

Edited Text to Speech

AR: This is Alexis Reverse, interviewing Lew Lombardo on September 2 2020, over zoom as part of the oral history project that is being produced by the Seymour library and the Cayuga Museum in collaboration with the New York heritage site. So, Lou, where and when were you born?

LL: Okay, I was born in Auburn, New York in 1945.

AR: Can you tell me a little bit about your family? Did you have any siblings? What was life like growing up?

LL: Okay, yeah, well, let's see my family, my mother and father and back then we were very close to my grandparents. My grandparents lived about four houses away in the house where my mother was born, and she always said, My father's family lived about four blocks away. But in a lot of ways, that was quite a distance. I'll get back to that in a minute. But, and I had, at the time, one brother, but then I had six years after I was born, we had a second, my brother, John. And then I had a sister, Francine, that was born nine years after me. So there were four children in the family, and my mother and father. Mother was when I was little, she worked a little bit. She worked as a secretary, she worked in the county treasurer's office, she worked in some of the businesses, factories around town as a secretary, bookkeeper. And then when I got around school age, I think she was home most of the time to work full time. And my father worked various jobs. He was in World War Two. So from 1942 to 1945. And so he wasn't really here, but especially for my older brother when he was born, which was probably pretty common for a lot of the people born during the war with one parent away and one parent here. I know my mother, we have pictures, my older brother, saluting my father. He was basically saluting a picture, because he hadn't really seen my father. When you know, when he was little, until he Well, maybe once in a while when he was home on leave, but not very often during those years. So it was very different. When I was born, the war was just about over. And the war in Japan was just about to end because that was 1945. And August was the bombing of Hiroshima. And that's just after I was born. So the European war when my father was, was over. So I had both parents pretty much most of the time. And it was pretty, a pretty stable world back then.

Growing up, and I think most of the kids that were my age grew up in a very similar kind of environment we and Auburn back in. Oh, sure. Before the 40s back in the early 1900s, when immigrants came over from Europe, they usually settled in neighborhoods where people came from the same country as they did. So my mother's family was Polish, and we grew up in the Polish neighborhood. My father's family was Italian. As I said, they were about four blocks away. But it was a whole different world. That was an Italian section of town. And city was really divided up that way, ethnically, but it wasn't in a negative way. I mean to think he grew up with, and growing up in, the Polish community growing up. And the Polish church, St. Hyacinth church, was, was founded by the Polish people back over 100 years ago. When they came, they kept a lot of traditions and they tried to teach us Polish when we were kids in school. Of course, we weren't very good at learning yet. But you know, they still made the attempt and we

had a lot of Polish celebrations and picnics, school picnics. Back then they were church picnics today we have the same thing at the same church but now they call it a Polish picnic. And the Italians have their picnic in the summertime, you know, community wide thing. It used to be St Francis picnic, now it's an Italian festival. So those things still continue in many ways. And so our parents, my parents, they were the first generation born in this country. Because their parents were, my mother's parents were born in Poland, before World War One. And my mother was born in this country just after World War One, in 1920, and my father was born in 1920s, same way.

So that there, was a lot of different things that contributed to life back then. I know my mother and father both went through, they were just young kids nine years old, when the depression, that great depression, hit in 1929. And so they went through that depression, then they went through, you know, World War Two. My father as, as a soldier in the service. My mother at home with all the other wives who were, had husbands in World War Two. So there was a whole community that developed around, you know, those experiences that people had. And growing up in the 50s, when I was, let's say, five in 1950, and starting school at the St. Hyacinth's, what the interesting thing what we had, you know, probably 30 kids in our kindergarten class. And probably 25 of those finished, when we graduated from the eighth grade, there might have been a few additions that came in as people moved into the area. But again, it was a very stable group, most of us lived in pretty much the same neighborhood, we played in the same places together. For lots and lots and lots of years. We still have friends from that time period.

