



Bob and Kaety Jacobson Oral History Interview, January 20, 2015

Title

“A Family Dynasty in Marine Extension”

Date

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Location

Lincoln County Extension Office, Newport, Oregon.

Summary

In the interview Bob Jacobson and his daughter Kaety reflect on their experiences as students at Oregon State University as well as their work as Marine Extension Agents based in Newport, Oregon.

The session begins with Bob's recollections of life growing up in North Bend, Oregon during the 1940s and 1950s. He then discusses his enrollment at Oregon State College in 1958, his participation on the OSC basketball team, his social life and academic progression, and his involvement with the school rally squad. He likewise makes mention of an accident in which he cut off three of his fingers while working in a sawmill; campus jobs that student athletes of his era were expected to fill; his memories of Slat Gill and Paul Valenti; his first jobs at the Oregon Fish Commission; and the means by which he became the country's first Marine Extension Agent.

At that point, Kaety Jacobson then shares her story of growing up in Newport and being heavily influenced by fishing and Extension activities as a youth. She likewise discusses her academic path and social activities while an OSU undergraduate, differences in the natural resources curriculum from her father's era, moving back to Newport and completing her schooling online, and the advancement of women within Forestry and Fisheries at Oregon State.

From there, the interview turns its attention back to Bob Jacobson's work as Marine Extension Agent. In this, Bob outlines the means by which he became acquainted with the local fishing community; the administrative relocation of his position within Oregon Sea Grant; his involvement in public policy discussions; the progression of his own commercial fishing interests; and the role that he played in improving the availability of fishermen's survival suits throughout the region.

Kaety Jacobson next describes the means by which she became employed as Marine Extension Agent; her involvement with the creation of Extension publications and YouTube videos; and her activities surrounding renewable energy research on the Oregon coast. Both interviewees then remark on their connections with the Hatfield Marine Science Center.

As the session nears its conclusion, the Jacobsons discuss their family in greater depth, as well as Bob's community involvement with youth sports and Newport High School athletics. The interview ends with final thoughts on OSU and the importance of Extension.

Interviewees

Bob Jacobson, Kaety Jacobson

Interviewer

Mike Dicianna

Website

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

Transcript

Mike Dicianna: OK, well today is January 20th, 2015, Tuesday. And we're in the offices of the OSU Lincoln County Extension Service in Newport, Oregon. The OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project is honored and pleased to capture two generations of Beavers this day. Robert "Bob" Jacobson, class of 1963, and his daughter Kaety Jacobson, the class of 2003. My name is Mike Dicianna, oral historian for the OSU Special Collections and Archive Research Center.

What I like to usually start with is a brief biographical sketch, so we'll start at the beginning with you, Bob. We'd like to learn about your life a little bit; how about a quick biographical sketch of your early days, where you were born and early school days?

Bob Jacobson: Thanks, Mike. I was born in North Bend, Oregon in 1939. My father was a logger and my mother was a schoolteacher. And I lived in North Bend through my grade school, middle school and high school years. Graduated from North Bend High School in 1958. Was offered a basketball scholarship to OSU and ended up attending that school for actually about six years – a couple years of graduate school.

MD: Childhood memories – what was it like growing up on the coast, especially during World War II, as a young child?

BJ: Interesting that you brought that up, because I hadn't thought about this in a long time. My dad was actually on what they called, I think it was "bridge watch." And during the war I was very very small, he and some of his fellow North Benders would go out at night to patrol the Coos Bay-North Bend Bridge, which had just recently been completed. So I hadn't thought about that in a long time. But it was great growing up on the coast. My dad was an outdoorsman, he taught me a lot about hunting and fishing, and to this day I'm still a very avid fisherman and hunter because of, basically, him taking me when I was a child with him when he went hunting and fishing.

So a great spot to grow up. We spent a lot of time in the sand hills actually, between Winchester Bay and Coos Bay. There were about four classmates and myself that had Model A sand buggies. In fact we were probably some of the first people to travel through the sand dunes, starting in the early 1950s. Great spot to grow up, great spot to have lived in.

MD: Well you mentioned that you went to school on an athletic scholarship, you actually entered Oregon State College and graduated from Oregon State University.

BJ: That is correct.

MD: So that's kind of a distinction in itself. Let's talk about college days: what were your living arrangements when you got to college? Did you pledge a fraternity?

BJ: I did. I went through what they called Rush Week and actually one of my friends from North Bend, whose dad happened to be school superintendent – Dave Hartley – was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. As so I went through the Rush Week, visited a lot of fraternities, and I pretty much decided, even before Rush Week, that because Dave was in this fraternity, I'd probably pledge there. Which I did.

I lived there the first two terms of my freshman year, didn't make grades to become a member of the house-

Kaety Jacobson: I've never heard this part of the story before.

BJ: Oh, you haven't?

KJ: I'm very excited, keep going.

BJ: So I moved out with a couple of other rook basketball players, into a, actually it was a boarding house. And lived there for a couple of terms, ended up making my grades, and became a member of the Sig Ep house my sophomore year. Lived there during my undergraduate years, and then, as a graduate student, moved out and lived in an apartment down on 12th street with two or three other Fish and Game guys that I knew pretty well.

MD: I understand that you began as a forestry major but you-

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BJ: Started as a forestry major, switched to fish and game my sophomore year, and eventually graduated in business with a minor in fisheries.

MD: That was Business and Technologies back then?

BJ: Correct.

MD: How about favorite classes and favorite professors during this early '60s period?

BJ: My favorite professor was Howard Horton, a professor of fisheries. And he ended up becoming my major professor in graduate school. But Howard took a real interest in his students; he personalized his teaching. He is just a great guy, still a good friend, still lives in Corvallis. Probably my second favorite prof was Bill Percy who was a professor of oceanography. And Bill is still around Corvallis, lives in Kings Valley, and he was like Howard, just a heck of a guy, and learned a lot from both of those profs.

MD: Now in the early '60s, fisheries biology, was that in the Department of Science? Or was it a separate department on its own by that time?

