

**John (JR) Rosendahl discusses his 40-plus year career as a production worker
and a GM manager at the Fisher Body Plant in Lansing, MI**

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5 Linda Johnson: Today is Wednesday, November 9, 2005. The Fisher Body Historical
6 Committee is meeting in the Labor Relation Conference Room. I am
7 Linda Johnson, and we are interviewing John Rosendahl. Also present
8 today are:
9
10 Mike Fleming: Mike Fleming.
11
12 Doreen Howard: Doreen Howard.
13
14 Doug Rademacher: Doug Rademacher.
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: Marilyn Coulter.
17
18 Linda Johnson: John, state your name and spell your last name and your address please.
19
20 John Rosendahl: John Rosendahl. R-O-S-E-N-D-A-H-L, 1111 Red Cliffe Drive, Lansing,
21 Michigan 48917.
22
23 Linda Johnson: [00:43] John, when did you start working at Fisher Body and why?
24
25 John Rosendahl: I hired into, uh, Fisher Body in August of '64. My adjusted seniority date
26 is 10/14 of '64. Um, I came here pretty much outta high school. I worked
27 another – I worked at another job here [inaudible 1:06] s-, Olds and Fisher
28 were hiring, so I went to Oldsmobile. I thought about this. I went ta
29 Oldsmobile and interviewed there, and, and, uh, uh, on the questionnaire,
30 they asked me if ya ever, if I ever had any back pain. Well everybody has
31 a back pain, they'd put down yes. So they rejected me. Told me I had, that,
32 you know, the doctor determined my back was no good to work in a
33 factory. So I went home. My mom was pissed, you know, 'cause I put that
34 down, so she says you go to Fisher Body and don't say a word. So I come
35 over here, and I got hired. So that's how that happened. Uh, but I came
36 here obviously for the money 'cause I, I, I hired in at 3.57 an hour, which
37 is huge money back then in '64. Um, a couple things I think that if ya
38 wanna go back in time 'cause, you know, y'all don't have as much time as
39 I got but, but I, I really, you, you know, that was in – 60s was – Kennedy
40 was shot, and I [hired 2:03] in before the Civil Rights Act was passed.
41
42 So, so when ya think about those things in history and all that's [goin' on
43 2:07] since then, uh, that's a long time ago because we just recognized
44 Rosa Parks and all that she done and, and I worked here before the, before
45 the Civil Rights Act was passed and I always thought that was, was
46 significant in the way we do things today versus what we do then. Um,

1 and I tell this story because you, you know, you talk about the first days of
2 hiring in. Uh, I hired into the Trim Department, uh, the old [B 2:37] Trim
3 or [AB 2:38] Trim Department and Hardware. And, uh, there were 13 of
4 us that were taken up from the office, from Personnel Office, um, by – the
5 general foreman – was a guy named [Ernie Reese 2:51]. Probably none of
6 ya remember he was, uh, – his son was [Dwayne Reese 2:55] if that rings
7 a bell with you [inaudible 2:57]. Ernie was just a sloppy man of a general
8 supervisor. He wore these old blue gabardine pants and now this
9 [inaudible 3:06] [of the word] shiny ‘cause he looked like a rag actually
10 [inaudible 3:07]. The shirt kinda hung out, you know. And he took us up
11 ta Hardware, and, and there were, like I say, were 13 of us, and we were
12 standing on the corner, uh, of [M 3:20] Trim, and I get – I came around the
13 corner, now this has been changed up there, but, but, [Ace Hardin 3:25]
14 was the supervisor, and, of course, you know, I mean I thought about this
15 too.

16
17 The way we treat new, uh, new hires today is different than they did back
18 then. We give people training and all this good stuff. Well now, you just
19 were up on the floor, you know, and, uh, uh, Ernie said to Ace, he says,
20 “Okay, Ace, you get these 6 guys here,” and Ace always chewed a cigar, a
21 little short cigar, and he’s [chair sliding] [inaudible 3:49] kinda like [door
22 creaking] he’s lookin’ around [screeching] and, and I’m gonna clean this
23 up for ya, but he looks around, he says, “I don’t want the black guy, give
24 me the big guy.” Now that’s not what he said, but that’s, that’s what he
25 said, and so I was the big guy, and so, so there was no, there was no
26 questions asked. Ernie took the other guys down the next area, and, and,
27 and I was on a job puttin’ on fender bars, and he wanted me ‘cause I could
28 – [was 198 4:16], so I could reach over and hold the fender bar with this
29 hand and get in the wheel well with this hand and put the nuts on, so that’s
30 how I got, got my job selection work. I was big. And then, uh, I was on –
31 then a couple days later, I moved down to another job.

32
33 This is the window story, uh, bigger – I think the next day I was moved
34 down to another job where I was buildin’ up channels for the glass, and
35 again, the break in that we did then versus what we do now is tot-, is
36 changed a lot but took me down and, and I had ta, and I was on days, and I
37 had ta build door channels on both sides of the line [clicking] for both
38 operators, which I didn’t know they had two guys on nights [clicking]
39 doin’ that, you know, one on each side, but, you know, hey, what are ya
40 gonna say, it’s your day 2, and uh, so, and he said, “Here’s the channels,
41 there’s your stock, and here’s your parts, make’m like these.” And that
42 was my break in. Nobody just like – so I had ta go back, and I had ta ask
43 the guy, you know, and, and you know, where’s this, and he says, “No
44 more of these, and uh, I want these.” So I’m runnin’ back and forth across
45 the line buildin’ stuff, and then stupid me, I was ke- – I kept workin’ when
46 the line went down for wagon. I got flagged for that, you know, you

1 know, like, "Hey, quit workin,'" you know, and so [that's why 5:29] I'm
2 behind and behind, you know, and, and uh, uh, anyway I was puttin' these,
3 these, these channel stops on the channel, so when the glass come down,
4 the glass would stop. Well, I didn't know.
5
6 I'd – so after lunch, you know, ya go ta lunch, ya forget your job, and uh, I
7 come back, and I start puttin' channel stops on the wrong side. So when
8 the cars got around, around the, to the, to the curve and around the next
9 side, the glass all falls down about the yard.
10
11 [laughter]
12
13 John Rosendahl: Well...
14
15 [laughter]
16
17 John Rosendahl: ...and I'm workin' my ass. I'm sweatin'. I got metal shavin'. No glove.
18 Ya didn't have gloves. Metal shavings in my hand, you know. I'm wipin'
19 sweat off and now ya look like iron man, you know, and stuff, [writing]
20 and, uh, so Ace comes up, and Ace was about 5 foot 3, so he, you know,
21 it's, you know, and I don't know why little people have an issue with
22 themself, but they do, but, so he comes up. and he picks up one of the
23 channel, and he threw it across the bench, and, and I had these channels all
24 stacked up, and they all scattered. I'm like what I'd do, and he says,
25 "Come with me." So – "And grab your wrench." So we went over, over
26 the glass area, and I had – he made me work the whole line back. Well,
27 my pick-up man was [Jack Bealer 6:34]. If you remember, Jack Bealer
28 was the general supervisor, I won't say any bad about him. He's – I don't
29 know if he's still alive or not, but, but he just kinda sit back and watched,
30 so he was a good pick-up man. He didn't do shit for a pick-up man.
31
32 [laughter]
33
34 John Rosendahl: But, uh...
35
36 [laughter]
37
38 John Rosendahl: ...uh...
39
40 [laughter]
41
42 John Rosendahl: ...TC kind a guy, you know. [inaudible 6:49]. So, so anyway, uh, uh, I had
43 ta work the whole line back when I got back. My stocks all gone, and so I
44 had ta [do it 6:55] more before I could start buildin'. Ace takes me to the
45 window and we had windows up on the second floor up there and there are
46 people outside, you know, people comin' and goin', applying for jobs,

1 and, and he points out and he says, "See that guy, that guy right there,
2 those guys want your job, you get your ass together," and he said, "You
3 mess up one more time, you're fired." I didn't make any more mistakes.
4 Well, that was the last mistake, that was the last mistake I ever made here,
5 you know.
6
7 [laughter]
8
9 John Rosendahl: But, but that's, that's a hiring story that I, that I, that I talk about because it
10 had an impression on me, you know, one, you know, just the, the, the –
11 how I was picked to work in that area. Two, and then, uh, the break in,
12 which ya didn't get, and the fact that I didn't know there were two guys
13 doin' this job on nights and me on days, you know. They were using me,
14 and, uh, but that was no big thing, you know, it was. So, so, uh, and then I
15 got bumped to nights and realized that I only had to do the right side. It was a
16 pretty cool job.
17
18 [laughter]
19
20 John Rosendahl: Wonder why I don't have this on days, you know. [laughter].
21
22 [laughter]
23
24 John Rosendahl: But, uh, you know, I, I didn't know you, you – we didn't know – you
25 didn't know anything about, about the union. You didn't know anything.
26 You didn't know anything about anything. You just went to work, and,
27 and I think that's, that's that was a good change to happen over the
28 decades where people were aware of stuff and got to know stuff. So, so
29 that's, that's my early on story. Um...
30
31 Linda Johnson: Mike Fleming has a question for ya, John.
32
33 Mike Fleming: John, you, you mentioned two things that, that weren't very clear. You
34 talked about Hardware where you started to work at and you also talked
35 about when the line went down you missed your wagon. [8:33] Could you
36 explain what those were?
37
38 John Rosendahl: Used to be, uh, I think only in Fisher Body, uh, around the [corp 8:40] we
39 had, um, a wagon break twice a day, uh, sometime in the [forenoon 8:45]
40 in the morning, and sometime in the afternoon. The line was shut down for
41 6 minutes, and, uh, a coffee wagon with rolls and sandwiches would,
42 would come. They'd, they'd park in different areas of the plant, and we
43 could go get somethin' to eat or drink and – but it was actually an extra
44 break. Wagon, the wagon break went away I think sometime in the late
45 70s [pen clicking] I think that was negotiated away, [pen clicking] and it
46 was one thing that people always said the wagons will never go away, but

1 they went away and, uh, um, I, I think, I th-, you know, obviously they
2 went away ta capture those 6 minutes back twice a day, but also I'd – you
3 know, it seemed like people stopped using the wagon. They just didn't,
4 didn't get as much business on them, as we – as they did when I hired in,
5 but, uh, it was just like an extra break in there, which was kinda cool.
6

7Mike Fleming: [9:38] And the, uh, Hardware Department you went into to, what is,
8 what's, what's...
9

10John Rosendahl: Uh, the Hardware and, you know, and the Body, Paint, and Trim. Trim,
11 Trim had two facets at the time. Hardware and what we call 3X was final.
12 Uh, uh, in the Hardware, the glass went in, the body moldings went on, the
13 wiring went in and, uh, [pen clicking] anything. Pretty much I'd say
14 anything, anything you couldn't see that was covered up by seats or carpet
15 was – and door panels were put on in Hardware.
16

17Mike Fleming: I've got one more question for ya, John. You mentioned that when the
18 superintendent came and he picked who he wanted or the...
19

20John Rosendahl: General foreman.
21

22Mike Fleming: ...general foreman, general foreman picked who he wanted that he, he, he
23 obviously made, uh, uh, a negative commendation toward the other
24 gentleman that was there. At possibly an African...
25

26John Rosendahl: Yeah.
27

28Mike Fleming: ...American I'm, I'm assuming.
29

30John Rosendahl: Yeah, that bothered me.
31

32Mike Fleming: [10:33] How [pen clicking] long did it take, uh, in si-, since you've been
33 here [pen clicking] before some of those things seem ta go away w-, with
34 policies and, and, you know, the joint ventures that we have in place?
35

36John Rosendahl: Well, I, I think it was in the middle 70s quite honestly. [paper tearing] You
37 know, and because, um – I, I, um, jump ahead here a ways, but I had, uh,
38 when I was up in 3X as a supervisor and, um – tie this back in a minute
39 here, but, um, there was a female working up there, one of the few females
40 that worked outside the Paint Shop. Used to be all the women worked in
41 the sealer room [pen clicking] in the Paint Shop. That's where they
42 worked cleaning cars and, uh, and, uh, there was a woman workin' up
43 there in, uh, it was, it wasn't uncommon for people ta open their lockers or
44 tool boxes and have [pen clicking] pictures of naked women outta
45 *Penthouse* and *Playboy* in there. Well, this [pen clicking] lady decided ta

1 do her own thing, and I can't think what's the magazine that for women
2 that always had, uh, a guy in there years ago?
3
4 Male: *Playgirl*.
5
6 John Rosendahl: No.
7
8 Female: *Cosmo*.
9
10 John Rosendahl: *Cosmo. Cosmo.* When *Cosmo* first started, they always had a spread in
11 there. [pen clicking] So, so she took a picture outta [pen clicking] *Cosmo*.
12 Some, some stud guy and hung it on her workbench there and what an
13 uproar that caused. All, all the men are already headed for calling
14 committee man, and wanted it down and stuff, and she created a havoc
15 about this. That's pretty cool, you know. [pen clicking] And, uh, they
16 made her take it down but then they also had ta start taking down
17 everything else, you know, or keep your toolbox shut. But, uh, so, so those
18 are the times when, when we started recognizing women mi-, minorities
19 as, as, as, average, you know, okay people here, you know.
20
21 Mike Fleming: Sure.
22
23 John Rosendahl: I mean – but we weren't always that way. Um, I, I chuckle, and I still have
24 this if you ever want ta see this. I still got a – I saved one. [Judy Davers
25 12:33] used to work in Labor Relations. In her files, she found this one
26 time and, uh, there was, uh, an article and written by the medical director
27 of Fisher Body from like 1940. You've seen this.
28
29 Linda Johnson: Mm-hm.
30
31 John Rosendahl: The articles tell women are not little men and you wouldn't believe this
32 article about what it talks about, but [chair moving] we actually thought
33 that way, you know, because I know when we started hiring women here,
34 it was during the war, but then, you, you know, like I say, and then all the
35 [chair sliding] women were contained to the Paint Shop sealer room or the
36 [pen clicking] cushion room when we had the cushion room. We built
37 seats here outta building 5, and then slowly they started creepin' around in
38 Trim. And then, you know, I don't know when we s-, got – let'm outta the
39 trucks ta drive, but you know, you know, you know what a deal that was
40 [pen clicking]. And, and, uh, but it, it was probably in the middle 70s and,
41 you know, I think that ties into, uh – in the 60s, you had a Vietnam War.
42 Okay. And, and then a transition in the 70s and, and the free-spirit age,
43 and that's when things started ta change. That's when the bra burning
44 thing came, you know, came more, more visible in America and, and
45 women's rights became important, and when that happens outside, it

happens inside, and I think that, that happened here and, uh, uh, but, but it wasn't – it was meant with resistance. [pen clicking]

Um, this, this person, uh, I talked about with the poster, she went on salary [pen clicking] for a while and, uh, I think – I believe she is the first woman on salary here, and it was a big to-do, and then the supervi- – in the supervisors' locker room, which used to be around the corner, because she was a woman [pen clicking], and there was a shower in there, and then, you know, the body shop supervisor would go in [pen clicking] there and shower sometimes, and all of a sudden, there's a woman in there, and, and that, you know, so it, it created major havoc. I mean, this [inaudible 14:32] this, some important stuff goin' on in General Motors, uh, we got women in the locker room, you know. So, so, uh, uh, but, but things s-, started to change a little bit then in the 70s, um, and f-, for me, I'd, I'd gone in the Service in '66 and came out in '69 and came back here with a family. I had a wife and a child and, uh, and in the Service, I worked in Personnel, had assignments, and liked that pretty well, and, and I [laughter] remember, uh, I had some Mike's – no, it was [Vince Moon 15:08] was in – sorry, Personnel, and I sent them an [pen clicking] 11-page resume. So people used shorter resumes. I had 11 pages I wrote. I was pretty good, you know.

[laughter]

But, uh, so, so I, so I came back, and I walked in and started Personnel 'cause I don't wanna work, I want ta go on salary. I, hey, I'm here, you know. And he said, "Oh yeah, you're [pen clicking] the guy with the 11-page resume. [pen clicking]

[laughter]

Yeah, I'm glad, I'm glad ya noticed, you know. And he says, "Well, we don't – ya just don't walk in here and go on salary, ya got a job out, out, out in the plant." So I went ta work back out in, uh, Quality Control and, uh, and, um, and, and I hated it. I did. I hated chasing [pen clicking] chain and, uh, so I started after a while, but I had a wife and kid. You gotta work. And, uh, so I started lookin' around outside for a job with another business and interviewed and went through an organization recruiting [inaudible 16:05] stuff and, and boy, nobody paid anything. So one of the guys I talked to said why don't ya go back and use, use, use your GI bill and get a degree. So I did. And, and, you know, that changed things, but I mean, I mean, I mean I think a lotta people throughout their career chair get caught up in the, in the thing of all of a sudden like I say back when I hired in I was makin' 3.57 an hour from a 1.35. I had a ton of money and, uh, back in the 60s, I, I, I had just – I had a wealth of money at 4 bucks an hour, if you will. And, and, uh, [pen clicking] it just – ya just – and I, and I

1 think every time you've had a hiring cycle you see that where we bring
2 people in.

3
4 In the '76 or '78, we had a group come in and ta another group in '90 or
5 '91 something and, and we usually bring in, uh, – the first groups they
6 brought in younger people. You know, younger bein' 18, 19, 20, That was
7 the core of [tapping] those people we hired. And, and you're 18, 19 years
8 old and you, you got a ton of money, and it just changed the whole attitude
9 about, about how people work because if ya remember back then, I think
10 through some of those cycles, uh, the PPH days and stuff, and we had
11 abs-, absenteeism problems, which, which we've always have and will
12 have, but, I mean [writing] people didn't come ta work because they were
13 workin' 10, 3, 9, 4 every night and makin' enough money in 4 days and if
14 the, the 4 days, one of those bein' a Saturday, they didn't need ta work 2
15 other days, you know. [pen clicking] And, and that's just how we worked,
16 and, and I think, uh, [pen clicking] that, that whole concept contributed ta
17 ab-, ta absenteeism, which I think becomes a [chair sliding] norm. It
18 becomes a norm that, that we have 10 percent absenteeism here, just
19 because we do. I mean just do, and, and ya can't – and, and that's, and
20 that's – that happens because we gave people a lotta money that didn't,
21 that didn't know what ta do with it. It wasn't like they had a family and
22 stuff, you know.

23
24 Linda Johnson: Doug Rademacher.

25
26 Doug Rademacher: John, it's interesting what ya just [pen clicking] said there about hirin'
27 [papers turning] groups of, of young teen or old teenagers 19, 18s [pen
28 clicking]. There was that time you said in the 60s where we hadn't really
29 grown yet. [18:16] What about how do you think it affected Lansing? [pen
30 clicking] Wasn't it a birth to Lansing when ya had, uh, the workforce you
31 hired in with [pen clicking] was people from about 20 miles out, maybe 30
32 miles out, a lotta farmers and stuff, and all of a sudden, you've hired
33 hundreds of teenagers that [papers turning] suddenly become able to buy
34 homes and, and raise families, and like yourself and...

35
36 John Rosendahl: I, I think a couple – yeah, you're right. We, we did rural hiring. [pen
37 clicking] We hired a lotta rural, but we also from that rural world, b-,– we
38 also hired, uh, uh, a lotta family, you, you know, and I think that last
39 group in '78 maybe was the last, last, last family group that hired where,
40 [papers turning] where brothers and sisters or sons and daughters were
41 hired through favoritism. Okay? After that we realized we couldn't hire
42 everybody's kid, so we went to a more neutral system, but, but yeah, it did
43 push a lotta money into the area. But, but I think it – I really think – and,
44 and I talk from my own experience back in the late 60s, uh, you know, I, I
45 bought a car, you know, and, and, uh, with, with my money, and I, I raced
46 my car every weekend. I – course cost money for, for tires and headers

1 and everything else ya use when ya race, but I had, I had a ton of money. I
2 had a pocketful of money. Didn't think about investin' money. I didn't
3 think about buyin' a house. I wanna just party, you know, and that's what
4 a [pen clicking] lotta people did, and I think every group that comes in
5 does that [pen clicking] uh, but as we've gotten away from hirin' those
6 [door creaking] youthful segments [door closing] of people that didn't
7 have anything – they didn't have anything ta pay, ta, ta pay for like a
8 house or wife and kid.
9

10Mike Fleming: No responsibility.

11

12John Rosendahl: No. Yeah. They didn't have any responsibility except ta have money and
13 party, you know. Now if ya think about in the 70s – [chair squeaking] I
14 mean, and, and I'm, and I am – and I made a couple notes here, uh, drugs
15 were fairly prominent in the 70. Okay. Pot, smokin' weed, you know,
16 gettin' high. Everybody got – I, I, I don't wanna quote. A lotta people that
17 worked here got high every day. Before work, during work, after work,
18 okay. Um, fortunately I didn't know any of'm but, uh...
19
20 [laughter]
21

22John Rosendahl: ...but I heard there were a lotta people, uh, [coughing] uh, you can laugh
23 if ya want ta [inaudible 20:31].
24
25 [laughter]
26

27Linda Johnson: [20:32] So you could smell it out in the parkin' lot?

