



## The OSU Extension Service Centennial Oral History Collection, April 26, 2008

**Title**

Owen Osborne

**Date**

April 26, 2008

**Location**

Black Butte Ranch, Oregon.

**Summary**

Osborne describes his youth in Missouri and his college years studying Electrical Engineering at the University of Missouri and at Oklahoma State University. He discusses his first position at Oregon State University as the director of the analog computer lab and as an assistant professor for Electrical Engineering. He goes on to describe his first position with Extension Service, as an energy specialist, and his involvement in the creation of an Energy Extension program. Osborne next speaks about going to Iowa State University to be the director of the Engineering Extension Service, getting promoted to Associate Dean of University Extension, and working as Director of Continuing Education. He recounts his return to Oregon as an Associate Director for Extension and discusses a variety of activities that he engaged in with professional organizations both before and after his retirement. He concludes the interview with a look back at his time with Extension.

**Interviewee**

Owen Osborne

**Interviewer**

Elizabeth Uhlig

**Website**

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/extension/>

## Transcript

**\*Note: Interview recorded to audio only.**

**Elizabeth Uhlig:** This is an oral history interview with Owen Osborne for the OSU Extension Service Oral History Project. Today is April 26, 2008. My name is Elizabeth Uhlig and we're in Owen's home in Black Butte Ranch, Oregon.

Owen, do you want to start - tell us something about your background, where were you born and where did you grow up?

**Owen Osborne:** Well, I was born in Versailles, Missouri. If you're not familiar with Versailles, the French mispronounce that Versailles - a small town in the Lake of the Ozarks. And I spent most of my youth, except for about four years, which I was in Texas, in Missouri. And went to high school in a little town called California, Missouri in central Missouri near Jefferson City. Went to the University of Missouri at Columbia, graduated from there in 1966 with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

**EU:** When you grew up were you in 4-H?

**OO:** You know, it's interesting. I didn't know much about Extension and didn't have much Extension experience or exposure. I wasn't in 4-H, but I knew who my county agent was because my father's brother and sister both were dairy farmers and, of course, they had connections with their county agents - what we called them then. And so I knew what the Extension Service was, but I didn't have any firsthand experience with it myself.

**EU:** Was your father involved with agriculture?

**OO:** He was when I was born. He was a teacher of vocational agriculture. That's how he managed to keep from going to the war. He had a deferment, and it was important. But shortly after I was born, maybe two or three years, he accepted a call to the ministry, went to seminary, and became a minister. And so I grew up as a preacher's kid.

**EU:** Did you have brothers and sisters?

**OO:** I had one brother who is older, physically older. He's three and a half years older than I and he's still working. He teaches on an Indian Reservation in New Mexico.

**EU:** So, you went to college at University of Missouri in Columbia?

**OO:** I did. I think I studied engineering because I had a family relative who was an engineer and read in the magazines how much you could make if you were in chemical or electrical engineering. And I had an aptitude for math, so that seemed to fit. And I did well in school, well enough that I was able to go on to graduate school with a full ride, fellowship, so that was nice.

**EU:** Where did you go to graduate school?

**OO:** I went to Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. That was quite an experience. I don't know whether you've been to Oklahoma. A couple things I remember. One is, you know you try to study up on the place where you are going to be and one of the things I discovered was that the average daily wind velocity in Stillwater, Oklahoma is 13 miles per hour. So that means for every calm day ...there's another day when it blows pretty good. But we had a good time; we were there about five years and my wife and I both got our doctorates at Oklahoma State and had a good experience there.

**EU:** Why did you choose Oklahoma State?

**OO:** Very simple. I had an opportunity to go to Purdue, to go to Mizzou, University of Missouri, or Oklahoma State. Each particular opportunity had a different financial aid package associated with it and both myself and my wife had three-year NDEA (National Defense Education Act) fellowships at Oklahoma State and so it was just the best offer, I guess you'd say; turned out to be the best for us.

**EU:** Was your wife from Missouri also?

**OO:** She was. She was born in Boonville. Met her and she was my high school sweetheart and we got married and off to college and so, did good. As I say, usually to my wife, we've been married, it will be 47 years this year and I usually say, "25 really good years," and she pipes up, "Well, maybe for you." [laughter]. So, we've had a good partnership.

[0:05:30]

**EU:** At Oklahoma State then, were you still studying Electrical Engineering?

**OO:** Electrical Engineering and, but it was kind of strange. I had an interest in other things other than Electrical Engineering, so I did a minor in Economics in graduate school. And I got involved in a project as a research assistant that was an interdisciplinary project that involved people from several different disciplines and really enjoyed that. It worked out, kind of repeated that theme as I went on in my career. I wrote my dissertation on a problem that was not an Electrical Engineering problem, but it was a transportation problem and I used some of the theory that applies to electrical things to model a transportation system. It was fun.

**EU:** When did you first start becoming involved with computers?

**OO:** Well, of course, you can't be in engineering, although this is kind of pre-personal computer; these were mainframe computers and you would have your box of cards with your data and that sort of thing. But that was just a part of your training and also computers were beginning to be a part of what you would learn in terms of digital system theory and that sort of thing in school. I wasn't really a computer expert or designer or anything like that. I was a computer user in the sense of using them as a tool to use mathematical models and describe other things and then let the computer do all the work for you. So that was most of my experience with computers.

**EU:** So, I maybe jumping ahead too far...in your career then, I mean did you also use computers in your work as opposed to...

**OO:** Well, it's interesting. Because when I started working at my first job, which was at OSU in Electrical Engineering, I was responsible for the analog computer lab, which is kind of an outdated concept of today. And I also used computers to do more modeling and simulation work. And then when I went to work for the Extension Service, one of the responsibilities I had there was to oversee the computer unit and help the Extension Service get internet access, get them all wired all over the state. And I spent quite a bit of time, again not doing computer work, but seeing that computer work got done all around the state and that was a lot of fun.

**EU:** When you said, "OSU," now, you meant Oregon State.

**OO:** Oh, that's right. In fact, that's a neat little story. Turns out that the colors for Oklahoma State are orange and black. Of course, those are Beaver colors, too. And when I came out, I brought, you know, like a baseball cap. It said, OSU on it and somebody would see it and say, "Boy, I like that. Where did you get that?" They hadn't seen that particular style of OSU. Well, it turns out it was a cowboy and not a beaver; but the colors still worked.