BJ: Mike, I'm not sure I can answer that question for you. I think it was part of the School of Agriculture, but I'm not positive about that. I think I'm right.

MD: Yeah, because your degree is a B.S. in Science.

BJ: Yeah, that's correct.

MD: Well, the 300-pound gorilla in the room, we really need to talk about your basketball highlights as a star of OSU basketball with teammates like Terry Baker and early Mel Counts. You were a member of the 1962 OSU team that went to the Final Four. Tell us about that – your seasons and those experiences.

BJ: Well, you're not quite correct. I was a member of the 1962 team, and that team did not go to the Final Four, it was the '63 team that went to the Final Four. But we did, in '62, make it to the final eight. We got beat by UCLA in the finals of the western regional playoffs in Provo, Utah. And then UCLA went on to the Final Four that year. But the next year, they beat UCLA and then went on to the Final Four. But that next year, I happened to be on the OSU rally squad; I was rally king. So I got a free trip to, I believe the Final Four was in Kentucky, I think it was Lexington. In addition to that, the rally squad got a free trip to the Liberty Bowl in Philadelphia, and got a ten-day free stay in Philadelphia and New York - saw a New York Giants football game while we were there.

But my basketball days were really one of the highlights of my college career. I played with some really outstanding individuals. You mentioned Terry Baker, who was the Heisman Trophy winner in '62. Mel Counts went on to a long career in professional basketball. Steve Pauly, who is a retired dentist from Beaverton, was the national decathlon champion while we were in school. Jake Hardy went on to coach Lew Alcindor – who was later Kareem Abdul-Jabbar – at UCLA, and Jake actually played for the Lakers for one year at the age of twenty-nine, I think. So we had some really really good guys on that team. Ernie Johnson is a long-time friend of mine, he was a regional manager for Northwest Natural Gas in Albany. Gary Rossi came from Coos Bay, he's been an attorney in Bend for years and years and year. So really a great bunch of guys, still keep in contact with some of them periodically. But that was really one of the highlights of my college.

MD: So you were at the Liberty Bowl to see Terry Baker's famous run?

BJ: Ninety-nine yard run, that's correct. I was standing on the sidelines.

MD: That's incredible. This is the type of history that this project is so rich in. Now, Mel Counts was towards the end of your basketball-

BJ: Mel came along as a sophomore when I was a senior. And then, I should probably add that, between my junior and senior year, I ended up cutting my fingers off in a plywood mill in Coos Bay. And Slats Gill, who was the coach at that time, came down to see me – both he and Paul Valenti – and said, "well, we'll probably hold you out your senior year, not play you, we'll bring you back the fifth year to play, depending on how the fingers heal." So I arranged my senior classes around coming back a fifth year, which meant I didn't take a couple required classes fall term, that I had to have to graduate.

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A week or so before our opening game against Montana State, they said "we're gonna play you this year." So I was already committed to coming back a fifth year, that was the reason why I wound up on rally squad – something to do. But I ended up starting that opening game for the Beavers, taped my fingers with sponge rubber and tape. Today they would have made a prosthetic-fitting hand for you, back then they didn't have the capabilities. So I played for actually a number of years after that just using the sponge rubber and tape on my fingers. And you had to learn to handle the ball almost all over again, learn how to shoot all over again, but I wasn't playing for my scoring ability, I was playing for my defense and rebounding, and that's probably the reason I continued to play.

MD: One of the things with you being on rally, that's one of your activities, what were some of the other activities that you did while you were freshman year, sophomore year? What were you involved with?

BJ: Well, people probably don't remember, Mike, that when I first got there in 1958, our scholarship was contingent upon working to gain that scholarship, to get the money from that scholarship. And so, for probably twenty hours every week, we were down in the basement of Gill Coliseum with a mop and a mop bucket, or some window spray and window cleaner, cleaning Gill Coliseum. That lasted, I think 1958-59 was the last year that they required scholarship athletes to work for their scholarship. But it was a great experience, it's something we can talk about now and kind of laugh about because saying to some college recruit, "you're gonna have to work for your scholarship," I don't think that would cut it in this day and age. But once again, a great experience, and I kind of look back on it with a little humor as I sit here and think about it.

MD: You had the opportunity to know two of the greatest coaches that OSU has ever had in Slats Gill and Paul Valenti, who we've interviewed and just recently passed away. What are your reflections on their coaching, their personalities, those two greats?

BJ: Two coaches that kind of came from the opposite end of the spectrum. Slats was very calm in his demeanor, seldom raised his voice. Paul was just the opposite – a fiery Italian who, if he didn't raise his voice...it was just Paul. He was always fiery, always rah-rah-rah. Slats just the opposite. Both of them great coaches. I don't think I could have gone to a better school as far as basketball is concerned, from the standpoint of learning not only about the sport but about life in general. Both the guys took a real interest in their players and I remember after my freshman year, I wasn't really interested in going back to Oregon State. Paul heard about that and called me into his office and sat me down – I don't know for what period of time I sat there, but it was at least four hours, five hours – and I probably didn't get in three words edgewise. And by the time that discussion ended that spring term, I was recommitted to Oregon State and, of course, stayed there for the rest of my college career.

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Both of them were great friends. I don't know if you were at Paul's funeral or not, recently, but a lot of his ex-players were there and a lot of great testimonials about Paul and the impact that he had on people's lives.

MD: So you stayed on at Oregon State for master's work, I understand that you-

BJ: I got tired of school, Mike. I bailed. [laughs] That was – let's see, I graduated in '63 – that was '65, I think. I got out, I took a temporary job with the old Oregon Fish Commission here in Newport. And about September 1st or October 1st, that money ran out, and I got transferred to the old Oregon Fish Commission lab in Clackamas, where I worked for about a year and a half, until I got a call from Howard Horton who had been my major prof, who I mentioned earlier. And he

said, "we are writing a proposal to get money to do Extension work with commercial fishermen. Would you be interested, if we got that money, in taking that job?" I said "I'd absolutely love it."

