

**Lyle McFadden, an African American, discusses his 40-year career
as a UAW production worker and plant security officer
at the Fisher Body plant in Lansing, MI**

1
2
3
4
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: [recorder clicking] Fisher Body Historical Team interview. Today is
7 January 26th, 2006. The time is approximately 12 noon. We're at the UAW
8 Local 602 [sniffing] Frank Dryer Greenhouse. First we'll interview –
9 introduce the team.
10
11 John Fedewa: John Fedewa.
12
13 Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: And I'm Marilyn Coulter. Today we're with, uh, Mr. Lyle McFadden.
16 [0:26] Uh, could you please, uh, give us your name and spell it for us,
17 please?
18
19 Lyle McFadden: Lyle McFadden, L-Y-L-E, M-C Capital-F-A-D-D-E-N.
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: [0:37] And your address, please. Your address?
22
23 Lyle McFadden: 221 Lahoma, Lansing, Michigan 48915.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: [coughing] And you're a male. [0:50] Um, are you married?
26
27 Lyle McFadden: My wife passed.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Mm. [beeping] Thank you. Sorry. Sorry about that. [0:56] Um, are you
30 have any children?
31
32 Lyle McFadden: I have four, I have four boys.
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: Four boys.
35
36 Lyle McFadden: And four grandkids.
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: [I see 1:04]. [1:05] Now, were you born – where were you born?
39
40 Lyle McFadden: I was born in St. Lawrence Hospital in Lansing, Michigan.
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: [1:11] Uh, so, [sniffing] um, uh, what were your education?
43
44 Lyle McFadden: I had three years a college.
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: And...

1
2Lyle McFadden: I, I, I s-, I graduated from Lansing Sexton 1955.
3
4Marilyn Coulter: [1:25] And, um, did you have any military experience?
5
6Lyle McFadden: No, I didn't.
7
8Marilyn Coulter: [1:30] And what'd your parents do? What did your parents do?
9
10Lyle McFadden: My, uh, dad worked for a school district at the – and my s-, my mother
11 worked for East Lansing School District; she drove the bus.
12
13Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [1:42] And, um, what do – and I take it you were in school, um,
14 before. What'd you do before you hired in to Fisher Body?
15
16Lyle McFadden: Uh, worked for the City of Lansing on the Garbage Department.
17
18Marilyn Coulter: In the Garbage Department. [sniffing] Okay. [throat clearing] Well, before
19 we get into our Fisher Body history, you were born right here in Lansing.
20
21Lyle McFadden: Yes.
22
23Marilyn Coulter: [2:00] So, um, being born here in Lansing, did you have any prior ex-, you
24 know, knowledge of Fisher Body?
25
26Lyle McFadden: Yes, because, uh, I had to-, I walked by it when I went to school. It's, it's
27 right across the street from Sexton.
28
29Marilyn Coulter: [It was 2:15] – okay. [2:16] So what'd ya think about it?
30
31Lyle McFadden: What'd I think about s-, Fisher Body?
32
33Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, what'd ya think about Fisher Body as a child?
34
35Lyle McFadden: Oh, it was great. I raised four boys.
36
37Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [2:25] But before you, [laughter] before you came in, when you
38 were...
39
40Lyle McFadden: When I was a kid?
41
42Marilyn Coulter: ...walking to school, did ya...
43
44Lyle McFadden: Oh, I just...
45
46Marilyn Coulter: ...have any...

1
2Lyle McFadden: ...I, well, we, we, you can look in the windows then and see people workin',
3 and ya had a s-, big ol' Fisher Body sign in the yard that, uh, made out a
4 flowers, and, and we used to go [really 2:44] pass in when you went by, and
5 it was beautiful.
6
7Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [2:48] Did you know anybody who worked in...
8
9Lyle McFadden: Oh yes...
10
11Marilyn Coulter: ...the Plant?
12
13Lyle McFadden: ...yes, yes. In the neighborhood, it was everybody [sniffing] in Lansing
14 [inaudible 2:54] [throat clearing] General Motors. Everybody in my
15 neighborhood did.
16
17Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. S-...
18
19Lyle McFadden: I mean their parents d-, their dad did.
20
21Marilyn Coulter: [3:00] So Fisher Body was considered a good place for the neighborhood?
22
23Lyle McFadden: Oh definitely, definitely.
24
25Marilyn Coulter: Um...
26
27Lyle McFadden: It's a bl-, that was a bl-, as my mother would say, it was a blessing.
28
29Marilyn Coulter: [3:10] Your mother would say Fisher Body was a blessing?
30
31Lyle McFadden: N-, she thought Fisher Body was a blessing, 'cause people – you know, you
32 lived good. You [inaudible 3:16].
33
34Marilyn Coulter: [3:19] So people who, who worked for General Motors was always
35 considered good work.
36
37Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
38
39Marilyn Coulter: [3:24] So, uh, what year did you hire in to Fisher Body?
40
41Lyle McFadden: Um, November 7th, 1956.
42
43Marilyn Coulter: [3:33] And, um, now, you said you had an education, so you were, um, you
44 had three years of college. Was that prior to hiring at Fisher Body?
45

1Lyle McFadden: Uh, no, uh, when I – I, I started, uh, working for Fisher Body and then I, uh,
2 went to work – I went to, uh, LCC...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
5
6Lyle McFadden: ...and you, you weren't workin' year-round then. You, you know, you w-,
7 you had summers off [because, and uh 3:58], so you – I went to school and
8 then when I went on, uh, Security...
9
10Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11
12Lyle McFadden: ...w-, we took fire, fire and safety and [police administration 4:07].
13
14Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
15
16Lyle McFadden: So.
17
18Marilyn Coulter: [murmuring] [4:12] So when you hired in, w-, when you hired into Fisher
19 Body, can you remember what your first day was like here?
20
21Lyle McFadden: Yes, I do. It was hard for me, but I nee-, w-, I needed a job. I went into
22 Paint Department and I worked there for 10 years.
23
24Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25
26Lyle McFadden: I wor-, and I got – which I did my hard work [inaudible 4:33], but, uh, so
27 then when I, uh, I worked on the line, and I was a relief man. I worked in
28 the Paint Department. Went that. and had some good foremans, 'cause I –
29 bein' from Lansing, some of my foremans were, I went to school with their
30 kids.
31
32Marilyn Coulter: Oh, so you knew.
33
34Lyle McFadden: So we grew up together, so...
35
36Marilyn Coulter: [4:58] So...
37
38Lyle McFadden: ...so they [knew me from that 4:59].
39
40Marilyn Coulter: ...can you tell me what was a wet deck?
41
42Lyle McFadden: S-, it was, uh, s-, where, where they sand the car before they paint it. It, but
43 in water, use water...
44
45Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
46

1Lyle McFadden: ...[and sand it up 5:09]. I don't know if – they called it moist [inaudible
2 5:11], it's not there anymore. I don't think it is.
3

4Marilyn Coulter: [5:16] So now, you came – and I'm gonna back up just a minute, and I just,
5 uh – so you came into Fisher Body. Had you planned to come in here after
6 high school? What made you [throat clearing] come to Fisher Body?
7

8Lyle McFadden: A job.
9

10Marilyn Coulter: Just the job?
11

12Lyle McFadden: Just the job. Ya-, back then, ya, ya, you could get, you could get into any
13 plant, you could get into plants easy if you were, you know, you were the
14 age. I, well, I came outta school young, so I – the first year, I, I did some
15 dishwashing and [throat clearing] pots and pans out to the [Michigan State
16 5:44] but when I went to, when got into the plant, you – it was different.
17 [Speak up 5:52]?
18

19Marilyn Coulter: [recorder clicking] So you worked in the wet deck and you were lucky
20 enough to have a supervisor that ya knew 'cause you went to school...
21

22Lyle McFadden: Uh, most of'm.
23

24Marilyn Coulter: ...with their kids.
25

26Lyle McFadden: Lansing wasn't that big. See, you, Lansing wasn't very big in them days.
27 The rail-, railroad tracks were outside the city.
28

29Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30

31Lyle McFadden: So usually there would be outside the city and people live right out here, you
32 know, s-, and, uh, so I, ya kn-, I knew, ya know, that a lotta of'm knew me
33 from sports, ya know, 'cause I played sports in high school, and so it, it was
34 kind of a section like a community school.
35

36Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
37

38Lyle McFadden: So I – lotta of'm knew me from there, so. And it helps.
39

40Marilyn Coulter: [6:29] And that helped?
41

42Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
43

44Marilyn Coulter: Because they knew you. [6:32] So...
45

46Lyle McFadden: [Yeah 6:32].

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: ...um, what was it like, um – [papers rustling] and what year did you hire in
3 again?
4
5 Lyle McFadden: '56. 1956.
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: In 1956.
8
9 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: [6:41] In 1956, were there many African Americans working...
12
13 Lyle McFadden: No.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: ...in the Plant?
16
17 Lyle McFadden: Not a whole lot of'm. They, they were – it was still, in the '50s, it still was
18 segre-, a certain amount a segregation.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [6:53] So how did that – did any of that affect you in the Plant?
21
22 Lyle McFadden: No. Not...
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25
26 Lyle McFadden: ...not many – it, at, at the time, I was more worried about, worried about
27 workin', and I said that what's I – you know, punchin' in and punchin' out.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: You punched in and you punched out. S-...
30
31 Lyle McFadden: And you worked and you...
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: ...ya know, y-, you, and ya [didn't have to g-, ya didn't, you know 7:14], say
36 you got paid.
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [7:17] So what was it like workin' in the Paint Department? And
39 you did the wet deck? Any other kind of...
40
41 Lyle McFadden: It...
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: ...jobs...
44
45 Lyle McFadden: ...it was...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: ...[workin' 7:21]?
2
3 Lyle McFadden: ...it was, [coughing] it was, uh, s-, kinda scary and it was tough because you
4 knew if you messed up you wouldn't be there.
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8 Lyle McFadden: So you, once ya start, ya got the hang of it, it didn't bother ya.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11
12 Lyle McFadden: You knew you – well, I had my bro-, I had brothers work here, work in the
13 Plant.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
16
17 Lyle McFadden: So.
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: [7:38] How did you learn your job? Did it take you a long time to...
20
21 Lyle McFadden: N-...
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: ...learn it?
24
25 Lyle McFadden: No. Not really. Not really, bein' the s-, I don't know, I – it was, uh – yeah,
26 I was a athlete, so it wasn't, wasn't like I was un-...
27
28 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
29
30 Lyle McFadden: ...uncoordinated. [laughter]
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Ah, I see.
33
34 Lyle McFadden: [laughter] No.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: [7:55] So, um, you were how – you were 18 when you hired in?
37
38 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: [7:58] So were there a l-, well did you hire on the day shift or the night shift
41 or?
42
43 Lyle McFadden: I – they – it was swing shifts then.
44
45 Marilyn Coulter: [8:05] Swing shifts? So how would...
46

