

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ARTHUR WEINFELD

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Arthur Weinfeld, on March 19, 2019, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for coming in.

Arthur Weinfeld: Oh, you're welcome, my pleasure.

SI: To begin, can you tell me where and when you were born?

AW: I was born on June 29, 1938, in Newark, New Jersey.

SI: Okay, now, for the record, what were your parents' names?

AW: My father was Milton. My mother was Ida.

SI: Starting with your father's side of the family, do you know anything about the family background, if there is any kind of immigration story on that side?

AW: Well, my grandfather's name was Sam, Samuel, and he was from Austria. I was always informed of Austria, but it probably was Austria-Hungary. He was born, I believe he was born in 1886. Both grandfathers, I know about that. We never saw him much when we were children. He was in Florida, and we were in New Jersey. On our honeymoon, when we got married, he lived in Hollywood, Florida, we made sure we stopped down and saw him during the visit. We were in Miami for our honeymoon. He worked as a host in a private club or swim, dinner, whatever.

SI: Oh, a country club?

AW: Yes, a county club type. That's all that I know about his work. Well, that's my grandfather. My father had two brothers and one sister.

SI: He was the host of a club in New Jersey.

AW: Yes, in New Jersey. Yes, he was up here at that time. In 1927--I never knew my grandmother, she died, on my father's side--and my grandfather apparently remarried or was with another woman afterward. My father was the youngest in the family, and my aunt, who was the only girl, used to take care of them. They had an apartment that my grandfather set them up in, and my aunt was the person that was relied upon a lot, my Aunt Ruth.

SI: So, your paternal grandmother that passed away, do you know if she was also born in Europe as well?

AW: I believe, she was born in Austria as well.

SI: Okay, all right.

AW: Yes.

SI: Yes. Do you think they married here or over in Europe?

AW: I think they married here. They met here.

SI: Okay.

AW: I think they did, I'm not sure. The other one I know, yes.

SI: Were they living in Newark at the time?

AW: Yes, Newark and Irvington. When I was born, we were living in Irvington. I was born in Newark, but we were living in Irvington. In fact, the address was 7 Roosevelt Terrace, Irvington. I've been informed of that.

SI: Do you know if there was anything particular that attracted the family to Newark?

AW: I think it was immigration. New York, I don't know if they stayed in New York when they first came over here, but Newark was, they were Jewish and Newark had, I guess, a considerable Jewish population of immigrants. The attraction to Newark, I don't know.

SI: What about your mother's side of the family?

AW: My mother's side of the family, my mother and my grandfather were my two favorite people of any of the relatives. My grandfather and grandmother lived in Irvington, and during World War II, I recall, when I was about four or five years old, we initially lived across the street from them. They lived on 724 18th Avenue and I think we were 719, but it was also on 18th Avenue in Irvington. It was a hill that led down to a park, which was Oraton Park. I recall, as a very young child, the house next door, burnt down, and I remember very much what happened there. I remember also, during the war, hiding under the couch during air raids. In any event, at some point, we were evicted from the house, so we moved across the street, where my grandparents lived, and we moved in with my grandparents. I had an aunt, who had been married in 1942, but her husband was in the service and she lived with my grandmother and grandfather. My parents and I moved in with them, probably '44, in that area.

My grandfather was a tailor. He had a tailor shop in Bloomfield, New Jersey. During the war, he used to take me on bus rides. We didn't have a car because most people didn't have a car during World War II. He would take me throughout New Jersey in different buses, and I became familiar with the bus drivers because of him. They would let me, when they had their coffee break, they would go out and they would let me sit behind [the wheel], in their seat and steer the bus, that kind of thing. [laughter] That I remember very well. The park that I told you about, Oraton Park, is now the Garden State Parkway. The park no longer exists, but my grandfather used to take me on the swings down there. We had a close relationship. [Editor's Note: Construction of the Garden State Parkway was completed in 1957.]

SI: Do you know anything about their background, where they came from?

AW: Oh, my grandfather and grandmother both came from Russia.

SI: Okay.

AW: I don't know how my grandmother got here, but my grandfather, in avoiding being drafted by the czar into the army, he got on a ship and came to the United States. He brought his brother, and what was at the time his girlfriend came with his brother later on, after he had sent them the money to come over.

SI: Do you know if they also came right to Newark or somewhere else first?

AW: They came to Newark too, yes. Yes, maybe New York. New York was the initial. I don't know if that was before they were in Newark or not.

SI: You were very close to them. Do you remember, for example, did they speak English?

AW: They spoke Yiddish.

SI: Yiddish, yes.

AW: They spoke English, but they didn't read English. They used to read Yiddish newspapers I remember, he did, when I worked for him in the store, and they belonged to organizations that involved Yiddish-speaking people.

SI: Did you pick up any language from them?

AW: Very little. My mother and father, when they didn't want me to understand what they were talking about, would talk in Yiddish. I remember that. That was an easy way to make sure that the children didn't know what they were saying when they were talking to each other. [laughter]

SI: Sure. [laughter]

AW: Her sister, my aunt, got married during the war, and in 1945, her husband came home after the war ended. In 1946, my mother, father and my uncle and aunt bought a two-family house in another part of Irvington, and we moved together. My mother and her sister were always together. They were an inseparable pair. That was on 18th Avenue. While we lived on 18th Avenue, my uncle, on my father's side, graduated number two in his class from Newark College of Engineering, and he couldn't get a job as an engineer. It was either related to religion, the depression, or a combination of both. So, he bought a gas station, and that's what he owned the rest of his work career. [Editor's Note: The New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) was known as the Newark College of Engineering from 1930 to 1975.]

SI: Had he been to Newark College of Engineering before the war or when he came back?

AW: He was born in 1908, so this was after the war.

SI: After the war, okay.

AW: He was the first to be married.

SI: Okay, all right.

AW: Yes. Now, ironically, his family, right now, more people from my father's side of the family live in Somerset, live together in Somerset Run. We also all lived in Irvington within very close proximity of each other. Between my grandfather on my mother's side and my uncles and aunts on my father's side, we lived close to each other.

SI: You had a lot of interaction with both sides of the family.

AW: Yes, yes.

SI: What did your parents do for a living?

AW: My father was a factory worker. During the war, he worked for GE [General Electric] in a defense plant, and after the war, he worked for Westinghouse. Then, near the end of his work years, he became a custodian in a school. That was probably three or four years before he retired.

SI: Did he ever talk about his work and what he did?

AW: Once in a while.

SI: Yes.

