so, the ranger and I got in our vehicle and we went out to the Yellow Jacket Mine. And it was a sad situation that we found, they...there were half a dozen miners there. It was a... How do I want to call it? The mine had ceased operating. They were just maintaining things.

1:03:13.8 Carl Pence: And sure enough, they had this eighty-year-old miner in a bunk in a small trailer, a camper there. They hadn't splinted his leg. And if you know anything about broken femurs, the muscles, if you don't put traction on it, the muscles contract and the broken ends pass each other. And when I got there, the miners were actually having kind of a party in the small trailer, and "Old Rod" was his name, but they were drinking alcoholic beverages as they were waiting on poor Old Rod. And what I did basically was clear the trailer. I said, "You guys leave. We've got to take care of the situation." It was beyond me splinting his leg. I just immobilized it and started giving him Demerol shots to relieve him of the pain, which he said, "Oh, thank you. That feels so good." And the ranger was out trying to get the helicopter to come in at daybreak and all this kind of stuff. Everybody left the trailer except this other young miner who was quite tall. And he was very inebriated. He refused to leave because he was with Rod when he broke the leg, and he kind of took responsibility for it. And he would, in a drunken slur, he would say, "Rod, don't worry about it. We'll take care of you." [laughter] "We'll get you out of here." Anyway, I babysat Rod. He sure appreciated me and that Demerol because it basically, he'd sleep a little bit. I gave him a big dose of Demerol, and he'd sleep for a while.

1:04:58.2 Carl Pence: And, finally about 5 o'clock that morning, the ranger came into the little trailer and he said, "Carl, the helicopter's going to be here in about twenty minutes." And so here, this big tall guy was sitting there and he kind of nodded off into a drunken stupor. So I woke him up, awakened him and I said, "Hey, helicopter's going to be here in about an hour. I want you to go out and maybe rest yourself so that you're... Well, able to..." I knew that if he... Once sat down, closed his eyes, he would go to sleep, which he did. Helicopter landed in twenty minutes. We got

the miner out, tied him on the old Bell helicopter, and they took off. And I never saw the drunken young guy again, thank goodness. But it was the rescue... Interesting enough, the old guy survived and did well. But that was an interesting, not an unusual situation in those remote ranger stations when you got exposed to those kind of situations.

1:06:07.2 James Wall: Oh. So you were a paramedic and a ranger?

1:06:10.0 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:06:11.1 James Wall: Wow. So this is all the Salmon, right?

1:06:14.1 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:06:15.1 James Wall: Now on fire right now, right?

1:06:16.8 Carl Pence: Yes, it is.

1:06:19.2 James Wall: But so those early years, how long were you on the Salmon?

1:06:22.4 Carl Pence: We were what, three years?

1:06:23.4 Vicki Pence: Two years.

1:06:24.8 Carl Pence: Two years before we got another blue envelope.

[laughter]

1:06:31.1 James Wall: Now, how did that work? Would they just... Would you just get a blue envelope in the mail...

1:06:33.1 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:06:33.1 James Wall: Or would the boss come in and he'd throw it on the desk?

1:06:35.6 Carl Pence: Well, kind of both. But they would, I often referred to it, it was kind of this godlike committee that they would look at us guys and say, "Well, that guy has potential. We need to give him more experiences." [chuckles] So we got this envelope that said, "You're going to Lehman Caves National Monument." It's part of the Ely Ranger District. Ely was seventy miles from this place. Lehman Caves is a limestone cavern, much like Carlsbad Cavern only on a smaller nature, very intimate, beautiful limestone cavern. And the National Park Service had a national monument there that was a mile square, including the cave. And they had an interpretive site there and a little restaurant and I was to be the Forest Service liaison with the Park Service. And I was to manage an area that was called Wheeler Peak Scenic Area, at that time. That was National Forest System land that surrounded this national monument. And we actually lived with the Park Service in their compound, and that was a pretty good living arrangement, actually. We had a very nice house. It was a new house that was just built and, but it was a long ways away from other services, like doctors, and Vicki could probably address that better than I can.

1:08:18.5 James Wall: Right, right, right. Well, at this point, when you were in Ely Caverns, your first child was about, what, three or four?

1:08:25.8 Vicki Pence: Three.

1:08:26.9 James Wall: Perfect time to have...

1:08:28.8 Vicki Pence: Yes.

[laughter]

1:08:28.9 James Wall: Nowhere to go.

1:08:30.9 Vicki Pence: Well after we got acquainted with the people there, there were a couple other women who were concerned about our children not being able to socialize and get socialization skills that they would have gotten elsewhere. The kids that were in elementary school were bused to Garrison, Utah, which was probably fifteen miles away. The high school kids were boarded out in, usually Ely, for the week and then they would come home on weekends. So anyway, the three of us decided we would start a preschool kindergarten, and we were allowed to use an abandoned church building. And so we used that and the Ely School District gave us the surplus learning materials, and so three times a week, we would take turns teaching these classes. And we would also... There were a lot of migrant workers on the farms in the area, so we'd go around, pick up all the migrant kids that fit our preschool kindergarten, and take them and teach them the school, as well as our kids and then after school, we would take them home. So we all did this volunteer, of course, and... Actually, one little girl actually cut her teeth on the dash of our... We had a pickup. So you're gathering all these kids, and they're all gathered in this, the front seat of this pickup. So it was interesting.

1:10:24.4 James Wall: So this was a just a private, your own...

1:10:28.4 Vicki Pence: Yeah.

1:10:28.7 James Wall: Little preschool and... because there was nowhere else to go.

1:10:31.7 Vicki Pence: There was no place else to go. But we wanted...

1:10:33.5 James Wall: And I guess you had to get caught up on early childhood education...

1:10:36.7 Vicki Pence: Yes.

1:10:37.5 James Wall: Materials and things like that.

1:10:39.4 Vicki Pence: We did. We had... Even church was in... We all took turns once a month or... To have church in our homes, and a pastor would come four miles from Delta, Utah.

1:10:52.8 Carl Pence: It was longer than four miles, four hours.

1:10:55.0 Vicki Pence: Four... I mean four hours for church. And then we'd put him up for the

night. And then...

1:11:02.2 James Wall: Sounds like the itinerant preachers of the Great Awakening.

1:11:03.3 Carl Pence: Yes. Yes.

1:11:04.3 Vicki Pence: They were, yeah. And then the nearest doctor, we could go ninety miles to Ely or we could go ninety miles from Milford. Well, it depends on what you needed, Milford, Utah, which you could... Depending on what was wrong with you, which doctor you would go to.

1:11:24.5 James Wall: Wait, so the, the closest doctor was ninety miles away?

1:11:28.7 Carl Pence: And Vicki got pregnant.

[laughter]

1:11:32.7 James Wall: Good lord.

1:11:33.0 Vicki Pence: And of course we're...

[laughter]

1:11:37.4 James Wall: You managed to get pregnant at the worst times it seems, when you were so far away from civilization.

1:11:44.8 Vicki Pence: Right. But you just don't plan on those...

1:11:50.1 James Wall: Yeah.

1:11:50.7 Vicki Pence: So...

1:11:52.2 James Wall: Was there a nurse or a...

1:11:54.2 Carl Pence: No.

1:11:54.6 Vicki Pence: One of the ladies that helped with this school that we set up, was a registered nurse, but she hadn't been in practice for a very long time in these places, but she took care of us or whatever. And since we did have the Rh factor¹ in the pregnancy, we'd done some study and that kind of stuff, and Carl carried an obstetrical kit in the car [chuckle] from the fifth month on in case he had to deliver. But I did call the doctor, I was having some symptoms of some issues with this second child, and he says, "Oh, you're just a paranoid pregnant female, forget it." Well, the contractions were coming, and this was again a premature birth, but we were getting close to... What was it about?

1:12:57.4 Carl Pence: Couple of weeks.

¹ The Rhesus factor, or Rh factor, is a certain type of protein found on the outside of blood cells. People are either Rh-positive (they have the protein) or Rh-negative (they do not have the protein). This distinction mostly matters when the mother is Rh-negative and her child is Rh-positive.

1:12:58.0 Vicki Pence: Eight months or whatever, into it. And so Carl couldn't take it any longer. He says, "Okay, I'm going to the hospital, would you like to come with me?" So, we did get to the hospital, things went from bad to worse. But anyway, the baby did pass away with a erythroblastosis². And so, we... It was that one of those coping skills or dealing, you learn to deal with that kind of thing. But we figured our life had been so far away from amenities, schools and grocery stores or whatever. And banks did not have direct deposit back in those days. You had to financially know when your shopping was going to be, how much you're going to need, and hoping that... And the mail wasn't real consistent, that that paycheck was going to be in the mailbox or the canvas bag, whatever it was, so that you could pay the rent, you could buy the groceries, you could... All of those kind of things. So, Lehman Caves was another remote place. [chuckle]

1:14:22.6 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:14:23.5 Vicki Pence: And going across it in the middle of the winter, the ninety miles to the doctors in the middle of January, we saw two lights from ranches that were a long ways away from the highway. So, you're there, you're by yourself, you got to know.

1:14:43.8 James Wall: And how were those roads in the Winter?

1:14:46.6 Vicki Pence: Those were paved, but they were icy.

1:14:50.5 James Wall: Oh, so I guess it was hit or miss with how well they were going to be plowed or salted or...

1:14:55.4 Carl Pence: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It was...

1:14:56.8 Vicki Pence: We had mountain passes still.

1:15:00.7 James Wall: Gee whiz.

1:15:00.8 Carl Pence: That was a good compound living thing though. We did have support, we supported each other well and friendly and that...it was a good assignment. There was some... I was really... I looked back and I was very proud of how we both recovered from the loss of that child. And we went from that to realizing that we couldn't have another natural birth child, so we applied for adoption and gosh, that was almost a miracle. It was a little less than a year after that baby's death that we got a call from the Nevada Adoption folks that said we had a little girl child that, three days old, if we would drive to...

1:15:56.9 Vicki Pence: Reno.

1:15:57.2 Carl Pence: Reno, Nevada. Clear across, it did... Now this was three days before Christmas.

1:16:08.2 Vicki Pence: Yeah. [laughter]

² *erythroblastosis fetalis* is a type of anemia in which the red blood cells (erythrocytes) of a fetus are destroyed in a maternal immune reaction resulting from a blood group incompatibility between the fetus and its mother.

1:16:09.6 Carl Pence: And now you talked about road conditions. We had to drive... See Lehman Caves National Monument, Lehman Caves where we were living, was only what? Right on the boundary between Utah and Nevada. So, in order to get to Reno, we had to drive all the way across, over several mountain passes to get to Reno, in the middle of December. And here we had our little son, three-year-old. And...

1:16:37.0 Vicki Pence: He was four this time.

1:16:38.2 Carl Pence: Yeah, a pickup truck with just the front seat, it was all pickups. So, we took off and we drove all night.

1:16:46.1 Vicki Pence: But Carl wasn't home when the call came.

1:16:48.5 Carl Pence: Oh, that's true.

[chuckle]

1:16:49.2 Vicki Pence: You had no idea when you were going to get the call. He was at a meeting in Ely, and the social worker called and said, "We have this baby girl for you, if you can get her by nine o'clock tomorrow morning in Reno." And she says, "But I have to have a signature by noon." This was early morning or late morning, and I said, "Well, my husband is in Ely at a meeting, if I can find him, then he could go sign that." And it was lunch hour, actually, when she called, and then she said, "I'll go through all the places, all the restaurants." And I started calling the Forest Service, nobody would answer at the office because it was lunch hour. So I had the phone number of one of the employees that worked there, and I called and I said, "I need some help, I need to find Carl immediately." And told her, the lady answered, why I did. And she said, "Oh, he's eating lunch right here." [chuckle] So he was able to run down, find this lady, the social worker, get the thing signed, and then I was to drive the pickup and get... I mean, when you're totally unprepared for something like this to happen, I mean, you've got to find the baby clothes, you got to find this, you got to find that. And a neighbor helped.