28

29John Rosendahl: Yeah, ya could smell it everywhere.
30
31 [Inaudible 20:34].
32

33John Rosendahl: I, I mean, I mean I tell ya I had – um, I went on salary in 1973 as a
34 supervisor, and, uh, uh, we had the test for that back and – let me back up.
35 Back in, back in '65, uh, there were 4 of us, we're the first inspectors on
36 the F-85 [by the 20:57] Cutlass Line and, and when they first put
37 inspectors on the Cutlass line, and there were four of us workin' down
38 there. [Mike Coulter 21:03] [Dave Nuth 21:04] and Gary 21:05]. I can't
39 think – Gary's – [Gary Snyder 21:06] But we worked on inspection. We
40 had ta test for that. So, so if you didn't pass the test, you didn't get the job.
41 I mean, I mean ya had ta take a written test and everything else, and it was
42 a lengthy test. It was an all day thing. But we were the first inspectors and,
43 and, and, uh, that job payed a little more, and it wasn't – well it wasn't off
44 the line. It wasn't, it wasn't, wasn't puttin' parts on cars and, and it was a
45 better job and, uh, I had a lotta fun and, and I, you know, again, this – I
46 just didn't have anything ta spend my money on except fun. And, uh, until

1 1970, ya come back, and ya got lots ta spend money on. Ya got a wife and
2 kid. Ya gotta house. Ya gotta payment, you know.

3
4 And, uh, uh, I think things really change when you get responsibility when
5 you're in – then you begin to realize how nice this job is, you know, and,
6 uh, uh, I was talkin' with someone the other day – I'm jumpin' ahead here
7 and in ju- – start the salary talkin' [pen clicking] about the fact that this
8 recent agreement that y'all gotta pay some more for healthcare, you know.
9 My, my, healthcare retirement cost doubled this year or for next year but,
10 you know what, I can't get healthcare this cheap anywhere else. So
11 whether I gotta pay more – my options are I can say no I don't want it and
12 buy it somewhere else, but it's, it's still a good deal, and, and I think GM
13 creates, creates good deals for people that are hard ta get outta sometimes.
14 They get ya caught up in the cycle bein' here but, but if ya look at it as it's
15 okay, it's not so bad. Uh...

16
17 Linda Johnson: Wait. John, I have a question. [22:39] Before you had talked about PPH
18 days. [inaudible 22:41] The people that are [papers rustling] not GM
19 people don't know what a PPH day is.
20

21 John Rosendahl: I think it was in the late 70s when it was negotiated to have [throat
22 clearing] everybody got 8 paid personal holidays. I think it was late 70s. Is
23 that about right? I think, uh, and, and, um, that was really seen as a real
24 mess [chair sliding] because, because [door creaking] management had ta,
25 had ta put on more, more utility people ta cover people who had days off
26 and somebody was smart enough to figure out a program and so you knew
27 what days ya had off during the year, and the intention was for you to
28 schedule your doctor's appointments and eye appointments and get your
29 car fixed on those days, but that whole thing didn't work. It was just – that
30 was an extra day off 'cause that extra 8 days a year you had off, that's
31 cool. And, uh, um, that was great. Because you're still a [inaudible 23:40].
32 You still got sick. You couldn't say you're gonna, you're gonna get sick
33 on March 4th, that's your PPH day. [throat clearing] So it didn't work. It
34 was, it was nice concept that didn't work. Yeah, they pulled that out I
35 think 2 contracts later if I'm not mistaken. Uh, it was an intention that was
36 tried as a way ta try ta curb absenteeism, but I really think GM and the
37 UAW – the automotive industry missed the mark on what was causin'
38 absenteeism. It, it wasn't bein' sick, and it wasn't havin' ta get your car
39 fixed.
40

41 It was workin' too much. I mean, you know, you work [ten threes 34:17]
42 six days a week, you're tired. You're just tired. Uh, and at the time, back
43 in the early part of 70s, we were doing that. I worked second shift on
44 hourly and, uh, and I was goin' ta school in the daytime, so I was, uh, I
45 was, uh, inspector in 3X and final, uh, buyer up there. Uh, and, uh, you
46 know, we'd work 14 hours a night, 15 hours a night, and I can remember

1 [coughing] asking to get out early one night so I'd go take a final exam.
2 Now early bein' I got to leave at [15, 5 24:52] you know, I got ta leave at
3 7 so I get down at LLC at 8, take a test and, and, and that was, that was
4 hard but, you know, I wanted somethin' outta that, so I got it. But, uh, you
5 know, it's just we built a lotta cars. We had about 50 percent market share
6 and, and I'm not, I'm not sayin' we built junk 'cause I don't think, I don't
7 think we ever intentionally built junk. We built good cars, but we made so
8 many of'm, and we worked so hard that I don't think the cars were as
9 good as they could be and, uh, uh, so, so, but I think we, you know, we
10 still had a good market share, and it wasn't 'cause our product was great.
11 It just wasn't competition like there is today. That's all.
12
13 Linda Johnson: [25:33] When you were going to school, John, you said that, um, [throat
14 clearing] GI bill paid for it and you didn't get to use the – GM didn't...
15
16 John Rosendahl: No.
17
18 Linda Johnson: ...pay for it?
19
20 John Rosendahl: No. Well, y-, y-, you can't use both.
21
22 Linda Johnson: [25:44] Can't use both?
23
24 John Rosendahl: So...
25
26 Linda Johnson: No double dippin.
27
28 John Rosendahl: ...you know, you know. No. The GI bill has a [life on 25:47] you know.
29 So the GI bill – I mean TAP, Tuition Assistance Program, pays you for
30 your books and your school fees. The GI bill pays you in a sense you get a
31 check every month.
32
33 Linda Johnson: Oh.
34
35 John Rosendahl: Based on the number of credits you're carrying. If you're goin' half time,
36 full time. I used ta go half time durin', durin' the school year and then full
37 time in the summer – in the summertime because the credit requirement
38 was less. But, you know, I don't know what it was. I might ta got 600
39 bucks [inaudible 26:19] for doing that. So, so at the time, that's pretty
40 good money, you know, but, but you earned it. I mean you earned it. I
41 mean just 'cause – I mean, you know, and also I wanna go back ta another
42 thing – talk about stories. There used to be 3 of us up, up in 3X up in
43 Finals and Trim that were, were – there were 3 repair guys in Trim [chair
44 squeaking] uh, there was the horseshoe up in 3X, which was – 'cause it
45 tracks up like a horseshoe, and they would load repair cars in there, and
46 then there was the hole, which they called a hole, which was an area that

1 held about 12 cars that repairmen worked offline on and then there was, uh
2 – there's another area called the wagon hole [pen clicking] where we used
3 to work on the old big wagons. The Eighty-Eight wagons. B-wagons.
4

5 And the reason those two areas [writing] existed a lotta times, uh, because
6 the line wasn't moving there, we would put cars depending what they
7 needed done where [coughing] somebody could work on a car that wasn't
8 moving like if ya had to fix the decal on the side of the body. You can't be jerkin'
9 if you're tryin' ta fix a headlight or tear inside. You can't be jerkin'
10 like that, you know. So they would be stationed in one spot, but we rotated
11 through there and, and there's a guy named [Al Whitford 27:33] uh, Al, Al
12 had a thing for, for pocket back, pocket bo-, you know, books, you know,
13 paperbacks. And, and he always read porn paperbacks, and, and it's truth.
14 And, uh, [Bob Morris 27:47] who was another good guy. Bob always read
15 the newspaper. He'd read the Free Press. He'd read the Journal. He'd ring
16 – he'd bring in two papers a night and read'm cover to cover. I bring in
17 my schoolbooks – bring my schoolbooks when I wasn't – when you
18 weren't checkin' jobs and, uh, I had a superintendent named [Charlie
19 Johnson 28:07] who wasn't one of my favorite people and, uh, Charlie
20 told my boss to tell me that I couldn't read my schoolbooks, and I
21 remember this because – but it was okay for Bob to read the paperbacks
22 and – I mean for Al to read the paperbacks and for Bob to read the papers.
23

24 Because Charlie felt that, that when I was reading the schoolbooks, I was
25 too intense in learning and I couldn't do my job properly. You know, so
26 when a car – when the repairman had a car fixed, I'd have ta go look at it,
27 sign off on the car that it was ready ta go. Well he felt 'cause I was reading
28 schoolbooks, I couldn't focus on that car like Al who is reading porno
29 books and Bob whose reading the newspaper...
30

31 [laughter]
32

33 John Rosendahl: ...that's light reading. So, so I had ta quit reading my schoolbooks, you
34 know. And, and it's really kinda bizarre, but that's, that's what – that's
35 true and, uh, you, you know, we've come a long way from that. Nobody
36 reads. Not at all. But, I mean, I mean, I mean there were levels of good
37 reading, you know, and, uh, mine [beeping] mine wasn't one of'm so, but,
38 uh, anyway, I, uh, went on salary in '73 and, uh, really thought I'd reached
39 the pinnacle of life, you know. In early 30s and I'm supervisor and, uh,
40 and then we had, uh, an academic downturn in '70-. late '74, and I was cut
41 off salary. Uh, that was, uh, was a very difficult thing ta do [throat
42 clearing] because first off [papers rustling] uh, automakers 25 percent
43 paycut 'cause used to be the base was 25 percent above your top 5 highest
44 paid people in your area, which was your utility people. Your extra [board
45 29:54] people. So you made 25 percent above them and, and which that's
46 all changed now. But, uh, so [writing] you go back takin' 25 percent pay

1 cut and, and I went back on inspection up in 3X, up in Final Trim and, uh,
2 I was put on a job that, that I thought I had too much work on. It was my
3 first day where I had too much work on it. So I asked my partner.
4
5 I says, ‘This job sucks as far as [inaudible 30:23],’ [throat clearing] and
6 he, he says, “Well, I don’t, I don’t wanna, don’t wanna make any waves.”
7 So I called [pen clicking] so I called the committee man, wrote a [78
8 30:30] on it, you know.
9
10 [laughter]
11
12 John Rosendahl: Too much work on it. And, uh, uh, and this is funny. I asked, I asked ta
13 see the, the stats on this job, you know, uh, says I wanna see the writeup
14 on the job to know what the content is, and they wouldn’t show it to me
15 because I was hourly. But the week prior, I coulda looked at. And, and I
16 couldn’t – to me, that made no sense. If I could look at it last week, why
17 can’t I look at it this week? ‘Cause I was hourly, you know, and I thought
18 that’s crap. So then they pulled me into the office and told me if, if I
19 pursued this 78, I would never have a chance of gettin’ back on salary.
20 And I, and I called their bluff, you know, so I’m not tryin’ goin’ ta Quality
21 Control. I can go back ta production. So screw you, you know, and I
22 pushed the 78 and they finally, they finally took some work of us. It was
23 too much work. But, uh, you, you know, uh, just that whole thing about I
24 could see the paperwork last week, but I couldn’t see it this week. That
25 bothered me, you know, and we don’t – you, you know, I think we’ve
26 changed from that. But I mean, I mean that’s the way it was back then.
27
28 [coughing]
29
30 John Rosendahl: There was a definite line between hourly and salary.
31
32 Linda Johnson: Mike Fleming.
33
34 Mike Fleming: [31:37] Um, John, just explain what a 78 is...
35
36 John Rosendahl: Oh, the 78 is, uh, is, uh, a paragraph of the national agreement that, that,
37 that every employee, every hourly employee has the right ta exercise if
38 they think there’s too much work on his job, he can write a para-,
39 paragraph 78 grievance grieving the operation, and then it’s worked out
40 later on. Uh, the 70s, like I says when we work a lot of overtime and, and,
41 uh, people were just kinda – they had a lotta money. Uh, I talked about
42 people gettin’ high. I, I had an area up in, up in Final Trim back in ’73 –
43 uh back in ’76, had about 33 guys workin’ in that area and, and, and I
44 could tell ya that there was 17 of’m that went out, went out every day, got
45 a buzz on, and, and, you know, that’s just the way it was, you know, and
46 nothin’ not good or bad, that’s just what people did. And, uh, you know,

1 that, that was, uh, that – it wasn't accepted by management. It was just the
2 way things were. I mean – but we had a, we had a lotta fun back then. W-,
3 work was fun. Work was a lotta fun.
4
5 I had, uh, uh, I'll tell ya one, one drug story I think that helped get me ta
6 where I'm at today as far as some things but, uh, one of my guys workin'
7 and saw him in front in-, inside garnish trim on the windshield, uh, my
8 general supervisor had walked through my area one day, and he called me
9 from Repair and said, "I just walked through your area," It was [Rocky
10 Wright 33:22] He says, "I just walked through your area and somebody's
11 smokin' pot in your area. I want you to find out who it is and take care of
12 it." I said, "Okay." So I went down [screeching] ta, ta the garnish area and
13 asked the guy, "Okay, I need to know who's smokin' pot," you know,
14 because I gotta, I gotta get it stopped and pretty soon this gentleman came
15 up ta me at my desk, he says, 'I was the one gettin' high. I, I was the one
16 smokin' a joint." I said, "Well, don't do that," you know, "Go over in the
17 other guy's area and smoke if you're goin' ta smoke."
18
19 [laughter]
20
21 John Rosendahl: "Don't smoke in my area."
22
23 [laughter]
24
25 John Rosendahl: Actually, go around the endline. Go around ta the other line and smo-,
26 smoke, smoke over there. So then Rocky called me later on. He said, "Did,
27 did you find out who was smokin' pot?" I says, "Yeah." He says, "Did
28 you get it taken care of?" I says, "Yeah." He said, "What'd ya do?" I says,
29 "I made the guy promise not ta smoke in my area anymore."
30
31 [laughter]
32
33 John Rosendahl: Well he thought that was, he thought that was wrong. He wanted me ta
34 discipline the guy, you know, no big deal, you know. But, uh, that was
35 just, that was the norm back then. I think the people just got high. They
36 just did.
37
38 Linda Johnson: Doug Rademacher.
39
40 Doug Rademacher: John, you said that Rocky wanted ya to discipline the, the man. [34:28]
41 Can you share at that time, since, uh, it wasn't accepted by management,
42 but it was pretty prevalent in the culture and in the plant, what would have
43 been, uh, uh, a discipline? Would it been, uh, [chair moving] a discharge
44 or would've you just...
45

1 John Rosendahl: No, it would be a 30-day DLO, and we'd probably – because he was a
2 good employee, we'd...
3
4 [throat clearing]
5
6 John Rosendahl: ...probably not [inaudible 34:43]. But, you know, that's one of those
7 things that the attitude about most things in management was you can't
8 have that, so we gotta discipline people, you know. And, and, and that's
9 what we did. We disciplined people, and then if they were good people,
10 you brought'm back early. Shorten their, shorten their penalty but left it on
11 their record or somethin' like that. But, but, that's how things were
12 handled. Now, yes Mike.
13
14 Mike Fleming: Um, DLO.
15
16 John Rosendahl: Disciplinary layoff.
17
18 Mike Fleming: [35:11] Can you to those who don't understand this...
19
20 John Rosendahl: Yeah. Okay, sorry.
21
22 Mike Fleming: ...disciplinary layoff?
23
24 John Rosendahl: Yeah. Yeah, uh, in 1980 – late 80, I had the opportunity to go in Labor
25 Relations. And, so again, I'm thinkin' about the pinnacle of my career. I
26 gotta, I gotta new pinnacle.
27
28 [laughter]
29
30 [coughing]
31
32 John Rosendahl: So I take this job in Labor and, uh, it was, it was an exciting thing that I
33 thought I was going ta do. Because one of the things I felt by going in the
34 Labor, none of the other, other Labor Reps had any floor experience. They
35 never worked hourly, and they had never worked in management other
36 than the Labor, and I thought I could bring somethin' to the table, uh, as a
37 segue when I went in there, [Judy Deavors 36:08] was Labor Relations
38 secretary. Most of us know Judy. And, and I had an office where
39 everybody had offices there, and she came ta my office one day, and this
40 is still Fisher Body, and she asked me what my level was. And I was a 6
41 level. Salary people are by code levels and, uh, uh, back then, all super-,
42 all supervisors were sixes and general supervisors were sevens and the
43 superintendents were eights, so and so forth. And we had a fair amount of
44 administrative people who were, uh, 5th level people. And I told her I was
45 a 6, and I asked her why. She said, "Well, because the Fisher Body code

1 was if you weren't a 6 level, you couldn't have a chair with arms." Honest
2 ta God.
3
4 [laughter]
5
6 John Rosendahl: You could not have a chair with arms...
7
8 [laughter]
9
10 John Rosendahl: ...unless you were a 6 level.
11
12 [clearing throat]
13
14 John Rosendahl: That was the rule. Okay.
15
16 [laughter]
17
18 John Rosendahl: And ya had to be a 7 level to get a credenza. Honest to God.
19
20 [coughing]
21
22 John Rosendahl: And that's the truth.
23
24 [laughter]
25
26 John Rosendahl: And yeah, you're laughing at that but that's, that's – maybe I'm – I'm like
27 what, uh, ya talkin' about, you know, I can't have that chair with arms,
28 you know. She says, "No, you gotta be a 6 level ta get a chair with arms."
29 'Cause she was checking to make sure I was authorized ta have that chair I
30 had, you know, so I felt better about that, you know, 'cause I had no where
31 to put my arms, you know...
32
33 [laughter]
34
35 John Rosendahl: ...but, uh...
36
37 Mike Fleming: John, Mike Fleming. John, y-, y-, you had, uh, – from just what you've
38 spoke of so far, there was, uh, quite a bit of discriminatory practices within
39 the...
40
41 John Rosendahl: Oh, all kinds of it. But that was okay. That's the way it was. I mean, I
42 mean it – I mean not okay but that's how the system was. We, we've
43 evolved, and we've, we've grown from that, but that's...
44
45 Mike Fleming: [Inaudible 37:39].
46

1John Rosendahl: ...that's really was part of the culture.
2
3Linda Johnson: The culture. Yeah.
4
5John Rosendahl: [Inaudible 37:43].
6
7Marilyn Coulter: Um, John, Marilyn Coulter. [37:46] Um, you've already had a vast, you
8 know, different steps, and I just wanted ta know because of with each step,
9 what were some of the things that you were able to impact on to make a
10 difference of these things that you were seeing and blowing your mind,
11 well, this is crazy. This is crazy. How did it affect John?
12
13John Rosendahl: I'll go back a couple and then I'll add to it 'cause it, it gets better.
14
15Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
16
17John Rosendahl: Uh, in that area that I had – I talked about the guy smokin' pot, uh, I had
18 another fellow in that area. An old, old, older gentleman that drank every
19 day. Now, he wasn't a drunk, he was an alcoholic. He drank every day. He
20 did his job, you know. Well, one af- – one noon time, some of the guys
21 took him out on a Friday ta have a couple beers and ta smoke a joint. Well,
22 he's stockin' mouldings in the car, trim mouldings, garnish mouldings. It
23 was his job. He come back. He couldn't tell blue from red from yellow
24 from which job he did, and he was just lost.
25
26 [laughter]
27
28John Rosendahl: Well, so what are they gonna do? Well, throw him out the door, you know,
29 discipline him, but I didn't have anybody ta cover him with. We didn't
30 have any help. So I made two of the guys take him out. He – we called his
31 wife, made'm take him out, get him in the car, and then come back, and
32 they had ta cover his job. Everybody had ta cover his job. I didn't care
33 how it got done. But I, I didn't want – he didn't, he didn't deserve
34 discipline, you know, uh, he was a nice old guy. He just went out and
35 smoked a couple hits of weed and he shouldn't of but – and was gone but,
36 but, you know, I saw no value ta throwin' the guy out the door for a week.
37 He couldn't afford ta go out door for a week. But he – but some of the
38 guys need ta learn a lesson. You're gonna cover his job tonight. So they all
39 busted their ass, and they got job done, but that was fine. And, and I felt
40 that was the way ta do things. And I had other issues where I had people
41 that, that, that, times went and got drunk and couldn't do the job. And,
42 and, you know, if ya have a luxury of having extra people around, you can
43 throw them out the door. That's an option. But if ya don't have that, then
44 that's not an option.
45