And it was a good time to grow up, because today, they would call, you know, the way we were in a kind of negative way. They told them like the free range kids, kids that, you know, nobody's supervising. Well, that was the way it was, we would leave our house in the morning in, the summertime especially. And we'd be gone. And then we come home at lunchtime and we'd be gone, then we come home at dinnertime, and we'd be gone and we come home before it got dark. And so, you know, you would just make things yourself, you would do things you would organize things. And so we learned a lot of skills doing that, because we were more independent, and we didn't have fear of going around the city or going anywhere really in town

. Downtown was much bigger than it is now. A lot more buildings, gosh it looked like a big city. since we were little kids. Even though it was a, you know, small town, a little bigger than it is now. But you, there were alleyways you could run through and you know, get lost and playgrounds, there were tons of them with people supervising the playground. So it was a, there were a lot of things. It was a very as we call it, today's world kind of a child centered world for the children. And people really took a lot of effort to do things for kids. The Polish community and, this is the same in all the ethnic neighborhoods, they would have published people started organizations or social organizations, athletic organizations to support their community. So they had tons of activities for kids. To do, so we had the bowling alleys at the Polish home and the Polish Falcons. We had gymnasiums there, we had basketball, we had summer programs, we had trips to Rochester, Buffalo, to compete against different Polish schools in different communities in New York State. So there was a lot of effort given to you know, raising children

and the families participated. It wasn't just, you know, for the kids. So they were the directors of these things. They organized them. They kept them going. So we had a really busy, busy time as kids.

And it wasn't not because, you know, we didn't, we organize a lot of stuff ourselves. But then there were those things that from our community were organized. And they weren't necessarily community wide. Although they did have Little League then, I didn't play baseball. When I tried out, first time I ever tried out for baseball at pony league, I went and it was the end of my career. I asked the coaches, "Think I'll make the team?", you know, they divided us up. And I still remember this. He said, "Are you trying out for my team?". I said that's it. He doesn't even know I'm here. Goodbye. And so I never played that kind of baseball again. But I played sports in high school afterwards. So that's part of growing up in Auburn, lots to do. Very Stable, things to do by yourself. Things to do that were organized. Lots of support, lots of stability. In today's world, that's something that's often lacking stability and support and lots of connections in terms of friends, family, because we had a lot of cousins. You know, my father had 10 brothers and sisters and his family and they had lots of children, most of his brothers and sisters. My mother had a brother and a sister, and they had children. So we get lots of cousins, all living very, you know, within the five block radius, for the most part. So you knew lots of people lots of time, and that was also a very important part of growing up, then something again, that's that's missing in the world today. For many, many children.

AR:What was school like for you?

LL:Well, school was, again, it was about a block away from where I live, so it was easy to get to. When I first started elementary school, we were in the parochial schools. Auburn had lots and lots of Catholic schools, again, they were started very early on at the same school my mother went to. I had some of the same teachers my mother had, when I was in the parochial school, that also happened. And when I went to high school, again, it was can tell there was a lot of, you know, stability and in Auburn during those years. And it was, was a school, you know, church school, St. Hyacinth's primarily, as I said, Polish kids, that was one of my classmates we used to when I returned to Auburn, once in a while there were a bunch of us that would get together for luncheon.

And I you know, we didn't know all these things that were happening to kids back then you didn't, nobody would talk about him or ask about her. But she said when she was going to start kindergarten, her problem was that she didn't speak English. She grew up and mother and father were Polish, they spoke Polish in the house, she spoke Polish in the house, and she didn't even know how to read or speak much English, if you can believe that. She's five years old. So fortunately for her, she said one of the nuns from there talked about enrolling her said okay, you come over and to the the convent where the nuns lived, and I'll teach you English so that you're prepared to go into school and then learn, spend, a lot of time with her before she even enrolled, teaching her English. I mean, that's the kind of support that was there. And, you know, the kind of environments people were coming from.

And some of the nuns were a little, like, in those days, especially a little brutal, and I remember one of my good friends, the nun was kind of beating him up in a closet and hitting him and one of the nuns would hit you with a strap and rulers if you got too much out of line. But again, it was that was, you know, part of the world that people didn't really think about something that shouldn't be done. Nowadays that I know most of the churches, and church schools, even from coming from Rome, you know, corporal punishment is supposed to be out, not something that they do anymore. But anybody that was my age or even older or younger, would have those kinds of stories. But it was a good educational process in spite of that kind of fear factor that they would put in.

