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Interviewers: Kristen Hark and Charlie Vancampen

Interviewee: Jon Springer

KH: This is 15 May 2014 with John Springer at Royaltyton Ranch with Charlie Vancampen and Kristen Hark.

JS: Have you all seen this book: Photo History of Aldridge?

CV: Uh, no we have not.

JS: I’m a little bit surprised because this-this was done to some degree in conjunction with the Gateway Museum in Livingston. You know the book might’ve been published, but I know Doris and Bill Whithorn, the authors, actually worked with the museum-

KH: Yeah

JS: -and they have an incredible archive of photographs on the museum website.

KH: I did see her name in some of the contributions she’s made to the museum.

JS: So it’s really fascinating because between 1896 and 1911 there were thousands of people living on our property here, mining and processing the coal into coke, you know which is refined coal, and then throwing it on trains and shipping it to Butte and other cities here in Montana. I mean fascinating story.

KH: Yeah, we’ll make sure to look at that.

JS: Yeah, it’s pretty cool. And I don’t know if it relates exactly. I think you’re more involved with what’s going on currently, you know rather than past history, but pretty amazing stuff in here.

KH: No, I think the past history is really important too because especially with what we’re looking at is the stories of the people and as you know most stories are passed down um orally from generation to generation so-

JS: Exactly.

KH: I mean, so the past stories are important. Especially, you know, some of the stuff that we’ve talked about and ask about are you know like how people came to be here or how did this area-how did you choose this area. That kind of thing. And a lot of times it is connected deeply to the past.

JS: Yep.

KH: Yeah, so we’re very interested in that.

JS: This book for example, the first chapter opens up with these fifth and sixth generational people who are around back you know in the late 1800s and their families and their names have changed slightly over time, just as part of the progression of being here.

KH: Right. Yeah, it’s fascinating.

JS: And it is really cool.

KH: Yeah, I’ve noticed the Whithorns, have con-I mean, they contributed a lot to the museum
JS: Yeah

KH: Um it was our first visit to the museum yesterday and talking to Karen via email, so it was nice to meet in person and check out the museum, but-

JS: Sure, sure. Yeah.

KH: And we have a lot-we have a lot of uh, research to do to check out the area.

JS: Yeah, I noticed you wrote a book it looks like on the fires in Yellowstone

KH: Yeah.

JS: Right, uh huh

KH: But if you can care to just to tell us- just you can start with anything, but we’d be really interested to hear about how-how you came to be in this area.

JS: Okay. Alright.

KH: And that could be personally, or it could be um, industry wise

JS: The ranch

KH: or the ranch. It could be anything.

JS: Let’s talk about the ranch because um, because I’m here because of the ranch.

KH: Okay.

JS: Yeah, so basically the Summer Lighthouse is a spiritual organization. It was founded in 1958, and um, it had its headquarters in Virginia, interestingly-

KH: Yeah.

JS: -at that, initially. And then it moved to Colorado Springs and to California, the California coast, and then we’re looking for a place where we could have a spiritual retreat. Some place deeply ___ nature where we could raise livestock and grow crops and things like that, and um, had a place that’s kind of separated from the cities and you know what we call “fluvia.”

KH: Right.

JS: You know how everything feels kind of think, and heavy in cities sometimes. You know here, it’s high in elevation, and it’s-it’s pure air, and you know there’s not a lot going on that’s not associated with nature. So that was the key criteria for selecting this area. And our land holdings in the late 80s got up to 33,000 acres here in Paradise Valley.

KH: Oh wow.

JS: And right now, as I mentioned to you earlier, we have 7,100 acres, so we’ve downsized some.

KH: Right.
JS: And I think it’s good. You know the organization’s not huge. We do have members around the world, and they come here- I wouldn’t say every member comes here. You know, some hardly come at all. Many are on third world countries. Typically we have people come for summer events, which are right around July 4th and we have them come from 30 or 40 different nations so it’s really cool, but when you think of people coming to Yellowstone Park, you know what do they get-60 or 100 or more nations represented there. So it kind of fits in a certain way with what Yellowstone’s Park is doing in drawing in people from different areas to experience the beauty and the sacredness of this property here. I was really thrilled a few years ago, we were working with some design folks from a company called Design Workshops, and one thing that they had uncovered was a book. I don’t remember the exact title, but it was something about spirituality in nature in Montana. You know, there was obviously a more condensed title, but that was like what they’re looking for and they interviewed people who came here from different states and so forth. And I don’t remember the exact question they asked, but they would express you know you seek God in the mountains or you know to just experience nature here and the deep interfeelings that would they would have related to spirituality to God in some way and so forth. So I thought that was really fascinating. And these were professor, I think, from the University of Michigan and um the University of Montana-Missoula, if I remember correctly. Any rate, if you’re interested I can find the connection to that book title and so forth. But I thought that was really cool that some outside university researchers wanted to pursue that and really uncover that.

KH: Yeah.

JS: And just how people come closer to their innerself and however they see or perceive God through nature.

KH: Right. So then, um that’s-I’m sorry what year did you say they purchased this property? Or that they-

JS: The ranch purchased this property in 1981.

KH: Okay, and I might have missed this, but how long have you been with the ranch?

JS: Well I joined the staff of the Summer Lighthouse in 1977.

KH: Okay.

JS: Yeah. So back in California.

KH: That’s great.

JS: Yeah. I came up later. I was working in the print shop running a printing press and that was still headquartered in California until 1987.

KH: Okay.

JS: so my wife and I moved here January 5th 87.

KH: that’s fabulous.

JS: Yeah.
KH: Okay, so tell us a little bit about what it was like to move. I mean, I’m guessing this is much different from California, where you were. Just as far as just the nature aspect of it, but it’s also just the population of it, the people that are here. So how did you find, how did you find the transition?

JS: Well, I, let me speak impersonally about the other folks that came up early in 1981 in the early 80s first and then I’ll go to my personal story. So at any rate, um what I had heard is we visited several times because we had several conferences up here I think and—did we have one in late 81?—either late 81 or 82 and the summer of 83, 84, basically every summer we would—what we have is one of the highest parts of the property in elevation, and deep back in the property near the boarders of Yellowstone Park, we have a place that we call “The Heart” (?). And, we would have summer conferences up there and you know if you were to go up there right now, you’d still see our tent frame up there where we had different tents. But, we would have several thousand people come and visit there, and it was like building a town. It was so much work! [laughing]-

KH: Yeah!

