

Transcription Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Nancy Eileen Muleady-Mecham (NM-M)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Born in Los Angeles, and raised in southern California, Nancy excelled in swimming, scuba diving, track, softball, basketball, horseback riding, rooting on the Dodgers, and schoolwork. After graduating from UCLA in Biology, Nancy was offered a job with the Forest Service as a wildland fire fighter and she never looked back. In Part 4, Nancy talks about working at the USS *Arizona* Memorial, law enforcement training school, and her four-month trip through Africa.

Date of Interview: February 10, 2021 PART 4

Method of Interview: Telephone

Transcriber: Kiana Cook

Date of Transcription: March 28, 2021

Transcription Reviewers: Nancy Muleady-Mecham, Tom Martin

Keys: National Park Service; Death Valley National Park; Sequoia National Park; EMT programs; *Park Ranger* (2004); *Park Ranger Sequel* (2008); Stanford University Hospital; William (Bill) Tweed; Modesto, California; Modesto-Ceres Ambulance; Everglades National Park; USS *Arizona* Memorial; Santa Rosa Criminal Justice Training Center; Aiea, Hawaii; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Molokai; Haleakalā; Sliding Sands Trail; Maui; Gail Minami; Mark Tanaka-Sanders; Daniel Inouye; Mark Senning; Yvonne Menard; Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (Glynco, Georgia); Sears Point, California; Bob Bondurant School of Driving; Valley Medical Center of Fresno; Ben Schifrin; Tom Tschohl; Kenya; Tanzania; Virunga Mountains; Ngorongoro Conservation Area; Maasai Mara National Reserve; Mount Kilimanjaro; Hans Meyer Cave

TM: Today is Wednesday, February 10th, 2021. This is Part 4 of a Grand Canyon Oral History Interview with Nancy Eileen Muleady-Mecham (NM-M). My name is Tom Martin (TM). Good afternoon, Nancy. How are you today?

NM-M: I'm well. Thank you, Tom.

TM: Great. Nancy, you and I were just talking about where we left off in Part 3, and, if I get this right, in 1980 and '81, you were in Death Valley. Is that right?

NM-M: Right. And I was there from October to April, and then from May to October of '81 in Sequoia National Park, and in '81 and '82 and back in Death Valley, and again in ... '80 ... the summer of '82 back in Sequoia National Park. And, as I went back and forth, I worked as a naturalist, but I also had a background as an emergency medical technician; and gave walks, talks, and evening programs. And I believe I talked about how Larry Norris and I kind of took over the interpretation when we lost the permanent employees, one of which transferred, and the chief had a heart attack, so...

TM: That's right.

NM-M: We did "A Day in Death Valley." We had a lot of fun—fun times being innovative, and I would do things called "Ties to the Past," which was about the railroad history. We talked about doing Juliet Brier history and all kinds of fun things. But one of the things that happened at Death Valley is, especially in after-hours and the evenings, I would often get called to respond to emergency medical calls because it wasn't a requirement back then that all of the protection rangers be EMTs.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And, so, they were few and far between. And it was very frustrating because the average population there in the wintertime was, you know, 70 to 80, and I was—it was the older people who were smokers, basically, and they would come and stay for weeks and weeks at a time and then leave and then come back. So we had heart attacks. We had strokes. And I've written several of these stories in my books, *Park Ranger* and *Park Ranger Sequel*, about people having heart attacks during the '49er weeks and trying to bring them back. And it was frustrating for me at this early stage in my life to only be able to do CPR for these people and airway and not have the ability to do any advanced life support or cardiac support. So, with that frustration in mind, I applied and was accepted to paramedic school at Stanford University Hospital, and I started there in summer of '82. And my boss at Sequoia National Park, Bill Tweed, was kind enough to fix it so I could work long hours, like three or four days a week, and then [bomb off] to the Bay Area and go to school. That particular paramedic school does not exist at Stanford anymore. It was one of the very first schools in California, and it soon was able to segue to one of the community colleges, and Stanford moved on to other things. But it was kind of neat to go there, and with housing being just so awful (like right now), I actually got a room in an old Victorian house on 200 Emerson Street—I think it was 200 Emerson Street—anyway, for just a couple of hundred dollars a month. But it was just—you know, no kitchen privileges and shared bathroom, but it was an adventurous time for a young person, that's for sure.

TM: In that Stanford paramedic school, do you remember who else was in there? I mean, people coming from different areas—was there anybody else from the Park Service there?

NM-M: No. No. Uh-uh. This was strictly a civilian-run thing. I did this all on my own, and I paid for it on my own, except for one thing: I got an envelope addressed to me, and there was no return address, and inside was a hundred-dollar bill.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And a little note said, "An investment in the life of a good person."

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And I had no idea, and I went to two or three people that I thought might have done it. And I said, "Thank you," and they said, "For what?" and I said, "For this," and they said, "I didn't do that." So they either denied it or I didn't find the person to thank. But that was one of the—a very nice thing that somebody did for me at that time.