And again, the school provided lots of activities in our school yard. We had, when I was going to school there, they had a tennis court in the back. You could play badminton, you could play shuffleboard, you could play basketball. They had in that small little, what's now a parking lot, room for, I don't know, how many sports and we were pretty good. I think back on it, about, you know, boys and girls playing things together. So we played tennis together, we played badminton together. We do other kinds of things. It wasn't so much the gender segregation that people talk about at that time. I don't know what the reason was for that. Maybe because we were all in the same neighborhood and all knew each other and our families. So it was more a normal kind of thing to do.

But the education was, I don't know why for everybody, but I know for me it was a powerful thing. I remember some of the lessons and I think this was in sixth grade or seventh grade. That kind of shaped the way I did work later when I became a professor much later. The nun was showing us, you know, there's these pictures that they use for psychological testing. She wasn't doing psychological testing, but she was showing us the idea of perspective. So if you look at these pictures, one way you see a vase, if you keep looking at the picture, all of a sudden you see two faces facing each other. And so what perspective made a difference? You know, what was the foreground? What was the background? And that was something that I always use in all the kinds of work that I've done years later.

And I remember another thing about when they were teaching arithmetic that I always liked. I liked it when we got, we were a little older, and we were doing word problems, there would be a problem, and you had to use arithmetic to figure out the answer to the problem. But it wasn't stated as just the numbers but it described a situation. Somebody went to store, they bought this and they had no weight so much, and how much did they have to spend that (etc.), and you had to use, you know, figure it out. That stuff I just love. And that became, again, something that was part of how I did my work much later, trying to learn problems.

And they had their strange things, again because most of the nuns were Polish, many of them were from Poland who came to the United States. They were older. And at that time, because it was, you know, Cold War with Russia, and Russia, taking over Poland and World War Two and all the problems that went on there. And I remember it was, I think it was Nikita Khrushchev was the premier. I can't remember what word they used back then, but he was the leader of the Soviet Union. And he was somebody we were supposed to hate, because what he had, what

the Soviet Union had done to Poland. And there was a picture that of him, they put up on a board, we had to walk by and spit on the picture. Just to show that, you know we didn't know what the hell that meant, we didn't know what that was all about, but yet, we did it just because they told us to do it. And if we didn't, something might happen to us. So we just kept doing it. But it was that kind of, you know, a little bit in the atmosphere.

But on the whole, most of the nuns were pretty good and helpful. And I remember when we were having lunch there, five or six of us that would get together, and we'd talk about the nuns, and we all had pretty much these were the good ones, these were the bad ones. And, you know, we all saw the same thing. We all felt the same thing about the same teachers, but they really did give you a good education. And we were also because it was part of the church in the school, we would go to Mass a lot. We were of course all altar boys: served the Mass, we were assistants, and then when back then it was in Latin. So we had to learn Latin, and how to read Latin and say all the prayers for the Mass in Latin as you responded. And that was really helpful because when we got to high school, one of the first classes you would take back in those days was Latin, first year Latin. And I already knew some Latin, I knew the words, I knew the language, and what I learned was I had so much already that what I was learning in the Latin class, I could apply to the words I already learned from being an altar boy serving mass they learned in Latin, so that gave me a good good background. And that was really helpful.

So I always liked languages, which is something that I picked up. I guess partly because of learning the Latin and trying to learn Polish, which I wasn't very good at. But then when I got my, went to college, I got my degree, was in Spanish, which of course is derived from Latin so it all kind of connects. But it was, it was you know, a good place to go. And again, it was close by so I didn't have to drive or anything, just cut through people's yards and get to the school, block away. And you know, we did a lot of things together again as a community as the kids. Picnics at Owasco Lake, and when school led, out trips to Roseland Park and Canandaigua, which had an amusement park, much like they did in early Auburn when we were little kids up at Owasco Lake. So we get to take advantage of all of that. And most of the kids you know, in the community did, at least in our part of the community.

But that was one of the things also that was interesting. We didn't interact much with other churches, except in basketball, where they had CYO leagues for basketball. So the schools St. Hyacinth we played Holy Family or St. Aloysius, or St. Alphonsus, or St. Mary's, or the other schools had their schools and had their teams. And that was the only time we really got together with other churches, in a sense. So even though you were still divided, you had so much stability surrounding you in the school. But I always thought, you know, it's a good, they gave you a good preparation for what you were going to get into. And we took all the regular state exams and St. Hyacinth they would do that as well, wasn't just separate. So it was kind of integrated, but gave you a good preparation. And your parents were very supportive of that stuff. They would help and be involved in that.