AW: When I was in college, I got a job at a shop and I ran the office. I was the bookkeeper and bill payer and whatever, and I remember my father wound up for a little while working in the shop through my work there. So, it was at the end, this was before he became the custodian. Afterward, he became a custodian in a school.

SI: Your mother also worked outside of the home.

AW: Yes, my mother was a secretary for the liquor union, Alcoholic Beverage Council [Control] for their liquor salesmen's union, and she used to handle their medical insurance program. She then, eventually, because the bosses eventually wanted to do something for the salesmen, organized trips to various [places]. One was Mallorca, Spain, and one was Italy. I remember that the liquor salesman were able to go on these trips. She was the one that they always relied on. Her name was Ida, and the calls were always for Ida to ask questions.

SI: She worked while you were growing up as well.

AW: Yes, and she passed away prematurely. When she died, she was fifty-eight years old. 1916 to 1974, yes, she had turned fifty-eight two weeks before she died, she had cancer. My father lived longer, and he remarried. She died in January of '74. My father died in May of 1992.

SI: Going back to when you were growing up in Irvington, what do you remember about the neighborhoods you grew up in?

AW: We lived in a four-family house. I remember the people that lived next door to us, I always called Aunt Minnie and Uncle Gerry. They weren't real relatives, but they were very close to my family. Above us, they had relatives too. Our family and two others I remember. Oh, above us, the man who lived there wound up a pilot in World War II, and he had some accolades about his accomplishments as well. I can't think of his name though.

SI: Was it a kind of melting pot area, or was it a primarily Jewish or some other group?

AW: Well, there were Jewish people on the block, but there were others. It was a mix as far as religion was concerned, but a lot of Jewish people did live in Irvington at the time. We moved from Roosevelt Terrace to 18th Avenue when I was very young. I don't even remember that move. It was something where immigrants could feel comfortable living.

SI: Do you remember what you would do for recreation, not when you were very young, but as you grew older, as you were a little more independent?

AW: Well, I remember learning how to ride a bike when we were living on 18th Avenue. I remember also being ridden home from school one day by one of my friends, and my feet caught in the spokes. I went over and I got injured, but he broke a leg, I think.

SI: Yes.

AW: Then, I was involved, there was no Little League, but I used to play catch with my father. On Sundays, we would go for rides into what we called the Orange Mountains and we would picnic and we would play catch, play ball and the family was always very close on Sundays. If we weren't on the ride, we were home at my house, where all the relatives came because my mother was on the receiving end of most of the family getting together on weekends. [Editor's Note: Orange Mountain is part of the Watching Mountains, which extend forty miles from Mahwah to Bound Brook.]

SI: Was religion a big part of your life growing up?

AW: Not a major part.

SI: Okay.

AW: Being Jewish, we were very much aware of our religion. We weren't religious per se. I remember one day, when I was six years old, walking home from school and hearing some older kids on the corner by a traffic light, and they were talking about how Hitler wasn't all bad because he killed the Jews. I remember that distinctly, and I went home and I asked my mother, "What did the Jews do wrong that these people would say something like that?" She had to explain what was going on to me with the war and with religion and with the punishment of Jews in Europe and that we were lucky to live here, where we do, even though there is still discrimination.

SI: Did that reoccur as you got older, other incidents?

AW: Yes, it did, yes. We moved to Union after we were in Irvington, and I experienced different forms of discrimination with people I grew up with. There were fewer Jews in Union than there were in Irvington, and so I had more experiences that were negative kind of experiences, although most of my friends today are from Union. They were my high school friends, and we're still friends today. I still have college friends as well that I'm still close to, yes.

SI: While you were still living in Irvington, did you start going to school there?

AW: Yes. When we were living on 18th Avenue, I went to Grove Street School for kindergarten, first and second, and then in third grade, we moved to the other part of Irvington to 16 Krotik Place. I went to Chancellor Avenue School in Irvington at that time. Then, I started high school in Irvington High School, but after my freshman year, we moved to Union. So, I spent three years in Union High School and graduated from Union High School.

SI: What did you think of the schools in Irvington?

AW: I thought the schools were very good. I enjoyed going to school in Irvington. I thought Union was harder in my mind. I was not as happy in Union as I was at Irvington, although, as I said, most of my friends are from Union now. I have one friend that I was friendly with in Irvington, who went to Grove Street School with me. We still have a friendship today. He lives in Somerset and I live in Somerset. He moved to Metuchen, shortly after he got married, and we lived in Edison. Then, my mother once met him and kind of rekindled our friendship, between Edison and Metuchen, when we lived there.

SI: What interested you the most in school?

AW: What interested me those most?

SI: Yes.

AW: I think I was a good student in elementary school and I enjoyed my freshman year in high school. I had teachers that I liked whom I thought were caring and concerned, although there was one teacher in elementary school that I didn't like, but most of my friends did. I used to talk

a lot and I would get punished by her. [laughter] But I enjoyed going to school at Irvington. When I moved to Union, it was difficult to adjust to for the first year. After the first year, everything was fine.

SI: Those teachers that you liked, was there anybody who was a kind of a mentor to you or stands out?

AW: There was a teacher I had in freshman year in high school. I had him for algebra. I got all "A's" and he was a very kind person who would assist you whenever you needed help. I felt successful in his class, and I liked his personality. So, he was kind of the teacher that left the greatest impression on me.

SI: Now, going back, you said you were not a very religious family but Jewish identity was a significant part of your life.

AW: Yes, well, we had uncles and aunts, family was very important. We used to get together with the uncles and aunts and cousins. As I said, it was always at my mother's house, because she was kind of the home base of everyone coming.

SI: Were there traditional foods or things that you would celebrate?

AW: Yes, we would, there was no such thing as health foods [laughter] in those days. I remember eating chicken fat on bread, which we wouldn't have today.

SI: Yes. [laughter]

AW: It was a tradition. I think it was my mother's family's traditional eating habits that were carried on when we were growing up. It was the middle European meals that were very much a part of the European upbringing and what my grandparents were familiar with and my mother was familiar with in growing up herself. In fact, I called my grandfather, who I said was one of my favorite people, "Papa." The reason I called him Papa, when I was young, was because my mother and my aunt used to call him Papa and I thought that was his name, but that was the immigrant form. Instead of a Dad or Daddy, it was Papa. I am Papa to my grandchildren because he was Papa to me. I wanted it to be that way with my own grandchildren, so it came back later on.

SI: You said he had a tailor shop.

AW: Yes, a cleaning store ...

SI: A cleaning store, okay.