1 You gotta find a way ta work around that and, and, and it seems like to the
2 supervisor, like [Kenny DeRosa 40:08] who you remember Kenny
3 DeRosa, always wanna throw somebody out. Shit, if he didn't throw
4 somebody out once a week, he, he had a bad week, you know. We'd
5 always find somebody ta cover a job, but I didn't look at it that way
6 because I didn't think discipline needed ta be – need ta cost ya money, you
7 know, you know, uh, [papers rustling] when – anyway, so when I went
8 into Labor, I thought I should try ta make a difference down there because
9 Labor Relation needed my help with the people. Helpin' fix things. And
10 it's really not your me- – you're really management's lawyer. And, and,
11 and, so you go into an interview – just for an interview and you've got the
12 union representative for the hourly person that is gonna be disciplined and
13 the Labor rep was a management guy and, uh, a couple things that, that I
14 changed for the good, uh, one was when I went in Labor Relations, one
15 thing I always hated when I was a supervisor, when ya do the disciplinary
16 interview, okay, you say, okay, "Doug, you were absent last night and,
17 you know, you've said, [pen clicking] you don't know why you're absent,
18 you just didn't make it in ta work, so we've gotta discipline ya."
19

20 So then we talk about it [pen clicking] and then, and then, we go out [pen
21 clicking] and we type up the [papers rustling] the 948, which is a number
22 for the, for the form. I still remember that number, you know, for the form.
23 We typed it up [pen clicking] and come back in and read it to ya. And I
24 always asked the question when I was a supervisor, "Why do we have ta
25 read the notice of discipline?" We've already told the guy what was goin'
26 on. We've already been through all this. And the answer was "God
27 Dammit, just read it," you know, so ya read it. While I was a Labor rep I
28 asked the same question, "Are there any rules that says the supervisor has
29 ta read the notice of discipline?" Because now get back in your head a
30 little ways [clicking] to the, to the early 80s and the supervisor we had,
31 who didn't have this, this whole group of college-educated people that
32 we've got now. And there was some people that couldn't read very well.
33 So they'd be required ta read this notice of discipline and, and embarrass
34 themselves stumblin' through it, you know, just it, it, you know – and they
35 couldn't read it. So when I started doin' interviews with people, I tell the
36 supervisor, you don't – [pen clicking] ya gonna read – uh, you don't need
37 ta read that. Just tell'm, "Doug, you're gone."
38

39 You're out the door for 3 days for violation of a plant rule," whatever it
40 was, "And you come back ta work next Monday." Got any questions?"
41 "Have a nice day." [clicking] "Here ya go." And, and while I thought that
42 was great, all of a sudden, I get flooded with interviews. Everybody wants
43 me for the interview. They don't want anybody else [paper tearing]
44 because, 'cause they don't have ta read.
45

46 [laughter]

1
2 John Rosendahl: You know.
3
4 [throat clearing]
5
6 John Rosendahl: So I'm tryin' ta do a nice thing, and I'm creating myself more work, you
7 know.
8
9 [laughter]
10
11 John Rosendahl: And, uh, Monday nights were terrible because I had all these Friday nights
12 ta take care of, you know, these interviews from people, from people
13 being absent on Monday night and Friday night, I'd have 7, 8 interviews,
14 and geez, I'm runnin' from Body Paint ta Trim and stuff and, and so, so
15 that, that was the start of things in, in Labor Relations. Eventually, others
16 started doin' that too. And, and where it was required, and now I don't
17 know, I haven't done, I haven't done one in so long but, but, uh, I don't
18 even think they involve Labor Relations anymore if it's under a couple
19 weeks or somethin' like that, uh, discipline. I don't know but, but that was
20 a change that I thought was good for the supervisors, you know. Because
21 they didn't have ta go through that point, and, and I had some situations,
22 um, that were best served if we just get people outta there [pen clicking]
23 and not talk about it a little – not talk about it anymore. We've already
24 been through a heated discussion, a heated argument. There's no sense
25 draggin' out by readin' what we've just talked about. So I, so I thought
26 that was good. Uh, my, my good friend, [Dave Brown 43:39] who is, is,
27 uh, the joint activities representative for Local 602 currently and, uh, at
28 that time was a district committee man up in Paint, uh, a representative in
29 Paint.
30
31 Uh, I, I think I got – there's two things that got, that got me, got me
32 credibility in Labor. One, Dave had an interview up there with [Keith
33 Ward 43:59] who was a general foreman that was just a bastard and, uh,
34 you can clean it up but, uh, uh...
35
36 [laughter]
37
38 John Rosendahl: ...he was. And, uh, we had an interview up there one time and, uh, Keith
39 was gonna throw some, some lady out for doin' somethin' and Dave had
40 facts. He says, "Well, Keith is it true that Doug, Doug did that last week
41 too?" "Was he doing that?" And Keith says, "Well, yeah maybe," [pen
42 clicking] you know, "Maybe," and, and I says, and I says, "So Keith, you
43 wanna discipline her for doin' the same thing that he did?" He says,
44 "Well, yeah. What's the difference?" I says, "I don't – we don't have a
45 case here." And I got up and walked out. And Keith Ward, if – those of
46 you who remember Keith Ward in Paint, was livid. He jumped up, and he

1 was pissed that a Labor rep walked outta of his interview 'cause I
2 wouldn't, I wouldn't do it. He didn't have a case. And, and, and so I think
3 that helped, and then I used ta do stuff with [Ron McKeever 44:57] who
4 worked the second shift with [Dorothy Stevens 45:00] uh, and [Ron Perry
5 45:03]. They were the nightshift. If someone came in, ya [need people
6 45:05] And McKeever and I decided at one time that when we'd have
7 interviews that it would make more sense if we both agreed on the facts.

8
9 So after an interview [tearing paper] and after a discipline of a case, if, if,
10 uh, [flipping page] a case goes up to the second and third step of the
11 interview process, uh, quite, quite frequently you'd be arguing about
12 different things, you know, so Ron and I would [papers rustling] sit down
13 and compare notes, which at that time was unheard of, you know, because
14 union and managements weren't supposed ta swap stories, you know, and,
15 and – but we would compare notes [pen clicking] so that, so that when we,
16 when we went ta each write our contention, [papers rustling] we were, we
17 were – we work off the same facts, which made things a lot – I mean it
18 made things a lot easier, and it made more sense. Why – I mean if we sat
19 in the same interview, we probably shoulda heard the same thing. Not you
20 heard black and I heard white [clicking] or you heard green and I heard
21 yellow. So we'd agree. Well, uh, you know, maybe he did say that, you
22 know, so, so [papers rustling] that worked out pretty well. Uh, I didn't stay
23 long in Labor. I, I, uh, one, I didn't care for it because, because you're
24 there ta be the bad guy. [pen clicking] In fact, at that time, and part of that
25 time, uh, I was raising my son as a single parent, and he was, I don't
26 know, when I was in Labor, probably he was 13 or somethin' like that or
27 14.

28
29 And, and ya get this investigative nature about you. Where ya been, you
30 know, well, I called or you weren't there, you know. And, and, and I
31 would do that with him, you know, [pen clicking] and he said ta me one
32 day – he said, "Dad, I hate your job," you know, he says, "Because [pen
33 clicking] you ask me questions when you already know the answers." You
34 know, it was just part of my [clicking] – you become, you become that
35 way as a Labor rep. [pen clicking] and because you wanna find out 'cause
36 everybody's lying to ya obviously, you know, so I go there [pen clicking]
37 but, but, so, so I didn't like that. So then I had the chance to, uh, get
38 involved at the ground floor of Quality Work Life, which, which was, uh,
39 uh, probably I think [papers rustling] the beginning of a good change for
40 where we're at today. Um, plant manager back then was [Don Chanowith
41 47:19] and, and Don firm-, firmly believed in Quality Work Life.
42 [tapping] Uh, there was initial discussions between [Don Eathlin 47:28] on
43 the UAW side and, uh, [pen clicking] and, and, uh, I wanna say [Bob
44 Stemple 47:35] from management but anyway that's, that, that's when the
45 whole hay day [papers tearing] of Quality Work Life to joint activities, to
46 [pen clicking] Quality Network ta where we are today with joint relations

1 between union [papers rustling] and management. Um, Quality Work Life
2 was, was a lotta fun.

3
4 I had a great [pen clicking] time. I had a great time because ya get ta kinda
5 be a prophet, you know, ya just – you’re tellin’ everybody that things are
6 gonna [tapping] be great tomorrow. You’re gonna love workin’ here, you
7 know...

8
9 [throat clearing]

10
11 ...you’re gonna get everything ya want. You’re gonna be happy. And
12 people liked that and, and [tapping] we did workshops. We did two
13 workshops a week, two, two-day workshops, 8, 8 hours a day, and we’d
14 bring in 40 people from – we’d do a department at a time – bring in 40
15 people to a workshop and teach them about Quality Work Life, about
16 working together and, and about problem solving together, and that kinda
17 stuff. And [pen clicking] uh, the fortune of having a manager that
18 supported it, he threw a lotta money on it. So, uh, the first employee
19 partic-, participation group, EPG group, that I ever sat on and the first one
20 I think in one of the plants, [Denny Moore 48:43] was the EPG leader out
21 of Paint. And, and I remember him – there were like 5 people in this
22 meeting, and he was promising them they could have a birdbath or wash
23 basin in their area. [pen clicking] He’d get it for’em or they’d be involved
24 in EPG. So they – so, so believe me we got Denny a birdbath ‘cause
25 Chanowith says, uh, [page turning] – “If ya ever wanna thing, [inaudible
26 49:03] we’ll pay for it.” So we, we fixed things. We put in new benches.
27 We put lights up. We did everything we could think of to make people’s
28 work environment better, uh, that they asked for. And I don’t think
29 anybody asked for stuff that wasn’t reasonable.

30
31 They asked for stuff they shoulda had and, and, uh, alls we did was agree
32 ta do it. And as a result, I think Quality Work Life got off on a good start.
33 Now, Ford was doin’ the same thing except they had employee
34 involvement. Ford said if you have employee involvement, you have
35 Quality Work Life. Well, GM – of course, we can’t be like Ford, so GM
36 said, you know, if ya have Quality Work Life, then ya get employee
37 involvement. I think Ford had it right. If ya have employee involvement,
38 then the quality of your work life improves. Not the other way around. But
39 that’s the way we went. Uh, one of the things that I remember about, I was
40 workin’ the nightshift doin’ a workshop, and [Steve Pfeiffer 50:09] was
41 my partner at the time, my UAW partner, and we always did these
42 workshops in teams. And, uh, I don’t know where it come from but one
43 night I’m up on the flipchart – I’m up on the front of the group talkin’ ta
44 them on the flipchart writin’ these things down, and I’m talkin’ on, on, on,
45 I’m talkin’ like, like I have a dream speech up here, you know, and, and I
46 says, [papers rustling] “I think what we’re gonna have,” [papers rustling]

1 and this is before we had QCAs, Quality Communication Advisors or
2 super EPG leaders, what I can rem-, EP, EPAs, whatever they called back
3 then, but, but...
4
5 [throat clearing]
6
7 John Rosendahl: ...I said that, that, "The days gonna come...
8
9 [throat clearing]
10
11 John Rosendahl: ...through [employee solving 50:48] when people in Body and Trim and
12 Paint will communicate with each other." So if Trim has a problem, don't
13 know who to contact [pen clicking] or they'll be able to contact someone
14 in Body Shop like we got bad studs or too much sealer on, on the studs
15 and the paint, you know, and that kinda stuff. And, and I just, just said
16 that, and I got done [tapping] and everybody thought God, that's really
17 cool, and I had a real, real sale job goin' on, and I was on a roll, you know,
18 I was like, like some TV minister, you know. And, uh, I got done and
19 Steve Pfeiffer says, come up to me and he says, "Wow, that's really cool.
20 How ya," he says, "How ya gonna do that?" I said, "I don't know. We'll
21 figure it out," you know, but I think we kinda got there. But it wasn't me,
22 it's just that [pen clicking] the system worked that way as more people got
23 involved. People from Body, Paint, and Trim started, started talkin' to one
24 another. We eliminated this, this competition between Body, Paint, and
25 Trim, you know, and, and, and, you know, [papers rustling] that's when
26 we started to understand that the, the flow to the banks, which, which are,
27 uh, areas between Body, Paint, and Trim where we'd, we'd float 20 cars,
28 15 cars from Body to Paint and Paint to Trim.
29
30 We understood how important it was where towards, you know, so if
31 Body Shop broke down, we could still have cars in a float between Paint
32 and Trim. So Paint and Trim could still run. It's just the mechanical side
33 was doin' the same thing the human side was. People were talkin' to one
34 another 'cause they wanted to keep, keep things goin'. [papers rustling]
35 And, and I really thought, thought that, that, that was a good era. Uh, uh, it
36 was people we – you, you know, we did stuff as a plant. We had golf
37 outings. We had – we played baseball. We did a lotta things. We had – we
38 did and, and, you know, we – that's I think from that if ya jump ahead
39 [pen clicking] 20 years, 25 years la-, years later to the, to the 2003, '04s,
40 '05s, when we – it is not uncommon to walk through Trim or any place
41 else and not see a [papers rustling] charity dinner for [pen clicking] so and
42 so whose mother has cancer or somebody's house [pen clicking] burnt
43 down. We became a very giving organization, but I think that all started
44 back here in the 80s when we began to like each other. And, and, you
45 know, and, and when, when trimmers and painters and body shoppers
46 were all the same people or members of UAW. They're good folks, and,

1 and I think that's when [writing] I think Quality Work Life movement
2 made, made a better work environment, made, made things better.
3
4 I still think we did it wrong. [pen clicking] If we woulda pushed
5 employment involvement, you woulda got Quality Work Life. But we
6 bought [pen clicking] employee involvement, and when we stopped
7 buying, then people said Quality Work Life didn't work. Uh, agree or
8 disagree that's my opinion, and we did – it didn't work because we
9 stopped payin' for it. And all of a sudden – well, and then we started
10 pushin' employee involvement, you know, and, uh, but [papers rustling]
11 uh, that's, that's my thoughts on how all that stuff worked, but it changed
12 the [inaudible 53:42] you know.
13
14 Linda Johnson: Doug Rademacher.
15
16 Doug Rademacher: You just shared another thing that I find interesting, John, about culture
17 change again and [pen clicking] you're talking about the, the corporation's
18 decision or, uh, Mr. Chanowith anyway. I don't know how far and all how
19 many plants implemented it, but there was a time in the original start of
20 Labor in the old days in the 30s where people stood up together ta get
21 what was right, you know, working conditions and wages and stuff.
22 [papers rustling] Then we came ta the point where you were just sharing
23 where people worked together. They played together. They started
24 growing as people together, and you don't see that anymore today.
25
26 John Rosendahl: Well, I – and I, I can give ya my opinion why, but I go back a little deeper
27 than you did.
28
29 [throat clearing]
30
31 John Rosendahl: I think, I think the very core of that was the George Pullman Car Company
32 back in the early 20s when George Pullman made Pullman rail cars and,
33 and he created his own community and, and you lived in the Pullman
34 community and, you know, you got money taken out of your check for
35 your house when ya live there, and you bought from the Pullman Grocery
36 Store and everything was, s-, nice. Everybody got along well, and it was
37 great until the Pullman cars didn't sell, and you still had to make your
38 payment. And, and that's when they, they eventually went outta business
39 because the whole, whole system collapsed. Now I, I think from what you
40 said, why it doesn't work the way it does today, uh, is were more
41 diversified in our culture. Uh, if I wanna leave here, I can eat at 6
42 restaurants in 5 minutes because there's, there's many things – there's
43 more things ta choose from. More things ta do. If ya go back into the 80s,
44 the, the – we brought people together with activities, you know, we did
45 family stuff. We did a lotta things, you know, you, you saw the holiday
46 dinners and things. And, and you saw, you saw the co-, you know, you

1 saw people gettin' together to play together. Uh, this, this age group that
2 works here now are probably either parents or grandparents.

3
4 Not sayin' they weren't then there but, but, you know, just the fact that if
5 ya joke about soccer moms and the number of SUVs and the number of
6 vans we saw 'cause kids are involved in everything. They're doin' –
7 they're playin' sports. They're doin dance and stuff, and people don't have
8 time and most people now are two-income families. They don't have time
9 to rely on the work environment for the, for the close-knit activity 'cause
10 there's soccer clubs, there's swim clubs, there's dance clubs, there's, you
11 know, I, I, I've thrown darts for many years in a league here in town. The
12 first year I ever [inaudible 56:43] 15 years. I didn't throw this year
13 because the guys on my team – his daughter – one guy – his daughter is 7.
14 She's in the Twist Stars now so he's gotta do that and, uh, uh, you know,
15 another guy, his kids are in high school, they're playin' sports and so
16 Monday nights a bad night 'cause of this and, and people get caught up in
17 things that they gotta do now and more so the, the options didn't exist for
18 exterior things for ya kids the way they do now, and I think that pulls
19 away. You always had the opportunity ta bowl.

20
21 You always had the op-, opportunity ta do somethin' else in the summer,
22 ta hunt in the fall but, but now ya gotta blend that with, with what goes on
23 in your family, and I think that makes it difficult ta count on work or
24 expect work ta be that core. Now if ya had – if you, if you created dance
25 classes at the hall for little kids and [throat clearing] uh, uh, a soccer
26 league over at your new hall or next ta the new administration building
27 outta, outta plant 7, whatever it is, then you might be able to pull some of
28 that in. But, you know, you might explore that sometime. Hey, why don't
29 we have a soccer league for employee's kids or somethin' like that
30 [inaudible 57:54] see if there's any interest in that and see, see if there's a
31 drawback to that. There might be, who knows. Uh, more in the 80s, the,
32 the, uh, [throat clearing] ya asked me if other plants did or not. The, the
33 Black Lake movements I call it was really strong. We would take Black
34 Lake is, uh, a facility in Ottawa, Michigan owned by the UAW, uh, started
35 by [Walter Roother 58:19] I believe, uh, back in the 20s if I'm not
36 mistaken, and that's, that's, uh, a facility where we took – we bein' GM
37 and UAW, took groups of managers and UAW leadership up there for a
38 week at a time and taught them how ta like each other and work together
39 and, uh, we did that for 2 or 3 years.

40
41 Uh, Fisher Body and Local 602 was a host plant one year up there for a
42 couple weeks, and I had the opportunity ta work up there many weeks, uh,
43 not only as an instructor but as a lead instructor and stuff and, uh, that
44 worked pretty good. Uh, it worked pretty good from the standpoint, ya get
45 people in a confined space, and they can learn ta like each other like a
46 foxhole, you know, I got your back and you got mine but [throat clearing]

1 when tanks move away, ya walk back out, well then, you're on your own,
2 you know, can I borrow a bullet, you know, but, uh...
3
4 [laughter]
5
6 [sniffing]
7
8 John Rosendahl: ...some of that drifted back in the plants and, in some plants, it worked
9 and some plants it didn't work. I also had the opportunity to, uh – during
10 that time, I went on the road with another UAW, with a couple different
11 fellows from UAW International, and we'd go ta plants and work
12 internally ta help union management learn how ta get along, and that was
13 always – that was hard work because ya walk into someplace, and we just
14 think about your leadership and the plant leadership. I wanna say when
15 we...
16
17 [sniffing]
18
19 John Rosendahl: ...shut down, you're – so the [inaudible 60:00] team shop committee and
20 then the management team, you'd go, you'd go in there and not know
21 them and, uh, you do 30 minute interviews or so on with each of them and,
22 uh, [pen clicking] 2 on 1, and then try ta gather up enough information ta
23 make, uh, [chair moving] make a workshop work, you know, for a 2 or 3-
24 day workshop. And, and hopefully, uncover some hidden agendas there,
25 you know, and ya always got a few but ya never been b-, but, but ya never
26 got'm all. But, but I would say that we were successful [rattling] in those
27 ventures in helping people understand that it was okay to work together. It
28 was okay ta share info-, information and stuff. Uh, that, that was a good
29 part of my career. I enjoyed that, you know.
30
31 Linda Johnson: Mike.
32
33 Mike Fleming: Uh, John, y-, you – very early on you talked about the horseshoe [pen
34 clicking] and your times in Quality Control.
35
36 John Rosendahl: Yeah.
37
38 Mike Fleming: [61:00] Did you happen ta know a gentleman that worked down in there
39 named Pops? [throat clearing] He had been there...
40
41 [sniffing]
42
43 Mike Fleming: ...for quite some time. He was there for like 50 years. He retired after 50
44 years' service. They called him Pops.
45
46 John Rosendahl: [Bruce Seagrid 61:12]

