

Interviewee: Olene Walker

Interviewer: Sarah Langsdon

Date: July 5-6, 2012

SL: This is Sarah Langsdon and I am interviewing Olene Walker at her home in St. George. It is July 5, 2012 at 9:30 in the morning. Good morning, Olene.

OW: Good morning.

SL: Why don't we just go ahead and get started. Tell us a little bit about where you grew up, your parents, and your siblings.

OW: I grew up in what was known as Wilson. It was the west part of Wilson, almost to Taylor and West Weber. I grew up on a farm. We actually had three different units and a total of about 130 acres, which was a little larger than most of the farms. I lived in an area where there were many small farms and families were able to survive on them. I didn't realize growing up that most of the people were rather poor, but no one ever thought we were poor. Since my father was involved in education—he was principal of an elementary and then a junior high and then of Ogden High School, before he became Superintendent of Ogden City Schools for, I believe, around twenty-



home. She stayed home for maybe five or six years when my younger sister went to school. They pleaded with her to come back and teach and so she did until she retired at sixty-five.

because they always end up crying.' That was the rule. If they didn't want to play, they didn't have to.

But I really did grow up working on the farm with my brothers and playing

my time helping the real first graders learn to read. It is ironic that I had gone with a cousin in Taylor to school the year before and the teacher offered to enroll me for the last few weeks and then I could go in to the second grade, primarily because I could read before I went to kindergarten. It was interesting experience. I'm sure I learned things in the second grade but my memory is just helping those first graders learn to read. I love to read so it was a good experience. I went to Wilson through elementary and through the eighth grade. It was a small school. It was elementary and junior high.

Ironically I was elected as Student Body President, but for some reason, and they didn't really tell me at the time, they really felt that ninth grade teacher—and we basically only had one teacher for every subject—was not stimulating enough. My father was then Principal at Washington Junior High and they talked me into going to Washington my ninth grade year. I enjoyed it. I'd hit an age where I'd become a little more social, way too social in fact and I kind of felt like the 'country cousin' coming to the city. People didn't have cars to move around like they do now. It was a long way from school for any activities so when there was something my father went to, I usually went. As far as going to parties and things, it was rather difficult because my parents would have to bring me in and then come and get me. I always felt a little strain on the ninth grade because being social I wanted to be part of the group but being a visitor it made it a little different.

I must admit, it was the first time I sluffed a class. I sluffed one class and felt so miserable that that was it. I felt that that teacher was going to ask my

father where I was and he was going to say that I was supposed to be in class. So when that happened, I kept thinking of all the stories I could tell him. It never happened, but it did inspire me to never skip a class again.

After that I went to Weber High. That too had some adjustments because I had left Wilson with a limited number of friends so I always had the feeling, well, Olene went to the city and left the country which is a strange feeling. Again, I was very social. If I had to do it over again, I would stick primarily to the academics and really prepare for college. But instead, I was involved in almost every thing you could run for. I was chosen to run for so many positions such as Princess of Sophomores or Junior Class Prom Queen or Senior Class Miss Weber. I was selected for most of them but I would always be a runner up or an attendant. You know, it really doesn't matter now, but at the time it was a little traumatic. One of my friends would always been the Queen. I did end up with a new group of friends, mainly from the South Ogden/Roy area. They were great friends and we still get together on occa

sophomore and junior year complained because the senior boys played last and they wouldn't get asked as much as the junior and sophomore girls would. Isn't that a ridiculous thing to remember from high school?

I was a Pep Club Officer my senior year. I was involved in many different activities at school—again, in my estimation, way too many activities ytmtr

settled in his hip. I remember, for example, spending time at my father's  
mothers—



and would run down the chicken coop roof and jump and he did and he broke his

wanted, which was probably more than they would ever get, and they would go in and talk to T.O., as he was called. T.O. would say, "I've worked this budget as hard as I can and this is what I can offer." All of the sudden, all the resistance disappeared because they knew that T.O. had done the best for them, in terms of salary, that he could do and so it was accepted. I thought that was quite a compliment because I think for years the teachers generally felt that he was on their side and yet he was very conservative in his budgeting. He was a Republican. I remember people coming to him wanting him to run for the Legislature. He would say, "I would like to run but there's no use. A Republican cannot be elected in Weber County." I look back and smile at that because years later when I was there and even now a lot of Republicans win in Weber County. I've heard more from teachers now that I'm grown, that worked with my father, and there was nothing but respect and admiration.

I've often wondered what motivated my father and my mother to get college degrees and even graduate degrees, because my father got his PhD and my mother got her Masters. Both of their parents only went to eighth grade. My father, apparently, loved to read. At least I've heard comments made by friends who said, "T.O. always had a book with him." He always carried a book. But my

high school level which is amazing. The pay was so small. His pay was remarkably small. He decided to get a Masters, which he did at the same time, from the University of Utah.