AW: ... And a tailor shop. It was Montgomery Cleaners on 128 Montgomery Street in Bloomfield.

SI: How long did he keep that?

AW: Well, he was in Newark in a tailor-cleaner before I was born, and this is all I remember from being born. I used to go on Saturdays from when I was in high school to deliver his clothes and to help him out, and I would clean up the store. I remember when I swept the store, he used to say to me, "Arthur, you cleaned Broadway, but you forgot 42nd Street, 43rd Street," the rows with the clothes in the aisles, "You've got to sweep in there too." [laughter] He had his brother, who was my mother's uncle, so it was my great uncle, come on Saturdays. He would check the sewing machine, and he would fix it when it was broken and whatever. Then, that was like five o'clock, and at six o'clock, we would go home and I would drive my grandfather home. That was when I first got my license.

SI: That was still in Newark.

AW: That was in Bloomfield.

SI: That was in Bloomfield, okay.

AW: Yes.

SI: Did you have any other jobs growing up in high school?

AW: The first job I ever had was delivering photostats to businesses in downtown Newark. I was a freshman at Irvington High School. We were on split session. In the morning, I would go to work on West Kinney Street in Newark, and deliver photostats and what have you to different businesses, and I would walk. I didn't have a license at the time. Then, I would take the bus from Newark to Irvington High School for my session, which was one to five-thirty and I worked to eleven-thirty. [Editor's Note: A photostat machine was a type of photocopy machine that was first produced in the early 1900s.]

SI: You probably would have gone into high school in 1951 or 1950.

AW: I started high school in 1952.

SI: Okay.

AW: I graduated elementary school in 1952 ...

SI: Okay.

AW: ... In June. In September 1952, for one year, I was in Irvington High School.

SI: Okay.

AW: Then, we moved in the summer of 1953, and I went to Union for three years.

SI: Do you know why the family moved to Union?

AW: They wanted to buy new houses.

SI: Okay.

AW: So, they sold the two-family house. Oh, no, the Parkway took our house. When the Parkway took our house, they took all the houses on the block and moved them after they bought them from the people, but my parents and my uncle and my aunt didn't accept the state's offer financially. So, later on, we were the only ones left on the block, and then they raised their offer. We moved to Union. They bought new houses, this was in a new development in Union together, next door to each other.

SI: Okay, it was still your aunt's family and your family next door.

AW: My aunt, my uncle and her children, and my mother and father and us. I was the oldest of all the children among the two families. Then, I had a cousin, Nick. My aunt had a son and then my brother, who was ten years younger than me, was born [on] February 28, 1948. I recall his being born shortly before leap year and I was worried that he would be born and only have a birthday every four years, but he wound up being born at seven o'clock on the 28th, five hours earlier.

SI: Wow. How many siblings do you have?

AW: I had one brother, who was killed in an automobile accident back in 1989. He and his family were going into New York to Mickey Mantle's restaurant and his daughter was driving. She couldn't drive in New York. So, they pulled over before the toll booth. He went out of the passenger's side to take the wheel from her, and a car came across the highway--he was parked on the apron, not with the flow of traffic--came across the highway and blew him through the windshield and severed her leg and she had twelve hours of surgery to save her leg.

SI: Oh, wow.

AW: It was the worst day of my life. I got a phone call from that hospital that I never forgot.

SI: Wow, I'm sorry.

AW: Yes, he was forty-one.

SI: Wow. You also had a sister?

AW: No sister, one brother.

SI: All right. Tell me a little bit about high school in Union. What interested you in the classroom and also were there any extracurricular activities that you were into?

AW: In Irvington, I played baseball. In Union, I didn't. I didn't participate in any interscholastic sports, but I did participate in intermural sports and that kind of thing. I remember playing basketball. One thing I liked about Irvington is the schools were open after school where you could go and play in the gym or play softball on the playground. The gym teacher would be there running it, and in Union, there was no follow up, no after school activity, unless you were interscholastic.

SI: Were you continuing to help your grandfather during that time?

AW: Yes, actually, that's when I started, when I was in Union.

SI: Oh, okay, all right.

AW: I was fifteen years old. I would take three buses to get to Bloomfield from Union and deliver his clothes in the morning, and then I'd go home about noon or one. After I started driving, I would go back and pick him up and bring him home.

SI: As you were progressing through high school, were you thinking about college then, or was your family encouraging you to think about college?

AW: Yes. The year before I was starting college, I had an uncle who was a teacher who lived across the street and that was on my father's side of the family, and I discussed my future with him. Then, he told me about teaching and why he was in teaching, and I think that led me into teaching. He was a math teacher, and I remember stories he told me about his older brother, my Uncle Sidney, the one with the gas station, and I remember Uncle Henry said one time, "You know, I'm a math teacher and I know a lot about math, but all the math I have in my whole body, Uncle Sidney has in his pinky." I never forgot how important that was to Uncle Henry, who was the teacher, and also just to show us how intelligent Uncle Sidney really was, even though he never followed the professional career that he was trained for.

SI: As you were in high school and you were working, did you have time for things outside extracurricular activities like summer camps or Boy Scouts?

AW: No camp. No, I used to play on the playground during the summer. We belonged to the playground, and all my friends and I would meet up there. We'd play stickball. It was pre-Little League, and it was pre really going to camp. Shortly afterward, there were camps that a lot of people went to, a lot of kids went to, that I was not a part of, because it was nonexistent to me.

SI: You also mentioned that the anti-Semitism you faced increased when you moved to Union.

AW: Yes, yes, because I had to deal with comments that would be made about my religion. It made my adjustment to Union [more difficult]. I didn't hear any of that really except the one

time walking home from school in Irvington. Other than that, I had never experienced any kind of criticism about my religion. In Union, I heard more of it, yes.

SI: Was it always only verbal, or were there any other?

AW: Verbal, yes.

SI: I am curious, when you were thinking about college, did that enter into it? I know Jewish folks of your generation, they would maybe want to go to a college, but then somebody would tell them, "You can't get in there." Was that ever something you thought about?

AW: No, my father could not afford colleges that were expensive colleges. That's why it was a known fact I would probably go to a state college, and teaching came more into the plan because of that. I remember how much it cost. My first year of college was fifty dollars a semester.

SI: Wow.