TM: That's really wonderful.

NM-M: Yeah. A hundred dollars may not seem that much, but the tuition for that class was a thousand dollars, so that helped a lot.

TM: Right. And that's 40 years ago. That was a big chunk of—it was a big chunk of money back then.

NM-M: It was a big chunk of money. Yes.

TM: Who else was in the class? Were they simply people that wanted to become EMTs, to be...?

NM-M: No, no, no. These were people becoming paramedics. They're all, they're already EMTs.

TM: Paramedics. I'm sorry. Thank you.

NM-M: You're already EMTs.

TM: Thank you.

NM-M: And these are people who are hoping to work for an ambulance company—

TM: Okay.

NM-M: —maybe to get in with the fire department. This was so early that when I became a paramedic and worked in Modesto, the fire department in Modesto still did not respond to medical calls.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: That was not in their purview. Now that's what they do. You know, that's 80 percent of their calls. And the fire chief was so old-fashioned that he would only go and help extricate people, but they wouldn't do patient care. So, when I was in Modesto, it was so early in being a paramedic back then that we had all standing orders. We did some very advanced life support things.

TM: Like what?

NM-M: Pericardiocentesis is one. We were able to go underneath the xiphoid bone of the sternum and go into the cardiac covering around the heart and pull out blood with a syringe.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: You don't do that now. A surgeon does that now. And so many other things that... And all of our calls were standing orders. You go to another county and you can't even start an IV without permission from the base station, but Modesto was very early and progressive in that we did endotracheal intubations, surgical cricothyrotomies. We did a lot of stuff that I was able to do for years, actually.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: Some of the other things probably—I mean, we—we stopped short of Caesarean sections, but they talked about that, emergency C-sections in the field, so...

TM: Okay.

NM-M: It was early on, for sure. And then I worked, as I said, for Modesto-Ceres Ambulance, which later become 9-1-1 Ambulance, which later became, I think—I'll have to think about the name that they are today, but they've changed hands many times. So, in the wintertime, I would often work as a paramedic in a city, and then I would work as a naturalist at Sequoia National Park. And I did that up until December of 1983. So, at that time, I would be working as a city paramedic and get lots and lots of calls, averaging, you know, 10, 12 calls sometimes a day, maybe fewer. But that might be what a park medic would get in an entire season—

TM: Right. Right.

NM-M: —at Sequoia or Death Valley or Tetons or wherever they were. And I—

TM: So just kind of clarifying this. You had been alternating between a seasonal at Death Valley in the winter and Sequoia in the summer.

NM-M: Right.

TM: And, so, what you did was replaced that winter in Death Valley with the paramedic school?

NM-M: Right.

TM: And then moving onto working for the Modesto ambulance.

NM-M: Right, but that changed in December of 1983, when I applied and received an appointment as a park ranger in Everglades.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: So now I'm back to working. And then I would work—sometimes, I'd work at the winter park for a few months; then I'd work as a city paramedic. So I had a whole thing. So I worked at—'83, '84, I worked in Everglades National Park; April to October, Sequoia National Park; from '84 to '85, to the *Arizona* Memorial; and then I took another big step in a career choice. And, from December to April, I went to the Santa Rosa Criminal Justice Training Center as a law enforcement student. And this was—I had seeing the writing on the wall. If I wanted to be a naturalist, I didn't really have to do anything. If I wanted to continue in emergency medicine, I'd have to become a protection ranger.

TM: Okay. This is really helpful, Nancy, because I remember—and I apologize. I've lost a page of my notes. In Part 3, we talked about your time at the Everglades. And you had a friend there, and we talked about crocodiles—

NM-M: Right. Right.

TM: —but I don't think we talked about the *Arizona* Memorial in Hawaii.

NM-M: No, and that was very exciting. That was before 9/11, before all of the big changes.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And Hawaii, as it turned out, was an incredible experience but a very expensive experience. And, so, I was hired—

TM: Why did you choose Hawaii?

NM-M: It was one that you have only a hand—you have, at that time, maybe 380 national park areas, of which maybe only 10 of them are considered “winter parks.”

TM: Okay.

NM-M: So everybody hires seasonals in the summer. But if you want to work as a seasonal in the winter—

TM: Right.

NM-M: —you went to Everglades. You went to Death Valley. You went to Hawaii. You went to the Virgin Islands. You went to where it was warm [laughs] in the wintertime.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And, so, I'd already been to Death Valley, and I'd already been to Everglades. So I just wanted to try something different. And this was a chance to go to Hawaii. I had never been there before.

TM: Wow. Were you looking—with your experience in scuba diving, were you looking to do diving there and to get out, you know?

NM-M: Oh, yes. To dive, for sure, which I did. I dove on a lot of—my first wrecks out there.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: So, when I got there, I remember I arrived in the evening. My flight out there, one-way, was \$128.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And I brought several boxes; my bicycle, which they encouraged me to do, which was an old 1965 bicycle.

TM: [laughs] That didn't fold in half. I bet the baggage people were grumbling down there.