**EU:** So, when you graduated from Oklahoma State then in 1971, was your first job then at Oklahoma or in Oregon?

**OO:** No, when I graduated at OSU, actually the department head in Electrical Engineering, fellow by the name of Lou Stone, came to Oklahoma State and interviewed two or three of us graduate students that were near getting done and I subsequently got an invitation to come and interview for a position in Electrical and Computer Engineering at OSU. And that was kind of a neat experience too because we had been having a draught in Oklahoma and, boy, I came out like the first week in May for an interview. Every rhododendron that you could see was in bloom, all the fruit trees were in bloom, all the pheasants were cackling and running across the road - it was just unbelievable; it was so pretty. And so I was very impressed with the natural beauty, particularly, stark contrast of what we were experiencing at that time in Oklahoma. Although I did use a little anecdote in my seminar that I had to give. Again, trying to do a little research, I discovered that the annual average rainfall in Corvallis, Oregon, which if I remember at that time was about 39 inches, was the same as it was in Tulsa, Oklahoma and I told my seminar audience I knew that was true because I was in Tulsa the day they got theirs. [laughter].

**EU:** Comes all at once?

**OO:** It comes all at once. But, you know, soon I found out what Oregon mist is - that comes over a six-month period.

**EU:** So you and your wife then moved out here?

**OO:** We did, in 1971. Had two little kids at the time. Drove across the country in a station wagon with our bird dog and little dachshund and our youngest daughter had never seen mountains. We were trying to describe what the mountains were like; we got to the Rockies in Colorado and she said, "Hey, Dad, there's a whole pile of them over there." Then of course, we got to the ocean and she had not seen the ocean before and I remember her running out into the surf and then turning around and running back when the waves chased her and we didn't know about, what is it, every seventh wave or something is a little bit bigger and she got caught and knocked flat on her face and boy it kind of scared her...scared us too...but she grew to love the ocean and still does.

[0:12:25]

**EU:** So what was your first job? You were working at the university, at OSU.

**OO:** Well, my first job – I was as an assistant professor in Electrical and Computer Engineering and I taught both undergraduate and graduate and tried to get going on a research program which was very important. I struggled a bit with that and got lucky. I got connected with a project that was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. Again, it was an interdisciplinary project and we were trying to do some modeling and simulation of general economic and environmental things. And we had an interdisciplinary team and some very capable people on that team.

And after awhile, when we got the model a little more developed, we wanted to be interacting with government people and agency people, and so I was kind of a liaison between the university and state government. I spent half-time up in Salem in the Governor's Office in the Assistant to the Governor for Natural Resources. Kess Cannon was the first person I worked with there. Hal Browner was the second and a couple of different governors – Tom McCall and Bob Straub. That was a great experience and it kind of developed into some interest that served me well for the long term.

**EU:** So, was it at that point, then, that you became involved with the Extension Service?

**OO:** Actually, it was a little bit after that. Part of this project that I was working on involved developing a model to predict a demand for electrical energy and while I was working on that we had the first, well it was the first one that I remember, energy crisis to hit. You may remember reading or have been somewhere where you experienced waiting in a gas line, there were shortages. All of the sudden people got interested in the problems that we were having with primarily fossil fuels, but with energy.

And so, the university was going to try to engage this issue and they put together a big conference up in Portland, and I got recruited to help develop that program. And before I knew it, I was working as a information coordinator for the Office of Energy Research and Development which was a newly created office on campus and I think I was only spending maybe quarter time doing that. The Extension Service was finding more and more people inquiring about energy, and of course we had people who knew about energy in their disciplines, ag engineers and home economists and so forth, but there wasn't an energy specialist or someone who was devoted to that and so I did that.

[0:16:00]

I started working half-time in the mid-70s for the Extension Service, working part-time in the Office of Energy Research and Development and part-time in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Had about three bosses during that time, which is about two too many. But it didn't take long; I with the help of some very capable people, put together a proposal to what then was the predecessor to the Department of Energy. It was called the Energy Research and Development Administration. And I wrote a proposal to develop an Energy Extension Program and essentially modeled it after what had, of course from Smith Lever Act forward, a long history of trying to take resources that the university had and extend those out to people within the state to help them solve their problems. And so it seemed like a natural that we were faced with this problem in energy and it cut across all industry as well as individuals.

So, I wrote this proposal, shipped it off. It was unsolicited and about that same time there was a move in Congress to fund an Energy Extension Service, essentially a separate Extension Service from the Cooperative Extension Service,

one that would be not in agriculture, but in the Department of Energy. And the proposal that I wrote somehow found its way into the Congressional Record, read in as testimony of evidence that such a thing is needed and is being called for. And eventually that program got funded on a pilot basis and we were one of the first states, I think there were ten states that were funded, and we got some help from the Oregon Legislature to expand. We had some money that was kind of like windfall money from the State. Chevron Oil Company had overcharged consumers and there was a big settlement, and so we were able to compete for that money, add that money to the money we got from the federal government and essentially started an Energy Extension program in Oregon. And that was an exciting time because there was certainly a need. And everybody working had their plates full and so how were they going to be able to cover this increase in demand for energy-related help. Well, we were fortunate that we got the grant and were able to hire some people and go after it.

**EU:** You said you had worked with Governors Straub and McCall? When I think of Governor McCall, I think of some of the pilot environmental programs, the bottle bill and so forth.

**OO:** Well, to be honest with you, I was kind of like a little mouse in the corner. I got to go to staff meetings and things like that but I was sitting on the side, not at the table. I went at the invitation of the assistant to the Governor for natural resources and I got to experience the discussion, but really I didn't participate in the discussion. Most of the work that I did one-on-one was with agency people related to this project that we were working on and with the assistant to the Governor for natural resources, but not the Governor himself.

[0:20:05]

**EU:** Can you talk a little bit about the program; the project that you worked on. It seems as though there were a lot of different organizations...

**OO:** In fact, one of the big problems, or opportunities really, was that everybody wanted to be in the energy education business and there were a number of competing entities out there looking for their niche. And what I tried to do was to say, "Let's work with these people." Community colleges were interested; well, what were the community colleges uniquely able to do that they could do better than we could do? And so we would try to cooperate with them. The utilities were interested in doing audits and things like this for energy and so what could we do to work with them?

We put together this program really around about four theme areas. We had a program for builders and contractors; the people that we recruited to work in this program, some of them had background and experience. We had a PhD architect, we had a nuclear engineer who was by training had a PhD in Nuclear Engineering but he had an interest in alternative energy; he actually had hydro power on his property and I don't mean a big dam, I mean just a little bitty hydro project. We had a mechanical engineer, we had a lot of people that we hired, very capable people, who had an interest in that. And then we had a fellow, Dave Burtner, that I remember well, was a communications major. He didn't have a technical background but boy, he was dynamite in terms of his ability to work with his colleagues and communicate about these different options these people had.

It was funny; we had a small business program which the staff all referred to as a "small program for business." But we worked with the restaurant industry and the restaurant association in trying to help improve efficiency and the use of energy in restaurants. It turns out, we didn't know a whole lot about that when we started but we learned fairly quickly and were able to do some things, the same as working with builders and contractors.