So that was early education. Lots of good stuff to learn. Pretty good atmosphere to do it. At least for me, I don't know, I can't speak for everybody.

AR: Can you tell me a little bit about the different jobs you've had and experiences that came with them?

LL: Okay, let's see different jobs. My first? Well, when we were little kids, I just want to get back to that a little bit. One of the things around, I don't know, it seemed like people were responsive to kids, they wouldn't just tell them to get out or go away. And one of the first things I did, it wasn't really a job, but it was kind of like a job. I always liked reporters, newspapers, that kind of thing. And when our local newspaper *The Auburn Citizen* was printed, on, I think it was Dill Street, where the newspaper was, you could go up there and watch this print, the printing press operate. And it was a fantastic thing to watch as the paper got fit into the printers, and it was just incredible. Well, one of my friends and I, we were doing nothing that I think was on a Saturday or something. And we were wandering around looking for something to do, we ended up going into the newspaper. And we asked them, said "Can we do some work for you, you know, help you out in some way?" and they said, "Oh, why don't you go around to the stores and try to get information about sales?"

Now, they were just, they didn't want us to really do that, but they just gave us that assignment, said go out and do that. So we thought that was a big deal. So we went out, got a little pad and went to all the stores that were around town, lots of department stores in downtown Auburn not much anymore in 2020. But back then there were lots of things. So we'd go in and ask people, "What's on sale today?" And they'd tell us and we'd write down information. And we did that for a few hours, and then we went back to the newspaper and gave them our list. You know, they were very nice about it and said, "Oh geez, I remember I sent you out. Thanks a lot. We'll take this and use it." Of course we didn't get paid anything because we weren't really doing anything. But they kept us busy for a few hours. But that was kind of one of the first things I did.

And then when I was in high school, I was a Director at one of the playgrounds for a couple of years. My brother was Director a few years before me and then I got redirected on at Casey Park playground. And then, of course, I went off to college. In summers I would work in some of the local factories. I worked at the Sylvania plant in Seneca Falls, night shift, putting colors in color TVs that they did at that particular plant, part of it anyway, for summers to make money to go to college. And then I worked at Auburn Plastics down near Canoga Road in Auburn when that was there a couple of summers. And then I was in college and my first regular job was I did some practice teach- not practice, substitute teaching in public schools for three days: one day, I think at Central and two days at West High.

Before I started as a teacher, my first full time job was a teacher at Auburn prison. I always thought in the back of my head, just to kind of have something to fall back on because we didn't have a lot of money. You know, growing up. My father eventually worked for the post office. But he got a brain tumor when he was fairly young and died when he was 51. And my mother, as I said, did some secretarial jobs. We didn't have a lot, but so I was always concerned about that and wanted to make sure I had something that I could do. So I did when I was in college, getting my teaching credential, so I could teach if need be. And luckily I found through a whole bunch of circumstances a job teaching at Auburn prison, and that was in 1969, I started there, and I

worked there until 1970. There was a riot at Auburn prison in 1971, was Attica prison riot. You know you think in 2020, that policing and you know, criminal justice issues are big issues. What's going on now is nothing compared to what was going on then in '69, '68. There was so much happening.

So I got interested in criminal justice, and it was just starting, and I ended up going to graduate school at SUNY Albany when they had just started their graduate program in Criminal Justice. It was pretty much brand new in '71 I got started there- or '70, I think it started, and I started there in '72, and was there a couple of years doing graduate work, and then came back to Auburn prison as a teacher, again. I took a leave from my job for a couple years, came back, did the same thing I was doing before, but now I was also working on my doctoral dissertation. And by '77, I was getting kind of nowhere. I knew I wasn't going to be in administration in the prison system because I've learned in the [unclear] too much and I would have been too radical, and I never would have, it never would have happened.

So I ended up figuring the best way I could help in terms of criminal justice reform stuff would be through education, and so I ended up becoming a teacher and instruct- professor at Old Dominion University in Virginia. And I took that job, and I was there for about [pause] almost 40 years. And then I retired and moved back to Auburn after 40 years. So I've had a few jobs, and again, not a lot. Some factory work. And when I did my dissertation, my doctoral work, it was that studying correctional officers as workers, because I've had a good bit, I had under- tried to understand working life and people's working life. And here were people that nobody had ever really studied before, in a sense, and I've been learning about criminal justice issues, and how to studying from that perspective and about how things change over time. So how to bring that perspective in. So that became my focus.