JS: I mean, we had dozens of people dedicating their whole summer to setting up and breaking down, and making it happen and everything. It was, it was quite an event but very, very meaningful to people.

KH: How long did the retreat last? I didn’t want to interrupt you.

JS: Well, it would last anywhere from— I think the shortest was 6 days and then 10 days, with the auxiliary events before and after. Now we have what we call our summer events, and they’re like 2 ½ weeks long, and I mean all of the stuff gets tanked on. I mean, people are coming from everywhere, so we have to take advantage of that and do all these things and the staff are just, “Ahh!” [laughing]

KH: [laughing]

JS: So at any rate, the early days, it was interesting because we had purchased this property from Malcom Forbes (?), and— were, were you aware of that?

KH: I didn’t know that.

JS: Okay, you know Malcom Forbes (?), right?

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: Because some people, you mention that name and, “Who’s that?”

KH: Yeah.

JS: So at any rate, I had seen in more recent years that he had purchased properties in Colorado and possibly others states. And beautiful and natural properties, and developed them. And I kind of had the sense that that was his intent with this property, but it didn’t happen. They decided in the late 70s or 1980 or so to put it on the market, and that was during the Reagan era. And there were federal funds allocated for purchases like this, and they were moving down that track. And all of a sudden Reagan cut some budgets and boom—the budget that would have purchased this property was no longer in place. So the church was able to buy it and umm—let’s see what else can I tell you? So, so there were some buildings here on the property and, you know they were old and they weren’t really cared for very much because, umm, Forbes has a cabin up very, very high—right near the Yellowstone Park boundary.
Beautiful cabin, incredible views overlooking the Yellowstone, the Yellowstone Park and Paradise Valley and Doom (?) Mountain and things like that. So I think when he came- and I heard mostly his wife would come- but I think they would stay in that, that wilderness cabin or one of the buildings down here. And, that’s actually a vacation rental! I can send you the link if you want to check it out- we put a little history of the cabin there. And, if you want me to share with you electronically the caretaker who took care of it under Forbes-

KH: Oh yeah!

JS: - some of his comments about the cabin, I could-

KH: That would be great!

JS: - So, at any rate, the point I’m making here is that some of the buildings were neglected. So I heard from guys that were here in the early 80s and so forth, and they were staying in the old- there’s an old railroad down here in the south end of the ranch. A three story home dilapidate (?) and the foundation was crumbling. They’d be in there, there’s no heat. And back in those- I think through the- I’m trying to remember- when I first arrived in ’87, the winters were harsh. I mean, I can remember a time when it was 45 below, and propane freezes at 45(?) we heat with propane and it freezes at about that temperature. So we were building fires under our propane tanks. [Laughing] I mean how ridiculous is that?

KH: [laughing] Right!

JS: But, you know, people die in those kinds of temperatures. So these guys are living in this building with no heat. You know, so they got multiple sleeping bags and they’re just enduring and, trying to seek out survival and help build the community here. [disruption] So umm, we had a pretty substantial construction team at that time and what we were looking for was a self-sufficient survival community. And, have you heard about our fall-out shelters that we have here?

KH: I haven’t.

JS: Okay, I’ll get into that story. So at any rate, they were umm, they realized that our staff from California would be moving up here so they were preparing housing and our buildings for our chapel and our cafeteria, and basically the things you need here.

KH: Right.

JS: In a long, long winter, you know you can’t get by living outside very well so you really have to accommodate people. Plus you think all these people are coming from a mild southern California climate.

KH: That’s what I was thinking [disruption]

JS: Yeah the transition, and just preparing for all of that! You know, they’re heavy into ranching. So preparing for not just the ranching, but also the farming so that was a lot of the focus here- getting the- And Forbes, as I kind of hinted earlier, he wasn’t very much into utilizing the land. I think right where we’re sitting, he had some cattle and possibly some other places but, a few things I’ve heard from a number of ranchers- it wasn’t [disruption] cared for them, there was a lot of trespassing on the property and that type of thing. So we had a lot of work to do. So, let’s see- fast-forward to my coming up here it
was ah- in the middle of winter- January and my wife and I had a VW van and I had never driven in snow before [disruption] Yellowstone- [laughing]

KH: Oh my word! [laughing]

JS: [disruption] summer tires, and all that stuff! And umm, it wasn’t bitterly cold but it-it was a tough adjustment to-to being in Southern California and boom, all of a sudden you’re up here in winter and so forth. But I can imagine some of these people who came out in the- late 1800s and early 1900s and what it was for them-

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: -and if you don’t mind me kind of going abstractly here-

KH: No, I love it.

JS: -so some of the stories related to this, I heard, when you go up to the buildings, I don’t know if you can still see it. But when I first toured them in the 80s, you’d see what you might call wallpaper, or actually newspapers and it was in Slavic languages. So I asked the guy who was taking me around, umm, why this was here, and he said his understanding was on- is it Stratton Island (?)?

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: Yeah, on Stratton Island that they had a sign out, “Need Work” in Slavic languages. So, when people would come up and inquire, “Yeah we’ve got mining work for you!” They’d throw them on a train, and you can just imagine they probably had no idea [disruption] going ¾ away, across the United States and ending up in the Rocky Mountains. And, you can imagine what that experience was like for them. But at any rate, you know, we’ve got a lot more technology now so it wasn’t extreme for us in 1987 as it was [disruption] several years earlier. But umm, so at any rate it was a great experience and umm, you know, we- a lot of people who were in California- we actually had to go through an interviewing process in the organization, you know- find out if people were really ready to move out here. Not just from a spiritual component, but also psychologically because it’s such a big shift- we were right in Los Angeles County .

KH: Oh my gosh.

JS: But you know, we had a beautiful property there, I mean, just a gorgeous property. It’s a national park now. And umm- but you have all that culture there- you’ve got the warm weather and all the opportunities for doing and seeing just about everything you can. And then you come up here to where there’s so little culture and, you know the climate can be seen as repressive and that type of thing. So people are actually interviewed before they come up here, and some agreed, you know, that’s just not the place for me. [laughing]

KH: [laughing]

JS: But you know, we- we saw it as a great, spiritual opportunity, and an opportunity to continue with the organization we loved and served and, you know, this was just one more step for our personal path- and I’m speaking for my wife and myself and the other folks who came up and so forth. So, we got a pretty tough reception here. And, umm, it’s interesting. I don’t know if you’ve met or talked with Frank Rigler (?) at all-
KH: I have not.