He eventually got a PhD from University of Southern California. Now, he did this while still being a principal primarily and running the farms and being the Stake President. He would go to USC in the summer time. We all stayed home with my mother and ran the farms and he would come home on the weekend occasionally and work the farms and go to church meetings. But that was his

freedom to go to the park. I must have been eight or nine years old and it was a unique experience.

We went again in the car and I don't remember the model or the make, but they took out the back seat and put our luggage right there to make the car level. Then we all kind of laid up there. Now, this was two brothers and myself and an aunt, so it was a remarkable experience. I do remember three always sat in the front seat—my mother, father and my aunt, usually. Just the three of us children were in the back. I assume we were about ten, eight, and six. The back seat was built up so we could lay on it, not sit on it. Being in St. George I should make the remark that we often drove to St. George, stayed in a park and rested until midnight when it cooled down. Then it was cool enough to drive to Las Vegas. We did this especially coming back from Southern California. We would stop in Las Vegas until midnight or after to make that huge drive, up the hill to St. George. You'd often see cars pulled over on the side with over-heated radiators. That was the dreaded part of that trip.

My father did get his PhD, which was unique in that time. I think he was very successful as superintendent of schools.

SL: Skip ahead and talk about where you went to college and sort of how you met Myron.

OW: Okay. I did get a debate scholarship to go to Weber College. It was a great experience. It was at the old campus. I debated but I also was still very social at Weber College. Somebody told me that I was the only person who got invited to the rush events of every social unit. They were called sororities but they weren't

national sororities. I had the fun experience of going to all these activities but I had to make a choice. Since most of my friends went in **Otioqua**, I ended up in **Otioqua**. It's strange, I remember the rush party at Pineview Reservoir. It was at a beautiful beach area. It was a fun experience being in it. Again, there was still somewhat of a feeling, not living on campus, that we lived a little too far. Some opportunities I missed because I didn't have a car and had to rely on transportation to get to Weber. I can tell you most every activity I was there.

I worked with the athletic department so one of my great honors is being part of the athletic team that went up and built the wall at the new campus on Harrison that said Weber State College. It was there for several years before anything else was built. It was just that sign. My claim to fame at Weber was that lasting wall that was built. Ironically I had not anticipated going to BYU, but my brother was going to school down at BYU and I went down to visit him. During the summer session—I don't know whether it was because of return missionaries or the fact that a lot of them that had been delayed because of being in the service, this was the fall of 1950, I had so many dates I couldn't work them all in hardly. I thought this was a great life so I ended up going to BYU. Now, I wish it



to Stanford and continuing on in political science. I could get a scholarship to Stanford in political theory. I chose to go on to Stanford in political theory. But, of course, that made a very rocky road for mine and Myron's relationship. He had marriage in mind and I had marriage in mind but not for several years.

figure out that we should live in the middle and each go different ways—it may have been because we were very poor and could only afford one car. But anyway, I drove to Stanford almost every day and back to Pacific Grove. That made a very long day but I did eventually get my Masters in Political Theory.

We got married in March and Myron had been accepted at Harvard Business School to get his master's degree that fall. After he got out of the service, we spent a short time in Ogden, but then went on to Boston where he got his masters degree. Now, I had really intended on getting my PhD but we had some surprises. I had had trouble before marriage with the reproduction system being consistent. The doctor told me that I probably couldn't get pregnant. I



We enjoyed Boston. We had good friends. We were all very poor. Our recreation often consisted of playing Monopoly on Friday nights or some other game at somebody's house. We did splurge. We got Boston Symphony tickets. On Sunday afternoon a group of us always went to the symphony. That was the one thing that we saved for over many weeks. We went on a very meager food budget so we could attend the symphony. It was an interesting time. We had good friends and we often got together with a group of friends on various activities. I remember between the two semesters, that we went from Boston to the LDS church sites at Palmyra, clear up to Quebec on seventy-five dollars. We often slept in the car with Steven, our youngest baby at the time, in the little sleeping bed. We made it all the way to Quebec and back to Boston. We arrived home with seventeen cents between us and an empty gas tank. But it was a marvelous trip. We went from Palmyra to Niagara Falls, on up to Quebec and took a great tour of Quebec and then back to Boston. It was the cheapest trip anyone has ever taken. All of our money almost went for gas and food. It was a great experience and we had a good experience in Boston.

