	cusses his career as a production worker, skilled trades millwright and AW member at the Fisher Body plant in Lansing, MI
4 5Doug Rademacher: 6 7 8 9	Good morning. I'm Doug Rademacher. I'm with the Fisher Body Historical Team and we're here to interview Randy Taylor and, uh, it is October the 6 <sup>th</sup> , approximately 10:20 in the morning. Good morning, Randy. [0:21] Would you please state your name and your address for the record?
10 11Randal Taylor: 12 13	Randy Taylor. I live in Flushing, Michigan. I'm a millwright here at Fisher Body.
14Doug Rademacher:	[0:31] And are you married?
16Randal Taylor:	Yes, I am.
18Doug Rademacher:	[0:33] Do you have any children?
20Randal Taylor: 21	Two kids, both girls, one grandkid and one more on the way.
22Doug Rademacher: 23 24	Congratulations. [throat clearing] [0:43] Um, would you please, uh, tell me a little bit about your education?
25Randal Taylor: 26 27 28	Uh, went to Flushing High School, Flushing Schools. Uh, took couple years up to Central Michigan University and, uh, then, uh, after that I went through the apprenticeship program through AC Spark Plug in Flint.
29Doug Rademacher: 30	Local 651.
31Randal Taylor: 32	Mm-hm, yep.
33Doug Rademacher: 34	Um, and did you have any?
35Randal Taylor: 36	[Inaudible 1:10].
37Doug Rademacher: 38	[1:11] Do you have any military service?
39Randal Taylor:	No, I don't.
41Doug Rademacher: 42 43	Well, we want to talk to you today about the, your history here at Fisher Body. [1:17] Can you tell me, um, how many years do you have here?
44Randal Taylor: 45	I came down to Fisher Body January of 2000, uh, as a transfer from AC Spark Plug which went to Delphi which then they came out with the flow-

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back agreement and I was the first one to raise my hand and say "How can

2 I get out of Delphi?" [chuckling]

3

4Doug Rademacher: Looking at today's, uh, state of the business, I'm sure you're glad [throat

clearing] that was the right move for you.

6

7Randal Taylor: Smartest thing I think I've ever done. [chuckling]

8

9Doug Rademacher: [1:48] And which department did you hire into?

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11Randal Taylor: Uh, Paint Department.

12

13Doug Rademacher: [1:53] And what was your, did you come right into Trades?

14

15Randal Taylor: Yeah.

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17Doug Rademacher: [1:56] So you got hired into the Paint Department as a?

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19Randal Taylor: As a millwright.

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21Doug Rademacher: As a millwright.

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23Randal Taylor: Mm-hm.

24

25Doug Rademacher: [2:02] Um, can you describe the duties of the millwright for people that

don't really know what a millwright is?

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28Randal Taylor: Uh, basically, a jack-of-all-trades. Whatever the pipefitters and

electricians and the tinsmiths don't want to do, the millwrights end up doin'. Uh, all the heavy stuff, movin' anything, uh, construction of any,

31 uh, heavy steel buildings, steel anything like that, uh, conveyor

maintenance, conveyor breakdown, uh, at least like I say, this is mostly
Paint Shop experience that I'm talking about. Um, and, uh, like I say, just basically, uh, you know, everything that's, uh, broke and nobody wants to

lay claim to it, we end up doin' it. [chuckling]

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37Michael Fleming: [2:49] Randy, um, while we're there, when you came in on your first day,

what was your first day like in this plant as a millwright and, and how did

39 they receive you when you came?

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41Randal Taylor: Oh, the reception was great. I was just in awe, because you have to

understand, coming from AC Spark Plug we made, uh, spark plugs, fuel filters, [throat clearing] air filters, small little things that just went 90 miles an hour down the assembly line. We assembled, uh, over a million spark plugs a week and I'm dealing with conveyors that are, you know, 3 ½ inches wide and going a bazillion miles an hour. And we come down here

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	and you got this piece of chain that's this long and it's all you can do to pick it up when they say "hey, you got to replace that" and, you know, the wrench is about yay long rather than my little 9/16 and 1/2 inch wrench I carry around my pocket that can pretty much fix anything. But people down here were great, you know. Even coming from a different plant, you know, and a different Local and everything and, uh, I'd say "hey", you know, you know, "who are you?" Introduce, you know, they'd introduce themselves and whatnot and, and, uh, they said, "hey, we're glad to have you down here", you know.
10 11Doug Rademacher: 12 13	Now you just shared a few, uh, sizes by some hand gestures but the people that are listening to this won't have any idea. [4:08] How big was yay long piece of chain and how big was that wrench?
14 15Randal Taylor: 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	Oh, well, like I say, you know, uh, you're talking, you know, a conveyor chain here in this plant, you know, each link itself is, is 6 inches long and then you get a length of, of 10-foot chain and you got to have two guys to, to pick it up and carry it around 'cause you can't do it by yourself. And, uh, sometimes on the breakdowns when you need a lot of leverage to, you know, cars get jammed up or you have, you know, cars that piggyback, they ride up on top of one another and, uh, you need to get a six-foot pry bar out or you might have to have a five-foot long wrench to get enough leverage to be able to move the chain so you can release the tension and get everybody goin' and make'm all happy again.
26Doug Rademacher: 27	So you kind of found that quite exciting the
28Randal Taylor: 29	Yeah.
30Doug Rademacher: 31	quite a change from
32Randal Taylor: 33	Yeah, it was, it was
34Doug Rademacher:	from a small assembly part to the
36Randal Taylor: 37	quite a difference, yeah.
38Doug Rademacher: 39	automobile.
40Randal Taylor: 41	Mm-hm.
42Doug Rademacher: 43	That's great.
44Randal Taylor:	Yeah.

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Uh, Jerri, you have a question?

46Doug Rademacher:

2Jerri Smith: Yes. [5:08] Were you a millwright when you were at Delphi?

4Randal Taylor: Yes, I was.

6Jerri Smith: So you just switched from there to here...

8Randal Taylor: Right, yes.

10Jerri Smith: ...as a millwright.