1Lyle McFadden: So that's 5...
2
3Marilyn Coulter: ...that work?
4
5Lyle McFadden: ...5 weeks on days and 5 weeks on nights...
6
7Marilyn Coulter: Oh. [8:10] What was that like?
8
9Lyle McFadden: ...and – it was a gettin' used to'm, but it was a job. You don't – you didn't
10 really have a whole lotta say about it, ya know what I mean? Did ya wanna
11 work?
12
13Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
14
15Lyle McFadden: Or ya didn't wanna work. If you wanted to work, you s-, you swung.
16
17Marilyn Coulter: [8:25] So how long did that process of swinging shifts...
18
19Lyle McFadden: At-, I can't remember what year they, what they, what the, what all then, uh,
20 [door squeaking] I think the late '50s they, they vote-, we voted for a s-, uh,
21 a, sen-, ya know, so you s-, [for all the shifts 8:39], so you were – and then I
22 went on to stayin' on nights.
23
24Marilyn Coulter: And then you stayed on nights.
25
26Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
27
28Marilyn Coulter: [8:44] That was your preferred with – why did you like nights?
29
30Lyle McFadden: Because I worked the, for the city in the daytime under Garbage in the
31 summer.
32
33Marilyn Coulter: [8:51] So you kept two jobs?
34
35Lyle McFadden: I kept two jobs most a my life.
36
37Marilyn Coulter: Wow. Two jobs. [8:59] Now, was, w-, was the assembly work that easy that
38 you were able to do two jobs at once or was it just because you were
39 younger and able...
40
41Lyle McFadden: I was...
42
43Marilyn Coulter: ...to...
44
45Lyle McFadden: I was younger.
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
2

3 Lyle McFadden: Because y-, when you're younger, you don't notice that it's – and I guess
4 that is somethin' that you wouldn't do when ya got old, get, when you get
5 older.
6

7 Marilyn Coulter: [9:16] So what types of hours did you work?
8

9 Lyle McFadden: On the Garbage, I got on the truck at 6:00 and I'd be done probably, most of
10 the time it averaged about 10:00, because you had s-, so many – it was
11 garbage cans in them days.
12

13 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
14

15 Lyle McFadden: You had so many cans that you had to pick up, you had to [throat clearing]
16 [go through 9:39], uh, neighborhoods and stuff in, in them days. It was
17 good exercise.
18

19 Marilyn Coulter: [9:43] So how many hours did you work in the Plant at night?
20

21 Lyle McFadden: Oh god, m-, well, you didn't work year-round in them days. You didn't
22 work the whole year. You, you were done in the summer.
23

24 Marilyn Coulter: [9:55] So it didn't work in the summer?
25

26 Lyle McFadden: Y-, the Plant didn't work year-round. I think the first year, uh, they worked
27 year-round was in '59.
28

29 Marilyn Coulter: In '59?
30

31 Lyle McFadden: '59, uh, 'cause I remember Eisenhower was president and we worked, uh,
32 worked through the summer, and it was hot in there. I mean, it's, it – they
33 didn't have air cond-, it was wasn't like it is now. There was...
34

35 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
36

37 Lyle McFadden: ...summertime, it was hot.
38

39 Marilyn Coulter: It was hot...
40

41 Lyle McFadden: The ovens, the ovens were hot too. [And they 10:22]...
42

43 Marilyn Coulter: So the...
44

45 Lyle McFadden: ...su-, they used to kinda like bake the paint on.
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: [10:25] So now are you sayin' like July and August you didn't work, or
2 August...
3
4 Lyle McFadden: Um...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: ...you didn't work...
7
8 Lyle McFadden: ...you didn-...
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: ...or...
11
12 Lyle McFadden: ...you, you were off in the summer, yeah.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: The whole summer.
15
16 Lyle McFadden: And then you went back in September.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: [10:35] Now, was that – what was [throat clearing] the decision a
19 changeover, where they changed [inaudible 10:40]...
20
21 Lyle McFadden: Oh, they have changeover too, yeah. [They – yeah 10:41].
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: [10:41] Oh, so that was in addition to the...
24
25 Lyle McFadden: You, you...
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: ...model change.
28
29 Lyle McFadden: ...yeah, you'd cha-, you had a changeover, but it, like I said, it, it was part of
30 the d-, when there was the downtime.
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Oh, okay.
33
34 Lyle McFadden: But you didn't – uh, like I said, it was – a lotta times you were down in the
35 summer because they, they th-, they'd, they didn't sell cars that much in the
36 summer [or somethin' 10:59].
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
39
40 Lyle McFadden: They, or they had'm [built up 11:00] in a [throat clearing] [inaudible 11:00]
41 and, uh, you know, I had'm built up.
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
44
45 Lyle McFadden: But yeah, a lotta people, a lotta other people had, uh, second jobs for
46 summer jobs; ya know...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: ...summer farmers, summer, ya know – so everybody had somethin' to do in
5 the summer.
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: [11:14] Well, now, how long did you work in Paint?
8
9 Lyle McFadden: Mm, from '56 to si-, to '66.
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: '56 to '66.
12
13 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: [11:23] And did you do all the wet deck the whole time you were there?
16
17 Lyle McFadden: I stayed in Paint over there, yeah. I...
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: In...
20
21 Lyle McFadden: ...I did mostly wet, mostly wet deck, and, uh, um, I most a the time was in
22 the wet deck. S-, some-, sometime I went on Sealer and did, ya know, I'd,
23 I'd, I'd, I was a relief person, so I had to learn a lotta jobs.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: Oh, okay.
26
27 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: [11:48] So, uh, what happened after 1966?
30
31 Lyle McFadden: I went on Security.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: You went on Security?
34
35 Lyle McFadden: Yeah. [coughing]
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: [11:55] So you went on Security for the same – for General Motors?
38
39 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: [12:00] And how was that? Can you explain that? How did that work?
42 How did you happen to go into Security?
43
44 Lyle McFadden: Well, they, they asked, I was asked [sniffing] would I go to – I, I went to
45 one – another thing in there, I went to, um, Plant 2. They had they tore out
46 the Paint Department. I didn't wanna go in the Body Shop, so I went to,

1 [tapping] uh, Plant 2. They let, they had a thing where you could go to Plant
2 2, f-, front end line, and, uh, I went over there and worked 2 years. And
3 then, when I went over there, they, I took, they had me take a foreman's test.
4

5Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
6

7Lyle McFadden: It was mostly just, uh, geometry and little bit a algebra.
8

9Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
10

11Lyle McFadden: And, uh, so when I went back to Fisher Body after 2 years, that was in '61
12 to '62...
13

14Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
15

16Lyle McFadden: ...when I went back to Fisher Body, they were, uh, startin' to integrate, um,
17 salary.
18

19Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20

21Lyle McFadden: So they, the, the, they called m-, they called me and asked me was I inter-,
22 still interested in bein' a foreman. I said no. I, I, uh, didn't, didn't think I'd
23 wanna put awa-, ya know, put away anybody. So, so then, uh, one a –
24 Buckmaster who run-, he's went to school with my bro-, older brothers, and
25 he told me about – he said, "What you oughta think about goin' on
26 Security," he said. Ya know, so, I said, "I don't know." I said, uh, ya know,
27 I didn't really mind...
28

29Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30

31Lyle McFadden: ...and then, and then [throat clearing] he told me that you could make more
32 money.
33

34Marilyn Coulter: You could make more money. [13:38] So...
35

36Lyle McFadden: [Inaudible 13:38]...
37

38Marilyn Coulter: ...now, who was Buckmaster?
39

40Lyle McFadden: Buckmaster was, uh, the #2 man at Fisher Body when it – back then.
41

42Marilyn Coulter: So he was...
43

44Lyle McFadden: He was my, he was my, uh, he was the Superintendent of Paint too.
45

46Marilyn Coulter: He was the Superintendent of Paint?

1
2Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
3
4Marilyn Coulter: But he [clanking]...
5
6Lyle McFadden: Uh...
7
8Marilyn Coulter: ...later become the Assistant...
9
10Lyle McFadden: But he was-...
11
12Marilyn Coulter: ...Plant Manager...
13
14Lyle McFadden: ...but Dick...
15
16Marilyn Coulter: ...also, right?
17
18Lyle McFadden: ...Dick Buckmaster. He was, uh, also a heck of an athlete back in, [sniffing]
19 back...
20
21Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [throat clearing]
22
23Lyle McFadden: ...at Sexton when he was, when, when, uh, he was in school, but he was,
24 he's been retired now. He's, he was old, he was, he was, he's, he was older
25 than I was. I don't remember seein' him play, but I...
26
27Marilyn Coulter: [Mm 14:09].
28
29Lyle McFadden: ...heard about him, you know.
30
31Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
32
33Lyle McFadden: So we talked [up 14:09], so he – I l-, I, ya know, I just said to him, and
34 [inaudible 14:15]...
35
36Marilyn Coulter: [14:15] So he...
37
38Lyle McFadden: ...[inaudible 14:16]...
39
40Marilyn Coulter: ...said it was more than p-, it was more pay.
41
42Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
43
44Marilyn Coulter: So what was – how much more did you get than workin' on the line, y-
45 when you became a Security.
46