After Boston, Myron took a job with the bank of Detroit. But because I was expecting our second child, I flew back to Salt Lake to be in Ogden to have the child. David was supposed to arrive the first part of June and then afterwards Myron drove from Boston to Ogden and waited for David to be born before he started work in Detroit. The wait became so long that he started to work with Bennett Motor to put in insurance department with the automobile agency. As a result, he ended declining the job in Detroit and we moved to Salt Lake. He

finished that project after a couple of years. Then we moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico where Myron was manager of (xxx) metal plant. Now, that's skipping over a lot of things.

SL: Let's skip back and talk a little bit about any memories you have growing up in Ogden—since you lived out in the rural area and then coming in to Ogden—what that was like for you. What you remember about downtown Ogden.

OW: Okay. You'll have to remember that I and everyone else considered Ogden to be our hometown. I remember walking to Ogden many times. We'd have to walk past the livestock yards, up over the viaduct that went over the railroad and the river. I remember a couple of times a board was missing and it was rather scary, but we would often walk in and it had to be five or six miles. Maybe seven or



the conscious decision not to continue in debate because of the extraordinary time that it took.

SL: How was Leland Monson as a debate coach?

OW: I thought he was great. You know, you lose perspective of things. He was well known and I think very well respected by many other schools, even though Weber was an extremely small college at the time. As I grew up and came in to Ogden, it was a big city. I remember going to L.R. Samuels, thinking it was very exclusive and very special when I went there. My mother still made the majority of my clothes but to get something from L.R. Samuels was unbelievable. Also, there was Fred Nye and stores that seemed to me to be very exclusive stores at the time. I remember the Union Pacific railroad station as a huge railroad station. You would go under tunnels to get there and it just seemed like it was New York because of how large it is. I look at it now and it is so remarkably small compared to the major railroad stations. The stores that I mentioned were so remarkably small, but at the time as a young girl and even as a teenager, they seemed to be a major metropolitan area. I was part of it going there.

It's interesting, as I look back on it, I think of some experiences. I remember seeing, quite often, a horse and buggy parked somewhere down by where you first get off the viaduct, before you get to the old Safeway store, that's now torn down. I'd see this horse and buggy parked and I knew it was my neighbor, just a block up the street that had a farm, and drove a horse and buggy to Ogden long after cars were the only mode of operation. So we almost lived in two worlds there. He just said he felt safer with a horse and buggy than a car.



44th South. So I've seen a lot of change, a lot of progression, in Ogden. I've also seen the demise of a lot of things that I loved and enjoyed as a youth. I don't see the people involved in downtown Ogden anymore.

I think almost every Saturday we went to Ogden to get groceries, but then the meeting place was the library that was just south of the City Hall. Every week we would get new books. We read a lot in our family. Quite often, in fact, our father would read to us. But during the day I remember sneaking away, reading, and my brothers saying, "After your work is done is reading time." I did read a great deal as a young person. That library held a lot of memories.

As I look back, I think the first thing I ever wanted to be was an elevator operator in that First Security Bank building on 24th and Washington. I thought the idea of doing nothing but going up and down, up and down, all day, seemed quite appealing. Then the second thing my aspirations turned to was being a librarian and being with all those books that I would love to read and being in that climate. So that was my second choice, I think all during college. As I matured, my direction was to be a professor at the university level. I've actually had some opportunities to teach at the university level but they've been minima mit (n)e(ct) 0.2 2(n)ethif

OW: The decision was spurred by the fact that after living in Albuquerque, Phoenix, and then Denver—we lived there for some time. In fact all my children almost were all born in a different city, so I can keep track of when we lived there by how old each one of the children are. Steven had Boston, which is easy. On the other hand, Lori had Albuquerque and we only lived there about nine months. Now she having to spell Albuquerque on forms has not been fair. But we moved thirteen times in the first eleven years of our marriage and had seven children and they were major moves. But I got back to Salt Lake and somehow we felt that this was a permanent move. Before long I did get involved, for various reasons, in a lot of different activities.

One of them was being Co-Chair of Block 57, as they redeveloped that in Salt Lake. Then they did a study of the elementary education in Salt Lake District and I was asked to chair that. I had someone that was staff that did most of the work but I got some credit for being chair of that committee and a few others. I had four or five people come say, “Why don’t you run for the Legislature?” There was an open seat because Genevieve Atwood was going to run for Senate. You know, five or six people—I thought the world wanted me. The last day I ran down and signed up. I then went home and looked at the District. Why I didn’t do it before, I don’t know. If I’d done it before, I would never have signed up because I found, at that time, I was in a district that was the third most democratic district in the state. Price was number one, Magna was number two, and the Avenues was number three. I worked hard. I didn’t make it through the convention without a primary but I had a relatively easy primary but I worked hard. I determined to get

to meet people I would have to go every evening after the 24th of July. So I knocked on doors all over the district.