11

12Randal Taylor: Right. Yep. Yeah. I was, uh, uh, hired on as a apprenticeship millwright at Del-, at AC Spark Plug [throat clearing] and, um, went through my 13 14 apprenticeship program there and everything. And then, like I say, in May of '99 they announced that all of AC, well at that time it was AC Delco, 15 16 would be now Delphi and then our great union got our flow-back

17 agreement and scooted on out of there.

18

19Doug Rademacher: Congratulations. [5:45] Uh, which shift did you hire into into Fisher

20 Body?.

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22Randal Taylor: The second shift.

23

24Doug Rademacher: [5:50] Now was that – for you was that a preferred shift or was that just

didn't matter at the time? 25

26

27Randal Taylor: Uh, didn't matter really too much at the time. I'm not real comfortable with gettin' up with alarm clocks at 4:00 in the morning. Of course, you 28 29 have to understand my situation, I got a 52-mile commute one-way back 30 and forth. So first shift startin' at 6:00, I got to be on the road by quarter to 5, which is an ungodly hour in the morning, so second shift definitely 31 32 worked out better for me. [chuckling]

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34Doug Rademacher: [6:21] Um, next question would be did you have any other members of 35

your family work here or in the auto industry before you went to AC

36 before you came?

37

38Randal Taylor: Yeah. My, um, my brother is a millwright at, uh, he was a millwright at 39 Buick City, which is in Flint, and he, when that shut down he transferred 40 up to the, uh, Saginaw Metal Casting which casts the aluminum, um, heads and blocks for the motors. My brother-in-law is a millwright at – he 41 42 started at Chevy V8, which when that closed he went to the Chevy 6-43 cylinder line. As a matter of fact, right now he's in Japan lookin' at new, 44 uh, new equipment for their new engine plant that they're buildin' in Flint.

45

46Doug Rademacher: [7:09] 659's, uh, metal, is that, uh, Flint Engine South...

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2Randal Taylor: Right.

4Doug Rademacher: ...that, that group?

6Randal Taylor: Yep. Mm-hm. So yeah, we got, uh, my brother, my brother-in-law, and my sister-in-law is an electrician at, uh, Buick City. She's still there at

8 Buick City, so.

10Doug Rademacher: You're the only escapee, is that...

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12Randal Taylor: Yeah, yeah. [chuckling]

13

14Doug Rademacher: The only one over the fence. [7:32] Um, so tell about the change. Um, 15

I'm sure you've got the stories from all of them. Is, uh, do you have a

good story to tell of about coming to Lansing or is it, uh...?

16 17

18Randal Taylor: [chuckling] I got a funny story.

20Doug Rademacher: All right.

21

22Randal Taylor: [chuckling] Um, when, uh, the C line was going down in which was, uh, 23 Christmas I think it was two years ago, anyways, the last, the last night 24 that we were here, um, I brought by son-in-law in to see the factory. He 25 had never been inside a General Motors factory, car assembly factory or 26 anything, you know, so I brought him in with me. And, and, uh, we had a,

27 a rent-a-boss I guess you would call it and, uh, I put him in a set of

coveralls and gave him a hat and a pair of glasses and the boss never asked 28

29 once who he was and we had a big breakdown and he went out on

breakdown with us and [chuckling] carried chains up the stairs goin' up in 30

21-3 and [chuckling] nobody ever said "boo" to him. [laughter] 31

32

33Michael Fleming: And while we're on that subject... [throat clearing]

34

35Doug Rademacher: Mike.

37Michael Fleming: While we're on that subject about rent-a-boss is – we all in this room

38 understand what a rent-a-boss is, [8:54] could you explain?

39

40Randal Taylor: Oh. Con-, the, the contract employees, contract supervisors. We had a

real good boss. Uh, at that time I was on third shift, uh, still in Paint, and, 41 42 uh, we had a real good boss, [Brad Shively 9:07] that, uh, took a position 43 over to car assembly which was across town and so they brought a, a

44 temporary, uh, contractual boss in.

45

46Michael Fleming: Thank you.

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2Doug Rademacher: [9:24] Uh, tell me, what's the working conditions like inside Fisher Body

for you?

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5Randal Taylor: Uh, [chuckling] well, do you want to, uh?

6

7Doug Rademacher: Yeah, the...

8

9Randal Taylor: If you want to go to Paint, [throat clearing] you're gonna find some nasty

creatures you don't want to have in your bedroom or in your house. Um, 10 11 it's an old plant and, uh, in some of the areas it's very dark and very wet 12 and so you get some critters that, uh, everybody's not too fond of. You move a piece of equipment and you'll find all sorts of them scatterin'. 13 Um, and bein' that it's an old plant, a lot of different levels, uh, paint 14 ovens and that, they go uphill and downhill and everything. And, you 15 16 know, being on the maintenance crew and everything, you have to do a PM inspection every two months so you're walkin' through the ovens and 17

if you're claustrophobic you don't want to be in there because it's just light enough and just high enough for a car body to fit through and that's it. And, uh, you know, so you're, you're goin' through a half-mile oven with no lights, you know, you just got your trusty little flashlight with you

22 and everything. Um, and then stark contrast, you go into the clean room 23 with the Paint Department where, you know, it's just spotless and it has to

be. So it varies, you know, depending on where you're at.

25

26Doug Rademacher: So why would you do it...

27

28Marilyn Coulter: Can – wait a minute. [10:53] Could, could you, for those once again who

29 don't know, can you say what PM is, please?

30

31Randal Taylor: Oh, pre-, preventative maintenance.

32

33Marilyn Coulter: Thank you.

34

35Doug Rademacher: I was just curious...

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37Randal Taylor: Mm-hm.

38

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39Doug Rademacher: ...[11:02] why would you do that preventative, that walkthrough in the

dark? I understand the plant's not running but, uh, what are you looking

41 for in a walkthrough in a evening walkthrough?