JS: -Okay, he’s-he’s-his family is mentioned in this book here. I think he’s 5th- maybe 6th generation in the area. They’ve owned a lot of property here. At any rate, one of the first interactions of purchasing property was with Fran. And he-he was just telling me and a co-worker a month or so ago that, you know, it was very interesting with Ed Frances (?) was our Vice President of the church at the time. And, he was doing the property purchases and so forth. So, a realtor came to Frank and said, “Hey Frank! Umm, somebody wants to buy this property you’re working right now.” And Frank said, “I’ve had this on the market for years, and nobody’s expressed any interest at all!”

KH: [laughing]

JS: “Who is this?”

KH: Right!

JS: And I think the realtor- we use different names and so forth- you know, not necessarily to be illusive, but a church from California- you know, this was in the- I don’t- had Wayco (?) happened then? You know what I’m referring to when I talk about “Wayco, Texas?

KH: Oh yeah.

JS: You know, the cult thing. Jonestown had occurred in Central America.

KH: Right.

JS: So there was this thing on cults. And we were definitely viewed as a cult.

KH: Right.

JS: So at any rate, Frank goes “Who are these folks?” And the realtor didn’t know how to answer. So Frank had a relative who was an attorney who said, “Hey, what’s going on here? You know, somebody’s offering full price. Been on the market for years. What the heck’s going on?”

KH: Right.

JS: So, he said when his attorney relative got back to him, he said, “The only people purchasing properties like that right now- in Oregon right now- Rajneeshpuram?

KH: Uh huh.

JS: Okay, are you familiar- it was a spiritual group into Eastern Indium (?) religion. It was seen as a cult. So Frank goes, “Oh, oh my God.” [disruption] [laughter]

KH: [laughter]

JS: But Frank, I mean, I got to hand it to him for his integrity. He has stood up for the church, for his organization since day 1. He knows we believe strongly in personal property rights, and that was something that was very important to him. And then Frances made a connection with him, and he just stood staunchly in defense of the organization when everybody goes, “Frank, what the heck are you doing? [disruption].” So I really need to hand it to him for his integrity in doing that. So, trying to think how I got on this tangent- we were talking about property and so forth-
KH: Yeah [disruption] I was just asking about the reception and the transition here [disruption] that’s how we got [disruption]

JS: So Frank was on one end of the spectrum and kind of, you know, standing there with just his wife and, you know, his immediate family and so forth. And you know, many other people, umm, I think people in Montana, they tend to be protective of their land and their ranching culture and so forth. It’s changed, you know, we used to drive up and down Paradise Valley and in the 80s and so forth, I mean there are long stretches with no lights. You drive at night, there’s nothing. So now you can see. We consider this pretty well developed-

KH: Right, right. Yeah!

JS: -throughout Paradise Valley. You know, long shot from what you see in Virginia and so forth. But I think, Montana folks in general, become more open. You know, we have a lot of movie stars and well-to-do people here, you know. If you get off the main road and start to see some of the mansions, it’s- it’s pretty extreme. But it has changed the face of the state in the area-

KH: Right.

JS: - You know, in terms of getting more liberal. It used to be a staunch, conservative state. And now, we’re not seeing that trend so much anymore. But I think the ranches, you know, as a whole- they’re- they’re really close to the land, and attached to the land. And believe in conservative values and the constitution, and that type of thing. That’s very much what we believe as an organization as well.

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: So I’d say, you know, when you set aside our spiritual beliefs, which are very universal and open- you know, we believe in all the world’s religions- if you set that aside and you know, what do you we really stand for in terms of our beliefs politically- I guess you classify it politically-

KH: Right.

JS: - You know, it fits with the ranches and the down-home style that I consider the basis of what [disruption] Montana and many Western states are all about.

KH: Right.

CV: So-

JS: Let me just say one more thing Charlie-

KH: Yeah-

JS: - But, I think a lot of people got hung up on the spiritual thing, and umm, you know we had an active, umm, Elizabeth Clare Prophet- you’ve probably done enough research to recognize that name- you know, she was a leader of the organization at that time and-

KH: Right.
JS: - That was her real last name. She married Mark Prophet so, you know, we considered her a prophet and interestingly enough, she bore the name. So, there- there was a lot of flak. And she was very, very outspoken.

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: You know, when you consider the prophets of the Old Testament, they didn’t mince their words-

KH: Right, right.

JS: -and she kind of followed the same thing.

KH: Right, right.

JS: So she took a lot of heat and a lot of flak, and you know, rightfully so to a certain degree because when you think of the prophets- they’re there to challenge people and where they’re at, their state of consciousness and so forth. So she’s kind of in that same type of lineage. So, we- we took a lot of heat. And umm, but- she- she was able to make a lot of connections, you know, through the wrigglers and through the other people- when they realized what we stand for, our values- in terms of our political values, relative the land and so forth- you know there are a lot of people who greatly respected her.

KH: Right.

JS: And Mark Prophet as well. He passed on in ’73. But I understand that at his funeral, people came that nobody in the organization would even know- it was gas station attendants and people who knew him in the police office (?) and just in street. “The prophet reached out to me, and he touched me so deeply, I just could not-not be here. So it was that type of thing, you know they had a certain [disruption] and that type of thing. So Mrs. Prophet was able to build some of those bridges here as well. So Charlie- Sorry, Charlie, you had a question.

CV: So, you mentioned that this was a very conservation and this-this-and-you weren’t very well received when you first moved here as you were very liberal. Has that changed?

JS: Well, let-let me say, we were not well received on the spiritual end-

CV: Okay.

JS: - but on the- with the political values, we fit right in. If people were to overlook what they perceived as the disparity with their whole spiritual beliefs. So, no umm, we tend to be conservative as an organization. You know, I think we fit in very well with those core values [disruption]. So what I was saying is as more people moved to Montana from you know, the movie star component and people from other states and so forth, “Wow, Montana!” A lot of these are second (?) homes, and sometimes people are here- you’ve heard about [disruption] and the developments out there. It is just crazy! You know, massive mansions, and people are there one a week a year or something like that, but you know you start to get those people in and a lot of those people are more liberal. So that’s-that’s the point I was making.

CV: Oh, okay. Thank you.

KH: You did mention something earlier. I wanted- I wanted to bring it back for a second. You mentioned the fallout-
JS: Fallout shelters - Yeah, yeah!

KH: and we were just talking about the property - you just mentioned that - so, could you tell us just a little more about that?