I was elected in 1980 and the census revision of districts took place in 1982. At that time, there was kind of a battle between Bob Sykes and myself over who would keep the West part of the Avenues. I figured that's kind of my home base so I fought to keep it. He was a longer term legislator and won out and I ended up, for the remaining years, having the East half of the Avenues. It was the area between South Temple and 4th South, down to Main and the University area, which was Democratic territory. So I had to work very hard to win. Truthfully, it was the fact that I had seven children that probably helped me. I would knock on doors and a child would answer the door and they'd say, "It's Nena's mom," or "It's Lori's mom," or "It's Tom's mom," and I think that really is one reason that I was elected because of having children and I working to evaluate the Salt Lake elementary education system. So I was elected.

I always recognized that it was going to be a tough election because every time there was an election, the head of the Democratic Party would come to me and say, "We really like you, Olene, but we have to target you because your district is one we should have," and that was true and I knew it. So I worked genuinely hard to be elected. Finally in 1988, I was in leadership. I was helping new legislators experiencing having to run for election, and as a result, I ended up losing to Paula Julander. The shock was somehow not as great because I had been very fortunate to win four times in a district that I really, by looking at the





would have been five in the House and Frances in the Senate. The women were not often given special attention, but the fact that I could often answer fiscal questions, I think, was the reason I was appointed as Chair of one of the Appropriation Committees.

Utah is unique in that everybody is on an Appropriation Committee, which gives them some power. But you soon realize that that power is concentrated in the leaderships and so after two terms, I ran for leadership position, starting with Assistant Majority Whip, which I won. Then my fourth term, I won Majority Whip. The ultimate decisions are made by the majority parties leadership coupled with the minorities leadership, which includes one less in that circle. So because I saw the power really in that direction, I determined to be part of leadership. I had a great experience because I think, the individuals I worked with in those two years were very capable, unique, and were interested in what was right and what was best for the State of Utah. The first year there was Bob Garv, there was Gayle McKeachnie, there was Glen Brown—all capable individuals. The second term that I was in leadership there was Nolan Karras—Glen Brown was Speaker and Nolan Karras was Majority Leader and Jack Demand was Assistant Minority Whip. Both terms we had great individuals involved, who, I sincerely felt were there to make Utah a better place. To me that is the reason they should have been there.

I watched a number of women increase over the years. Utah had been the first state to have a woman senator, Martha Hughes Cannon. We had had women there with the exception of 1910 to about 1914. So there was generally

an increase of women until finally, when I was Governor, I believe that there were













Lieutenant Governor and Governor. So the training is a great experience. I have nothing but positive things to say about the Legislature. I think when I was there in the 80s, everyone generally did what they felt was the best for the State of Utah. What they attempted to do was strengthen Utah's policies as a state. I'm not certain that same dedicated rationale has carried forth in every case in the current Legislature.

One of the areas that I did work on was human services and the needs of individuals that need attention. I think that was the background for many decisions that I worked on when I became Lieutenant Governor and Governor. At the time, we were very concerned about how we were treating foster children. I worked with two or three bills that were focused on improving that service. The truth of the matter is, it wasn't sufficient to save us from a lawsuit when I was first elected Lieutenant Governor. I think there are many bills that are introduced that may be insignificant and probably are not needed in the state of Utah but on the other hand, many times, fixing a word or two in a bill will make a difference in people's lives. I think the ability to determine what is critical and what should be ignored is an aspect of being a legislature that a lot of people don't realize. Fortunately, when I was in the Legislature, very little time was spent on message bills. As ideologies have developed the past few years, much more time is being spent on those types of bills.

For example, I remember one time a great legislator introduced doing away with candy cigarettes and it was almost laughable—the discussion—because it seemed so relative and unimportant. It was important to her and they

disappeared, so I'm glad, but those kinds of message bills often get the attention of the media. Too little attention is given in the media to various tax bills that affect people's lives. It's interesting—I've talked to many groups since then, primarily about education, and I will ask the group what tax increases they remember. After a great deal of thinking they always say, "Many," but they can't name them. Finally somebody mentioned the one under Bangerter and I think that's the only generic tax increase that we've had. But yet we've lowered taxes twenty-seven times in the last twenty or thirty years and nobody can remember any of the times. I think it's a lack of focus or attention on those issues. There is more attention given on the issues that are the ridiculous bills that send messages rather than bills that probably should be considered.