AW: So, a hundred dollars a year. That's when I went into education. In fact, after I became a teacher, I taught in Union, not in the school I went to, and I taught fourth, fifth and sixth grade my first three years. I have had contact recently from one of my former students who saw my name and she emailed me and asked me if I was the Mr. Weinfeld who taught in Franklin School in Union and I responded back, "Yes." She responded, that, "You were my favorite teacher and I had you three years in a row, fourth grade, fifth grade, and sixth grade, and then all my friends and I were hoping that when we moved on, that you would move on with us and be out teacher all the way through school." So, that was nice. [laughter]

SI: So, you wound up going to Newark State College.

AW: Right, Newark State Teacher's College at first.

SI: Yes.

AW: In 1956, it was Down Neck, Newark for a year and a half, and then the campus was built in Union and we moved to Union during my sophomore year. [Editor's Note: Kean University traces its history to 1855, when the Newark Normal School was founded. From 1937 to 1959, it was known as New Jersey State Teacher's College at Newark. From 1959 to 1973, it was known as Newark State College. In 1973, Newark State College became known as Kean College, which is now Kean University. The Down Neck section of Newark, New Jersey is located in the East Ward and is also known as the Ironbound section.]

SI: Now, did you live at home, or did they have any on campus housing?

AW: I lived at home. My friendships in college were developed very early in my career because I remember meeting the first day during orientation. You were in sections. We were section seven and my three best friends were in section seven with me, and we are still friendly until

today. One of them was in the service, was about eight years older than me--and he's actually seven, seven and a half--he is still around now. We, my wife and I--his wife passed away about a year and a half ago, she was eighty-six and he's eighty-seven and I'm eighty--we go out, we take him out periodically for lunch, just to get together, which we did a couple of weeks ago. It's good to have that relationship, where he appreciates it because he misses her greatly and they don't have a whole lot of friends, friendships. They had people they knew, except for us--we were the best friends. He was an athlete when he was in high school, Westside High School, and she was, I believe, a cheerleader.

My wife Ruth grew up in Highland Park, which was very Jewish. I grew up, where I had mostly non-Jewish friends, but our friendships have always been based on the fact of what kind of people we associated with. That's why we have strong friendships with my college friends now and also the high school friends, who mostly were not the same religion as us.

SI: Tell me a little bit about getting adjusted to college life. You are a commuter, but it also sounds like you also have some involvement on campus.

AW: I drove to school. In fact, I used to take, when we went to Newark, I would take a girl who I was friends with, with me, and then we would go to Irvington, pick up my grandfather, take him to Bloomfield, and then from Bloomfield, go to Newark and pick up my friend who lived in Newark near Bloomfield Avenue and go to school. So, it was a long ride. [laughter] It was an early leaving, and by the time we got to school, it took time. But I enjoyed my college life, even down there. I guess the most exciting part of it was moving to a campus, and we became very actively involved in the campus with activities. I've got to go to the bathroom.

SI: Sure.

[TAPE PAUSED]

AW: Now, we were just talking about college.

SI: Yes, you talked about the commute and then how it was much different when the campus was built in Union.

AW: Yes, yes, everything was brand new. At the time, there were no dorms, everything was commute, but eventually it became a college with dorms. It's still in existence today, and I still have, as I said, my friendships from college. The four of us are still around, but one lost his wife. One of the others, the one I used to pick up on my way to school, his wife now has, she was a smoker, which I was a long time ago too, but I stopped when my granddaughter was born. She had her leg amputated as a result of smoking, and he had prostate cancer. He's okay health-wise. He and I were principals. One of them was a superintendent of schools in Monroe, and he has a place in Florida and up here and he's still around. Then, the fourth one is the one who, I told you, we take out to lunch.

SI: Well, it is interesting, he being so much older because he was in the service. Were most of your classmates of traditional age coming out of high school, or was there a mixture of different?

AW: Most were traditional age coming out of high school, yes. It was post-World War II and post-Korean War, and after we graduated, the Vietnamese War came. But we never really experienced the war. I joined the National Guard when I was in college; that was in December of 1956. I had an eight-year commitment with only two weeks every summer. Then, after three years, you have an opportunity to leave or stay, one year at a time. So, I stayed one year at a time until 1962, when I left, after six years. So, I still had two years left on my obligation and they transferred me to the inactive reserve, Army Reserve, and that's what I was part of my last two years of my military career and just before that was ... [Editor's Note: World War II occurred for the United States from 1941 to 1945. The Korean War occurred from 1950 to 1953. American involvement in the Vietnam War lasted from 1964 to 1973.]

SI: The Missile Crisis? [Editor's Note: The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in October of 1962 after the discovery that the Soviet Union had built missile sites in Cuba. After a tense thirteen-day standoff, President John F. Kennedy negotiated a deal with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev for the removal of the missile sites.]

AW: Yes, the missile crisis, there was talk about our outfit be activated into Germany. That's when I did not renew--my term came up ...

SI: Okay, yes.

AW: ... And I had the option to stay or leave and I left and went into the inactive reserve at that time. Now, our outfit was not actually activated, but there was a lot of talk about it happening. I went inactive, and when I left, I got my discharge from the Army Reserve in '64, so that was in eight years. Actually, it was in November of 1964.

SI: Why did you join in the first place?

AW: I joined, number one, I wanted to have an experience militarily that did not involve long active duty terms, so that was one major reason. The other was to just to--I was the only that joined all of my friends. I met a lot of people there, and I was a company clerk for a long time. Then, later on, I became an administrative sergeant. So, I was the one who ran the office of the outfit. I was in the same outfit all those years. I was the only one who could type, I guess. [laughter]

SI: Now, was this the 102nd?

AW: The 102nd Armored Cavalry, right. [Editor's Note: The 102nd Cavalry Regiment is a New Jersey National Guard unit that was established in 1913. It is part of the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.]

SI: You would be active for two weeks a year. Would you have to go to meetings regularly?

AW: I would go, during the summer, two weeks a year, and then, at the beginning, we drilled one night a week and later on, it changed to a weekend a month.

SI: When you would go on active duty, would you be within New Jersey or would you go any further?

AW: We were up at Camp Drum every year, every summer. [Editor's Note: Fort Drum was established in 1908 and continues to be an active military post that is headquarters for the 10th Mountain Division. It is located in Jefferson County, New York.]

SI: Okay.

AW: Yes, Camp Drum. Then, we would have our weekends, I was in Elizabeth and then I was in West Orange. Our outfit got transferred to different armories at different times.

SI: You noted that you were part of the Honor Guard for John Glenn.