[chuckle]

1:18:18.1 Vicki Pence: So, I was able to pick Carl up at five o'clock, drive our pickup into Ely at five o'clock that afternoon when he got through with his meeting. And then the three of us drove the rest of the night to get to Reno. It was a twelve-hour trip.

1:18:34.1 Carl Pence: Yeah, and we had to get to Reno because, for, it was again, three days before Christmas and all of the Child Services people were going to not... They're not going to work beyond that day. So, we had to be in there to get our baby girl so that they could spend Christmas with their families. And we didn't get any sleep that night. We did end up in Reno probably, what was it, three o'clock in the morning? We stayed in a hotel room that we had booked, neither one of us... I don't know about adopting... Others with adoption. You're still always wondering, "can I accept that child? Like I would... It would be a naturally born child of you and your spouse." And I know Vicki didn't sleep much because she was tossing and turning and so was I, but I wanted to state to anybody that has that kind of concern about adoption when I... The Child Services lady handed me that little baby girl. And I looked at her, I thought, "I can do this."

1:19:51.8 James Wall: And I think somebody's phone was buzzing, but... So how old was she?

1:20:00.6 Carl Pence: Three days.

1:20:00.7 Vicki Pence: Three days old.

1:20:01.3 James Wall: Really?

1:20:01.9 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:20:02.2 Vicki Pence: We had to sign paperwork that we would forgo... We would accept all responsibility and forgo any doctor checkups, that kind of thing, because it was Christmas and they were going to be closed for two weeks. And so we signed the waiver. And...

1:20:19.2 James Wall: Did she already have a name or did you...

1:20:21.8 Vicki Pence: No, that was up to us.

1:20:23.3 James Wall: Wow. And had you picked out a name?

1:20:26.2 Vicki Pence: We'd had one picked out for a girl for a long time as the boys we had our trouble with, [laughter] we had two boys, [laughter], we had to come up with names for her. But...

1:20:38.9 James Wall: Wow. And so, at that point, did you feel like you had a big family? I mean the family that you wanted?

1:20:46.7 Vicki Pence: We did.

1:20:47.1 James Wall: Maybe not the one you planned for, but the one you wanted, needed.

1:20:50.0 Vicki Pence: We did. We just knew that God was watching out for us and he'd taken super care of us. And ironically, Nevada was one of two states in the United States that only had a six-month probationary period before you could finalize an adoption. And to get ready for the next transfer, we picked up our U-Haul truck. In those days you moved yourself pretty much. And we picked it up the day we went to court to finalize her adoption.

1:21:28.3 Carl Pence: Yeah. And that... I need to explain that transfer. We were in Lehman Caves for, what was it, two years, three years? Something like that, and there was going to be a big shuffle in the Forest Service. This is President Nixon's era. And he had a plan where he was going to—between BLM and the Forest Service—that they were going to have centralized common regional offices. So, this was Region Four of the Forest Service and its office was in Ogden, Utah. But in the Nixon plan, he was going to combine most of Region Four with the regional office out of Denver. So, the regional office in Ogden was going to cease to exist. And the regional forester, because of that, the regional forester said, sent a memo out that said if anyone in our region would be interested in another region's experience, volunteer and we'll put you on the list because we need to reduce the several hundred employees because the regional office is going to cease to exist. And so, being the adventurous person I tended to be, I put my name on the list and we got the blue envelope that we were to transfer to a ranger district in Region Six in Oregon, the Unity Ranger District. And that

was another shock.

[laughter]

1:23:05.3 Carl Pence: Just so to speak. But anyway, we had to, and as Vicki was mentioning, it was kind of coincidental, not kind of, it was coincidental, almost a weird situation because as we loaded our U-Haul truck and went through Ely to go on to Unity, Oregon, in eastern Oregon, we signed the papers finalizing Shelley's adoption.

1:23:38.4 James Wall: So, what a moment of change in...

1:23:41.0 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:23:41.6 James Wall: Several different ways for you.

1:23:43.0 Carl Pence: Yeah. And I need to take another break. All the coffee I drank.

[recording paused]

1:23:46.6 James Wall: Sure, sure. Alright, so you adopted a baby in Reno, took a gamble on that, and then you're carted off to the vaunted, famous Region Six, right? Which is for most people, was the place you wanted to be in the Forest Service, right?

1:24:04.9 Carl Pence: Yes. We had a great impression, we envisioned not the desert situation that we had in Nevada, we thought in the very small community that we had in Nevada. And so we had our U-Haul truck loaded and our other pickup loaded and two young children. And so we moved on it was quite a journey, but the closer we got to Unity, Oregon, fortunately we... Vicki had a, her sister and her husband were working in Boise. We went through Boise. And so Vicki and I left our two young children with Vicki's sister and her husband here in the Boise area. And we drove to Unity, Oregon and from Boise and the closer we got to Unity, Oregon, we got thinking, "Gee, where are all the trees? Where..." And it looked a lot like Nevada, sagebrush and pinyon pine and...

1:25:18.7 Carl Pence: Unity, Oregon, when we came over the little summit into Unity, Oregon, it was really not much different than our assignment in Nevada. It looked very similar, only the compound... The Forest Service compound was huge, to Region Four standards. Gosh, Region Six from the timber program, they had their own walk-in cooler to keep the regeneration trees cool, where in Region Four when we planted trees, we got the seedlings, we would go up to the nearby summit and bury... That spring, bury the seedlings in the snow to keep them from breaking dormancy until we got ready to plant them. But there, they put them in these big walk-in coolers, and the district had a...golly, instead of like the Cobalt District, there was a ranger, an assistant ranger, general district assistant, and some part-time employees, and that was it. In Region Six, my gosh, you had an engineering staff, a pre-sale staff, a post-sale staff, and I was to be what called the "Other Resource Assistant," which had charge of the Recreation, Range, and Wildlife Program. And it was just me and a technician, whereas all the timber-related stuff were minions of people and a very large compound. And when we got there, it was kind of an... This was not one of those compounds...

1:27:03.0 Carl Pence: I mentioned that we left the Bridgeport compound because we needed to.

This was a different compound, a lot of people, big one. The ranger, I talked to the ranger before we left Lehman Caves and asked him what kind of a dwelling we would be moving into. And he says, "Well, I have two vacant dwellings. One's a duplex, the other's a three-bedroom house, but I've got another position I've got to fill and I haven't made a decision which one you will get." And so I said, "Well, call us so we can pack accordingly." Well, the ranger never called us back until I had to be there, so we left and we didn't know which house we would have. Pulled into the ranger district and as Vicki and I drove into the office area there, and they were having a staff meeting, the ranger wasn't present, but the rest of the staff... There were about twenty on the staff, very different than the five staff that I was used to.

1:28:15.4 Carl Pence: The district administrative officer clerk came out to talk to me and I said, "Which house do we unload in?" And she says, "I don't know." And I said, "Well, where's the ranger? Would he know?" "I don't know where the ranger is?" And I thought, "Oh my gosh, this is..." And I got really kind of upset and I said, "Well, you try to get ahold of that ranger, it's noon, and Vicki and I are going to eat lunch and I need to know, so that we can unload. Because I got to unload the U-Haul trailer, take it back to Boise to turn it in and pick up our two children and come back tomorrow." And here it was noon. And so, we ate, went and ate lunch. It was kind of a sad deal because this is the only time this precious wife of mine, I saw her cry a little bit, because the restaurant... There was only one small restaurant-bar and a gas station-general store. That was basically the service industry to serve the population there in Unity, Oregon.

1:29:32.7 Vicki Pence: Which was a hundred.

1:29:34.0 Carl Pence: Yeah. And there was a sawmill there, of course. And so we went to this restaurant to get lunch. We had, what was it? Grilled cheese sandwiches and the bread was quite stale, obviously, and poor Vicki. It was sad, wasn't it? [laughter]

1:29:52.9 Vicki Pence: Well, it gets worse.

[laughter]

1:29:55.3 Carl Pence: Anyway, oh, so after we ate lunch I went back to the office and the secretary clerk did get ahold of the ranger and she said, "Well, you have the duplex, but the duplex has been housing temporary employees, and so it has to... They have to move out before you can move in." Oh my gosh. So we had to wait an hour or so before the temporary employees moved out into the bunkhouse area, and the duplex was a mess. There was dried ketchup on the kitchen counter. The temporary employees had obviously not cleaned it for several... Well, ever. And so, before we could unpack, Vicki and I had to clean that house. It was a two-bedroom duplex.

1:30:52.7 Vicki Pence: It was on excess from World War II.

[laughter]

1:30:55.3 James Wall: So, what... Vicki, what did you think when you walked in and you saw this new home for the first time?

1:31:02.0 Vicki Pence: By this time I had quit thinking.

[laughter]

1:31:05.7 Vicki Pence: It was awful. And I just remember the people lining up outside to see how we were going to take it. They were wondering how we were going to react to everything that was happening. And this was not the major compound. We were in the annex compound across town, which also housed the school employees.

1:31:35.1 Vicki Pence: But these guys were just standing there, and Carl and I were working like crazy to get this... So we could even clean enough so we could even move in. And so Carl finally went over to the general store, bought a case of beer, came back and he said, "All right, you can have this case of beer if you'll help." So they did, it took more than a case, but we did get them to help us and we got things put in there. But this place was... I don't know if this is the time to go in, [dog barking] but the general store had a gas station, and the gas station leaked into the aquifer, so when you turned on the faucet, all you could smell was gas because it had contaminated the water supply.

1:32:30.7 Carl Pence: There was an underground gas storage tank and it got into the aquifer.

1:32:35.9 Vicki Pence: And I know if you lit a match in the shower you'd have blown up. After we were living there, the walls were paper thin, and if the neighbors shut their door, our blinds would fall out of the ceiling, [chuckles] and nothing was private [laughter].

1:33:01.0 Carl Pence: It was really an interesting assignment. As we were cleaning the house to get moved in about... It was about 5:30, the ranger finally came. And I gotta confess, I'm a fairly adaptive person, but I was upset, very upset, because he hadn't called and told us what we were going to move into. When we found out what we were going to move into, it wasn't prepared for us, we had to spend at least three hours before we got the darn thing cleaned. And when he showed up, I was cleaning out the one-car garage, and I had this pile of dirt that was probably about a foot high that I'd been sweeping up so we could move some of the rest of our stuff into the garage so we could work it into the living room. And he showed up and he was an older person, and he said... I don't think I gave him a chance to even say anything. But I said, "I gotta confess to you that I hope this first impression I have is not an accurate impression of how this unit works." And he looked at me and he says, "I mighta know'd they woulda sent me one of them guys." And turned around and started to walk away.

[laughter]

1:34:24.9 Carl Pence: And I grabbed him by the shoulder and turned him around and I said, "You'll find that I'm a very hard worker, and I'll do the best I can to do what I need to do, but I'll also tell you how I feel." And he turned around and walked off, but I certainly wasn't impressed with the leadership there, I'm sorry to say, and it wasn't good. It destroyed the image I had of Region Six, really did. I don't know how that person really got the job he did as a district ranger, I don't know the history behind that, but he was an absent ranger, had very low personnel skills. That was one of my strong points and actually, Vicki and I both became very... Because of our adaptability that we had, we became very well-liked in the community, the whole community, and especially the Forest Service community there. A lot of the employees were very frustrated. An example, there was one Sunday night, we were in our duplex house, and I had a knock on the door and there was this young employee, he was part of the post-sale staff, but he had a master's degree

in wildlife biology. He explained to me, and he and his wife were extremely frustrated that he'd been trying to get a job in his wildlife specialty, but the ranger wouldn't help him find a job in that specialty. And I thought, "My gosh." I always was of the impression that a job as a supervisor, ranger, assistant ranger, was to help your employees find what they wanted to in their careers.

