

Transcript of a Saint Paul Police oral history interview with

Jane Ellen Laurence



1990



2006

November 18, 2010

By

Kateleen Cavett

at

HAND in HAND Productions' office in Saint Paul, Minnesota

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All pictures are from the Saint Paul Police Department collections and the personal files of the Laurence family.

ORAL HISTORY

Oral History is the spoken word in print.

Oral histories are personal memories shared from the perspective of the narrator. By means of recorded interviews oral history documents collect spoken memories and personal commentaries of historical significance. These interviews are transcribed verbatim and minimally edited for accessibility. Greatest appreciation is gained when one can read an oral history aloud.

Oral histories don't follow the standard language usage of the written word. Transcribed interviews are not edited to meet traditional writing standards; they are edited only for clarity and understanding. The hope of oral history is to capture the flavor of the narrator's speech and convey the narrator's feelings through the timbre and tempo of speech patterns.

An oral history is more than a family tree with names of ancestors and their birth and death dates. Oral history is recorded personal memory, and that is its value. What it offers complements other forms of historical text, and doesn't always require historical collaboration. Oral history recognizes that memories often become polished as they sift through time, taking on new meanings and potentially reshaping the events they relate.

Memories shared in an oral histories create a picture of the narrator's life – the culture, food, eccentricities, opinions, thoughts, idiosyncrasies, joys, sorrows, passions - the rich substance that gives color and texture to this individual life.

Kate Cavett

Oral Historian HAND in HAND Productions

Sergeant Jane Laurence

MEDAL OF MERIT

September 1996

For actions exemplifying professionalism at its best. On August 25, 1996, Jane was one of the responding squads to a homicide at 1572 Portland Avenue. Not only did she secure the crime scene but she was able to isolate the armed suspect until assistance was available.

MEDAL OF MERIT

September 1994

For actions exemplifying professionalism at its best. On February 12, 1994, Jane responded to the report of a disturbance at 728 Dayton Avenue. After hearing gunfire, she was part of a team that secured the premises, detained twenty-eight persons in the residence, recovered evidence and remained in control of a volatile situation. A suspect was ultimately identified from the individuals present and charged with murder.

MEDAL OF COMMADATION

March 2012

On March 23, 2007, three people, including a 15-year-old child, were murdered during a home invasion in Saint Paul. Two younger children witnessed the shooting death of their family members. This was a crime of unthinkable cruelty that took over four years to resolve. Two men, who at the time of their convictions were serving time for other murders, received the maximum penalty of life in prison for the three murders. Their convictions were due to the hard work and dedication of many people who selflessly devoted many hours to bring justice to the families of those murdered.

Jane and the team of investigator and analyst, was able to provide crucial testimony during the trial. Jane's analysis of the telephone calls made on the day of the murder and the locations of the cell towers used for those calls identified a core group of suspects, including the two defendants. Jane was also able to show that those two men were indeed at the crime scene. She was also involved with drafting search warrants and continued to assist in the investigation after her retirement in 2010, the same year the case was indicted by a federal jury. For the next 18 months, she and the other investigators began preparing for trial. The talents, leadership and professionalism Jane displayed over the lengthy duration of this case were instrumental in the successful prosecution of these two criminals.

Jane Laurence was appointed police officer March 20, 1989;
Promoted to sergeant May 17, 1997; acting commander April 15, 2006;
returned to sergeant December 2, 2006;
and retired September 30, 2010.

KC: Kate Cavett

JL: Jane Laurence

JL: My name is Jane Laurence. I retired about a month-and-a-half ago as a sergeant from the Saint Paul Police Department. I live in the city. I moved over to Saint Paul from Brooklyn Park where I grew up and worked as an officer for twenty-one years here, and for seven years with the Plymouth Police Department before that.

KC: What made you want to become a police officer?

JL: Well, actually I had intended to be a conservation officer and I got a Bachelor of Science and Forestry [degree] from the University of Minnesota. Then the final training would be to take the skills portion and I took that through a program that was run by Captain Mike Smith¹ from the Saint Paul Police Department. As I was getting toward the end of it, he encouraged me to come for a ride along with

¹ Michael T. Smith, was appointed patrolman January 23, 1971; promoted to sergeant March 10, 1978; lieutenant October 23, 1981; captain February 23, 1987; and retired December 31, 1998

Saint Paul, and that led to me applying and getting the job. Looking back, I am really glad I came to be a big city police officer instead of a conservation officer. It was a much better fit and now I still enjoy the woods and the lakes as an avocation instead of having it be my life's work.

KC: You said you were with Plymouth.

JL: I went to work for Plymouth as a community service officer and was there for seven years, fulltime, and worked on my degree during that time. I also got married and had a couple kids. During those seven years, I was a civilian with the police department, working with the officers and getting to understand the culture of policing and law enforcement. By then I was kind of entrenched in living in the Twin Cities and didn't really have an option to be moving outside of the cities with the DNR or something, so that is how I spent my time with the Plymouth Police Department.

KC: Any memories that you have of your academy [in Saint Paul]?

JL: Oh boy. I think we were twenty people to start with, and we only lost one in the first couple of weeks, so the other nineteen of us -- I think it was nineteen -- made it through. But then right at the end, we had to pass a lot of the physical agility stuff and Mike Findley² didn't pass. He couldn't complete the run in the twelve-and-a-half minutes that we had to do it. Mike had been a cancer survivor and we all felt really terrible that he got dropped and wasn't able to graduate with us. It was a real shock. Also Linda Wilson³ -- we had been doing some wrestling with Mark Johnson as our defensive tactics instructor and they paired up Linda

² Michael Thomas Findley was appointed police officer March 20, 1989; promoted to sergeant May 17, 1997; and died from cancer on May 13, 2008.

³ Linda Wilson was appointed police officer March 20, 1989; promoted to sergeant May 30, 1998; and retired August 31, 2011.

Wilson with Dave Pavlak,⁴ who is really tall, probably 6'4" or so. In their wrestling maneuvers Dave flipped over and Linda's foot, right at the ankle, was trapped underneath her as she rolled backwards on it. We all heard it snap and crackle, just like a chicken bone when you are breaking up chicken pieces for dinner. It popped right out of the joint and her foot was stuck up against the back of her calf. It was just sickening. Anyway, she needed surgery to put that back together, but they let her stay in the academy and they let her graduate with us. But they dropped Mike. And Mike and I and Jerry Johnson had commuted together to the academy, so we were -- I mean everyone gets close, but we were especially close. So Mike went ahead and got a personal trainer that summer. We finished the academy in something like June, I think. And he went and got himself a personal trainer and went on a diet and a physical regimen to get in shape, and by the end of the summer he passed his test and they let him come back and start his field training with us. He ended up being the most colorful character in our whole class. He died in 2007. The cancer came back and we lost him. So that is probably the two biggest memories of --

KC: How many women were in the academy?

JL: Well, we started with five and we ended with four. Linda Wilson, Lucia,⁵ Sue Drutschmann,⁶ and me.

⁴ Dave Pavlak was appointed police officer March 20, 1989.

⁵ Lucia Theresa Wroblewski was appointed police officer March 20, 1989; Medal of Valor on September 29, 1996; Class C Medal of Commendation 12-28-1990, 12-28-2006, 2-15-2007; Saint Paul Officer of the Year in 2001 with partner, Officer Tim Bradley.

⁶ Sue Drutschmann was appointed police officer March 20, 1989.

KC: Any reflections on how the women were treated? Were they treated any differently? At this point, it is just twelve years into women coming on Saint Paul Police.

JL: No, not anything that we felt was different that we could put our finger on. We had our own locker room, obviously, but --

KC: That was better than 1975 [when Debbie Montgomery⁷ had to share showers with the men].

JL: I suppose, yes. But no, they put the same expectations on us and none of the four of us thought we were entitled to any different kind of treatment. So we didn't expect it and we didn't receive it and that was just the way we wanted it. We supported each other. It is normal I guess to go our separate ways after the academy. They put you different places and move around, but we have maintained kind of distant friendships over the years and always been happy to see each other and happy to see each other succeed. But no, no special treatment.

KC: Any stories, any reflections on your early years of FTO?

JL: Yes, I had kind of a unique experience that seemed like a good idea at the time, but maybe I would not recommend to other people, especially other women. I FTO'ed in the Eastside. I had Jim Ramstad⁸ for my primary FTO. So I learned the streets and the culture over on the Eastside and finished my field training in about October. In December, the new bid takes effect and I was transferred to

⁷ Deborah Louise Montgomery (April 17, 1946) was the first female to complete the same academy as male recruits and appointed police officer September 8, 1975; the first Black woman promoted to sergeant November 8, 1987; lieutenant May 29, 1998; title change to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander February 8, 2003; retired July 31, 2003. She became assistant commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety 1991-1998 and was the first Black woman to serve on the Saint Paul City Council 2004-2007.

⁸ Jim Ramstad was appointed police officer January 30, 1984; promoted to sergeant February 1, 1997.