1 Lyle McFadden: [Lot of, a lot more 14:24].
2
3 Marilyn Coulter: [14:26] Uh, I mean, like how much were you making an hour, per se, as...
4
5 Lyle McFadden: Uh...
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: ...a line...
8
9 Lyle McFadden: ...it was...
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: ...worker?
12
13 Lyle McFadden: ...you, you worked a lot...
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
16
17 Lyle McFadden: ...on security.
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
20
21 Lyle McFadden: You was workin', y-, you, you were 6 days a week...
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
24
25 Lyle McFadden: ...most a the times. Somet-, and, uh, and, uh, you made more an hour...
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
28
29 Lyle McFadden: ...and, uh, and, uh, then they, they changed it to salary so, so ya got, uh,
30 [stock 14:48] benefits. I mean, it w-, it w-, it was a, it was a great deal. I
31 mean, [laughter] it was a, it was a heck of a deal.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: It was a heck of deal.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: [14:56] And so you went on Security.
38
39 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: [14:59] So how did that, um, go for you, going from being the [co-worker
42 15:03] [throat clearing] to being the Security for the [co-workers 15:06]?
43
44 Lyle McFadden: Great, because I, I always liked, I, I coa-, I mess around coachin' and I
45 started lotta Little League. The – well, you probably drive by the – down
46 Michigan Avenue, if ya look over to the right, when ya – uh, north...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: ...that baseball diamond, um, me, [Sam McGee 15:24] and Ja-, [Javier
5 Cavazos 15:26]...
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
8
9 Lyle McFadden: ...we dug that, we dug that sucker almost by hand, started out by hand, and I
10 got a guy run a bulldozer, and he level, leveled it off and we, we made that
11 park. Now it's the city's park, but we started out makin' that baseball park.
12 We...
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
15
16 Lyle McFadden: ...uh, w-, we had, we had to have a place to play baseball. So that was at
17 that time. But we got it done.
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: So...
20
21 Lyle McFadden: And...
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: ...now...
24
25 Lyle McFadden: ...I had baseball, [sniffing] I had to [throat clearing] have, m-, uh, I worked
26 on that board with, um, with Babe Ruth b-, uh, baseball, uh, instrumental on
27 the board with Pop Warner. So...
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: ...and I, and we used to go by St. Joe Park. It's still, s-, it's still over there.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: And, uh, and because I was at Sexton, uh, we'd get – that was when you
36 could use old stuff, and I'd take old football uniforms I'd get from the
37 coaches and stuff and went out and, and give, you know, so the kids could
38 play foot-, playin' the football.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: [16:27] So you did it for kids in the community.
41
42 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: And so you...
45
46 Lyle McFadden: And I was a scout, I was a scout [inaudible 16:33] for a while. I worked...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: ...at scouts for a while too. That's...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: [16:36] So now Sam McGee who was also a Security [Guard 16:39]...
7
8 Lyle McFadden: Oh yeah.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: ...you, um, sat there and made the ba-, the baseball diamond?
11
12 Lyle McFadden: The – right down here, right down...
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Right down the street...
15
16 Lyle McFadden: ...right that street there...
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: ...down on Michigan.
19
20 Lyle McFadden: ...yeah, across from the fire station.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: [16:48] Now, was that...
23
24 Lyle McFadden; Yeah.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: ...public property?
27
28 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: What was that [then 16:51]?
31
32 Lyle McFadden: That was, uh, that was just, uh, drainage from the golf course, ya know;
33 looked like a swamp down there.
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
36
37 Lyle McFadden: And so we got – they, they, they started dumpin' stuff, dumpin' dirt there...
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
40
41 Lyle McFadden: ...where that big rocks and stuff. So we, uh, they, we, uh, they – uh, Javier
42 Cavazos said we gotta have a place to play games, so [clicking] we just got
43 out there...
44
45 Marilyn Coulter: [And made it 17:13].
46

1Lyle McFadden: ...and he, he told me to show up with a shovel, and then I, I knew a guy who
2 had a bulldozer, and I went and got him and I said, uh, you know, um...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
5
6Lyle McFadden: ...and we had kids out there helpin', and I can't have kids pickin' up big
7 rocks, so I had to – I got this guy to level up, level it off for us...
8
9Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
10
11Lyle McFadden: ...and we had to pick up the rock and, you know, [inaudible 17:32] but we
12 got the park, we got it built.
13
14Marilyn Coulter: So – oh, that's excellent.
15
16Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
17
18Marilyn Coulter: [17:38] Um, so when you became a Security guard...
19
20Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
21
22Marilyn Coulter: ...uh, what were [throat clearing] your responsibilities as a Security Guard?
23 Were you a s-, now, were you a Security Guard in Fisher Body?
24
25Lyle McFadden: Yeah, I was General Motors.
26
27Marilyn Coulter: [17:51] In-...
28
29Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
30
31Marilyn Coulter: ...in-, inside the same facility...
32
33Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
34
35Marilyn Coulter: ...that you worked on the line.
36
37Lyle McFadden: Yeah, I was still there, yeah.
38
39Marilyn Coulter: [17:55] And so now, you're, you're in Fisher Body and you're a...
40
41Lyle McFadden: No...
42
43Marilyn Coulter: ...Security Guard...
44
45Lyle McFadden: ...actually I'm with, uh – I'm down here now, on the corner, o-, eh...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: ...at that time.
2
3 Lyle McFadden: Yeah, at that time...
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: At that time.
6
7 Lyle McFadden: ...yeah. Excuse me.
8
9 Marilyn Coulter: [18:03] So you were, um – so what was the responsibilities of Security
10 Guards?
11
12 Lyle McFadden: Check people in and out, check, ya know, check lunch buckets, um, make
13 sure, ya know, people came in supposed to be there, notify, notify, uh, uh,
14 people, ya know, the foremans or the superintendents if they – I was a
15 dispatcher too, so I had to, had to answer the phone. Yeah, no, it was, it
16 was, it was, it was a good job. And we, w-, go on [AMS 18:34] runs.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: [18:35] So do you have some good memories that you'd like to share with
19 us about being – as your time your time on Security? I'm sure – how long
20 were you a Security Guard?
21
22 Lyle McFadden: Oh, god, I, uh, still am. [laughter]
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Well, [laughter] I know you still are, [laughter] but I'm sure insofar [throat
25 clearing] as in Fisher Body, Plant 6...
26
27 Lyle McFadden: When I left...
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: ...can you remember some stories...
30
31 Lyle McFadden: ...oh, they s-, they s-, they, they sold, uh, General Motors Security in it was
32 '93...
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35
36 Lyle McFadden: ...and, uh, I moved over here in '94, '95, w-...
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: Down at the other [building 19:08].
39
40 Lyle McFadden: ...because, because they were gonna run the city outta there.
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
43
44 Lyle McFadden: Just have one dispatcher.
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

1
2Lyle McFadden: And I had the experience, so they wanted me to...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
5
6Lyle McFadden: ...go over there. And I knew...
7
8Marilyn Coulter: S-...
9
10Lyle McFadden: ...Lansing...
11
12Marilyn Coulter: ...so but before we get over there, let's go back into Fisher Body.
13
14Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
15
16Marilyn Coulter: [19:22] So do you have some suc-, some good stories of being Security at
17 Fisher Body?
18
19Lyle McFadden: Mm, like I say, I, I loved it. I, I love workin' there. I, even doin' Paint. I
20 didn't, I didn't mind.
21
22Marilyn Coulter: [19:33] What w-, what, what was one a your favorite days or one of your
23 most interesting days as a Security Guard at Fisher Body?
24
25Lyle McFadden: Oh god. I'm g-, I, I ain't gonna say payday, but [laughter] [inaudible
26 19:47]...
27
28Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 19:48]. [laughter] [murmuring] [recorder clicking] [19:53] So
29 Mr. McFadden, can you just walk us through some of your times as a
30 Security Guard? You know, um, s-, your good times, your bad times,
31 exciting times, funny times. Just kinda share with us and let us know
32 [sniffing] what it's like bein' a Security Guard.
33
34Lyle McFadden: Well, the, the, the real good parts is that a lot of the kids that played
35 ball for me at Sexton or played for other schools would come in there to, to
36 work, and I'd get on'm about, ya know, get on'm about working and stuff,
37 and tell'm they'd better, they'd better stay straight, ya know, and all that
38 stuff there when they come in, and we'd joke back and forth, and a lotta kids
39 that I knew that played sports came in and worked for General Motors, and,
40 uh, then I said, uh, the, probably the, the, that some of'm went on and be-,
41 become foremans and superintendents, and so I get there and I said [Fred
42 Ford 20:45] played for s-, played for s-, Sexton, him and h-, ya know, his
43 brother. So, uh, then, uh, I said the bad part was probably the worst night
44 was the night that those three guys died in the tank.
45

1 I said I was dispatcher. And I knew'm. I knew [Clay 21:02] when he was
2 goi-, when he was going to college, and, uh, [Tackett 21:06] wrestled my
3 son; he w-, he was from [Elwood LC 21:10], he wrestled my son, so I kinda
4 knew him that way and, uh, and he was quite and athlete, and, uh, [Ward
5 21:20] was – I knew Ward because we, we got to be real good, be good
6 friends. And so I'm, I'm at the desk and, and I, I monitored, I answered the
7 desk area, dispatch area, you answered a phone and you monitor the radios
8 and stuff, and I, and I was sittin' there, and all of a sudden I heard Ward say,
9 call for [Bob Perry 21:42] to come to him. He said, "We're in trouble.
10 We're in the Paint Department." So I yelled for the – "All Security, head
11 for the Paint Department, 2nd Floor." [Inaudible 21:53] and a older guy
12 came down to the desk named [Burgess 21:56], and he said, uh, "What you
13 got?" I said, "I don't know, but take my place."
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
16
17 Lyle McFadden: I said, "Take my place," 'cause I said, "I'll, I'll go up there." So we r-, I ran
18 upstairs-, ran, got [inaudible 22:07] to another guy, and we were headed up –
19 [Ramos 22:10] – we headed up on a-, we head up to Paint. Everything was
20 chaotic. Runnin' around, everybody runnin' around. So [inaudible 22:17],
21 ya know, you're runnin', you're jump off the doggone [inaudible 22:21]. I
22 said, "What's going on?" They said, uh, said, "Down there." So I ran down
23 there and, and got, went to the booth, and, uh, one a the guys yelled at me,
24 "Don't go down there," said, "unless you got a Scott Air-Pak on." I said,
25 "Where's it at?" and he said, "Down there," and I looked down there and it
26 was – the on-, the booth [clearings 22:43] was workin', had been workin',
27 and the fumes had overtaken'm.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: So the g-, so they said, "Go get some more Scott Air-Paks." So we went,
32 went ba-, we, I pulled this one, helped this guy named [Tucker 22:56] up,
33 and helped up and go – he was wet...
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
36
37 Lyle McFadden: ...and, uh, but the thinner was in the tank...
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
40
41 Lyle McFadden: ...in the water, and it was burnin' him. So we put him on the [ambulance
42 23:08]. So then I had to run back, oh, probably, oh, about 40 yards and grab
43 two Scott Air-Pak bot-, things, and they were heavy, and I started runnin'
44 back to the guys and, ya know, ya [swim 23:23] across the ground to get
45 to'm, and so they said, "Take him down to the hospital, and when ya, and
46 when you, uh – by the time that, we'll get, we'll get the other guys out."