1:36:33.9 Carl Pence: And here, the ranger would not help this young man who was actually doing a very good job as a post-sale or a pre-sale forester, but he was a wildlife specialist with a master's degree. So next time I had an opportunity and I forged it, I went to the regional... The forest supervisor's office and I talked to the wildlife staff officer, and I said, "Hey, we've got a young master's degree wildlife biologist that would dearly love to work in his specialty. Do you have any jobs for him?" He said, "Oh yeah, we got a tussock moth spray thing, I need a person that would monitor how that spray, or aerial spray project's going on in the forest and I'll offer him a job, permanent employee job with a promotion as soon as I can get him." So I went back and I shared that with the ranger, and the ranger was really angry at me, he said, "Well, I keep my good employees here."

[laughter]

1:37:39.4 Carl Pence: So, I... You know, I... That was one of those jobs. We had two compound living situations where we kind of escaped. One was the Bridgeport Ranger District. This was another escape. We only were there just nearly a year and again, Providence, God, whatever you want to call it, gave me an opportunity to... There was a man that got a new job in the region... forest supervisor's office because of NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] and NFMA [National Forest Management Act] all those new acts late in the '70s were coming on board and he was putting together a planning, forest planner team. And I interviewed with him and he was impressed with me and so we had a transfer into Baker City, Oregon, and this was a new experience for our life.

1:38:36.0 Vicki Pence: But we still had to go through the gas rationing.

1:38:39.9 Carl Pence: [chuckle] Oh, yeah.

1:38:40.9 Vicki Pence: In Unity, which was an hour and a half from Baker City, where you went to the doctor and got your groceries. So you could have five gallons a day, you'd have to go down to the general store, get five gallons a day. And we had a gas guzzling pickup, that's all we had. Every day I did that so I would have enough gas to take the kids to the doctor or go get groceries if I needed to.

1:39:06.7 James Wall: And would you store the gas in like the...

1:39:09.9 Vicki Pence: Just put it in the pickup.

1:39:10.1 James Wall: Oh, Okay.

1:39:10.2 Carl Pence: I had two tanks...

1:39:11.7 Vicki Pence: And we had two tanks on the pickup by that time.

[laughter]

1:39:13.6 Carl Pence: Oh my God.

1:39:16.8 Vicki Pence: So. [chuckle] You would have to... And it was over a mountain pass called Dooley. It's very famous for how nasty it was at that point...

1:39:24.7 Carl Pence: How carsick it gets you.

1:39:26.1 Vicki Pence: And, and...

1:39:26.2 James Wall: So you've got to drive all the way to the gas station to get your five gallons of gas?

1:39:29.2 Vicki Pence: Well, the five gallons was at the general store.

1:39:31.7 James Wall: Oh, okay.

1:39:32.3 Vicki Pence: That was in Missoula town...

1:39:32.9 James Wall: I was about to say, you might burn all the gas that you just got.

1:39:35.9 Vicki Pence: No, no, but to get to the doctor and the grocery store you did.

1:39:38.9 James Wall: Oh my God.

1:39:41.2 Vicki Pence: So [chuckle] at 7 miles a gallon, it was...

1:39:44.9 James Wall: So, was the Baker City assignment. Was that finally like your first town that you were ever in?

1:39:49.7 Vicki Pence: Our first town.

1:39:50.6 James Wall: That must have been the dark clouds parting.

1:39:51.9 Vicki Pence: It was so exciting. Oh my goodness.

1:39:54.9 Carl Pence: Yes. [chuckle]

1:39:55.0 James Wall: Wow. So, did you tell him, "We're never leaving here"? [laughter]

1:40:00.6 Vicki Pence: Well, you know, if it had been at the end of our career instead of the first, we would have stayed there. But we house hunted. "My goodness, we can pick our own house and buy it?" And you know, our first house cost \$17,500 and that's because we bought the appliances in it that it was the extra \$500. So... And the three percent interest for a house at that, it... I mean...

1:40:31.7 James Wall: Wow.

1:40:32.2 Vicki Pence: We were so excited. We had three-fourths of an acre, we had a garden, we had [chuckle] walking distance to the elementary school, which our son was just beginning. And Carl rode his bike to work, man [chuckle] It was a town... It was about 10,000 people, I think.

1:40:53.0 James Wall: Wow. I guess you don't realize all of the things people take for granted until you finally get into a town.

1:41:00.1 Carl Pence: Oh, it was wonderful.

1:41:00.9 Vicki Pence: Yeah, it was so exciting.

1:41:02.3 James Wall: Yeah.

1:41:02.8 Vicki Pence: And the neighbors were friendly. They were... [laughter] They were... I mean...

1:41:07.1 James Wall: They didn't leave you a bunch of...

1:41:08.2 Vicki Pence: No. We just...

1:41:08.4 James Wall: Garbage in your house when you moved in?

1:41:11.7 Vicki Pence: No, they offered to... I mean, I had a friend... Well, we actually met, she was with the school, living in Unity, and they transferred... It was a school system, to Baker before we did, and so we had a contact and it was exciting.

1:41:31.7 James Wall: It must have been.

1:41:32.7 Carl Pence: And the job as Assistant Planner, implementing NEPA and all those Environmental Plan Acts that began then was really a positive thing for me. I learned how to do public meetings well, and sharpened my writing skills, and public speaking skills, I had... The boss and I had a really a good relationship. It was a good job.

1:42:06.8 James Wall: Who was the Forest Supervisor?

1:42:10.3 Carl Pence: Oh, uh... Good Lord.

1:42:11.1 Vicki Pence: Roth?

1:42:13.1 Carl Pence: No. Oh my gosh, I can't quite remember. We had two forest supervisors. It was, oh, I can't remember those names I got two, two...

1:42:24.0 James Wall: Sure, sure, sure. But this is the... So you were working on, what was it called? Was it the Northwest Forest Plan?

1:42:29.5 Carl Pence: No, this was pre that. We were still doing just environmental impact statements. It was a short, short window in the Forest Service going from a project EIS's to... We were doing... We divided the forest up into zones, not just ranger district, but zones. And we were

doing... This is pre-Forest Plan. We tried to divide the forest up into socioeconomic units and we'd do a plan for that unit. And that... That didn't last too long until we found out the National Forest Planning [Management] Act happened just after I moved from that job, and then that took the place of that short-term planning effort, but it was just a precursor to the larger planning efforts. But it was a very good learning experience to me, extremely good learning experience.

1:43:32.5 James Wall: What do you remember about Charles Connaughton?

1:43:35.4 Carl Pence: Oh, Chuck, a very powerful forest supervisor, speak his, speak his mind. But I was truly impressed with him. Just a powerful individual. What you envisioned as a regional forester ought to be.

1:43:52.7 James Wall: Yeah, interesting. So, this Baker City, you were there for, how long was this?

1:44:00.3 Carl Pence: Three years, was it that we were in Baker City? Just pushed three years.

1:44:03.1 Vicki Pence: Yeah.

1:44:03.4 Carl Pence: Yeah.

1:44:03.7 James Wall: So Vicki, when you found out that you had to leave Baker City, was that a grieving process?

1:44:10.1 Vicki Pence: [chuckle] No, it was more... Well, we were going to Jackson Hole from Baker City.

1:44:17.5 Carl Pence: Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

1:44:19.6 Vicki Pence: So... But that had it... You know, you hated to leave. You were kind of... You had the friends, you had the kind of a normal situation. What you would think life might be that I was beginning to think was just a dream and I'd read it in a book someplace. But Baker City gave us a chance to have the life I kind of thought...

1:44:47.9 Carl Pence: And recover.

1:44:48.0 Vicki Pence: I wanted in the very beginning [chuckle] Long before I met Carl. [chuckle]

1:44:52.8 Carl Pence: I need... There was a change at that point in time. Now, I talked about the blue envelope before. But when we were in Baker City in that planning job, the Forest Service decided to do away with this assigned, "You go to where we want you to go."

1:45:11.4 James Wall: A directed reassignment.

1:45:14.1 Carl Pence: Yes. We... They... We were able... Jobs... Open jobs were advertised, and you'd look at... Now you could choose where you wanted to go. And you'd look at the advertisement and apply for it. And you put in your 171, your... That was the form you'd fill out about your experience levels. And so, I was really enjoying the planning job and the planning career

in the Forest Service was beginning really... Up to that point, there were no planning jobs. But the planning career was just started at that point with NEPA and NFMA and all those things. So I could... I thought, "Man, this is a good career opportunity." So I started looking in that era of future jobs and up to this point I'd had... The assignments I took were lateral assignments, GS-9 lateral assignments. I finally became a GS-11 in those things. And so, I had three jobs as GS-11 lateral assignments. And so I was looking at promotional opportunities and there was this job that showed up on the thing as a Wild and Scenic River Study Team Leader in Jackson, Wyoming. And I thought, "Whoa, this looks like a cherry assignment." So I applied for it and got it. And there was a promotional one to a GS-12. And so away we went.

1:47:10.4 Vicki Pence: Yes. And getting there was really interesting.

[chuckle]

1:47:12.8 James Wall: Tell me about it.

1:47:13.7 Vicki Pence: He was driving the U-Haul. I was driving our pickup, pulling a horse trailer with our huge upright piano that we had inherited.

[chuckle]

1:47:23.4 Vicki Pence: And we were going... I had the two kids with me in the pickup, and one was almost three and of course one was pushing five, or was five. And we were going across the Craters of the Moon in Idaho. And there was a horrible thunderstorm. It was really spectacular. And a fire started. And it had an incredible wind, sagebrush, high grass, and it was moving it right toward us at the highway. And Carl and I... And that area is famous for its frost heaves. And Carl and I were driving as fast as we could possibly go, terrified, praying the whole way that we could stay ahead of that fire. And it got to the... We were doing pretty good. The kids didn't even say a thing. And it got to the side of the road and it stopped so we could get ahead of it a little bit more. And that was the most terrifying move across that desert that we'd ever gone. And we thought, "I hope we're leaving this desert away... We're getting out of the desert. We're never going back to another desert." [chuckle]

1:48:48.9 James Wall: I took that way here from Missoula and there's something already kind of creepy about the Craters of the Moon.

1:48:56.6 Vicki Pence: There is.

1:48:57.2 Carl Pence: Oh, yeah.

1:48:58.0 James Wall: You feel like you're on a rock, you know, barren... Other planet. And so then to combine that with fire coming at you.

1:49:07.9 Vicki Pence: And the roads were not kept up in those days.

1:49:10.3 James Wall: Oh lord. Yeah.

1:49:11.2 Vicki Pence: It was just awful. And I just knew that piano... I could just hear those keys

scream every time I hit one of those bumps.

1:49:19.1 Carl Pence: It never got re-tuned [laughter]

1:49:22.1 Vicki Pence: Well, it did, but, it got totally refinished as a matter of fact. But I can't tell you the terror that you have trying to outrun something and you're driving this machine that you know you're driving far faster than you should be going. And then the capability of having a flat tire or whatever it... With two kids. [chuckle] It was terrifying.

1:49:48.7 James Wall: Nice. So that was... By the time you got there, I guess every... It seemed like, "Well, this is the easy part. We didn't die. Now it's just, let's move our stuff in and then get to work."

1:50:01.9 Carl Pence: It didn't work that way.

1:50:02.0 Vicki Pence: We didn't have a house.

1:50:03.3 James Wall: What was Jackson like at that... What year was this?

1:50:06.3 Vicki Pence: 1976.

1:50:08.0 James Wall: So, I guess it must have already... It was at the very beginning of what it became...

1:50:13.5 Carl Pence: It was still kind of a... Had that ranching ambiance when we got there. It was starting, just starting, like you said, to become another Sun Valley kind of a deal.

1:50:26.5 James Wall: Because now it's just a playground for the ultra-rich.

1:50:30.4 Carl Pence: Oh, yeah.

1:50:30.7 Vicki Pence: But something happened to the housing prices. Our \$17,500 house that we first bought, they were now \$80,000 and eleven percent interest.

1:50:42.7 James Wall: Wow.

1:50:42.8 Vicki Pence: And the house that we had found was under construction. It was a spec house. And that was one of the lesser prices available. [laughter] But we... I mean, we... Of course, we were sticker shocked, but we did some of the painting and that kind of stuff to help bring the prices down or the price down. But we had to live in a motel. They promised us they would have it done by the time we got there, but that didn't happen. They quit building by the time when we purchased it, we didn't realize that, doing their other projects. So we lived in a motel with two kids for...