Southwest. I was barely out on my own and was transferred to a whole new team that didn't even have a common border with East at the time. I had a few months on the street in Southwest and then got transferred onto the Narcotics unit as an agent. I guess the idea was to put some fresh faces in there and it sounded fun to me. And it was fun, but I didn't have the time on the street to establish my credibility and share my part of the load and rightly so I think people looked at me as some sort of a prima donna. When I was transferred out of the Narcotics unit three years later and came back to the street, I had a lot of ground to make up with my credibility. The rest of my class had been out there working the midnight shift, taking their calls and writing their reports and backing each other up and I had not been there. I would not recommend that path, even though it was fun and I did learn some great skills, especially writing search warrants. I wrote a lot of search warrants during that time and that is something that stayed with me my whole career, learning to handle informants. Those were all good things, but you really need that time where you just blend in and share the work and do your part and don't complain and don't expect anything special to get a solid platform of credibility. So that is what I would recommend to people coming on -- male or female -- is do your time and don't look for any specialized assignment. Those will come later, when you have the credibility for it.

KC: Were they wanting women in Narcotics to work as decoys?

JL: Well not decoys, because those were the vice unit jobs and I never did those. I never wanted to do those jobs, but undercover purchasing and stuff. But I didn't do a lot of undercover work. That wasn't anything I was good at or wanted to do, either. I think [they] just [wanted] some fresh faces out there, maybe. I am not sure why. I didn't make the decision.

KC: Any stories that you remember about cases that you worked on in Narcotics?

JL: Yes. I was involved in the Pluff Investigation. That was in the early '90s and there was a family on the Eastside, the Pluffs. It was a white family, tied in with some Black Gangster Disciples [GD] from Chicago. One of the daughters was connected that way. They were moving powder cocaine up from Chicago, Schaumburg area into Saint Paul and distributing it. Again, I got brought in on the ground level with that, which turned into a wiretap, which was fascinating to be part of a wiretap in -- I think it was '91 probably. We had a little storefront thing where the equipment was set up, and back then it was actually cassette tapes, so every time there was a conversation it was recorded on three separate decks of cassette tapes and then we had to transcribe it. Most of it happened during the night shift, so we worked either an evening or a night shift over there in that storefront at Phelan's Center, which is not even there anymore. I was kind of temporarily assigned on that project to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. So that led to not only the experience of doing the wiretap, but making a lot of professional relationships with agents and technicians and personnel from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. Those stayed with me through the years as an investigator, having those relationships with their agents, their investigators. And later, [it] led to some projects I worked on in the last couple years before I left the department, [which was working on] three wiretaps, where we used the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to help us with the technology end of some investigations.

KC: When we look at your assignments, your career has been very strongly in investigations. That looks like the department really tapped into those skills for you a lot. What happened with the Pluff case?

JL: Okay, the Pluff case. The wiretap went on about two or three months, I think. Then there was an investigative phase. One of the Pluff offenders was actually

Officer Jane Laurence 1990



licensed to be a police officer and I had attended some of my skills training with him and knew him. And he had a lot of knowledge of police practices, law enforcement techniques, and code words and people involved in undercover operations and all kinds of things that made him especially dangerous. He even had some relationships with working law enforcement people. He even had a job actually, as a part-time officer with a small agency -- I will leave it at that -- in the Metro area here. He was indicted and so were, boy, I think four or five of the Pluff kids and both parents and a couple of other people on the fringe. In the investigative phase, the wires and the conversations were used as a lot of the evidence against them, [showing] that there were actual drugs taken as the physical evidence. Then that was a big learning opportunity for me to see how a skilled interviewer approached witnesses, because there were a lot of people that were involved in this operation that were not targets, that they hoped to get indictments against, but their testimony as witnesses would strengthen the case a lot. These people were approached individually and it was spelled out how they were kind of caught between a rock and a hard place and had a choice to make now about whether or not to be witnesses. Just watching how that seed was

planted in their minds and how they were given a chance to process through and to think about all their options and then to come around to the point where they would be our allies and witnesses and be truthful, because a witness that tries to play both sides and be untruthful is not any help to themselves or to us. But again, [that gave me] skills that I would use later on and in the rest of my career. I got to watch some very capable agents and police officers at work there. So it ended up with several federal indictments, and people did some long prison terms.

KC: Who were some of these role models for you that were the good interviewers?

JL: Well Larry Bergsgaard, from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Terry Vandergrif, Gene Leatherman, Mike Wold. At the time, I was also working with Neil Nelson⁹ and Joe Younghans,¹⁰ Dennis Jensen.¹¹

KC: Were you are the only woman?

JL: Terry was on that case too.

KC: When you went back on the street, can you talk a little bit about what it was like and how you were finally able to prove yourself?

⁹ Neil Paul Nelson was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant June 15, 1986; commander June 12, 2004, and retired September 30, 2010.

¹⁰ Joseph Daniel Younghans was appointed police officer March 13, 1978; promoted to sergeant March 1, 1990; and retired May 30, 2003.

¹¹ Dennis Lynn Jensen was appointed police officer April 3, 1983; promoted to sergeant March 30, 1990; lieutenant January 18, 1997; commander June 26, 1999; assistant chief June 12, 2004; and retired September 29, 2006.

JL: Well Mike Findley was at Western District and I got sent out to the Western District. Mike was the kind of guy that nobody was safe during roll call. He would just cut loose and he would hammer everybody. If you sat up in front he got you from behind and if you -- you can't sit in the back unless you are a little bit salty, so of course when you are new, you have to sit up front. And if you made the mistake of sitting in the back, Mike would clobber you. Mike was just one of these guys that would always be on -- there was the other radio channels where you could be a little more informal and he would be getting around on that channel and if you didn't -- you know, it is up to the rookie. And of course I wasn't a rookie, but I was,



Mike Findley

because I am out there starting over. You have to be the one to step up and take the calls and let the other people take their coffee breaks. Mike would just push and get around with you until you did what you were supposed to do. But that group out there, Jeff Hutchinson,¹² Steve Smith,¹³

¹² Jeff Hutchinson was appointed police officer September 18, 1989.

¹³ Steve Smith was appointed police officer March 20, 1989; resigned September 21, 2002; appointed police officer April 4, 2005.

Jerry Johnson, John Wright,¹⁴ Matt Toupel,¹⁵ and Jerry Vick¹⁶ were out there at the time. We had some great bosses, Bruce Wynkoop,¹⁷ Pat Padden,¹⁸ Kit Hoskin,¹⁹ and it was -- and still is I think -- the busiest shift in the busiest area of town, Frogtown. There was always plenty to do.



Jane Laurence 1996

¹⁴ John Robinson Wright was certified police officer December 10, 1984; resigned March 28, 1986; reinstated January 11, 1987; promoted to sergeant November 29, 1997.

¹⁵ Matthew Louis Toupal was appointed police officer September 18, 1989; promoted to sergeant February 12, 2000; commander January 15, 2011.

¹⁶ Gerald Dennis Vick appointed police officer September 18, 1989, promoted to sergeant July 31, 1999; fatally injured by gunfire May 6, 2005. Received the Medal of Valor 1991, 1997, and 2005.

¹⁷ Bruce Wynkoop was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972; promoted to sergeant February 1, 1984; and retired December 31, 2004.

¹⁸ Pat Padden was appointed patrolman June 28, 1965; promoted to sergeant November 21, 1970; demoted to police officer May 12, 1976; promoted to sergeant November 8, 1987; and retired July 30, 1999.

¹⁹ Christopher C. "Kit" Hoskin was appointed police officer October 1, 1979; promoted to sergeant March 9, 1986; Lieutenant March 14, 1998; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; promoted to senior commander October 14, 2006; and retired October 27, 2006

I got my first Medal of Merit while working that shift. Jerry Johnson and I were working together and a call came out. If I recall, it was 694 Dayton. I believe that was the address. Anyway, on Dayton there it was a shooting. I think it was February and there was about a foot-and-a-half of soft snow. It was a big house on the southwest corner of the intersection and somebody called that somebody had just been shot inside the house. We came up Selby and turned and stopped on the east side of the house. Meanwhile Steve Smith and Don Benner²⁰ came in separate cars, so the four of us got there just as -- I am pretty sure the final count was ninety-four people, were in the house. They came pouring out the house just as we all pulled up. The first ten or so people out the door, we pointed our gun at them and told them to lie down in the snow, thinking that maybe the suspects were among them. So then there were still all of these people in the house and the person who was shot was still in there. The medics had to go down. Somehow we had to control all these people. I believe it was ninety-four. Anyway, we called for some MTC buses and got control of things and patted people down, got a name and put them all on the bus and then brought the bus -- I think it took two or three busloads to get them down and then put them in places like the racquetball court and to try to sort through this whole thing.

Once it was stabilized, a canine came to the scene and found a gun wrapped up a sock right in the area on the snow where we had put these first people down. It was a weapon that was used to shoot -- his last name was Brown. I think it was Leondre Brown and he was deceased. Through the night, the investigators

²⁰ Don Benner was appointed police officer April 2, 1990; promoted to sergeant September 9, 2000.

interviewed all these people, starting with the first, I don't know, it was about seven I guess that came out the door right away and we stopped. It was determined that the two brothers Albert Hill and his brother were the killers and they were part of these first few that we had stopped. So that was part of my experience on the street in those years.

KC: So did the four of you that were first on the scene get the Medal of Merit for handling the case and keeping it in control and not letting it get away?