JS: Okay, sure. So, part of the organization’s objective for moving to Montana was that we saw the potential and-and actually for decades, in terms of the economy and the balance of nations and so forth, and umm- it’s a little bit difficult to explain because you know, we see it within our-our spiritual theologies. So I’m trying to-

KH: Well you can tell umm- We’d love to hear that part to- [disruption]

JS: So at any rate, umm, yeah, so at any rate, we saw the potential for, for nuclear war and so forth. And, back when we built our fallout shelter it was-we were deciding maybe late ’86, ’87, we broke ground in ’89. Completed 1990. Massive, massive project. And umm-sorry I'm jumping around a bit. But we’ve actually had some people who know this industry and the federal government. They came up here and their jaws dropped. They said, “You built this privately?” At that point in time, they said, “This is probably the largest, private fallout shelter in the United States.” And they were just really impressed with the quality of it all. But at any rate, I think you’re more interest in the intent- and the intent was just to have an insurance policy because we foresaw the-the potential for nuclear war. I mean, you can go back to the Kennedy era when the Cubin Missile Crisis was happening. I mean, at that point- boy, I mean, everyone was expecting a fallout shelter in the United States. But, late 80s, 90s? Man, we took a lot of flak. And, you know, especially for building it in an environmentally-sensitive area, you know that- that was not well received. And you know, we had to do a lot of litigation on that. I’m not saying the church did everything right by any means, you know. We’ve-we’ve had to clean up a lot of umm- well there was an oil spill because we had faulty tanks and the manufacturer had made them poorly. Man that was a huge, huge ordeal. So, at any rate, umm, I don’t know if I answered your question sufficiently. Feel free to ask me some more questions about that-

KH: No, I- when you mentioned the fallout, I think you had just talked about how when you purchased the property, what you were looking for was a very like self-sustainable kind of life- which, I think fits in with a lot of the uhh-especially the- just the values of sustainability and you know, people- especially affiliated with the national park, most people have a respect for the way of the nature that, maybe others who haven’t been here don’t. So I just thought it was interesting when you mentioned that when you were looking at the property, that was one of the key things. Umm, and that’s when you mentioned [disruption], so that’s why I was asking that-

JS: Right. I think some people- they misperceive our- yeah please help yourself to our-

KH: Thank you!

JS: -it’s there for you all so feel free. I think some people misperceived our interest in stewardship of the land and so forth. And, you know, bringing so many people from southern California- all of a sudden we- we got into several E.I.S’es- environmental impact statements- and people were just really concerned about what was going on here. And then building the fallout shelters and so forth. So we kind of kept things under wraps at a certain point in time partly to not generate initial opposition to it. You know, that was just the stance of-of leadership-
KH: Sure-
JS: You know, that’s just the way it was.
KH: Right.
JS: You know, you’re looking at history, you can look back and say, “Hey, we could’ve done things a whole lot better”-
KH: Right.
JS: But you know, 20/20 hindsight, you know, here we are. And you know, we try to be very open at this point in time. You know, and happy to be meeting with you and talking and talking about our plans here and so forth.
KH: No, I think it’s great, especially the part about the stewardship of the land. It’s something that, I know in a sense is very- I’ll use the word “trendy” for lack of better word. But umm, with just environmental and sustainability and that kind of thing. But, I think that’s- that’s one of the key things that- hearing your take home of the relationship with the land and your relationship with the park-do you have-can you talk more about your relationship with the park?
JS: Sure-sure- absolutely! Yeah we have a very good relationship with the park. Once again, going back as I was hinting, umm, Barb Barbey (?) and some other individuals and superintendents of the park during these very intense years when we were moving up here and, a concern they had was that we were going to build a spiritual Disneyland. [laughing]
KH: [laughing]
CV: [laughing]
JS: You know, they looked at Rajneeshpuram- you know, they looked at other things that go on with the cults as I have mentioned and the concern about that, and it was very much unfounded.
KH: Right.
JS: You know, we-we do believe strongly in the stewardship of the land, and yet, I can recognize their perspective and so forth. So, at any rate, umm, you know we-we’ve reached out to these folks and Dan Rank (?) the current supervisor down at Yellowstone Park. He met with us having lunch in this very room a few months ago and whenever we have a new president or some major change, he comes in and, often with Steve Holks (?)- He’s the umm, assistant superintendent of the park- and Steve’s been there forever. I mean, he just knows everything about the park. But it’s a great relationship and we work closely with them. I mean, it’s not that we agree on everything by any point- If I could tie back to what you were mentioning, Kristen, about the umm, the view of land and so forth- you know the park- and I don’t know to what extent these individuals personally believe this and what’s federal policy, and how much they go along with federal policy, I’m pretty sure you know about the Byson situation and that you talk to somebody like Frank Riggler (?) and he goes, “Byson, get them out of here. They’re trashing the range and look at the range here”- and they’ll show you historical photos of how uhh, prolific and fruitful the range used to be. And you know, you’ve got too many animals over-grazing it. You go look at the park, and their range land- it’s the sorriest state of affairs. And-and I do see it that way. And yet the dilemma is, the National Park is set up to preserve wild life. And how do you find that balance in the
ecosystem? And then you get environmentalist groups- Buffalo Field Campaign, “Don’t go! Don’t kill any buffalo! They should be roaming the entire nation!” [laughing]

KH: [laughing]

JS: So you’ve got these extremes and, as I was mentioning to you in our formal conversation before we started- I really hand it to the leadership in the park because they- they really reach out, and I think it’s genuine too. I mean, when you talk to Dane Lank (?), “I’ve got the greatest job”- in, in- the world. I think he said “in the world”, or the nation. Something like that. He loves it. And he pours his heart into it. And anybody like that, you know, I almost don’t care what their stance is. But somebody who is so fired up about what their job is and that they want to do their very best, I mean, I hand it to them.

KH: Right.

JS: So any rate, he’s in a very tough position. He said- he told us when he was meeting with us over this recent lunch, he said, “You know what? Any kid of wildlife migrates out of the park, people love it. But if bison walks out, it’s our accountability.” He said, “It’s such a disparity between all the other wildlife and a bison. And it’s- it’s a huge political issue. And, you may know we have a bison corridor agreement on the ranch here. We work with the state of Montana and several state agencies and so forth, and we-we came up with restrictions on how bison can cross the ranch, and what they can do here because we’re right in the midst of the migration corridor. And, umm any rate, a lot of the local ranchers are envious or mad that we have this agreement. Nobody else has this agreement that protects their property rights like we do. But I mean, honestly, private property rights should be upheld. It doesn’t matter if you have an agreement with the feds, with the state, or whoever.

KH: Right.