1 Well, he had no-, I had no idea who – I should have known, because I’d
2 heard it, but y-, you go blank for a while, because you just, you just know
3 guys in the tank; you didn’t think they were in that kinda trouble.
4

5 So then we went down – so I took him, uh, we took him down to the
6 hospital and [they got down to the 23:52] hospital and had to take his
7 clothes off and the nurse had to wash him down ‘cause the thinner was
8 burnin’. So we, we went back up. Well then, by that time, we turned
9 around and got – we were back upstairs, and by that time, some more
10 security guards had came. So then we had to go down there and pull them
11 guys up. Then we had to work on’m, we had to do our s-, CPR, [thumping]
12 which was, uh, it was – Ward was black. Tackett was a white but he had a
13 lotta hair on him, he was a – and he had black, black curly hair.
14

15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
16

17 Lyle McFadden: Um, Clay had blonde hair.
18

19 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20

21 Lyle McFadden: And we had to pu-, ya know, pull’m up and then take’m with, uh, our su-,
22 but you didn’t realize it until – who it was or anything until you got, you,
23 you would go from one person [thumping] to ano-, rotate one [thumping]
24 one to another.
25

26 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
27

28 Lyle McFadden: Then the, [tapping] the Fire Department come and, and, uh, they put a IV
29 and stuff on the-, when I stood up, [Jones 24:53] turned to me and he said,
30 uh, “Do you know who that is?” and I looked down and these guys are gray.
31 All of’m are gray. The, the, they were, they were, I mean, the paint and
32 lookin’, I mean, they were – and I, you couldn’t tell. I mean, you – and then
33 I recognized when I saw the paramedic and stuff workin’ on’m, I look and I
34 said, “That’s Ward,” I said, and I, I heard that, you know, and, uh, so then,
35 uh, I looked and Perry was, the other foreman was almost gone. He was –
36 and I t-, “Calm down, Bob. Calm down.” I said, “[Inaudible 25:28],” I said,
37 he said, “I don’t know why he went down there in that tank. I don’t know
38 why.”
39

40 I said, “Hey” – and so then I, then we, w-, we had to leave [inaudible 25:39],
41 uh, [John Dean 25:40] who played football like for – we went to junior high
42 together, he was a chief then, and, uh, he, um, and, uh, he, he had came in,
43 and I told’m, I said, “Hot thinner’s in that tank,” and he said, uh, “Don’t say
44 that,” he said, because, you know, Gener-, it could be a lawsuit and all that
45 stuff, so, I – “Let me tell ya somethin’,” I said. “I worked in Paint,” and I
46 said, “That stuff was burnin’ and I, and you, and if you worked with hot

1 thinner and ya turned to talk to somebody, uh, ammonia, it's like, like a, like
2 a, like a, uh, like ammonia's comin' outta your breath...

3

4Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

5

6Lyle McFadden: ...and I, that's how you could tell. So back then, it wasn't Safety, when I
7 worked in, uh, in Paint. So you, if you strip a car...

8

9Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.

10

11Lyle McFadden: ...you would, uh, either tell a person stripped a car 'cause you talk and you
12 look around, look and say god-dog, ya know, you could smell that.

13

14Marilyn Coulter: Oh.

15

16Lyle McFadden: 'Cause it gets in your pores, yeah. It, it, it would get in your pores. And so
17 then, so then, uh, after that, I had to leave and go back to the dispatch...

18

19Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

20

21Lyle McFadden: ...and when I went back to dispatch, I got a call from Clay's wife and, uh, I
22 was writin' my reports, and, um, Clay's wife, and she said, "Lyle," she said,
23 uh, "The – I got a call, I think it was a prank." She said, uh, "My, my," uh –
24 "They say that," uh, "they" – "for me to go to emergency." She was gonna
25 have a baby.

26

27Marilyn Coulter: Oh no.

28

29Lyle McFadden: She had one and she was gonna have another one. And so I told her, I said,
30 "Are you by yourself?" and she said, no-, uh, "Yeah," and I said, I said, uh,
31 "I mean, somebody could go to the hospital with ya," and she said, uh, she
32 said yea-, she said, "Yeah, my in-laws live nextdoor."

33

34Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

35

36Lyle McFadden: I said, "Well, I advise you to, you know, have them go with ya. Have'm go
37 with ya." Well, I didn't know that he was dead. You know, there was – w-,
38 w-, we had IV on him w-, and stuff, it looked like they were breathin', but I,
39 but – and, and, um, so then she said, "Okay." And so she left. Well then, by
40 that time, I'm, I, they, she left and we had, ya know, people were there and,
41 and...

42

43Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

44

45Lyle McFadden: ...go ahead and – s-, so then I went to the – I looked up and here come
46 [Steve Ward 27:56], Bob's brother. He came through the door cryin', and,

1 uh, he had been to the hospital, and he said, "We was supposed to go see my
2 mother tomorrow." He said, "Now I gotta down there and tell her that B-,
3 Bob's dead."
4

5Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
6

7Lyle McFadden: And I – god dang, ya know what I mean? And then I told'm I had, and I had
8 his valuables; you know, his wallet and everything...
9

10Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11

12Lyle McFadden: ...and then I, and then I sit there and he, he was really sh-, he was really
13 goin'. And so then, I mean, it was like one thing after another I guess, and,
14 and then there w-, you know how General Motors is; they came in there,
15 "Did you get in touch with everybody?" Ya know, you have people who
16 didn't call, show up, who were released, you know what I mean? The
17 people, they p-, I, ya know, people who didn't come, and everybody's
18 supposed to come in and ya call'm, and they didn't; they fired'm or they
19 forced'm to retire. Some had a lotta time.
20

21Marilyn Coulter: Yeah.
22

23Lyle McFadden: So then, uh, so then, uh, it lasted for, I, lasted a while 'cause you, you, I'm
24 not supposed to give out information...
25

26Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
27

28Lyle McFadden: ...but I did give out some information that, ya know, that, to, I just told the
29 lady told me it's, uh, ya know, did, did we, did we do, ya know, "I heard
30 that, that, they, uh, let'm die." I said, "That's not true." I said, "I was up
31 there," and I said, "I worked my butt off tryin' to help your s-, help your
32 husband," I said.
33

34Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35

36Lyle McFadden: I said. "and I know," I said, I said, I – "It's just one a them things," I said. I
37 said, "I'm sorry. You know, I knew him." She said, "No, I know. I n-, I
38 believe you did what you could," and I said, "Yup."
39

40Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41

42Lyle McFadden: But, uh, it was, um, it was a bad night.
43

44Marilyn Coulter: [29:37] How did that night affect or change what you had to do as a Security
45 Guard [throat clearing] [in the future 29:45]?
46

1Lyle McFadden: Safety came in. Safety, safety, safety.
2

3Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
4

5Lyle McFadden: Really, I mean, you – they changed a lotta things; they put in some
6 procedures in place that, ya know, that made it a lot safer.
7

8Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
9

10Lyle McFadden: Nobody could go in there by theirself; you always had to have a, you have a,
11 [clicking] a ent-, uh, person who ent-, entered the confined space...
12

13Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
14

15Lyle McFadden: ...then you have a attendant to watch it, then you have to have a supervisor
16 there. So you had, so he could g-, it, it's so you can get people out, ya
17 know, and then they start bringin' in, uh, companies that would suck the, the
18 fluid out.
19

20Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
21

22Lyle McFadden: See, the, the, the fluid, they said the fluid was, when I looked down there, it
23 was gray, but it was I don't know how many feet of, y-, it's...
24

25Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
26

27Lyle McFadden: ...ya know, it was...
28

29Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30

31Lyle McFadden: ...[inaudible 30:31] there was some water still in the tank, stuff still in the
32 tank, they used to take out like 5-gallon pails...
33

34Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35

36Lyle McFadden: ...but now they suck all that out, ya know, they suck, they sucked all that
37 out.
38

39Marilyn Coulter: So people don't have to...
40

41Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
42

43Marilyn Coulter: ...go down there.
44

45Lyle McFadden: So they [didn't have to 30:40] – but the fumes, I guess, was the fumes and
46 stuff would come, it would come, came up and it overtook the guys.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: But it was, um, it was, um, it was, uh – they were young guys, ya know;
5 they were a lot younger than I was, so that kinda really got me.
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: [30:57] Was that the only fatality that you had to deal with in the plant?
8
9 Lyle McFadden: Uh, we had – no, I had some – you have some heart attacks, ya know, old-,
10 in the morning, older, older guys would, would come in the morning and
11 after eatin’ a big breakfast, and they, they, they used to have a lot more heart
12 attacks in from around 8, 8, 9, they would, they’d come to work and they
13 would, uh, they would die, they died. [Inaudible 31:25] on the weekend.
14 On Mondays, there’d be – it’d be the big day.
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: [31:31] So Mondays was a big heart attack day?
17
18 Lyle McFadden: [throat clearing] Yeah.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: [31:34] Mondays and in the morning were heart attack times.
21
22 Lyle McFadden: Yeah. ‘Cause the mornings was – most people, older people worked days.
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
25
26 Lyle McFadden: So it was, uh, it was, uh, but it was, uh, it was just one a, it was...
27
28 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
29
30 Lyle McFadden: ...it was different.
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah. [laughter]
33
34 Lyle McFadden: Well, it wasn’t, it wasn’t...
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: [Uh-huh 31:52].
37
38 Lyle McFadden: ...it wasn’t like every day...
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, but...
41
42 Lyle McFadden: ...I mean, you know, but it...
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: ...did...
45
46 Lyle McFadden: ...it was, but you remember.