I'd known a few fishermen growing up down in Coos Bay, and actually I'd gone to Oregon State with a couple gals who were born and raised here in Newport whose dad, Wilburn Hall, was a long-time fisherman here. So I knew the Hall family. In about May of '67, Howard Horton contacted me again and he said, "we got that money, you've got the job if you want it." No interviews, no nothing. I said, "I'll take it – when do I go to work?" He said, "be in Newport on June 1st." So I turned in my resignation to the old Oregon Fish Commission and was down here, maybe it was June 15th of '67. And I've been here ever since.

MD: Well this is a unique opportunity for us, I'd like to switch now and talk a little bit with Kaety, the next generation of Beaver, forty years later. So even with your dad in the room, tell us a little about your childhood, your school experiences. Was OSU Extension ever-present in your household when you were a child?

KJ: OSU Extension was always present in my everywhere. [laughs] In fact, probably more than anything as a kid, I hated going to the store with you [to Bob], I hated it, because you knew everybody. So we'd go to get, like, a new pair of shoes or something, and we'd be there forever, because it was every single person we'd run into. And it wasn't just that he knew them, it was like they needed to have a conversation about whatever work stuff. And I sort of chuckle now because with my own kids it's the same way. I go to the store and it's like I know everybody. Because in Extension those relationships are yours and they're real. You don't just build them for work, they're real relationships. And so as you see them in places, these are people that you have relationships with and want to chat or whatever.

But yeah, so I was born in Lincoln City and grew up here in Newport, and went to Newport High School. And I was part of both a fishing family, because Dad also had a fishing career and we owned fishing vessels, and then also an Extension family. And so I feel like I sort of have two cultures I was raised in; fishing culture, which is really prevalent and not just that we owned vessels, there's a whole bunch of things that go with that. As he said, he was raised by an outdoorsman, well so was I. And so looking for agates, and digging up daffodils at old homesteads, and fishing, and picking blackberries, and all of that kind of stuff was part of life.

And then the Extension piece of life, which was a lot of community functions – at least from my end as a kid – a lot of community functions and banquets, and lots of relationships, and lots of people coming over to the house all the time. And travel – he did travel a lot for work, so there were some times when we got to go with him. Sun Valley, Idaho, I remember that one very well. But a really wonderful place to grow up in, Newport. I really enjoyed growing up on the coast. It certainly did a lot for me in terms of what I wanted to do when I got older. Really, really enjoyed the fishing community, and I think as I got older and looked for careers, it certainly was something I wanted to be connected to again.

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MD: So was there any doubt that you'd be a Beaver and attend OSU?

KJ: There was actually, yeah. I have two older sisters, and one went to Western Oregon and the other went to U of O. And there was absolutely no pressure to go to OSU, really at all. It was more, "so what do you want to do and what's the best school for that?" I wanted to go into fisheries, so it was kind of like OSU or Humboldt State – actually, Dad drove me down there to Humboldt State, and walked around campus. I don't think he said much really, and when I started to look at OSU he said, "well, you should talk to Howard, you should talk to blah, blah, blah," because he knew everybody.

And then I actually got to OSU and didn't do fisheries, I actually transferred into Natural Resources, which was a new program at the time, it had only been going a couple years. And at that point, it was interdisciplinary; now it's in the College of Forestry, but it wasn't when I was there. So you basically picked the college that you were in, and so I picked the College of Agriculture because I was interested in fisheries. But there were no fisheries faculty members as part of the Natural Resources program, so I ended up with Paul Doescher, who is still there today, who was my advisor, who is a rangeland resources specialist. And I was this kid from the coast interested in fisheries, and I ended up with Paul. And he had great humor about it, because there was nobody from Fisheries and Wildlife or in Fisheries Science that were willing to take a Natural Resources kid as an advisor. So Paul stepped up and, despite really not having expertise in fisheries stuff, did a good job.

MD: So you attended forty years after your father, let's compare college experiences. What were your living arrangements and your activities as a student in the early 2000s?

KJ: My first year living on campus, I lived in Callahan Hall. And the second year I lived off campus. And then, actually, the third and fourth year I was back here in Newport, and actually lived here back on the coast and did some commuting, and also did distance ed to finish up my last two years. Which was, of course, not even a pipe dream back when you [to Bob] went to school, to have distance ed through computers and stuff. So I really enjoyed campus, I enjoyed it a lot. I think certainly from his perspective, it was a lot bigger. I remember Dad coming over a couple times and getting slightly turned around because there was just more buildings. Once he found the MU and Gill Coliseum he was usually ok, but other than that there were some times where things had changed. You knew where Peavy Hall was, but some of the buildings had moved around.

MD: Yeah, they find a little piece of dirt and they build a dorm on it nowadays. Now there's forty years of scientific advancement; from what you know about what your dad went through, what was the difference in your coursework, your studies, and the changes in the field?

KJ: Well, I would like to think that I had to have a lot more hard math and science than you [Bob] did, I don't know if that's actually accurate, but I think I did.

BJ: Probably.

KJ: OK, I'd like to think so, I don't know if that's true. I think advancement in terms of fisheries science, I think when Dad went through – and we talked about this before – he was really in the era, post-World War II, where they were really trying to get people to fish. I mean, "those are our resources, let's get people out there harvesting." And maybe sometime before we knew a whole lot scientifically about the resources we were harvesting, about the actual fish and biology and life history of those animals.

I think as I hit OSU and even now in my job, it's really flip-flopped, and a lot of it is "let's conserve, let's find out how to do this more sustainably, let's have less bycatch, let's study something a lot before we go out and harvest it." So I think just the thinking behind fisheries science has changed a lot. And I think our scientific understanding – certainly the technology, our ability to read fish otoliths and take genetic samples of salmon and find out which stream they come from, that was technology that wasn't something you [Bob] had at all when you did it. And so I think our understanding of fisheries has changed a lot, and I also think our technology and ability to do some of that research has changed a lot. And certainly my career with OSU, especially because my undergrad was a lot broader than his – I just didn't do fisheries stuff, I had to do rangeland resources, I had to do forestry – so I got a pretty wide look across some different sectors when I was there.