And what ran the guys ragged was what we called our "Consumer Response Program." And that potentially just meant trying to respond to all the questions and inquiries. And we finally figured that out in the sense that we would use all of the questions that we would get to figure out what we ought to prepare in terms of more formal/informal educational programs. So we would put together publications, we had an excellent communications specialist who worked with us, Joyce Patterson. And so we put together these little, what we referred to as "quick and dirty" publications that would address a specific issue and then that would relieve the agents the time that they would have to spend one-on-one which is really nice if you can do that, but it's not very efficient in terms of the resources that we had.

If we had a lot of questions about solar water heating, then we would put together a group of two or three of the staff, they would develop a seminar, we'd duplicate, that was the day of the slide show presentations, we'd duplicate those slides so everybody could do the same program. We'd back it up with the publications support and references. We would have

referrals to all the local resources that say you went and learned about this and now you want to do something; where do I go, who do I see, what do I do? And so we tried to do that and do it with all the other players that were out there trying to address this issue.

[0:24:40]

**EU:** So, did you work directly through the agents out in the field?

**OO:** Well, it's interesting. I'd say the program just pretty much paralleled the way the rest of the Extension Service's programs worked in the sense that we had a few specialists; we had about three times that many agents. The agents were housed in the local county Extension offices. They were a part of that staff just like the home economist or the forestry agent or the ag agent who might be in that office, so they would find themselves working together with those staff on, you know, common things as well. And they had the support of faculty on campus, most of whom were housed in Engineering department, Mechanical Engineering. But there were others who had unique expertise that might not have been a part of our program and we worked with them as well. Extension had an Energy Committee and that had at least one representative from each program area, so that again, trying to get connected as many ways as we possibly could. I think it worked very well. I didn't stay with the program that long, but it survived when I left and thrived and in fact, I think mostly due to the quality of the staff that we had, several of those staff members were recognized as outstanding new agents by the Extension Agents Association or recognized in other ways.

**EU:** You mentioned, for example, the solar panels as an example. What were some of the other consumer concerns that you...

**OO:** Well, that's interesting. One of the projects that worked really well was one that we did with Eugene Water and Electric Board, and they had what was called a "blower door;" that sounds like a highfalutin name. All it was was a fan, a big fan, in a door that you would take your off, put that door on, turn this fan on and it would essentially show you where all of the air leaks are in your home. So you would turn the fan on the front door, have it blow out, so now it's sucking in air from wherever it can. Well, it may sound not too exciting, but things like weather stripping and plugging around plumbing, where plumbing comes in and out of the house, those are ways that you can save energy, doesn't cost a lot of money, go to Home Depot, this was prior to Home Depot or Lowe's but go to, I think Jerry's was there in Eugene at that time, you go there and you get the materials that you need and you could do it yourself. And for lower income homes, we would do things like plastic over the outside of the windows where they couldn't afford to put up double pane or triple pane windows or other things that you might do in more modern construction.

But we also helped with the development of the building code so that it was strengthened in terms of the energy requirements so that you had to have much higher R values for your insulation in your attic than what previously was used. It wasn't long until two-by-four construction was replaced with two-by-six construction so that you can get more insulation in the walls, and, you know. Put more insulation in your house wasn't too exciting but it certainly paid off in terms of the return on your investment.

**EU:** Did you work much with farmers or people out in the agricultural areas?

**OO:** You know, we did not do a whole lot. One of our agents, Rich Topielec, was in Union County and he did work in irrigation on ways that you could save energy with irrigation, so he worked not only kind of directly with some of the agriculturists in that northeast Oregon area but he also worked with some of the other agents and Experiment Station staff on that sort of thing. But we didn't do a whole lot directly with agriculture.

[0:29:55]

**EU:** You mentioned you worked with some companies and different businesses?

**OO:** We did, we did. Actually, Greg Wheeler, who was a mechanical engineering Extension specialist, developed a program and he would use students and they would do audits for small industrial plants and make recommendations on things they could do. They did educational programs for the association that they might belong to, whatever that industry was. They had some publications that they put together that would help those folks in terms of their energy consumption.

And the range of the industries varied. It might be a cannery; it was all over the map. There wasn't a particular...you know most companies have a space, so there's opportunity to save energy in the way they manage their space. Maybe they have an opportunity, maybe they produce a waste product that they could use, what's called cogeneration, to produce their own energy and not waste it and so they would explore those kinds of opportunities with whoever they would.

**EU:** You said there were energy agents? In different counties?

**OO:** Right, there were. Lane County, Washington County, Multnomah County, Union County, yes.

**EU:** So they were all over the state.

**OO:** Well, not all over; we didn't have anybody in southeast Oregon, but pretty much all over the state.

**EU:** But not strictly in the cities, like Eugene, Portland or...?

**OO:** We did have them in those areas and of course we had more there than we did in the more rural areas just because that's where the demand was. But we wanted to be statewide as we could with limited resources.

**EU:** Did you travel much or were you mostly in Corvallis?

**OO:** I travelled a lot. I don't know, I did a little bit of educational work myself, but I did quite a little bit of travelling, again, trying to keep the money coming, so I had to do quite a little bit of travelling both within Oregon and also back to Washington D.C., quite a bit of time in Salem trying to keep the projects funded, look for other opportunities for funding and that sort of thing. It kept me busy.

**EU:** Was this interest in energy, I'm assuming it wasn't just an Oregon interest?

**OO:** No, it was a national need at the time. It kind of went by the wayside in terms of the urgency. If you didn't have to stand in a gas line, sit in a gas line, you kind of forgot about it. You know, some of the basic principles haven't changed, you know. We've got a limited amount of oil, and we may not be using a lot more, but the world is developing and as you have seen in the picture of China recently, as they develop they have an appetite that consumes energy and so that finite pool that exists out there of whatever non-renewable source you are talking about, whether it's natural gas or oil or whatever, it's going to get used up sometime; it's just a matter of when, not if, but when.

So, you know, there's a famous guy that studied this and showed the, his name is M. King Hubbert, but you know essentially, we're going to run out and so you can argue about when this is going to happen but you really can't argue the fact that we've got to do something to find a renewable source of energy to reduce our consumption of those non-renewable resources. And that's essentially what we preached and I have to say "preached" because the guys we had working had an almost religious fervor in the way we went about working on this problem. We were concerned about it and committed to try to do something about it and every chance we got we tried to get people to do something better.

[0:35:10]

**EU:** Today, we hear so much about global warming and sustainability and these types of concerns, how would you compare what people are concerned with today to back in the 70s?

**OO:** I think the hardest thing to do; something like energy is a little more easy for people to understand that if I do this, I can actually see my pocketbook either money doesn't go out as fast or whatever. In other words, I can do something to improve my situation and I have a fairly immediate return on whatever I invest. If the investment is just as simple as, okay, I'm going to turn off the lights if I'm not in a room and if you haven't been doing that and your kids haven't been doing that, you can look at the electric bill and you will save money and save energy by just turning the lights off every time you leave the room. Well, people could relate to that.