And also in that process, I became in terms of my teaching and writing and research, as a professor, violence became a very important part of what I was doing, because I had gone through a lot seen a lot of that. And again, most people it's interpersonal violence that they have experience with, well, that wasn't where I hid. It wasn't like there was spouse abuse in my family or that we were abused as kids. That wasn't where my interest came from. It came from, you know, the atomic bomb was dropped two weeks after I was born. World War Two when I was even a little kid, when television at first started in the 50s, they would show, you know, what happened after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. There were TV shows about World War Two. There were TV shows about the Holocaust, there were things that I would see, that would make me, you know this is a little kid, you kind of wonder how can people do that to each other? You know, we were trying to learn about, you know, the Golden Rule and do unto others and all that stuff we were learning in the Catholic school, but yet, here's these examples of this horrific stuff going on. And then when I started working at the prison, we had the riots at the prison and there was a lot of violence going on in the communities. Think back to the late 60's. You know, there was a report on police violence in America. 1960's, 2020, same problem. So That was all around when I was in graduate school in Wisconsin. There were anti Vietnam War riots there. One of the buildings that I was I actually worked in, the math building was the subject of a bomb that blew up in that building not long after I had left it one day.

So I'd seen a lot of violence around, and when I got to the prison, there was the riot at Auburn, Attica Prison, riot. So violence became something that I was really interested in, studying and trying to understand. And then years later, I started to work on violence in the world of children, which became one of the things that I focused on for about the last 20 years, and we've gotten into a lot of advocacy work in that area, and participation, conferences and children's rights and things international as well as national. So it all kind of held together. And it was always, you know, trying to understand the world that's around you and what can you do to do that.

And luckily, I got- had very good training and, you know, my school days in Auburn, very good training. In my university days when I was, my first school was the University of Rochester, and then, as I said, I went to Wisconsin for a couple years, then Auburn Prison, then SUNY Albany, then Auburn prison, and then Old Dominion for 40 years, and now I'm retired. I still teach online courses now. One course this semester, and it deals with violence and children for the most part, because nobody else teaches that there. So I still do that every semester. So I do advocacy work relating to violence and children, especially corporal punishment of children and been doing that for a long, long time now. So that's kind of my career path, again, pretty stable. Most people, and especially in the world of colleges and universities, move around a lot. You know, they take a job one place, and then they take it up another place, and they're moving. And I found a place that I could do what I wanted to do, be involved in things that I wanted to be involved in important ways for the University. I just stayed there. So I had a lot of stability in my childhood, a lot of stability in my working life. So again, that's what I like, I guess, don't like a lot of chaos, which seems to be what we live in the world today, but had it back then as well.

AR: So what do you like about living in Auburn, and the surrounding Cayuga County area?

LL: Well, I like, I'm not a hot weather person, as you can tell from my background picture. And my zoom thing here. And so when I was in Virginia, where Old Dominion was in Norfolk was, you know, is there a long time, but I always came back up here in the summertime. Luckily, in that kind of job, you can, you can do that. Then less, you know, number of years, as they were doing a lot of distance learning I could even teach from here, I didn't have to be stuck in Norfolk in the heat and humidity, which I've never comfortable with. So I'd like to weather here. And I'd like that every fall. I don't have to worry about hurricanes is one of the things about living on the land coast, and especially in the south.

You know, if you own a house, which I did, all you worry about is is it going to blow away are trees gonna fall on. And you know, every year it's the same problem and the flooding being on the coast. And Norfolk was right at sea level, almost like New Orleans. So the floods, even from just a heavy rainstorm would happen a lot. And I never liked it. But I like the place where I work. That's the reason I stayed and the people that I worked with. Were good folks. So once I got back there and you know, middle of August, that was fine. I could deal with the weather. Until again, it got around to me and he came in. So I love, I like the weather here. I like the change of seasons that we have. One of the first things I found when I moved to Norfolk because it's so low and it's sea level and it's flat. It took me about a few months to figure out that what I was missing. And what I was missing was the, when you're in places like Central New York with all

the hills and things that are around us. There's not as much sky. It's hard to believe this but as much sky as you see when you're in a very flat area. And so I think that that sense of just wide open flatness with not much change in terrain. I didn't like, I like the variety of the community up here and the geography up here.