AW: Yes, when John Glenn circled, our outfit was asked to have people come on a voluntary basis to be on the Honor Guard and I was one of the people that was in Honor Guard. [Editor's Note: On February 20, 1962, astronaut John Glenn flew in the Friendship 7 spacecraft in the Mercury-Atlas 6 mission, becoming the first American to orbit the Earth and the fifth person and third American in space. He went on to serve as a U.S. Senator from Ohio from 1974 to 1999. Glenn returned to space on October 29, 1998, as a crewmember of STS-95 at the age of seventy-seven.]

SI: Wow.

AW: When that happened, that was just an amazing [feat], what he did was something that was so new and we all thought it was become an everyday part of our lives, going into space.

SI: Wow. While you were in Newark Teacher's College, did you major in a particular area?

AW: I majored in elementary education, and then after I got my bachelor's degree, I got a teaching job and I went back for my master's degree in school administration at night. Actually, after I graduated college, that summer, I met my future wife and she graduated four years after. When I got my master's, she graduated with her bachelors, so we graduated in the same ceremony because it was four years apart, yes.

SI: How did you meet?

AW: We met on the boardwalk in Asbury Park. I was with a friend of mine walking and she was with girls that walked the opposite direction and passed us. Then, we slowed down and waited somewhere, and two of the girls peeled off from their group of friends and walked by us

again. We wound up going out to get a bite to eat or whatever you did in those days, and that was how we met.

SI: Do any professors stand out in your memory from Newark?

AW: Yes. I had a "Western Civ" [civilization] professor, my freshman year, and I probably remember him the most because he had good personality and he would just help people as they needed help and was a part of the group. He was the one I remember the most really. We were all in the same classes, we were group seven, so, like I said, we all had the same classes together. It was like high school, if it was self-contained, yes.

SI: Why did you choose elementary education?

AW: Because I enjoy working with younger children, not the oldest, like high school or middle school. That was my personal preference. Then, I became an elementary principal. After seven years, I became a vice principal in Edison, and I changed to Edison. I was a half-day teacher and a half-day vice principal. Then, the following year, my principal moved to Florida, and I became principal and I was principal of the school for twenty-eight years.

SI: You were a member of a fraternity at Newark State.

AW: Yes, I was. I was in the fraternity, but that was not where I did most of my social activities. My social activities were with the other three guys. Now, one of them was in the fraternity with me, and he became the superintendent of schools in Newark. The other two did not join a fraternity. What we did mostly was together. Rather than having fraternity activities, we had friendship activities that were a more important part of my college career.

SI: Was there any particular reason why you joined that?

AW: No, it was just the fact that we were friends, and the fraternity activities, the fraternities were not like what fraternities became. Your social activities were much more limited.

SI: You also played basketball.

AW: I played basketball my freshman year, and then I got a job, starting with my sophomore year, but I was on the basketball team my freshman year. In those days, there were no freshman teams. It was anybody, freshman through seniors, so I played basketball my freshman year.

SI: Who would you play against?

AW: Other state teacher's colleges, Upsala, Panzer, and then we went in Pennsylvania, we played some schools in Pennsylvania. Our basketball coach was a someone who was a more recent graduate of Newark State and played basketball. He was a younger guy. He was maybe twenty-six years old at the time. His wife, when I became a principal, his wife was one of my teachers, and they ran a swim club. My friend and I played softball. We joined for half a

summer. I hit a homerun to win the championship, and this former coach of mine, who ran the swim club, made an announcement about my winning the championship with my homerun. That was as far as I got of having an athletic career that was successful. [Editor's Note: Upsala College was in operation from 1893 to 1995. It was founded in Brooklyn, New York but permanently moved to East Orange, New Jersey in 1924. It closed due to lack of funds. In 1917, the Newark Normal School of Physical Education and Hygiene was founded. It would later be renamed Panzer College of Physical Education and Hygiene. In 1958, it merged with Montclair State College, which is now Montclair State University.]

SI: Before we leave Newark State Teacher's College, do you have any other memories either about class or things that you would do as part of your life there?

AW: I think as a part of my relationships with my friends, we would go bowling. We would play ball. Also, for my student-teaching experience, I was a student teacher in Hillside and it was Hillside Avenue School at the time. It's now, I believe, Krumbiegel School, and he was the principal when I had my student teaching. My senior year, I was in Kenilworth as a student teacher. Those both stand out. My wife wound up having the same student teacher four years later in Hillside, and she got an "A" and I got a "B." [laughter] Most of the experiences were based around friendships. There was nothing in particular in school that stood out in my mind other than some of the classes, like the one I told you about, the "Western Civ."

SI: You got a job first in Union.

AW: In Union, yes.

SI: Was it difficult to get a job at that time?

AW: No, everybody got a job. When I got the job in Union, I had been offered a job in Plainfield. Then, I interviewed in Union. I took the job in Union, but there was no class. They would hire seven teachers who wandered until a position opened up for them, and I was one of those seven teachers. So, I would fill in for the first couple months. It was September and October, and in November, the permanent job opened up and that's when I wound up at Franklin School in Union with this class that I told you I got the e-mails from.

SI: What were your impressions of your first couple of years of teaching? What stands out in your memory?

AW: Just the experience of standing in front of kids and teaching them. There were two things that stood out. Well, my third year, JFK was assassinated. My wife was in college at the time, and she called. It was at lunchtime to inform me, and I walked back to class and I told teachers. None of them believed me and they said, "You don't joke about something like that." I mean, nobody could, it was unheard of. I say, the girl, she's sixty-seven years old and she's communicating with me now, and she said she remembered that she had me when JFK was assassinated. She also said something else which impressed me. She said, "I also remember when you took out a cigarette and blew into a handkerchief and showed what that cigarette left in

that handkerchief to impress us with the fact that if you're a smoker, this is what's getting into your lungs every time you smoke a cigarette." She never smoked cigarettes because of that. She never forgot that. So, there were things like that that made impressions with individuals. I had a student whose uncle was Jonas Salk, Jonas Salk with the ... [Editor's Note: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963 in Dallas, Texas.]

SI: Polio vaccine.

AW: ... Polio vaccine. It was her father's brother. I remember that one. Just the experience of interacting with kids and being a part of a class where I could look over them and impart what I could to their lives was the most important thing in teaching. [Editor's Note: Jonas Salk was a physician and scientist who lived from 1914 to 1995. In 1955, the polio vaccine he developed was released to the public, effectively eliminating polio.]

SI: Were there things about how you approached the job that were different from how you looked at the job maybe ten or twenty years down the road?

AW: No. The most important thing was the relationship with kids and with colleagues as a principal or as a teacher. That was the most important part of my experience, and the impressions that I made with others as well as the impressions they made on me.

SI: So, you said you taught that class, fourth, fifth, and sixth, the same students.