1
2Mike Fleming: No.
3
4John Rosendahl: Not Bruce.
5
6 [Inaudible 61:14]
7
8John Rosendahl: Bruce, uh...
9
10Mike Fleming: Lloyd...
11
12John Rosendahl: [Lloyd Sevara 61:16] I worked with Lloyd, yeah. He's a good guy.
13
14Mike Fleming: [61:19] Uh, what type of working – what type of guy was he? What type –
15 talk about Fisher Body. The things that made Fisher Body Fisher Body.
16 We know we had, uh, a store here that, that sold [pen clicking] Fisher by
17 the name of [inaudible 61:31]. We had a coach here. We had all these
18 things that were [pen clicking] in this facility that – talk about those times
19 if you could.
20
21John Rosendahl: Lloyd B. Service was his name, uh, be official about that. Um, was a good
22 repairman, uh, [door screeching] but [door creaking] he never got too
23 excited about anything. He just – let me tell ya, you, you know, once
24 you've been here a while, ya think ya know the adage. Somebody says I
25 got 33 years' experience. Well, if ya really get at it, ya got 1 years'
26 experience 33 times, you know.
27
28Mike Fleming: [laughter]
29
30John Rosendahl: And, and Lloyd was like that. He probably [clicking] fixed everything on
31 the car worth fixin' so ya couldn't give him something he couldn't do.
32
33Mike Fleming: Sure.
34
35John Rosendahl: He was just a laid back guy. Uh, most everybody that ever worked around
36 here with a few exceptions, uh, all had the same incentive ta come ta
37 work. They had family. They had responsibilities. They're tryin' ta do
38 something, and they wanna come ta work and, and go home in the same
39 piece they come in, you know, and, uh, I think that's pretty much the way
40 we've always been around here. Uh, as far as the Fisher Body era – are
41 you leaving me?
42
43Female: No sir.
44
45Doug Rademacher: No.
46

1John Rosendahl: Okay, not sure. As far as the Fisher Body era, you know, I hired into
2 Fisher Body like most everybody else here did but in '84 became Lansing
3 Car Assembly and some people struggled with that. I think some people
4 still struggle with that. Uh, but it's like being married and divorced, you
5 know, I've been married and divorced and you cant', ya can't keep call-, –
6 you can't call your new wife by her – by your ex-wife's name, you know,
7 you can't do that. You know, it's like you move on and, and I think Fisher
8 Body was, was a, was a very valuable piece of, uh, of Local 602 and of
9 Lansing and of all of us that worked here. [chair squeaking] Uh, I had a
10 conversation [tapping] a re- – a while back with a fellow that worked
11 originally in, uh, the food company that was in Fisher Body that the Fisher
12 Brothers owned, uh, [Canteen 63:43]was it or somewhere – [Profit 63:44]
13 Foods, Profit Foods. When Profit Foods had the cafeteria business here,
14 Profit Foods were in all the Fisher Body plants 'cause Profit Foods was
15 owned by one of the Fisher brothers so...
16
17Mike Fleming: Sure.
18
19John Rosendahl: ...you know, guess what?
20
21 [Inaudible 63:59]
22
23John Rosendahl: And so I had a great...
24
25 [coughing]
26
27John Rosendahl: ...time talkin' with him because he went back and told me stuff I didn't
28 know but, but, uh, uh, Fisher Body was just another division of General
29 Motors like Oldsmobile, Cadillac. It was just, just a division. Uh, and I
30 don't have the knowledge to get back ta the beginning when this building
31 was built but, but I, I don't, you know, I don't think that Fisher Body and
32 Lansing Car Assembly is different. I mean I look at – and this is gonna
33 sound like somethin' outta a book but yeah, it's the people I work with
34 and, and the culture that, that – the culture didn't change when we
35 changed ta Lansing Car Assembly. Yeah, we brought over some
36 supervisors from Oldsmobile but I, I mean they, they f-, they fit it [pen
37 clicking] We sent supervisors over there and they f-, fit in somehow, you
38 know, and. and I think, uh, [rattling] we did a lot from [Zubkus 64:54] and
39 then going forward to make this one organization. Uh, I would never
40 support that Local 602 become part of 652 or vice versa but, but I think if
41 there'd ever been a better connector between the two locals, you woulda
42 had a better, a better core ta move forward. I think that the fact that you
43 mentioned of playin' golf...
44
45Mike Fleming: Mm-hm.
46

1John Rosendahl: ...with some 652 guys...
2
3 [throat clearing]
4
5John Rosendahl: ...uh, we've always maintained that identity and autonomy from a local
6 standpoint, and we've tried not ta have that from a management
7 standpoint.
8
9Mike Fleming: Sure.
10
11John Rosendahl: And, and I don't think that was ever beneficial for us because [door
12 creaking] ya got one management team servicing 2 [door creaking]
13 unions, and I'm gonna tell ya what. There's whip sawing goin' all the
14 time. Whip sawing bein' playin one against the other and, and we've
15 always done that and, and whether we meant to or not, it's just part of the
16 deal. You know, if I give you a shirt and don't give that guy a [pen
17 clicking] shirt [pen clicking] well, then we got issues. I mean of all the
18 events I ever did here, and I certainly have done a lot of'm the last few
19 years. Not all of 'm. We always ran into the situation with 652 when we're
20 giving away jackets to Lansing Car Assembly or when we're puttin' up
21 mass lunches ta Lansing Car Assembly that the people of Metal Fab – [Art
22 Baker 66:20] chairman of Local 65th 2 wants his Metal Fab folks ta have it
23 too because [pen clicking] they're part of the same local. [footsteps] And,
24 and we say well, we can't, you know, because [door opening] this is ours
25 and they said well geez, we feed you guys metal so [door screeching] ya
26 ought ta treat us like your brothers, [door screeching] you know, and gee,
27 even at [Chassie 66:38] when we do – when I do the dinners and stuff over
28 there.
29
30 I, I mean it's an amazing organization we got, we got, we got 7,000
31 people, I feed 10,000, you know. You'd be surprised at the people that
32 come out of the woodwork that supposed ta work at Lansing Car
33 Assembly.
34
35 [laughter]
36
37John Rosendahl: When there's free food along.
38
39Mike Fleming: Yes, indeed.
40
41John Rosendahl: But, but, I mean, I mean in all the things we do with jackets ta, ta, ta create
42 a data base ta say okay, here's the 7,000 people that's gonna get jackets.
43 Ya still give away 10,000 jackets because people show up with –
44 somehow and, and so we've never, we've never taken this – well, I'll call
45 this unity thing to the next level at Lansing. I, I mean you have region 1C,
46 you've got that, that's fine. But from a Lansing prospective, you got

1 different locals here who want their own autonomy, which is fine. But it
2 doesn't move us forward as – it's like union management. You'll never
3 get any, you know, get somewhere unless you're all on the same team
4 sometimes, and we-, we're, we're better at that. I don't know if will ever
5 get perfect at it but, but as, as, as a Lansing base, we're not gonna get
6 there. How many remember [Mike Braun 67:44] who works, works over
7 at Chassie, saw me one day and told me him and some others had been
8 down in Detroit makin' a pitch ta build police cars. And he says – and I
9 asked him. This is like, like 6 [inaudible 67:56] in about early, early in '05
10 or end of '04, and I says, "There's enough police cars for, for Body and
11 Chassie?" He says, "Oh no, we're just talkin' building 32 over at
12 Chassie."
13
14 [coughing]
15
16 John Rosendahl: And I'm like wait a minute, you know...
17
18 [Inaudible 68:12]
19
20 John Rosendahl: ...ya just can't have'm over there. We want somebody – we, we all get'm,
21 you know. If we can't all get'm, it's not, not every dog for himself. We're
22 tryin' ta save a plant here, you know. But, but he, and he didn't mean any
23 harm by it. Just like my leadership has gone down ta talk, ta talk ta
24 somebody in Detroit, talk to [Wagner 68:30] ta try ta get product for us,
25 for Local 652. Not for – but he said for Lansing slash, you know, hyphen,
26 parentheses Local 652. And, and if we could ever move on beyond that,
27 it'd be better. And I mean I'd almost – better not play this for anybody that
28 would care, but if ya become Local 637, you split the difference, you
29 know, and had one, one Lansing Local. I don't know if any – I know ya
30 guys work by regions and everything else but, but, you know, and that
31 may never change, but from a prospective of Lansing, you, you know, I
32 don't think any other town is gonna get any plants for a while in America
33 from GM. So, so we got two, which is pretty good and, and ta keep those
34 two and ta keep product. Some of these look beyond like what can we do
35 ta make sure we keep that and that ta me, that's, uh, that's, uh, Lansing –
36 that's a regional drive to, to not – it isn't about Fisher Body or 652 or 602,
37 it's about your family.
38
39 About your kids. About your family and kids, you know. You – when you
40 moved – you moved around before. You like it here, you know. It's about
41 keepin' everybody [pen clicking] here workin' and, and it's not about
42 who's got the bigger jobs banked. It likes whatta we do here ta keep
43 Lansing workin', and I don't know if I'll see that or you'll see that but
44 [pen clicking] it would sure be good if we could ever get beyond that, but I
45 don't know.
46

1Mike Fleming: Well you, you talked about earlier [paper tearing] um, the, um, um, the
2 culture and, and Doug asked ya about parties and you're, you're pretty
3 much that guy that gives all these parties and stuff.
4

5John Rosendahl: Events. Events.
6

7Mike Fleming: Yeah. Events. [coughing] Well, you know, the festive stuff. [70:17] When
8 you were in the plant itself working as an hourly person, what type of
9 dinners and things...
10

11Linda Johnson: Let's stop and take a pause one moment and change our d-, desks.
12
13 [Inaudible 70:26]
14

15John Rosendahl: Okay, regarding dinners way back in the 60s, we didn't do'm. They didn't
16 exist. Everybody brought, you know – the people just didn't do that. You
17 brought your lunch. First off, ya had 42 minutes for lunch so, so, uh, uh,
18 and we just didn't have those things, okay. Um, before I went in the
19 Service – when I came back outta the Service, it seems that – they seemed
20 ta start appearing or having more of the dinners or – and, and they didn't
21 have that many. Ya havin' a Thanksgiving, ya havin' a Christmas, and ya
22 might have one some other time. And, and ya know it was, was bags of
23 chips and rings of bologna and that kinda stuff because ya didn't have
24 crockpots, y-, you, you know, I don't know when crockpots came in to
25 bein' but...
26

27Mike Fleming: [laughter]
28

29John Rosendahl: ...y-, you know, and just in – I don't know when the microwaves – we
30 didn't have microwaves either back then here. And, and, and we didn't y-,
31 you know, now for dinner ya got, ya got maintenance out there runnin'
32 cords for everything or puttin' drops in because ya got crockpots and
33 everything else goin' out there and plugged in and, and just people are
34 cookin' stuff. Uh, uh, I, I remember there was a guy who worked for us –
35 me back in the 70s named [Bill Carpenter 71:42] that his wife made the
36 best turkey and, and, you know, it was every year at the holiday time.
37 We'd all gladly throw in a buck, two bucks for Bill's wife ta make the
38 turkey and she'd bring – 'cause she'd bring a killer turkey and, and she'd
39 bring the turkey and everybody brought stuff in. Now, now the joke was,
40 and I think it still is, is that, is that you can tell – I cook. I like ta cook so,
41 so but ya can tell the guys – I never liked it when a man used the term
42 "My old lady." That always bugged me, you know. He had more respect
43 for his dog than does his wife, you know, but "Oh, my old lady don't
44 cook," you know, "so I'll stop and get a ring of bologna." No, you make
45 somethin', you know, "And you cook somethin." "Well, I don't cook."
46 Well then you don't get ta eat, you know, that's how ya...

1
2Mike Fleming: [laughter]
3
4John Rosendahl: ...go about it. But, but, but, you know, the effort has gone in those things
5and now when I – when the, when the collection dinners I call'm, – that
6[Linda Vasquez 72:34] who used ta put on your trim here. By the way she
7was, she was a baby – her parent – her dad and I rode ta work together,
8and we lived next door ta them. I lived next door ta them when she was
9born so known her a long time, but God, she's makin' her own, she's
10makin' her own chips, her own taco shells, and, and she's bringin' stuff in
11and there's more dishes. There's more entrees now, you know, and you
12don't see rings of bologna. You don't see bags of cookies. You see stuff
13that people make because, because there's, there's – the culture is now
14there's I wanna give, I wanna give somethin'. I wanna bring somethin' in
15that's made with my hands. And, and I think it creates a warmer
16environment than just bringin' in and throwin' around, around, uh, round
17of bologna down or bag of chips because that used ta be what went on.
18And ya might get somebody that might – somebody's wife might make a
19green bean casserole, but ya had more rings of bologna and bags of chips
20and chunks of cheese with a knife out there. Somebody's utility knife
21they've been cuttin', cutting your thing off the windshield glass with, you
22know.
23
24[laughter]
25
26John Rosendahl: You know, 'cause some hear, "Oh, my ol-, my old lady didn't pack a
27knife. I'll just use my work knife here ta cut this cheese off." But, you
28know, and, uh, so, so things have gotten better but because there – I mean,
29Geez, almost once a week now a dinner is planned somewhere raisin'
30money for somebody. Why not just say, okay, walk around and give your
31money or why not take 10 bucks outta your check once a week and go
32towards the thing? No, because the culture says we wanna get together in
33our own way. We wanna say we're sorry about your plight, and we're
34gonna have a dinner for ya, and we're, we're a caring organization. We
35really are, and it shows these then and, and, uh, [pen clicking] you, you
36talk about the events that I've done over the past and stuff, uh, not
37everybody but when ya pass out jackets, ya pass out stuff, and people say
38thank you. Uh, not everybody does, but some people look at you or you
39give'm a coat or shirt or somethin' like that, and they say thank you, and
40they're, they're talkin' ta you as you represent what they work for, you
41know, that's the business. Uh, ya get some that think it's an entitlement
42but, but more and more ya get people that appreciate stuff that's given to
43'em and, uh, uh, definitely saw a lotta that in the last event, the lunch we
44did.
45

1 But, you know, I fought tooth and nail ta put a damn good lunch on
2 because I wanted a nice one, and we had a nice lunch. The last lunch was
3 – the last dinner was good with the chicken and stuff, you know.
4

5Mike Fleming: At [Gold and Reynolds 75:09] here.
6

7John Rosendahl: But that was first class but, you know, um, working with Zubkus when he
8 was a manager here, workin' with Amy, um, they're two different people.
9 Amy wanted ta make sure all was good. She was in there and wanted ta
10 make sure everything was ship shape and so I was fortunate enough ta get
11 lucky and be able ta do that. Uh, Zubkus – the biggest thing I did with him
12 was the Breslin Event and, uh, that was when we had – that was the start
13 of the '97 [throat clearing] '98...
14

15Mike Fleming: GMX 130.
16

17John Rosendahl: Yeah, GMX 130 and, uh...
18

19Mike Fleming: The best launch ever.
20

21John Rosendahl: Huh?
22

23Mike Fleming: The best launch ever.
24

25John Rosendahl: The best launch ever, yeah. Um, and that was a lotta fun. Uh, because he
26 gave me Carte blanche and [Glen Kirk 76:04] who was the finance
27 director at the time, Glen – we'd – I'd go in meetings with Kirk and
28 Zubkus and [inaudible 76:12] sometimes and tell'm what I want ta do and
29 Kirk say, "What's that cost?" And Zubkus says, "Don't worry about it,"
30 you know, and I spent \$100,000 on that event and Zubkus didn't bat an
31 eye 'cause he got what he wanted. I promised him 5,000 people there and
32 there was 5,000 [inaudible 76:27] people there, you know. We kept count
33 at the gate and, and, uh, I did all that pyrotech stuff in Breslin Center. I
34 didn't tell'm about that. But, you know [laughter] but, you know, it was
35 cool. He, he got a good show and, and I think that people come outta that
36 hyped. I don't remember what, what brought us down or somethin',
37 somethin' killed the buzz after that for some of'm here at Lansing Car
38 Assembly. Somethin' happened, and I don't know what it was, but we lost
39 one. We had some layoff time or some downtime. That was it. We had
40 down – we had weeks, weeks off or somethin' around Christmastime.
41 Kinda killed the juice on that but, but that was a good event, you know,
42 and I don't – and [Mark Hogan 77:03] says it was the biggest thing he'd
43 ever been to when he was corporate VP.
44

1 But, but, you know, if ya just spend, uh, – for a \$100,000, he got, he got a
2 cheap buzz outta that. He got – ‘cause people got, got fired up, you know.
3 And I give’m cokes and popcorn and we raffled...
4

5Female: Mugs.
6

7John Rosendahl: ... off some cars. Mugs. We give’m mugs.
8

9Doug Rademacher: [77:25] Didn’t we do the scholarship that day?
10

11John Rosendahl: We did scholarship that day. [throat clearing] You, you know, that – and,
12 and Zubkus had a good attitude about that. \$100,000 bucks, 5,000 people.
13 That’s nothin’. If I get ya excited ta come ta work every day and give –
14 build a good car, that’s a cheap investment, you know. And, and I really
15 think ya need ta do more of that, especially when times are tough. You
16 need ta find a way ta find \$10,000 and make people feel proud...
17

18Doug Rademacher: The morale builders.
19

20John Rosendahl: Yeah, it’s a morale builder.
21

22Doug Rademacher: Certainly.
23

24John Rosendahl: And, and ya can say what ya want, you need money ta build morale. You
25 can, you can build morale without it, but you can build better morale with
26 it...
27

28 [laughter]
29

30John Rosendahl: ...you know. I mean ya just do. I mean ya gotta have some of that stuff ta
31 get people, get people enthused.
32

33Linda Johnson: Doug Rademacher.
34

35Doug Rademacher: John, I want ya ta just be a little more descriptive about this best launch
36 ever. [78:14]You bein’ a Spartan fan, what kind of a feelin’ was that ta be
37 able ta take what’s well renowned around this nation as one of the nicest,
38 uh, basketball facilities, the Breslin Center, and be able ta go ta work with
39 that and [pen clicking] put this project together? Can ya give a picture to
40 the – somebody that would hear this tape?
41

42John Rosendahl: Jim Zubkus was a, was a [coughing] [throat clearing] manager that if he
43 trusted you, he let you do what had ta be done but come back and tell him
44 how. I’ll hit on another story I admit that’s kinda fun but, uh, when he
45 gave me that project, he said I wanna do something, okay. And then, uh,
46 uh, actually I think it was you and I talked a lot about this ‘best launch

1 ever' theme and, uh, Linda and I and, uh, I had originally – I looked at
2 many things. I looked at the Lansing Center originally, uh, parking was a
3 issue down there, and I looked at, you know. We looked at everything,
4 you know. Before we knew what we were gonna do, and then, uh, I finally
5 decided that I'd use the Breslin Center, and that's when I went ta Zubkus
6 and said we gotta use our Breslin Center. That's like sayin' I gotta use
7 Mount r-, Mount, uh, Rushmore ta do somethin' like this. It's like I use the
8 biggest place in town, okay, and, and, and, or what's that cost? How much
9 stuff? 15 grand, you know. Uh, that's okay. So, so then when, when I first
10 started doin' this, it was, uh, it was, uh, 15 grand. Not a lotta money [pen
11 clicking] and then I worked outta deal with Michigan State on, on some
12 mugs, and we had decals made ta put on the mugs.

13
14 We decided ta – and we worked outta price for, for the pop and the
15 popcorns. We're starting ta put this idea together and then, and then the
16 company I had hired, Future Media, helped me produce this thing and, uh,
17 a [Mitt Chaney 80:14] was my guy, and we're walking – I picked up Ed
18 one day at the front – down front – out front of the plant. We were walkin'
19 up ta Zubkus' office – and me with Kirk and [Jim Gaunt 80:25] Personnel
20 Manager and Zubkus. And Ed's got this proposal, and we're walkin' up
21 through the Trim line up here and we – and I says, "So, so let me see the
22 proposal. How's – how'd it turn out?" He says, "Well not too bad." And I,
23 and I flipped ta the last page, and he's \$87,000 in, and I stopped dead in
24 my tracks and says, "Whoa!" and I says, "I can't sell this." I said, "I can't
25 sell \$87,000. These guys are gonna kill me," you know, you know. So he
26 – so we're standing outside the door goin' in ta Personnel for – we're
27 goin', goin' in ta the Finance up there. He says, "Whatta ya wanna do?" I
28 said, "Well got this," you know, and I says, I says, "I can't sell this." I
29 says, "Let's go in there and just kinda generalize the ideas and tell'm ya
30 don't have the price finalized yet. You're still pricing [papers rustling]
31 some things up." So we did that. We went in, and we generalized the
32 ideas.

33
34 Well, Jim Guant – and those of us who know Jim Gaunt and 30 years from
35 now nobody will know Jim Guant, so it doesn't matter what's on tape but,
36 but him bein' the rigid guy he is – "I don't know if I like that." I said,
37 "Well, it's, it's not about you, it not about you, Jim," you know, and, and
38 he was real funny about it 'cause Jim would be the, the Zubkus protector
39 or the bouncer, you know. So if Jim liked it – if Guant liked it, then
40 Zubkus would be okay with it. But if Zubkus liked it, then he'd tell Gaunt
41 ta shut up. So that's what I'm bankin' on, you know.