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: But it's part of your job...
3
4 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: ...that you have to – that's...
7
8 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: ...and that's a hard part of it.
11
12 Lyle McFadden: Yeah, and the funny, funny thing is that, probably the funniest part is that y-,
13 you, on, on Fridays...
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
16
17 Lyle McFadden: ...or Saturdays you'd, you, you escorted drunks out, and that was kinda
18 funny.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: [32:13] And that was funny?
21
22 Lyle McFadden: Yeah. [laughter]
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: What made that funny? Just because [throat clearing] [inaudible 32:16]?
25
26 Lyle McFadden: Because the – uh, these guys, uh, they, they act like they couldn't, they
27 couldn't, uh, they couldn't wait, they couldn't wait, you know, the, you
28 know, the, to, if, if, they, "This was, but this was Saturday, so I had a few
29 drinks,"...
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
32
33 Lyle McFadden: ...ya know, but "Ya had more than a few drinks, buddy," you know.
34 [laughter] You, you, you, you know, then you have to, ya know, oh, uh, I
35 had'm where they'd have people throw up on the floor and you try to
36 keep'm – "Stay still now, stay s-, stay still, don't, don't move, don't move,
37 'cause ya move, you're gonna throw up," and I'm tryin' to throw a can over
38 the garbage, or the wastebaskets over there. "Now make sure you throw up
39 in there." [vomiting sound] All over the floor. Oh god. [laughter] Uh, aw,
40 no. Th-, then, then we, back then, we used to have to escort, ya know, we'd
41 give'm a ride home sometimes.
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
44
45 Lyle McFadden: Ya know, then they stopped that, they started they had to take a cab...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
2
3 Lyle McFadden: ...which was better because guys would, would, they'd jump outta the car.
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: They'd jump out the car?
6
7 Lyle McFadden: Yeah. [laughter] They'd, they'd jump out the car. I mean, you stopped,
8 they'd jump out the car. You, nothin' you could do, [wasn't really 33:23]...
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11
12 Lyle McFadden: ...a whole lot you could do.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
15
16 Lyle McFadden: But, um, no, it was, uh, well, it was, it was, it was interesting, though.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: [33:32] Um, did you ever have to deal with altercations?
19
20 Lyle McFadden: Oh yeah, there's – fights? Oh yeah. Yeah, you'd, there was, there, they'd
21 have fights. But you, like I said, most a the time, they, you'd just raise your
22 voice and, "Okay, break it up." Just like that, ya know. "What you doin'?"
23 You guys gonna get fired." [grumbling] That kinda attitude.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: [33:55] And they would stop.
26
27 Lyle McFadden: They usually stopped.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: Most of'm kinda glad that – most guys, just like in school, they, and, uh, in
32 school they, they, they always wanna say they wanna fight but most of'm
33 don't wanna fight. I go-, I, at, at school, I, kids say, "I'm gonna kick that
34 guy's ass." "Go, go, go ahead, go ahead." [laughter] "Naw, naw." [laughter]
35 "No, okay. Okay." 'Cause you don't know him. He could, he could, he
36 could kick your butt, so you'd better...
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
39
40 Lyle McFadden: ...you'd better keep your mouth shut. Ya know, it's, it can go both ways.
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [34:26] So, um, what was there – what would you say would be the
43 most rewarding time?
44
45 Lyle McFadden: Probably, uh, when I got older, retirement.
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Retirement?
2

3 Lyle McFadden: Yeah, or, or, or going to the mall and runnin' into some a the guys that I, I
4 worked with and then meeting their families...
5

6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7

8 Lyle McFadden: ...and stuff like that there, and that's kinda nice. That, that's kinda, that's
9 kind of a nice thing. Or now I'm reti-, am old, and I go, I go to Grand
10 Ledge or some places and some a the guys who are retired...
11

12 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
13

14 Lyle McFadden: ...will come up to the fence at the football game and call me and I go over to
15 the fence and shake their hands and I haven't seen'm in 10, 15 years...
16

17 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
18

19 Lyle McFadden: ...and, uh, that's kinda nice.
20

21 Marilyn Coulter: [35:13] So being part of the salary and things like that, did you look at your,
22 um, co-workers kinda like your family...
23

24 Lyle McFadden: Oh definitely.
25

26 Marilyn Coulter: ...[at work 35:22]?
27

28 Lyle McFadden: Definitely. I st-, we still, we still meet and sometimes have breakfast.
29 When I was in the hospital, I had a bunch of'm come up there, came up to
30 the, came up to the hospital, uh, last year and they see how I was doin', and
31 I, and I, that was kinda nice. They, the nurse told me, said, "You d-, you
32 have so many people come up here, I can't believe it," said that, "but ya
33 know, the – you got, you gotta limit people, ya know, that can come up,"...
34

35 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
36

37 Lyle McFadden: ...and I said, "Well, I didn't know I was gonna come up here and I didn't, so
38 I didn't really [laughter] have, have time, I didn't have time to really
39 notify'm that I wasn't gonna be" – and what I, they, I said, so I said, uh, so,
40 they s-, she said, said "Okay," so, she said, "I'm gonna help you out," 'cause
41 she went to school with my son, and she'd...
42

43 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
44

45 Lyle McFadden: ..."I'm gonna help gonna help you out." All right, I thought okay. So I
46 says, eh, so she said, "You can only have so many people," you know, so...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: ...she said, "You gotta get well," [somethin' like that 36:16].
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: [36:16] So um... [papers rustling]
7
8 Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid. Mr. McFadden, you've mentioned that you, um, when
9 you were at the guard checks that you would, uh, check lunchboxes.
10
11 Lyle McFadden: Yes.
12
13 Cheryl McQuaid: [36:29] What did you check lunchboxes for and what were some a the other
14 things that you were checking for?
15
16 Lyle McFadden: Uh, you'd ma-, you'd check, uh, the badges when they're comin' in. You
17 check, uh, badges and what they were bringin' in the Plant. Uh, they can't
18 bring alcohol or [not gonna 36:45] – but, um, when they went out, you had
19 to check in, uh, uh, lunch buckets to make sure that they didn't take out any
20 General Motors products; you know, any things that belonged to General
21 Motors, like tools or somethin' like that there. And uh, lotta areas they
22 have, they had little s-, little tools that, uh, people could use at home, and
23 they'd have'm in y-, lunch bucket, ya know, then.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: [37:07] Did ya find that very often?
26
27 Lyle McFadden: Sometimes ya did, but you – most a the time, lotta guys, they, they had a
28 tool that their favorite tool, and they didn't trust leavin' it there, and they
29 took it home and they brought it back. But yeah, ya couldn't, ya can't do
30 that. Ya couldn't do it. Just Black & Decker, it was little screwdrivers and
31 stuff like that.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: S-...
34
35 Lyle McFadden: But, uh, but it would be, you know, you could tell when a person was
36 intendin' to do it and if a person was just [inaudible 37:34].
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: [37:34] So being a Security Guard, were there things that made you – what
39 types of things would make you check a person a little bit more closer than
40 another?
41
42 Lyle McFadden: Well, most a the time you, you could tell. I mean, most a the time you
43 could, when a person s-, start hesitatin' before he gets to ya, ya know, before
44 he, before he, uh, got to ya, and then he, uh, and then when he, uh, he turned
45 one, ya know, turned sideways or somethin', tryin' to – you go, you know,

1 you ask him to step in the Gate House, because he – they, they, they look a
2 little – they act like there’s somethin’ goin’ on.
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: [38:08] What’s the largest thing you ever caught somebody tryin’ to leave
5 the building with? [throat clearing]
6
7 Lyle McFadden: A, a si-, um, quarter panel, about – he had it on the side of – it was probably
8 about, about that big, a piece of it, and I saw that he had a varsity jacket on,
9 and I said, I looked at him and I said, I said, “Come here,” and he t-, he – I’ll
10 never forget that, he [came 38:29] and he said “I never did that before, I
11 never st-, [laughter] I’ve never took nothin’ before,” and I said, [laughter] I
12 said, “[Inaudible 38:40], I said, “What, what” – I mean like, I mean it was
13 stickin’ out. It was [laughter] stickin’ out the back, and I – oh, it was a, that
14 was [a thing 38:47], that was another thing. But, uh, I think that one day I
15 come to, ca-, went to work, I – when I was a dispatcher, and a guy was, uh,
16 he was havin’ some problems, and, uh, lady tol-, the dispatcher I relieved
17 told me, said “This guy got f-, some time off,” got some time off, and he had
18 never, he’s a older guy...
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
21
22 Lyle McFadden: ...and he had never got time off. He never had no time off...
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25
26 Lyle McFadden: ...and he said, uh, the guy said he’s gonna come – he’s goin’ home, he’s
27 gonna get a gun, and he’s comin’ back. So, somethin’ tells me this ain’t
28 right, and so I call the place [background conversation] and I told’m, and I
29 l-, we had a address book too and I t-, I had his...
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33 Lyle McFadden: ...name, so I told the police, and I said maybe it’s just a prank. They caught
34 him on the corner of Martin Luther King and Mt. Hope...
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37
38 Lyle McFadden: ...and he was packin’.
39
40 Cheryl McQuaid: [God 39:46].
41
42 Lyle McFadden: And I said, you know, this, this isn’t a big joke no more, you know? I mean,
43 this is, this is get-, this job is gettin’ a little dangerous, ya know. And then
44 the, the, like I said, th-, then years of the riots it was different. You know,
45 could see people sometimes [coughing] [dro-, dro- 40:03], drove by and
46 threw wood and threw bricks. Yeah, we, we had to make patrols and we’d