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MD: You graduated with the class of 2003, what were your goals as you entered OSU and how did they change upon graduation?

KJ: I don't think I had a lot of change, honestly. I really wanted to do marine education stuff; that was my purpose in going to school, I wanted to do fisheries, I wanted to do marine ed. And I got out and that's what I did. So I don't really think that my goals changed a whole lot; that's one of the reasons I moved back to the coast is I sort missed being on the coast. And I had a job at Marine Discovery Tours – which is a vessel that takes people out on the water – I had a really great job doing that as a naturalist guide and really wanted to be able to do that. So I chose to live here and work for ODF&W. And I actually worked for OSU while I went to school at OSU – I worked at the Hatfield Marine Science Center as sort of the staff person that ran the visitors center. So I had a lot of jobs in marine science and marine education as I went through school. So I think all of those jobs and those experiences just cemented in why I went to school in the first place. So I don't think I actually came out with a lot of changed goals. I think the only thing that changed is I realized that I needed a master's degree. That was the only thing – I went into undergraduate not realizing it was needed, and came out knowing I needed to do that.

MD: It's always wonderful to hear when a Beaver reaches their dreams, reaches their goals. That's what this college is all about. Now during Bob's time in the program, there probably weren't a lot of women in the sciences.

BJ: That's true. And particularly as I think back about the classes in fisheries and forestry, very very few, if any, women involved in those programs. Today it's quite the opposite. So there has been a huge huge turnaround from the standpoint of providing a lot of opportunities for women that weren't there. The opportunities might have been there, but maybe the interest from their standpoint wasn't there. But today that's all changed.

MD: As a woman graduating in the early 2000s, do you echo those-

KJ: Well, I think when I graduated, thinking back to some of those forestry/fisheries classes, there certainly were women, I was not the only one. I would say it's certainly more men coming through, definitely more, so maybe a 70/30 kind of thing going on. But I felt totally welcome, I don't think there were any issues with women being there. But now, just that I've seen, now working for OSU and working in those departments, I think it's flip-flopped again, and I think that we have a 90% women and 10% men thing going on, especially when I look at the Marine Resource Management Program for the Fisheries and Wildlife graduate students that they were kicking out, I see far fewer men in those fields than I had just when I started working for OSU ten years ago, yeah.

BJ: It's been ten years, holy smokes.

KJ: It's actually been twelve, but...

BJ: Time flies.

KJ: It does, yeah.

MD: So Bob, how was it to see your daughter graduate from your alma mater, what are your reflections there?

BJ: Just darn proud of her. In fact, I was just looking through some old photos yesterday and there's a picture of her receiving her diploma on stage from, I think it was the president of OSU, wasn't it?

KJ: Yeah, I think so.

BJ: So yeah, very proud.

MD: A legacy, I see so many times the family legacies-

BJ: I should add this Mike, that I was real proud of my other daughters when they graduated too from their respective schools.

MD: Even the one that graduated from University of Oregon?

BJ: Yeah, it doesn't make any difference. [laughs]

MD: Well let's switch gears a little bit, I'd like to know a little bit about the early history of Sea Grant and the Extension Service dealing with the coast. Your career dates back to the original Sea Grant, which was the idea of William Wick in '67. And his whole idea was suggesting taking the Extension model that had been so successful with the agricultural interests, and applying it to challenges facing people, communities, and businesses here on the Oregon coast. And you were the first Marine Extension agent in the nation, so tell us how you got involved with all that.

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BJ: Well, I told you part of the story earlier about working for the Fish Commission and getting a call from Howard Horton and Bill Wick, asking me if I was interested in taking a job if they got the money, and they got the money. This was prior to Sea Grant. It was actually money that came through the federal act called The State Technical Services Act. It wasn't much; I think my starting salary was \$5,900 a year. That sounds totally unrealistic by today's standards, but that's what it was. And Bill Wick explained it to me as, "you're a county agent in hip boots."

So running with that cue, I landed in Newport, as I indicated, in June of 1967 and didn't know any fishermen – I knew the Hall family. But I meet people pretty easy and there was a little reluctance on the part of the fishermen because, you know, I was the first, supposedly there to help them. "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Somebody from the government here to help you." So I had to overcome that a little bit, but...

One of the first guys I met was Terry Thompson. He was still in school but he fished commercially for salmon during the summers.

KJ: And he was at OSU, right?

BJ: I don't remember whether he was at OSU or University of Missouri then, but he came home in the summers to fish for salmon. Terry's now one of our Lincoln County Commissioners. Anyway, I met a bunch of people, I travelled the coast from Brookings to Astoria, and some of those people I met in those early days are still my friends today, I still communicate with them. It was kind of a shared experience – I didn't know much about fishing when I took the job, so it was kind of a crash course. I learned by talking to others and digesting that information. But there was a definite need there for someone in my capacity to work with the fishermen in an educational capacity. And we filled a void that was probably pretty useful to the industry, overall.

MD: Yeah, you blazed a trail that other Extension agents blazed a hundred years ago, back to the 1910s, they were going out as a college guy trying to tell the farmers how to do their business.

BJ: Yep, same concept.

MD: Same concept, but you overcame that obviously.

BJ: I guess from the OSU standpoint the interesting thing is that my hiring preceded Sea Grant by a couple of years, so OSU was off to a running start by the time the Sea Grant program came around. And once we got Sea Grant money, then we were able to hire Extension agents and specialists in other places on the coast. And ultimately we ended up with agents in Astoria, Tillamook, myself here in Newport, Coos Bay area, and the Brookings/Crescent City area, with a complement of specialists mostly in Corvallis and at the Marine Science Center. I think that running start that my early hiring gave OSU really provided them with the impetus to get some of that Sea Grant money that they might not have gotten as early as they got it, because we were off and running.

MD: Yeah, because the Sea Grant, as far as OSU, the date is '71, I believe?

BJ: '71, yeah.

MD: So what do you consider to be some of your major accomplishments while working with the Sea Grant and working with industry?