42

43Randal Taylor: Well, you're on, we're on third shift and so we come in, you know, the

ovens would be shut down in the evening and whatnot and, uh, after they cool down enough to where we could get into'm, um, we would have to walk the conveyors, which was basically just a, a, track that the car bodies,

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uh, were situated on a dolly. The conveyor chain would pull these dollies down this track and, uh, there would wear items, the steel in the track that would wear out, um, that would break. Um, there's – in the ovens it's arranged in kind of a continuous S curve, so a lot of curves and whatnot and a lot of places for the, uh, chain to wear out too. The conveyor chain is constructed in a way to where there's wear strips that are meant to wear out so that the chain doesn't wear out, so it's, it's, uh, kind of a throwaway item type, you know, so that's what you're lookin' for.

10Doug Rademacher:

Interesting. [12:21] Um, how has, uh, your supervisory techniques changed over the years? Did you have, um – the way supervisors conducted business is it the same as when you hired in or has things changed in how they, uh, uh, set up work or something?

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I guess I've been fortunate in that, uh, I've always had really good bosses that were really close with the maintenance personnel. And maybe it's just something that's, uh, indigenous to being in maintenance, uh, versus being on the line, um, because our, you know, we don't have a, we don't have a pace that has to be maintained, you know, and, uh, ours is kind of more like a reactive type situation. And so all the bosses that I've, I've had have been really good as far as, you know, as far as communicating things, as far as, you know, if I need any tools or any equipment or anything like that, they've all been really good about gettin' it. And, um, you know, and usually it's always been the older bosses or I should say fellows that have been around a lot because, you know, you get the new, new hires or new bosses basically are on the production and this, and this is just what I've seen, you know, are on the production floor and then after 15, 20, 20 years or so if they got the seniority, you know, it's not like a union but if, you know, they put in their time then hopefully they can get a little bit choicer position and it seems like they'd all kinda graduate up into a maintenance type situation to where it's, it's a little bit more laid back than having to be on the line all the time.

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34Doug Rademacher: 35

[14:09] Have you noticed any environmental changes in the conditions of the plant?

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Yeah. It's, it's gotten better as far as, um, um, you know, just the cleanliness of it, you know, as far as the paint and whatnot, you know. And talking to some of the guys that had been around for years and years and years, you know, they just tell horror stories about what it used to be like, you know, with the fumes and the smells and everything and, uh, it, it's definitely a lot better than what it was from talkin' to these guys. Um, like I say, with the short time that I was here, um, I didn't notice too much of a difference or...

46Doug Rademacher:

[14:53] Did you ever have a layoff?

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2Randal Taylor: Uh, yeah, for two weeks.

3

4Doug Rademacher: Tell...

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6Randal Taylor: I wish it was longer.

7

8Doug Rademacher: ...tell, tell about that.

9

10Randal Taylor: [chuckling]

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12Doug Rademacher: [15:01] Uh, what caused the layoff? What were you out for?

13

14Randal Taylor:

Uh, it was, um, last year when we were shuttin' down the plants for two weeks on, two weeks off type of thing because of, uh, the cutback in the orders and, and everything so, um, maintenance at the time they were trying to save some money too, knowing that the plant was going to be decommissioned shortly. Um, there was one period where the plant was down for two weeks and we actually got to have those two weeks off where normally we're just workin' all the time when the plant is closed.

2021

22Doug Rademacher: Over the period of years they had what they called changeovers where

23 they would introduce the new models. [15:51] Did you, uh, ever have any

of those changeover downtimes?

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26Randal Taylor: Yeah, yeah. Um, it's when we're down when everybody's gone and it's

changeover it's, um, um, it's a lot of work and, uh, you're, you're goin' 90
miles an hour pretty much all the time just to get, uh, get everything done
because, you know, they got a set date they want to have this stuff done
and so a lot of construction and a lot of moving things around and gettin'
set up for different lines. Um, and just like when, uh, when the plant here
was closing and we switched everything from the M line which was

upstairs and they wanted everything downstairs and we had a target date to hit, this was when everybody was comin' back to work and, and, uh, everything had to be moved, everything had to be changed and re-

anchored down and it was pretty interesting. [chuckling]

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38Michael Fleming: While you're on the subject of moving and moving things around, you

mentioned earlier that millwrights do everything that doesn't get done,
especially the heavy work. We're in a, a period or at a juncture now when
the plant is being disassembled. [17:16] Talk to us about what you all are
doing as millwrights to help disassemble the plant and what type of job it

43 would take to, to get that done.

44

45Randal Taylor: A lot of things, uh, a lot of equipment that was in our plant, uh, um, when

46 we first shut down, uh, and I'm not completely clear of the process but I

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understand other plants would put in a requisition for whatever parts that — or equipment that we had that they would be interested in. Um, we had quite a bit of aluminum, uh, what they call Night Rail that, uh, holds overhead tooling, air tools and whatnot for the production lines that ended up going to Mexico and, uh, to Canada. Um, there was probably over 15,000 feet of that that was taken out of the ceiling and sent out, robots that, um, other plants had an interest in.

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Robots that we could use at the new plant for training were, uh, uh, disconnected by the pipefitters and electricians and then millwrights would go in and, and physically pick the robot up and, and get it to a dock and put it on the truck so the trucks could take it to the new, new location. Um, just a lot of the small equipment that you just take for granted, things that, uh, were just here all the time, you know, just small, small welders, grinders, things that you just normally use every day that you don't think about until oops, you know, we're at the new plant and all of a sudden we don't have that thing, have that stuff, you know, that, uh, you know, we just got to go through the whole plant and get it out of there and load it up. either skid it, or, you know, put it on a wooden skid or put it in a big wire basket and, uh, band it up and get it on a truck and get it over to the new plant. Um, just, uh, like I say, a lot of, a lot of small equipment, uh, that takes a lot of time that you need as far as on a maintenance perspective that you basically need every day, you know, and, you know GM is not going to buy new stuff when we have perfectly working, good working equipment here at this plant.

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27Doreen Howard: Doreen. [19:41] Um, do you have your own personal equipment too that

you, that you have to purchase yourself for your...?

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30Randal Taylor: Yeah.

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32Doreen Howard: ...your own toolbox?