Similarly, if you're talking about other forms of consumption or they put more insulation in, the house feels more comfortable, they see that their utility bill goes down, they can feel it in their pocketbook; real, immediate, not necessarily instant payoff, it might take two or three years to recover an investment, but then it just keeps paying for itself.

When you're talking about global warming, it's hard for people to see what they might do could actually change something like a glacier melting. It's too much of a disconnect between individual action and that's what we need to work on because the only way that problems like that are going to get solved is if individuals change the way they behave and society changes the way it behaves and manufacturers change, you know, all these things go together. We've all got to do better if that that's what we want to do. Right now, I don't think anybody's decided that's what we want to do.

There's still too many naysayers out there who think that no, this is really not a problem, or it's just a part of the normal cycle and this too will pass. Unfortunately, that's kind of what has happened with the energy crisis. It may seem like a crisis now because you're having to pay a lot of gasoline, but most people will just pay it and they have less money to save for their retirement or less money for discretion, but you know, it's just a hard sell when you're talking about global warming, it's just hard. I think our former Vice President has done a fantastic job on that and of course he's been recognized with the highest recognition you can get, the Nobel Prize. One person can make a difference but you have to get a whole lot of one persons changing the way they do things before it will really matter.

**EU:** So, do you see these as happening on a cyclical basis? I mean the interest, like in the '70s, you know, when you had the first gasoline crisis?

**OO:** I think that's right. My experience is that what happens is, the shock immediately when you have like an increase, run up in price, may cause you to adjust your behavior a little bit. I know we do that, like we live seven miles from the nearest town. Well, used to be we wouldn't think anything about if we needed something, just run to town. Now we make a list. Okay, what do we need to do next time we go to town? We don't just go because we need something, or want something. So you know, we'll go to town once a week.

If you can get people to be thinking that way, that's good. But what happens is prices will drop a little bit, now they haven't gone back to where they were, they've just dropped a little bit, but now, hey, it's eased off, I'm comfortable; you can revert to your old ways. And before you know it, more and more of your income is going toward energy. We heat our house with wood here, in fact, it's a little too warm now because it's so nice outside and it's a lot harder to regulate the temperature when you use wood heat than if I'd let the heat pump come on and I do have a heat pump; I'm not living in the backwoods, exactly, but you know, it's just changes.

[0:40:30]

**EU:** So, the Extension Service, the Energy Program, how long did that continue?

**OO:** You know, exactly, I don't know. Well, how can I say this? I thought it was really significant when the Extension Director at the time, Hank Wadsworth, actually elevated the work that we were doing in energy to program level status. So it was like the Forestry Extension Program, the Marine Advisory Program, which is Extension Sea Grant, 4-H Youth Development, all those programs had status as an Extension program. Energy was in that situation and as the program leader I was able to join the administrative team and participate in the administration of the organization and that meant a lot to us. It wasn't just some guys and gals out there working it, was something that was valued.

I don't know how long that status was afforded, but I do know that in 1982, I left OSU and took a job at Iowa State University. And when I left they filled my position, which is a good sign. Because you know, often when somebody leaves a position it doesn't get filled. So that was a good sign. We had an energy program leader. He was there for quite some time and I think he was there when I came back; I know he was there when I came back in 1990 but exactly when the program, "lost its organizational status" I don't know.

**EU:** Why don't we take a break here. This is the end of Part 1.

[0:42:35]

**Elizabeth Uhlig:** This is Part 2 of the oral history with Owen Osborne. Owen, we're up to about 1982, I think it was, and then you left OSU and moved back...

**Owen Osborne:** I did. Gosh, it was really hard to do because we had a "going concern" as they say with our energy program getting off the ground. But in 1982 I had an opportunity to go back to Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, as



the director of the Engineering Extension Service. And it was kind of a career opportunity that I didn't think I could pass up. Iowa State was a very good university and it was a neat program. They had a lot of history, actually the Engineering Extension Service program in Iowa predated the Smith Lever Act. They started in 1913 and Smith Lever Act which created the Cooperative Extension Service was passed in 1914.

So it was kind of neat to go to a program like that and while I was there I became Associate Dean of University Extension and had a little broader responsibility. In Iowa, University Extension encompassed not only the Cooperative Extension Service which was mainly in ag, 4-H and family and consumer sciences, they called it; they didn't like home economics as a term, it was out of vogue. But also the Engineering Extension Service and a Center for Industrial Research and Service and Continuing Education. So all of the off-campus credit programs and all the on- and off-campus non-credit programs were all coordinated and under the umbrella of University Extension. So you had this real sense that the whole university was available to the people of Iowa.

And I have to tell you, there are some unique things about Iowa. It gets really cold in the winter; it gets hot and humid in the summer, but that's not unique. There are a lot of places like that. But the people of Iowa are really committed to education; K-12 education, higher education, and they really value their universities. And when you would go out, you could tell that they really appreciated what you did and they were very supportive and I don't just mean verbally supportive. People were willing to make sacrifices in order that their kids could have the best education possible. They were willing to make sacrifices so their universities were strong and that I found interesting because it was a contrast to what I had experienced in Oregon. Yes, we were appreciated but no, people didn't have the same level of commitment to education in general that I found when I went to Iowa and it was really a nice place to be.

[0:46:25]

**EU:** So, when you were Associate Dean of University Extension, you were in charge of outreach services?

**OO:** Well, actually I was also the Director of Continuing Education so I wore kind of three hats. I still was the Director of the Engineering Extension Service. To be honest with you, the Associate Dean position was a great job. It was what I would call a staff position, as opposed to a line position. Now, the other two jobs, the directors jobs, they were line positions, so things like hiring and firing were things you had to do. But as Associate Dean, I didn't make the decisions, I didn't hire, I didn't fire and so I was a member of a team and a support. And I got to go to a lot of meetings, of course, a lot of which I went for the Dean, but I didn't have the authority that the Dean did, but I didn't have responsibility either. It was a very good job, I enjoyed it. And because it was a total university Extension effort, I had connections all across campus and I knew faculty members in many disciplines and worked on a food science project, Food Safety Inspection Service project, with people in vet med and other areas of the university so that was a lot of fun.

**EU:** Could you talk a little bit about the Engineering Extension Service, because that's different, I don't think Oregon has that.