BJ: One of the things that I was called on to do, Mike, the industry really wasn't very well represented in the political arena when I got here. And I'm not a very good public speaker, but I learned that it was going to be very important for me to take on their interests in a public forum whenever that time arose. And over the years I did a pretty good job of that, and today I'm just darn proud that others in the industry have picked the ball up and run with it. You know, Terry's a county commissioner here, Jeff Feldner is on the Pacific Fishery Management Council. One of the good young fishermen, Kurt Cochran, is on the North Pacific Fishery Advisory Panel. Paul Stannard, a local fisherman, was on the Alsea Falls Creek Hatchery Research Program Advisory Group. A lot of these guys have taken a leadership role in the community, certainly much more so than was in effect when I got here in '67. So I'm proud of the fact that they've stepped up to the plate and said, "we understand that we need to take a leadership role," and they did it.

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I'm just darn proud of all the young kids that have done an exceptional job in the fishing industry. I worked with their grandpas when I got here. Bill Pettis is a boat builder, and he fished a little bit when I got here, and I started working with his son Mike. And Mike now is one of the top fishermen in the port and Mike's son Tony-

KJ: And now I work with him.

BJ: Yeah, and now Kaety works with him. So there's at least three generations there who, between Kaety and I, we worked with family members in the fishing industry. And it's satisfying to see how much success they have met with over the years. I'm not saying I had a whole lot to do with it, but hopefully someplace there, I gave them a tip along the way someplace that might have gotten them...

MD: Well, the industry has gone through a lot of changes in those forty years.

BJ: Huge. Huge.

MD: And you were a major part of that. Now you are also involved on a personal basis in the fisheries industry-

BJ: [laughs] OSU hired a professor by the name of Barry Fisher back in 1969, once again pre-Sea Grant. But Barry was a decorated Vietnam War veteran, had come out of the service and gone to Harvard. He graduated from Harvard, began a commercial fishing business on the East Coast and decided that, when he heard about this commercial fishing specialist job here at OSU, decided he'd take it. So the university hired him. He was a high energy sort of guy and one of the first projects he got involved in was a little salmon trolling project using small boats using outboards, where he attached a hydraulic pump to the top of an outboard engine and supplied power to hydraulic gurdies that pulled in lines that you used to troll for salmon. Most of the dories prior to that time had been hand cranks – let it down by hand and pull it up by hand. So Barry was looking for three or four people to test his prototype and asked me if I was interested. And I said, "well yeah, I'd be interested."

So beginning in 1970, I bought a dory and an engine, and Barry installed the hydraulic pump on this engine, and that's how I got started in commercial fishing. I think I fished small boat for three or four years, and then I bought a little bigger boat that I could stay out overnight in, and then I bought a little bigger boat. And all the time I was fishing weekends and vacations.

Finally I thought, "you know, I really like this, I'd like to do it more than just weekends and vacations." So I went to my boss at the time, Ken Hildebrand, and said, "Ken, I may need some help here, but I'd like your support in my application to the university to take leave without pay for three months out of every year, so I could fish commercially." So Ken thought about it for a while and he said, "well, yeah. You're learning as you go," which I certainly was. "You can help others through what you learn by fishing." So he backed me up. I think that request went all the way up to President Jensen, who was president of the university at that time. And as far as I know, nobody else in Extension had ever done that. And I got my three month's leave.

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And then, several years later, I ended up taking five months leave over a seven month period. So from the first of May through whatever seven months is, I'd have five months leave without pay and have to work a couple months during that period. And that's the way I ended my career at OSU. And during that fishing time, I not only fished locally, but in the early '80s I got started in Alaska. I had a brother up there fishing and my best friend here, Spike Jones, was fishing, and they talked me into coming up. So we bought a boat and I started my Alaska fishing career, and I eventually sold my interests down here and spent the last – since about 1983, all my fishing has been in Alaska. I'm currently part owner of two boats up there that fish for black cod, halibut, all the crab species; both these boats, one of them is eighty-four feet and one of them is one-hundred and four feet. So they're multi-purpose, big vessels that can take the winter weather up there.

MD: Where are they based at?

BJ: One's based at Kodiak and one's based at Dutch Harbor. That's kind of, in a nutshell, my fishing career.

MD: The boats got bigger and the responsibilities got bigger.

KJ: Yeah, I always say, as I grew up and got older, the boats did too. That's sort of how it worked for me. There were small boats when I was small and they just kept getting bigger.

BJ: Yep.

MD: Well, your career with OSU Extension spanned decades, so your other major highlights maybe? There was something to do with survival suits?

BJ: Oh there's a lot of highlights along the way. I don't remember what year it was, but I saw an article in the *Fishermen's News* about a new safety device that was available to the industry called a survival suit. So as soon as I saw that I thought, "this is something that I should know more about." So I made a couple calls and ran into a guy who was a wholesaler of these brand new survival suits in Seattle. In the meantime, one of the local marine supply stores had purchased one for sale and got a lot of interest among fishermen, and I think it was between three- and four-hundred dollars, but what price a life? I mean, to have these on a boat available to you if something ever happened, you can't put a price on that. But talking to my friend in Seattle he said, "oh, I can beat that price. If you order a bunch, we can probably get the price down to a little over a hundred bucks a piece." So I started taking orders from guys and pretty soon I got an order of twenty-five and called the guy, and he said, "yeah, I can have them there next week." Down they came.

In the meantime, the marine supply dealer found out what I was doing, got a little irate because I was certainly undercutting him. But it was a piece of survival equipment that was imperative we get these on the boats. And a lot of fishermen at three-hundred or three-hundred-fifty bucks weren't going to buy them. A hundred bucks, yes. So I think, initially, I would guess I probably purchased close to three-hundred survival suits for not only fishermen here in Newport, but up and down the coast. Kaety can probably tell you some true-life stories about how they have impacted people; I think that in the third or fourth year that fishermen had them, there was a big storm here and somebody survived for thirty hours in a suit when he might otherwise have perished. So it's just one of the many things that I got involved with along the line that, I think, helped the industry and maybe saved a life or two. And pissed some people off locally because I undercut them price-wise, but I felt it was important enough that that was not even a consideration.