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34Randal Taylor: Right. Yeah. Well, GM provides the toolbox for us and, uh, like I say, a lot of the specialized tools that we need to do our job they'll purchase. 35 36 Normal hand tools and everything we get a, a, the union negotiated an all-, 37 a tool allowance for Skilled Trades so that we're able to purchase our own 38 hand tools and whatnot with that allowance and, uh, so all that is, uh, 39 being shipped over. Uh, everybody, all the, all the trades got new toolboxes because of the new, uh, five, five-foot rule I guess it is over at 40 41 the new plant and, uh, so they constructed new toolboxes and everything

42 for everybody.

43

44Michael Fleming: [20:36] Explain the five-foot rule.

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Uh, five-foot rule basically is just a line of sight, uh, at the new plant. The managers felt they wanted, uh, everything po-, if possible below five-foot so you have a nice clean view of the plant floor that you'll be able to look across, be able to observe everything that's going on and, uh, it well help, um, make things and it opens the plant up quite up, you know, to where you're able to see so if there's necessarily a problem, you know, that hopefully it'll come to light a little bit sooner.

8 9Doug Rademacher:

[21:14] Did you ever, um, have a problem with manpower in the Trades here at Fisher Body? Was there enough manpower? Was there enough Trades? I know that, uh, you know, the apprenticeships and stuff were put on hold for a while, so can you share a little of that? Is there – you guys always work together? Has there been a time when there wasn't enough manpower to get the job done properly or safely?

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16Randal Taylor:

Yeah. We, uh, especially as millwrights being that most of our jobs are 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

fairly heavy, complex, they're involved. You, you just don't want to, especially down here you don't want to do them, uh, by yourself. You really do need to and we're always taxed for, we've had so many people retire and, uh, like you say, the apprenticeship program has been put on hold, we haven't had any new apprenticeships. Uh, and so if you just look at the numbers just in the short time that I've, I've been here at Fisher Body and the same thing is true over when I was at AC Spark Plug, um, the Trades numbers have really dwindled. And, uh, now especially it would be interesting at the new plant because we're gonna have 18 millwrights for the body shop, which is where I'll be at in the new place, so that will be six per shift whereas before you had at least 10 on each shift and you have a body shop that's [coughing] actually going to be bigger than what we have here now and almost twice as many robots.

30 31Doug Rademacher:

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[22:53] Could you share, um, one of your days? What time did you start and what did you do for your lunch hour?

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34Randal Taylor: 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

Um, third shift, when I was up in Paint working third shift, uh, we would start at 10:00 in the evening. And, uh, we would come in and basically being a two-shift operation, um, the boss would meet us, we would have a picnic table that we all sat to have a, have a cup of coffee and whatnot. When we first came in, the boss would come around and, and, uh, give us basically a lineup of jobs that he wanted to be done after production went home anywhere between 2:30, 3, 3:30 in the morning. And, uh, like I say, we had, uh, one, two, I'm trying to think, we had, uh, eight guys in Paint and we were divvied up into two fellows that would handle breakdowns and myself and my partner we would handle the, uh, the PMs, the preventative maintenance. And then after the line went down, um, depending on the type of job and whatnot that the boss would, would have for us and there again, they were really flexible, a lot of times, um, we

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1 would, um, work through our lunch hours just so we could have a, a little 2 bit longer break at the end of the day to kinda kick back and relax a little 3 bit. Bein' on third shift, you're kinda afforded that opportunity. 4 5Doug Rademacher: You said you started in on the second shift and, uh, you didn't like to wake up anyway, so that was good. [24:33] But how did that affect your 6 7 family life, making that drive and not being, uh, in Flint where you're 8 from with the kids and your wife? Can you share a little bit about what 9 it's like to...? 10 11Randal Taylor: Well, fortunately... ...[inaudible 24:44]? 13Doug Rademacher: 14 15Randal Taylor: ...in, in my situation, um, when I went on second shift it was in 2000, uh, both my kids were grown. Um, my daughter got married the year after 16 17 that and, uh, she was out of the house already. My son, he was in college. And, uh, so basically it was just myself and my wife at home at the time. 18 And, um, she is a freelance interpreter for the deaf so she can pretty much 19 20 schedule her own hours so when I was on second shift she most of the 21 time just trying to get her schedule to be a little bit more in line with mine 22 so that she would be home in the morning when I was home and then she 23 would work, uh, in the afternoons. I would have to leave the house at, uh, 24 12:30 to be down here at 2 to start at second shift in the afternoon and, uh, 25 then she'd go to work and she'd be home by the time I got home, so 26 actually for me it worked. It was kinda like the best of both worlds. I 27 didn't have to get up in the morning and still have family life. 28 We're going to pause for a moment. [clicking] We're back with Randy 29Doug Rademacher: Taylor. [26:01] Randy, would you please, uh, tell me, what is your view 30 of your coworker? Do you see them as brothers and sisters? 31 32 33Randal Taylor: Yeah. Um, especially, uh, being in Trades you're always partnered up with somebody and so, uh, you see a lot of these guys that have been 34 35 partnered up for years and I mean they're just they're like, you know, best 36 buds that have been together ever since, you know, they were growin' up, 37 you know. And, uh, I've always had a real good relationship with 38 whoever I'm workin' with to get along with them and everything and you 39 just naturally, you know, you're, you're on the job and you're workin' and you're, you're just gonna talk about things that, uh, uh, you know, pertain 40 to your life and whatnot and share, share things, you know, uh, grandkids 41

1 Page 11 of 22

and daughters gettin' married and boys gettin' out of school and

graduating, things like that, you know. So yeah, you just, you just

naturally develop those ties and those bonds between, between the people

and everything, so it's, uh, you, you end up developing a, a relationship

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1 that starts at, at work and it just flows to where it just ends up being 2 outside of work also, you know. 3

4Doug Rademacher: [27:14] Has a particular coworker impacted your family life?