1:51:25.6 Carl Pence: Nearly two months.

1:51:27.5 Vicki Pence: Two months or so.

1:51:28.3 Carl Pence: Nearly two months.

1:51:29.2 James Wall: Oh my gosh.

1:51:30.6 Carl Pence: But that wasn't all that...

1:51:32.3 Vicki Pence: No. It wasn't...

1:51:33.4 Carl Pence: I mean, she found a career for herself.

1:51:33.6 Vicki Pence: Yeah, the man who owned it knocked on the door one day and he says, "You're going to be here for a while. Would you mind helping us out?"

[laughter]

1:51:42.6 Vicki Pence: I helped them out for two years.

[laughter]

1:51:47.3 Vicki Pence: Even after we moved, they would call, "We're in a terrible strait... Dire strait for..."

1:51:52.1 James Wall: What would you do?

1:51:54.9 Vicki Pence: Clean rooms.

1:51:55.4 James Wall: Wow.

1:51:56.9 Carl Pence: And when they were gone, she was... Managed it.

1:52:00.6 James Wall: So I guess the kids at that point had gotten old enough to where you could work?

1:52:06.3 Vicki Pence: Well, they promised to pay for the babysitter. "We'll pay for your babysitter. We'll do whatever." Our son was in the second grade and he was having... The change was really, really hard for him. And we couldn't let him come home for lunch because he wouldn't want to go back and we'd have all the tears and everything. So, but our three-year-old was... Everybody was a friend. We lost her one day and had the whole neighborhood out looking for her, and she'd gone to play with some little boy, a block or two away. [chuckle] So living in a motel had its issues. But...

[laughter]

1:52:43.9 James Wall: Not the first story I've heard of living in a motel...

1:52:46.1 Vicki Pence: Oh.

1:52:47.4 James Wall: In the Forest Service. But was this a desk job or was it a dirt job?

1:52:52.3 Carl Pence: It was a desk job, but it was somewhat similar to my Baker, Oregon planning job, doing the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968) had just occurred. The Upper Snake River from Grand Teton National Park down to Palisades Reservoir was... I was to study that to find out how that river segment would fit within the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. So I had to write an EIS, and submit that to Congress as a report to Congress so that they could look at how the Act or the river qualified within the Act. And then they would pass an Act accordingly, saying it is a scenic river, a wild river or a recreational river segment. And I had to form a committee. Again, you were mentioning committee decisions. I had to form a committee that included ranchers, recreation, a spectrum of the people in Nevada. It was interesting. Water rights is a very touchy thing.

1:54:06.1 James Wall: Oh, yeah.

1:54:07.6 Carl Pence: And I remember one of my committee members was a rancher from Pinedale, Wyoming. And my first meeting that I held with that committee, he got right close to my face and he says, "You might steal my wife, and you might steal my horses, but if you steal my water I really will get mad." [laughter] So, state water rights is a very controversial thing. I did finish the study. It took me about two years to do so, and submitted it, the report to Congress. And eventually Congress did get around to classifying that segment of the river within the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. But after we had left Wyoming... We actually stayed in that area for what? Was it nine years?

1:55:00.3 Vicki Pence: Eleven? Eleven years.

1:55:01.5 Carl Pence: Right.

1:55:01.6 Vicki Pence: Eleven years.

1:55:02.1 Carl Pence: Yeah. And well, it was a neat thing because our children then were able to basically, except for our daughter, get through grade school and middle school. And our son got through high school and was in... Going to college when we left that area. Our daughter, however, was just starting high school when we left.

1:55:29.1 Vicki Pence: And both kids were on the USSA...

1:55:29.5 Carl Pence: Oh. Yeah.

1:55:30.0 Vicki Pence: Nordic Racing Team.

1:55:33.2 Carl Pence: We took every advantage of the life in Jackson, Wyoming, and it really fit our lifestyle. We bought a canoe and canoed all the lakes and the rivers and we became skiers. Our son and daughter both got into the Nordic Ski Racing scene, USSA Racing thing. Our son was a State Champion for Nordic Racing when he got into senior high school. Both attended Junior Nationals... Junior Olympics, basically, Nordic Ski Racing, twice... Three times. Corey went three times. And we downhill skied, canoed.

1:56:22.1 Vicki Pence: Our daughter was in horses.

1:56:24.3 Carl Pence: Yeah. Yeah. I had horses...

1:56:27.4 Vicki Pence: And she was a rodeo princess.

1:56:28.3 Carl Pence: Yeah.

[laughter]

1:56:28.9 Vicki Pence: That kind of stuff.

[chuckle]

1:56:29.9 Carl Pence: And we packed horses. But we truly enjoyed life there. Had a lot of friends, a lot of friends. I, fortunately, in my previous job, I'd learned skills relative to public meetings. I finished that job with the Wild and Scenic River thing and the forest planner's staff, he transferred and I was well-qualified to assume his job so I applied for it when he left, and I got it. So I transferred in place from the river study job, which I had finished to the forest planner, who was to help implement all that NFMA, NEPA, etcetera, when we started the forest plan. And I... That was a very challenging job to say the least. I don't know if you've ever interviewed anybody that was in charge as a forest planner to... It was, it kind of became a joke to us because we'd almost get a draft environmental impact statement ready, and then somehow or another that the powers to be in Washington decided to change how... Add something to it, so we'd have to...

1:57:57.9 Carl Pence: We'd go back to square one, we'd say, "Oh, we're back to square one again." We had this ridiculous floor plan. There was this impression that the intelligentsia in the Forest Service felt that we'd had this computer program, that we put everything into that computer program and let it run. And the best answer would automatically come out of the computer and it would be uncontroversial. Everybody would say, "Amen, brother." And we'd have a forest plan. Well, that didn't work out. Plus, the model, the computer model was, had so many flaws in it. And I kind of laugh at people that think they can get a non-controversial solution by using a computer when you're dealing with value-related decisions that are not mathematical decisions. And it was ridiculous.

1:59:07.9 Carl Pence: I spent ten years in really big frustration there. We did get a draft environmental impact statement out, we were working on the final, when I decided it was time for me to move on. We did love Jackson, and I cried when we left Jackson. We had awesome friends there, but we ended up moving and I became an Area Ranger on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, which was... You know, I was stereotyped. I'd been applying for, I kept thinking, "Oh, I should be able to become a forest supervisor with all my great experience and talents." And so, I applied for either deputy forest supervisor or forest supervisor positions. I had moved from a GS-11 to a GS-13 at that time. When I became Forest Planner, I got a promotion in place. And that was cool. But I... And I was doing well, and I had great experience. I thought, well, but again, you and I mentioned that there's a stigma that in order to get into those other positions, you need that Washington office experience. And so, after applying for a number of deputy forest supervisor, even lateral positions, going to a GS-13, to a deputy forest supervisor, well, that's a good... But I, and of course I also was fighting a diversity issue that the Forest Service have. White male, you know, whatever.

2:00:47.2 Carl Pence: And, anyway, I decided, "Well, I'll lateral out." And here came this job on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area as Head Ranger of the Sawtooth NRA and I applied and I got it. And that was moving from Jackson, Wyoming to Sun Valley, Idaho area. Similar, somewhat similar areas, but I need to express that there's a difference. You were right in Jackson, while we were there it turned into a wealthy... Harrison Ford bought a big ranch there and others, but still there was a difference in the wealth between those two communities. I remember while I was doing the Wild and Scenic River Study, an old guy in bib overalls came in to talk to me. He owned a large piece of property along the Snake River there. And he had bib overalls, and I thought this is just an old... He was head of... His last name was Fleischmann of Fleischmann Yeast. [chuckles] Just a great guy, and so I contrast the wealth at Jackson, a lot of it was old wealth, where the wealth in Sun Valley, Idaho was young wealth that they got their money... Actors, lawyers, physicians, etcetera. A totally different kind of wealth in Sun Valley than there was in Jackson.

2:02:27.2 James Wall: Yeah. So Vicki, how did you feel about leaving Jackson? Was it crushing as well?

2:02:36.7 Vicki Pence: Well, I learned to float with [laughter]...Be flexible and I got to the point that you try not to own things. So what? The house, you can't take it with you anyway, so that kind of stuff. You just learn to be flexible. So I thought, "Okay, this is for Carl, we're going." And I've learned that through life [chuckles], you just do what you're required to do or... And how are you going to fit in? That's...

2:03:14.0 James Wall: Does that, when you move to...

2:03:16.2 Vicki Pence: Has a lot...

2:03:16.3 James Wall: From one place to another, to another, to another, does it get to a point where, you know, "Okay, I don't want to get too attached to this friend or to this place, or... That you're kind of guarding yourself a bit?

2:03:29.5 Vicki Pence: Not friends. You're always a friend. We have friends. Our Christmas card list is astronomical, but... And we call each other. We remember their birthdays. All around all these places that we've lived. So that part wasn't, but you get detached from the temporal things, the houses, the things. But there is a grieving process that goes with each move. You're either grieving because you had to be there and it's antagonistic, or you're grieving what you left. So you do go through a few weeks of, "How come I don't feel... Like I don't have the energy I need." Of course you're also acclimatizing to different time zones and that kind of thing. But... And then... But what I thought paled in what I had to help my kids through. And Carl would... Had, you know, be nervous about the new job, that kind of thing. But getting the kids to accept the fact and make it exciting for them. That was my job. And getting up with friends, that kind of thing. I went overboard. Well, I don't know if overboard or not, but meeting new people and I... Coming from a total introvert.

2:04:56.8 James Wall: That's work. Yeah.

2:04:58.3 Vicki Pence: It took a lot to be able to. And I would... Once they started school, I always volunteered at the school at least an hour of every week. I learned more in the school [laughter], but that's where you learn what's going on, what the kids were going to go through, that kind of thing.

But I always volunteered in their class... Whatever grade they were in, in their classes. So that I had a handle on what was going on and how I could help them through it.

2:05:30.7 James Wall: Right, wow. So how did they take to the move to Sawtooth?

2:05:37.0 Vicki Pence: Well, one was already in college. He'd left for college two weeks before... The University of Wyoming. And we called him and said, "You want your skis? You better come get them." [laughter] because he was going to ski for the Wyoming College. And so, he did that and he drove back and forth. He...

2:05:58.7 Carl Pence: And he worked summers in summer job in...

2:06:02.1 Vicki Pence: Jackson Hole in Sun Valley.

2:06:03.4 Carl Pence: Sun Valley.

2:06:03.6 Vicki Pence: So, but moving a fourteen-year-old to a new location was... I wouldn't wish that on anybody.

2:06:12.1 James Wall: Yeah, that's probably the worst age to do that.

2:06:17.5 Carl Pence: Well...

2:06:18.1 Vicki Pence: It was, and the...

2:06:18.8 James Wall: Awkward, awkward age.

[laughter]

2:06:18.9 Vicki Pence: The school system was so inundated with movie stars, that kind of thing because the movie stars would buy these condos for their kids to give them a rural experience. And it was just destroyed. The drugs. The...

2:06:34.1 James Wall: What type of movie stars were there? Can you remember any?

2:06:36.9 Vicki Pence: Yeah.

2:06:37.5 Carl Pence: Bruce Willis.

2:06:38.8 Vicki Pence: Well Bruce Willis was there.

2:06:40.2 Carl Pence: Demi Moore.

2:06:42.6 Vicki Pence: Demi Moore. Of course, the Kennedys were there. The... Oh my goodness.

2:06:50.3 Carl Pence: John Kerry.

2:06:51.3 Vicki Pence: The snobs were there and you had to have this in the school yard. When

somebody had a sixteenth birthday. This brand-new car with this huge red ribbon would appear in the school parking lot. That's what you were contending with. And...

2:07:10.5 James Wall: That's tough.

2:07:12.1 Vicki Pence: It's... Yeah, in the school system there were a lot of wannabes that weren't. It was...

2:07:20.1 James Wall: Yeah. And that's tough as a parent because it's... Your kid's already going to be. They're like, "Oh, well Johnny's dad is Bruce Willis."