**OO:** No, Oregon doesn't have it. And in fact, there weren't too many states that had that kind of a program. The College of Engineering at Iowa State had essentially committed to the Land Grant concept of teaching, research, and service. So their faculty thought they had a responsibility to do research and also to do service. And one of the things that Iowa has and had, and has had for a long time is a lot more industry than people are aware of. You think of Iowa as an agricultural hub, and it is, there are all kinds of corn and soy beans and pigs and that sort of thing, but Iowa also has a lot of industry and it's not all big industry. It's not necessarily the smoke-stack thing you would associate with Ohio or Pennsylvania, it's Amana and John Deere and companies like that and all the little companies that make things to support them.

And the insurance industry. We had a whole group of fellows that worked doing a lot of training and development of what I would call human resources that worked in the insurance industry. Just conflict resolution, all kinds of things like this, that some of our industrial engineering professors who were good with process and people and the things you need to make industry work, they were doing that sort of thing.

So, it was a very interesting program. But we had high level data communication schools that electrical engineering faculty would run for industry people; we had a very extensive civil engineering Extension program. In Iowa, and again that was somewhat unique, there are just two or three states, there was a mandatory continuing education requirement for

engineers to retain their license. So if you were a licensed professional engineer in the state of Iowa, I can't recall the exact number of hours of credits that you would have to have; we called them "CEUs," continuing education units, but it was a captive audience in the sense that they had to be kept up to date on whatever the latest thing was in transportation of waste water treatment or sewage or whatever, and so we had faculty that would do that. And it worked out very well.

[0:51:25]

**EU:** Could you talk a little bit about the programs that you did for these different companies. Where you working with the individuals or the companies?

**OO:** It worked both ways. Sometimes, a company would be having a problem and one of our staff members would be there visiting, mostly to do what we would refer to as "needs assessment;" what can we do, what do you need? And in the context of that conversation, maybe they would find out that they really needed some training on x, y, or z that would need to be set up just for their employees and we would do that. Sometimes they would not need that for all of their employees but they have a few people that need development in this particular area and you know, if we found that there were several companies that had a similar need, then we would put on a program and we would support it.

Almost all of those programs were fee-based. They weren't free. So that puts a little extra pressure on to do a good job because people are going to be paying money for the education. So it was not all that different than what you would find in credit instruction where, you know, it costs money to get your education. A lot of the things that we did cost money. Most of the things we did were at a level that, you know, sometimes it would be pretty expensive for a company to send a couple of people to a two week short course on some highly technical thing. But at other times we would be doing something that had a more general audience and it would be a fairly low fee.

One of the things that was in vogue when I was there was statistical process control and Deming was kind of the father of that and so we would have a conference and everybody would come and then there would be spinoff from that and often we would do that by getting sponsors. We would get a company to sponsor; maybe they would cover the honorarium that Deming or some other speaker would require in order to participate. We would get those people to Iowa and expose our people to their ideas that would spin off some other things like, well now that we know who to do that, we really need to know how to do this...who can help us with that? So it was a fairly typical, ongoing working relationship with the industry in the state.

Not at all dissimilar to what you find here in Oregon with the forestry program and the small woodlot owners, same kind of thing.

**EU:** How would you compare, or were there other differences or similarities between Oregon Extension and Iowa Extension?

**OO:** Well, I think at that time, the major difference that I saw was when I left in '82, Extension was generally both administratively and philosophically joined at the hip with agriculture. And when I got to Iowa State, I found of course, agriculture was big but the Director of the Extension Service didn't report to the Dean of Agriculture. That was a pretty fundamental in the way resources get allocated and who gets the attention of whom. It just makes a big difference.

And so, the whole University Extension concept is something that had been talked about at OSU and it appears to me, may have come to pass. I haven't had a chance to talk with Scott Reed to see if the titles and the responsibilities and the authority and all that stuff line up so that it's as it's advertised. I know I used to tell a joke which was not a very popular joke at the time, but when we had a big budget cut, they eliminated a lot of vice presidents and replaced them with vice provosts and it saved 20 percent of the alphabet. ... That's a joke. Not one that's well received by administrators generally, but you know that's kind of what a lot of folks think.

**EU:** So how long did you spend in Iowa?

**OO:** I was in Iowa from '82 until October of 1990. And in the summer of 1990, well actually my wife and I had talked about we'd like to get back to the Northwest because we enjoyed Iowa and the opportunity was great but we missed the Northwest. We had one of our kids here, our grandkids here. We had a house at Black Butte Ranch that we kept when we were in Iowa and missed having the opportunity to spend time here. And we missed a lot of the opportunities for

work and the connections that we had. So we decided we were going to try to come back and we would start looking for some opportunities. My wife found an opportunity and then she turned the job down because she was concerned that I wouldn't find anything to do in the particular town where she got a job offer and then I had a chance to interview for a position; essentially, it was Alberta Johnston's vacated Associate Director position. A little restructuring in terms of job responsibilities, but it was Associate Director of programs and that was in the summer of 1990 and in October 1st I showed up for that job.

That was for me, the good news. The bad news for me was about a month later Ballot Measure 5 passed and so a lot of the energy that I had to spend in the first few months of the job were revolving around how do we go about accomplishing the program reductions and staff reductions that were going to be required because of Ballot Measure 5. And of course at that point I was a part of the administrative team and couldn't dodge all the responsibility. Particularly our Director at that time, Ernie Smith, was very much a consensus decision maker and he depended on and used advice of his administrative staff and we had a good group of people doing that at that time and so it wasn't easy but we got it done.

[0:59:20]

**EU:** Could you talk a little bit about this administrative team; how was the Extension Service organized at that time?

**OO:** Well, we had, I think the Extension Service had been through all kinds of changes. I know when Jack Ross was an assistant director of Extension, I think when Jack was assistant director, and that was probably 20 years before my time, we had what were called area supervisors and they worked out; usually were housed out in the state and they worked in support of the county Extension staff, essentially the Extension staff chairs reported to them.

When I came back in 1990 we had several new administrators. I was new, Lyla Houglum, who was a 4-H specialist, started about the same time I did and she was an assistant director? associate director? I think she was an associate director for counties, was the title that was given. And Scott Reed had just been hired the same month I was hired, he was hired as the new Forestry program leader. And at that time, the program leaders reported to the associate director for programs.

But it wasn't long after that, that that changed and the program faculty were placed in colleges, so that Scott Reed, for example in Extension Forestry would report to George Brown who was the dean of the College of Forestry. And that was true pretty much throughout. And that was kind of an integration and a decentralization of the way that Extension was administered. So, my job changed a little bit then. I worked more with them in the colleges and there was more responsibility and authority given to the college administrators for the Extension program that Extension-funded faculty carried out that were housed in their college.