I really want to stress the fact that those of us that have been in the Legislature have an obligation to do more than we are doing to encourage capable people to run. Again, the emphasis would be on women. I think that, through whatever means, there needs to be committees that concentrate on that process. I remember in the year 2000, for example, a committee was put together to get capable women to run in not only the Legislative office but for school boards, county council offices, etc. In that one year it did increase because of the concerted effort to get women involved. It hasn't happened in the past few years. Somehow we need to generate more committees to act in that direction.

I learned several things about being in the Legislature. One aspect I thought was interesting is that as leadership, my fourth term there, we often met

at the Capitol but we were often interrupted with various questions and issues. So the decision was to meet somewhere else at either breakfast or dinner. My house was the logical place because I lived relatively close to the Capitol. In fact, I often walked to the Capitol and back—a long walk down but a much longer walk back up the hill. As a result, we met at my home several times. I would fix something quick, either dinner or breakfast. But all of the sudden, the house speaker, Nolan Karras said, “All of the sudden, it hit me—this is not right. If we make Olene fix meals for us in addition to being in leadership.” we met away to get away from extra stress but we created her greater stress. We’re not going to meet here again and eat. We’ll only meet to discuss. You know, I thought that was remarkable insights. We made progress.

Maybe I should mention one incident that happened in the Legislature. I co-chaired, with Senator Peterson from Utah County, a looking at the future of higher education in Utah. During those hearings a head of one agency spoke. I asked a fiscal question and he said, “What’s a nice lady like you doing worrying about money?” I thought, ‘I’ll lay him low.’ Then I looked in the room and about half of the men put their hands over their faces and were embarrassed. I decided no, that isn’t needed. I just said, “With what you’re presenting, some of the nice ladies have to worry about the budget.” That’s another example of some of the bills that I carried because out of that committee, several things happened and I did carry over half of the bills that came out of that committee that had positive effect.

Number one: it created the language that said that any credit given to students at Salt Lake Community College or other community college, has to be accepted by the University of Utah, Weber—any Universities that give credit. I think that was a major change. It changed the name of Salt Lake Community College from the Skills Center to an actual college, which was a positive move. It gave some legitimacy to the community college and the courses that are presented there. It really was the background for our future in our community education. I think that there was greater effort to recognize that that was a critical part of the education system than every before. That was a positive committee and positive legislation came out of it.

Now there are other examples where committees have really focused in on an issue and have developed a legislation that has had an impact. Some of them haven't. If you look at taxation in the 1980s, a major effort was made to steady tax policy. There were five committees that were designated to look at different areas: property, income, sales, severance, and miscellaneous—thinking that the major system would be revised. But because special interest people and lobbyists were included in that operation, only two bills ever got passed. They really didn't change the tax policy. The first one was Truth in Taxation and it had a great impact. I didn't carry it. Frank Norton did. It mandated that any school board cannot increase taxes over the population growth without a vote of the people, which is a great factor and was a positive. The other was establishing the

Legislature, hoping to get all the funding. We basically turned our state education policy from local decisions, to the State Legislature, as the mega funding source for all education programs, which I consider a negative.

[Day Two of the Interview]

SL: This is Sarah Langsdon. I'm interviewing Olene Walker. This is the second day of the interview. It is July 6, 2012. We are at her home in St. George. It is about 9:30 in the morning.

Okay, Olene, yesterday we left off when you lost the race in the Legislature, so let's talk about what happened to you after you were no longer in the Legislature.

OW: I had been working as Director of the Salt Lake Education Foundation for several years. Actually, I started earlier in the 1970s working part time over a Federal grant, called Esau School Emergency Aid. It was a result of desegregation in the South. Salt Lake qualified because they were closing so many schools in the central part and the students were going out further from the central heart of Salt Lake. So they





State meetings nationally, because that's where all the information was given. We were only one of four states that didn't have a secretary of state. I attended those meetings as well as the national secretary of states. We worked very hard to establish an election office which handled the changing laws and working with the counties. I think we were successful because we ended up getting some honors for our efforts in election. Again, the emphasis was on elections when they ran in to controversy in Florida on punch cards and we had used the punch card voting system. We knew that we would have to change and so it was quite an active ten years in the elections office. I had a great staff who worked in that area and I was very proud of them.

Another thing we did—I was over volunteerism and we worked to have a volunteer office in every county, many at part time. I remember one of the most interesting experiences I ever had had to do with volunteerism. I'd gone to Park City to speak at a conference. I spoke and then had other appointments so I hurried back to the Capitol to keep those appointments. Later in the day, George Romney came to my office and said, "Olene, why did you leave that volunteer conference? That's the most important thing you could have been doing today." He chastised the Governor for not even coming and said, "I hope that you'll always be working on volunteerism because that's an answer to a lot of government problems, is to better utilize volunteers." That was a unique experience.