42
43 [laughter]

44
45 John Rosendahl: Tell'm ta shut up, tell'm ta shut up, you know. So, so, so Zubkus liked the
46 stuff. There's a couple things he didn't like, and we got through that. So,

1 uh, then, then we started workin' on, on the thing, and, and I hired another
2 company outta of Novi ta create the invitations. We wanted ta send
3 everybody a nice invitation and, uh, we did that and sent those out ta
4 everybody, uh, and then this was the day of the event, uh, and then we,
5 then we lined up the speakers. This is funny. We're – [paper ripping] got
6 who we wanted ta speak 'cause we didn't want ta be at speeches all day
7 long. We want it fun and, uh, that's where the pyrotechnics come in. We
8 know it's fun and, uh, so we're linin' up the speakers and, uh, [Annette
9 Clayton 82:40]who's now head of Saturn was one of the – I think Annette
10 Clayton was one of the speakers. Her or [Annette Myers 82:45]. One of'm
11 but, but we, we had speakers and [Malcus 82:48]. This is funny. Malcus
12 who, who was an as-, assistant manager was goin' ta speak, and those of
13 you who knew Gary, had this, this nausea – nauseating voice, you know,
14 "Tell me how ya know." All the time, you know, and, and so, so Zubkus
15 wanted ta see everybody's speech and their comments and what they're
16 gonna talk about. He wanted ta know. So I went to him with Malcus'
17 comments.
18
19 He says, [writing] "You can talk about that," [writing]"You can talk about
20 that." [ripping paper] "Too long, take it back to'm." [crumbling paper]
21
22 [laughter]
23
24 John Rosendahl: So I go back ta Malcus, the assistant manager, and says, "Zubkus
25 shortened your speech."
26
27 [laughter]
28
29 John Rosendahl: And that was cool 'cause I gotta do that. "Zubkus shortened your speech
30 pal." [laughter] And, and, and but it was funny, and he says, "I'm still
31 [papers rustling] gonna talk about this." I says, [paper ripping] "I'm tellin'
32 ya your boss said you get 3 minutes and that's it." He says, "I need about
33 8." I says, "You can't have it." So we went back and forth. I says, "Gary,
34 if ya don't like it [writing] go next door and talk ta your boss." "Well, I'm
35 not doin' that. I says, "Well okay then, ya get 3 minutes."
36
37 [laughter]
38
39 John Rosendahl: Well he took more and – but it was, it was a lotta fun 'cause I'm like,
40 "Hey, screw you," you know, [laughter] and, uh, 'cause I had Zubkus in
41 my corner on that one. But anyway, so the morning of, it was predicted –
42 it was February 28th or 27th. It was supposed ta be un-, unseasonably like
43 60-degree day. And, and, you know, I had rented busses for, uh, – from
44 Dean Transportation ta move people. I mean had a pretty good program
45 put together for never having done anything this big before. I had the
46 busses lined up. Had Breslin lined up, and I tell ya what, if ya ever rent

1 Breslin Center, there's a lotta cost ya don't know about. I mean, when I
2 rented the [pen clicking] buildin' for \$15,000 – uh, don't ya want the
3 lights turned on, you know. So ya gotta have electricians. You gotta have
4 this [pen clicking] and then – now we're hirin' all the pyrotechnics and
5 that stuff. You gotta [throat clearing] [writing]] pay their people time and
6 a half to do all of the – which is financed – Union Labor. And all the stuff,
7 and then, and then, oh, you gotta buy them dinner too unless you want
8 them ta take an hour and a half and go out to dinner. [clicking] It's up ta
9 you.

10
11 So, so, so that \$15,000-bill grew quite a bit but, uh, uh, and then ya gotta
12 hire these Lansing Police Department to run traffic for ya, and there's a
13 lotta things that I learned I didn't know that I never – and I won't forget
14 again. I didn't forget it but, but, uh – and then, uh, [pen clicking] that
15 morning of, Zubkus was worried nobody would show up because we, we,
16 we shut the line down at 1 o'clock, I think. 12:30, 1 o'clock and people
17 voluntarily went out there and then we asked the nightshift to voluntarily
18 come in, and we paid them some money but, but, uh, uh, 5,000 people
19 showed up, which was a great crowd. Great crowd. And we had a lotta
20 fun. We had a lotta fun, and I think the enthusiasm was strong, but we did
21 things ta make that strong, and it was a good time. [tapping] A little
22 known fact of that event, we gave away 3 cars, uh, for a year. Use of a car
23 for a year. Grand Ams and, uh, Jim was at that time, kinda weird like all of
24 us get some time, we wear glasses, don't wear glasses. He didn't wanna
25 wear'm 'cause he didn't wanna let people know he couldn't see, you
26 know, so we wound up givin' away 4 cars because he misread one of the
27 slips.

28
29 [laughter]

30
31 John Rosendahl: And he called [Roberta Myers 86:16] – was the name he called. And when
32 no – and ya had ta be present ta win. And when Roberta Myers didn't
33 come up, he drew another name. Well, he rode the bus out ta where we
34 had the cars parked out there, and he got out there, I guess, after it was
35 over and got thinkin' and then drove back in – walked clear back in the
36 Breslin Center lookin' for that piece of paper he had wadded up and
37 thrown on the floor by his chair. Well it was gone. We were breakin'
38 chairs down. We were done. It was, it was [inaudible 86:48] now. You're
39 cleanin' out and, uh, the next day, [Bob Myers 86:54] who works in
40 Accounting, walked into Zubkus' office about 8:30, 9 o'clock 'cause Bob
41 Myers had access ta the whole alpha roster of everybody at Lansing Car
42 Assembly and went and looked for Roberta Myers. There wasn't one. So
43 he went into Zubkus' office and said, "Uh, I think you made a mistake. I
44 think you drew my name. You said Roberta Myers and it's – not Robert A
45 Myers."
46

1Mike Fleming: Mm-hm.
2
3 [laughter]
4
5John Rosendahl: And Zubkus says, "You're, you're right, I did make a mistake." [throat
6 clearing] "I'm gonna give ya car for a year." So he fixed it like that and
7 then Bob Myers bein' the guy he is, he says, "Well, you know, my name
8 didn't get in the drawing for the scholarship 'cause ya put that in your
9 pocket." Zubkus says, "Don't push it."
10
11 [laughter]
12
13John Rosendahl: "Don't push it."
14
15 [laughter]
16
17John Rosendahl: So he got a car. So we gave, we gave away 4 cars. But, uh, when it was all
18 done, we had a meetin' goin' over everything, and Kirk was cryin' that I
19 spent \$100,000. Zubkus says, "Don't worry about it." And that was the
20 last I heard about it. No more question about it but, you know, I mean all
21 the things we've done – ya think about that, 100,000 on that event. Let
22 people leave. Pay'm, let'm go, you know. The times we bought jackets
23 and things. We bought 10,000 jackets; whatever that amounts to. We've
24 done a lotta things here that I don't know other people – and not ya gotta
25 be grateful, you know, but, but it could be a lot worse, and I think – and tie
26 this back in. It is most of – you talked about Lansing and why, why we are
27 who we are, uh, I think all those things are plugs to the party. And, and I
28 mean they make things. We, we, we've done a lotta good things for
29 people. Now we don't do it every day, and there's times when we think
30 management doesn't care about ya because they didn't do somethin' or
31 they didn't get somethin' fixed but, but on the whole from the dinners to,
32 to, uh – from the dinners that the plants paid for to the jackets and other
33 things that we've given away, uh, ta recognize our accomplishments ta the
34 'best launch ever' event and, uh, ta the plant closing events, which I think
35 were all nice.
36
37 I did'm. I think they're nice. Of course, I think they're nice. But I mean –
38 but, but there was a good effort made ta say ta the people workin' here in
39 Lansing, ya did a good job, and we appreciate that and, you know, and you
40 can debate whether ya get a hat or a mug. It doesn't matter just as long as
41 they do the right thing, you know. And, uh, I think that we've always had
42 good work ethic here and any, anything that's ever written, it's about, it's
43 about the Union-Management relationships in Lansing and that includes
44 602. Now only 652. But just in Lansing as a whole. I mean when
45 [Hollister 90:00] started the Blue Ribbon Committee and brought Mark
46 Hogan and Company from GM in here, and they started doin' whatever

1 they could do ta keep Lansing. I mean that's a community effort, you
2 know, and that's a good – that was a good move on his part. That was a
3 great move on Hollister's part ta do that 'cause I think it really influenced
4 GM ta stay here. I really do and, uh, uh, 'cause like I say, you can go back
5 through history, you're not gonna find any town that ever got two plants
6 within the same decade, let alone the same life, you know. But they may,
7 but they may refurb a plant, but nobody gets two new ones. That means
8 you're locked and loaded for 30 years.

9
10 So, uh, but, you know, I just think that everything – just everything we've
11 done – like I say, if ya wanna go back ta Quality Worklife when we were
12 pullin' that off and sayin', "Gee, is that why Lansing is so good?" I don't
13 know. I mean, I mean Lansing has never had a labor issue like – I mean
14 you had the recent nurse's strike at Ingham but that's, you know, 30-day
15 labor issue. You guys were down in Jackson yesterday or the [inaudible
16 91:02] or wherever ya went. They gotta labor issue down there, you know.
17 They got no work and, and, and I think if that happened in Lansing, the
18 Blue Ribbon Committee or somebody would step in ta help resolve that
19 'cause they would – you just – it's not allowed here. We don't – that's not
20 how we work. It's like when somebody comes ta your house, you know.
21 Uh, I remember one time my son and his girlfriend came ta the house for
22 dinner, and she had on a ballcap. Baseball cap – cause she hadn't done her
23 hair that day. Ponytail's back. And I said, "Vickie, I don't allow ballcaps
24 at my dinner table." She says, "Well my hair's not done." I says, "I don't
25 really care. No, no ballcaps at my table." And my son says, "He's right
26 take your cap off," you know. I don't care what your hair looks like.
27 You're not wearing a ballcap at my table. And I think the same things
28 that's in Lansing.

29
30 I don't care what ya do. You're not gonna have disarray here with Union-
31 Management relationships in Lansing. We just don't have it. That's not
32 the way we do things, you know. It's not the way – and just like goin'
33 back ta the beginning when I talked about we don't treat people like that
34 anymore. We just don't, you know, 'cause it's not right.

35
36Mike Fleming: Sure.

37
38John Rosendahl: And, and, you know, we don't treat minorities and women any different
39 than we treat anybody else here. Now there's spot occasions, and I'm sure
40 there are but, but we don't do [coughing] that as a culture here, you know,
41 so...

42
43Linda Johnson: Mike Fleming.
44

1Mike Fleming: John, you, you, you've got a long history with,uh, General Motors and,
2 and, uh, you've been here for quite some time. [92:32] Can you think of
3 what would be your best day here, uh, at working for General Motors?
4

5John Rosendahl: Well it wouldn't, it wouldn't be the day I hired in and it wouldn't be the
6 day I retired because those, those – 'cause the hire in was, uh, skepticism
7 and retirement's, uh, well kinda of a – won't say it's a sad day. It's just not
8 a – it's not a happy day. You know, you're leaving, you're leavin' what
9 you've done for 40 years so it's really not – that wasn't a happy day for
10 me. Uh, I just wrapped up the event over at Chassis and the [Milani 93:04]
11 event and stuff and had come back here and I know the plant was closin',
12 and I had ta get the rest of my shit outta here. I lost the pass ta get my stuff
13 outta the, the pass ta take your stuff out and so on. Shit.
14

15 [laughter]
16

17John Rosendahl: Now I go down to the other [inaudible 93:19] [Pinkerton guards 93:20], I
18 got no pass, you know. [pen clicking] And, and it's [writing] like I'm
19 leavin'. I just wanna take my shit and go, you know. I wasn't takin'
20 anything. I didn't take anything that wasn't mine. I left my [owl 93:29]
21 but, uh, [laughter] yeah, but, uh, and it's – so, so that wasn't the best day.
22 Um, I have ta s-, think that somewhere in that period of the – in that
23 Labor, Quality Work Life, or somewhere, uh, or the events. That's really
24 cool under Breslin – on that dor- – day at the Breslin ta stand there and see
25 everything happen, you know, because if the pyro don't work, ya can't say
26 come back tomorrow, I'm gonna fire it tomorrow.
27

28 [laughter]
29

30John Rosendahl: You know, and everything worked. Ta see 5,000 people come. So you
31 must have done somethin' right ta get'm there, you know, so, so it's, it's,
32 it's things like that. It's things when I, when I walk outta interview with
33 Keith Ward and – 'cause [Dave runs right 94:19]. It's those things I think
34 that are the good days when ya do somethin' right, you know, uh, 'cause
35 ya can't do it all the time, you know. You just can't do everythin' right
36 every day, you know. And, and I can go back ta things in our wo-, wor-,
37 workgroup over the years, and I always felt that that little workgroup I had
38 up there like the cafeteria, you, you know, that was, uh, best group of
39 people. Not just my retired but overall that whole concept was the best I
40 ever had because I felt I created what we should all have. That's a
41 autonomous workgroup where ya come in and do your job, go home, and
42 have a nice day. Ya have ta punch in, and ya have ta punch out or punch in
43 once and – but if ya got stuff ta do, go do it, you know, and then do your
44 job. And that's the way I think it should be. Unfortunately, the people who
45 chase chain can't do that. They can't leave at leisure, but if ya have one of
46 those jobs, do good for others and don't abuse it.

1
2 And that's the way I felt and, and just I think people oughta have the right
3 ta do that if ya have that opportunity, you know. Uh, you know, when you,
4 Doug, when you're drivin' truck, there were baskets ya didn't have ta
5 move, you know, for sometimes, but ya do that to help an operator out
6 because, because you want to. Because ya feel, why not? So, so I think
7 when ya do those things, [pen clicking] people benefit from that, and if
8 you can make somebody else's day good, it's a good day. But, uh, you
9 know, I just – I mean, I mean there were many times in that workgroup of
10 mine when we had a, a great time. It wasn't dinners. We didn't do a lotta
11 dinners. Uh, we'd do stuff now and then. We didn't do a lotta dinners.
12 Christmastime, we all, we all went out. Went out for – we went out for 2
13 o'clock...
14
15 Linda Johnson: [Business 96:09].
16
17 John Rosendahl: ...afternoon Christmas party. And, and most everybody came. Ya didn't
18 have ta come but you, but you were supposed to 'cause you're on the
19 clock. So yeah, that's, uh, you're on the clock, you gotta come, you know.
20 But we always had fun and, uh, but, uh I didn't make ya come and, uh, I
21 really think that if managers try ta make work fun for people, it's easier ta
22 manage. Because my workgroup wasn't any different than the guy on the
23 floor whether ya got 19 personalities – ya got 19 personalities whether
24 they're out on the floor or somewhere else, you know. There's all – ev-,
25 ev-, everybody's got restraints on what they can and can't do, you know,
26 and the things that Linda can do then aren't what she can now, you know.
27 It's just – I mean but if ya work in a situation and ya can do some things,
28 take advantage of it but don't, don't take the wrong advantage of that
29 stuff, you know. Make it good for ya and, you know, I always felt that if
30 somebody was goofin' off like – 'cause I've always had 5, 6 dockers
31 workin' for me. If, if you're screwin' off, I'm not catching the pe-, the
32 people are gonna catch ya, you know. People are gonna talk about ya.
33 They're gonna see ya come, come in and out, and, and eventually, you'll,
34 you'll, you'll kill your own soul and, and, I – not gonna get in whether
35 anybody has or not but, but, you're gonna make it bad for yourself, you
36 know.
37
38 So that's – so I can't after 40 years with times 365, I couldn't pick that one
39 day but, but I had a lotta great days. [pen clicking] So, you know.
40
41 Linda Johnson: [97:45] How many hats did ya wear, John? You had so many [throat
42 clearing] interesting jobs and you relayed well with union activities and
43 you shared a lotta hats with...
44
45 John Rosendahl: Well, I was, uh, cuttin' through some of those durin' prior ta the end here
46 but Joint Activities Coordinator, uh, Joint Training Rep, uh, QN Rep for

1 both Body and Chassis, uh, I had the plant tour program when we did that,
2 and that was one of mine that Zubkus had me do. Um, I did any and all
3 special events we did. Uh, I, I had overseen the newspaper both Body and
4 Chassis for quite – for a long time. Um, what I’m tryin’ ta think that was,
5 that special events things covers a lot, you know. I got stuck doin’ United
6 Way sometimes, and I didn’t like that, uh, you know, only because I did
7 salary United Way, and I didn’t like that because I think giving is a
8 personal choice, you know, and I didn’t feel right about goin’ and talkin’
9 to ya about givin’. It’s a personal choice, and I really took offense to it the
10 one year I got the roster what everybody gave, and I found out what
11 people gave and that was when I didn’t do it anymore ‘cause there were
12 people that I thought shoulda been givin’ that weren’t given’, you know,
13 and I, I couldn’t, I couldn’t look ya in the eye when you’re makin’ what
14 you’re makin’ and knowin’, you know, you ain’t givin’ nothin’, you
15 know. You know, that bothered me. So I didn’t need that task with that
16 knowledge ‘cause I wasn’t any good at it, you know.

17
18 And, uh, uh, that’s probably, unless you can think of more, I don’t know.
19 Uh, Joint Activities covers a lotta things. You, you asked me – somebody
20 asked me how I got started on this job doin’ what I do. I’m gonna tell ya.
21 Back in 1980, 81, 80, 82, uh, [Ron Warner 99:55] who is deceased,
22 [thump] and I were the management QWL guys, and back then, we would
23 – GM was again changing their appraisal process for managers. They do
24 that about every 3 years, uh, change the way, change the way ya appraise
25 people so ya can pay them different and oop, ya got a new system, we
26 gotta pay ya less now. So, so, uh...

27
28 [laughter]

29
30 John Rosendahl: ...uh, we worked for [Dick Buckmaster 100:19] was, uh, assistant
31 manager of the plant, and I don’t know why we worked for Dick other
32 than we sat up by him. My office was up front next ta, you know, where,
33 you know, where Amy sits. Uh, I was the next office and, and Dick
34 Buckmaster sat in where the assistant manager sat on the other side. Well,
35 this new appraisal process they come up with, you’re manager had ta write
36 your key job [coughing] elements, your key job elements that you’re
37 appraised on. Well, Buck called us in one day and said, “I don’t know
38 what you guys do. I don’t wanna know what you do. I don’t really care,
39 but you do a good job. So write your key job elements and give’m ta me.
40 If they look all right, I’ll okay’m.” Great, I get ta write my key job
41 elements, you know. So, so at the time, [Bruce DeLand 101:06] who was
42 my UAW partner in Quality Work Life. Bruce and I were members of the
43 Lansing Area Joint Labor Management Committee, which was a
44 committee comprised of guys like [Glen Freeman 1:01:22] who’s I think
45 still around or was around.
46

1Mike Fleming: Yes, he is.
2
3John Rosendahl: And, and some other UAW, uh, people in town and managers from
4 different companies and stuff and, uh, we meet once and then [Marty
5 Bocken 101:33] was that big, tall man. I can't remember if it was Marty.
6 That big, tall guy. We, we'd meet once a month ta talk about Lansing
7 Labor Management things and stuff and Quality Work Life bein' a big
8 part of that and, uh, so in my key job elements, I wrote that I had ta be
9 involved in community activities, and we put it in both of ours; mine and
10 Ron's. Well, Buck took it out of Ron's [pen clicking] left it in mine. So it
11 stayed with me forever that involved in community activities. So as a
12 result, I was – I got involved. I was on different boards and things around
13 town and I'd get involved in things and so I know a lotta people around
14 the city. I got, got a lotta markers out there, you know. I just knew a lotta
15 people. So it just stayed. Well, Rosendahl did it. He's involved in
16 community activities and, you know, and well, he's on the committee
17 downtown, and we got this, so we – you, you need ta get John, you know.
18 Well, if ya change that and I'll talk about that in a second but, but, uh, and
19 why we changed that but that's how I got that. I just – I, I wrote it in my
20 key job elements back in 1982, 2, and it always [clicking] stayed there.
21
22Mike Fleming: Mm-hm.
23
24John Rosendahl: So if ya ever get a chance ta do that...
25
26 [laughter]
27
28John Rosendahl: ...put in shit ya wanna do and that shit ya...
29
30 [laughter]
31
32John Rosendahl: ...don't wanna do.
33
34 [laughter]
35
36John Rosendahl: Now I wanna talk about, about I'm gonna get that in a minute, uh, we
37 were at, uh, Integrators, Communication Integrators. Linda and I and
38 [Mike Benz 102:58] were at a meetin' about 3 years or 4 years ago and
39 [Jim Hobson 103:03] was our integrator at the time, and I remember this
40 'cause I think he talked about this or somebody else did, uh, you see now
41 – you see a lot of the management staffs assigned ta different boards
42 [papers rustling] around town. Boys' and Girls' Club, Big Brothers', Big
43 Sisters'. There's somebody [pen clicking] from GM management in this
44 town and [pen clicking] on all those boards.
45
46Mike Fleming: Certainly.