6Randal Taylor: Um, yeah, there's, there's been a number of them through, through the years, you know, that you just, like I say, you just, you deve-, develop 8 those friendships and whatnot, you know, and some fade and go away and 9 then new ones start up. And, uh, it just, uh, just gettin' to know different 10 people from different walks of life and everything, um, and everybody's different viewpoint and their different takes on, on life it just, uh, just 11 gives you a richer, um, just understanding of what everybody else has to 12 13 go through. You're not in, uh, you're not, you're just not in it alone.

14

15Doug Rademacher: [27:56] Well, I'd like to have a, a explanation of your, your interaction with the worker on the line as that, um, as a Trades perspective and as a 16

personal perspective.

17 18

19Randal Taylor: Yeah. um...

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21Doug Rademacher: [28:11] Can you share something on that?

23Randal Taylor: Yeah. Um, third shift you didn't have a lot of reaction. When I was on second shift and also when, uh, when I was workin' at AC Spark Plug, 24 25 um, on second shift here in Paint, uh, you'd obviously get to know 26 everybody on the line because, you know, they would have a breakdown or they would have a problem and, uh, through their boss they'd get a hold 27 28 of you and you'd come down, you'd talk to them and find out, you know, 29 what the problem is and whatnot, you know, and you'd get to know everybody on the line, get to know names and whatnot. And so, um, 30 they'd always whenever there was always special dinners and whatnot for 31 32 somebody's birthday and everything and, and, uh, we were always invited, 33 you know, to come by and grab some cake or whatnot, you know, to join in with them and everything. It wasn't a, a adversarial type relationship 34 35 because we're all, you know, uh, like I say, we're all working for the same 36 company, we're all in the same union, we're all brothers, you know. And, 37 uh, and the same thing there at AC Spark Plug too. Um, you know,

39 all get together and have, just have a heck of a good time.

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41Doug Rademacher: You keep referring back to, uh, the two different scenarios from Flint AC 42

all the way back to Fisher Body Lansing. [29:31] Uh, can you tell me

Christmas dinners and, uh, Thanksgiving dinners and whatnot, we'd all,

what vehicle do you drive for all those miles? 43

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45Randal Taylor: [chuckling] Well, when I first, uh, uh, when I first started drivin' down here I had a, I had my real nice car and, uh, I was puttin' on 35,000 miles a 46

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1 2 3 4	year on it and I told the wife, I says this isn't going to work. I just, uh, ended up buyin' a \$1000 beater from my nephew and just drove the snot out of it till the wheels fell off and, uh, went out and just bought another one for a couple thousand dollars. Now it's got like 92,000 miles. I'll
5 6	drive that one till the motor falls out of it and [laughter]
7Doug Rademacher: 8	[30:09] Did you e-, did you ever consider buyin' a foreign vehicle?
9Randal Taylor: 10 11 12 13	Oh [chuckle] no. [laughter] My, uh, son-in-law when he was datin' my daughter he drove up in his daddy's car one time and, uh, it was a Audi and I told him he had to park out on the street. He didn't believe me until I actually made him park out on the street. [laughter]
14Doug Rademacher: 15 16 17 18 19 20	[30:38] So is there anything that you did within the plant? There was lots of different groups, um, you said you were included in the dinners and things. Did you, um, have any special interests that you, you participated in? I know I see people, uh, play harmonica or they may have a, a Bible study group but was there anything that you did as a, a culture within the plant?
21Randal Taylor: 22 23 24 25 26 27	No. Not, not really. Um, and I think, uh, a lot of that, like I say, um, probably could be attributed to the fact that, uh, with the overtime, uh, working the overtime, drivin', you know, 2½ hours out of each day kinda takes a big bite out of your schedule, you know, and so you want to spend as much time as you can to, to family and everything. So, um, as far as involvements in that area, I never really, uh, got involved in that type of thing.
29Doug Rademacher: 30 31 32	A lot of times in, in places like this you hear about people that do pranks. [31:50] You got any pranks that were pulled on you or that you pulled on someone else?
33Randal Taylor: 34 35 36 37 38 39	[chuckling] Uh, I've heard quite a few stories but I was never a participant or participee or, uh, other than just normal, you know, normal goofin' around every day type of thing, you know. But, um, there was, um, couple guys that, uh, uh, well, one, one fellow he was gettin' married, um, and so we took his toolbox and we painted it white and we put, uh, pink little hearts all over the toolbox just before he got married.
40Doug Rademacher: 41 42	[32:38] Did you paint those on or were they hard for him to get off or was it something?
43Randal Taylor: 44	It was – they were all stickers.
45Doug Rademacher: 46	Oh, okay.

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1Randal Taylor: Yeah, so he just had to peel the stickers off and get his box repainted, so it

2 wasn't anything permanent or anything like that, you know.

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4Doug Rademacher: [32:51] What's your best memory of working at this Fisher Body plant?

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6Randal Taylor: Uh, I'd just have to say probably the best memory is just, just the working relationships and, and everything. Uh, just the people really, you know, the people make, make it enjoyable to work here, you know. Even if you got the best job in the world and you got a complete jackass that you got to

sit across from or that you got to relate to for eight hours out of the day,

it's gonna be a terrible experience.

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13Doug Rademacher: [33:26] Do you recall your best job and/or your worst job that you had to

14 do here?

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16Randal Taylor: Uh, worst job would have been doing, uh, again we're back to PMs,

preventative maintenance, uh, on, uh, what they call bond rate and, uh, you're just, you're crawlin' through a terrible, nasty place and a lotta

chemicals and...

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21Doreen Howard: Um, I think w-, we need to stop for a second. [clicking]

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23Doug Rademacher: [34:07] Randy, would you share your best and/or your worst job memory?

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25Randal Taylor: Um, worst job would have to be, uh, doing inspections, again, uh, back into the Paint Department, um, they have a collection system that, uh,

funnels water underneath the, underneath the, uh, paint booths that collects paint and whatnot and, uh, goes down into a filter and all the, basically the sludge gets filtered out, um, so the water can be recycled. And, uh, it's just a nasty smellin' purple crap because when you take every color in the world imaginable and you mix it together, you don't get black, you get a funky-lookin' purple, uh, junk [chuckling] and it's just sticky and nasty

and you get outta there and it's hot and you're just, it's just terrible with,

with all the chemical smells and everything.