AW: Yes, and then I stayed in sixth grade for the following four years. Those that had had me that fourth, fifth and six, that was for three years, she had me and others that were a part of that class.

SI: Then, in 1967, that was when you went ...

AW: In 1967, I went ...

SI: To Edison?

AW: To Edison, yes, and I taught in what was a new school in Edison. We opened up the building, and I had one year in sixth grade teaching. The following year, I became a part-time vice-principal at another school, which is where I was principal for my whole career.

SI: What were the names of those two schools?

AW: Woodbrook School was the first, and James Madison Intermediate School was the second. That was the one that I ultimately became principal of. In 1967, I was a teacher. '68-'69, I was vice principal, and '69 on, I was principal.

SI: Where were you living at this time?

AW: In Edison, not in the school area, the immediate school area of the school though, but it was a ten-minute drive to work. It was nice, yes.

SI: I have interviewed a number of people from Edison, and it seems like that was a time of great change. The township was really growing. What are your memories of how the town and the schools were growing?

AW: I came from a town that was established. Union was established, and I was an active part of the teacher's association. Then, I moved to Edison. Edison has had the highest teacher salary from 1969 to today in Middlesex County. I was not a part of that initial development, but I was a principal a year later and I became active in the Principals Association. I became president of the Edison Principals Association for two years, and it gave me the opportunity to work on the state level because I was part of what was the New Jersey State, NJSIAA [NJPSA, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association]. Then, I was a part of the local organization and could impart my opinions and [was] active with Boards of Education, so I knew different people that were on Boards of Education. [Editor's Note: The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) oversees high school athletics. The New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA) is composed of principals, assistant principals, supervisors, directors and other school district leaders. The NJPSA advocates for educational excellence through government advocacy, legal assistance, leadership programs, professional learning and retirement counseling.]

Ironically, I started, after we retired, a lunch group of former administrators. We get together for lunch every few months. Our old superintendent, ex-superintendent, is still a part of it. He's ninety-four years old and he golfs. He had a stroke in his late eighties. He overcame, he went to rehab and was voted the "Person of the Year" in rehab, and he went back to golf again. I always call him to tell him--in fact, we have a lunch coming up in a couple of weeks--that it's our next luncheon, and his answer in the spring always is, "Well, if it's cold out, I'm not going to go golfing. I'll go there. But if it's nice and warm and sunny, I'll be golfing and I'll miss this one and get the next one." [laughter]

SI: What do you remember about making the switch from classroom teaching to administration? What did you like about it? Was there anything you did not like about it?

AW: Well, I think the most important thing to me was that you were dealing with more people as an administrator and you could impart your personality and your feelings about them, instead of just a class of twenty-something kids every year. That was the most impressive. Ironically, today, I was out to breakfast, and I met a friend of mine. One of my former students walks in the door, and his parents live in the community that we live in. He comes over, he says, "Mr. Weinfeld, you look the same as you always did." He came over, and we hugged each other. He told a story to those I was sitting with about an experience he had while he was in my office one day and I told him, "I'm really your friend." He said, "Well, if you're my friend, how come I'm here?" It gave an opportunity for me to affect the lives of more people. When I retired, they named a street after me going in and out of the school.

SI: Oh, great.

AW: That still exists.

SI: Wow. When you took over as principal, what did you see as the main challenges you had to overcome or the main goals for the first few years?

AW: First year we were on a split session and trying to get everything moving in one direction with the entire school is difficult when you have half one and half the other. But the active involvement of parents, getting them involved in the education of their kids, as well as my experience with the kids, just gave me a good feeling about dealing with children and adults at the same time. That was the most important part of my job, I think, just to develop a positive environment in a school.

SI: You had gotten your master's in administration. Do you think that prepared you well in your role as assistant and later principal?

AW: Yes, I think so.

SI: Did you have to go for any kind of continuing education, or was that not required then?

AW: No, I never got my doctorate degree. I did have a few opportunities to become superintendents of school, but they were in much smaller school districts and financially it wasn't worth my while to make a move from what I was doing. I enjoyed being at the school I was at for so many years that it was part of my life.

SI: What was the factor that let you stop doing split sessions?

AW: Oh, enrollment. That first year, I was a teacher in the morning and vice principal in the afternoon, but the following year, the enrollment pattern changed and a lot of students went back to their home schools instead of coming here, coming to mine. The principal that I worked under moved to Florida. As things fall into place, I didn't know this, but my superintendent of schools was a golfing buddy of my former superintendent of schools, and when I got the job as principal, I was part of their discussion, so that helped me.

SI: Moving into the 1970s and 1980s, were you well supported by the community and your budgets and that sort of thing?

AW: Yes, I had a very good relationship with the community. In fact, when I needed something for the school, we had an assistant superintendent who was very much in control of the curriculum and we really felt it was important to have something. I remember that we had a room that we wanted to use for a specific purpose and I told the assistant superintendent, when he didn't want to give me the room because he had other purposes for it, I said, "Okay, I guess the parents are very much involved in this and you'll probably hear from them." Then, he said, "Is that a threat?" I said, "No, that's not a threat, it's just that it's an involvement that we both

have for the use of this room." Two days later, I get the phone call that we got the room for our purpose. [laughter] The active involvement of parents in the school was a very important part of my administration. Naturally, you're working with the kids and doing a few things extra, doing whatever we could. We had a gym, but it was a multi-purpose room and it was a converted kind of situation. I was very fortunate in that I could have a career where I was respected and I respected the people around me, and we developed a school that we thought and I thought was a great school for the kids. I was a very big Giants football fan and I had things in my office. So, all the kids that would get into trouble would have to come into the office, and some of the kids never saw my office. So, some of them got in trouble just to see the office. I decided, when I retired, I picked a day when all the kids in the school could come to my office because they always heard about what was there and see the office as well, all the good kids. [laughter]

SI: You were there for quite a while.

AW: Yes.

SI: Did you see changes in the community that you had to address in the school?

AW: Yes. In fact, we were the first school to have a heavy Asian population. It all started with JFK Hospital because a lot of the doctors came from India at the time, and so their children were in my school. They lived in the area. It was a big opportunity for people to see and meet other kids from other parts of the world and be a part of what they do.

SI: Would you have actual programs, or was it just a matter of making sure everybody was open?

AW: We had programs too. In fact, I remember one kid, something happened involving use of language. I can't recall the whole situation, but I had to talk to him when he didn't speak English and try to explain something to him and it was very difficult for me. Now, Edison has one of the largest Asian communities.