1 go up and, and ya, ya, they threw rocks through the window, somebody'd
2 throw rocks [through the window 40:14], ya know, [inaudible 40:15].
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: [40:16] They'd throw rocks in the windows?
5
6 Lyle McFadden: They threw – yeah, they drove by and threw rocks at us, at, uh, Fisher.
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
9
10 Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid. [40:23] Is that one a the reasons that they blocked up the
11 windows?
12
13 Lyle McFadden: No, the, the, the guys were, uh, the guys were whistlin' at the school kids,
14 the girls, and...
15
16 Cheryl McQuaid: [40:35] The auto workers?
17
18 Lyle McFadden: The auto workers did. And so, they, uh, they – and then they'd have girls
19 come up to the windows, give'm, bring'm somethin', like lunch or a bottle a
20 beer, or, and hand it to the – it used to be you could, you could go right out
21 to it, go – they could j-, go sneak through there and go to Harry's.
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
24
25 Lyle McFadden: It was a lotta, it was, uh – and it cut down on the heat too, 'cause it was, uh,
26 they, they blocked it up, but th-, then you could just [inaudible 41:04] out...
27
28 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
29
30 Lyle McFadden: ...back in them days. [laughter]
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: So I know that, um, on – Fisher Body had Verlinden Elementary on one side
33 and Sexton High School on the other.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: [41:18] Now, there were some things that the Security – you guys helped to
38 – when did they start helping the kids cross at Verlinden? When did that
39 start?
40
41 Lyle McFadden: Oh, that was, that was before, uh – I, I, I, uh, when I went on in '66, they
42 were helpin' kids on the, on down there, crossing guard down there, uh,
43 because it, that was a bad corner, and now they got a crossing guard down
44 there [throat clearing] [on that corner 41:42] you'd s-, people used to fly
45 outta that, outta the parkin' lot...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
2
3 Lyle McFadden: ...run into the back of each other. They'd, uh, [inaudible 41:49] I mean, they
4 would, I mean, they wouldn't, and, and you know, in this kinda weather...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8 Lyle McFadden: ...they wouldn't clean their, the windows would be kinda, they're waitin' for
9 the windows to clear up, and they would, they would run in the back of a car
10 in front of'm and everything.
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Mm. [42:03] So you guys...
13
14 Lyle McFadden: And you had to...
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: ...helped kids cross.
17
18 Lyle McFadden: ...you had to go out there and, uh, wear a thing to slow down the, slow'm
19 down.
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
22
23 Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid. [42:13] When the Plant, after the Plant had closed down,
24 we, um, [coughing] were kinda scavenging...
25
26 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
27
28 Cheryl McQuaid: ...to, to try to find memorabilia...
29
30 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
31
32 Cheryl McQuaid: ...for the history team and [coughing] I went down into, I believe they called
33 it The Vault years [coughing] ago...
34
35 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
36
37 Cheryl McQuaid: ...and it was right across from the [coughing]...
38
39 Lyle McFadden: Security.
40
41 Cheryl McQuaid: ...Security desk back into a basement [sniffing] area...
42
43 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
44
45 Cheryl McQuaid: ...and there was closets there, it looked like Plant Security closets...
46

1Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
2

3Cheryl McQuaid: ...when we had our own Plant Security, and I could see the names of
4 different...
5

6Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
7

8Cheryl McQuaid: ...Plant Security Officers, and we found a stop sign down there...
9

10Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
11

12Cheryl McQuaid: ...that looked like maybe it had been made in the Plant.
13

14Lyle McFadden: Uh-huh.
15

16Cheryl McQuaid: Was that – do you...
17

18Lyle McFadden: That's what you use...
19

20Cheryl McQuaid: ...know what I'm talkin' about?
21

22Lyle McFadden: Y-, yeah. That what we used down there, and we used to leave or clo-, the,
23 we had a drycleaners come in and do the cleanin', and we used to leave our
24 s-, winter clothes and s-, in, in there, and, and then when winter, we left our
25 summer clothes in there. We, and, uh, we had free drycleaning service, and,
26 uh, and that's what where we stored, where we stored everything.
27

28Cheryl McQuaid: [43:18] So you remember that stop...
29

30Lyle McFadden: Oh...
31

32Cheryl McQuaid: ...sign?
33

34Lyle McFadden: ...oh yeah.
35

36Cheryl McQuaid: [43:20] Who made the stop sign? Do you know?
37

38Lyle McFadden: Uh, probably [Bob Sonner 43:23].
39

40Cheryl McQuaid: [43:24] And who's he?
41

42Lyle McFadden: He's dead now, but I said he was a, he used to do a lotta things for us. He
43 worked in, uh, he was a millwright, and he worked for, [coughing] he
44 worked for General Motors, [coughing] for Fisher Body. He did a lotta
45 things like that.
46

1 Cheryl McQuaid: [43:38] So and that was to help – he did that, he made that sign to help Plant
2 Security do their job and...
3
4 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
5
6 Cheryl McQuaid: ...go out and cross the children...
7
8 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
9
10 Cheryl McQuaid: ...and make sure that the, the...
11
12 Lyle McFadden: [Yeah 43:45].
13
14 Cheryl McQuaid: ...neighborhood children were safe.
15
16 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
17
18 Cheryl McQuaid: Excellent.
19
20 Lyle McFadden: You probably remember him as, uh, the, the bunny and, uh, he have
21 charities he would, uh, he would dress up...
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
24
25 Lyle McFadden: ...in a San-, Santa Claus outfit and all that stuff [just for children 43:57]...
26
27 Cheryl McQuaid: Oh, that's cool.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: ...[about summer 43:59], from he lived in Grand Ledge.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Now, [throat clearing] I know that, um, sometimes – Marilyn Coulter –
34 sometimes you, um, the Security Guards have to come up and open
35 employees' lockers.
36
37 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: [44:17] Um, when you did that, sometimes did somebody forgot their lock
40 or they just needed to get into somebody's...
41
42 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: ...locker, what was the most interesting thing you found or stumbled upon
45 opening a locker?
46

1 Lyle McFadden: One day, I opened up a locker in the Building 7 Locker Room, and on my
2 way out, and on my way out, uh, I looked up on the small lockers, and it was
3 full a money.
4

5 Marilyn Coulter: Full a money? [throat clearing]
6

7 Lyle McFadden: And I, uh, called up my boss, and he came up there. We locked the do-,
8 locked it back up, but he, well, we locked it back up, but I, I w-, I was
9 lookin' for somebody to say that somebody went and, uh, ya know, took
10 some money outta there, but nobody ever reported, uh, any money missin'.
11 It w-, ya know, I thought, ya know, that – but I just couldn't – it was loose.
12 That's – I never – but it was small bills, 5 and \$1 bills and – but it was stuck
13 in there, and, and ya look up there, and it, it, it popped open.
14

15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
16

17 Lyle McFadden: And I thought, yeah, and ya know, I thought it was as setup, you know; I'm
18 lookin' around, and somebody gonna see if I'm gonna steal this, take this
19 money [laughter] so, so I...
20

21 Cheryl McQuaid: Candid Camera was hot then.
22

23 Lyle McFadden: ...so I, so I looked around and I [inaudible 45:45], but it's, that's – and then
24 I, then I, one day, I, I, a, a, a, millwright went and, um, a guy, well, a
25 Sanitation guy found a w-, a w-, a wallet, and, uh, and he had 700, the guy
26 had \$700 in it, and, uh, it was like, hmm. I called him up about, I see his
27 address and stuff in there, I call him up about 2 in the morning, and he had
28 told me he lost his wallet. So I say, "Hey," ya know, "I found, we found
29 your wallet," and he said, "[Oh did ya, man? Okay 46:18]." I said, "Yeah."
30 He said, "Oh," guy says, "Sometime tomorrow I'll get in there and get it."
31 [laughter] I was lookin' at, at, ya know, I'm sayin, you know, most people
32 gonna say, ya know, they go, "Wow," ya know what I mean? He acted like
33 it was no big deal.
34

35 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
36

37 Lyle McFadden: He, he acted like it's no big deal, and then I, I've seen, I had a homeless, a
38 guy who was, who was, uh, pickin' up bottles...
39

40 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41

42 Lyle McFadden: ...one day, and he went, and he brought in \$200, uh, somebody dropped it
43 from, comin' from, um, Harry's...
44

45 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
46

1Lyle McFadden: ...and I took it and I put it in the lost-and-found.
2

3Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
4

5Lyle McFadden: I told him, I said, uh, "You know, after 30 days, you can come in and claim
6 that." We had to find that guy, catch him out there, and bring him down
7 there to get the money.
8

9Marilyn Coulter: Really?
10

11Lyle McFadden: And he was, and this guy was, I mean, ya know, he, ya know, and I was like
12 this, and, and he come in there, he said, "But it's not mine." I said, "Well,"
13 I said, "ya know, you, uh, you, uh, the period of time had went by. You,
14 you"...

15

16Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
17

18Lyle McFadden: ..."it's, now it's, y-, you can have it." Because there wasn't no wallet or
19 nothin' just only money.
20

21Marilyn Coulter: [47:21] Now, speaking of homeless people, I know it sometimes they used
22 to say that people lived inside the Plant, or the people who maybe who
23 didn't necessarily need to be inside were [then 47:30]. Did you ever run
24 into any people like that?
25

26Lyle McFadden: They, there wasn't that many. There was guys who stayed there, guys who
27 – there was uh, uh, uh, they had a guy who was a Worl-, World War II guy...
28

29Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
30

31Lyle McFadden: ...who lived on the roof, and, um, he, uh, and he lived, and he stayed in one
32 a the heater houses, and, uh, he would, he would sneak in the railroad gates
33 and go out that way, and they, they, people saw him, and kept, and they kept
34 reportin' him, but we c-, we thought it was a [inaudible 48:01] or somethin'
35 'cause they said he was dirty. So then they, they, they went and, uh, he
36 came down and s-, stole somebody's lunch, and they saw him and they
37 called us, and we got him, and he, and they, we took him outside and he was
38 staggerin', he was really bad, and he was older, it was really bad, and we –
39 the police came and got him, and...
40

41Marilyn Coulter: [Oh 48:22].
42

43Lyle McFadden: ...but he, [I believe he was 48:23] a war hero. He was, but he just had a
44 breakdown. But, uh, we had guys who went through divorces who, who
45 lived in, who, who, uh, wouldn't, wouldn't live in there, but they would stay

1 in there like if, if they had problems at home, they would stay and they w-,
2 they'll go in the...
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
5
6 Lyle McFadden: ...in the locker rooms and lay, and lay on the, lay on the benches there and
7 stay. They could stay on the, they could make sure everything, get on the
8 cushions and stuff, but they'd lay there and, and you'd, and you knew they
9 were there, but they, they couldn't live there, ya know, y-, they couldn't stay
10 there.
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Had to go home.
13
14 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: [48:59] So you've been through a lot of transitions.
17
18 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: [throat clearing] Kinda changin' boats [throat clearing] here. You went
21 from being a line worker...
22
23 Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: ...and then you became Security...
26
27 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: ...and GM was, GM Security's salary...
30
31 Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: ...but it didn't change hands to Pinkerton and to Securitas.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Can you tell us about that transition, how that was for you from going from
38 GM Security to Pinkerton and Security? Was that a big switch on how you
39 did things? How was that going from one company to another?
40
41 Lyle McFadden: It didn't change a whole lot what ya, how ya did things, but it was a lot
42 different the money. General Motors paid a lot more money.
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
45
46 Lyle McFadden: And it was, it was, it, it, I felt I was blessed, so...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: ...I didn't, it d-, I, ya know, it didn't [bother me 49:45]. I – 'cause when
5 you, I went to General Motors, I st-, you started out real ch-, real low
6 salary...
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
9
10 Lyle McFadden: ...and it built up...
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
13
14 Lyle McFadden: ...and got enormous in the '70s...
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
17
18 Lyle McFadden: ...ya know? But, uh, you, uh, you, you, you got used to it.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
21
22 Lyle McFadden: Ya know? You d-, you, you, you n-, I, uh, the ups and downs, you know,
23 you know that there's gonna be down times and there...
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
26
27 Lyle McFadden: ...like when the, when the plant went down or somethin' like that there when
28 ya, when ya, when they, if ya went, when we went on strike, the str-...
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
31
32 Lyle McFadden: ...the strike pay was, uh, \$6 a week.
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35
36 Lyle McFadden: So you didn't wanna go on strike too much. Unemployment was – the first
37 time I went unemployment I think it was 20-somethin' dollars a week. Then
38 it went up to \$30.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41
42 Lyle McFadden: So, it wasn't a – you didn't wanna, you didn't want the Plant to go down.
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
45
46 Lyle McFadden: Ya know, [inaudible 50:40].