I haven't been back to see how that model has worked. When I was in Iowa it worked really well. But as I mentioned, there was a long history of faculty being in the colleges and that's just the way it always was, so it wasn't like this was something new. I know there was some apprehension about that at OSU and some question about whether or not, you know, whether the audiences of Extension would get their money's worth if these people who were housed in the colleges had different designs on their energies; how these people would be recognized and rewarded. Would they be granted promotion; whether they could get tenure; all of these things were important issues that changing the structure; having a different group of peers review your work. Having to define what scholarship is, since scholarship is a requirement for advancement and tenure. How do you define what scholarship is for a person who works in the Extension Service. So, I don't know how all that has worked out. I know it can work and I hope it is working, but I just haven't followed up to see.

**EU:** So you were in charge of the various programs, then. The agriculture program...

**OO:** Well, "in charge" is probably too strong a statement. If you work for the Extension Service you soon find that really nobody's in charge. Each one of these professionals is in charge and if you hire good people and you let them be in charge, they are going to do much better than you could, "trying to be in charge." And I think that's what has made the Extension Service so strong. Is that it has done a very good job of hiring quality people who listen more to the people they are trying to serve than they do to the administration. And I think that's a good thing. I didn't think that when it was time to get the annual report done, which I was responsible for, and I was trying to pull teeth to get people to prepare their annual report. Or it was time to prepare the plan of work for the next cycle and I was responsible for the plan of work, and so getting

people to do their plans of work on time and try to get all that put together was like pulling teeth. But you know a lot of people don't have time to plan because they are too busy. Wrong. But that's what they tell you. And you can be too busy. But if you are too busy to plan, you've got your priorities in the wrong place because you do need to plan.

**EU:** You said you came at the same time Ballot Measure 5 was passed.

**OO:** Right, I did.

**EU:** Could you talk a little bit more about how that impacted the Extension Service and what are some of the decisions you had to make.

**OO:** I think probably one of the greatest impacts, there's of course, the cost of some programs that were reduced or eliminated; there's the cost of some staff who were...we were able to do a lot of the reductions through attrition. We didn't have to declare financial exigency which is a thing that allows you to terminate tenured faculty if you need to, if you eliminate a program. We didn't have to do that.

I think the thing that hurt more than anything else was morale. People didn't feel good about what was happening. They had always had the support, it wasn't there, and I think morale went down. People were apprehensive about whether the hammer was going to fall on them or on a colleague or near. And because the Extension Service is a cooperatively funded venture it had trickledown effect. In other words, Ballot Measure 5 affected one stream of resources, but there were other streams of resources out there that supported Extension that were also being hammered. So it was a tough time and trying to keep the focus of the organization on the program and the people we served was a challenge.

**EU:** Was this happening about the same time as some of these organizational changes, then?

**OO:** Well, you know, the organizational changes actually came a little bit later. It's interesting. Oftentimes, when you have budget, it gives you opportunity. Okay, now we can fix it the way we think it ought to be. Well, the universities don't get fixed that easily. The Extension Service doesn't get fixed that easily. So, actually, those evolved after quite a lot of study, quite a lot of report task forces work and you kind of have to get everybody onboard in order to do that. Because you know, I'm not going to give you some resources, but I'm going to have some expectations of you if I do and maybe you don't want those resources because you don't want the expectations that go along with them. I'm going to have to let my puppy dog out....she's crying at the door. [short break]

**EU:** So did you, you yourself, how did you deal with the morale problem?

**OO:** Well, I guess I'd say, I had the same problems that everybody else did. It's not like I could lift myself up and say, hey...I struggled along with a lot of other folks. I think the thing that helps and that we tried to do, was to continue to celebrate successes where they occurred; recognize people for doing good things, recognize programs for doing good things. And the extent to which we were able to do that, your attention was drawn away from things that weren't going well, and I think that's a reasonable approach. It's what we tried.

**EU:** Did you notice other changes in Extension Service when you were here in the '70s and when you came back in the '90s; societal changes, or...?

**OO:** I don't think so. I think that, you know, Extension has an organization is just fundamentally right and it's just the right thing to do and so if you can get the right people and they are doing the right things, you really, maybe it hasn't changed as much as some people might like because part of its strength is its tradition, but, I don't know, I'm a firm believer in the Extension Service and the Land Grant mission and philosophy and I think that's what makes Land Grant universities unique and I think if they don't capitalize on that they are missing the boat because, you know, if you can get your faculty committed to accepting their responsibility and recognizing that each person has a unique contribution to make to that mission, and maybe you are the guy in the white coat in the lab with the rats, that's important, but there's somebody else out there who's working with 4-H who's just as important. So get people to buy into that is the big challenge.

[1:11:15]

**EU:** Did you notice any change over the years in the position of women in the Extension Service?

**OO:** I did. In fact, I had the good pleasure of working with Lyla Houglum who was a colleague, associate director and then became my boss. She was the first, I believe, woman director of the Extension Service that there had been in Oregon. And, she got that job because she did a good job; not because she was a woman and that made me feel good and that made a whole lot of people feel good and I hope it made her feel good. Because there are examples of where people get into their positions because of who they know or things like this and not necessarily what they are capable of doing. I found that having that person in a leadership position and Lyla was an excellent communicator and a good delegator; I found that to be good. And I had not had the opportunity to work for a female administrator before, but it was a good experience for me.

At the organizational level below the director, I didn't see a whole lot of change because women had always been real important in the Extension Service. I mean, I could name some names of home economists around the state that were better known in the community, more respected in the community, than any of the other agents who worked in that office. They were on television with their show, they were at the mall, they were wherever, you know. And now, they were in what you might call "traditional" roles for women. But, I saw examples of other agents, females, who were working in traditionally male roles and doing quite well at it. So all that, I thought, was positive. I didn't see any....

And you know, anytime you work as an administrator and anytime you work at a high level administrative position, you serve at the pleasure of your boss. It is not like a tenured faculty position where your bosses come and go and it doesn't matter. It does matter. And so you can have differences in expectations and as administrations change you can have different personalities, all these sorts of things. And there's absolutely nothing wrong in my view, with a new administrator coming in and wanting his or her own people. I've seen this happen throughout my career at other institutions as well as OSU and I don't think it's a bad thing. Now, I think it's a bad thing if you are a faculty member working the field, you shouldn't be subject to that kind of stuff, but if you accept the responsibility of a top level administrative position, you serve at the pleasure. Not unlike politics. In fact, maybe there is a little politics in it.

[1:15:15]

**EU:** Did you travel much, in-state or out-state?

**OO:** Well, in terms of travelling in my new job as associate director for programs, I didn't do a whole lot of travelling in that particular role. I was mostly a Corvallis-based person. I would go to the regional meetings like others, occasionally, but my responsibilities were primarily there. I did, kind of as a part of my training, have two counties that I was assigned as if I were the associate director for counties, so I could understand what their jobs were like – Marion County, Salem, John Burt was the staff chair; and Deschutes County, the county I'm in now. And I had some interesting challenges, some of which I won't go into, but personnel problems, challenges that the associate director for counties would have to deal with and I had to work through that.