JR: Yes.

KC: It is a big deal to get a Medal of Merit.

JL: It is, yes. And I didn't realize it at the time. But I should not say it is a big deal. I mean people do this kind of thing every night. It's actually the truth.

KC: Well, that is one perspective, and yes it is a police officer's responsibility, but when the chief determines that these police officers do it every night and yet to do it really, really well, not everybody is acknowledged for the quality that it was done in. So it is a big deal to get a Medal of Merit.

JL: Well, it was an honor.

KC: Any other stories that you remember about being on the street?

JL: Sure. I've got a good one. Jerry Johnson was my partner for many years and I told you I commuted with Mike Findley and Jerry was also one of the people. We lived out in Plymouth, out that way, so we rode to the academy together. So Jerry and I got to be good friends and our kids were the same age and our families took vacations and everything. But Jerry grew up in Northern Minnesota, in Mountain Iron, and he spent his summers in Menahga, Minnesota. And he comes from a Finnish family, so he speaks Finnish. He grew up every summer with his uncles on the farm speaking Finnish. Well, of course you don't have much chance to speak Finnish around here. Jerry also acts like a Finlander,

so he has this way of coming off as not too smart, but if you stay with him long enough, you realize he is smart like a fox. So we worked together and we would get some savvy street guy in our back seat and Jerry would start talking to him. You could just see the guy would think like, "This guy is dumb as a stump. I can fool him." And Jerry would ask him a question about his name or where he was from or something and the guy would lie, and then Jerry would ask almost this identical question again. Then he would ask him again and it would be just a little bit different. After about the eighth time he would rephrase these questions that sounded so dumb and suddenly the guy would just open up and start talking and every time it would just amaze me. How does he do this?

So one night there was a shooting and we all went to the area where it happened and Mike Findley came up with the guy that we all knew was the shooter. He got him in his back seat and Mike was inside the car with him, talking with him, and the rest of us are standing around outside. After about fifteen minutes, Mike gets out of the car and he slams the door and he shakes his head and he goes, "He threw the gun, but he's not gonna tell me where. I'm just gonna take him down and book him." We all shrugged and Jerry says, "Well, how about if I talk to him, Mike?" Mike rolled his eyes so that rest of us could see it and he goes, "Yeah Jerry, why don't you talk to him?" So Jerry gets in the car with the guy and the rest of us are standing around laughing at Jerry, and after a few minutes Jerry gets out of the car and he says, "Follow me. He's gonna show me where he put the gun." Really? So we all follow him over. He drives over to an apartment building -- it was right around this neighborhood in fact, by the cathedral. And the guy is in handcuffs, so he has got his hands cuffed in the front of him, and he is leading Jerry into this apartment. We get into an apartment and he points with

both hands up into the ceiling and there are some ceiling tiles up there. Jerry looks around for something that he can stand on so he can reach up into the ceiling tiles and there is nothing around so he gestures to the guy: "Well, give me a boost." Now with his hands cuffed together, the guy laces his fingers like this and lets Jerry stand on his hands so that Jerry can reach up into the ceiling tiles. Jerry reaches up there and comes out with the gun [both laugh]. After that, he had all kinds of respect. He just had this way. And he is still that way today. He is a funny guy.

KC: That is phenomenal. That is absolutely phenomenal.

JL: Yes. You know, everybody comes to this job with these different backgrounds and these different talents and stuff and you can't make people be who they are not. But if you give them support in who they are, everybody brings something to the table, everybody.

Jane 1997



KC: What were some of the early skills that you started to hone that were naturally Jane, but you started to realize that these would really work for you as a police woman?

JL: Well, I had always been told by people that I was easy to talk to and that I was a good listener and that was something I always liked to know, because having people feel that way about me was important. So, the listening skills I brought and I worked on improving. And I think that they were probably my biggest thing I brought, to listen to what people were saying and what they were not

saying and what they were saying with their eyes. Then to look beneath that for what was motivating them to withhold something or to exaggerate something, because it is all about motivation. Getting a confession is not something an investigator gets; it is something someone decides to do and they do it for -- maybe they want to brag or maybe they want to relieve themselves of the guilt or maybe they want to get someone else in trouble. But you have to open your mind to all the possible motivations there are for talking to police or not talking to the police or exaggerating, minimizing. And then you have to go with that person through that experience and through that door. All you can do is present the possible routes that they might choose to take and understand which path they might want to take to get there. So I think the listening skills and the partnering with people to go in the direction they are inclined to go anyway is a strength area.

KC: When you were on the street were you able to start honing these listening skills?

JL: Oh definitely. I mean that was probably the most exposure because it is one incident after another where you are sent to calls or you are doing traffic stops and it is a buffet. It is a smorgasbord of opportunities [chuckles].

KC: Now you are a small woman. You are small in stature. Have [there been] any situations where other officers didn't know if you could fight and have their back, or where citizens were not going to pay as much attention to you?

JL: Oh, I am guessing that if you ask some male officers they might say that that is a concern with me or with other women.

KC: How did you overcome that, is more the question.

JL: Yes, I don't think this is the majority of men that feel that way on the job. The smarter ones and the better officers realize that it is your -- I mean, ultimately, we have a gun. And there was never a question of whether I was prepared or skilled

in using that. That was established a long time ago. But tackling and muscling people around; I mean most men figure out that that is a losing battle, because they get hurt, somebody gets hurt and it is just -- anytime you put your hands on somebody, somebody is going to get hurt. If you can avoid it through verbal skills or partnering or any other way to get somebody in your backseat -- going downtown they used to say -- you have won. It doesn't matter how they get there. Yes, like I said, I guess you would have to ask the individual men if they had concerns.

KC: They never made you aware of it.

JL: No, not in a bad way. I mean a guy with a knee injury or something was just as lame as I was [chuckles]. We all knew that that wasn't how we prevail in the end anyway. We had to use our heads and our minds.

KC: Did you grow up knowing how to fight?

JL: No. I still don't know how to fight [both chuckle].

KC: But you have to learn a certain amount of -- if you end up in a fight, to physically fight as an officer.

JL: Yes, I think it is more important to learn how to avoid putting yourself in an unsafe situation. How to stand and protect the gear on your belt and to protect yourself and give -- you know, it is as simple as don't let a door lock behind you. That is a lot more important than learning how to fight when the door does lock behind you. Checking out on calls and not going into situations where you are setting yourself up. Again, Mike Finely -- I got a call for -- this was around the time -- there were some missing college kids or things, shenanigans on the river. Somebody called and said that they had found some suspicious grave or something along the river. I met up with them and I was going to go walk down by the river. Mike drove up. I didn't ask him to come, but he showed up and he

said, “Jane, let’s not go to the river with somebody you don’t know. I mean what are you thinking here?” It is things like that that. Learning to fight and all; it is learning to think about how to avoid the fight that you really have to do.

KC: Tell me another story.

JL: Sure. I’ll tell you a story about leadership that I learned early on, that I have never forgotten and I try to apply in my work and family and everything.

Anyway, Larry McDonald,²¹ who I think you have talked to, right? There was a big graffiti²² problem just after I got back onto the street and they were tagging all over the businesses. And it wasn’t gang graffiti. There is a difference between gang graffiti and tagging. Tagging is artistic. But the city was just getting clobbered by this tagging, to the point where they were hanging over the freeway signs and writing across the big green reflective freeway signs. And those things cost thousands of dollars for a cherry picker to go out there and somebody to refinish those signs. So Larry McDonald called Jerry Johnson and I into his office -- we were working the midnight shift -- and told us the problem and said he wanted to assign us temporarily to this problem, and that we should

²¹ Laurence Francis McDonald was appointed patrolman July 11, 1955; promoted to sergeant February 26, 1966; lieutenant January 14, 1971; captain July 5, 1989; demoted to lieutenant January 12, 1991; promoted to captain August 31, 1991; and retired March 31, 1995. Awarded the Medal of Merit Class B on August 26, 1993.

²² **Graffiti/Tagging:** In modern times, paint, particularly spray paint, has become the most commonly used graffiti material. Marking or painting property without the property owner's consent is considered defacement and vandalism, which is a punishable crime. A whole genre of artistic expression is based upon spray paint graffiti styles or tagging. Within hip-hop culture, graffiti has evolved alongside hip-hop music, b-boying, and other elements. The maker of this graffiti is called the *writer* or *artist* and adds a stylized signature to every piece of graffiti they make.

just figure out how to approach it. He trusted us and he would get us what we needed and we just needed to solve this problem.

KC: And Larry was commander of Southwest team.