SI: What about new curricular programs or just currents in thought that people just tried to work into the curriculum? Are there any of them that you remember being put in place and being very successful or not working out? Does any of that stand out in your memory?

AW: Yes, most of what we did involved parents, as well as teachers and then kids, as a part of what you do. The more involvement you had from the total community, the more opportunity you had to bring in new ideas, new thoughts and curricular activities.

SI: Do any specific examples come to mind?

AW: Right now, I can't think of anything in particular.

SI: Okay. Now, you became very active in the Principals Association, as you noted. Did that start right away or as you got more along in your career?

AW: I was active but as a member. As I got older, I took a leadership role and got involved in the state Principals Association as well as a result of whatever we did in Edison.

SI: What were the main goals of the group as you were working with them, and were there areas that you particularly specialized in?

AW: Well, some of them are in curricular areas. Some of them were in personal areas, how the administrative role would affect what's going on. It was a combination of many different things. I became active in the state association as well, when it came to political involvement of administrators statewide, as well as locally.

SI: Did that bring you into contact with a lot state senators or assemblymen?

AW: Mostly with the state association. Then, the Commissioner of Education becomes involved. That's as far as our political involvement went, through the commissioner, yes.

SI: Do you remember particular campaigns or things you were going for?

AW: I think involvement of principals in more central activities than were taking place at the state level, because at the local level we would all be involved in curriculum committees with the teachers and we would come up with some thoughts and ideas that could move forward and we wanted the state involvement to support them.

SI: Did the size of the student body and the faculty pretty much stay the same?

AW: Actually, when I took over, it was larger. That's when we had to go in split session. It went down, and then it came back up before I retired. The lowest I had was 400-and-some students, and I retired at 550 students. But when I took over, it was like 800 students, 780.

SI: What about your relationship with the faculty?

AW: Yes, the relationship with the faculty was very important in everything that we did because I tried to involve them in what we could accomplish. Probably their support and the parents' support were the two most positive things I had going for me as a principal. Because of their involvement, that was the reason I had their support.

SI: Because you were there for a very long time, are there any specific issues that come to mind or things that you wish you had been able to accomplish?

AW: I can't think of anything specific. Things happened along the way. I think the fact that the reputation of the school kept getting better from the early years, because when I took over it was not a school that had a significantly positive reputation in the town. To what it became was probably the most important part of everything, of my feeling about my job and my role.

SI: How many schools of this type were in Edison? How many elementary schools are there?

AW: I retired twenty years ago.

SI: Or when you were there?

AW: There were about ten elementary schools. Mine was called intermediate, but it was really upper elementary. We would get two of the other schools at different times. Because of enrollments, they would take the sixth grades from those two schools and send them to my school, so half my building was six grades and the others were fourth and fifth grade at those times. I had like 350 sixth graders alone.

SI: You obviously must have had a relationship with your fellow principals at the other schools. Was that mostly through the association, or would you meet informally with them?

AW: Elementary principals would meet informally and get together and discuss our curricular projects and programs. I would go to other schools and I would go to other towns to see what they were doing in different subject areas, where we considering changes. I know that North Brunswick was one of them that I got involved with and East Brunswick. The association was there for curricular as well as professional advancement, and the elementary principals, the middle school principals and the high school principals each had their own individual concerns that they met with on their own as well.

SI: All right. Let me pause for a second.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: When did you retire as principal?

AW: 1996.

SI: Did you do anything in your career after that?

AW: Yes, I supervised student-teachers from Monmouth University for ten years.

SI: Okay. Anything stand out about that experience?

AW: The experience of working with college kids to become teachers was an interesting one, because I had never done that before. I enjoyed that.

SI: Were they student-teachers that were coming into the Edison area, or would you go all over?

AW: No, all over.

SI: Okay.

AW: Not Edison in particular. I had a lot of Central Jersey. Old Bridge was a place where I had a lot of student-teachers and Sayreville, and then I had a few outside the county. For the most part, it was as close as it could be where I could combine a number of students on the same day.

SI: You obviously have seen the educational system from many different perspectives.

AW: Right.

SI: What are the biggest changes you saw over the course of your career?

AW: I think the education being related to individuals rather than group education, from the beginning of my career to the end, changed a lot, whereas everybody at the beginning studied the same way as a class. Breaking down classes into individual groups and individual students was a major change over the years.

SI: Do you mean separating people in their tracks?

AW: No, tracks were one thing at one time, tracks were important, but then, the individual students, dealing with them and the individual problems that they had and how to solve them, not as a group.

SI: Okay, like IEPs? [Editor's Note: The Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.]

AW: Right, right, yes.

SI: Any other major changes that stand out?

AW: I had classes for emotionally disturbed students for years, and that was an area that was special ed. It was something that became important, more important as the years went by. At the beginning, it wasn't. My daughter is a psychologist, and she works with Asperger's kids. There was no term, Asperger's, before I retired, but the first student who became identified from my school was the year after I retired and his mother was president of the state Asperger's association and my daughter worked with her.

SI: What about diversification both in the student body and the faculty and administration, were those issues?

AW: Yes. They were issues that had to be dealt with because there were major changes from the beginning, dealing with the whole group, where everybody spoke the same language. Helping students from other countries come in and adjust to school here was a big part of it as

well as the years went by, especially through the '70s and the '80s. The '70s were a big change, and that was key.

SI: I would imagine your faculty also changed over time.

AW: Yes.

SI: Was that a conscious campaign, or did it just happen as individuals just filtered in?

AW: No, it was a conscious campaign. We would meet and we would deal with teacher attitudes towards students, toward different kinds of students and their backgrounds, and once again, getting down to the individual rather than just dealing as a total group.

SI: Were mostly your faculty supportive of this, or was there any resistance to it?

AW: No, they were supportive. Of course, there are always individuals and you have to deal with the individuals who aren't, but on the whole, they were very supportive and they were one of the leaders in dealing with kids coming from foreign countries.

SI: You mentioned you were working closely with the parents. That was probably through the parent-teacher organization.

AW: Yes, parent-teacher organization, the teachers association, administrators associations, dealing and coming together.

SI: Would you have to work with the Board of Education, or was that part of the superintendent's role?

AW: Well, the superintendent worked with the Board of Education, but we worked with the superintendent and the assistant superintendent in these areas. They are the spokespeople for our concerns and the changes that we were interested in making.

SI: You were living in Edison this whole period.

AW: I was living in Edison a few years before I started teaching in Edison. We moved to Edison in 1965 and I came to Edison in 1967, so it was only a couple of years.