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MD: Well there's a second generation of Marine Extension Service in the family, and I'd like to hear a little bit about Kaety's experience. So your position here at Lincoln County carries on the tradition of your dad. And this office, even the very desk that you work at, I understand?

KJ: I do, yeah. In fact, when I got here – so Dad was really lucky enough to work with Jenny Goblirsch, who was a Marine Extension agent, and they worked very closely together. And I replaced Jenny when she retired, so Jenny was sort of the person between us. And Jenny had Dad's desk kind of in storage but saved, with his pictures still in the drawer and all this stuff. And so when I got here, I went and found it in storage and hauled it up the stairs and brought it back in.

I was sort of called to Extension work because I started doing marine education – really working with K-12, teaching kids about whales and all that stuff – and I began to see a lot of issues coming forward. The year 2000 was a major groundfish, federally declared groundfish disaster, which hit trawl communities and trawl families really really hard in Oregon and Washington and California. And I graduated in 2003, so we were right in the middle of that as I graduated. And those issues sort of continued; we hit a second wave of salmon disasters after that. And so as I was doing my marine education thing, I kept feeling drawn to come back to the fishing community in a way.

And then when Jenny retired, they opened up the position but I couldn't apply for it because I did not have my master's degree yet; it was a slow process working on it, which I'm still working on. So I couldn't apply. And then the second time, when they couldn't find anybody to fill the position, they dropped the master's requirement. I applied for the position and I still to this day kind of don't know why I was hired. I really think Jay Rasmussen, who was the Sea Grant program leader at the time, I think he obviously saw something in me, but took a huge risk. Huge, huge risk. I mean, I was twenty-four years old, I had really only been out of school a couple of years, I had never done work like this before. The interview process was two and a half days long. I was also pregnant with my daughter and he knew that, so he knew I'd be taking leave soon. And I was with candidates that had done work in fisheries – not necessarily with fishermen – but in fisheries, for years, had master's degrees, a couple of Ph.D. candidates. So yeah, I sometimes see Jay and am like, "you were crazy. Why did you do that?" Very glad he did, but a big risk.

I really enjoy the industry and I think that, as Dad was talking about the story of survival suits and seeing the ad in the newspaper or the magazine or whatever, and going after it, that's Extension work, and that's what's exciting. Yeah, I have some things I have to do for my responsibilities for OSU and Extension otherwise, but most of the job is that kind of stuff, is seeing an opportunity, seeing an issue and trying to get in front of it. Trying to think about what the industry needs or even, sometimes, what they think they don't need, but that maybe you think they do need, because they're not always supportive of everything I try to do. But a lot of times it's seeing issues coming down the track and trying to get in front of them. I always sort of joke that I'm carrying the industry behind me sometimes, I'm trying to sort of drag them into things that I know they need to be involved in. Maybe they don't see those issues coming up in the way that I do.

MD: I see that in some of the OSU Extension publications that you were involved with, like tsunamis and that type of thing. Tell us a bit about that research and how you come up with these ideas, and that whole process of doing an OSU Extension publication.

KJ: Well, I have to say, I don't do a whole lot of Extension publications – it's kind of one of those, like, "should be doing more of those." At the beginning of my career, I feel like I had more time and now I get pretty busy within. But as I find topics that really don't have education around them, like as OSU itself is really investing in tsunami research and that kind of stuff. And I had a Sea Grant colleague, Pat Corcoran in Astoria, that really does the public outreach piece of tsunamis. He said, "Kaety, do you think that the fishing community knows what to do?" And I said, "I don't know, let's ask them." "Do you know what to do?" "Well, we're gonna run our boats out." "Well, what if your boat's in port?" "We're gonna run it out." "OK, that's a problem."

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So just trying to understand what the industry knows about certain things and getting, sometimes, scientific data that tells us what they actually should be doing. And so in that case, some of them might have time to run their boat out, depending on where they're at. But a lot of them, if their boat's here and we have a local event and the earthquake happens first, they likely do not have time to get their boats out to deep water. So that was really the education message of that publication. And some other work, it's just like, what do you do with your vessel? What do you do when you're at sea? What do you do when you're not at sea?

MD: I've seen a video of how to buy tuna.

KJ: Oh yeah, that was fun. That was really fun.

BJ: That was a good video.

KJ: Yeah, in fact that was the video that stirred up some controversy, because it was right, I think, when our organization was struggling with professional quality videos, and do we want these YouTube things or do we want really nice productions? And I said, "I think a YouTube audience is worth doing some stuff in. We can do a nice professional one, but let's try this." And phenomenal success, phenomenal success. In fact, after I did the video – which was actually sort of against orders, but I did it anyways – I thought, "oh my God, I'm gonna have to tell them I did this video, and I was sort of told not to. What am I gonna do?"

So I put it on my personal Facebook page and was like "Whee! In the morningtime, by the time I told them I did this, I'll have lots of posts, I'll have lots of people that liked it. And then it'll be like 'look at this!'" And so, by the next morning, when I got to work, I was like "here's the day I'm telling them I did it," my director actually got a call from the national Sea Grant office who, through all of my different Facebook friends, had worked its way back to the national office and they were like, "this is amazing! We need to do more of these! What a great thing!" So I was saved.

But I guess the moral of that story is knowing your audience. And I think that's the biggest thing, both with his [Bob's] job and mine, is knowing your audience. And for me it's not just the fishing community, it's knowing the larger community. It's knowing seafood consumers, it's knowing the political arena, it's knowing scientists. It's knowing a whole bunch of different audiences and seeing how you can bring those audiences together around pieces of information or around the issues.

MD: The needs of the industry have changed drastically in the forty years between your father's beginning and yours, so today what are some of the major industry issues that you have been dealing with?