JL: Correct. So Jerry and I worked for a week or so, met with some businesses, tried to get into some of these cult groups where they were doing the graffiti on paper. Anyway, we tried to sort of learn what was going on and we realized real quickly that we could give our card out and our office phone number, but then we were not there to take the call. So there would be a meeting or something that would start up and we would not find out until the next day. This was way before everyone ran around with cell phones. A cell phone was expensive. So we worked up our courage and we went to Larry and we said, "Well, first of all, this isn't all happening on midnights. We think that it's happening during the evenings and so our hours aren't really matching and we were wondering if we could change our hours a little bit." He looked at us like we were idiots and he said, "Well, I thought I explained to you, just solve the problem. I trust you. Work forty hours a week. Write down the hours you work. You don't have to ask me to change your hours, of course." Then we said, "Okay. But the other thing is that we can't get any of these people that were asking to call us. We can't get the calls because--" And he said, "Well, it sounds like you need a cell phone." We said, "Well, actually yeah, that's what we were thinking. We need a cell phone." And he said, "Okay, go sit down. I'll get right with you." He went in his office and came back out in fifteen minutes and he said, "Go up to Rosedale. There is a cell phone waiting for you and use it." So we went and got a phone and started giving out the number. We cleared ninety-six criminal damage to property cases and we got felony charges on seven people and for a while, the graffiti went

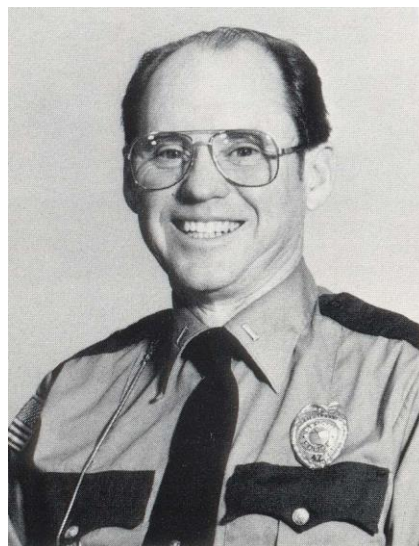
down. We got to back to our jobs and I don't know, there might even be a letter or something on here from him.

Well, Larry retired and years went by and I learned many, many years later that when he had made that decision to get us a cell phone he got in trouble, because he was supposed to have a review by the finance department and it was supposed to go to the city council. I don't know what all, but he ended up with a letter of reprimand for what he did for us. That taught me that, for one, he is just a great leader. He empowered us to do the job, the job got done, and yet he took the punishment. Never mentioned it to us or probably anyone else around him; he just took that as part of his job, to clear the way for us and get us what we need. Again, I watched the movie *Saving Private Ryan* where they talk about how gripes only go up because they are trying to get the captain to say what he is unhappy about. And he said, "That's not how it works. Gripes only go up." And that was Larry McDonald and he is I think the greatest leader I have ever worked for.

KC: Yes. He is an incredible man. He is active in the Police Historical Society — was at the meeting this morning.

JL: He is a great guy.

Captain Larry McDonald
1984



KC: The former Chief John Harrington²³ called him “the can-do captain.” If there is a problem, tell you to do it or he would get it solved.

JL: Yes. That is it. [He greets you with:] “How the hell are you?” [both laugh]

KC: You have mentioned your family several times. How old were your children²⁴ when you came on the department?

JL: Two and four.

KC: What is it like being a young mom with all these strange hours, this challenging work?

JL: Yeah. Well they of course absorbed it little by little as they were growing up and I had to go and deal with my daughter one time when she was spouting off on the playground about, “My mom’s a cop.” So we went through a little bit of that. Then I think it was when Jerry Hoff²⁵ was shot in the pizza place on Lake Street there and they were old enough then to figure that out, that all he was doing was having his lunch break and he got killed. I remember my son had given me a marble and he told me to wear it in my shirt pocket above my heart. That would stop a bullet. So I held onto that marble for a long time. Well, I was a mom. In my mind, that was the most important thing I did and I would ask my kids, “What am I?” And they would say, “Well, you’re a cop.” And I would say, “No, cop is

²³ John Mark Harrington was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant September 7, 1983; acting lieutenant January 4, 1997; lieutenant November 1, 1997; title changed to commander January 1, 2000; senior commander July 1, 2000 ; assistant chief May 8, 2004; chief July 1, 2004; and retired June 14, 2010. Elected to the State Senate from Saint Paul, November 2010.

²⁴ Children: Cody Cooper and Kristin Cooper.

²⁵ Jerry Hoff, a veteran Minneapolis policeman, was shot in the back while having dinner at a Minneapolis pizza parlor by gang members on September 26, 1992. He was targeted solely because he was a police officer.

what I do, but I am a mom. You know I'll always be your mom. Being a cop is just what I do." We had to have that talk a few times.

Then they went through that stage where they were kind of ashamed of it and then my daughter especially wanted me to come to her school and do some of those talks. She kind of ended her high school days where I think that she was proud of it. They would come to the memorial ceremony. They went to Saint Thomas and Visitation, so they were used to uniforms and some of that kind of quasi-military stuff that the police and the military have in common. I think that was a special feeling for them. Then one of them -- at least because I married John [Wright] and he has got the three kids and they are all about the same age. And then they would meet officers themselves on their -- you know, out in whatever they were doing. I think most of them got tickets and deserved it [both laugh].



Cody, Mom, and Kristin
2006

KC: And mom didn't try to get them out of it?

JL: Oh heck no, uh-uh. No, if I had to do it over again, I think I would tag all of them myself. I think every kid needs a ticket [both laugh].

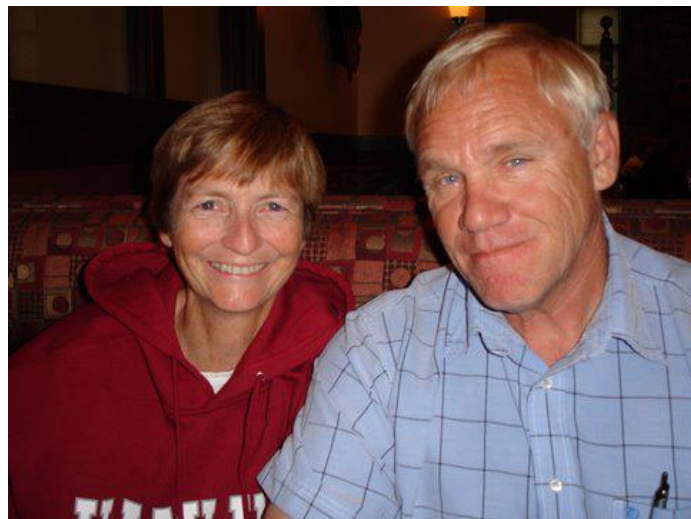
KC: So during your career, you divorced and remarried. And you remarried an officer.

JL: Correct.

KC: What is it like dating on the job in this small culture?

JL: Well, before we dated we had worked in the same district and a lot of times worked in the same car, so we had our separate lives and stuff, but when you are working you have a lot of time to talk to somebody. So that was a real nice way to start a relationship, just as a friend at work and it was many years that way. Then when it changed and we started dating. By then we were working in different areas, but it didn't fall under a big spotlight like some relationships do. I mean we tried not to let it -- a lot of people who knew us both for many years were kind of surprised when they found out that we were together and had been together for awhile. We just kept it real low key that way.

Jane Laurence
and John Wright
2010



He was on the SWAT team and I was on the Crisis Negotiation Team for many years, so we worked a lot of incidents together with our own jobs that way. And that was a nice arrangement because I know negotiators from a lot of different

agencies and there is sometimes not the smoothest relationships [with SWAT]. You have totally different personalities drawn to those jobs and if you look at best practices and you understand the role of the negotiator, or the crises negotiation team, is really that of managing risks. So yeah, sure we would like to see the bad guy live through this, but we don't have any special interest in what a wonderful person this person is any more than the rest of the police department. If they have done something bad and they need to be arrested, we are just as intent on that as everybody else. But it is about being able to say that as a department before you send an arrest team up or before you use a lethal force on somebody, that you tried everything. That is the role of the negotiation and we use tactics that are verbal that are designed to partner with people and a lot of times, most of the time, all of us have experienced that when we are in a crisis, the one thing we want more than anything is to be listened to. That is not something a SWAT team is. That is not their job and that is not what they are trained for or anything. But if you leave that piece out of it, you miss that chance for the venting to be all they really wanted in the first place. But anyway, so there is this oppositional set-up between the negotiators' tactics and the tactical team's tactics. They are both trying to achieve the same thing, but in a different way. So it is having him as a sergeant on the SWAT team, me running the crisis negotiation team, I think as a department we went through a lot fewer pains over this than other agencies have to deal with where there is a little bit more friction. So that was always a very nice arrangement.

KC: You were dating and married at the time that you had these roles.

JL: Yes.

KC: Talk about a negotiation that you were involved with.

JL: Maybe I will tell you about Darnell Anderson. He had been in prison. I think it was for robbery, but anyway, he had been out for a little while. He was a young guy in his early twenties. He wasn't making it too well in the real world. He ended up deciding to take a gun into a pawn shop on Grand Avenue down there by that Greek restaurant,²⁷ by the Caribou Coffee. So he brought a gun in. You have to go up the stairs to get to the pawn shop and he used the gun to hold up the pawn shop owner and during the robbery, he got another gun. Making his way down the stairs, the pawn shop owner pushed a button to remotely lock the door. Darnell shot the lock off the door and by then the police and the pawn shop owner and the guy from the Greek restaurant were all chasing him and he made it across Grand Avenue and through the neighborhood into the area on the Portland Side of the House of Hope Presbyterian Church. He got surrounded by two or three squad cars where people jumped out and pinned him down right there on the entryway. He had two guns in his hand and was surrounded on all sides and the negotiators and the SWAT people got there real quickly and we started to have a dialogue with him about how he could make some decisions to make it through this. Well, he didn't point the guns at any officers and I was close enough so that we could yell to each other. He said he didn't want to go back to prison and he was thinking he would shoot himself or have the police shoot him. And that is something I have experienced many times is during a dialogue with someone like that, they will actually talk about that they are making a decision whether to live or die. And furthermore, that they know that one of their options is that they can behave in a way that will make the police shoot them.