Other things that I worked on included health care policy. For seven years I chaired the health care policy task force. We dealt with a lot of issues. Many of





about three in the morning. So it was kind of a hectic pace, covering every county and listening to their complaints and their reasons. But generally, the state employers were wonderful. It was a very rewarding experience.

One of the great experiences as Lieutenant Governor was being involved in the Olympics and what a great event that turned out to be. I remember of struggling how we should change after the negatives came out about bribes that had taken place forever and probably still take place, but we knew we had to

member of the Olympic team, from New York. She said, "You know, Olene, there will never be another Olympic like this one." I said, "Why?" She said, "Usually, at the march in the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the participants from different countries you'll see them kind of grudgingly marching through. But in Salt Lake there were groups of people that cheered for every team and you could just see their faces light up and beam because they had a group of supporters somewhere in the audience." Now, the only logical answer is the LDS send out missionaries, many from Utah and they were there to cheer for the country they went to. But it did make a difference and it was noticeable. It was a great event.

I was very, very fortunate to be involved in it. I knew it was successful the first day because I had encouraged all of my children and their families to get tickets. I remember getting a call from my daughter, Lori, who I had encouraged to go up to Park City to see the ski jump four hours early. I felt that traffic was such, that security had been so enhanced because of 9-11. It was a time when we had to increase security unbelievably and it became a real concern for the Olympics to have extreme conservative action in providing security where no chances would be taken. So I told her it would take an hour or two hours to get through security, then to find a parking place and get there.2 (h) -0.sqr4 -0.2 ( ) t(n) -0.2 (d) -C

I enjoyed being Lieutenant Governor. Many times you work hard and somebody on a project, such as workforce, or health care, and others may have gotten the credit, but to see those programs work out was really rewarding. I also was included in many activities. I was involved in interviewing the judges, for example. They were done very carefully, with a great deal of thought because we realized in appointing judges, you're appointing people for the rest of their lives.

political controversy that they decided, “Now, who can we elect that will be accepted by everyone.” So I ended up as President of the organization which was a great experience. We had a great conference here at the time and it was very rewarding. I did work again, a lot with volunteerism and actually got the National Award for being the outstanding volunteer person in the nation. So it was a rewarding experience. I felt that it was a great opportunity to learn and understand the different agencies of the government. I had looked at them from the legislative point of view, but now I had the opportunity of looking at it from the executive point of view.

SL: What was it like working with Mike Leavitt?

OW: It was interesting. I think we work very well together. He was clearly the Governor and made decisions, but in our discussions I was included in all the meetings. If I disagreed, I felt very comfortable in disagreeing and giving the reasons. There are numerous times when he listened. Many times decisions were made as a result of those discussions. Clearly he was the boss. He had a great sense of the political part of being governor and he was very acute and able to pick moments for the press and to pick moments, even in some of his speeches to make high points for the press. We basically agreed on most every decision. But there are some decisions—for example, he mentioned that he was going to appoint someone to a major position as department head. I disagreed. We discussed it thoroughly, brought the staff in to discuss, and in the end, he agreed that it should be a different person. So there were many cases where we’d discuss a decision to be made and he would listen to the advice that he got.

SL: What do you think is your legacy of being Lieutenant Governor?

OW: I think two or three things—certainly, the Department of Workforce Development is a legacy because, I don't know whether people still remember all the work that went in to getting it started or not, but there was a lot of work. I think the Children's Health Insurance Program is a legacy. I think volunteerism throughout the state is a legacy. I'm not sure how long these legacies last because I already feel that they are probably disappearing. I think the Rainy Day Fund has become a legacy. There are other bills, such as the one that I got through in my first session, right at the end of the last day, that the state should fund prisoners housed at the county level. It's still in existence and some people still refer back to when it was first funded. I think all of those are legacies. Certainly, the election—we have an outstanding election office and have had since I was involved with the two federal bills. I think that's a legacy we can be very proud of. Certainly, in a sense, public lands, has a certain legacy.

We were there when the Escalante Staircase was made and that in itself was an experience because the week before we had heard rumors that something was going to happen. We called the White House. I was in Governor Leavitt's office twice when he called. They said, "Oh, that's just a rumor. We'll let you know when it's going to happen." Well, all of the sudden, he got a call what was back in New York at two o'clock in the morning telling him that they were going to announce the Escalante Staircase Monument of over 1.5 million acres in Southern Utah the next day. He didn't invite any of us to go to Arizona. The announcement was made near the Grand Canyon. My good friend, Norma