KJ: I think the major one that I have worked on, which when I started was not even mentioned – like, in my interview they didn't say it one time and then it quickly took over my life in the next ten years – was marine renewable energy development in the ocean. So OSU itself, who has some research interests in that, and then private companies that want to put, whether it be wave-energy projects or offshore wind projects in the ocean. Which a lot of times creates conflict for the fishing communities, it's where they make a living. That's been a major part of my life. And not doing the research on it, but really working with communities on trying to create process, on how we talk about these things, how we make decisions. And then where in the ocean might we be able to put some of this that's of less impact to the fishing community. It's a major piece of my work.

And a piece of what I do, which is a lot different from him [Bob] – I think he did it informally and maybe that might have been where I learned it from – is running public process; designing public process and running it. Allowing a truly sort of bottom up approach to solving problems. And one of the major pieces of work that I did, and I just finished it up two years ago, is trying to site or trying to find a location for OSU to have the nation's first wave energy grid-connected test facility, where they will put wave energy devices in the ocean. So these are devices for private companies that OSU will be testing, and the energy will be cabled back to shore. And so that was, for me, a two-year project creating a process basically across the entire coast, looking at where we can put this thing. And my good friend Dr. Belinda Batten was the engineering head, looking at, from an engineering perspective, what makes sense. But I was really looking at it from a community perspective, what makes sense. And so designing public process, public meetings, stakeholder groups, up and down the entire coast.

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And we finally got to Newport after two years, finally found a location in Newport that made sense from an engineering perspective and that made sense for the fishing community. It was an amazing day. We came to the local fishing group that works on that stuff and they basically said, "alright, we want to support the research," and rolled out their maps and started drawing boxes of where they thought that could go. And that day, I think, really illustrates the work not just that I did but the decades and decades and decades that OSU has invested in the Sea Grant program and in Extension. Because I don't think that would have happened just with me working on it a couple years. That was really a culmination of his [Bob's] work and Jenny Goblirsch's work and mine, and all those relationships built not just with us as individuals but with OSU as a whole.

MD: Yeah, it is kind of a legacy thing and it is so important. Now the Hatfield Marine Science Center is celebrating its fiftieth this year, both of you guys had relationships with the Hatfield Center from early on. Today do you still work closely with the Hatfield Center?

KJ: I do. And actually my partner Mark works there, so I work very closely with people over there. [laughs] Mostly my work is two-fold, one with the scientists that are over there – Waldo Wakefield and Sarah Henkel and others that do work that either are about fishing... So Waldo does work on gear types and that type of stuff in the trawl industry. Or people that do work that can affect fishing or that maybe need to just charter a fishing vessel and don't really know who to talk to about that. And then I think the second part of my work is I do a lot of work with the visitor's center there. So there are several exhibits that I have put together and got into the visitors center for Marine Science Day. And I use that as a way to talk about fishing to the public.

MD: And Bob, you were there when the place was basically just first being built?

BJ: Well Mike, I actually spent a summer down here working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service while I was going to school, at the old OSU Marine Science Center lab, which most people don't even realize existed. And that was located at an area up the bay where Sawyer's Landing is now located, just down bay from Sawyer's Landing.

KJ: I didn't know this.

BJ: It was the old OSU Fisheries Research Lab. And there were – Willie Brees, who was an OSU fisheries prof, shellfish prof, was the head of that lab. And there was two or three people there. So I'm connected from way back. And actually, after the Science Center was built, we had marine education specialist Don Giles, who did a wonderful job working with school kids from the Marine Science Center, and I worked with Don a lot on programs for school kids relating to fisheries and the marine sciences.

And I should say, before we get totally off the topic, that Kaety really did a good job in pulling together individuals from all walks of life to try to put this whole ocean renewable energy resources package together; trying to find a spot for OSU to situate their buoys offshore. And I should also give credit to the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, in this area, who formed an advisory committee to the commissioners to deal with issues like this. So Kaety, through that group locally and through other groups in Astoria, over in Tillamook, and Coos Bay and Port Orford, has really done a good job in keeping all of us posted on what's going on with this thing, locally and nationally.

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MD: It is the future.

KJ: It is.

BJ: Well it's not only that, it's alternative uses of the ocean. It's not only ocean energy, it takes in a whole wide spectrum of potential uses out there that, forty years ago, we never thought about.

KJ: Yeah, the ocean is not a final frontier anymore; lots of people use it.

BJ: That's right.

MD: Well, there's family life, which we've talked a little bit about. But a little bit about the family: when did you settle, raising kids and everything like that here on the coast?

BJ: I met my wife Robin in 1979, I guess. And I'd been living here for twelve years at that point in time. She brought into the marriage two daughters by a previous marriage. And then we had Kaety, and so we raised three kids. Actually, fairly late in life, we took in a little guy who was a sixth grader, who at that time was living in the juvenile center, and gave him a place to stay and gave him a little direction and discipline. His name is Eddie Townsend. Eddie could have fallen off either side of the fence. Fortunately he fell off the good side and he is now the head basketball coach at Toledo High School and a teacher at Siletz. So we provided some direction and advice and some discipline for Eddie over the course of his middle school and high school-

KJ: I think we still do.

BJ: And still do. [laughs] But anyway, a great place to raise kids. You asked Kaety earlier about Extension and her life, she was totally totally immersed in Extension 4-H obedience classes with her dogs over the years.

KJ: Yeah, I did do that.

BJ: And one of the things that she loved to do the most, each year in Lincoln County we have a county fair. And so both she and her two sisters, they loved to enter things in the county fair, because the winner gets a blue ribbon.

KJ: And some money at the time.

BJ: And the money. Kaety particularly would come out of there with fifteen or twenty blue ribbons. I remember one time we raised some gladiolas in our yard, which is right on the coast – not a good place to raise flowers. And we entered those glads in the fair, there were maybe a dozen categories, and Kaety took-

KJ: Every one of them.

BJ: I think she took the grand prize and all the blue ribbons in all the dahlia categories. Ladies from the Seal Rock Garden Club-

KJ: Quite dismayed.

BJ: -who prided themselves in winning those categories couldn't believe that she had done that.