JS: That’s- that’s the way I see it. So-

KH: That’s- that’s interesting. We were talking about, umm, the migration of wildlife. Outside of the park, we spoke with some wildlife biologists in Jackson on Monday I believe.

JS: Cool!

KH: And so for them, the bison are one major issue. The second is the wolves- the reintroduction of the wolves. Have you heard, or do you guys deal much with that?

JS: Well I- I love to hike out here. And umm, the wolf tracks- and the elk population, Northern Yellowstone Elk Curd (?) has gone from 22,000 in the mid or late 80s- but the wolves, reintroduction of the wolves- it’s 3,000 now. It’s less than 1/7 of what it used to be. And you get certain contingencies, like the hunters and those that that love big game. And they’re going, “What the heck is going on here?” And wolves are off the endangered species list as you know now, and you can go and shoot a couple of them. But I mean, they’re so prolific that that- and this is part of my concern. Have you heard about the book by Alston Chase, umm, “Playing God in Yellowstone”?

KH: No!

JS: Fascinating book. Alston was a researcher in Yellowstone Park, and he-he kind of saw the inside story that wasn’t really being conveyed to the public. So he took it on himself in writing this book. He’s a great storyteller in writing. He’s not a really good speaker [laughing]
KH: [laughing]

JS: - but he’s a great writer. And, really fascinating book. So at any rate, he-he talked about how umm, no- I-I don’t want to knock the park service, but this goes back quite a way. But he would say, they would re-write history. You know, like relate it to the American Indians living in the park. You know, whatever myth the parks agenda-what they wanted to communicate- they would take some liberties at re-writing history, and things like that. He also said there was a time when rangers in Yellowstone Park would shoot (?) elk because the population was getting to high- you know, they didn’t have wolves back in that time. So how were they trying to balance the ecosystem? I hand it to them, you know, “Hey, you know, if you got too many elks and they’re destroying the ecosystem, sure take some out.”

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: But then you have tourists coming through to see the wildlife. “The rangers are shooting elks? What’s going on here?”

KH: [laughing]

JS: So you can imagine the dilemma that they’d have. And, you know how they tried to deal with this. But, you know I’m not a wildlife biologists. But if someone could really could think through systematically and optha-no, but optimistically, but objectively and say, “Okay, you reintroduce wolves. There’s a certain balance here. And when the population-we project when the population reaches this number, it’s going to have this impact. You know, somebody could really look at-and try to perceive-forecast that and then make sure different perspectives come in so it’s not just a scientist who has a strong environmental back-has a strong advocate for wolves and so forth.

KH: Right.

JS: But, I mean, basically the ecosystem is going like this. You know, high and low between and where-where’s the balance? So, I don’t know. You know, federal policy. If you could try to find that balance in the ecosystem, and have enough latitude to maintain that? There’s been human intervention here ever since the American Indians were living here. They would purposely burn large areas. That doesn’t happen until a fire starts 1988 and it hasn’t for so long, it destroys 2- what was it- 2/3 of the park? Something like that. Karen knows, she wrote the book on it.

KH: Yeah, she did.

JS: Umm, so at any rate, that’s- that’s part of my burden. You know, to-to-and I’m not pointing my finger at the federal park but- park system but, others and saying you know, rewriting history- you know- is history accurately conveyed? You know, the Indians did do that. You know we need to recognize that. And that’s how they helped to balance the ecosystem. You know, certain pines don’t regenerate until there’s fire and the cones (?) open up and releases the seeds. You know, it’s part of the environment here. I go back in our back country, and I’m thinking, “Man, we’ve been praying to not have wildfires here. But, I’m almost scared to the point where I’m turning 180 degrees.” There’s so much wind throw in the ground, you can’t even hike through areas. It’s ridiculous. You know, what’s it take, you know? We need (?) wildfire.

KH: Right.
JS: So, you know, I’m personally having to go-and you know, when our forestry consultant comes out, I’m going to ask him, you know. Sam, what do you do with stuff like this?

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: Is, is a wildfire the only answer? But you know, you-you- I’m sorry Charlie, one more quick thing- you know, when you drive up and down Paradise Valley, you look over at- you look on both sides. You can see where fires burned, and you know, it’s not beautiful. So you’ve got these tradeoff’s here. You know, what is true stewardship? And, I don’t know the answer. But to me, that’s really something we need to discover. Sorry.

CV: So, what was your experience and-I guess, the rancher’s experience, with the 1988 fire?

JS: It was miserable. The-the fires started in May, and I remember climbing to Electric Peak in late May, early June- Electric Peak is, you know, a mountain that kind of- it’s inside the park but it boarders our property. All kinds of people ask if they can climb up from church property up Electric Peak. And, you know you can see these spot fires growing in the park. And then, it just got progressively worse from there. And, I mean, you- every single breath (?) was miserable. I mean, it was so smoke filled here and the fire started burning around the south end of our property by Sportsman (?) Lake and so forth, and started threatening our property. And we’re working with the park services, and you know, you can have all the access you need and, umm, that type of thing. Umm, we’re out there praying a lot. And we- we still have people who were there at that time not part of the organization. And they say, “I do not- I cannot believe what you did through your prayers. I mean, that fire was roaring down and you guys are standing there praying with your hands up, and that fire just stopped and turned around” [laughing] [disruption]

KH: [laughing] yeah!

JS: -and, not to took our own horn, but you know, we believe in the power of prayer. And, umm, so I don’t know, I’m not remembering a whole lot of detail about the particular fires other than they were miserable, huge burden on people, and everything was going crazy around here. I think Dan Wank (?), as I recall, he was a front line (?) ranger at that time fighting the fire. And, I think that was one of his first experiences here at the park. So, you know he-[laughing]-he got in pretty deep from the gecko.

KH: Yeah.

JS: So, your name is the Grand Key Teton Ranch (?)-

JS: Royal Teton-

CV: Royal Teton. So, how did you decide on the name “Royal Teton”? And umm, like-what’s your ranching operation like here?