Matheson was invited. Of course, there was a lot of anger after it was announced, especially in those areas where it took so many acres. It was by far the largest monument in the country with the exception of Alaska that was considered. When the word came that the reason it was considered was because Nader was gaining ground in California and it was an election and Clinton had to do something to stop that growth, something dramatic for the environmentalists. His answer was the Escalante Staircase. I remember that many areas of Southern Utah wanted us to go to court over it. We had people thoroughly research it and it became clear that the state wouldn't win. They were still angry. I remember, the Governor said, "You go to Escalante to a meeting because they're so angry that they'll be kinder with you, a woman-grandmother type, than they will with me." So I went down to Escalante and they were angry, but they were kind to me. They wanted to leave the United States and set up their own state and there was a lot of anger. I remember going down in Kane County with the county clerk. Her family had worked for a hundred years to build up some of the grazing lands and they were included in national monument. In Henrysville, at first the whole town was taken in the monument. But when they realized that they'd taken a very small community, they ended up drawing the monument around with an outlet so they wouldn't take the town. But there were some areas like that where there were really angry people. Some of them are still angry.

That really intensified the public lands debate. As a result, we worked to try and solve it. We worked on the western half of the state and met with all these communities and worked with them and did really well, thinking that we would





because he had asked me not to mention it to anyone. So that was a difficult time. I think from being in the Legislature, and from being Lieutenant Governor for over ten years, I understood most of the problems and issues that were important, especially those that I felt there were some solutions to. We were still living under tight budgets, because after 9-11 in 2002 the economy virtually stopped. If you think of it, for a week, no planes flew, the Wall Street financial area of New York was virtually destroyed and people were just hanging on. It was a survival time. It was a time of very low growth, the rest of 2002 and much of 2003. So I was very aware of the budget problems. We had emerged from a slow economy but 9-11 just changed that and sent the economy in a down turn. I looked at budgets a great deal during that time.

Finally I ended up going to Russia and to Kurkistan. In a way, it was a





SL: Why don't you talk a little bit about your time as Governor?

OW: Okay. I thought I would just jump from here into picking Lieutenant Governor.

SL: Okay, that's great.

OW: It was a hard decision, at that time, to pick a Lieutenant

for education. I felt that education had been cut and that we were in last place in per pupil expenditures, which I thought for a state that thought education was important, was regrettable. Even more important, I understood that during the nineties, we had been in the top ten of personal income going to education. So I could always say, even though we are last, we put more effort into funding it. It's because of the great number of students. But by 2003, we had slipped significantly from being in the top ten and we were just below the national average in percent of income going to public and higher education. One of my first efforts and most concentrated efforts was to do something for education.

I looked and searched and determined the best thing I could do was start with the real basics—reading. So we started the program of reading with your child to get greater influence. One thing in the budget, I looked at every place for money that it could be funded. I even took a staff person that had been helping

on the motto "20 minutes to success." The message was that it is very important to read twenty minutes. We even argued and debated and discussed the twenty minutes because at first we were saying an hour and we all realized that's not going to happen, let's make it a half hour, but the hour seemed long. Twenty minutes seemed doable in every family. So we designated reading with a child

The first initiative was actually something that probably no one expected from me. It was in technology and in dealing with the inoperability between state, local, and federal governments. The need was highlighted by two things. Earlier I had been Chair of the Criminal and Juvenile and I remember several times talking to the leaders of those departments saying, "What are your real needs?" It was always we're on different wave lengths of communicating between the state, federal, and local. They were always going to work it out but it didn't happen.

When I was Lieutenant Governor we'd had a tornado. Now I didn't think Utah had tornados, but we had a tornado. I couldn't do anything at the State Capitol so I had walked down to the Convention Center where the reports were that an individual had been killed. Actually I started to go by myself but pretty soon security caught up with me and said, "We're supposed to keep you from stepping on an electric line." So they walked down with me. I got down there and I talked to the head of the department of Public Safety. I said, "What are your problems?" He said, "Everything is going well except we don't know what the Federal Government is doing. We don't know what the local government's doing." We still can't communicate with each other. So I made the decision after that discussion that it was finally going to get done. This was in November and I announced that by June it would be completed, thinking that I would put the pressure on and it did happen. I'm very proud of that initiative.

By the way, Commissioner Durden asked me if I wanted to follow the track of the tornado. I got in the helicopter and we went up over the hospital, over the Capitol, up to the high avenues where I lived, and all of the sudden I looked down

and found the roofs on the two houses on each side of mine were gone. There was probably more destruction in my immediate neighborhood than any place else in that city. So I asked him to put me down in the church parking lot and I ended up going from neighbor to neighbor to encourage them and find out the destruction. But anyway, that was an initiative that was completed.

There are fourteen of them. I don't know whether we have time to go through all of them but I will talk about a couple of others.

SL: Please, go ahead.