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And, um, the best job, um, [chuckling] the best job I had and you're not going to believe this, we had a huge, huge crash. Um, [throat clearing] the cars would get painted and then they would be inspected and, and bought off, meaning that they'd be okay as far as the paint has no defects and the

quality is good and then they would be shipped from, uh, 21-3, which is
Building 21, Third Floor. And they would be shipped, uh, on a conveyor,

on a conveyor chain down, uh, I'd have to say this conveyor chain is probably at least a good half mile long from the third floor building basically down to a second floor building to be, uh, ready to be put into the Trim Department and, uh, for whatever reason we had a big crash.

Cars ended up piled one on top of one another upside down, uh, falling off

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the conveyor trestle that was 35 feet up in the air. And, um, we had to call in, we, we had a crane, a mobile crane that we brought upstairs and, uh, we had to pick each individual car off and if it, you know, basically the cars would jump that got involved in the accident so I was climbing all over brand new cars, jumpin' on the roofs, you know, trying to dislodge them and tying chains around them so the crane can pick'm up and set'm out.

And, uh, it's kinda interesting, uh, whenever you have a big breakdown like that, a big crisis because obviously something like that just shuts the entire plant down because Paint can't run and pretty soon Trim is out of cars, so Trim can't build any cars, Body can't ship any cars out of the body shop because the Paint Shop is not runnin' and so you have every white shirt, which is to say every boss in the entire plant comin' up to figure out what's goin' on and you're out there trying to do your job and [Amy Farmer 37:23] was there. And, uh, finally I just got fed up and they were way too close, it wasn't safe for them to be there and, uh, I looked at my boss and I says "Can I say somethin'?" He said "Go right ahead." And so I yelled at all these supervisors, all these white shirts and I just told them "Get the hell out of my way. Let me do my job."

22Doug Rademacher: That was your best moment.

24Randal Taylor: Yep. That was my best moment. [laughter]

26Female: [37:49] How long did it take to pull all these cars out of there [inaudible

27 37:53]?

29Randal Taylor: Believe it or not, we had the plant up and runnin' in less than two hours.

31Female: [37:58] And what was the problem?

33Randal Taylor:
One body, uh, had come down the hill and they're on a, on a dolly. The
body is basically bare, there's no interior, no motors, just the steel body
and they're on a, on a four-wheel dolly and one of the wheels broke on the
dolly which caused it to tip up, which then the next car coming down got
underneath it, picked it up and then it was just a chain reaction from there.

39Doug Rademacher: In-plant dominoes.

41Randal Taylor: Yep. [chuckling]

43Doug Rademacher: [38:34] Uh, have you ever done anything for somebody, like build a locker

or repair something or build something to make your job easier or

45 someone on the line?

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1Randal Taylor: Oh yeah. Yeah. There's, uh, all the time, um, and, uh, when you're dealing, you know, with production and whatnot, you know, you have 3 guys that will come up and they'll want you to modify a cart or, you know, something to make their job easier and everything and, and, you 4 know, everybody is, you know, "Hey, can you do me a favor? Can you do 5 this for me?" "Sure, no problem." You know, "If you got time, do this." 6 7 And we're always, always doin' things, fixin' things, you know, and, and, 8 uh, makin' little things. 9 10Doug Rademacher: [39:22] As far as a union man, did you attend union meetings? 11 12Randal Taylor: Uh, no. Not here in Lansing I didn't, um, and the reason for that is because #1 the drive. And, uh, I attended when I was in Flint at the union 13 14 meeting up there. 'Cause they always had the union meetings on Sunday and either I'm workin' which means I have to drive in early and then wait 15 16 for work to start or, you know, it just didn't work out for me. 17 18Marilyn Coulter: I want to go back to your job. [40:00] Can you tell me, would you like to tell the people a little bit about the importance of Skilled Trades personnel 19 20 and their tools and...? 21 22Randal Taylor: As far as, um, as far as tools, like I say, you know, we purchase the 23 majority of our tools ourselves. Um, General Motors, you know, like I 24 say, with the specialty things that we need, you know, to do our job, uh, 25 they would purchase 'cause a lot of this stuff you can't get by going to 26 Sears, you know, and Craftsman don't make something like this, you 27 know. Snap-on doesn't make something like this. You got to – it's an 28 industrial tool supplier that you have to get these items from. 29 30 But, um, yeah, there's, uh, Skilled Trades I think as far as millwrights. millwrights are more along the line of a, say like a mechanic and I got, 31 32 you know, your favorite sticker where, you know, you don't touch these 33 tools in my toolbox, it's my livelihood, you know, type of thing. And, uh, so yeah, we're, uh, you don't mess with another guy's tools and you 34 35 always, eh, working together and everything. I've always been and other 36 guys too have always been real considerate about, you know, if they want 37 to borrow a tool from you, they'll say, "hey," you know, "can I borrow this from you?" And you'll say, "Yeah, it's in my drawer," you know, 38 39 "third drawer down" or whatever, you know. They just don't go in and start rummaging through your toolbox, you know. That's, that's your, 40 your private area, your space, you know, you don't get a lot of that in a, in 41 42 a factory. 43 44Marilyn Coulter: [41:35] Has there ever been like, um, an initiation for a rookie to learn or

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apprentice to learn the importance of tools or...?

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1Randal Taylor: Yeah.

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3Marilyn Coulter: ...to respect, to even respect their own tools?

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5Randal Taylor: Yeah, there's, um, I don't know, like I say, I've never, never participated in it but I've heard of it being done where, you know, in order to teach somebody a lesson, you know, they'll take and pump their toolbox full of

grease.

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10Marilyn Coulter: Ew. [laughter] Oh wow. But...

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12Randal Taylor: So that kinda, kinda gets your attention, you know, if something like that

were to happen. [chuckling]

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15Marilyn Coulter: You got to know about the tools but I know you have to work as a team.

[42:14] Would you want to tell us a little bit about I know you have to have lockouts and safety because you guys do do things like, um, you

know, take dominoes apart and things like that...

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20Randal Taylor: Yeah, right.