JS: Uh huh. Okay, so umm, Royal Teton Ranch- we believe there’s great significance in what we call umm, spiritual retreat of masters that’s umm, basically physically anchored in the Grand Teton. So, you know that-that was a key element for attracting us to this area here. So between us and the Teton, we basically just have Yellowstone Park. So as the crow flies (?), great proximity there. So umm, as part of our spiritual beliefs, you know, we believe in masters, you know, the goal of life is not just to live a good life and hopefully Jesus will save us from our sins, but we believe that Jesus and other spiritual masters
actually demonstrated what we- each one of us is supposed to do. You know, we have a spark of spirituality, a spark of God in our hearts, and they actually walked the path that we’re supposed to walk. So we believe that Jesus isn’t necessarily the only one in heaven- there are many like that. And that they actually have retreats that are close to our planet and anchored in certain places. So umm, we believe that there’s a retreat of the masters there at Grand Teton. And we also believe that as you’re sleeping at night, you can travel to the retreats and be educated and, you know, work on your spirituality and things like that. So umm, that’s a key reason why we took the name Royal Teton Ranch. So, ranching operations right now are primarily farming, and I mentioned a little while ago the bison corridor agreement, that’s a thirty (?) year agreement with the State of Montana. And, umm you heard about the brucellosis problem, I’m sure from biologists. You know, elk carry that too, not just bison. So, at any rate, I think over recent years, it’s come out a lot more that the transmittal of brucellosis have been through elk rather than bison. But back when we did the corridor agreement, I think that the propensity of thought was that bison were the primary carriers. So, part of the agreement we have with the state was we cannot have certain [disruption] in the ranch- cattle for one-

KH: Right.

JS: -because of the potential for brucellosis transmissions. Then we also had to give up our sheeping operation. We can’t have goats. Basically the only domestic animal we can have is horses. And, you know, horses aren’t profitable unless you’re an outfitter, or you use them in some way like that. So, we lease our property to horse outfits- Yellowstone, umm, is it Yellowstone Outfitters? The biggest horse operation, Yellowstone Park, uses our umm corrals and things like that. You might have noticed- no we just had the horses moved out of that field so you wouldn’t notice that because we turned that into agriculture now for the summer. So basically, our ranching operations at this point are leases to people who own horses and then farming during the summer months. And we do ad-leases as well, because we have a fairly small ranching operation at this time. And contrast to when we first moved here in the 80s and through the mid-90s, we have substantial, umm, ranching operations for farming and sheep and goat herding and cattle operations.

KH: Mm hmm. Can I ask why you downsized, or was it just a-

JS: Well, umm, so when you say downsizing they’re- they’re- In the ranching operation, it was, I guess it goes back to downsizing. What happened was, as a spiritual community and organization, umm, staff were just being paid a stipend, if anything at all- or they were expected to work out in the local area and find work outside of the community here to support their families and so forth. And it was so that the money coming into the organization could be reinvested into the land and our spiritual mission, and reaching out to people worldwide and so forth. So, in the late 90s, that shifted. And umm, I can’t remember if there were IRS rulings or what exactly drove it, I think there were several dynamics doing on. But we got to the place where we had to pay staff more of a reasonable salary. And at this point in time, you know our salaries compared to rural areas and a nonprofit, you know, they- they’re what industry benchmarks would be. But you know, that was a gradual transition getting there. So downsizing, at the height of building the shelters, probably was our height of establishing members here. And we had 6 or 7 staff at the ranch here at that point in time. But you think back, Aldrich, during these days, they had thousands of people here. So people are objecting us to having hundreds here when historical precedence is here were multiple thousands of people here.

KH: Right.
JS: So at any rate, be that what it is, now our staff is 75-85- somewhere in that range. But you, you think when you go from 3-4-5-600 people to 75-85, you’ve got to do major downsizing, you know the re-engineering era and things like that. So we had to really focus, “What is our core mission?” You know, we’re a spiritual organization, yeah we’ve got land that we need to be stewards of- but our core mission was spiritual. So, did I answer your question adequately?

KH: Yeah, I think so! I was just-

JS: It was these various dynamics and-

KH: Right.

JS: -The other thing I mentioned was that actually the agreement with the state caused us to downsize in the ranching operations with animals and so forth.

KH: Right. And that’s-that’s one thing I wanted to ask about. Since you leased that out, do you have any kind of umm, say in, or maybe the kinds of types of farming like, I guess I’m asking like, the practices of the people you lease to- are they-do they try to be-

JS: Absolutely. And we don’t lease it all out- just a portion-

KH: Portion-

JS: Right. Umm, up by-well, halfway between here and immigrant (?), we have 548 acres that’s in the ad-lease (?) and we don’t’ specify to traveling much up there, but we have certain parameters- and I’m sorry I don’t know the detail to some agency that regulates what we do here- so those, those guidelines and those regulations- or less or- is accountable for meeting those.

KH: Oh. Right.

JS: And you know, we practice good practice. You know, part of the problem we have here with farming is that there’s so much wildlife. You know [disruption],

KH: [laughing] we were just talking about that!

JS: Yeah, I mean that gets spread so rapidly!

KH: Yeah!

JS: So, you know, to try to do weed free (?) or organic, or anything like that, it’s just prohibitive because of the amount of wildlife traveling through, and because of the transmission of weeds traveling because of that. And, I mean, I love to see wildlife in our fields here. I mean, to see the trails up and down the mountains, you know, during a harsh winter or-or fall, I mean it’s just amazing how many wildlife you’ll see in the field. And that’s great! I love it. You know, it presents certain challenges, but once again, back to the balance of the ecosystem and the sustainability matter, you know, all these things have to work together as a whole and in harmony at the right balance.

KH: Mm hmm.

JS: And umm, you think back historically. Well umm, the Indians obviously were farming here, but probably to a much lesser degree. There’s more rangeland, it was probably healthier- I don’t know. I
mean, you can only speculate. And, you know, we’ll never really go back to those days. Now, there’s a lot of human intervention. How do you intervene humanly to sustain what is the proper balance?

KH: Yeah, yeah that is a good question- and one I wish we had the answer to. [laughing]

All: [laughing]

JS: Hopefully it will evolve over time and we’ll get that one day because it is so important.

KH: It is, for sure.

JS: - and certainly not just here in this ecosystem, but everywhere planet wide. And that’s part of our spiritual beliefs; that is foundation. You know, we believe there are actual beings called “elementals” that work with the air, you know, beings are fire, air, water and earth. And they’re extremely burdened by pollution and umm, anger, and you know they’re very sensitive beings. And if they didn’t have to grab on- deal with- the pollutants that mankind throws out, you know- not just physically but mentally and emotionally and otherwise. You know, we’d have a lot purer planet. You know, so we pray for the elementals, and you know that’s part of our belief of the sacredness of the land. You know, it’s spiritual, it’s sacred. Part of the reason I was late here, we were just talking to our staff about the sacredness of this very property here, and you know, why we came here and how important it is, and what it means to people and so forth. That- that’s deeply engrained in all of us and um, you know, how does that translate to how we care for the land and what other people see. You know, not necessarily knowing our spiritual beliefs and so forth.