[laughter]

2:07:28.3 Carl Pence: Exactly.

2:07:29.7 James Wall: "Why can't you be cool like that?" Oh, man, what a nightmare.

2:07:34.6 Vicki Pence: It was a hard place to survive in, but we did it.

2:07:37.7 Carl Pence: Yeah. It was somewhat complicated because our adopted daughter came with some issues. Her parents had obviously been into drugs, and you adopt, your child is actually pre-addicted. And addiction does things to people's brains. And Shelli had challenges in life.

2:08:14.3 Vicki Pence: But she was also...

2:08:16.7 Carl Pence: Brilliant.

2:08:17.6 Vicki Pence: She was brilliant. She was just... When they tested her at school or had her tested, she was just a few points away from being a genius. I mean she could play the piano by ear. She could sing, she could... She was so many years ahead of herself. We took her to a psychologist at three. Trying to deal with some behavioral issues and he said your... He did us what he'd called 'staging'. He said, "She has a twelve-year-old mentality. But she didn't have the experience of life to deal with it. So you have the temper tantrums."

2:09:00.4 Carl Pence: Frustrations.

2:09:01.6 Vicki Pence: The frustrations. And he said, "You..." And she was smaller for her age than most kids. She didn't even have all the bones in her body at seven, it was just... She was so tiny and so she looked so much younger than everybody else her age. But she could dance, she could sing. She learned how to do the horses, English riding all by herself. She did the barrel racing. I mean it was...

2:09:29.0 Carl Pence: She was junior princess of the rodeo in Jackson, Wyoming.

2:09:34.1 Vicki Pence: And it was incredible, but we learned through her and if she wanted something a twelve-year-old wanted at three, the psychiatrist said, "Give it to her." And we did that.

2:09:49.8 James Wall: Wow. So this in Sun Valley, so the job... You went from a planning job and

more of a behind the scenes job to, honest to God, public-facing recreation area...

2:10:09.2 Carl Pence: And I... That's what I really wanted. That's what I... That's the kind of... I warned my employers that I was going to be like that high-strung dog that you keep in a cage, and you let him out, and I was.

[laughter]

2:10:24.4 Carl Pence: And I loved it. It was an awesome job. Again, it wasn't an awesome community to live in. Vicki implied some of those issues that, all that licentiousness associated with movie stars and whatever.

2:10:41.0 Vicki Pence: But also on the Forest Service realm, society was changing in their mentality and their federal lands and if you worked for the government, you were part of the government. And I mean, we learned about bodyguards, Kevlar vests, that he would have to have periodically. The angry threats, the death threats, and as a new kid in school you're dealing with all, "Oh, your dad's who?" I mean, you know.

2:11:14.8 James Wall: Yeah, that's tough on the kids.

2:11:16.3 Vicki Pence: So...

2:11:16.5 James Wall: Idaho has always had that sort of history of somewhat antagonistic towards federal government, still does really.

2:11:23.9 Carl Pence: Yeah. No, I need to express that the head... The area ranger, before I was... Before I'd got that job, it had been the position was called superintendent. Kind of following the Park Service image of management. But when I got the job, I was... The regional forester called me in and he said, "You're going to be the area ranger." And actually, the act that started the National Recreation... Sawtooth National Recreation Area, described the leader as the area ranger versus the superintendent of the area. So, my title changed and the... Stan Tixier was the regional forester. He gave me a list of things to do. I had... In my previous job, I'd kind of gotten the image of being a troubleshooter. Take on issues and find solutions. So he gave me a whole list of things. One of them was to help this unit become more of a part of the Sawtooth National Forest as a district versus being a totally separate unit. So that was a challenge because the staff on the Sawtooth NRA that were working under me didn't like that idea. They liked that separateness that they had as the Sawtooth National Recreation Area.

2:12:54.4 Carl Pence: So that was a challenge. There were many other things. And Vicki, one of the good example was the charge of private property that I had. Being the Area Ranger of the... The enabling legislation gave me as ranger authority over how private land would be developed and subdivided if we allowed it to be subdivided. One of the charges of that Act was to maintain the open pastoral scene of the area. The ranching, historic ranching and what have you. And so Sawtooth Valley, that part of the Sawtooth NRA, when I... When they made the Act was... Rapidly the ranches were rapidly being divided into lots to get lots of money out of.

2:13:58.5 Carl Pence: So we would buy scenic easements of the private land to try to maintain that ranching ambience of the area. That... Custer County, Idaho, I was born and raised in Custer

County. It was kind of like moving home, actually, because I had lot of historic relatives living in the area and that was a positive thing to me, but sometimes it was negative because me coming in, for example, I had to... The anadromous fisheries, salmon, steelhead, bull-trout, etcetera, these migrating fish from the ocean, that was their spawning and rearing habitat. And a lot of the heavy cattle grazing and sheep grazing affected that habitat. So I ended up having to be... To cut, to reduce the amount of use, change how the use was for the ranching community, and that was a very big sore point, as Vicki mentioned.

2:15:03.9 Carl Pence: And then the mining, I don't know if you know much about the geology of that central Idaho portion, but you've got limestone formations, you've got batholith granite formations, you've got lava formations, volcanic formations. They all intersect into that area. And whenever you get different geology coming together it's mineralized stuff, whether it be copper, silver, uranium, you name it. It was there in those intersections. And so there were a lot of mining things and I had to get that under control to maintain that openness. So, I wasn't popular with the miners at all. Wasn't popular with the livestock, who my heritage was from, very much either. And to deal with those issues on anadromous fisheries and then also maintain that open ambience of the historic ranching deal. And so, we bought lots of scenic easements to maintain that thing. And that in itself was a...

2:16:19.8 Carl Pence: Kind of a contrast in how it affected it. Yeah, we'd buy a scenic easement to, we'd actually buy the rights for the owner to subdivide it. And oftentimes that we would give them about eighty percent of the value of that property to reduce their... Or keep them from subdividing. But what would that do to somebody that would be... The rancher would get lots of money from the subdivision and they'd say, "Well..." A lot of them are old people. And they would say, "Well, I want to leave. I'll sell my ranch now. Who's interested in that ranch?" But a rich thoracic surgeon or a movie actor, or whatever. And then they'd come, buy the ranch. And it... We thought that buying the subdivision rights would reduce the value of the land, but it didn't reduce the value of the land. When you consider the new interest to wealthy purchasers, it actually enhanced the value of the ranch. [laughter] It now was valued as a, by an actor or thoracic surgeon or politician or head as a place they could own and develop their own little fiefdom and build their castle. [laughter]

2:17:50.4 Carl Pence: And so, it was kind of an interesting thing. Now, if you visit the Sawtooth NRA, you see a lot of this openness, which we did maintain, but then there'll be some huge, huge houses. And when I was there, we tried to keep that from happening, but it was very difficult. Because politics get involved and all that stuff. And so now you go there you'll see open land. Yeah. But you'll see some huge, huge houses and you won't see the ranching ambience. We didn't, we maintained some of the openness, but certainly there are very few ranches, true ranches involved there.

2:18:37.5 James Wall: Wow. And so how long were you on the Sawtooth?

2:18:40.5 Carl Pence: That was four...

2:18:42.4 Vicki Pence: Five years.

2:18:43.6 Carl Pence: We pushed five years. Yeah.

2:18:43.7 James Wall: So, by that point, were you beginning to see the light at the end of your

career tunnel and think about next steps of where you wanted to finish your career?

2:18:54.2 Carl Pence: Yeah. I was, and I was pushing 50, and I felt I needed to move on because I was becoming kind of, I hate to say target, but I was becoming quite controversial. And in that controversial image, perhaps that was not helping us move forward.

2:19:20.2 James Wall: Yeah.

2:19:20.2 Carl Pence: So I thought... And I thought, I still want to become a forest supervisor, so how am I going to do this? So I'd been applying for, again, for supervisor jobs, but I kept hitting that barrier. "You still haven't gotten Washington office experience, Carl." So I decided I'd lateral again, given the line officer experience I had proven that I could succeed in. So I applied for a lateral to a deputy forest supervisor position. I thought that, "Gee whiz, the Southwest looks interesting as a new experience. How about the Gila National Forest?" And they were advertising a deputy forest supervisor. So I applied and I got it.

2:20:02.4 James Wall: Wow. On the Gila. Yeah. I've heard a lot about the Gila.

2:20:06.6 Vicki Pence: And before we moved, we found out we were moving. The house was up for sale, everything was clean, everything we were getting things, and Croy Canyon has a forest fire.

[laughter]

2:20:19.9 Vicki Pence: And it came roaring down that mountain right where we were living in that area. And everybody had to evacuate. He was on a fire.

2:20:28.0 Carl Pence: In Stanley.

2:20:29.4 Vicki Pence: Elsewhere.

2:20:31.3 James Wall: What happened to the... Did the house get burned up?

2:20:33.9 Vicki Pence: No, we were able, he'd put automatic water out in the field. We had three acres and turned the... I turned the sprinklers on. We had hope... We had a tin roof. Everybody else had shingles, wooden shingles and had their sprinklers on the roof. And we still had our horse trailer. And so, I took all of our important papers and stuff to higher ground and went around and gathered up all the other Forest Service people's important belongings. But the ash was falling. It was incredible.

2:21:14.4 Carl Pence: I married the right person. That's all I can say. [laughter]

2:21:19.6 James Wall: Nice. Good thinking.

2:21:19.7 Vicki Pence: So that was an interesting...

2:21:20.6 Carl Pence: It was interesting. I, on the fire I was on, I knew that Vicki was, so I... Late at night I was at Stanley, which was a couple hours drive from town and I wanted to come see how

she was doing. And it... The road into our place was blocked off and embers and stuff were floating through the air was like midnight or so when I got there. And the roadblock wouldn't let me through in my private car. So I went back to where I had my Forest Service car, got in it. Of course, I had my Nomex and all that stuff on. [laughter] So I drove by the checkpoint to get to our house to see how Vicki was doing in my official capacity. [laughter] And spent the night with her, which was good because I'd been gone for like five days or so.

2:22:12.7 Vicki Pence: And I couldn't leave because if you left, they wouldn't let you back in. But I'd figured out, we didn't live too far from the airport, so I figured I had a way out away from the fire to get out.

2:22:27.0 James Wall: Seems like every time y'all move you got to outrun a fire to get to the next place.

2:22:34.3 Carl Pence: There's some challenge always.

2:22:35.3 Vicki Pence: And then you move to town and think you're safe and you have to evacuate.

2:22:40.7 James Wall: Wow. So the Gila, you finally moved to the Great Southwest?

2:22:44.7 Carl Pence: Yes.

2:22:45.1 James Wall: Everybody seems to love that spot.

2:22:49.0 Vicki Pence: It is neat.

2:22:49.2 Carl Pence: We really loved the location. It was, and we lived in two very expensive places. Sun Valley, Idaho Area, and Jackson, Wyoming. And we've got to Silver City. We could buy any house they had there. And we ended up... Tell him what size and describe the house.

2:23:07.7 Vicki Pence: We had a 5,000 square foot house that looked just like John Wayne should walk in. It had a tennis court. It had six acres.

[laughter]

2:23:15.6 James Wall: Oh wow. So y'all were just living the high life at that point.

2:23:19.1 Vicki Pence: It was fun.

2:23:20.3 James Wall: And the kids were going at that point.

2:23:22.0 Vicki Pence: They were.

2:23:22.7 James Wall: Oh, so that was...

2:23:23.9 Vicki Pence: Well, our daughter actually moved there with us. She was in college in Oregon and she decided to come.

2:23:29.1 James Wall: Well, you had plenty of space for her, so.

2:23:30.9 Carl Pence: Yeah, we did.

2:23:31.9 James Wall: Yeah.

2:23:32.4 Vicki Pence: And she enjoyed it. And she went to college there. The town actually had a college in it.

2:23:40.9 James Wall: A real live town, huh?

2:23:42.0 Vicki Pence: Yes. And I finally got to go back, but not in what I was, the home economics that I did. But...

2:23:49.5 James Wall: What major was... Did you go back as?