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2John Rosendahl:

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There are. And the reason [writing] is in, in Kent City, the league's plant out there, GM had gone in a few years ago for a tax abatement. And, uh, they got turned down. They thought they could just, you know, we're your only plant here in town so, you know, we need another abatement, so give us some, you know, give us some shake. They got shot down, and the reason they got shot down was because the city said, "Look, we pull up numbers and about 40 percent, about 40 percent of your people live, live, live in our city and the rest of them live outside, pay taxes outside. When you – when we, when we gave ya a tax abatement 20 years ago, you didn't mention ya was goin' ta come back for another one when it expired. So no, and you're not involved and you don't – you're not involved in the community. You're not doin' anything. You're for – except, except buildin' cars here." So that's when GM made the big shift ta push to start making managers ta be involved in different things around the city so if you look at or if you're lookin' at boards sometime for whether any charitable organization – anybody we give money to, there's somebody on that board. So, you know, there's a committee in town that, uh – there's a management committee in town for Lansing, and they did this several years ago.

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If you're Big Brothers' and Big Sisters', you'd, you'd wind up callin' [pen clicking] the Metal Fab askin', askin' for 500 bucks and [paper ripping] then ya go to Lansing Car Assembly and ask for money. Then you'd go ta Dell and ask for money. Then ya go ta Grand River. [papers rustling] So they formed a committee when we had 5 managers in town of the managers and the comptrollers and [Laura Pratt 105:06] is the secretary of that, and they meet monthly and discuss all requests for money from GM. Well it comes outta [pen clicking] one spot now. So, so everybody who wants money fills outta form; proposal request, submits that, and then it's [papers rustling] reviewed, and then it's decided [papers rustling] whether they give money or not and, and, and that's how that works now. So and, also then in course, part of that if GM gives you money, we expect a seat on the board, you know. We wanna know what's goin' on. So, so I was always on the Convention Bureau Board of Governors and, and, uh, for years, and then when they restructured their board, uh, they eliminated like 20 of us off the board. Got down to a core group. Well there was some politicking. I've heard that word before going on about what was gonna be done.

41

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45

46

So when, when I was taken – when I was removed from the board [clicking] Glen Kirk was livid about that [papers rustling] and, uh, and they had come to us and asked for \$20,000 for bein' tourists to your own town event that goes on in June, and Kirk said, "No, we're not givin' ya a dime. You took my guy off the board. No." And that was no meant no, and he gave me the money and, and said, you know, well then he

1 restructured the board and I was back on this, this advisory committee part
2 of the board, and then I've since resigned since I have retired, but I mean,
3 but – and then once I was back on the advisory board, then they got
4 requests granted. But, you know, it's like if you're gonna – you wanna s-,
5 you wanna somebody ta play, then we getta play too, you know. We want
6 somebody playin' first base and, and so, so that we've got better
7 community involvement probably across the corporation because we
8 understand that we need ta be good community citizens. Ya can't just sit
9 here and build cars and get tax abatements and think you're okay because,
10 you know, I don't know about this group here but, you know, if ya took a
11 poll of how many people live outside Lansing – a pretty good number, you
12 know, that don't live in Lansing. Don't pay city taxes. I mean that don't,
13 don't take, don't take care of, care of the city needs, you know.
14
15 And, you know, it's part of the, the in-out thing ya talked about in the
16 culture, you know, I mean we're not gonna get everybody ta move back ta
17 into Lansing. You're not gonna go and move up ta Delta Township 'cause
18 they put a plant out there, but you still gotta have some, some of the in-out
19 stuff goin' on where people are doin' stuff for Delta Township, you know,
20 whether it be through, through people movin' out there or whatever. You
21 still need ta support that and, and, and you need ta support the charities
22 that help those that aren't as fortunate as we are. You can't expect, you
23 know. So, so we've, we've become better citizens about that. So...
24
25Mike Fleming: John...
26
27Linda Johnson: John...
28
29Mike Fleming: ...Mike Fleming. [107:50] Real, real quick, just on this same subject and
30 let me just ask – so you went from, uh, the QC on a line assembler –
31 assembler to QC on the line to all those positions you just mentioned to
32 eventually what? Level...
33
34John Rosendahl: Yeah, okay. I'll track that for ya. I went from assembler, uh, from '64 to
35 '73 minus 4 years in the Service. Uh, in that time, I also worked in Quality
36 Control. I was on salary from '73 to say '75. Back to hourly 'til mid-'76
37 somewhere in there and a supervisor from '73 – did I say that for '73?
38 Yeah. Uh, and then off and then back on into Labor Relations in '81.
39 Quality Work Life in '82 and then Quality Work Life training,
40 training/Quality Network goin' on – it's probably, probably from late 80s.
41 Uh, I went from, from bein' a lineworker at 3.57 an hour and 7-level
42 manager.
43
44Mike Fleming: 7-level. That's what [inaudible 109:09].
45
46John Rosendahl: And, and, and I made 7 bucks an hour [inaudible 109:14].

1
2 [laughter]
3
4 Linda Johnson: [109:15] John, you were talkin' that GM is better at all across the board at
5 workin' with communities, but I believe that you and others like you were
6 expected or maybe you did it on your own when you worked with youths,
7 like didn't we have a boy scout troop here and, um, uh, some other
8 business programs you worked with, uh, young people?
9
10 John Rosendahl: Well, the LAMP program is a great example of that. The LAMP program
11 that started in Lansing piloted Lansing because some people in Lansing
12 thought it was a good idea and went and gr-, went and got grant money
13 for, uh, the LAMP Lansing area and manufacturing partnership. Bring us
14 together as students, uh, juniors, uh, from the area high schools who had
15 interviewed in bein' part of the program. The committee spent so many
16 days – so many hours, so many days of the week here learning the
17 manufacturing process and our pay to [inaudible 110:00] ta do that, uh,
18 and get credits for it. And that we, we have gotten national recognition for
19 that, uh, uh, time and again. It's a great program. Uh, if there's a flaw in
20 the program and that is we don't have a mechanism ta hirin' kids fr-, outta
21 that program 'cause it goes against our hirin' policy of how we hire
22 people. I think if we invest in a kid and teach'm manufacturing, we oughta
23 try ta use'm, you know, try ta bring him in here, you know, because those
24 kids – because most of those kids – a lotta those kids – and I mentored one
25 for a year, and he didn't wanna have anything ta do with manufacturing.
26 He didn't want ta work on the line, you know. He didn't wanna do the, do
27 that shit, you know. What he wanted ta do – what he really wanted ta do,
28 he wanted ta be a cop.
29
30 He wa-, he wanted ta be a Texas ranger so, so he could bust heads he told
31 me. I said, "Well, you know, we're not gonna teach ya that, you know."
32 [laughter] But, but, uh, uh, and, and I still see him. He's an orderly at
33 Sparrow and loves his work. So he turned out pretty well. I tell ya he does
34 a good job. I, I've seen him in action but, uh, we oughta – we, we, we take
35 these kids, pay'm, teach'm the process, we oughta hire'm. We oughta
36 have an exception ta hire'm. I know it may go against the grain of how
37 people get hired but then what are we doin' this program for if we're not
38 gonna use'm, you know. [pen clicking]
39
40 Mike Fleming: Absolutely.
41
42 John Rosendahl: What we tell ya – what are we s-, tellin' you you're – we're joint partners
43 if we don't, we don't involve you in the business. If we don't – if ya don't
44 share stuff with ya. What's the sense in doin' that? You know, now as a
45 corporation, I don't think we've been the best at bein' honest sometimes
46 about, you know, I love you but, you know, I won't have ya, I won't have

1 ya over for dinner, you know. I mean [coughing] we're, we're joint but,
2 uh, you know, we're not that joint. How is it that – my theory ta make this
3 business right and, and I've shared this with many people. It never went
4 anywhere so I guess I'm crazy. Uh, y'all oughta realign your dockers.
5 Take every docker ya got – if ya wanna use the same ones that's fine but
6 ya oughta realign those dock 46 people. Those internationally appointed
7 people that serve at the beck and call of the chairman and president and
8 align'm with management. Somebody should be in line with the personnel
9 director or [Dave Elliott 112:23] Somebody should be or that [Mark
10 Strolley 112:25] should be, be in line with Elliott. You oughta take, uh,
11 somebody that's gotta finance head on his shoulders, align him with
12 whoever the comptroller is, you know. Let's assume the brain ones lines
13 up with, with, with [Randy Thayer 112:38], the manager, you know. I
14 wouldn't count your president 'cause he's in a different role, but, but your
15 people that manage the plant, and that's not [Bremose 112:46].

16
17 I mean that's not [Art 112:47] Art manages the union. Bremose manages
18 the plant. But align those dockers up with the management position so, so
19 when, when, when, somebody goes in ta talk, you're right there with'm,
20 you know. That's what we did in Quality Work Life. That's how we did
21 that stuff. We're joint, so we all knew everything together, we oughta sh-
22 share the same stuff but, but take your [Morgans' 113:07] and whoever
23 else ya got and line'm up with your staff people. Line somebody up with
24 [Leah Wolfe 113:12] in Materials or somethin' like that but make'm
25 partners and, and don't, don't ask her if this is – okay, we, we gotta new
26 deal. Leah Wolfe, Morgan's your partner. You go ta [meeting 113:23
27 without Bob and you're dead, you know, you know. Comptroller, you
28 open the books up, I wanna see somethin', I wanna read the same page
29 you got. Make'm become full partners in the business, and that's just my
30 thought on how they're gonna work, you know. Crazy as it is, I think it'd
31 work.

32
33 Doug Rademacher: Well, I think they finally have listened to ya, John. Doug Rademacher.
34 Um, this, uh, presentation of the new Delta plant; this GM, GMS is, uh,
35 bein' presented that way, and they are aligned. Each department [papers
36 rustling] with a, with a [tapping] union head and, uh, it will be [coughing]
37 wonderful ta see. It – we're gonna make it happen but it's, it's gonna be
38 interesting ta see that transition that you just said it's gonna be, uh, a tough
39 road at first, but we're gonna do that. So your idea wasn't crazy.

40
41 John Rosendahl: It's not that. I mean, I mean I worked with Frank [inaudible 114:17], some
42 others on jointness, you know, and, and, you know, people used ta think
43 that jointness means you're attached at the hip. And I think the first we
44 had the – we struggle for years of tryin' ta define jointness because that
45 always come up at Black Lake. Well, we're joint, you know, buy me a
46 beer, you know, and, uh, we're joint. How come ya know somethin' I

1 don't know. Well, I, I, I kinda likened it to, to bein' joint in tryin' ta use
2 an outhouse. You both can't go at the same time, you know. You just
3 can't. It doesn't work that way, but you can be joint, you know. You can
4 stop, you can stop and, you know, but you can't go at the same time and,
5 and, and I think, I think we, we've struggled for years tryin' ta understand
6 decades about how we can be joint and still maintain autonomy. [pen
7 clicking] You got the right, and you have the right, and you should
8 maintain the right ta be, ta be, uh, a respected member of the UAW and
9 the leadership you inducted. But you still gotta be a joint partner in how
10 we run the business, [pen clicking] and we got the right ta manage a
11 business. That's, that's in the national agreement or somethin' but, but we
12 gotta be [pen clicking] we gotta be joint about how we do that stuff, you
13 know.

14
15 We, we gotta make hard decisions. Managers gotta make hard decisions
16 sometimes based on, on revenue, based on market share, and so on, but
17 that doesn't mean we gotta do it behind your back, and occasionally, I
18 think we slip in ta doin' that. "And oh, by the way, we're, we're knockin'
19 outta shift next week. I meant ta tell ya," you know, and, and I think – I
20 hate that when we do that and we did that and, and I'm not pointing
21 fingers at any manager but, but, but I think we still [pen clicking] have that
22 sometimes, you know.

23
24 Doug Rademacher: John, Doug Rademacher again. You said, [pen clicking] the word docker a
25 few times. I don't know if we explained what a docker is. Could you...

26
27 John Rosendahl: Nobody's talked about dockers in this thing yet? [inaudible 116:05] [pen
28 clicking]

29
30 Doug Rademacher: ...uh, you – I don't know. On your interview, you mentioned the word
31 docker. [116:09] What is a docker?

32
33 John Rosendahl: The – yeah, that – well, I'll define it by the national agreement, not by
34 what it is. Uh, [laughter] uh, probably 3 contracts ago, that the position is
35 under document 46 of the national agreement that the position was created
36 based on plant headcount, the union would, would have so many people
37 that would only be internationally appointed that would, uh, work for the
38 best interest of the, of the union and the membership and, uh, this plant
39 had at one time I think 8 or 11 dockers, somethin' like that. In our case at
40 Lansing Car, uh, Joint Training Reps; there were 2 of those for a while,
41 uh, Quality Network Rep, uh, Joint Activities Rep, Health and Safety
42 Reps, and they're really at the – at the choosing of the president chair what
43 positions they wanna appoint those as. Uh, [pen clicking], uh, I don't
44 remember all the – all they are now but, but that's what they were and,
45 and, and they still function. They still do that but, but, uh, I think they'd be
46 better served if ya align them. Ya still [pen clicking] can have your shop

1 committee, but I think [tapping] ya take your dockers and make'm,
2 make'm personnel managers. You make'm materials managers. You
3 make'm superin-. You make'm somethin' that aligns with the staff that
4 run the business, you know.
5
6 I mean you can have – you got, you got your shop committee aligned with
7 the superintendents in the plant; Body Paint and Trim and Material but,
8 but take your dockers and make'm managers and make'm, make'm core
9 people 'cause that's – they're, they're – to me, they're the, they're the eyes
10 and ears of the chairman, and that's what they should be doin', so that's
11 what I'd do. If I was [Gettelfinger 117:56] [clicking] I'd do that, you
12 know.
13
14 [laughter]
15
16 John Rosendahl: I'll call'm this afternoon.
17
18 [laughter]
19
20 Doug Rademacher: I'll see him this afternoon as a matter of fact.
21
22 John Rosendahl: Tell'm I said – tell'm this and say, “This guy gots this idea...”[papers
23 rustling]
24
25 Linda Johnson: John, you had an interesting office. Everyone loved ta go in your office
26 'cause it didn't look like a typical office.
27
28 John Rosendahl: No it wasn't.
29
30 Linda Johnson: [118:12] And can you tell us about some of the items in your office that
31 people would always comment?
32
33 John Rosendahl: Yeah. Um...
34
35 Linda Johnson: The duke. I also like that story too.
36
37 John Rosendahl: I had what I thought was a cool office because people would come in there
38 and look around 'cause there wasn't any GM stuff in there. It was all, uh,
39 all golf pictures. Uh, if I go back a ways, one time, we were cleanin' out a
40 closet upstairs in, uh, storage area off an office, and we found a picture of
41 Bob Stemple and [Alex Cunningham 118:46] and Lloyd Royce, and for a
42 long time they hung at the entrance as you come in the main gate down
43 here. As you went down the steps, those 3 pictures were there. So the
44 Stemple picture was in good shape, and he was the most recognizable so,
45 uh, [Pam Gates 119:04] who was the artist at [inaudible 119:06] at the
46 time, I had her take the picture and a gold pen, uh, and hung and write,

1 “John and Bruce, you two are doin’ a great job in Lansing.’ “Bob.”
2 [laughter] And we hung it in the office for [Bruce Delandon 119:22] I
3 said. [laughter] Well, I can’t tell you the numbers of people that came in
4 and out. Now Pam has beautiful writing, you know, but, but I can’t – there
5 was some – general foreman come from Paint one time come down ta my
6 office ta see me about somethin’, and he couldn’t talk. [laughter] You
7 guys gotta signed picture of Bob Stemple. “Oh, yeah.” [laughter] “Yeah,
8 he gave me that. He was in here one day [laughter] and give us that.”
9 [laughter] He was in awe of that. [laughter] I thought it was pretty funny,
10 you know.
11
12 [laughter]
13
14 John Rosendahl: You know, so, so then I started, you know, started buyin’ golf pictures.
15 Hangin’ golf pictures and then fortunately I had some nice pictures that
16 were Christmas presents from my workgroup and, and I hung those there
17 and I, I probably had 20 big pictures. Mike, I know you’ve seen them
18 many times. And, and various other things. Uh, the owl that mysteriously
19 showed up on the table today that, uh, can be a gift ta anybody who’d like
20 it. Uh, was given ta me by a f-, a for-, of, of a friend that I haven’t seen her
21 in a long time but she just gave it ta me one year for Christmas because
22 she thought I was wise like an owl. Well, what I did with that is I put it up
23 on the shelf I had where I had particular things on the shelf and, and I – to
24 me it was my little symbol of General Motors and the way we are today
25 because I had the owl, and on one side of the owl, I had the book
26 ‘*Dilbert*’, which I thought as – and signed, signed by I can’t think of the
27 last name but I, I saw him at a conference, and he signed the book for me.
28 Uh, what is that guy’s name?
29
30 Mike Fleming: I’m, I’m not...
31
32 John Rosendahl: You know, the Dilbert car?
33
34 Doug Rademacher: Oh yes.
35
36 John Rosendahl: Yeah. Yeah.
37
38 Doug Rademacher: The cartoon, but I can’t tell ya the author.
39
40 John Rosendahl: Yeah. Well, I got this signed book, so I had that there, and on the other
41 side of the, the owl and equally of eq-, – of equal importance was the
42 book, uh, that, that, uh, Tom Weekley wrote, who was the UAW at J.
43 Hoover where the UAW and GM calling network gurus – and was about
44 joint, jointness or working together, and it was signed by him. He signed it
45 for me, you know, you know, uh, keep doin’ the good stuff you’re doin’
46 and stuff, you know. So, so I thought the ‘*Dilbert*’, which is the mockery

1 outta the principles of management, I think, you know, and the wise owl
2 and this book, which I thought was full of shit anyway, you know, I
3 thought that was a great, a great little thing. I looked at it everyday out
4 there and like [papers rustling] like are we ever gonna get anywhere, you
5 know. We got the wise owl and the – this book and this book, and it was
6 all true. So that's what that meant, you know, so it was my little symbol
7 that just was my little symbol. But, you know, I had all those pictures in
8 there. I had, uh, a Crystal model Corvette that had given – was given ta me
9 when I did – when I was involved with Cystic Fibrosis, uh, and I had a
10 lotta other stuff in there. I never locked my desk. I don't know that my
11 office was locked every night when I went home.

12
13 Sometimes, I'd be somewhere, wouldn't come back and forget ta call
14 somebody and lock it. I never had anybody – nobody ever took anything,
15 you know. Uh, first off, if they did, they couldn't take anything I couldn't
16 replace except maybe the '*Dilbert*' book and the Tom Weekley book. But
17 I mean, I mean, I mean people didn't steal. Everybody said, "What if
18 somebody gotta steal that?" Well, if they want it, they can have it. Hm, I
19 don't care, you know, but I never – I, I didn't worry about that. There's
20 other things ta worry about than what if somebody takes, uh, – steals a
21 picture or steal somethin' but nobody ever stole a thing in my office. And
22 I know on weekends, you know, ya go in there and, you know, there's,
23 there's boot prints up on your desk 'cause there's some maintenance guy
24 in there takin' a break or whatever and, and that's fine. I don't care. But I
25 was never missing – I never found my files ruffled through. I just didn't
26 lock anything and...

27
28Mike Fleming: Very good.

29
30John Rosendahl: ...I didn't. I, I hate that ya gotta lock shit up around here.

31
32Mike Fleming: John, Mike Fleming. [123:24] Um, you're a retiree now, uh, can you talk a
33 little about, um, how ya feel about the state of the business and, and
34 General Motors in the future?