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: [50:43] Uh, speaking of strikes, how was that – how did that affect your job
3 when the UAW went on strike and when you – and as a...
4
5 Lyle McFadden: N-, n-...
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: ...Security Guard?
8
9 Lyle McFadden: ...n-, not – me it didn't, it, it, I, I, uh, they had, uh, better s-, s-, uh, strike
10 benefits when I was, when, when...
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
13
14 Lyle McFadden: ...when they were, when, when, when I – after I went out, uh...
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: Uh, no, I meant as a Security Guard.
17
18 Lyle McFadden: That what I meant, I said it was, so you didn't have the animosity, you
19 know, people were pissed off...
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
22
23 Lyle McFadden: ...ya know. I mean, now, person get laid off, they're not mad, you know.
24 Back when...
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
27
28 Lyle McFadden: ...I was workin' and you got laid off, I mean, you're gonna, your, your
29 money got...
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33 Lyle McFadden: ...[sayin' 51:21], ya know...
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
36
37 Lyle McFadden: ...and I said, but, uh, now, I said then I'd stop and talk to'm, you know, talk
38 to the guys and, ya know, we'd – and...
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41
42 Lyle McFadden: ...I knew most of'm, a lot of'm.
43
44 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
45

1 Lyle McFadden: [Inaudible 51:31] so, it was, uh, but you didn't get any, you know, no, no –
2 well, you got a – I, I think I only had like five, four or five bomb threats in
3 my life. And I said that that's, that's a different experience.
4

5 Marilyn Coulter: [51:47] They call into and threat to the Plant?
6

7 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
8

9 Marilyn Coulter: Oh. Wow.
10

11 Lyle McFadden: Oh, yeah, uh – you didn't know that?
12

13 Marilyn Coulter: Well, I knew we had'm.
14

15 Lyle McFadden: Oh yeah.
16

17 Marilyn Coulter: I knew we had evacuations and...
18

19 Lyle McFadden: No, they had, they, they didn't evacuate when [inaudible 52:00] when I, the
20 first I went on there, and, and they, they just kept, they, they, you know what
21 I mean, they, you know, like "Aw, he's just bullshittin'." I mean, that's
22 kinda [inaudible 52:11], but when, when they, when people start gettin' a
23 little crazier, then they start, they start really, ya know, we, we, we evacuate
24 this plant. I don't think – I think Fisher Body only been evacuated about
25 two times, hasn't it? [Not very many times 52:28]. [throat clearing] Got a
26 guy who called me up and told me he was gonna – then they, we got a
27 [recorder clicking] form you have to, ya know, uh, [tapping] it's fu-, kind of
28 a funny form because it says, uh – you're supposed to, you know, you try to
29 keep'm on the phone, talk to'm. I'd [bullstuff'm 52:44], you know, I...
30

31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32

33 Lyle McFadden: ...but then they ask you what color the guy is, ya know, what nationality he
34 is [laughter] and [all that stuff there 52:50]. Well, you know, they had a
35 accent or somethin' like that there, but you, you, but you, you're sittin' up
36 there talkin' to the guy while a, uh, a guy called and, and he had told me
37 he's gonna blow up the plant. He said he, that he, he used to work there.
38

39 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
40

41 Lyle McFadden: So I'm talkin' to'm and I said, uh, he says, "Well, do you know where the
42 bomb is?" and he said, "What you tryin' to do, catch me?" I said, "No," I
43 said, "because I got," I told him, I said, you know, I said, "I coach at Sexton
44 and I got a game this weekend. I'd hate to get blown up." [laughter] He
45 said, "Oh, it's at the north end," he said, "It's out," he says, "it's by the, it's
46 b-, it's out by the, by the par-, the [Park Map 53:28], towards Saginaw. I

1 said, "Oh, you mean toward Saginaw, huh?" I'm just talkin' to him and
2 we're, we just, you know, and gettin' it on, uh...

3

4Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

5

6Lyle McFadden: ...a tape. I said, uh, I said, "Yeah, [anything 53:38]," and I said, yeah, and
7 then I said, "You didn't go to, you didn't go to Sexton, did ya?" He said,
8 "No, I'm not from around here," and I go, "Oh, because I just, I just want to
9 know," I said, you know how it goes, I said, I, I, I said kids would be
10 disappointed if I didn't show up, uh, [probably 53:53] [laughter], oh, ya
11 know, oh, ya know? It was kind, it was, it was kinda, it was kinda funny,
12 but it w-, [laughter] it wasn't funny because I – and then, so I told, uh,
13 [sighing] the, the boss to go down, and [Martin 54:03] was a Plant Mana-
14 Assistant Plant Manager then, and he said, "What do you think we should
15 do?" I said, "If you had said it was down this" – if he had said it was down
16 in this area here, I'd say "Evacuate this sucka now." [laughter] I said, I said,
17 I said, "Cryin' out loud, if it's, if it's this close, I wanna get outta here."
18

19Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.

20

21Lyle McFadden: But no, it was a, that was kinda funny, but it wasn't – we didn't, we didn't,
22 we – and we, then we used to go look for'm; we'd look for bomb, which
23 was I think a little different now, we bring in people.

24

25Marilyn Coulter: Now you bring people in.

26

27Lyle McFadden: Yeah. You go look in the wastebaskets and stuff and it's kinda st-, that was
28 kinda dumb, I mean, 'cause if it was...

29

30Marilyn Coulter: Mm.

31

32Lyle McFadden: ...a bomb, ya know, y-, you're g-, you gonna die. [laughter]

33

34Marilyn Coulter: [54:46] So I know that, um, you've done a lot for employees. Now, you
35 said you also, um, coach at the schools?

36

37Lyle McFadden: Yeah, at Sexton.

38

39Marilyn Coulter: [54:55] And you still coach there?

40

41Lyle McFadden: Yup. I got into the Hall of Fame this past, past year.

42

43Marilyn Coulter: Oh congratulations.

44

45Cheryl McQuaid: Yay. [clapping]

46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Yay.
2
3 Lyle McFadden: That was kinda...
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: Excellent.
6
7 Lyle McFadden: ...[inaudible 55:05], I had, I had, uh, I started, uh, [Magic 55:10] and [J
8 Events 55:10] and I, I had quite a few of the big things.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: [55:15] So um, you played, uh, the Pee wee Leagues and the...
11
12 Lyle McFadden: I, I, I still work with Pee wee, but s-, go most of the time at Sexton.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: At Sexton.
15
16 Lyle McFadden: Yeah, 'cause I...
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: And...
19
20 Lyle McFadden: ...back when I was y-, when I was younger, I, I could do both, both of'm.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: [55:30] So you, um, you, um, set there and, um, you coached there, and so,
23 in total, about how many years would you say you've been t-, coachin'?'
24
25 Lyle McFadden: Mm, probably 30.
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: For 30 years.
28
29 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: So actually for 30 years you've had not one job, not two jobs, but three jobs.
32
33 Lyle McFadden: Well, that, [laughter] yeah, that – I don't call coaching a real job, you know.
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: That's a pleasure.
36
37 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: Um...
40
41 Cheryl McQuaid: [56:01] Mr. McFadden – Cheryl McQuaid – um, I always heard, and I'm,
42 I'm hopin' that you...
43
44 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
45

1 Cheryl McQuaid: ...can tell me whether or not there's any truth to this, but I've always heard
2 that the houses around the Sexton and Fisher Body area were built for Fisher
3 Body executives. Do you know anything about that or?
4

5 Lyle McFadden: No, I, I, I don't remember that. Now, like, um, oh, my brother graduated
6 from Sexton in '46...
7

8 Cheryl McQuaid: Mm-hm.
9

10 Lyle McFadden: ...my oldest brother, and, uh, there wasn't that many hou-, there was over
11 here [papers rustling] by the park and everything, there were woods. I
12 [papers rustling] remember comin' here and there were woods over there.
13 They wouldn't build, it wasn't built up in there. But, uh, a lot of your, lotta
14 your big wheels, uh, lived on, on, on, around Everett Drive in there, them
15 houses in there, they were, but, uh, they – I don't know if they were General
16 Motors executives or not because – and back then, I know, I said, I said, uh,
17 I said I don't – I don't remember ex-, the exact [inaudible 57:08] some pe-,
18 lotta people from – uh, like foremans and stuff lived in there, and um,
19 people worked in the office, 'cause they could walk to work.
20

21 But, uh, uh, I remember a lotta doctors that had houses on, that, that, 'cause
22 I went to school with their kids and stuff, but, uh, uh, it was, um, I, um, them
23 houses been there a long time, so that was – I remember bein' – I was in j-,
24 uh, grade school w-, I w-, I went to Willow, but we used to come to Sexton
25 and, uh, on Saturday, 'cause, uh, the coaches would open up the gym and let
26 ya play, ya know, play basketball and stuff, and I remember going through
27 there and all the – there wasn't very m-, all, the houses weren't that close
28 together. They'd have a lotta lots and stuff. And then all of a sudden they
29 start fillin in them lots.
30