2:23:51.6 Vicki Pence: I went into more of a clerical type office work. because at that time you couldn't be part of the... Any, from the time he started to current times you could as nepotism was in, and you could not work for the Department of Agriculture. Well, when you live in remote places that is all there is. And part of my training in school with the home economics was extension, which was one... A favorite part of mine, and that is the Department of Agriculture. So, I decided this is ridiculous. I better get programmed for the modern world [laughter] and do what I was called to do on a volunteer basis. Everything I did had to be volunteer because it was dependent on the Department of Agriculture or something. So, I volunteered for forty years.

2:24:56.7 Carl Pence: But you went into realty.

2:24:58.0 Vicki Pence: But I... Yeah. Well, that's what happened in the Southwest.

[laughter]

2:25:01.7 James Wall: Wow.

2:25:02.3 Carl Pence: She got her realtor's license.

2:25:05.6 Vicki Pence: As we were looking for houses there, the agent said, "You know more about houses than I do."

[laughter]

2:25:13.3 Vicki Pence: And so apparently he told the owner of it, and by the time we were moving into our house she called me and asked me if I would accept a position at their office and she would pay for me to go to get my real estate license.

2:25:31.3 James Wall: Wow.

2:25:32.6 Vicki Pence: And I said, "But I don't, I've never been in this place. I don't know anything about the people. I don't know anything about the property, land, anything like that." And she said,

"Well, you know what? Why don't you be my property manager? You still have to be licensed as a realtor." And real estate in my family was as bad as an insurance agent.

[laughter]

2:25:57.6 Vicki Pence: And I thought, "I can't do that. My family will really disown me."

2:26:02.6 James Wall: Not as bad as a forest range, though.

[laughter]

2:26:05.3 Vicki Pence: No, I've already fixed that. So, but I did.

2:26:10.4 James Wall: Yeah.

2:26:10.7 Vicki Pence: And it turned out really well.

2:26:13.1 James Wall: Outside of the motel gig. This was like, I guess the first "job-job" of, for a while?

2:26:19.2 Vicki Pence: I managed 200 rentals. We had residential and commercial, and I did remodeling for, had remodeling done for people that wanted... It was, Silver City was a kind of a split. A lot of people had their second homes there for the winter. And so I did a lot of that kind of thing.

2:26:45.0 James Wall: So, did you get to indulge your design impulse? And.

2:26:49.2 Vicki Pence: I did.

2:26:50.4 James Wall: That sort of more visual element. Yeah. That's exciting.

2:26:53.6 Vicki Pence: And I really... I did enjoy that.

2:26:56.5 James Wall: And at the same time this was the apex, or you were getting up in the echelon.

2:27:02.4 Carl Pence: I was.

2:27:04.5 James Wall: Now, when you did the deputy gig did you have your eyes on at the time, climbing up the next rung?

2:27:10.6 Carl Pence: I certainly did. And interestingly enough, the forest supervisor that was there retired within a short time that we're there. And so I became Acting Forest Supervisor.

2:27:24.7 James Wall: Okay.

2:27:24.8 Carl Pence: For I was Acting Forest Supervisor for really a year before they filled the position. I wanted that position really badly. But the Forest Service had other programs that they

wanted to fill with a diversity candidate. And they didn't open it up for advertisement. If they'd advertised the job, I certainly would've applied. I was... That area fit us very well. We were popular in the community. Vicki had a host of friends she made with her job. I had... And we used the, our acreage in our house as a recreational place for parties, Forest Service potluck parties. And we played tennis. We... Until it got, or played volleyball on our volleyball court there until it got dark and then played it until it was ridiculous. And then we'd sit around a fire and play guitars and sing, you know, that kind of a wonderful thing. We had room in our house, we had lots of bedroom space. And one year there were a bunch of interns, medical interns from the college there in the state.

2:28:54.1 Carl Pence: They needed bedroom space because they were going to work as interns for the local doctors, and they wanted space. So we opened up two of our bedrooms to wannabe doctors, and there were like a dozen interns in the valley. So our place became the gathering place for the interns. And it was cool when... And also it was the party place for the Forest Service employees. And we, one story was we... I'd invited all the interns to our Forest Service potluck party. And while us Forest Service people were gathered drinking adult beverages and telling war stories, the wannabe doctors were playing volleyball. And they came up, they knew that we played volleyball. And they came and challenged us old fogies to play a game of volleyball against them. What they didn't realize that there were a bunch of hot shot firefighters and smokejumpers involved in our Forest Service group.

2:30:01.4 Carl Pence: So, we formed two teams. There were the interns and there were the Forest Service, including Vicki. She's a good volleyball player too, because we played lots of volleyball in all these remote locations. You didn't have TV, and in the summertimes every place had their volleyball court, and we'd play volleyball on the compounds. And so, we did a age scan of the two teams. Our team was about forty-seven-years-old as average. I was one of the older ones at fifty-one and the forest... There was the guy that retired was part of. He's an old smokejumper, Maynard Rost. And he was also a good volleyball player, and the rest were quite seasoned volleyball players. And so, there was this one student who was a surgeon, going to be a surgeon, and he... Big mouth guy and he says, "Well don't worry, all you old people, if you start to have a heart attack while you're playing us, we can keep you alive." [laughter]

2:31:09.5 James Wall: That's pretty funny.

2:31:10.3 Carl Pence: The first game was the close one. We, us old people, we won, we won in overtime. We got our stuff together. The second game we skunked them basically. And we offered to play them the third game and the student intern said, No, no, no, no [laughter] and that surgeon, doctor, or wannabe doctor he kept every... He'd come over to our place, of course frequently. And he'd say, "I just don't understand it, Carl. Statistically we had you guys beat in reaction time and what have you. And you skunked us. I don't understand at all." [laughter] And I'd say, "You just don't understand. We played our zones and we volleyed it to each other. You guys were all over each other trying to knock each other down, trying to get to the ball. [chuckle] You guys were easy bait." [chuckle]

2:32:10.0 James Wall: Yeah.

2:32:11.9 Carl Pence: But we had a lot of fun there and it was a sad thing to have to leave. But here was a story on that. During that time the environmentalists was shutting down timber programs

and the mills that we had on the Gila were going to shut because of Mexican spotted owl. So, our program significantly reduced. The forest did not have... And they filled the forest supervisor position with... Actually, it was kind of ironic because Region Six was closing down and the person that filled the forest supervisor position had been on the Region Six excess list. He did meet diversity requirements and he and I didn't have... We had different management styles. I was more of this personal... Personality that dealt with friendly. He felt that a supervisor should not make friends to employees. Totally different style of management. So we had some conflicts there plus the forest did not need a deputy because of the reduced program. So I ended up having to look for an alternative and the Malheur National Forest became our next assignment.

2:33:32.1 James Wall: Really? Well, tell me about that.

[chuckle]

2:33:34.9 Carl Pence: Well, first off, let me talk, do you know any French?

2:33:38.9 James Wall: Very little. No. Not really.

2:33:40.4 Carl Pence: What's mal mean?

2:33:41.4 James Wall: Bad. Right?

2:33:42.8 Carl Pence: What's heure in French mean? Hour?

2:33:46.5 James Wall: Hour. [laughter] Or bad. [laughter]

2:33:50.1 Carl Pence: Or misfortune or disaster or... [laughter]

2:33:54.5 James Wall: Is that accurate?

2:33:58.3 Carl Pence: Pretty close. Pretty close. [laughter] We... That was another terrible move because of long move, I had... And it was complicated from family situation because I moved there. It was just before Thanksgiving and Vicki had her complex job. She had to close out. We had to sell that beautiful place that we loved. And so, I was... I moved to John Day, Oregon to the forest supervisor's job there. And I was there about three months before Vicki was able to follow me. And you need to explain [chuckle] what that was all about.

2:34:44.4 Vicki Pence: Well, I... Well, Carl was in Oregon. My mother had emergency surgery and five bypasses in Idaho. So, when we left on January 1st, 1992... Or was it... Let's see.

2:35:08.6 Carl Pence: Oh, it was '90... Yeah...

2:35:09.7 Vicki Pence: '96, 1996.

2:35:10.8 Carl Pence: Yeah.

2:35:11.4 Vicki Pence: Then we actually rode together and then split forces in Boise. And I went to Idaho to take care of my mother and he went to Oregon. But then moving to... When I got to

Oregon, we had this temporary housing in Prairie City...

2:35:32.8 Carl Pence: We were unable to find a good place for us.

2:35:34.5 Vicki Pence: Yeah. And so, we obviously had to build something. So I designed a house and found a builder that would build it for us. And then in the meantime we were in this temporary housing [chuckle] and people in Oregon, if we thought Idaho was bad, they really get upset about government workers. It was the melting pot of John Birchers, that type of people, and that he could call them...

2:36:10.9 Carl Pence: Posse comitatus.

2:36:11.5 James Wall: Really. I never thought Oregon would be...

2:36:12.7 Carl Pence: Very conservative. Extreme...

2:36:15.9 Vicki Pence: It's the eastern part.

2:36:17.4 Carl Pence: Eastern Oregon and Western Oregon are two different places.

2:36:20.2 James Wall: I have heard that. Yeah, I have heard that.

2:36:23.9 Vicki Pence: And...

2:36:24.5 James Wall: Wow.

2:36:25.0 Vicki Pence: So, my first order of the day was to clean up this temporary dwelling. So I went to the little hardware store rented, and asked to rent a carpet shampooper, and I would pick it up the next day at nine o'clock. And sure, they had one and I could do that. So I get there early the next day, and by that time they figured out who I was. And so they said, "I'm sorry, it's been rented." Well, I could see it in the back room, but they would not let me take it. So, then I went to the bank and thought, "Well, I'll wash clothes today." And I wanted to write a check for a roll of quarters so I could use their laundromat. And the cashier says, "I'm sorry, we can't cash your check. You could drive twelve miles down to John Day and maybe they'll cash it for you because you don't have an account in our bank." [chuckle]

2:37:29.0 Vicki Pence: So, the next thing I did was go to the grocery store next door and I bought a cookie sheet and I bought several roles of pre-made cookies that I took to our place and baked them, put a note on it, who I was, and my phone number. And if any of them needed help, I'd be glad to help them. And took it around to them. And it was so fun watching the expression on their faces. [chuckle] In the first place, they didn't know whether they should open the door to me, but then I'm bringing the cookies, you usually take cookies to a new person that moved into the neighborhood [chuckle] rather than do them harm. So I [chuckle] gave them this plate of cookies and none of them knew what to say. And that's kind of the way John Day was.

2:38:25.9 Carl Pence: It was truly hilarious sometimes right after we got there and when... That summer that Vicki finally, after three months moved back to us. We tended a community barbecue kind of a deal. And as we were taking care of one of my staff's two daughters because they took a

trip somewhere, I can't remember what, but we had their two daughters with us at this community party. And we were sitting there at the table eating our lunch, barbecue lunch, and this old guy that came to sit at the table with us. And I'd only been there about four months at that time. And he was obviously quite inebriated. And he says, "You know, thanks. A really strange, strange, strange world. The new head of the Forest Service there. I hear stories that one of his grandparents, great grandparents stole some women, a couple women from, being, plural wives of some Mormon in Salt Lake City and stole them away." And that's partially true.

2:39:49.9 Carl Pence: And what he was telling this story, I said, "Well, that's kind of interesting." I said, "You know more about my family history than I do." [laughter] And he realized who he was talking to, and his mouth dropped open. [laughter] It was so funny. We got a terrible laugh at him. And he went around saying, "Do you know who that guy is?" [laughter] But we hit there at a really a tough time as you probably knew Region Six was, because of spotted owl and the all sorts of things, the timber program was going whacko, it's reducing. And when I got there in John Day Valley, we had actually three or four large sawmills on the forest, at Burns and in that John Day Valley area. And they were suffering badly. And the community was suffering because of it.