35
36John Rosendahl: Well, you know, it used ta be everybody hopes they get out and there's a
37 pension left, you know. I'm hopin' I die pretty quick so I [laughter] know
38 I'm all right but, uh, [laughter] no, but, but I, you, you know, I, I think the
39 business is bad. I mean, you know, I remember, I remember 49 percent
40 market share, and I know 27, 26 percent market share ain't very much,
41 you know. Uh, as a QN rep, we would have meetings once a year and last
42 few years, we've gone ta Chicago and then we as teams would go ta
43 Chicago Auto Show and do competitive evaluation, and we'd have a list
44 of cars we had ta look at. Everybody had a different list of cars based on
45 what you built. Uh, in our case, Lansing Cars Assembly, some of the folks
46 were assigned ta go look at the Vol-, the Volkswagon Koreg and some

1 others, which is gonna be the crossover that we'll build here or somethin'
2 like that. And then, and then we'd look at, we'd look at, you know, the
3 Avalons and the Dodge Stratus, somethin' that was in our market, and
4 then we'd go back and do competitive analysis on our cars, you know, and
5 it's disheartening that ya could look at some of these Toyotas, Hondas,
6 Nissans that have just so much better appearance, appeal than ours do.
7

8 I mean, you know, as hard as we work at bein' common with common
9 parts and stuff, you know, I mean ya open up the door and it's just gray,
10 smoke gray like your shirt, you know. Just, you know, and ya open up the
11 door of those other cars and it's tricked out. I mean just some of that stuff
12 bein' – we were lookin' at one vehicle and, and you know how the little
13 side pockets ya got down there, you know, how the right – I can't get my
14 hands in some of those. I can't think which vehicle it was but, you know,
15 the pockets that they tipped out. They tipped back and tipped out. Who
16 thought of that? And how simple is that? So if ya gotta get your hand in
17 that pocket, just tip it out. Reach it in and tip it back. It wasn't in
18 anybody's way. But just little things like that, you know, and just the
19 whole looks of it, you know. The outside – everybody's car – I won't say
20 they look alike but this is cool, this is cool, but boy, ya get inside. and
21 where do ya spend most of the time, time with your car? It's on the inside.
22 Not standin' out in driveway lookin' at it. It's inside. [throat clearing] And
23 just that whole dash appeal and, and, you know, it will forever bug me that
24 I can close a Honda and a Toyota door with my finger.
25

26 I can't with our cars, you know, and I know it's a lot in the vacuum seal
27 but dammit, if they can make a vacuum seal that shuts doors easily, why
28 can't we? They all have glass channels and wires and glass seals like we
29 do. But our cars aren't built as good as those are and, and, and I can't
30 believe their engineers goin' ta different schools than ours go to. And, and
31 I think, I think Wagner will be a fall guy. He'll – the way Stemple was.
32 Stemple was a fall guy for what Smith did, and I think Wagner will be the
33 fall guy probably next year after the 4th quarter when that's in the tank
34 again, and, and then we'll lose market share. I don't think, I don't think
35 your – I don't think the UAW is done making concessions. I think they'll
36 hitch again. I think you lose, I think you lose a [jobs bank 126:57] next
37 time around. It's gotta go away. You can't afford ya – we can't – you
38 can't afford or we can't afford jobs bank. It's not – to me, it's not healthy
39 for your membership ta sit around and do nothin'. That's not what they
40 hired in for. They hired in ta go ta work. I think if ya let that go on, you
41 create a culture that they go home and tell their kids, "I did nothin' today."
42 So the kids look for jobs where they do nothin' and, and we, and we're
43 creating the bad culture.
44

45 We gotta stop that, you know, and, you know, they stopped that limited
46 jobs bank. So whatta ya do? We have ta get in – we have to divest into

1 another business, hut I don't know if we'll do that. I think, I think we'll
2 give the jobs bank – you'll – I think he'll give the jobs bank up in
3 exchange for somethin' for Delphi people because the Delphi thing will
4 drag out for a couple years before it really gets nasty. So ya give up the
5 jobs bank and you'll have enough attrition back then that, that it won't be
6 as bad but, but you'll wind up givin' that process away ta take care of the
7 Delphi things 'cause we screwed Delphi. We screwed those people, you
8 know. We spun'm off and then didn't give'm anything ta hang onto, you
9 know, and I mean, I mean it's like me tellin' you ta go to 652 and "Oh,
10 you're not gonna be, you're not gonna be the vice president or by the way,
11 I didn't tell ya that, did I?", you know, "What?" "I thought I'd be vice
12 president," you know, "Oh no, you're not gonna be," [Doolo's 128:14]got
13 that job or whoever's got that job now, you know, you think well, I'm
14 goin' – they're okay, that's cool. And, and, and Delphie got, got hosed like
15 that. I think they did. [pen clicking] I mean anybody in their right mind – I
16 mean you look at Chandler Suppliers and stuff and how that goes.

17
18 That was, uh, that was a move by GM ta just down the road cut fat, you
19 know, and so we did cut fat and now, and now we're gonna cut'm off and
20 lay those people – you know, if somebody tells me I work for 7 bucks an
21 hour or 8 bucks an hour, I've been makin' 20, that's hard ta swallow.
22 That's hard ta swallow. But I, I think, I think the UAW will do the right
23 thing and concede somethin' ta take care of those folks 'cause I think you
24 always gotta take care of retirees, not because I am one...

25
26 [laughter]
27

28John Rosendahl: ...but ya gotta take care of the folks that, that did the duty and then worry
29 about the ones that are, that are comin' on but ya gotta take care – you
30 gotta take care of those first. It's just like, you know, ya take care of your
31 kids and take care of your parents. You gotta take care of your parents.
32 Kids will get stuff, you know, he got the new shoes he wants, but if your,
33 if your mother needs a prescription, you're gonna take care of that, you
34 know, so and business is the same way. You gotta take care of these. You,
35 you got, you got more time ta take care of these. You just can't tell these
36 fall face here and so, so I, I really think, think you'll, you'll make some
37 more gives and healthcare thing if they didn't get a little more on that.
38 Sobeit. Still, still the best, the best around, uh, don't know if we'll ever see
39 national healthcare, that'd be the cure but probably won't in our lifetime.
40 But, uh, I, I really don't see us gettin' back market share. I really don't.
41 Uh, I don't see us surviving giving away rebates, uh, the last QN thing
42 when I went to in Chicago, whoever was up there said we averaged last
43 year 40, over 4400 dollars of vehicle in rebates. Now that's Saturns, that's
44 SUVs, that's Escalades, that's Impalas average per vehicle, \$4400.00, you
45 know.
46

1 You can't make a profit and give away 40, 40, \$4400.00 every car ya sell.
2 You can't. I mean – but if ya get outta the market, somebody else will get
3 in there. So there's gotta be an agreement how ya fix that. The difficulty is
4 Toyota and Honda don't have ta agree ta that.
5
6Female: Mm-hm.
7
8John Rosendahl: Yeah. It's like you don't have ta agree ta join up with the other local
9 [papers rustling] ta make it right [laughter] but, but if ya don't do
10 somethin' and you can't have a monopoly of the 3 car companies, you
11 know, they ain't gonna allow that but, but, but somebody will probably
12 lose in the car market. Could be Ford. I think [inaudible 130:55] or
13 Chrysler got too much money overseas that they will come up short. But,
14 but, uh, it's – I mean I really hope that somebody doesn't call some day
15 and say or you get a letter ta say your pension is cut in half or you don't
16 have a pension anymore. Hm. Shit, I'd be dead, you know. I mean I could
17 go find work but, you know, I don't wanna lose that pension. I mean you
18 don't wanna lose that pension so...
19
20Doug Rademacher: I wanna see mine.
21
22 [laughter]
23
24John Rosendahl: Yeah, you wanna see yours, and I think [pen clicking] I think there's gotta
25 be some, some movement ta make things better but I don't – and you can
26 take away Wagner and you could put, you could put Billy Bob Thornton
27 in there, and it ain't gonna make any difference 'cause we do business a
28 certain way and, and until somebody says we need ta do business another
29 way. It's like ya talk about durin' GMS trainin', you got Art and [Randy
30 131:44] up there talkin'. You, you gotta do – we gotta do – we gotta build
31 cars differently or we gotta do somethin' differently ta, ta hang on ta the
32 25 percent market share, which is nothin' and so that's what I think.
33
34Linda Johnson: Doug Rademacher.
35
36Doug Rademacher: [coughing] John, so we're talkin' about things you recognize now from the
37 outside as far as where we look like we are seein' some flaws, uh, you
38 think the corporate is not gonna get back market share. We hear this about
39 market share. [coughing] A couple things I wanted ta just have ya talk
40 about is where we become a diverse nation, a diverse workforce, the –
41 they call it the big 6 now. It is no longer the big 3. People can buy a
42 nameplate from their country of origin and feel like they're buyin'
43 American today. Also, you said we're lookin' inside of a foreign [pen
44 clicking] made vehicle and it's looked so much nicer. [pen clicking] The
45 m- – the perception of the autoworkers that they're overpaid and just ta
46 run, uh, some quick figures, uh, we had at a \$30.00 an hour pay [calculator

1 buttons] that's bein' up around the skilled-trade level and Lansing Cars so
2 many bein' not. Highest productivity plant in North America, we were – at
3 the end, we were doin', uh, almost 19 man hours per vehicle from start of
4 metal ta puttin' it on a truck or train. At \$30.00 an hour, we're talkin'
5 about a \$600 cost to – of labor and, uh, General Motors says that the
6 healthcare problem is what's kill'm about \$1500 a vehicle. Just combinin'
7 the labor cost and the, the healthcare cost of – we're up around \$2200.
8 We're failin' in design. The worker obviously is not a major part of this,
9 of this equation. [133:44] Where's it lie?
10
11 John Rosendahl: Well, your numbers are pretty good rather you only covered three pieces
12 of, uh...
13
14 Doug Rademacher: Okay.
15
16 John Rosendahl: ...I think if ya guys would re-, would realign yourself, somebody could sit
17 next to the comptroller, you could look at those books, and I mean that in
18 all seriousness, and understand what those numbers are 'cause you're
19 right, you identified some things. But, but there's – I mean there's, there's
20 the cost of researchers, the cost of this building. There's a cost of
21 everything that goes on somewhere, goes on what we sell. Now, uh, the
22 number 1 responsibility that any business has is to return profit to the
23 investor and, and even though, you know, our market share is down, so
24 and so forth, our overall goal is still ta return profit to the investor. If we
25 drop the price in our cars ta \$4000 'cause that gives us 100 bucks a car
26 over, you know, the investors wouldn't make any money. And, and I'm
27 just not meanin' you and me, who have 50 shares of stock but, but
28 investors and, and so I don't have a good feel on where all that money
29 goes or how it all goes. I, I know what Zubkus told me one time, and he
30 coulda been just smokin' me or not about how much we made on a car,
31 and I was amazed 'cause I wasn't thinkin' that high, you know. But I also
32 know that it takes a lot to run a business. The things we don't even see,
33 you know, if, if nothin' more than the money we give ta charities and
34 stuff, you know, all that stuff.
35
36 You know, well just while we're settin' here, you know, what's it gonna
37 cost ta tear this plant down? Well, is it cheaper ta tear it down or leave it
38 up? You know, and it's like geez, it might cost us [throat clearing]
39 700,000 ta tear it down. Why don't we leave it up? "Cause it costs more ta
40 keep it up, you know, and just ta heat it and maintain it and stuff and, and,
41 and then ya go in the – you know, what, um – when GM bought EDS way
42 back when, they bought that with a purpose in mind. Now I thought it was
43 stupid when we bought EDS because when they bought EDS, we had ta
44 give them all our computers. All of our computers. We got a computer. It
45 was now property of EDS, and then we leased 'em back from EDS. So I
46 give you somethin' and then I lease it back from ya. It doesn't, doesn't

1 play well in my book, okay? But it's part of the big deal. We bought EDS
2 for the satellite capacity, okay? And – No, I'm sorry, we built EDS for
3 their, for their computer capacity. Then we bought Hughes for the satellite
4 capacity so we could track all and the goal was ta track material, so we do
5 just the time inventory. So we put satellites in the sky for views, and we
6 use EDS's capabilities with computers to track trucks, so we create Just-
7 In-Time inventory to produce our inventory flow cost.

8
9 So, so, you know, you may not think about that but that's what we did.
10 That's what we do and that all costs somethin' ta, ta cut down on this cost.
11 I mean, I mean I don't understand the big global financial pieces so I can't
12 give you a good answer on that. But, but can we sell cars for less? Y-,
13 yeah, probably, you know. Can we make a profit? Can we continue ta do
14 research? Can we create, uh, can we create vehicles that provide access for
15 people who don't have mobility or that kinda stuff? I don't know if we can
16 do all that stuff, you know. We may have ta decide we're gonna get it just,
17 just like, just like electric motor division when we used ta have that
18 division and stuff, you know. If ya have – one of the, one of the wildest
19 plants that I ever, I ever, that I ever went into was the one in LaGrange,
20 Illinois where they, where [pen clicking] they make locomotives. Shit. If
21 ya never been in a locomotive plant, they're bigger than this room, you
22 know. You talk about a scrap bin, you know, one wheel fits in the scrap
23 bin. I mean these things they build one a day, you know, and, and it's, it's
24 a big plant. But should we be in that business? Probably not, you know. So
25 I think we sold it off, you know, to another division but, but just like
26 Delphie should, should we, should we have had – our business is buildin'
27 cars.

28
29 Not parts. And, and, and so we go with the in and out thing. We buy parts
30 and you, you know, and now we're gonna sell off GMC, most profitable
31 division we got. We're gonna work on – we're gonna sell off because
32 they're bringin' it down. We're, we're, we're bringin' down the credit
33 value of GMC, so we're gonna let it go, you know. It's an in and out thing,
34 and we'll probably bring her back so that we'll get back ta where we need
35 ta be. But, but, I don't, I don't understand enough about ta know why my
36 car cost \$50,000, but it does. Don't pay that much for it, but it does. I just
37 don't understand all that stuff. So I can't answer that.

38
39 Linda Johnson: Doreen Howard.

40
41 Doreen Howard: Um, you've been here for a long time. [throat clearing] And were here
42 durin' when it was Fisher Body to all the different name changes that
43 happened here. Could...

44
45 John Rosendahl: Just been one name change.
46

1Doreen Howard: [138:45] Just the one name change?
2
3John Rosendahl: Lansing Cars Assembly.
4
5Doreen Howard: Okay. [138:48] Um, what was your feelings about that? And, and from
6 what when it went from – ‘cause you were here durin’ Fisher Body,
7 correct?
8
9John Rosendahl: Oh, yeah. [chair moving] Yeah. It, it didn’t bother me. I mean I, I, you
10 know, again I relate as I said earlier, it’s like, like a divorce. I mean I
11 changed wives. That doesn’t bother me, you know, I mean it just happens,
12 you know. I mean I – it – I, I can’t – you can’t say, you can’t say your new
13 wife, and I’ll use that analogy, “Honey, she’s a better cook than you.”
14 “Honey, she kept the house a lot, a lot nicer than you do.” “You know, she
15 mowed the grass all the time, you should,” you know, you can’t do that.
16 You move on. You move forward. And, and the effort was ta merge Fisher
17 Body and Oldsmobile and get away. Drop the Fisher ta Body Division.
18 We’ve now dropped the Oldsmobile Division. We’re gonna drop another
19 one here sometime. Pontiac is next ta go. But, but I mean, huh, that
20 doesn’t, doesn’t – it’s like movin’ from a house. I move from the Westside
21 to the Northside then the Northside ta the Westside. I still go back and
22 drive by there once in a while but I don’t sit in front of the, the house and
23 geez, I wish I still had that house, you know, I lived there. [coughing] We
24 were at Fisher Body. I wore Fisher Body stuff, you know. I got Fisher
25 Body pins for my 5, 10, 15, and then I think in the – my 20th, we switched
26 over to the square pins, you know.
27
28 I got a clock, you know, I got an old – those old, big old chime clocks for
29 my 25-year award. Now you can choose telescopes, bicycles, and golf
30 clubs. Could I turn my clock back in or should I feel bad ‘cause you get
31 that and I don’t? Don’t bother me. That’s what the program is now. I mean
32 I, I just don’t think you can get hung up on that, that, that, you know, that
33 it’s not Fisher Body anymore. It’s just not. Fisher Body is gone, you
34 know. Local 602 still exists. You know, I mean people – it’s not – it’s just
35 that – it was a nameplate we had here ‘cause the Fisher Brothers were
36 good enough ta build a plant in Lansing [throat clearing] and so – but I
37 don’t – that doesn’t bother me, you know. Never has, you know.
38
39Doreen Howard: Also, I had another question. [140:53] Um, what type of vehicles do you
40 prefer ta drive?
41
42John Rosendahl: Well, I drive a Toyota Avalon.
43
44 [laughter]
45

1 John Rosendahl: I drive a Cadillac Deville, okay? [laughter] I've driven [laughter] caught
2 ya off guard there, man. [throat clearing] Don't, don't cut the tape off after
3 that line.
4
5 [laughter]
6
7 Female: You would not fit in that car. [laughter]
8
9 John Rosendahl: I'm on my s-, second Cadillac. I drove big Park Avenues. I drove, uh, '98.
10 I drove Tornados and, you know, that's far back as I can think, you know.
11 I need a big car. I don't fit in little cars. I don't fit in an Equinox [sniffing]
12 or, uh, anything else. I need a big car. When I fly somewhere, rent a
13 vehicle, I rent a big car 'cause it doesn't cost that much more ta be
14 comfortable, you know. So, so, and, and, and the only reason I mean, I
15 mean I buy the Cadillac – not because I have a Cadillac – I mean but, uh,
16 there's not many big products out there that we build. I did when I was out
17 – I was out West a while ago and rented a Chrysler 300, which was top of
18 their line, you know, and it was a piece of shit, you know, it wasn't near as
19 good as mine and, uh, but we're runnin' outta stuff that I can buy, and I'm
20 not buyin' an Escalade or I'm not buyin, uh, a big truck. I'm not a truck
21 guy. I'm a car guy. Now I'm a car guy with comfort so, so, you know.
22 And, and now if, if anything bothered me, I didn't like it when we – I
23 mean I didn't [paper tearing] like it from, from the car size.
24
25 I didn't [paper tearing] like it when we went ta Grand Ams and Somersets
26 and the [inaudible 142:32] the cheapest back then, uh, because they were
27 small cars. But ya think [tapping] back then, people were really panicky
28 about we were gettin' rid of the Ninety Eights and Eighty-Eights and the
29 Cutlasses but, you know, [tapping] we made a hell of a livin'. If you watch
30 that video that y'all got copies of DVD on, that's part of the talk on there
31 about, about the – we all hated that, that move to the little car but that
32 Grand Am sure, sure familed us up for a long time here. You know, it was
33 our – that was, that was a great thing for us, you know. Somebody made
34 that decision that we didn't have involvement in, and it turned out pretty
35 good, you know. So sometimes, you gotta trust those decisions. I mean,
36 you know, sometimes ya gotta trust the fact that corporation does know
37 what their doin'. You know, you can challenge it but, but sometimes they
38 make the right decision. I think this SSR thing across the street, they need
39 ta shut that down as soon as they can 'cause that's – I mean, yeah, people
40 are gettin' more weeks' downtime than they are workweeks over there and
41 – but what are ya gonna do with those folks, you know? You gotta do
42 somethin' with'm. You gotta do somethin' at that plant. That's always
43 gonna be a low-vying production plant like Bowling Green.
44
45 But, but how many niche-market vehicles do we need? We – I mean we
46 can't [pen clicking] do well with the common market we got. We don't –

1 we're not, you know, you got the niche market with the [pen clicking]
2 Cadillac SSR and the Corvette down in Bowling Green. I don't know
3 there'll be another niche-market plant unless your gonna build electric
4 vehicles or you're gonna build, you know, crossover vehicles and, and
5 that's what they oughta be doin' over there. They oughta be takin' that
6 plant and doin' research here how we can build, uh, electric vehicle,
7 whatever else over there, you know, hybrid vehicle I mean, you know.
8

9Mike Fleming: Y-, Mike Fleming. You're right. Hydrogen, hydrogen [papers rustling] is
10 the way that's, uh...

11

12John Rosendahl: Yeah.

13

14Mike Fleming: ...we need ta be...

15

16John Rosendahl: Yeah.

17

18Mike Fleming: ...involved in that. [papers rustling] And you're – you talk about nice
19 vehicles. We do have a couple [tapping] we got the new Pontiac Solstice
20 [tapping] is a nice vehicle, uh...

21

22John Rosendahl: That's in Wilmington.

23

24Mike Fleming: ...the SSR.