OW: On public lands—after the political conflicts that developed after the Escalante



ranchers, and property owners. They had to stay at the table. They had to be able to make a decision. They couldn't go back to Washington to have the decision made. They had to be able to make the decision. They worked hard. We were very nurturing to both groups. I have to give Ted Wilson a lot of credit because he really helped with the environmentalists to get them there. Everyone was a little reluctant. I had hoped that we could get it done while I was Governor.

we cut the tax because we have extra revenues and so the next time in a

policy. So I gathered this group together, some staff people, some people that had been prominent in the legislative process and some from the academic world to make decisions. This was a totally voluntary effort. We often started at five or six at night and often went to two and three in the morning. Then people had to go back to their normal jobs. We had practitioners. We had academics. We had Leo Manment who had been over the legislative staff for so many years. We had Gary Doxey, my Chief of Staff; Lynn Ward, who was Assistant Chief of Staff, but had been over the office of budget and planning for years. Altogether we really worked on developing a tax policy that was as far and just as we could make it. They set goals. They set recommendations. Our plan was to present it to the Legislature prior to their running for office. Well, when it came prior to their running for office, the issue becomes so critical that we decided to wait until after some of the primaries had been over and conventions had been over to announce the results. We did. We tried to work and education legislators. We met with all the editorial boards of papers and tried to get the information out. Again, we had done so much modeling and data mining, to make certain that it was a fair and just tax—neither raising or lowering tax—that we thought it would have some serious discussion. There were many things in there that we knew was political and negatives and there would be people against it. We felt that they had to use the positive aspects of the tax reform to justify it. The motto tended to become lower rates, broader base. With that we announced the program and it immediately became a discussion of the election cycle. After I was Governor we hoped it would carry on. But it soon became far more political.

Governor Hunstman—we felt we had invited him to all the meetings as well as his opponent

never been more speechless because I didn't know whether to say, "This is too much, we can't even begin to do that," or say, "Let's postpone the press conference." But everybody was there. So we went ahead. They had included the Sevier drainage area and if you look at that, it's huge. But in every one of these sections, we had people working on improving the watershed and it has made a difference. There's still a lot to be done but a lot did get done. Most of these were exciting. Another one was to have the 211 number available to all of Utah to find out where human services could be received for the first time.

We worked hard in the short time that I was Governor. In fact, quite truthfully, I think I neglected the politics. The politics only became important because I had to make a decision. Do I try to run again as Governor? I knew that if I announced it before we had the legislative session in 2004, that it would be a

again because I didn't know at that time, of any other woman who could be in the hunt to win as Governor. Too often, as women, we have failed to step up and take the risk, and so for that reason I determined to run for Governor. I didn't want to spend a huge amount of money, even though I knew that there were several people that had spent huge amount to get through the caucus and the conventio

SL: So what do you think, overall, is your legacy in politics and in the State of Utah?

OW:





the Hinckley Institute, which is funded to far greater extent than anything I could ever do with students or community. I graduated from BYU but they have policies that require so much approval in the line of authority that I felt it would be difficult to start an Institute and develop the pr

because of the training and the effort to have them placed. That's something that I see the Walker Institute focusing on. I think having brown bag discussions, at least on a monthly, if not a weekly basis for students on issues that confront them or the community—and when I say community it's basically Weber, Davis, Morgan, and Box Elder Counties—I see those happening to bring the students together and understand that—again, as I said about my children, they have to be givers. They have to help solve problems and be involved. They cannot all be takers from government programs but they have to be producers. So that's kind of the mentality. I see them having workshops for people that want to run for office and then workshops for those that are elected to the office, be it commissioner, legislature, library board, school board—workshops in all those areas to better train people about their responsibilities of being elected. I see it as a focus for community activity in those areas, maybe better planning for the areas, but certainly an involvement of students and the community. Pretty broad basis, but a lot of specific things also.

SL: Did you have anything else that you wanted to talk about?

OW: I just want to say thank you for being here and getting this history. I've always been proud of my background in Ogden. When people have asked me where I'm from, I've always said Ogden, Utah. I had a kind of a remarkable childhood growing up with pressure to learn but the usual fun freedom of going any place I wanted to, feeling safe in a rural setting and having close enough neighbors to play games but yet space to roam and explore. I'm very proud to see how Weber has grown from the campus that I went to—one square block in downtown

Ogden to a beautiful, magnificent campus on the foothills. I'm hoping that the Walker Institute of Policy and Public Service will continue to grow and become so established it becomes a critical part of the university campus at Weber. I'm excited because I think we're getting a stable start. I've been amazed at the donations that have been made and it's really been exciting to be involved in developing this project. Thank you.

SL: Thank you, Olene.