KH: Right.

CV: So with your sustainability that you place great emphasis on, do you utilize any alternative energy or alternative practices uhh-in various ways alone (?)?

JS: Yeah, good question. That was solely the intent of coming here. Some of our water rights are for power generation and things like that. And, umm, we-we actually had umm- interestingly enough, we had an individual named Gordon Melton (?) who did um- I can get you a copy of his book- but he wrote umm, what was it? It’s something about Church Universal and (?) Triumphant. And he spent several years, I believe, interviewing our members and so forth, and the leadership of the church and so forth, to find out what is the demographic of this church? And, very objectively laying that out, and it was great because he told the good, the bad, the ugly, and everything.

KH: [laughing]

JS: And one thing he found is that we have, per capita, very, very educated members. I mean, he was actually shocked how many PhD’s and Masters and so forth were attracted to the organization when Mrs. Prophet was active. You know, we haven’t done demographics anytime recently, so I can’t tell you if we’ve continued on that trend, but we have very knowledgeable people- some who are seminal and developing self-sufficient communities in New Mexico and places like that- came here and moved to Montana and we’ve had these people- you know (?) and PhD’s, in certain areas of geology and things that relate to alternative energy and so forth. So these individuals were looking at how practical is it in this area to use solar heating and things like that. So we did all of that research, and I know the intent was fully there. And, I don’t know the reasons because I wasn’t involved with leadership at the time why
we didn’t implement more of that- however, you may be aware that we have a water right for the Ladue Hot Springs-

KH: Oh, I didn’t know that.

JS: -And if you have time, you should stop by where we have a foot bath- I’ll describe that to you.

KH: Yeah I’d love to see that-

JS: -At any rate, umm, this has been used for medicinal purposes ever since it was umm, discovered, you know, discovered recently- I’m sure the Indians used it back in the late 1800s, and a lot of people from the towns of Aldridge, Electric, and....and all these surrounding areas....would come and visit the Hot Springs and so forth. So at any rate we have that water right. We’ve transferred it through pipeline. It used to be through a white cedar pipeline wrapped with wiring and so forth-

KH: Wow.

JS: So uh, we have more technologically upgraded water line at this point in time. And delivering the water to this historical point of views- you know, you probably heard about water rights in Montana-

KH: We have.

JS: -and the depths and the immensities of that whole conversation. So at any rate, they’re coming to the historical point of views, and we plan to develop a beautiful facility there where people can come and experience the water and all different kinds of environments, so we basically have a world class tam with people who develop...and things like that, they’re consulting with us. And it’s going to be fabulous, but it will be a lead certified. I don’t know if it’ll be platinum, silver, or gold, or whatever it will be, but we’re- that is our intent. So, I think as we develop from here, then we’ll look at that. And, this particular here- this was built in 2005, and this is very environmentally, or energy-efficient I should say. You know, we don’t have solar panels and things like that, but the architect was an expert at how you position and design and things like that. And our maintenance guys go, “I can’t believe how little propane this building uses”.” So, umm, you know at least we’re-we’re moving in that direction. And this next facility we build, we’ll umm- I’m not on the design team but based on what I’ve seen, I think we’ll incorporate all those elements- I shouldn’t say all- a lot of those elements of alternative energy and efficiency and so forth. I mean, you know about the Leads (?) Program, right?

CV: We have a couple of buildings off campus that are leads (?)-

JS: Cool-that’s awesome. That’s awesome.

KH: It’s really interesting. Umm-

JS: And the design we’ll fit in with the environment. I mean, last thing we want to do is stand out. So we’ll have indigenous rock, and one of the designers, he’s driving down the valley when he came to visit from San Francisco. He’s looking around- all you see are those grey (?) cyclos (?), so he actually proposed recycling the grey cyclon, adding it there as part of the design. But, I don’t know if that’s going to stick with the final design. But it’s something that would really be beautiful and fit in here. It will attract attention, but it’s not going to stand out like a sore thumb. And we-we are the way- a gateway to Yellowstone Park. And you know, we-we honor that role that we have here and respect here. And have to fit in with the environment, and the duty, and the nature of what people would expect when they go
to a national park. I mean, the park would love to expand their boundaries and encompass the ranch
and so forth so-

KH: Sure:

JS: -you know how we feel about private property rights? You know, that’s not going to happen. But, you
know we work with them and respect that orientation. We fully agree with them on that.

KH: Right. Can I ask when the construction for that project- is that soon or-?

JS: Well-

KH: Or is it in year or so or-

JS: I....that because you know, we had expected to break ground by now and, you know, when you get
into a huge project, there’s so many elements that come up and-

KH: Oh yeah.

JS: I was just speaking with our umm, former chairman of the board who was-who was driving the
project and expressing a little frustration that it’s not happening yet. We said, “John, when you do a
project like this, if you don’t take very single step in sequence and do it just right, you’re set up for
failure.”

KH: Yeah.

JS: -“So, much better to delay it and be successful and do it right.

KH: Right, yeah exactly.

JS: So, I don’t have an answer.

KH: No I just [disruption] wondered, yeah! I-I’m-I’m fascinated with architecture and construction so I
just thought -

JS: Oh cool!

KH: -I’d just ask.

JS: Well, you’re going to have to come visit when it’s up for sure. So let’s stay in touch.

KH: Yeah, that would definitely be great!

CV: So, you mentioned you’re kind of the gateway of Yellowstone National Park. Do you see tourism as
a- how as tourism affected this area and/or your ranch, if at all?

JS: Okay, well please don’t quote me as, “The gateway to Yellowstone Park”-

CV: Oh! [laughing]

KH: Oh, yeah, yeah!

JS: Okay- I was saying a component of the gateway to Yellowstone Park. You know, that’s the way I like
to be quoted on that. And umm, hopefully people wouldn’t dispute that here. Just because of proximity
here, and the north entrance, they’ve got to drive by here for sure. And they were actually talking about re-route- at one point at time, they were going to re-route umm, traffic to Yellowstone Park on this Westside of the river, which would cross through portions of our property and take them through more of park and see more wildlife, but it wasn’t practical to do that. So, at any rate, umm-see now I forgot your question. I’m sorry-

CV: Oh, seeing how has tourism affected the ranch- if it does at all.