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22Marilyn Coulter: ...with cars and as far as it being safety, could you tell the people a little bit

about the safety and lockouts and things like that on your job?

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25Randal Taylor: Yeah, it's, um, you know, it's not just something that we do just because,

26 you know, GM says hey you got to do this and this and this, you know. 27 It's something that you do because it's your own personal safety, um, you 28 know. When you – even all the way from a big crash, you know, to where 29 you want to make sure you got all the conveyors locked out that it's not 30 gonna start runnin' automatically because these things take off and go on 31 their own, you know. You want to make sure that's locked out, that 32 there's no power to it. Um, you want to make sure the electricity is shut 33 off because a lot of times if you do have a big crash like that it ends up 34 cuttin' through electrical lines too for sensors and things like that. Um, all 35 the way down to just, um, workin' on a, uh, on a sprayer, a paint sprayer 36 robot, um, you know, the same thing. That robot doesn't know you're 37 there, it doesn't have eyes and it's a heck of a lot bigger than you are. 38 And, uh, you know, they're – again, these things, they all, they all run off 39 sensors, they all run automatically. They can't tell you from a car. If you were to trip a sensor, that robot is gonna start sprayin' paint. If you don't 40

42 you turn it off, you know. It's just the smart thing to do.

43

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And like I say, it's, and it, it becomes I find myself even being more conscious of it at home just because of the fact that it's, you're just,

want to be green or two-tone blue with missing two fingers, you make sure

posters everywhere, it's ingrained to you at work, you know, take two for

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7	safety, lock it out, you know, be safe, you know. Just take the time to, to make sure you're gonna be okay and so then you get that kind of a mindset. And you go back home, help, I'm helpin' my son-in-law wire up his new house and everything and it's like, "Are you sure this is off? Well, go check. Make sure it's off before I stick my fingers in here." That type of thing, you know.
8Doreen Howard: 9 10 11	[44:46] And kind of on the same line, um, have you ever seen anybody that may have not followed any safety rules or, um, uh, had mishaps for whatever reason it might have been?
11 12Randal Taylor: 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	Um, I've personally myself I, you know, I've never had, um, a mishap like that, you know, to where it would be kind of a life-threatening type situation, you know. Um, I've gotten, you know, bangs and bruises, things like that just because of the nature of, you know, being a millwright. You're on pry bar and everything and something will break loose and it just lets go and you just gotta make sure you get out of the way sometimes and you don't get out of the way fast enough, um, but, uh, you know, other than, you know, I got all my fingers and my toes and whatnot, um, you know. I, I know of fellows that have lost fingers, um, here at the plant and workin' at home, you know, just, um, being careless, just bein', you know, "hey, this is the last thing we got to do today, let's hurry up, let's get it done and then we can go take a break" and boom, it's too late.
26Doreen Howard: 27 28 29	[46:11] So has there been, um, many changes since you've been here as far as, um, maybe more, um, safety precautions put into effect or are they about the same?
30Randal Taylor: 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38	I would – yeah, there's, there's more. And I, I think it's, it's, um, um, I guess used to be, you know, 10 years ago lockout was just kind of laissez-faire type of thing, you know. The bosses weren't really, you know, they, they basically they just wanted the job done. If there was a problem they, you know, "go take care of it, I don't care how you do it, just get it fixed and get us runnin'" and everything and now it's progressed to a point where, you know, they, they themselves are, are concerned a little bit more about doin' it in a safe way and, uh, and I think it's a good thing, you know.
40Doug Rademacher: 41 42 43	[47:13] Did you have a problem ever working with women in trades or, uh, different, different ethnicities or did that, did that ever play into your workplace?
44Randal Taylor: 45 46	No, um, I don't have, you know, I never had a problem with it or anything like that. Um, and, uh, you know, as far as, you know, workin' with different people, you know, uh, that doesn't bother me at all. And, uh, and

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1 [chuckling] my, uh, I had a journeyman when I was in apprenticeship 2 training, [Eddie Moore 47:50] and, uh, he was a, he was a black fellow 3 and he was just funnier than snot but he just [chuckling] he had all this 4 money, he was a tradesman, he's, he's got all this money and he lives in this little shack in the worst part of north end of Flint, you know. And 5 6 he'd come into work with all these horror stories, you know, and I'd, I'd 7 kid him all the time, you know, to get out of there and everything but he 8 just wouldn't leave, you know. [chuckling] 9 10 But, um, the only, the only, if there is a problem I guess the only thing I would, I would say that would be the only thing I've seen is, um, with 11 women in trades is on the millwright side, um, a lot of times, you know, 12 13 you need the muscle to get the job done and some, you know, and women just being women, you know, they're not as strong as the guys are, you 14 know, so. And you – so what, what happens is you just, uh, I don't know 15 16 if it's a, um, I'm trying to think of the word I want to use and I can't, it's 17 gone but, uh, like a discriminatory type of thing but you end up seeing the 18 women takin' the easier, lighter jobs and then the guys do all the heavier 19 type of work, you know, and uh, but, you know, that's, that's okay. 20 21Doug Rademacher: Well, I always, myself always said that, uh, we had our grandmother and grandfather, I'm sure you had one also and, uh, Grandpa didn't expect the 22 23 same amount of labor out of Grandma but... 24 25Randal Taylor: Right. 26 27Doug Rademacher: ...expected the same amount of effort, um. [laughter] I'm just curious then, you said that, uh, you didn't attend union meetings here, [49:39] do 29 you, uh, take the time to go vote and do, what do you think of your...? 30 31Randal Taylor: Oh yeah. 33Doug Rademacher: ...union leadership compared to the, this plant? Or you've seen two different unions, how does this union fare in, in your work experience? 34 35 36Randal Taylor: Yeah, I've, you know, um, I've participated in all the whatever votes we 37 have, you know, for contracts and for committeemen and things like that, 38 whatever comes up. Um, the, the unions as far as, uh, uh, 651 which was 39 in Flint and 602, um, a lot of the, a lot of the same things I would say Flint 40 was probably a little bit more, um, what do I want to say, not aggressive but, uh, uh, conflict, you know, they're more to conflict with their, with 41 42 General Motors type of thing. It seems like here in Lansing [throat clearing] with union, with the Local 602 there's more of a, a better 43 44 working relationship between the union and the management. Not that, 45 you know, you see eye to eye all the time but, um, they're just, like I say, I

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think everybody in Flint was a rebel. [laughter] We had to go out on strike

2 to prove it, you know, something. [chuckling]

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4Doug Rademacher: [51:10] Speaking of that, have you been out on strike?