Fortunately, I didn't have to do that forever, but unfortunately; no fortunately, we had a personnel change on campus and I got to learn another new job. The state 4-H program leader position was vacant and I got the opportunity to be the interim state 4-H program leader. I didn't know anything about 4-H, and I did that for a couple of years and I think it would be fair to say that people who knew would say, "Well, it's good and it's bad that Owen doesn't know much about 4-H. Some things are better because he doesn't know and some things it would be better if he knew." But I did the best I could with that for a couple of years until we hired a new 4-H program leader and I had an opportunity to help the organization, I guess I would say, develop its computer communication, internet capabilities.

And I did do quite a bit of travelling when I was doing that because we were getting all the county Extension offices wired. I didn't do the wiring myself; I'm an electrical engineer; I couldn't change a light bulb. But we had staff did that work and we would network the offices and that was fun. And I did travel around the state a lot during that time. And you know, internet was something....there was a fellow who worked with us and he was trying to sell me on all the things you could do, and how neat this would be and I was kind of, yeah, sure. Well, he was right. It's unbelievable what you can do. The only problem that I see with that is one of the nice things about going to the Extension Service and getting information is you know it's research-based. You know that there is something to it. It's not just made up. If you go on the internet, you're not sure. If you're not sure of the source, it may look good, sound good, and not be good. So you

have to be careful. It's open and so there's no good housekeeping seal of approval or whatever on this particular piece of information or another. So, it requires caution among users of that information to make sure. And that's why I think it's important for the Extension Service and other organizations that do have credible information - get it online because everybody else is. And they can choose yours.

[1:19:20]

**EU:** From the beginning of your career in the early '70s, could you talk a little bit about the impact of the computer on your work, or the work of the Extension Service.

**OO:** Well, initially, I think it was a tool that was not unlike, this is going to sound silly, but it's like oh, I have a new typewriter, now I can use Word or Word Perfect, or whatever you happen to use and now I can type this document and if I make a mistake I can edit it and I don't have to use white out anymore, okay? And when I get it just like I want it, I can print it out and it's good, okay? Well, it turned out that that was nice but the computer was not a typewriter.

The computer had so much more capability and particularly as it has evolved, it's in my opinion, a communication tool as much or more as it is a computational tool or a word processor or whatever. So that now, I mean, gosh, there isn't anything a specialist in Extension doesn't have a program that can help you with whatever it is and they can have it on a laptop and sit down with you in a seminar or sit down with you at your place of business or in your home or whatever and go through these things. I think about my own situation, in terms of my finances and my planning and my analysis and all this. If I didn't have a computer, I'd make some pretty bad decisions. I may still make some pretty bad decisions, even with it. But you know, I think that's the thing, it just kind of gotten woven into where now it's like an IPOD. You don't see a kid running around hardly without their music. Well, you don't see professionals running around without their computers. And if they don't run around with them, they have them in their office, in their home, wherever.

**EU:** So, when did you retire?

**OO:** Well, that's kind of a debatable thing. The reason I say that is I took advantage of an incentive retirement opportunity the university offered and I actually did a phased-retirement. And so I kind of started retiring about 1998 and I think I got done shortly thereafter. Now this is not something you would want to ask a lot of my colleagues because they may have thought I retired even sooner than that, but really I didn't. So, late '90s. I retired at age 55 and I will be 65 in about another two weeks, so I've been retired about ten years.

**EU:** Let's take a little break again.

[1:22:55]

**Elizabeth Uhlig:** This is Part 3 of the interview with Owen Osborne. Before we get too much into your retirement, I wanted to ask you about some of your activities with different professional organizations while you were with the Extension Service.

**Owen Osborne:** Okay. I guess the one organization that I was probably most active with was a division of the American Society for Engineering Education. It was called the Continuing Professional Development Division. And I had an opportunity to serve that organization to be the chairman of the group and we had a couple of meetings each year - summer meeting and a winter meeting. The winter meeting was always in some summer location in the southern part of the country so that was nice. I was active in that group when I was at Iowa State and also when I was at Oregon State and it gave me a lot of opportunities. We had several world conferences on continuing engineering education and I was able to participate in those.

They were the most interesting. Participation was in a conference in Beijing, China. We were there in Beijing in Tiananmen Square the day they closed the square and so it was a very exciting time. The location where I was supposed to make a presentation had to be changed for obvious reasons. We weren't able to see the Great Wall and the things that we hoped to see. The hotel that we were staying in, Dan Rather, CBS News correspondent, was in the same hotel and every night we would go watch him do the news in his fatigues. He was right there on the patio of our hotel, and we weren't able to go out sometimes because the troops were outside and the trucks. We got to see some of the things you saw on television firsthand where people would try to block the advance of the troops and try to get them to not be military but

support them. My wife took some fantastic pictures of the demonstrations when we were in Tiananmen Square of children and students and protesters. All in all, it was quite an experience.

[1:25:30]

But I think the most important thing we learned on that particular trip was the importance of communication and how lucky we are to be in a free society. We, when we left our hotel, weren't able to fly out on a commercial airline we flew in on; so we had to fly on a military airline and a bus took us there on bicycle paths because the streets were clogged with burning vehicles and tires and things.

We got on a plane and flew from Beijing to Xian, we got off the plane, got on a bus to go to our hotel, got to the hotel, nobody knew from nothing what was happening in Beijing. All the TV had been edited, so they were asking us what was going on and it was really strange. We went from there to Guilin and some other cities. Nobody knew what was happening in their capital, so it was very interesting. But that organization, I was fortunate enough to work with Joe Biedenbach who was from the University of South Carolina who was a pioneer in that field and the organization gives an annual award; has a nice cash award that goes with the plaque and the Joseph Biedenbach Distinguished Service Award. And I won that award one year so that was kind of a great, special, particularly because of Joe.

**EU:** Did you do other traveling involved with that?

**OO:** Well, we did a lot, I had an opportunity to do quite a bit of international travel when my job would allow it and some of it some people might say was just kind of a boondoggle, I guess that's the word. Can I use that word? You know, when you go to a nice location for a conference, if you are in Iowa, for example, in the middle of the winter and you go to San Juan, Puerto Rico, somebody thinks something's up. Well, something is up. But it's all up and up. While you're there its work; you do have an opportunity to see things and do things. But there were things like that. I had a chance to go to Paris and give a paper; it was at the NATO Headquarters and translated in different languages, you can't understand or hear them all because somebody's doing that. It was kind of neat, you know, things you get a chance to do and it was fun.

**EU:** So you said you sort of had a phased-in retirement.

**OO:** I did. It worked out well. My supervisor was very flexible and allowed me to essentially work or not work. I didn't know how to work half time. I told my boss I could work or not work, so I was able to take a few months off and then go back and work a few months and take a few months off and that really helped me get ready for retirement and understand what I'd do with myself. Fortunately, my wife continued to work for a while after I retired, so she didn't have to worry about what to do with me. I had the chance to figure that out on my own.