JS: Okay, so well it will a lot more when we have this facility because it’s at an area umm, I can explain it to you or show you- umm, but there will be signs from the highway and I think this is something that will attract the public. A lot of people come because they see our chapel here- I’m sure looked out the window here and saw our steeple. A lot of people will come and inquire about that. Some people will drive down to Yellowstone, and the way they had their signage configured- umm, Yellowstone Park was pointing north, so rather than rerouting them north and then turning sharply back into the park, they would drive all the way up here about 8 miles, “Hey, where’s Yellowstone Park?”

KH and CV: [laughing]

KH: Because they see you!

JS: Yeah, exactly! So, well at any rate, umm, I’d say that at this point in time, tourism is not really big for the organization, but once we have that facility- and that facility is likely to become a draw for people who would come here to visit the facility and partake of the park. Rafting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, all of the outdoor activities we have to offer here in the area. So, we actually are intending it and designing it in such a way that it’ll be a draw in and of itself in addition to the tourism that exists here for the park and other recreational activities.

KH: Oh yeah, that’s really interesting! I don’t want to take a tone of your time, but-

JS: No, I’m happy talking to you all.

KH: Yeah- but, I’m super interested, I think it’s really interesting. Can I just go back? You mentioned not knowing the demographics right now, but that Gordon Miton-

JS: Melton, M-E-L-T-O-N-

KH: Meton- had done more of a study of that at that time. So if-if I wanted to ask you know a description of your church that might not be percent percentages on the demographics, how might you describe it or is that-?

JS: Okay, well let me give a shot at it. And this is highly subjective-

KH: Sure.

JS: -Since we don’t do demographic studies, so along with what we’re seeing in the world trend today, we’re-we’re seeing that our Hispanic population is increasing dramatically, and when you think of them from a spiritual standpoint, they tend to be- umm, involved in Catholicism largely. And what, what Gordon discovered is that- I don’t want to give you the exact percentages- but it was- 70s or 80s possibly, that that high percentage of members of this church had come through Catholicism. And partly it’s because of the rituals that we have, the statutes that we have, the belief in archangels and things
like that. Umm, you know the implication is that it’s an easier step or transition from fundamental Catholicism to this organization. And you know the way we- people have all kinds of perceptions about our religion, but the way we see it- it’s more universal, it’s more encompassing- umm, it goes beyond Catholicism and being more open. And other people say, “Hey, that’s very repressive”- you know-

KH: Right.

JS: So, I mean, that, that’s my own opinion of it. I think a lot of people who felt- came through Catholicism viewed it that way even though here- here’s- here’s another vision of you know, how I can see spirituality and view my world, and you know I hinted a little at our path of mastery, and how you obtain your mastery, how you become following in the footsteps of Jesus, or Buddha, or, or somebody like that. So, you asked more generally about demographics. So this Hispanic component, umm- our largest growth and largest membership tends to be in Russia. And a lot of Spanish speaking countries. Umm, Brazil is large. Portuguese-speaking country. So you know when- as we’ve ask the question of the years why-why is the organization growing so slowly in the United States and first world countries, and so rapidly in third-world countries, the explanation that makes sense to me is that we have a rigorous path that we follow in terms of our spiritual beliefs. And when you think about what life is like in Russia- I mean, I’ve had some Russians explain this to me and obviously this is through my own filters and so forth. But what they say is, you know, there- there have been times, you know, recent times in Russia where you just fighting to survive. You know, life is tough. You have to break the rules set by the government and go around things, and the backdoor just to survive. And not that our spiritual lives break rules or things like that. But, it’s a tough, rigorous path. And they’re- they’re acclimated to making sacrifices and do, umm, living a life that’s not just fun and you know, “Am I happy?”

KH: Right.

JS: You know, a lot of people ask, “Are you happy?” You know, to me that’s not the meaning of life. It’s much, much deeper than that. So, umm, did I explain that reasonably well?

KH: Yeah I think that- I think that’s-

JS: -In third world countries, you know they’re not used to the indulgences- if I put it bluntly, that we have here in America and first world countries. You know the, “Hey! I’ll just go to church on Sunday morning or not go at all. And you know, we’ll have rock music there and you know, it’ll be fun and a good time and you know, I’ll be happy there.”

KH: Right.

JS: “And that’s my spiritual life.” You know, our path isn’t like that-

KH: Right.

JS: You know, you have to dig in and you have to work at it. And umm, look at what Jesus did. That sure wasn’t an easy life. And you know, certain ways, that’s our architype. You know, we’re not carrying the cross down the street. But you know we fill we’re spiritually carrying it, and carrying the burdens of the world also. You know, a lot of our prayers are for, umm, the protection of the planet, for God-government, and you know, just to hold this planet together when you know, few nuclear blasts could basically just destroy it.
KH: Right.

JS: You know, a huge amount of our spiritual work is on that. And you know I kind of talked about how we have conservative values and communism is not the way to go, the way we believe. I mean, look at how inefficient that-that is. Look at the millions of people who have been killed to get communism in place, you know. And it’s even happening today in some countries, so you know we-part of our spiritual focus is largely on world conditions and you know, how do we help people find the free enterprise system you know? Because we believe the free enterprise system is the same spiritual path you need to follow. You know, you need to dig in, you need to do your very best, you need to find your sacred labor, they call it dar-darma in the eastern religions. You need to find your darma and you need to work at it. You need to pray and have your spiritual life and help other people. So, you know, that’s why our demographics largely emphasize the third world countries because I think they have an inherent, implicit understanding of the rigors of what it takes to survive and life and prosper and grow.

KH: Right. Yeah.

JS: [disruption] So did that kind of answer your question?

KH: That was a perfect- it was a perfect answer. Umm-and so, is that population- can I ask is that population like you mentioned, coming from southern California- mostly people that- I’ll use the word “migrated” for better term, with you here or as a part of your organization local? And is it- I just wondered if it’s more umm-

JS: So once again, I’m just pondering here a bit because we haven’t done recent demographic studies. So, one umm, woman who was on staff and our in-house counsel- we now work with her as an attorney out of Boseman, she was more in …. Montana. She was Native American heritage, and umm, I don’t remember the exact story of how she found the organization, but she jumped right in, worked in- she was a horseshoer, you know, grew up on a ranch in…. She jumped right in and it was a perfect match for her. So you know, moving to Montana, yeah some Montanans have come in. I’m trying to think of our most recent demographics and they go back over a decade or so, so we actually had it broken down by my state. And these were not comprehensive. You know, these were just information that comes in from a particular source filtering it. And, I think our largest group of members were California, Florida, and New-New York. And from there, splattered across the other states and so forth.