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6Randal Taylor: Yeah.

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8Doug Rademacher: [51:12] How many times?

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10Randal Taylor: Uh, twice, both times in Flint.

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12Jerri Smith: [51:18] For very long?

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14Randal Taylor: Uh, one was in '98 was for six weeks and in ninety-, '93 was it or, or no,

no no, '95 was three days.

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17Doug Rademacher: [51:37] What is your most appreciated bargain benefit?

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19Randal Taylor: Um, the money, healthcare, you know, um, paid vacations. I h-, it's hard

20 to say which one you enjoyed more really, you know. I mean the union 21 negotiated a, a wage package that pays you enough money that you can 22 have a good quality life and enjoy the things in life, you know, that, uh, 23 whether it be, you know, motorcycling, snowmobiling, campin', you 24 know, I do it all, you know. Um, there's very few jobs out there that have 25 that kind of, uh, level of, of pay. Um, the benefits, you know, the health 26 benefits and whatnot that we enjoy that you can just, you know, you know 27 that it's, you know, no matter what happens it's gonna be taken care of, 28 you know. Um, being able to take time off and have paid vacations, you

know, spending time with your family. I, you know, it's hard to say which one, you know. They all kinda all mix together to just give you a better

quality of life so you can enjoy it.

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33Doug Rademacher: [53:01] Has your skills that you've gained through the skilled trades arena

carried outside of the plant and do you – you said you're helping your sonin-law do some work with the housing electrical, um, do you have a

business on the side or do you do things for your community back in Flint,

37 uh, that pertain to your trade?

38

39Randal Taylor: Well, um, I'd say as far, you know, it's, it's nice to have a reservoir of

people that have so many that are knowledgeable about so many things.
Um, I'm not an electrician, um, by trade but, you know, for example
workin' on my son-in-law's house and everything, you know, I have a
question about an electrical problem, I come in here to work, I talk to the
guys and say hey, you know, this is what we got, how can I do this, you
know. What do I have to do to fix this or what's the proper way to, to do

46 this, you know. Um, skills that I've learned on the job as, as far as myself,

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1 um, I use a lot because I'm into restorin' older vehicles and everything and 2 so I'm turnin' a lot of wrenches, I'm doin' a lot of welding and, and things 3 like that, so that helps me. 4 5Doreen Howard: Um, I have, uh, one last question to ask you before we wrap this up here. [54:21] Um, how do you feel about the plant closing and the prospects of 7 the new plant? You know, you've already made a transition once, do you, 8 um, do you have any, you know, words of wisdom for people like myself 9 who've never had to go through any type of transition from one facility to 10 another or...? 11 12Randal Taylor: Um, it's, um, it's sad to see this place close down, you know, because a lot of years and everything but, um, y-, you look at it and it's just, uh, like I 13 14 say, unless you're actually for instance up in Paint and you're walkin' the miles of conveyor and you're goin' from one floor to the next and you 15 16 think, boy, this is really stupid, how can they ever build a car on three different levels of a plant, you know, and make money doin' it type of 17 18 thing, you know. If you look at it that way it's easy to say yeah, you know, it makes more sense to build a new building, um, but then, you 19 20 know, a lot of history here and whatnot, you know, but it's all in your comfort level, you know. You tend to get comfortable workin' in one 21 22 place and you hate to see that change, you know. I loved workin' at AC 23 Spark Plug. I didn't want to leave there but for my financial wellbeing, 24 for my family and whatnot, you know, I felt it was a better decision to 25 come down here and so I came down here and, you know. 26 27 Then, you know, we find out we're closin' while they're buildin' us a new 28 factory, that's pretty exciting in itself. There's not many people in 29 General Motors that can say, you know, hey, I was here at Ground One, you know, when the new building went up and, uh, so it's, it's exci-, it's, 30 it's an exciting time because you do have that opportunity that not a lot of 31 32 people within a corporation would have that. Uh, but then again, like I 33 say, you know, it's just we're comfortable back here in the old place, you know. We all, you know, this is where we work, you know, we know 34 35 where everything is at and we feel good here, you know, and you hate to, 36 you hate to leave that but... 37 Leavin' an old friend behind. 38Doreen Howard: 40Randal Taylor: Yep, exactly. [chuckling] 42Doug Rademacher: I guess the last question then she lead into the new plant, you and I had 43 some training together, what do you think about, uh, the way they, they're preparing us to go into this brand new facility, this great opportunity, 44

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[56:58] what do you think of that?

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1Randal Taylor:	I think it's, it's good. I've been through a lot of training not only
2	with, with Doug, with, uh, with the GMS but, uh, I've been down in
3	Detroit quite a few times with, uh, conveyor, you know, new conveyor
4	training, uh, robots, new robot training and everything with new robots
5	we're gonna have in the, in the plant and, uh, I've learned a lot just
6	through those type of classes on the different equipment that we're gonna
7	have and everything. And, uh, like I say, I, I personally myself it's I think
8	it's a pretty exciting time, you know. You're going in a brand new place,
9	brand new equipment, you know, but yet it's the same old people. That's
10	the nice part about it and you still got the relationships and everything that
11	we have here and they'll keep on goin' there, so it'll be good.
12	

13Doug Rademacher: Well, we really appreciate the time you've shared with us. Um, it's been a

wonderful interview.

14 15

16Doreen Howard: Thank you.

17

[Inaudible 58:00]. 18Marilyn Coulter:

20Jerri Smith: Thank you, Randy.

21

22Randal Taylor: Thank you, yep.

23

24Marilyn Coulter: Thank... [clicking]

25 26 27/mlc

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