2:40:52.5 Carl Pence: And I was... I couldn't take Vicki out to dinner without getting either accosted by some local people saying I need to allow more timber harvest or the environmental... Member from the environmental community saying, "You're cutting too many trees, you got to cut it down more." And, highly controversial job and very, very, very difficult. You know, I did well, succeeded in it, didn't make a lot of friends in the regional office [laughter] because I was more commodity oriented than they would've liked me to be. because I really had empathy for the community. They were having to go through some severe adjustments, and I was trying to do my best to help them through those adjustments. I pled for... Pleaded the regional office for some times to allow the community to adjust. And that didn't set well with people.

2:41:57.7 James Wall: Yeah, well you were in an impossible place.

2:42:00.8 Carl Pence: Yes, we were.

2:42:00.8 James Wall: You're like being a referee in a football game, half of the people are going to hate you.

2:42:05.0 Carl Pence: Yeah, yeah.

2:42:06.3 James Wall: So, was this your last assignment or were you...

2:42:09.4 Carl Pence: Well, I managed... We were there four years, and I was getting ready to retire frankly. I was 56.

2:42:24.1 James Wall: Yeah, you had gotten your years at that point, right?

2:42:26.3 Carl Pence: Yeah. And I went to the regional forester and said, you know, "I could retire now but I wouldn't mind working in another three years and here's my conditions. I do need to get my wife..." We could see some family issues coming between my parents, her parents and her aunt. We knew that they were all getting aged and they may need some help. And we wanted personally to get... Well, I asked Vicki, I says, "If we move, what kind of a place would you be willing to

move to?" What was your answer?

2:43:04.1 Vicki Pence: Be within 45 minutes of a doctor and a grocery store.

[laughter]

2:43:07.0 James Wall: That's a tall order.

2:43:11.0 Carl Pence: So [laughter], so I gave the regional forester...

2:43:12.4 James Wall: So a town, you know, a normal town.

2:43:14.0 Carl Pence: I gave the regional forester several options, I said, "You know I could finish out, I'd like to work about three more years. I would be willing to move to a regional office and work a staff job, maybe in Ogden, Utah, Denver, Colorado, Missoula, Montana, but if there would be a possibility of me moving to Boise, Idaho, that would be ideal for our family issues." And it just turned out that there was [the] Clinton Administration dream of basin-level planning, and with my planning background [laughter], and I hated to have to go back into that era of my life. But there were... President Clinton had this idea of basin-level planning, the Northwest Forest Plan was happening. And there was this Upper Interior Columbia River Basin Management Plan. ICBMP was the acronym for it. And they needed an implementation person on that to help. If the plan got done, they needed somebody to create an implementation plan. And that was one of my specialties actually. So when the regional person said, "Carl, we could move you to Boise, Idaho, and you'd work for ICBMP. [laughter] And we were fairly happy about that, frankly.

2:44:55.9 James Wall: That was Manhattan, as far as you're concerned.

2:45:00.3 Carl Pence: Oh my goodness. Yes.

[laughter]

2:45:00.7 James Wall: The size of the town and there's hospitals five minutes away and...

2:45:05.9 Carl Pence: Yeah.

2:45:06.2 James Wall: So yeah. That must have been incredible.

2:45:07.0 Carl Pence: And she could get to Walmart.

[laughter]

2:45:08.7 James Wall: Yeah. You didn't have to have supplies flown in or anything. You got electricity and...

2:45:17.7 Vicki Pence: Right.

[chuckle]

2:45:18.1 James Wall: Wow. So that was where you finished up.

2:45:19.4 Carl Pence: Where I finished my career and it was kind of ironic. I did not like... See what that added, I... With my planning... the Forest Service already had several levels of planning before you actually did implementation, you had of course, national issues, you had the manual, set some standards, and then regional would set standards. We'd have a forest plan that would set standards and guidelines. And then you had project level planning, because there was already plenty of levels of planning. And the Clinton idea was, "Well, we'll do base level." And there were some good ideas in that thought. But the real rub, it was an interagency planning effort between the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fishery Service, The SCS, the BLM was thrown into it too.

2:46:14.4 Carl Pence: So, it was an interagency mess, let me tell you. It really was to... And I had an implementation team I was working with and kind of right at the end of the Clinton administration, I remember being on a conference call with my implementation team, which included Forest Service, BLM, National Marine Fishery Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, etcetera. And there was a Fish and Wildlife Service person on my conference call. And she says, "We have to set these standards and guidelines so strict because we can't trust forest supervisors, area rangers, area managers, the BLM and district rangers, we can't trust them to do the right thing." And I had cleared my throat and I said, "You know who you're talking to? I've been a district ranger. I've been a forest supervisor." [laughter] And we need at basin level, had very general standards and guidelines to allow the other steps of the planning process to make a decision considering [an] area's specific conditions, socially, environmentally.

2:47:27.2 Carl Pence: We need to let them have that decision space to make decisions relative to those local conditions. And she strongly disagreed with me because they... Lack of trust. And ironically, about that time, President Clinton left his office. George Bush came in and George Bush killed those basin level plans. Ironically too, one of the big issues that we were trying to figure out was relative to spotted owl and other old growth habitat-dependent species. All those plans were dedicating large acres of ground to old growth management and maintenance. What's happened in the last twenty years to all those old growth things that were dedicated to old growth? They've all burned up, every single one of them. I don't know how many spotted owls got fried in all of that, but it's... You don't hear anything about spotted owls anymore.

2:48:37.2 James Wall: Yeah.

[laughter]

2:48:38.4 James Wall: But it was a big pain in the butt for a lot of people for a long time.

2:48:42.9 Carl Pence: Yes, it was.

2:48:43.4 James Wall: Well, how did it feel, all that work got tossed into the fire once Bush came in?

2:48:48.2 Carl Pence: It felt good. I like to say maybe I helped stab the vampire with the wooden stake [laughter], because that was the last... I put ICBMP to bed and then I retired. A good friend of mine, Dale Bosworth became Regional Forester. He went to college with me.

2:49:14.2 James Wall: I know Dale. Yeah.

2:49:15.1 Carl Pence: Yeah. Dale and I are really good friends.

2:49:18.7 James Wall: Did y'all go to Idaho together?

2:49:19.7 Carl Pence: Yes, we did.

2:49:20.3 James Wall: I was about to ask.

2:49:21.1 Carl Pence: Yes, we did.

2:49:22.0 James Wall: I knew he had gone through there.

2:49:24.0 Carl Pence: And Dale about... Well, when Dale got assigned the job, I got this phone call from him. And of course, I heard he was on the line. I said, "Dale, I thought you were smarter than that." And he says, "Yes, Carl, you know me, but I want you to come with me." [laughter]

2:49:44.3 James Wall: To Washington?

2:49:46.1 Carl Pence: Yes.

2:49:47.1 James Wall: After all that time?

2:49:48.1 Carl Pence: Yes. [laughter]

2:49:49.0 James Wall: Of saying, "I don't want to do it."

[laughter]

2:49:51.7 Carl Pence: And it did take me back. He said... And Dale's a good salesperson. He got... He said, "Oh, Carl I..." I said, "Well, Dale, I'm close to retirement age and I got to talk to Vicki about this before I really give you my answer." And he said, "Well, Carl, tell her... All you'd have to do is come be here for a couple years and you'd certainly get a promotion out of it, and..." And it sounded good. Dale's a good salesman. And so I said, "But Dale..." it was a Friday. And I said, "Dale, I got to talk to Vicki about this. I've dragged that beautiful person all over creation." And Dale's wife was also... We socialized.

2:50:43.3 James Wall: Carma.

2:50:44.0 Carl Pence: Dale and I, we were on the dean's two lists. As a freshman we were on the probation list, getting low grades, and we both managed to be on the dean's good list before we both graduated, but... And we chased girls and learned to do bad things like drink beer and other things and chew tobacco together as we went through college, and fortunately I quit all that stuff.

[laughter]

2:51:16.3 James Wall: Look at where you both ended up, my god.

2:51:18.3 Carl Pence: But anyway.

2:51:19.0 James Wall: Who would have guessed that?

2:51:20.7 Carl Pence: So, I couldn't get up the nerve to talk to Vicki about this until Monday morning. I fretted, I looked for opportunities and finally Monday morning, just before I went to work for ICBMP there, I said, "Oh, Vicki, by the way, Dale called me last Friday." And she said, "Yes. What did he want?" [laughter]

2:51:40.4 James Wall: "Oh, that degenerate, I don't know." [laughter] Now he was chief at that point, or was he...

2:51:46.0 Carl Pence: Yeah, he had been appointed chief. He was trying to get his...

2:51:51.7 James Wall: Putting his team together.

2:51:52.1 Carl Pence: Staff together to move with him. And I know he had something important for me and I loved Dale, I did, but I looked to Vicki and I tried to give Dale's salesman the, "Hey we don't really have to sell this place. We could probably rent it to somebody." We had this nice ranchette kind of a thing. Five acres and...

2:52:15.3 Vicki Pence: His ranchette.

2:52:16.9 Carl Pence: Yeah, his ranchette. Yeah. I was riding horses and all that stuff again. And we were eating our oatmeal there. And when I... She... I gave her the spiel and she kind of got a despondent look on her face and said, "Well, do what you want to do." And I thought, you know, "I just cannot do this to this wonderful woman." And so as soon as I closed ICBMP down, I retired. And it...

2:52:49.5 James Wall: What did you tell Dale?

2:52:50.6 Carl Pence: I didn't. [laughter] I never called him back. And I think he knew. I think he knew. And interesting enough, we had a reunion, the summer camp reunion last year in McCall, and he did remind me. He says, we got talking about careers and he said, "Well, I did offer you a job to DC." And I said, "Yes, you did Dale." But I still haven't given him the real story behind why I turned him down, but I think he knew.

2:53:18.6 James Wall: That's funny. Oh, wow. [laughter] Well, it's, yeah, it would've been tough. because we interviewed Carma and...

2:53:28.4 Carl Pence: Oh yeah.

2:53:29.0 James Wall: Those years in DC.

2:53:30.1 Carl Pence: Oh, yeah.

2:53:32.1 James Wall: Real tough to keep a marriage together.

2:53:33.9 Carl Pence: There were a lot of stuff and I know Dale had those issues and Carma's health as well, but we were facing things too, because one of our big objectives to moving closer to her folks and my folks. As soon as I retired, we ended up... My mother had a blood clot issue in her lungs. And we ended up with her. Her parents were in dire straits for help. We ended up with them and we took care of her folks for... Well, how many years was it?

2:54:09.7 Vicki Pence: Well, off and on about twelve, but they lived in our house for half of that time.

2:54:13.1 Carl Pence: Yeah. Winter times. Yeah. Most of the time. So, we knew we were facing that kind of stuff. And so that was a big item. And it was... I have to admit, it was... From my ego standpoint, it would've been wonderful to have gone with Dale. And I think we would've had a good team together. I don't know what exactly he had in mind for me, but again, it just didn't fit what we knew we were facing relative to family.

2:54:40.8 James Wall: Yeah. Well, it sounds like you made the right call.

2:54:43.7 Carl Pence: I did.

2:54:44.3 James Wall: She's still here.

2:54:45.3 Carl Pence: I did. [laughter]

2:54:46.8 Vicki Pence: Well, you know being a Forest Service wife, it's hard all the time because the guys aren't there very often.

2:54:54.2 James Wall: Yeah.

2:54:55.0 Vicki Pence: And then you retire and you think, "Who in the world is this guy?" [laughter]

2:55:00.8 James Wall: So you have to sort of meet again.

2:55:03.3 Vicki Pence: Right.

2:55:04.1 James Wall: Every time.

2:55:04.9 Carl Pence: Yeah.

2:55:05.8 James Wall: Wow. Alright, y'all ready for the lightning round of end of the interview questions? I always ask a few questions.

2:55:12.0 Carl Pence: That's cool.

2:55:14.1 James Wall: What was your favorite district? Not necessarily the one where you felt like you were getting the most done, but having the most fun?

2:55:24.1 Carl Pence: The Cobalt District.

2:55:25.0 James Wall: I was about to say. That's the big house right?

2:55:28.2 Carl Pence: No, it wasn't a big house. The district. If you asked me what the favorite forest was, it would've been the Gila.