²⁷ Acropol Inn, 748 Grand Avenue, Saint Paul.

KC: Suicide by cop.

JL: Well, that is the term and they will spell it out to us. We will say if you point your gun at the police, the police are going to shoot you. And they have said that. I understand that. So with Darnell, we talked about if he had pointed the guns, that is what would happen. Furthermore, we had explained to him that there was an area he needed to stay within and not walk outside on that, because if he walked outside of the sidewalk that we would take that as he was trying to flee and that he would be shot. So we vocalized all that and he said he understood. But he was behaving like he wasn't completely engaged in the conversation. I mean we would make eye contact and he would say something, but then he would drift away and he would look at other officers, because you could see them poking out from behind vehicles and pillars and things like that. They were all kind of visible to us. Then the SWAT team was right in front of me with shields and different things and I had a secondary negotiator with me also.

KC: Yes, but you are out there so he can see you.

JL: Yes. There was a truck and I was behind the engine of the truck. He was on the other side of it, maybe fifteen, twenty feet away. I could duck behind the engine. And then there were these SWAT guys with shields and snipers and all sorts of other things that they do. The problem with him was keeping him focused because he kept turning around and then other officers would yell things. That is not what they are supposed to do, but that happens. The big concern was that one officer had gotten there right away and came around the corner and was face to face with him, so he had jumped out of his car and gotten behind a pillar. But he had left his car door open and his car running. Everybody was very concerned that Darnell was going to just walk over, get in his car with a shotgun now,

besides the other two guns, and drive away. That is why we said you can't cross this line at the sidewalk or you will get shot.

Meanwhile, then the SWAT team had just been trained and learned how to use a shotgun that is called less lethal, where it shoots out basically a beanbag. They had never used it before, but they had gotten to the point where they were trained in it, so the commanders decided they were going to try to beanbag Darnell instead of shooting him. But they didn't want to do that either if he would just surrender. So we are going through, "Put the guns down. You'll be treated respectfully. You'll be able to call your mother or whatever." Trying to find something to help him decide to go peacefully.

KC: Did people know him? Or do you do some research to find out what his family connections might be?

JL: We do and that was all going on. He had told us his name and a little bit about his background. He was a pleasant person to deal with, he was. Anyway, about an hour-and-a-half went by and all of the SWAT team was in position. They had this less lethal and they decided that if he moved outside this area they would shoot him with the less lethal. That was going to be what they did, because fifteen minutes before, they would have had to shoot him with a rifle or a shotgun. Anyway, he said he didn't want to go back to prison and he was going to give up. And he started to walk right across that line, right toward that open squad car. And they ran out with the less lethal and just as he was getting up to the squad car they shot him in the back with the less lethal and he went down and they ran up and handcuffed him and took him away.

Well, a few years before that, the SWAT team and I had decided we could learn a lot from people that survived these standoffs. We could learn what they were thinking and what they could hear and what did we do that was good and what was distracting and what could we have done different. So typically, after someone would survive something like this, we would go as a negotiator and a SWAT person together and we would ask them, "Tell us how we could do our job better?" And we learned a lot from doing that.

So Darnell went through his interview with the investigators, doing the official investigation, and then we went to see him and we told him who we were. He recognized me and the first thing he said was, "My mom was really glad you didn't kill me." [laughs] Then he started to tell us about the experience and what had happened was, when he had come down the stairway and been locked into the pawn shop entry and he shot the lock off -- he shot five times in this really small stairway. All this time we thought he wasn't engaging and that he was ignoring us and why did he walk toward the -- the problem was that his hearing had been blown out and that it was getting worse as time went on. He couldn't hear. Then we said, "Well you understood, right, that if you crossed that line you'd get shot?" And he said, "Yeah, I did know that and what I was trying to do was -- you were nice people and I wanted to die, but I didn't want to be remembered as somebody that pointed my gun at the police." So he said, "I knew if I walked away from you that they'd shoot me in the back and then people would remember me as a person who was shot in the back." So there you go. Incredible what you learn.

KC: Do you still do that? Go in and see what you can learn from the situations?

JL: Yup, we do. Being a crisis negotiator this is great training. We take a week or two of official training and you do these pretend things and stuff, but the best training is these case debriefings. The best information for a case debriefing is from the actual subject. So it has caught on now in a lot of different agencies.

KC: Wow, fascinating. Tell me another story about it. Could you be at home with your children? Or could you be working something else and they just call you and you just run and show up at the case, drop everything.

JL: Yes. Yes, that is how it works. You are on call. And of course, cell phones have changed everything. I mean, we still operate with a throw phone, a dedicated phone that goes in as basically just a closed circuit. And that is ideal because then you have total control over it.



Negotiating Team

2007

Shelia Lambi, Art
Guerrero, Mary Nash,
Janet Dunnom, Jane
Laurence, Paul Schnell,
Sylvia McPeak

KC: Or you throw the phone in to the person [with whom] you are going to negotiate.

JL: It is hard to do because the SWAT team has to go up and break a window or a robot has to go in and drop it off. There are all the things that can go wrong. Usually, it is just made to fail, but that is ideal.

If we can't do that, then we dedicate a phone line. So if there is a hardline – like in your house here there is a hardline – we can take control of that through the phone company and then they can only call out. And when they call out they can only reach us. Friends and relatives and stuff can't call in and media and everything. But now with cell phones it is a whole new game. Instant messaging, email, I mean there's a million ways just sitting in this house right now that we could communicate with whomever we wanted. So that has gotten to be a real challenge.

Well, I will tell you about the negotiation with Freddy Bowen. That was in, I think 1996. A call came out for a domestic on Portland and Snelling, basically. I was working plainclothes and just down the street so I turned and went in the alley. It was about a thirty unit apartment building or something there on Portland kind of by the SA -- SuperAmerica.²⁸ While I was driving those couple blocks, it came out as shots fired and one down. So I got in the alley and got out of my car and realized I was right at the back door of the building they were talking about. Just then, a guy matching the description came out the back door and he had a big manila envelope covering one of his hands and the other hand was holding the envelope. He made eye contact with me, but I was in just normal clothes and he just looked past me and started to walk down the alley toward

²⁸ SuperAmerica, 56 Snelling Avenue North, Saint Paul

Snelling. There is a big brick retaining wall there that -- meanwhile, two other uniformed officers were coming on Snelling and on Portland. One pulled up in front of Portland and the other pulled across traffic on Snelling. I got on my radio and said, "I think he just came out of the alley and is on Snelling." And Mark Wiegel²⁹ stopped him from walking south on Snelling and Jim Campbell³⁰ came around to where I was and boxed him in then along the sidewalk. So there he was and he had a great big gun, which was what he had under the envelope. Then other officers got to the front door and found that there was a woman that had been shot many times and was dead in the entryway. So it started right then as a face-to-face dialogue with him. Jim Campbell and I were behind the corner of the retaining wall and Mark Wiegel was behind his car and Freddy was in between us. Again, he didn't point the gun at us.

And he right away wanted to talk about what had happened. He had come up here from Indiana to try to convince his girlfriend -- or I think it was his girlfriend. Anyway, they had been in a long relationship and she had broken up and moved up here. He had brought up leg irons and handcuffs and a gun and intended to bring her back with him one way or another to Indiana. This is what he is telling us. Well, he had kept her captive in the apartment for two days and not let her leave. She finally convinced him that she needed to walk across the street to get something to eat or drink from the convenience store. He let her walk down the hallway and then changed his mind because she started to run, so

²⁹ Mark Wiegel was appointed police officer January 30, 1984; retired January 21, 2011.

³⁰ James Scott Campbell was appointed patrolman June 26, 1968; retired May 31, 2000.

he chased her down and he killed her. So he confessed right then to murdering her. Right away, we are into discussion about what his options are: to allow us to arrest him or to shoot himself and die there, or to make us shoot him.

KC: So when you have these negotiations, I mean, it sounds like you are just very open. It is not like, "Well, what do you think you want to do?" kind of approach.

JL: Well, again, it works best to let them talk. And I don't remember how it came up, but I do remember that early into the thing he came out with his full confession and himself voiced his options that were real clear to him.

Meanwhile, the SWAT team showed up and the streets were all blocked and all this stuff was going on while we are having this face-to-face talk. Jim Campbell, the senior officer, very good talker, friendly guy that can talk to anybody. A regular *man's man* kind of, and a kidder. Gift of gab, I guess, and louder than me. So he jumped in and was encouraging Freddy: "Let's walk away from this. Nothing is that bad. We'll make sure that we get you treated right and we'll work through this." So he took over and he was doing a great job. By that time, I had had a lot of training in negotiation and Jim had not, but Jim had years of experience and it was just a real friendly, good talker. Because he was louder and had this rapport going, I started giving him ideas and coaching him so he could have the conversation with him.