And also it's, it's not you know, we have our problems as they do everywhere. But they're not the same as you get in, in the south. When I had was publishing my first book, one of the editors, I'd send it to sent me a note. He says, he's, I can see from your last name, you're not one of the FFVs. And I said, What the heck, I had no idea what he meant. He was from Virginia, who was from Charlottesville. And I had no idea what he meant being a northerner from Central New York. So I was asking some people and they said, Oh, FFVs are first families of Virginia. The implication being are your name is Italian. So you weren't in the boats that came over to settle in Virginia, the first families of Virginia, which is kind of a weird thing for somebody to say. But that's, that's how people thought, and the race issues. And I don't know, there was just something about it that never quite clicked. And it's funny, one of my friends was taught in the English department, taught courses on linguistics, and dialects. And she used to invite me to her classes to read things so students could try to figure out where I came from. She says, you've been living in Norfolk, Virginia for 20 years, and you've picked up nothing. You don't have any of the sounds that southerners have, you haven't picked up any of the dialect from the south. And she says you must really be a Yankee. Which I guess was right, it was just my, I guess this, you know, you are you were just say that way. So I didn't.

That was again, something that was always troubling. And one of my first departments when I was looking for an apartment, somebody, the landlady says, I asked her "how much the rent was?" she said, Well, for you, it would be so much. And then she tells me volunteers this information, but if I was reading this to a black person, the rent would be twice as high. Because they don't want the black people to rent the apartments. So you know, talk about fair housing. But there was always that kind of background to things. I'm sure you have some of that up here. But it's not as blatant, not as open. And I think, given this area, Auburn, Cayuga County, with its history, and no wonder friends of mine, maybe timely talks about the quarter of conscience, that as you think about the anti slavery movements, the abolition movement, the women's rights movement, the learning from the Native American tribes that were here, back, when this area was first being settled, the prison reform movement with Thomas Mott Osborne, all the things that happen during that period. There's just that tradition in history. It has many people who are tuned to that kind of human rights kind of approach to the world. And human dignity approach to the world that is much more comfortable, at least for me here. And I found a lot of people that were working on those issues in our community. And so I can join some of those groups and work with them and, you know, have good dialogue and have an impact. And I think that's starting to happen. So, you know, again, that makes it a better place to live. It's not like your I know, I worked at what some groups in Norfolk and Hampton Roads area of Virginia, and it was like the same thing every, every year for 20 years. They would say the same things, and nothing would ever get done and we just kind of spin around. Where up here things seem to happen a little bit, more concretely. And I like that as a kind of place to live and a place to work.

AR: Do you think there's anything missing from sort of the common knowledge written history of the Auburn area?

LL: I think people you know, at various times it pops up more and I think there's a, the, the diversity of the community, I think, is something that we understand. We know about. We don't always keep it in the forefront, you know, that it's respecting the diversity and respecting the commonalities. I think I remember back in I don't know when this was maybe in the 60s or early 70s. Because I know I was living in Auburn at the time. So it might have been when I was working at the prison. But the local newspaper, the Auburn Citizen, ran a series of articles. They were really fascinating. One of these days, I'm going to go look them all up and print them out. But they were on people who had immigrated to this area from Europe. Many of like my grandparents, people of that age, and talked about what happened when they came here, how they, why they picked this area, why they ended up in this area, why they, how they found their jobs, how they found housing, you know, how they found community, with other people from the same countries, and so forth. That really pointed out both the diversity of people, but also the common experiences of people. And it was just a very well thought out and well planned series of articles.