31 Cheryl McQuaid: [57:59] Another thing that I've heard about...
32

33 Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
34

35 Cheryl McQuaid: ...Fisher Body is that there are tunnels all under there. I've heard that
36 there's a tunnel that goes to Harry's, there's a tunnel that goes...
37

38 Lyle McFadden: No.
39

40 Cheryl McQuaid: ...downtown.
41

42 Lyle McFadden: No.
43

44 Cheryl McQuaid: Are there any tunnels under there, and if there are, where do they go?
45

46 Lyle McFadden: They, they're the, the, the steam tunnels.

1
2 Cheryl McQuaid: Oh, steam tunnels?
3
4 Lyle McFadden: Yeah, that's what you see the, when ya, when ya see all that steam comin'
5 outta the ground. They run from, they run from, uh, [clanking] Building 13
6 to the powerhouse...
7
8 Cheryl McQuaid: [58:30] Building 13 bein' 3X? Is that...
9
10 Lyle McFadden: It would be...
11
12 Cheryl McQuaid: ...Building 13?
13
14 Lyle McFadden: ...it would be, used to be there were 15 and, uh, 13 is that's where, that's
15 where they downwards and it ran, it ran to the, it ran to the powerhouse, and
16 then, then it ran, uh, and then they got one that run over the [fit over the
17 holes 58:46]. [clanking] That's the one that you see goin' to the parking lot
18 over here, and you go down Martin Luther King, you see steam comin' up.
19 [tapping] [Right now 58:54] it's the, it's the steam f-, it's a steam tunnel we
20 call it. And they, they, and they, uh, they, uh, [clanking] that's what the,
21 that's, that's, that's the tunnels that they're [usually talkin' about 59:06].
22
23 I said, uh, but it's, it's not – we had, we had people go down there. W-, I
24 mean, like we, you're supposed to go down there with a partner. I went
25 down there one time when they had a leak and it's not nice; it's real slimy,
26 slippery down there, and, uh, you go, you know, they, when they worked
27 down there, you had to have a – just like goin' into confined space, but, um,
28 it's not, uh, it's not, uh, it's, it's like, it's, it's not a tunnel just to get the –
29 you're never gonna hear [inaudible 59:36] [laughter] they'd never make a
30 tunnel that go to Harry's. Yeah, but I said, but no, it, it did go to, go to the
31 Power House, because that's where the tu-, the steam ran. The steam ran
32 from the P-, Power House up into the Plant.
33
34 Cheryl McQuaid: [59:53] And one more thing. Um, they used to say that we made our own
35 power and sold our excess to Board of Water and Light. Do you know
36 anything about that?
37
38 Lyle McFadden: Uh, we, uh, we used to do – I don't know if we, I don't know if we sold it to
39 Board a Water Ladada, but I knew we, we used to have our own, p-, w-, we
40 had coal furnaces and they, they used to, uh, you could go by there and they
41 would see the, see them puttin' coal in, and they had coal piles out there that
42 they – big ol' bulldozers pushin' the coal into the – I said, well I didn't
43 know if they sold it to Board a Water and Light or not. I think Bord a Water
44 and Light do all of it now, don't they? They do all...
45
46 Cheryl McQuaid: Yeah.

1
2Lyle McFadden: ...they do all [inaudible 60:32]...
3
4Cheryl McQuaid: I believe so.
5
6Lyle McFadden: ...yeah.
7
8Cheryl McQuaid: Yup.
9
10Lyle McFadden: Yeah. [tapping] But I said I was a, I said I didn't, I didn't know about sellin'
11 it and [inaudible 60:44].
12
13Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [60:48] Uh, Mr. McFadden...
14
15Lyle McFadden: Mm-hm.
16
17Marilyn Coulter: ...uh, Marilyn Coulter – you grew up in Lansing, you've been here all your
18 life.
19
20Lyle McFadden: Yes.
21
22Marilyn Coulter: And Fisher Body's been here for all your life.
23
24Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
25
26Marilyn Coulter: Now that, as we know, it is getting ready to go...
27
28Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
29
30Marilyn Coulter: ...what's your thoughts about that?
31
32Lyle McFadden: It was like losin' a real close friend. I, people [audio cut out] I mean,
33 nobody really believe that...
34
35Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm, mm-hm.
36
37Lyle McFadden: ...that they were gonna get rid of, uh...
38
39Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
40
41Lyle McFadden: ...uh, Fisher Body. I [audio skipping] mean, they said this was back
42 [inaudible 61:24] the '60s they, when they, they gonna get rid of, you know,
43 and I said I [audio skipping] and now I just can't believe that, you know,
44 that when I, I, I, I, I was workin' the night to last they took those [audio
45 skipping] security off [a the gate 61:40].
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
2
3 Lyle McFadden: Ya know, the gate, that gate's [over there 61:42] and they locked'm up and I
4 can...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8 Lyle McFadden: ...I c-, I just couldn't believe it. I told, I, I, I told the guys that used to work
9 with, ya know, I worked over there...
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
12
13 Lyle McFadden: ...and they'd say [inaudible 61:51] "Can you believe it?" I said, "No, I
14 never thought I'd ever see." Now, one, it's different because they're,
15 they're [addin' 61:58] [audio skipping] the new plant now is, uh, um...
16
17 Marilyn Coulter: [62:03] So when you...
18
19 Lyle McFadden: ...the Grand River Plant...
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: ...speak of one, you're speakin' of the old Oldsmobile factory.
22
23 Lyle McFadden: The real Olds. The...
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: The original, [oh I see 62:08].
26
27 Lyle McFadden: ...original Olds.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Ah.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: They start, they, they tore some a that down and they increased it...
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: ...that, what do ya call that, uh, Grand River [inaudible 62:16]...
36
37 Cheryl McQuaid: Yeah.
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
40
41 Lyle McFadden: ...Grand River Plant. So, ya, so, back there it sounded like General Motors...
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
44
45 Lyle McFadden: ...but you don't really think a General Motors gettin' rid of a whole plant.
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: [62:25] Now, and now, that's as an ex-employee, but now you live on
2 Lahoma.
3
4 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Lahoma's not far from Fisher Body.
7
8 Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: Being a neighbor, living in a neighborhood where the factory was, what was
11 that like?
12
13 Lyle McFadden: Nice. I coulda walked to work if I wanted.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [laughter] I know at one time they had plants and neighbors were –
16 had problems with the emissions and...
17
18 Lyle McFadden: Very few...
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: ...the sounds...
21
22 Lyle McFadden: ...very few people.
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Very few...
25
26 Lyle McFadden: I was a, I, I was a dispatcher, and it would be, uh, it would be the same
27 person who smelled somethin'...
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30
31 Lyle McFadden: ...that, that...
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
34
35 Lyle McFadden: ...that I talked [too loud 63:09].
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
38
39 Lyle McFadden: They were, they, the, they could hear me give the Line Time, and, uh, so...
40
41 Cheryl McQuaid: Oh. [laughter]
42
43 Lyle McFadden: ...I said, "Oh, I'll tr-, I'll tr-, I'll tr-, I'll, oh, [inaudible 63:19], that's my
44 fault. I'll do it"...
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.

1
2Lyle McFadden: ...“I’ll do it different.”
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Ya know, you, um, said somethin’ that brings back a, a memory for me.
5
6Lyle McFadden: Uh-huh.
7
8Marilyn Coulter: ...and, um, you were the dispatch person and bein’ a person on the line...
9
10Lyle McFadden: Yeah.
11
12Marilyn Coulter: ...you always announced Line Time, because for many of us, you were
13 considered to be The Voice.
14
15Lyle McFadden: Uh-huh. [laughter]
16
17Marilyn Coulter: And if you would, please, for those people, could you announce the Line
18 Time in...
19
20Lyle McFadden: The Line Time for the night shift is: C-Line, 9 hours; B-Line, 8.8. Repeat:
21 C-Line, 9 hours; B-Line, 8.8.
22
23Marilyn Coulter: And that was the voice. [laughter]
24
25Lyle McFadden: And I...
26
27Marilyn Coulter: Yeah.
28
29Lyle McFadden: ...and it was kinda, it was nice. It was...
30
31Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 64:09].
32
33Lyle McFadden: ...it was a good job.
34
35Marilyn Coulter: We always knew there, um – you were always one that we could understand
36 exactly how long we were [goin’ 64:16]. [laughter] It didn’t sound like we
37 were being [inaudible 64:18].
38
39Lyle McFadden: Oh, when, when I cut it short, though, I got people sayin’ little nasty things,
40 and they go – I – they thought I, I controlled the Line Time.
41
42Marilyn Coulter: Ah.
43
44Lyle McFadden: “Cryin’ out loud, this is a heck of a time. It’s a doggone holiday and you’re
45 workin’ us overtime.” [grumbling] [laughter] I – “Uh, okay. [laughter] Have
46 a, ha-, have a good week. [laughter] Have a good weekend [laughter].”

1
2John Fedewa: See ya. [laughter]
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Mr. McFadden, is there anything that you'd like to share with people that we
5 haven't touched on?
6
7Lyle McFadden: Oh, I guess, I enjoyed my years at General Motors and I – my, like I said,
8 my, one a my sons started at, uh, Fisher Body. He's in, he's in Flint now.
9 He's on Skilled Trades down there. But, uh, I, I, it's been good to my
10 family and they're good to me.
11
12Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
13
14Lyle McFadden: So I don't have no, I have no regrets. I j-, like I said, I j-, kinda hurt that
15 they, they w-, when they tear it, that, that'll hurt, but you – I'll surpr-, you'll
16 be surprised the amount of people that came back just to see the place when
17 they heard that it was the last day.
18
19Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
20
21Lyle McFadden: I, I, [door squeaking], I didn't go over, but I saw people that came by and
22 the, the [assembly 65:31], and they said they went up and [door closing]
23 looked at the old area, ya know...
24
25Marilyn Coulter: Mm.
26
27Lyle McFadden: ...and they said that a lotta people, they, they were [inaudible 65:37].
28
29Marilyn Coulter: Well, thank you for sharing your memories with us.
30
31Lyle McFadden: Oh [inaudible 65:44].
32
33Cheryl McQuaid: Thank you so much...
34
35John Fedewa: Thank you very much.
36
37Cheryl McQuaid: ...sir.
38
39Lyle McFadden: Uh-huh. Okay. [recorder clicking]
40
41
42/rt