2:55:36.4 James Wall: Yeah. What was it about the Cobalt District?

2:55:41.5 Carl Pence: Well, we kind of recovered, it was a recovery time from the Bridgeport deal, and Vicki gained her health. We had a good support group with her parents. And it was a fun district. I had a good relationship with the ranger and his wife. They had young kids, we had young kids. And it was kind of a recovery time. We weren't there very long. But the rest of the district jobs... Bridgeport was an escape situation. Unity, Oregon was an escape situation. But from the district standpoint that was a good time. From the forest standpoint, the forest we enjoyed most of all, again, was the Gila. That was, oh... If I'd been able to get the first supervisor's job there, I would've retired there with our big house. And all that. [chuckle]

2:56:47.6 James Wall: Sounds like you had a good spread out there.

2:56:49.1 Carl Pence: Yeah.

2:56:49.1 James Wall: Yeah. Your favorite mentor?

2:56:54.5 Carl Pence: My favorite mentor? Ron [Roland] Stoleson. He was forest supervisor on the Sawtooth when I was ranger. What I liked about Ron: I could go to him with an idea and he would say, "That sounds good, Carl. Go for it." And he... Yeah. Yeah. Ron Stoleson was a good forest supervisor to work for.

2:57:32.9 James Wall: Yeah. What about the... Is there somebody you mentored that stands out for you?

2:57:38.5 Carl Pence: Oh my gosh.

2:57:39.5 James Wall: You saw them grow in the outfit.

2:57:45.7 Carl Pence: You know, there were so many names in that regard. When I was area ranger on Sawtooth, it was so rewarding. There was kind of a transition there. There were a lot of young people that loved... In the wintertime they would be ski patrol, but they had forestry degrees. Ken Britton stands out in my mind. He was an awesome guy. Played guitar, sang. I played at the guitar and sang. [chuckle] And he had... In every meeting we would both do our things. And I... He ended up... Ron Stoleson and I had somewhat of a conflict there because he recognized Ken's ability, but Ken did not want to move at that time. Ron wanted to force him to move and I talked to Ken about it, and Ken said, "I won't move." He had family issues with a daughter that was going blind and I... And he didn't want to move at that time. So, Ron... That was another good attribute of Ron.

2:59:07.5 Carl Pence: I remember I called him on the phone and I said, "Please don't make me do

this for Ken. Because he'll quit and he's too much, too valuable an employee to let off in that regard." And I convinced... That was another good attribute for Ron. He swallowed and said, "Okay." I said, "The timing is not right. We need to give him some more time." And what was it? A couple of years later, then Ken did accept the transfer and he became a district ranger in Montana. Had a good career, but at that point, Ken wouldn't. So that was wonderful. There were a lot of other stories. I gave you the story about the... In Unity, Oregon, that poor wildlife biologist with the master's degree working, planting trees, my goodness. But there are a lot of stories I could say in that regard. That was the most rewarding thing in my career, to help others.

3:00:13.4 James Wall: What is the one thing you missed the most about the job? About being in the Forest Service? If there's one thing where you really missed that part of it.

3:00:26.8 Carl Pence: It's hard for me to... Hard for me to find anything, I... Everything... There was extremely... As I... We explained some very, very difficult things, but I look back, it was all character building. The thing I missed most of all was, again, that favorite forest we had. I would've loved to have stayed there. But again, there were things we wouldn't have been able to do had I stayed there and retired because we had family issues that we ended up dealing with later on. And going that route, moving finally to Boise, which was a strategic location for both our daughter and son. And our son, he got several degrees and was working in San Diego in the fast life there with Pacific Bell.

3:01:19.7 Carl Pence: And when we moved to Boise, I was looking... And I had actually retired and I was kind of looking at the Juan ads for jobs, thinking, "Well, maybe there'd be something I could pick up part-time." And I see this job for the City of Boise for a safety specialist for the... And that was his... What he was doing for Pacific Bell. And I said, "Hey, Corey. Why don't you consider this job?" And he applied for it. Took a tremendous reduction in pay when he got the job in Boise, which is where he is working now, and has been for the last, what? Sixteen, seventeen years.
[chuckle]

3:02:03.4 James Wall: Wow. Not a lot of people would take a pay cut to move away from San Diego. [chuckle]

3:02:08.1 Carl Pence: Well, he did because the City of Boise asked him, "Well, you're taking all this pay cut." He said, "Well, funny thing. I take all my vacation time and go up to Idaho."

[laughter]

3:02:21.9 James Wall: Might as well just take that all at once.

3:02:27.7 Carl Pence: Yeah.

3:02:28.2 James Wall: Wow. What else? Let's see. I'm trying to think. A question I always ask is, if you could go... And this could be for both of you, really. Really more for you, probably. If you could go back in time to when you were first starting out in the Forest Service, marrying into the Forest Service, knowing everything you know now, and give yourself a piece of advice...

[chuckle]

3:02:50.0 Vicki Pence: That's not a fair question.

3:02:51.7 James Wall: Give yourself a piece of advice about... And don't answer with, "Don't marry him." Right? That's not good to hear. But give yourself a piece of advice knowing what you know now on how to survive and get through the outfit, life in the outfit. What would you tell yourself?

3:03:13.8 Vicki Pence: He... He's looking at you.

3:03:15.7 James Wall: Anybody. Take your time.

3:03:19.0 Carl Pence: Oh, I don't regret any of it. It was an awesome journey.

3:03:24.0 James Wall: Well, for you though, like a logistical piece of advice of, you know, maybe here's how to deal with this or deal with that, or, "Hey, this is the hardest thing you're going to have to do, so act accordingly."

3:03:39.3 Carl Pence: Oh boy, that's a tough question. The hardest thing was adjusting to new societies. As I mentioned, when we moved to John Day Oregon, that was extremely difficult. I ended up... Because the community finally realized that I wasn't the usual forest supervisor and did care about them. When they realized that I did, I became really quite popular, but it took a time for me to achieve that.

3:04:14.1 Vicki Pence: In one of their parades at the end, they had a logging truck with a big sign that says, "We love Carl Pence."

[laughter]

3:04:26.7 James Wall: Sounds like you could have run for governor.

3:04:29.2 Vicki Pence: I probably could have.

3:04:30.6 James Wall: You could have been mayor.

3:04:33.0 Carl Pence: Not...

3:04:33.4 Vicki Pence: No not...

3:04:34.1 Carl Pence: Not in Oregon, because... Because Western Oregon's a totally different situation. But certainly, I could've probably run for congressman, state congressman or something.

3:04:47.9 James Wall: Sure. Maybe your advice would be, "Don't move to... "

3:04:51.3 Carl Pence: Yeah. Advice would be...

3:04:53.0 James Wall: "Unity. Don't Move to Unity."

3:04:53.9 Carl Pence: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And, but you know, every, every...

3:05:00.9 James Wall: Of course, to appreciate the other districts, you needed Unity.

3:05:02.9 Carl Pence: Yes. You need those. You need those to appreciate the good.

3:05:06.7 James Wall: But yeah, so.

3:05:07.9 Carl Pence: And I don't regret not moving to DC.

3:05:11.6 James Wall: I don't think anybody would... Talk to people who went to DC, they'll cure you of that.

3:05:16.1 Carl Pence: Yeah.

3:05:17.9 James Wall: What about you? Any advice that you would've given yourself on ways of coping?

3:05:23.5 Vicki Pence: I probably wouldn't have forced myself, but now that, because I had to do it for my family and the situation, I'm glad I had to do it because I've been able to help others get to that point.

3:05:38.5 Carl Pence: That's right. Good point.

3:05:39.9 Vicki Pence: And I wouldn't have become the person I am, which, I mean, I'm kind of looked at as an oddity anyway, because somebody asked me about something and said, "Oh, well you do it this and this and this way." "Well, how do you know?" I mean, very few people have had to go hand over hand across the Salmon River to work in the hayfield, you know, that kind of stuff. And they just think, like, look at you like you're from outer space. Or they ask me a question like you're doing and you think, "I've never heard anybody say something like that." You know, "How do you do that?" Because it's so different. Our grandchildren [chuckles] just have a really hard time understanding where their roots are and how they got to... Why grandma is doing this or that, or the other thing.

3:06:28.8 James Wall: Right. Well, I think that's the good thing about the Forest Service that people really enjoy is that, you always have an opportunity to learn something new. This is kind of a dying era in the sense that they don't move people around like they moved you around.

3:06:43.3 Carl Pence: Absolutely a dying era.

3:06:45.0 James Wall: But if you're cut out for it, it... Look at all the experiences you have had. Look at all the parts of the country you've been able to see.

3:06:53.2 Carl Pence: Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah.

3:06:54.0 James Wall: And that's a special thing.

3:06:55.4 Vicki Pence: And actually it's like different cultures, because every community is different.

3:07:00.6 James Wall: Yeah.

3:07:00.7 Vicki Pence: And they have different ways of looking at things, different ways of saying things, different ways of acting. So, you... It's in some cases it was like moving to a foreign country.

3:07:13.5 James Wall: Yeah. Or back in time.

3:07:14.0 Carl Pence: Back in time. Basically John Day, Oregon was that.

3:07:17.5 James Wall: Where you might as well be in an old logging town.

3:07:19.0 Carl Pence: Yeah.

3:07:21.4 Vicki Pence: Yeah. The only thing we didn't have was the buckboard and a horse.

[laughter]

3:07:25.7 James Wall: That's... I think the worst story is one about the, hanging clothes in the winter that's not even drying those clothes, you were just freezing them.

3:07:35.7 Vicki Pence: Right.

3:07:36.8 James Wall: And then you got to thaw them out when you put them back in there.

3:07:39.9 Carl Pence: I need to add that little story about that clothesline. Of course, I had my appendectomy, and no way could I shovel that clothesline out. And even if I did, it would've... The wind would've filled it back up. But when we were finally leaving with our... We moved our trailer to Salmon, Idaho. That was our... Start of our winter house, there in Salmon. But when we moved in, was it May?

3:08:12.1 Vicki Pence: April.

3:08:13.9 Carl Pence: April, there was still snow. We had to dig that camp trailer out so they could attach. There were snow drifts all over the place. And as we were leaving, I looked through the rear-view mirror. We hadn't used that clothesline that I'd... Wonderful looking clothesline, since the storms buried it. But the snow settling had broken the arms of the clothesline. And I looked back and I thought, "Oh my God. We're escaping, finally." Even the clothesline failed.

3:08:50.2 James Wall: Every move seemed like an escape for you.

3:08:53.6 Carl Pence: Yeah.

3:08:54.1 James Wall: It was less of a move and more of like a prison break or something. Like, "Oh." Or that the... Lot's wife, you know, you can't look back.

3:09:00.4 Carl Pence: Yeah. That's true.

3:09:01.6 James Wall: Because you're going to turn into salt. Well, thanks for taking us on that journey.

3:09:07.1 Carl Pence: It was fun.

3:09:07.8 James Wall: Is there anything we forgot? Anything we must hit?

3:09:10.5 Carl Pence: Is there something you want to add?

3:09:13.8 Vicki Pence: But for the grace of God, we'd have never made it.

[laughter]

3:09:17.3 Carl Pence: Well, it was a spirit...And if you read my book, I, in the preface I explained that it was not only a physical journey, but a spiritual one.

3:09:27.6 James Wall: Yeah.

3:09:28.5 Carl Pence: It definitely was.

3:09:29.5 Vicki Pence: Yeah. We learned to kill with kindness.

3:09:35.3 James Wall: Exactly. Yeah.

3:09:36.3 Vicki Pence: The way to survive was not being angry.

3:09:41.7 James Wall: Yeah. Roll with the punches.

3:09:41.8 Carl Pence: Yeah.

3:09:45.4 James Wall: Well, it sounds like you had a hell of a run. Still have one hell of a run.

3:09:47.3 Carl Pence: We're still enjoying it. We're still enjoying it.

3:09:49.8 James Wall: Well, if that's all. I will let you off the clock.

3:09:51.6 Carl Pence: Yeah.