And I remember one of the people they covered was a person that I knew from our church, and he had been a prisoner in one of the concentration camps in Nazi Germany. And so he could talk about that experience. You know, his parents, he had come over from Europe after World War Two. His parents, I think, were killed during World War Two, because they were living in Europe and Poland. And they were part of the war. But, you know, that was very much a, there's this sense, I think we're coming back to that. I know the Seymour Library, the Cayuga County Museum [Cayuga Museum of History & Art], the Celebrate Diverse Auburn group that started a few years ago, are helping the community. Get back to understand those roots, if you will, those beginning points of Auburn. It's, it's history, especially in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

As the community grew and developed, and I think we're starting to understand what, in many ways, some of the things that were lost as communities changed in the 60s and 70s. It happened everywhere. It wasn't just in Auburn, that was a nationwide kind of phenomenon. The Urban Renewal knocking down the old downtowns, you know, trying to rebuild building roads, all that stuff that happened here happened in lots and lots and lots of communities. But I think we're getting to build community a little bit better and a little bit more, and I hope that's the case.

So over- it's a long term process, it doesn't happen overnight. But people that are of goodwill and willing to listen to others and listen to learn from other people, as I think we did, when we were kids, learning to respect different cultures, whether they were Italian or Polish, or German or Irish, or whatever it happened to be those kinds of ethnicity things or African American, as it was you know that's, I think, starting to get better, in spite of all the division that we see. I think there's still an undercurrent of people want to find a commonality and the sense of community, for everybody. So we just need to keep working at it and working at it takes a lot of effort, a lot of

time, a lot of energy. But I think there's a lot of people who have that. So I think we're getting there. Hopefully we will.

AR: Shifting gears just a little bit, of course, we also want to try and document a little bit of what's going on now as well in terms of the pandemic, so how has that affected you in the last year or so, six or seven months things have changed?

LL: Well, I gotta be honest, in many ways, what has changed is some of the travel that I used to do, I don't do, I haven't done. Like right now I would normally be in San Diego at a conference. This time of year is a conference that I go to every year that is on violence and trauma that meets in San Diego, and this year we're doing it by Zoom. So yesterday afternoon, I was two hours at my computer, participating in Zoom conferences. So you got to do it that way you're not traveling, you know, and seeing people together with the person. You see them on Zoom, but that's, that's a little bit different way of doing it. So for me, that's been the only thing that's really key.

I don't go to the store- grocery stores as much. I go into the stores now, I did for about two months we get groceries delivered instead of going to the store. But I think now it's at least, there's enough protocols in place both at the stores and with people being pretty careful about masks and distancing and stuff that adds a little safer. Well, fortunately, we're still able to play some golf, and I like playing golf. I didn't like it, it was very, it's a hard, hard game, but I'm getting a little bit better at it. So I like it a little more than I did a few years ago. Now, when golf season ends, that's gonna be a whole different story. But again, I can teach, I still teach online, so I can do that. Still, right. So I could still do that. And many of the things that I do, you know, I can still do, the only thing that's not there is the travel.

When I leased a car a few years ago, and I get all these miles, you know, on my lease, because I thought I'd be going to Virginia or North Carolina, where my sister lives, and now she's in Florida, but you know the last eight months, that's been- so I've got all these miles I've never driven, that I'm paying for it, but live and learn. My next one will probably be a little shorter lease for terms of miles, but other than that, it hasn't been all that much changed for me, you know, being older. Now I fear for a young person, which is what I worry about. It's changed a lot. But schools being closed or not closed or online, or what have you, it's, you know, not a world that anybody was prepared for, especially for young people. One of the questions I'm having my students work on right now, my class has just started, is how has, you know, COVID changed your experiences and what you thought about in terms of the future? Because I'm sure you know, the whole world of work and jobs and what people do and the stability that has changed drastically. I don't have to worry about it. Because it's not something that's going to affect me that much. I can still do the job that I normally do, online or not. But how is it gonna affect the younger people? What's the world that they see out there in front of them as a result of this? So it's gonna be interesting to see. But as I said, that for me, it hasn't changed [pause] all that much.

AR: Have you been able to keep in touch with friends and family?

LL: Yeah, pretty much you can do it, I do it through Zoom, or I do it through, you know, emails and text messages. And my friends in Virginia, I still do some work down there, some consulting. So we have Zoom meetings every month or so. And the friends that I would normally see at the meetings that I go to, you know, we work on some projects together, so we get together on Zoom meetings. So in that sense, I can still do that. So connections are pretty much okay.

AR: Well thank you for being a part of the project and sharing your stories and experiences.

LL: Okay. I look forward to seeing the whole project.

AR: All right. Thank you.

LL: Thanks, Alexis, Take care.