25

26John Rosendahl: What's Saturn? You know? [snapping]

27

28Mike Fleming: That's the SSR and the XLR. They kinda look [XLR 144:28]

29

30John Rosendahl: That's, that's it, yeah. [tapping] But, you know, that, that Solstice is like
31 the SSR, once those that want one, have one, it's over. It's not somethin'
32 that's gonna drive the marketplace. I mean it's a car. Why I think they're
33 cute, I don't want one, and I don't think anybody ov-, over 5' 10" wants
34 one, you know. [writing]

35

36 [laughter]

37

38John Rosendahl: But it's a cute car, you know, and if ya got, if you've got – if you're a
39 soccer mom, you don't want a Solstice, you know, and there's probably
40 more soccer moms than there are others. So, so we'll, we'll capture that
41 market like we did with the [pen clicking] SSR over here and, uh, and then
42 we're done with that, you know. I mean I don't know how many Corvettes
43 we built here, but we don't seem ta build more than we need, you know,
44 we don't. And yeah, they build just the right amount and so they are able
45 ta sustain that, but I don't think we found another product that has, has
46 proven itself ta last as long. The Riata was pretty good for a while but, but

1 even that dried up, you know, [coughing] 'cause it didn't fit in the Buick
2 line, you know. Could almost make a whole division of, of specialty
3 vehicles and...
4
5 Linda Johnson: [145:34] Well John, is there anything else you wanna [turning pages]
6 share about your...
7
8 John Rosendahl: Oh yeah, there was another...
9
10 Linda Johnson: ...career?
11
12 John Rosendahl: ...thing. I had another story for ya, um...
13
14 Linda Johnson: Okay.
15
16 John Rosendahl: Uh, this is a Zubkus story and I told ya [papers ripping] gettin' back ta
17 before the, uh, [papers ripping] the Breslin Event. He, uh, called me in his
18 office one day and... [clicking]
19
20 Doug Rademacher: John, were you, uh – you're retired now. You've spent the many years,
21 and we talked a little bit about plant hirings. We had a hirin' in 1995. It
22 was the last big hirin' group. [146:07] Can you talk about that group that
23 came in and, and have you seen a change in, in the way the plant work
24 ethic came with that group?
25
26 John Rosendahl: I think that while we thought we did the right thing in '95 by using the
27 referral service and basically taking it outta our hands and hirin' at, at
28 large, if you will, uh, I think we got away from your kids and, and your,
29 your referral gettin' in here, and I know everybody filled out a referral
30 form but, but we really opened it up ta, ta gen-, gen-, general hiring and,
31 and so that family effect that we've had here has slowly diminished
32 because of our – one our hirin', and then we kill that family effect because
33 we went ta contract supervisors, and they hadn't – they didn't have any
34 allegiance to the people they supervised and they're here a week, there at
35 Chassis a week, there somewhere else a week, and, and, and you take
36 away. We talk work teams on the floor but we don't put work-team
37 elements in place ta make work teams happen. Uh, and I think the, I think
38 the hirin' stuff, uh, if ya go back ta when I hired as I talked about long,
39 erger-, earlier today, I learned on, I learned on my own and somebody
40 helped me. But now we send people through 4 weeks of school and
41 through the school, we teach'm everything you wanna – that we think they
42 oughta know and, and about, about love and peace in the UAW and Team
43 Build and GMS and we teach'm all this stuff that really isn't about what
44 they do, you know.
45

1 What they do is they work on the floor and they work in workgroups and
2 we, we don't spend enough time doin' that. My thoughts are you take'm
3 on the floor, put'm out there for a week or two, and then take'm off and
4 see how it's goin', and then train'm. Train'm what they don't know, you
5 know. Hey, whose a union, you know. A guy asks ya after 2 weeks or he
6 doesn't know, tell him what he doesn't know, you know. After, after a
7 couple sessions, you'll get the general questions down but we give all this
8 upfront stuff but it re-, really isn't implacable. I mean they wanna do one
9 thing. They wanna learn how ta, how ta get in the door and get to the car,
10 and if I can find a bathroom on the way, that's great too. But, but we
11 spend all this time on GMS because General Motors says, "Gotta teach'm
12 GMS." And somebody says, "We oughta teach'm union history," and this
13 stuff we gotta teach'm. That's all good stuff but, but it doesn't make'm
14 build better cars 'cause they knew – they knew that the '37 strike was in
15 Flint. I mean [pen clicking] it doesn't make any better. They want, they
16 want ta know how they get from, from their hirin' wage [tapping] to their
17 full wage, you know, and they wanna get there as quick as they can. They
18 can get there a lot quicker in their mind if their workin', not sitting in the
19 classroom.
20

21 And, and so, so I think all, all the goodness we've tried ta do with hirin',
22 you know, hirin' procedures and practices don't make, don't, don't make a
23 better ship. It doesn't make us any better. It doesn't make a better
24 employee. Get'm out on the floor and get'm acclimated, you know, it's
25 just I've used this on – this analogy several times about a marriage. But,
26 you know, you think of, of – and I don't know if you've been married
27 before or not, but as we get older and you go meet the new in-laws or the
28 new brother and sister-in-laws, you know, and that kinda stuff, you know,
29 it's different than the first time, you know, because, because, you know,
30 they're – they've, they've seen games, games before and stuff. They're
31 checkin' you out, you know. And, uh, I remember one time I went with
32 this lady ta meet her parents, and she said ta me, she says, "Now my dad
33 will ask ya if ya want a beer." I know you drink Mosa and [inaudible
34 149:44] beer, but whatever ya do, do not ask for anything more than a
35 Budweiser. Okay. So we go in there – it's up at Mount Pleasant. We go in
36 there and sit down. "Would you like a beer?" "Yeah, you gotta Bud?" "I
37 like a Bud man." [laughter] Well, I learned the ropes, you know.
38

39 I knew the rules so, so that's why [paper tearing] I think you, you know, if
40 ya take these people and bring'm in and, and, you know, don't get hung up
41 on they gotta know everything about GMS and about union history. Get'm
42 out [pen clicking] on the floor workin' with the people and get some
43 mentoring goin' on, and then pull'm back and then do what ya want ta do
44 with'm, but get'm out there so they got questions about how things work.
45 Not how things read and, uh, but I don't think, I don't think our hirin' has,
46 has been as good because we took the family effect out. When you really

1 wanted ta get somebody in here. Get your kid in here, you know. We only
2 had so many jobs and you used your, you used your, your markers ta get
3 somebody in here and, and I think by taking that away, you kill that, that,
4 that team thing from the beginning, you know. Well, you don't get as great
5 a chance ta work as others by not – by doin' somethin' else, and then I
6 don't think our training is on the mark 'cause – bless their heart, [Kevin
7 Barrett 151:02] and my good friend, [Mark Strolley 151:04] I've seen their
8 stuff, and it's all good stuff. It's great stuff, you know, but I don't know if
9 it hits the spot, you know.

10
11 I don't know, you know, that's the thing, you know, you want people who
12 can come in here and build good cars and be good, good union members
13 and everything else but, but get'm buildin' cars first and then we'll work
14 on the other stuff, you know, so my thought. Zubkus story. [papers
15 rustling] Zubkus. One of the projects he [writing] had me on one time was,
16 uh, Oldsmobile had – they wanted ta do some things. They wanted, uh –
17 they had some I don't wanna say extra cars, but they had – they wanted ta
18 get a program about how ta sell vehicles [papers rustling] of having the
19 people [chair moving] drive their cars so what they, what they come up
20 with, uh, I can't think of the guy's last name now, uh, but he was in Zub's
21 office. I went up there. Denny Moore and I – and me [coughing] and, uh,
22 they, they wanted ta put Oldsmobiles in every plant; Body, Fab, Delta
23 engine plant, uh, Chassis 90 and 32 in the craft center and rotate[paper
24 ripping] these cars. They had 7 vehicles, uh, Bravada, uh, Silhouette, a
25 Cutlass, you know, and rotate these around [writing] and then by every car
26 exhibit, they'd have a box; a questionnaire box and like 3 questions you'd
27 – I mean or 3 things you like the car, you know, [da-da 152:28] and you
28 sign it and put it in the box and once a week, there'd be a drawing of the
29 names in that box and whoseever got drawn would get ta drive the product
30 that was there for a week [tapping] somethin' like a Tuesday ta Tuesday.

31
32 You had ta go out to [Inaudible 152:43] out by the airport and get it [paper
33 tearing] 'cause that's where they'd clean'm up at and stuff. And then
34 they'd move and they ro-, rotate. So they'd take the Bravada here, move it
35 here, and they [thumping] just rotated these seven cars. [papers rustling]
36 Well, Zubkus called me up there and Denny Moore went with me ta – he
37 wanted us ta develop this program for, for the Oldsmobile who built this
38 program. So we worked on this thing a little bit, you know, it wasn't
39 rocket science, just had ta figure it out and get the questions right and get
40 the sites and get the coordinates [chair moving] from the other plants right
41 and, uh, and, uh, I wanted ta splash this out so [Lynn and Mike Benz
42 153:17]had, uh, when they went ta one newspaper, we had –we– when we
43 communized the newspaper to once a month, we had a paper come out.
44 [pen clicking] This is a front story but – and the paper was at – ready ta go
45 ta printer. [papers rustling] It was at the printer. But – so I said ta Zubkus
46 on Friday, "I got this thing ready ta go. Do you want me ta come up and

[clicking] do you wanna see it?" He says, "No, call up [Kinsinger 153:39] get on the agenda for the staff and bring it ta the staff on Monday just ta see it all." [clicking] And I says, "Okay."

So I go in the staff meeting on Monday and [Ed Henning 153:50] [inaudible 153:51] He's sitting behind me and ya got [Olds 153:53] guy." And I'm in the staff and – so I'm up on the front [papers tearing] overhead, you know, [inaudible 153:59]] and if ya ever go on a staff meeting over there, you know, they sittin' around and, uh, kinda like they got position seats, well Zub always said if this was the table and that's the front, he sat where Linda's at. [throat clearing] He's sittin' center right, okay? 'Cause then he'd always sat and he could look around at the people, you know, and people could judge his reaction [writing] to this. It's just the way it was. Um, Malcus always sat in the corner and y-, you know, that kinda – so wait a minute, if I'm doing this presentation and I flippin' and I think I got a good show over here, you know, and, and I'm lookin' around. I look up and look around the room and Malcus has this weird look on his – on this, this pern burn look [coughing] on his face and stuff, you know, and, and, and others are like leanin' in talkin' ta one another and I'm goin' on and pretty soon – Zub, he's just sittin' there kinda lookin' at it like this, you know, his head down. Pretty soon, Malcus says, "John, I have a question." You know? S- – "Yeah, Garrett." He says, "Where'd this come from?"

And he says, "I've never seen this before." He says, "Zub, have you seen this before?" Zub says, "No, I haven't. Never seen it." [laughter] And I'm like "ya gave me the project," you know, but keep your mouth shut, you know. 'Cause he did. Then he says, "Not never – here I never – I never seen it." So I was pissed. Well then, then Pa-choo, the shotguns come out and they're all firin' and questionin' me. This won't work and this won't work and we can't do this and that'll never work and da, ta, da, da, ta, and it's no good. You gotta, you gotta start over. So I [papers rustling] gathered up my flimsies and sat back down. Zub takes [paper crumbling] a piece of paper and [paper ripping] hands me a note. It says, "See me, I have ideas." I think God damn right I'm gonna see ya, [laughter] you know. [laughter] So the next morning I come in ta work and I'm drivin' in from the Northside, and I'm comin' out on Verlinda, and I notice his light's on, so I parked up front, I walked right in the door, went right to phonin' security. I says, pardon me for this but I did. I picked up the phone and dialed 9063. "Zubkus," I says, "Why did ya fuck me like that?" You know.

[laughter]

And, uh, he says, "Come up and see me." So, I went up there and I went in, and he says, "What was that about?" And he says, "What'd ya want me

1 ta do, they were pissed,” you know? [laughter] But he says – I says, “Well
2 ya said ya hadn’t seen it. You gave me the project.” Well he said, “I hadn’t
3 seen the presentation, that wasn’t a lie was it?” [laughter] I says, “No, it
4 wasn’t a lie.” So then we, we talked through it but it was just, just typical
5 him, you know, but I’m standin’ up makin’ this presentation and he’s like
6 Naa, never seen it before, you know?
7
8 [laughter]
9
10 Doug Rademacher: [156:39] So did we ever put that in there?
11
12 John Rosendahl: Oh yeah, we did that for a while, yeah.
13
14 Doug Rademacher: [156:42] But it did happen?
15
16 John Rosendahl: Yeah, yeah, it happened. [throat clearing] And it came off well, I mean, I
17 don’t know [pen clicking] if they got any good PR out of it but I mean
18 everybody – we drew and people got their other car. I think people, you
19 know, people can and, and, you know, uh, give’m somethin’ nice and ya
20 think geez, I’d rather have a green fleece, you know. Why don’t ya get
21 green for MSU? Why don’t ya get blue for UVM? But people that got the
22 cars were complainin’ ‘cause they had ta go over ta [Inaudible 157:02] and
23 pick’m up.
24
25 Doug Rademacher: Ahh.
26
27 [laughter]
28
29 John Rosendahl: Well, how I’m gonna get there? I live in Ionia. Getta ride, you know,
30 figure it out. If ya don’t want it, don’t worry about. [coughing] The car’s
31 here if ya want it, you know, didn’t care how many miles they put on it,
32 just take it and drive it for a week, you know. But, you know, typically,
33 typical staff will – “What if they wreck it?” We’ll fix it, you know. “Well
34 what if somebody steals it?” We’ll get another one, you know. [laughter]
35 All those questions have answers, you know, [laughter] “What if there –
36 what if a guy doesn’t have a license?” Well then, he can’t take it, you
37 know, [laughter] ‘cause they had, you know, show your license, check the
38 way ya do a company car. I mean there’s somethings that don’t change,
39 but it’s not – I mean why do we have ta micromanage everything? ‘Cause
40 they – I tell ya that whole staff had ‘bout 50 questions that didn’t amount
41 ta shit, you know? What if they wreck it? We’ll fix it, you know. What if
42 somebody steals it? We’ll get another one, you know. Simple answers for
43 simple questions, you know, but, but all reasons ta say, “Well let’s think
44 about it,” you know, “Let’s not do that today.” Let’s do that. We’ll think
45 about it. Let’s form a committee, and we’ll get the right players, and we’ll

1 think about that. So then ya get in the meetin' and say – and they meet for
2 3 [inaudible 158:14].
3
4 Well ya know, we don't have the right players here, you know, so, you
5 know, shit never gets off the ground here because of that stuff, you know.
6 But just a simple program. Give people a chance ta drive a car for a week.
7 Answer 3 questions, drop it in the box, draw your name, you getta drive
8 the car. Simple. [chair sliding] Well then, well then, I'll tell ya what, then
9 here ta complicate things, we parked the car in the C-Trim auto area,
10 okay? Down there when we had the booths down there and stuff.
11 [coughing] And then, and then we got complaints of Body Shop because it
12 was too far for the Body Shop ta come ta, ta sign – it was too far ta come
13 ta sign your name and drop it in the box. Can ya get the car closer to us?
14 So we put it out there once in a while. Well then ya know what the
15 painters want. They want a car up there. It was way too far for them ta go
16 ta the Body Shop, you know, sometimes you gotta just say, we bought
17 blue jackets, you know, that's what ya [laughter] gotta do.
18
19 Mike Fleming: Yeah.
20
21 John Rosendahl: I'm sorry ya don't like it, but we got blue today, you know, but – and I
22 don't know that they'll ever fix those kinds of things, you know, 'cause
23 we're too big. You can fix it in your house when you're – you know, if ya
24 ask your kids where ya wanna go on vacation, they got opinions. You're
25 gonna make the decision, you know, 'cause it's not a big group but when
26 ya got 4, 5,000 people where ya got a corporation, it's hard ta make those
27 decision 'cause ya got a big group. Nobody agrees or nobody wants ta
28 make a decision and that's, that's the way it's – the things I've seen here
29 when ya got managers, ya got staff people that don't support or don't
30 agree with the decisions, decisions don't get made because they find ways
31 ta drag it because the leader – the manager doesn't get the support, and it
32 probably goes on your [house 159:32]. The manager doesn't get support or
33 people find ways ta kill the decision, you know, if I don't like your
34 decision, I'm gonna ask for – we oughta form a committee. Get all the
35 right players there, you know.
36
37 Doug Rademacher: They don't wanna take orders so...
38
39 John Rosendahl: They don't wanna...
40
41 Male: ...they just a soon kill it.
42
43 John Rosendahl: ...they don't wanna stick – they didn't wanna stick their neck out. I, I
44 mean, you know, I wanna tell ya this is – the last dinner, the last event we
45 did, you know, now I've known the guy that put that dinner on for some
46 time. He owns the Golden Rose, [Bob Hocums, 160:22] A good roaster.

1 Always had good food. Runs good catering business. I know that he's
2 catered big events for like Spartan Motors and some others, and he's done
3 a lotta big stuff and that's why I chose him. But, but Amy said originally I
4 want a nice dinner, okay? Then she wants brats and burgers. Brats and
5 burgers, no nice dinner. [laughter] Brats and burgers are brought since
6 lunch and so if ya wanna nice dinner, I'll give ya a nice dinner. So, so I set
7 up a taste testin', and we went out there. And we tasted the chicken we
8 had, and we tasted brats. We tasted burgers and stuff, and she locked down
9 the chicken but, you know, it was like, like if ya want a nice dinner, I
10 don't need a committee of 12 ta decide what that is. I'll give ya nice
11 dinners. Let me give ya a nice dinner. If ya don't like it, don't ask me ta do
12 it again. The last one anyway but I mean, you know, [laughter] but ya
13 want a nice [coughing] dinner, give a nice dinner, you know, give a ¼ of
14 chicken, ½ chicken, whatever that was and make it look nice, you know,
15 but don't fool around with brats and then the whole thing.

16

17 She wanted them grilled on site. Well, you can't grill on site and feed
18 people, 2,000 people in an hour. Ya can't grill. You can grill but that takes
19 about 40 feet of grills ta about 15 cooks, you know, and ya gotta draw a
20 line somewhere.

21

22 Doug Rademacher: Then ya gotta go [boneless 161:38].

23

24 John Rosendahl: Yeah.

25

26 Doug Rademacher: That's another thing.

27

28 John Rosendahl: Yeah. That first day...

29

30 Doug Rademacher: Yeah.

31

32 John Rosendahl: ...that first day and si- – and I, and I'm not knockin' [Amy Farmer
33 161:46] but, but it's just seein' how this isn't goin' ta their – Do-, [Doug
34 Mayer 161:52] retired anyway but, uh, [laughter] we had – I made the
35 decision not ta put heat in the tent. I was [knocking] that [inaudible
36 162:02] Well it wasn't. So I brought propane heaters across town to
37 Chassis. First session we did here, it was cool. That night I put heat in the
38 tent of Chassis, okay? And then I set the plant up ta take those propane
39 heaters once their done at Chassis, bring'm over here for the next day, for
40 the next day ta heat the tent, so – but she didn't know that I was doin' that.
41 I just made the decision ta do that, you know, but, but rather than call me,
42 she calls [Kim Carpenter 162:46] ta ask me am I gonna heat the tent up
43 over here. And Kim couldn't reach me 'cause I was out goofin' off or
44 somethin' like that. So everybody's in a panic now 'cause and by this
45 time, the h-, the heats runnin' the tent out here and Kim come here early

1 and Amy come early I think and tryin' ta figure what are we gonna do, the
2 tents cold.
3
4 Oh, I took care of it and that's, that's one thing that I try ta do around here,
5 was anticipate shit a lotta times ta, ta get that taken care of and it's like
6 Radar on *M*A*S*H*, we anticipate stuff, take care of it, if people just let
7 ya do your job but, but, but certain people and I think she was one, she'd
8 trust ya but oh, wouldn't trust ya far enough. She had a very small core
9 that she worked with and Kim Carpenter was one of those, and I tried ta
10 pimp out Kim sometimes. Get her stuff – ta do stuff outside of her comfort
11 zone. Don't tell her, we'll just do it. I gotta tell her, so and so. We tell her
12 that and then we do somethin' else, you know. And, and, and it would
13 always make her nervous 'cause she didn't know what I was gonna do but,
14 you know, you gotta let that go – go of some stuff, and GM doesn't do
15 that. You know, we just don't do that, you know. We oughta let
16 Gettelfinger run the business for a month and see how it goes. You know,
17 fire Wagner and say, "Okay, Gettelfinger, get in there and take it over for
18 a month. Let me know what ya think."
19
20 Doug Rademacher: I like your choice rather than [Miller 163:54] from [Mondova].
21
22 John Rosendahl: Well, yeah, I just, just, just – I mean the only way you're gonna make a
23 change in this business is just do things differently, you know.
24
25 Mike Fleming: Well, we certainly need ta be thinkin' outside of the box.
26
27 John Rosendahl: Yeah, ya gotta do that, so...
28
29 Linda Johnson: Is there...
30
31 John Rosendahl: ...anyone else got any more questions? I'm about all talked out.
32
33 Doug Rademacher: John, I just wanna share with ya that, you know, I came down to your
34 office a number of times. We've had discussions over the years and
35 you've, uh...
36
37 John Rosendahl: I u-, I usually give ya what ya wanted.
38
39 Doug Rademacher: Yeah, you've always, uh – you've wore many different hats but you've
40 always been pleasant and, uh, treated me with, uh, uh, as an equal and, uh,
41 open door in front of me and I really appreciate that.
42
43 John Rosendahl: I wouldn't have it any, any other way. So, so I don't miss bein' here but,
44 you know, wish I could still be doin' it. [laughter]
45

1Mike Fleming: John, I wanna tell ya also that it was, uh, a pleasure for me ta know ya and
2work around ya. You're a good guy.
3
4John Rosendahl: I'll see ya on the golf course. I know you always – out – I see ya outta
5there at 1 o'clock sometime. I don't know how ya get outta so early. You
6must start early.
7
8[laughter]
9
10John Rosendahl: Is that on tape?
11
12Mike Fleming: That's on tape, John. [laughter]
13
14Linda Johnson: Thanks, John.
15
16Marilyn Coulter: Thank you.
17
18Doreen Howard: Thanks.
19
20Doug Rademacher: Thank you.
21
22Mike Fleming: Thank you, John.
23
24John Rosendahl: Thank you. [paper crumbling]
25
26
27/ls