By now the shields have arrived and we were settling into a pattern that we were on for about six hours. Well, this was Snelling Avenue. It was August, the end of August, which means State Fair time. Kitty-corner from this spot is Macalester and the students were already back for the school year. There were students yelling from the dormitory there, "Just shoot yourself, you chicken." And yelling

“Pig” and all sorts of distractions like that. There was a squad car that somebody had jumped out of and I think left the lights going and the battery died and when that died, then the siren went off. Then the SWAT team, they sometimes disguise themselves with bushes. Anyway, this guy in a disguise had moved up around the alley across the street. He was a sniper and he was ready with a distraction device, so if there was a sudden move he could throw this flash-bang out to distract. And for whatever reason, that blew up suddenly.

KC: [laughs] It was a tense situation.

JL: Oh, my God. There was a media helicopter that came down so close that dust and stuff was scattered. You couldn’t talk to the person next you, let alone talk over several feet like that. So the situation was disintegrating and Freddy, after being real engaged and talking, he sat down on the grass after a few hours and pretty soon he laid down. After the last hour or so he put his face right in the grass and he had the gun tucked right underneath him. Oh, this envelope that he had; he explained these were all of his letters that he had sent trying to convince her that he loved her and that they could have a future together and everything. He threw those to us and he wanted us to take those. That is a really bad sign, when somebody is contemplating suicide and they give up important possessions like that. It is a bad sign.

So meanwhile, the SWAT team then was rehearsing an arrest tactic that they were going to use. So four of them were going to go up to him and hold him down with shields and try to handcuff him and disarm him. And they practiced that out of sight a few times.

We had a team psychologist at that time. He was a sergeant on the job named Dennis Conroy³¹ and he would come to scenes like this and, as a psychologist, he would advise us. You know, "From my professional viewpoint, it looks like he's thinking this way or this is what he's planning" or something. And when Freddy put his face down in the grass and disengaged like that and this grenade blew up and he didn't react to it and the helicopter came and he didn't react to it, he said, "It's my opinion that he's checked out. He's just waiting for the next thing." Okay and now we have evacuated this neighborhood, which you can picture how well that went with the houses there and this -- so there was all this pressure to open up Snelling again. It is six o' clock now on a Sunday afternoon at the end of August and they are saying, "We gotta do something here." So the arrest team practiced and practiced and practiced, then they got somebody on the other side of this six foot retaining wall, this brick wall. They climbed up there and their job was the throw two flash-bangs down as the arrest team walked up to further distract him. Everything got in place and we tried one more time: "Freddy come on, let's talk. We can make it through this." All this talk to engage him and he just would not. So it all started and the one flash-bang went off right by his head, another one landed on him and went off. He didn't move. But as the team came around he had his eye on them and as soon as they came out, he sat up and he turned and he pointed his big handgun right at them, so they shot him.

KC: They had to.

³¹ Dennis Lee Conroy, PhD, was appointed patrolman May 22, 1972; promoted to sergeant June 6, 1978; and retired November 29, 2002. He was awarded a PhD in Psychology September 5, 1987.

JL: Yes.

KC: What does it feel like after that many hours, that much intensity, that work, to try to save his life, and of course there wasn't a thing that you could do?

JL: Well, it was interesting, because as I told you, I took the role of a coach and Jim was very engaged. In fact, at one point Jim had said, "Freddy, if it'll make you feel better, I'll take off my gun belt and I'll walk out to you." And we said, "No, you can't do that Jim." And he didn't do that. But Jim emotionally got a lot further invested into it than I did and he had a lot harder time with the death then. I suppose it sounds cold, but I firmly believe that Freddy knew exactly what he was doing. I watched what happened. I talked and heard him. To me, he made that decision and it went exactly the way that he wanted it to go and that was his choice. Those four guys that shot him -- and one of them is my husband -- that is something they have had to live with. And that has not been easy for them and Freddy did that to them. He put that on them. It was a little upsetting for him. I know it was. He would tell you it was. I actually have known Jim all my life. He was a friend of my uncle's before I ever became a cop.

KC: The last nine years you have mostly been in investigations.

JL: That sounds right. Since Juvenile in 1997.

KC: So you spent about four years in Juvenile. What was that like?

JL: Juvenile is a great place for a first sergeant to go. Juvenile is the unit where I think we really do our best work. It is set up so that you have sergeants working cases and then you have these school resource officers who are officers and it is a natural mentoring situation. Officers are out in the schools and they are the ones you call on to bring suspects or victims in. They will maybe sit through an interview or they will do a line up for you, so they are like junior investigators in a mentoring situation. It is a very positive way to learn the skills. Plus, as a

Juvenile investigator, you investigate every crime there is except for sex crimes and burglaries. Fraud and forgery, arson, assault, auto-theft, robbery, anything a seventeen-or-under-year-old person does, except those other two areas. So you learn all the elements of every type of crime and how to get it properly prosecuted. It is a great platform for an investigator to start off on. It is the area where there is an especially positive relationship with the Juvenile prosecutors. There is a lot of exchange of skills, every year there is a couple of social events between the two agencies. Friendships form. I have still got friendships with some of the Juvenile prosecutors that I made way back then. So Juvenile was a very good place to work. At the time my kids were in their early teens, so -- [laughs]. Yes, it was good that way, too.

KC: As you are walking through it personally, you are seeing the harder kids. Then you moved into the other investigative roles. After Juvenile you were in Homicide and then Domestic Violence, then Homicide, then SIU.

JL: Yes.

KC: Talk about some of the cases that you investigated.

JL: Well, probably the one I am most known for is the Steven Bailey case. That was my first “lead investigator” case, I guess. I worked in with Neil Nelson.³² Steven Bailey had met someone online and invited them to come here and engage in breath restriction activities with sex.³³ A flight attendant from California had

³² Neil Paul Nelson was appointed police officer July 11, 1977; promoted to sergeant June 15, 1986; commander June 12, 2004; retired September 30, 2010.

³³ **Erotic asphyxiation** or breath control play is the intentional restriction of oxygen to the brain for sexual arousal. The sexual preference for that behavior is variously called asphyxiophilia, autoerotic asphyxia, hypoxiphilia. Colloquially, a person engaging in the activity is sometimes called a *gasper*. The erotic interest in asphyxiation is classified as a paraphilia in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association. (Wikipedia)

come here, Frank Brodnax. Met up with Steve Bailey, went to his house, they put a gas mask on him, Steve hung him from this weight contraption he had in his room, and then put a chloroform rag in the gas mask with a plastic bag over it, and Mr. Brodnax had suffocated. We got the call three days later when Mr. Bailey was trying to drag the body out of the apartment and put it in the trunk of his car and his neighbor saw him. My involvement started then right in the alley, where the officer had him in the backseat of his car. I went in the car and introduced myself. Bailey told me he had AIDS and he needed a gym bag full of medication that was still in the apartment. He knew he was going to jail and would I go in and get his medication so he could stay on his cocktails of medication for AIDS. So I went in and got that gym bag and brought it back out, put it in the car. We brought him downtown and we started what turned out to be fourteen hours then of interview with him over four separate stages.

The first one took place in the interview room. The second one was out at his house, where we actually walked through all the steps of the night and where the body had laid for three days and how he had moved it around and all the equipment that he had and pointing things out. During that interview then, where he is on camera and he is showing me around his apartment, we pause by the door of his apartment and I said, "Well, is there anything else that you want me to have or that you haven't mentioned?" And he said, "Well, I suppose you're gonna want the movie camera that I used to film it." I said, "Yeah, I would like the movie camera that you used to film it." [chuckles] He got that down and I said, "And where's the film that you used to film it?" He said, "That's in the gym bag that you brought back to the office." I had always known that asking open ended questions and giving someone a chance to fill in things

that you forget to ask about, because I never would have guessed that he had a movie camera [laughs]. But anyway, so he ended up explaining several different versions of how Mr. Brodnax had died and he got charged with manslaughter and third degree murder, which is a very odd statute. But those were the charges.

He went to trial, decided not to have a jury, and it was a judge that decided that he was guilty of manslaughter. From there he got sentenced. The guidelines were four years, but the judge departed upwards and gave him six years, but then the Supreme Court decided that, when there is not a jury trial, a judge doesn't have an option of departing upward. It is only when a jury decides someone is guilty that you can depart upward. So anyway, the sentence had to be reduced again to four years and after serving about two-and-a-half, there he was, back out on the street again. I have run into him a few times now [both laugh].

KC: And you live in our city, so you may run into the people that live in our city and have committed crimes. Have you ever felt that there was danger in that? Running into someone that you have arrested and sent to prison?

JL: No, I haven't. Maybe it is because my memory is not good enough, but no I have not felt that --

KC: Or maybe it is because you are respectful and you treat people fairly.

JL: Well, I like to think that is the case.

That was something, as negotiators, we would always remind ourselves, too: what does it cost to not humiliate somebody when we finally do arrest them? Or to not talk bad about them, because guess what, they are going to be back out

here again. And we have negotiated with the same people more than once, on more than one occasion.