And since I've retired, well a couple of things have happened. I have always had a passion for golf and have always enjoyed playing golf and my friends say about my golf game, "Owen shoots in the high seventies to low eighties. If it gets any colder than that or it rains, he doesn't play." Kind of an inside joke if you live in the Willamette Valley and so I've enjoyed golf. But since I've retired, I've done some volunteering in golf and currently I volunteer for the USGA in the Oregon Golf Association and I rate golf courses; establish the slope rating and course rating, the par rating, for golf course. And there's so many new golf courses being built in the state that it keeps us busy. We do several each year and then golf courses need to be re-rated after a certain period of time and I have really enjoyed the friendships. It's an analytical thing so that kind of fits with my background; it involves numbers, it involves analysis, it involves making decisions, exercising your judgment, negotiating with your fellow raters to come up with some numbers that seem to make sense.

And I do that throughout the summer and have had a chance to go to a couple USGA seminars; one just this February in San Diego and previously one in LA. And the nice thing about that is that it's supported fully by the Oregon Golf Association and so it's just my time I'm volunteering, they take care of my expenses and that's nice. And a nice perk, you get to play golf for free.

[1:31:30]

**EU:** Now, of course, you're living here in Black Butte Ranch. When did you move here?

**OO:** Well, it's interesting. We bought this property in 1976, the property that our house is sitting on where we are sitting. Built immediately a little vacation home on the property and kept that vacation home until about three years ago when we decided it didn't make sense to have a nice home in Corvallis and a vacation home at Black Butte Ranch; neither of which we really wanted to be staying at in January and February. Too rainy and gray in the Valley and too cold and snowy up here. So, we said why don't we sell the house in Corvallis, remodel the house here and move up here full time. And then we can go south, snowbird, in the wintertime.

So we called in an architect who we knew and respected to get his ideas on remodeling our house. He said, "Well, I think you should push it over and here's what I think you should do." So that was a shock. We couldn't imagine doing that. So after some starts and stops, we eventually did what he recommended, bulldozed the old house and built this house, which is a one level, appropriate for retirement type house. The only regrets my wife has is I wouldn't build it big enough that all of our kids and all of our grandkids could be here at the same time. So that's kind of a bone of contention. But I asked her, I said, "How many times in the last five years, how many days in the last five years have all of our kids and grandkids been with us anywhere?" And the answer was, "Five days." So well, it doesn't make sense to build another bedroom and another bathroom for something that happens that infrequently. So she's still right on the issue, but we're surviving. I told her, "You know, if the kids all want to come here sometime, there's a lot of big really nice homes here at Black Butte Ranch, we'll just go rent one and we'll move over there where we can all stay together and eat together and play together." But that hasn't happened yet either.

**EU:** So you go down to Arizona?

**OO:** We actually go, it varies each year. This last year we spent two months in the Tucson, Arizona area and then on the way back we stopped in St. George, Utah and spent a couple of weeks there and we've been doing that, actually I've been doing that since I retired. In fact, the first few years after I retired, Judy would just come down and spend a week or two with me because she was still working. And after a few years she got tired of that and said, "There's something wrong with this picture." So she retired too about five years ago. So now we go down there and spend time and we enjoy it.

**EU:** I noticed when you were showing me some of your artwork around your house. You have quite a bit of art.

**OO:** We do. We have kind of connected with the southwestern art, particularly we like a lot of the Hopi art, the Kachina carvings and baskets and pottery and things like that. So now, every year when we go we always bring something back that kind of reminds us of that year and if we keep this up, we're going to have someplace to put it because we are getting more than we need.

[1:35:40]

**EU:** And you've also gone down to Mexico?

**OO:** Well, we have been to Mexico. We went to Puerto Vallarta and spent a little time. We don't do a lot in Mexico. Mexico is getting a little scary, to be honest with you and so we had a little scare one time when we were in Mexico and we've been a little apprehensive. We have some friends who are working on a project in Cabo San Lucas area and they want us to go down. We probably will, but our adventures into Mexico were more like driving from Tucson down to Tubac and then venturing on down to the border towns and that sort of thing.

**EU:** I notice you also have some artwork from Alaska.

**OO:** We do. My wife had a student when she was at Western Oregon University who was an Eskimo, a Native American from Barrow, Alaska and she has helped us and gifted to us some family things that are just very precious, very nice, unique pieces. We have a whale's tooth, a baleen, that her father carved; very primitive carving, it's not fancy artwork by any means but it tells a story and Alice's Dad did it so it's kind of neat.

**EU:** So, you keep yourself busy in your retirement, both you and your wife?

**OO:** No question about that. I play mostly. My wife actually still does some work. She volunteers for Habitat for Humanity. Most of my volunteer work, I'm on the board for the local golf club; we have a golf club at Black Butte Ranch; I'm on the handicap committee; I am an OGA director, meaning I'm our representative for this club to the Oregon Golf



Association and as I say have been volunteering for the OGA for several years as a course rater. And then I play golf every chance I get. I try not to play more than every other day. There are other things to do.

**EU:** So, are there other things I should have asked you about, the Extension Service or?

**OO:** Oh, gosh. I don't think so. I guess the only thing I would say is that I kind of backed into the Extension Service. I didn't ever intend to work for the Extension Service as a career. I had something else in mind altogether. It's kind of like I didn't intend to be in administration and I spent most of my career in administration. But it just happened and I realized I was a little bit different in terms of academic background because you didn't find many PhD electrical and computer engineering working in Extension. So it was a little different but I really feel like, felt like, still feel that way, that a lot of the skills and things you develop with engineering as a discipline serve you well, it doesn't matter what you do. And I still feel that way. It's good training. I don't carry a slide rule on my hip, and I don't have liners in my pocket, and I've gotten rid of my horn rimmed glasses, but I still do like analytical stuff and I just find satisfaction in managing investments and working on course ratings and things like this to keep that part of my brain active.

[1:40:18]

**EU:** When you look back on the Extension Service, and your career, what are the highlights? What gave you the most satisfaction?

**OO:** Oh I think probably the best time was when the Extension Energy Program got started. There was a need, a void. We had just exceptional people that we put together in that team. We enjoyed working together; we were very different but complemented one another. I think they appreciated what I tried to do in my role and I know I appreciated what they did and we were successful. It wasn't for long that that lasted for me, because I went on and did something else, but I think, just in terms of excitement and energy in a job that was the time that was special for me.

**EU:** Anything else we should ...

**OO:** No, thanks for taking the time to do this. I hope it hasn't been all for naught.

**EU:** This has been great.

**OO:** Good.

**EU:** So, thank you very much.

[1:42:13]