SI: In your own neighborhood and section of town, what are the main changes you recall?

AW: I think that where we lived, the major change was in the makeup of the people and the makeup of the population. Now, I haven't been involved for twenty years, but we were the instigators in making adaptations to that and involving the students and parents in our whole program, yes.

SI: You were also involved in the temple at this time.

AW: Yes, at the beginning, in the 1970s, was my major involvement because I was an educator and I was involved in the educational aspect of the temple. So, I was vice president of the temple at one time, and my major responsibility was the education of the students in the religious school, academically, not religious-wise.

SI: What would that entail? What subjects were they learning?

AW: Well, they would learn history of religion, how different people in different groups came into [the religion] and also discrimination within the religion too. My wife and I both taught in religious schools, in Temple Israel in South Orange, Temple Sinai in Summit, as well as Temple Emanu-El, where we belong.

SI: Was the temple already established when you moved to Edison?

AW: The temple was established. It was a temple, but it did not have a building and they held classes in public schools. Actually, they held services in a Protestant church at one time, and then they held classes at Clara Barton School, over here on Amboy Avenue. That was the school at the time. Now, I don't know if it's a senior complex or part of the JFK Hospital, but the classes were held in schools and in other facilities. The temple was built in 1968, physically, the building. From 1965 through 1968, I taught there. I taught in Clara Barton School on Sundays, the Sunday School program, which was basically history, a history approach to the religion, historical.

SI: As you continue with the temple, what were the major challenges that you remember, or were there any?

AW: The challenges with the temple were in making adaptations to communities changing where they live and their relationships with the new people that have just moved in and also to deal with the history of the Jewish people, how that has changed over the course of the years, especially here in the United States.

SI: Is it a Reform temple or Conservative?

AW: Yes, it's Reform.

SI: Has that changed over time? I know, in general, there has been a trend towards more conservative beliefs.

AW: Well, now, things are changing to the degree that there's more recognition and respect from different sects of the religion with others, because at one time, if you were Orthodox, there was no such thing as anything else. Reform attitudes towards the Orthodox was they just deal with things that are outdated. But the changes that have taken place over time with the Reform, I think, have been very positive in dealing with their membership and dealing with other Jewish memberships as well.

SI: Has the community grown over the years you have been there?

AW: Oh, now, it's much less. In the '70s and '80s, Temple Emanu-El was at its maximum; they probably had about five to six hundred members. Now, it's much fewer. In fact, there's even talk about merging with a Reform congregation and a Conservative congregation in one building and having a Reform chapel and a Conservative chapel. I don't know where that will go, but that's the modification that has to be made because there aren't as many members in each sect as there were. Then, we're older, so involving seniors in your temple, who had been in the role that most of the people are in operation of the temple right now affects a lot with the attitudes. I think there's more appreciation and respect today for other sects of the religion than there were when we started. Reform was not accepted by the Orthodox and Conservative as much as they are now. Now, people recognize that there's a place for all different rules within the religious framework.

SI: Any other aspects of your involvement of the temple that you would like to talk about?

AW: Well, early on, I was very involved in the education, and today, I'm one of the members. I do not really have an active role in the operation of the temple.

SI: You were president of the men's club.

AW: Let me see. I was not president of the men's club in the temple.

SI: Okay. Down here [on the pre-interview survey] where it says, "President of the community men's club."

AW: Oh, community men's club.

SI: Oh, it is not with the temple.

AW: No, no. [I was] vice president of Temple Emanu-El in charge of education in the '70s.

SI: Oh, all right.

AW: President of community men's club, yes.

SI: All right.

AW: That's where I live now.

SI: All right.

AW: We formed the men's club too.

SI: When did you leave Edison for Somerset?

AW: We left in 2004. This is fifteen years now. I lived in Edison from 1965 to 2004, so we're talking about thirty-eight-and-a-half years.

SI: What attracted you to the community in Somerset?

AW: Well, actually, my daughter had an issue with her house, which was on wetlands, and she had health issues with the house. She had a much larger house than ours, so she moved in with us, while her husband was going to clean out the attic from whatever they thought was causing it. It was Memorial Day weekend 2002, and she never went home. She stayed with us. He was back and forth between the house, and then finally they sold their house in February of 2004. We moved into our house in April of 2004, so we lived together in the house for two months under the guarantee that I have my bedroom. I don't move my bedroom. Now, they own our old house, and we own a house here.

SI: You have three children.

AW: Yes, they're two sons and a daughter. The oldest is a son. He's the one who is the State Farm agent. My daughter is a psychologist, private psychologist, and my youngest son is the CFO for SNY SportsNet New York, which is known as the Mets baseball network. He went to Delaware. The oldest went to Rutgers, and my daughter went to SUNY Binghamton. [Editor's Note: SportsNet New York was established in 2006. It is a regional sports channel that broadcasts the games and content of the New York Mets. It also broadcasts content about the New York Jets.]

SI: Are there traditions that you have tried to pass down to your children from your parents and your grandparents' generation that either it has happened or you have consciously tried to pass them down?

AW: From our parents, yes, I think that we both, my wife and I both have consciously passed some down. Now, one of my children is in an interfaith marriage, so religion doesn't become really a part of it, although he goes to services in the church with his wife on holidays and she comes to temple with him, along with the two daughters that they have, when we have our holidays. So, the other two are married within the religion, but they all have traditions, family traditions, that were existing before, which are outside the religion, that are a part of what they do and we make them aware of building the family in that way too.

SI: You mentioned having your grandchildren call you "Papa." Are there other specific examples that you can think of?

AW: From the past?

SI: Yes, things that are passed down.

AW: As far as communication, using words is only one, but our tradition about interfaith relationships and respect for other people and for ourselves and our family is always emphasized as being very important. Now, we have [grandchildren], one graduated college, the second one is graduating college this year, and a third one next year, and one is starting college next year as well. So, the importance of relating with your family and being a part of your family has automatically come out, not through our telling them, "This is what you should do," but we noticed that the family, they always consult each other about different things, when it comes to college especially, and they help lead each other along the way, the grandchildren. The importance of family is probably the major thing that we emphasize and that we practice and they practice.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add about your life in general or your career?

AW: No, the only thing I can say is that if I had to do it over again, I know that I chose the right career for myself. I would do it the same way professionally, and if I had to raise a family, I would do what we have done because we're very proud of our children and their relationships with each other and with other people.

SI: All right. Well, thank you very much. I appreciate all your time.

AW: Okay.

-----END OF TRANSCRIPT-----

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