The Steven Bailey case was funny, because those were in the early days of the internet and this thing was just in 2002. I guess not the early days, but it right away splashed all over the whole world and there were cases in Germany that they thought were linked. There may be other things that are connected and maybe we will find out someday and maybe not. Somehow, a movie production crew in England heard about the case and then called me up and asked if they could do a story out of it. They came to town and they dug up all the court stuff and then they went to prison and they interviewed him and then they interviewed me. Then it was a special that aired on the BBC or something [both chuckle]. Of all things. So I have got a lot of friends in Norway and out of the blue one day, somebody said that they had watched this movie from England and “Oh, there you were.” [both laugh]

KC: Oh, wow. Tell me another story about an investigation

JL: Well, I will tell you about a way of investigating that I came from scoffing at to actually believing in. I am a logical, analytical person. That has always been where I have--I like finding hard evidence and I love data and things like that. I don't get real emotional with the way I approach an investigation, so I don't like go by my feelings. I go by black and white. One of my colleagues over the years is Janet Dunnom³⁴ and she has just the opposite approach where she does

³⁴ Janet Lee Dunnom was appointed police officer June 15, 1987; leave of absence March 24, 1991; return police officer January 21, 1992; promoted to sergeant August 30, 1997; inspector August 31, 1997; return to sergeant January 30, 1999; retired July 31, 2009; temporary public information specialist October 26, 2009 – June 8, 2010.

think with her heart on everything. It was very hard for me to work around her, because everything was “Oh, I feel this” or “My intuition is telling me that” and I would be like, “Janet, let’s deal with the facts here. Let’s write a list and let’s approach this logically.” And she would fly off and follow these red herrings around and it was very hard. First we were negotiators together and then we became Sex Crimes investigators together and again had these different approaches. It wasn’t until we started working Homicide cases together that I came to value her approach. What I saw was that Janet was orphaned at age fourteen and my parents are still alive all these years. I believe that Janet has always been tuned into listening for like, signs of her mother talking. She lost her mother when she was two. Like she would meet my mom and my mom would be telling the same story that I had heard a hundred times and I would be kind of embarrassed and then afterwards Janet would say, “Oh, your mom is so wise. I learned so many things from her.” And I would say, “Really? I think maybe that was your mom talking to you through my mom.” [laughs] So I started to open my mind to it.

Janet had a case assigned to her, Memory Pakowitz. And Memory was a person-- she had a daughter who was I believe around thirteen and then a child that was about one, and she had a lifestyle that was kind of edgy. Her mother lived up in, I think, North Dakota. She had a few boyfriends in her life. Anyway, somehow we get notified that Memory Pakowitz had been missing, was a missing person. Missing person cases are all over the spectrum, because people can be adults and they can go missing and that is not a crime. There is not really a lot the police can and will do until there is a crime that is involved. That is just a fact. Anyway, she had been reported missing and there were some things that didn’t add up, but

she had gone missing before, I think, so nobody was taking this very serious. But Janet was totally convinced that something had happened to Memory Pakowitz. She got bloodhounds out to search this area. She got a helicopter to fly over and to search. The whole week that she was doing this, the rest of us were saying, "Hey, reality check. You know there's work to do here. Get back to--" and she just would not let it go. She just, "No, no, something's happened to Memory. I've gotta keep working on this. I'm gonna do this."

Well, a week went by and on a Saturday, a guy called in and he said that he owned a big house that had been chopped up in a lot of small little efficiency apartments. He was trying to sell it and he had come back from California and there was a bad smell in one of the apartments. Janet looked at me, "See?" Before we ever knew. Anyway, went over there. It was Memory, but beyond recognition. We knew from the clothing. It was then that I realized there is something to this. Janet investigates with her heart and I better start listening to her. It was the first of many, many times that I saw that approach. Especially when it was coupled with a logical, analytical approach, it made the full package. We have laughed about it many times. We are best friends. We are as different as night and day, but she is an amazing investigator.

KC: Do you have that intuition? Are you able to intuitively pull that up sometimes?

JL: I would say I don't. But I know that my faith is there for me when I--what I have had happen to me is at a point in an investigation, I have opened myself up to being an instrument and kind of letting go of the controls.

KC: One of the people I have interviewed is Joe Corcoran.³⁵ Joe was the Homicide lieutenant, head of the unit, for a number of years retired before you went into Homicide. Joe certainly would say the same thing, that every time he got the call he would pray. He said He -- He meaning God -- He, in his case it was a male. So he was very clear that God guided him and the investigators and that is how they solved the cases that they did.

JL: It is a fact, yes. I have the Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi³⁶ over my desk. I believe I am just an instrument, always have been. I am grateful for that.

KC: When you came on the department, was your faith as strong then as it is now?

JL: No. No, John would never talk about it and together we have grown to the point where yes, we pray about cases and guidance, and we meditate and read a lot.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be
consoled, as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal
Life.

Amen.*

³⁵ Joseph Kane Corcoran was appointed patrolman March 2, 1964; promoted to sergeant October 3, 1970; promoted to lieutenant March 24, 1990; and retired March 27, 1998.

³⁶ The **Prayer of Saint Francis** is a Christian prayer. It is attributed to the 13th-century Saint Francis of Assisi, although the prayer in its present form cannot be traced back further than 1912. The prayer has been known in the United States since 1936 and Cardinal Francis Spellman and Senator Albert W. Hawkes distributed millions of copies of the prayer during and just after World War II.

KC: When did you start getting into meditation?

JL: With John.

I have always had social girlfriends through church and our kids were the age, so we have had this huge side to always going to the same church and doing aerobics and 'Body and Soul' and all this together. So it has been a good platform. I guess the experiences with John, losing officers on the job, just



John and Jane

2006

KC: How do you keep the balance in your life? You say that you are a mom, the job you do is that of a cop, but how do you keep the balance of being a balanced woman? Because law enforcement, being a cop, can be very time consuming, working a lot of strange hours.

JL: Well I didn't set really to--I didn't say, "Oh, I have to keep girlfriends so that I stay balanced, or I have to stay in shape so I stay—" but I did and of course it has helped. To have civilian girlfriends--there is a lot of stories I can't even tell them, because they just look at me like ["you're scaring me."]. Having John and instead of having to explain about my job and everything, he already knows. He knows all the people and he knows all the pressures and everything. He is a great dad to his kids and a stepdad to my kids. So he has been the main source of that strength and balance. And me for him, too. I know that, because there was a time when he was working seven extra jobs besides, so he is a lot more balanced

now. He doesn't work any off duty anymore. He works quite a bit of overtime as a Homicide investigator, but he is in a much more stable frame of mind.



Sergeants John Wright and Jane Laurence

2005

KC: How long have you been married?

JL: I think seven years. We were together for probably four or so before that.

KC: You came on twelve years into women being on the department. Have there been women that have stepped up and mentored you when you were learning new jobs? Who have been the mentors that really have strengthened your skills?

JL: Well, Nancy DiPerna³⁷ definitely.

KC: She was your commander in Homicide.

JL: Yes. The best there ever was. Nancy has got the biggest heart of anybody around and she knows how to have fun and she cares so much for victims and she cares about doing the right thing and about employees. She is just a very--and yet

³⁷ Nancy Elizabeth DiPerna was appointed police officer October 31, 1980; promoted to sergeant March 9, 1986; lieutenant May 1, 1990; commander October 4, 1997; senior commander January 1, 2000; assistant chief June 26, 2004; returned to senior commander July 3, 2010; and retired November 30, 2010.



Assistant Chief
Nancy DiPerna
2005

nobody thinks of her as anything less than a great commander and deputy chief. Nancy DiPerna was definitely my best mentor, of any man or woman.

KC: Tell me about a homicide, where you had to work a lot with the victims or the victim's family.

JL: Boy, there was a couple where there are victims and then there are victims. Ben Doran was a fifteen-year-old boy that was murdered by two thugs that I guess mistook him for another person. These two idiots didn't have much of a plan and then they just chased him down and beat him to death. Working with Maggie Doran: he was her only child and I was so glad that that case did get solved because it started off very--I mean, like who? Ben didn't have any enemies. Usually you start with, "Well who would have done this?" Well nobody. We couldn't figure out--in fact there was another young man whose name had come up early in that investigation.

Ben was with a group of kids and there was another guy that maybe would have had a motive, so we focused on this guy. We were in his house talking with him and his family, in the middle of that night, kind of pressuring him, like "Did you not have a grudge?" And he said, "Yeah I did, but I didn't do this." And we are thinking, "Oh, you are lying. You did this." We were pretty tough on him. And it turned out then that was a red herring and we got back on track and kind of forgot about him, but that really bothered his family that he was accused of that. We were accusing him. His mom wanted to meet later and I could see why. We owed her an apology. Many years later, I was over at Regions Hospital on

another case and I ran into this boy's mother in intensive care. I just ran into her and she goes, "I recognize you." And I am trying to place her and everything and she said, "I'm his mother." I said, "Oh." You know, I am trying to recover. I said, "How is he?" She said, "He's dying. He's here because he's dying." And he did [sighs]. To this day--I mean it was just, what were our paths? Why did they cross like that, twice? She lost her son, too.

No, I think about Maggie Doran a lot. She has invited us to be part of her --

KC: She has created a non-profit to do work in Frogtown, I think, or to help kids.