KJ: Now to follow up, I will say that many years later – you [Bob] had been retired like ten years when I took this job. When I was cleaning out Jenny's closet, which was actually your closet, in my office, I found an entire box of fair balloons and a check from the fair that apparently the ladies downstairs had given to you to give to me, and you just put them in a closet. And I found them.

BJ: [laughs] I hadn't heard that story before.

KJ: I laughed really hard and I ran the check downstairs to Patty Mann, who had been his secretary and mine, and asked, "Is this still good? Can I still cash this?" She was like, "Oh my God! Where did you find that?"

MD: Well you were recently recognized by the Oregon Coast Council for the Arts as the Arts Council Community Legend of 2014, a huge honor. Highlights of your community service over the years? I mean, there's community service through Extension, but then also you had quite a bit of community service yourself within the community.

BJ: You know Mike, when you live in a community you really like – and I really like Newport, the entire time I've been here – then you'd like to do something to improve that community for others who live here. So early on I recognized that community service was pretty important, not only to my Extension position but to me personally, just to give back to the community that had given me so much. So I got involved in a lot of community activities over the years. I've been on the county budget committee and county planning committee, a lot of different local groups.

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I got involved with the boosters club here in Newport, which funds primarily athletics, but also rally squad and choir and band. And about that point in time I got involved, my very best friend Spike Jones, who happened to be an ex-OSU wrestler and a commercial fisherman, said, "you know, I'd really like you to take on a project to raise money to build a new running track for Newport High School." He said, "I'm gonna make that one of my priority projects as president of the boosters." So, I don't like to ask people for money, but I agreed to do it for Spike. And we raised a little over \$300,000 in about a six month period of time, built a new running track, and the surprising thing to me was that, while the initial impetus was to provide this for the kids, it was really interesting to see how many community members used that new track for running and walking, before and after school and on weekends.

Also through boosters, we renovated the high school gymnasium, we started a little endowment fund for the boosters that started out with donations from three or four individuals of \$5,000. That endowment fund is now, I think it's over \$800,000 in the last ten or twelve years. So yeah, I've been involved in a lot of different things in the community. Helped start the Little League basketball program, way back when I first got here.

MD: Yeah, early on you received the Distinguished Service Award for the county.

BJ: That was probably because of the Little League basketball, and I helped the Boy Scouts out a lot, when I first moved here. So it's just a matter of liking the community and trying to give back.

MD: So how does being a grandfather suit you?

BJ: Wonderful. Wonderful. Kaety just had another little baby-

KJ: In July, yeah six months.

BJ: Six months ago. So that's seven grandkids, and with Eddie it's eight.

MD: You have a young family as well.

KJ: I do.

MD: Tell us a little bit about it.

KJ: Between me and my partner Mark, we have a sixteen year old boy, and then we have a nine year old girl and a four year old boy, and then a six month old baby boy. So life's busy. But like I said, I really enjoy this community and Mark's a transplant, he came here from the valley. And it's been really fun getting someone involved in the coast. I always enjoy that; I always enjoy people that aren't from here learning about coastal life. Whether that be new people that move here that haven't lived on the coast before – we were just at a crab feed this weekend and sitting down with a bunch of people, it was a charity event for the Maritime Museum, and everybody's got out their crab crackers and little scissors, and I just started ripping it open with my teeth, which is the way he [Bob] showed me how to do it. You just use your teeth! You don't need a crab cracker, you just use your fingers. And everybody was like, "what are you doing!" And I'm like, "well, this is the way you eat crab! You don't need a tool! You use your fingers." Well, you might use the side of the house to get the shell off, but other than that it's fine.

But yeah, life's busy. One of the things I really enjoy about working for Extension is that, even though I feel like it's a big part of my life and it takes up a lot of time, I think it's a job that's really great for people with families. Really, really wonderful. Really flexible time. Yeah, I have a meeting tonight at 7:00, so I'm not going to put the kids to bed. But at the same time, I'm going to volunteer at my daughter's school on Friday. So really a wonderful job for people with families, because it's flexible.

And like I said earlier, building relationships with people, that's you. That's you. I just don't that for work, it's real, it's genuine. And so all those fishing families I know, all those community members, those are relationships that really my whole family benefits from. We have a whole network of people, of community, that we're a part of. And I think that's really wonderful, not just for me, but for my children as well.

MD: Well, it's been a true honor to be able meet two generations of Extension on the coast here: a star from the early '60s and a new woman in the field. Are there any other reflections that either of you would like to add as far as what you would like to give back to the Beaver Nation that's going to be viewing this?

[1:10:11]

BJ: One of the stories, Mike, that I didn't share with you, was when Kaety first went to work down here, after she had graduated, she came to me one day and she said, "Dad, Jenny's retiring and I think I'll apply for your old job." And I said to her, "Kaety, you know, you probably need more experience. So I guess I would recommend that you didn't do it." And she said, "Oh, ok. Well, thanks for that." And little did I know that they didn't find a good candidate the first go-around, so they readvertised and she decided to apply, against my best judgement, and got the job. So what's a dad know?

KJ: And I guess what I would say leaving is that, to me, OSU has always been bigger than just Corvallis. And I think maybe people that spend time in Corvallis, and that's their campus experience, that's what they know. And I had a wonderful time on campus, but OSU is bigger than that; it's bigger than Corvallis. It's everywhere, it's everywhere. It's on the coast here, it's with a lot of the fishermen we serve, and it touches people's lives even when they are no longer in Corvallis or no longer in that academic setting. It's everywhere. And I think for the people and the fishermen and the communities that I work with, it touches people's lives in ways that I think is beyond just the way you think about an academic setting. You think about a university, most of us have some pretty boxed-up notions of what that means. And I think how OSU weaves its way into lives and communities is a lot bigger than, I think, people realize.

BJ: And that's thanks to Extension.

KJ: Yes! That's Extension. And I think now with Ecampus and Open Campus and a lot of those different initiatives, I think that the original Extension idea is now expanding into audiences that are bigger and bigger.

MD: Well, it's been an honor, and on behalf of the OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, I thank you both for your reflections, and Go Beavs.

KJ: Thank you, Go Beavers!

[1:12:39]