JL: I guess so. I purposely distanced myself. I care a lot about Maggie and stuff, but I did, and I think the other investigator did, too. We said, "I can't do this. I just can't." It is just too hard to keep--I don't know. God bless her for it, but--

KC: So that would be one of the ways that you keep balance in your life, is not by staying enmeshed with victim's families, because they have a lot of emotional roller coaster and if you stayed with their emotional roller coaster you become their counselors. That can be very draining.

JL: Yes. And I hope she never reads this and blames me, but that is the truth.



Dan Moriarty, Jane Laurence, Trish Englund, Neil Nelson, Janet Dunnom, Tom Bergern, Mark Kempe.

Seated: Commander Nancy DiPerna

Homicide Unit

2004

Another case I think about is Shirley Sheppard. I don't know if you remember her. I think she was in her upper seventies, and she had worked at the Goodwill and she had made friends with this woman who was kind of homeless. It was over off of Fairview and University. There is that Goodwill and then there is a storage area and I think Shirley was working in the storage area and the girl was keeping her [things in storage]. She had a little storage thing, just like a closet is all. But anyway, they had gotten to know each other somehow. This girl decided she wanted to steal Shirley's car and somehow she made it over to Shirley's house on the Eastside and then waited out in the car in the garage and attacked Shirley when she came out and beat her. Then she brought her body out to Woodbury and put it in the woods out there in a park.

A very complicated investigation. Shirley herself was friends with the mother of one of the other investigators on the case. And also one of Shirley's sons is a Saint Paul fireman. She was a complete total, innocent victim, just like Ben. Anyway, that case also started with an officer where his own intuition just would not give up. He got sent up to Shirley's house to take a missing report and instead of just taking the report and driving off, the guy camped out in her house and started calling her family members and he got everyone involved. He did sixty percent of the investigation before we even got called in on it. Todd Tessmer,³⁸ his name is.

KC: And the body was found and they recognized she was murdered in the city.

³⁸ Todd Tessmer was appointed police officer May 2, 1994.

JL: She wasn't found until we had done quite a bit of the investigation. We took it from there seriously right away, because of her age and there was a checkbook missing, her car was missing. There were some very obvious signs that something bad had happened. That was another--Neil Nelson is a name I am sure you will keep hearing all the time, but an amazing investigator.

Okay so we get called up to Shirley's house, the car is gone, she is gone, something has happened. By now people had trampled all over the house and the garage and I mean family, police, everybody had walked around trying to figure this out. Neil figured out that the crime scene was probably the garage and that there might be footprints in the garage. Well just looking at the garage floor nobody could see any footprints. Neil called the BCA, the State of Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension crime scene team out there and they did photographs of the floor of the garage where the light came right along the floor like this so that each grain of sand was visible in the photograph. Once they did that, you could see that there were these tennis shoe prints where they had turned on the ball of the foot. There was a circle and you could tell that an imprint from a tennis shoe would have a circle like that. Huge evidence, because later, when we figured out who the suspect was and got her, she had those tennis shoes with that on her. I mean there had to have been thirty-forty people that had walked around in that garage and not seen it and not thought to look for it until Neil. It wasn't even his case and he walked in and that is how amazing he is as an investigator.

KC: That has to be intuition and guidance. And he has just retired

JL: Yes, same day as me.

KC: Same day as you?

JL: Yes.

KC: Did you have a party together?

JL: He had a party and he paid for it and I came [both laugh]. I got to say goodbye to all my favorite people and it didn't cost me anything.

KC: What other stories do I need to ask you?

JL: Well, I would like to mention the wiretaps. Like I say, I had the brief experience with wiretaps in the early 1990s and in--I guess it was in 2008, there was a few officers that are kind of--we call ourselves like the nerd herd or the geek cops or whatever, but we just like data and we like technology. Most cops, they are aware of it, but there is other areas of law enforcement that they are more interested in and that is not their thing, to sit with data spreadsheets and all that. But anyway, a few of us were sitting around talking and one of them had worked on a DEA, Drug Enforcement Administration task force for a while, where they routinely do wiretaps on a federal level.

You can either get a federal authorization for a wiretap, or there is a Minnesota state law and it is the same thing. You have to show necessity and exhaustion. So you do an investigation, a thorough investigation, then you just show all the steps that you have done. You show that you have exhausted all other possibilities or they are too dangerous to try or likely to fail and that it is necessary for the completion of the investigation for you to intercept communications. So we said, "Well, let's do this. The technology's there and we've got all these--" That was back in 2007, 2008. We were having a lot of gang murders. I don't know if you have noticed, but they are not happening as much. Once you have those retaliation things and you have a bunch of different shootings, then you have a murder, then you have another murder. Then they

will not talk, because they are all afraid or they are going to handle it themselves or whatever, but they are very hard to investigate.

We decided we would take one of those murders -- a seventeen-year-old girl had gotten shot in an exchange of gunfire. She wasn't the target, but we used that and wrote it up so that we got permission to tap the phones of some of the people that we knew were involved in it. Again, this was just patrol officers and sergeants that were thinking of this and we had to push it through the powers that be and it costs money. It costs less now to do one intercept than it used to, because technology is so much easier. It is all on computers now. Anyway, the BCA, State of Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, has the room set up for doing it. You have to partner with the Ramsey county attorney. You have to get an attorney, because they have to draft all these motions and warrants and things like that, then go to the judge. So we got an attorney, David Miller, on board and I wrote the affidavit, twenty-two pages, and he completed the other forms that he needed to and we got permission to do it. So we did about a month-and-a-half of interceptions there.

What we found right away was the people we were listening to were doing a whole lot of drug dealing and a lot retaliation and a lot of shooting and stuff. Well, that wasn't the focus of what we were trying--we were just supposed to be investigating this murder, so David Miller said, "You can't use any of this drug dealing evidence and stuff from this intercept, because that wasn't your focus. But you can use that as probable cause to get another intercept order and make it a broader, organized crime focus where you're gonna be looking at all this different type of stuff that's running the machinery of this organized crime. The

Selby Side.” That is a gang in Saint Paul. So we wrote that up and got a wiretap going. And this time, we had a big field contingency, so then you have the guys that do surveillance and tails and make traffic stops and run informants and all that. So we had that going on at the same we had the monitoring going on.

Well, sure enough they do a couple of drive-bys right while we are listening to them and we got--I think we ended up with ten or eleven different state felony charges on different high ranking Selby Siders. Also then, Tom Arnold,³⁹ one of the guys right in the middle of this whole thing, he had some experience working with the ATF on different gun cases, getting federal charges on gun cases. He listened to some of the calls closely and figured out that what he was listening to was a conversation about straw purchases, which is a person with a clean record who buys guns for somebody who is not allowed to have guns. So he followed up on that and got this straw purchaser to flip over and agree to sell another gun to this real bad gang member. Tom set all that up. He was just amazing and he arranged this whole thing -- the take down, the eavesdropping, the wire, the monitor, everything over there by--what is it Arby’s? Over there on the corner of Fairview and University. We took him down right as he was turning over another gun to this gangster and got federal charges on that guy.

Then we did a third wiretap recently on a murder of a two-and-a-half-year-old and that is still an ongoing investigation. But what was fun about it was that the

³⁹ Thomas Duane Arnold was appointed police officer September 19, 1988; promoted to sergeant January 14, 2012.

department has not done a state wiretap since Nancy DiPerna was involved in one when I first came on in 1989, and that was the last time we had done it, even though the law is in the books and it is available for us to do. It felt good to do that. It felt good to work with this bunch of geeky cops, and they are going to be the future of the department in that area. They are going to do the next wiretap. They are going to launch in listening to voice-over-internet, all these different aspects of investigating that police are going to have to keep up on. These guys are going to be the ones that do it.

KC: In her oral history interview, Nancy talked that was the first wiretap in the state. The law was on the books, but I think it was the first.

JL: I will bet it was. On the Nina, the brothels and the saunas and stuff. Yes. It goes full circle. It does.

KC: It does. What were the circumstances that you decided to retire after twenty-one years? Had you been planning this for a while?

Janet Dunnom,
Tom Bergren, Nancy
DiPerna, Bruce
Wynkoop, Jane Laurence

Homicide Unit
Law Enforcement
Memorial Day
2003



JL: Everybody talks about it all the time. You get cops in their forties and fifties together, that is like the only thing they talk about. Everybody has got this date out there. I had a heart thing a couple years ago, ended up in a cardiac-intensive care unit and got a pacemaker, so that was a little bit of a wake-up. But I don't think that was what made me pick a date. This date had always worked out in a big complicated formula, is the first time that it really was financially a good thing. I mean I could have gone at fifty. We all can leave at fifty, but you have to look at a lot of things, you know insurance and other things. A huge formula. This date had worked out and John could go, too, but he is liking working the homicide cases. I had kind of reached a point where I had worked everywhere that I wanted to work and really couldn't go back to doing other things and probably wanted to move out of the arrangement that I was in. Looked from side to side and back and decided to move forward.

KC: What are you most proud about in your twenty-one years?

JL: I will tell you what I feel most rich about and that is people told me, "You won't get rich. You're a civil servant. You work for the government. You'll never be rich." But I did get rich in memories and friendship. That is what I am very rich in.

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