NM-M: It did not. They put it in a bicycle box, and they put it on the plane.

TM: Oh my gosh.

NM-M: Back then, it was so easy, so easy to do all that stuff. I even had a six-inch dive knife I just brought as a carry-on—

TM: Oh my gosh.

NM-M: —because I didn't want to lose it, you know. So things were so relaxed. There was no metal detectors. People could see you off at the gate. It was very different.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: But I got there, and the person that picked me up had a VW Bug. So, you know, we crowded my bags, tied the bicycle on the top. And he had made arrangements for me to rent a room in one of the permanents—permanent's rental house, so kind of a sublet.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And, so, it was in a little town called Aiea, which is up from Pearl City, which was—trying to remember if it was a two-and-a-half or three-and-a-half miles one-way walk to the *Arizona* Memorial at Pearl Harbor.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: I ended up not riding my bike to and from work because it was easy downhill, but it was a grunt all the way uphill. We had to go past Aloha Stadium, the C&H Sugar Factory, and all that stuff. So I walked it every day, and it was very delightful, but I had to get up before dawn. And, as you did so, the—they had what they called palmetto bugs—well, cockroaches.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: Giant cockroaches there.

TM: Oh.

NM-M: You would walk on the sidewalk before the sun would come up, and you'd just—they would crunch under your feet. It was very sad. But, anyway, so it—and I loved the wind. Oh, that's my favorite thing in the whole world. It's like Mother Nature giving you a big old hug. So the wind would blow, and as I walked by the chain-link fence by Pearl Harbor, there would be all these plastic bags caught in it. And I had my little tape player, and I'd be listening to musicals, you know, *South Pacific* and *Man of La Mancha* and all these different things. I just love that kind of stuff. So I would listen to it as I walked to and from work. But I had a room, a very small room, a mattress on the floor, and kitchen privileges. And it was very interesting living in Aiea. I found out that if I walked uphill into a very small enclave there, that there was a laundromat. So I would take my laundry up and do it in the laundromat, and then I'd go down to a place to get something to eat for lunch, and I would stand in line. And I was the only haole there, and "haole" is the slang for a white person there, as opposed to somebody who lived in Hawaii. And, when I would get up toward my—to my time in line, it was really disconcerting because the person at the counter would help everybody around me but me, even if I had worked my way up in line, until there was nobody there to help but me. So it was my first look at being—at prejudice.

TM: Discriminated against, yeah.

NM-M: And I had, you know—I had sadness for people who were slighted, you know, students, especially people of color, but I never experienced it myself until then. And what I had realized, as I came back week after week to do my laundry, that it changed. They thought I was some tourist, perhaps trying to get local color or something. And, later on, as they got to know me and knew I lived there and all that kind of stuff, then that never happened again.

TM: Nice.

NM-M: But it was—it was very interesting. And, because it was so expensive there—if lettuce was a quarter on the mainland, it was a dollar and a quarter in Hawaii.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: So I would go over to the Aloha Stadium parking lot, where they had flea markets. And, a lot of times, you could buy cans of food without labels on them, and they said, "Oh, these are pineapples. These are spam." So I'd buy some of those for very cheap, you know, like 15 cents a can. I later found out, you know, many years later, that it was probably all stolen, but I didn't know that at the time. And, so, I would buy cheap food. And I made a point to go to every single island. That's what I did with my money.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: I flew to each of the other islands, and sometimes I went with a friend of mine who I worked with at the *Arizona* Memorial. And Gail Minami was one of my traveling friends, and we'd—she later became the chief ranger at Hawai'i Volcanoes. But we went to Kalaupapa. We went down a Molokai cliff on mules and went to the leper colony when there were still people who had leprosy living there.

TM: And they still let people go out there? Wow.

NM-M: Yeah. Yeah. And it was important—tourism was important for them.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: It was an important part. But it's a national park area.

TM: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

NM-M: And I would go—went to each of the islands. Of course, I couldn't afford to do anything but sleep in my car, so I had a rental car, and I would drive to somewhere, and then I would spend the night in the car and then go hiking somewhere. At Maui, I went to Haleakalā, and I parked—I'll never forget this. I parked the car at the very top with the intent of hiking all the way down the crater, the Sliding Sands Trail. Then you come out on the one road that goes all the way back up, but it's—you know, it's like a seven-mile walk all the way back uphill. I got all the way down to the road, and I thought, "I've never done this before. I'm going to put a thumb out, and I'm going to ask for a ride." And, just as I was going to do that, this car comes up and says, "Can you tell us where the parking lot is for Haleakalā?" And I said, "Well, I'm headed there myself. If you give me a ride, I can point it out to you." "Great!" So they took me to the top, not realizing it was the one and only road and they would never get lost. [laughs] So that was a lot of fun.

TM: Fun.

NM-M: But there were many, many different guides who worked for the Park Service there named Mark. So they all had different names. There was Mark, Marco, Maleko, you know, so we all gave them different names, because we couldn't have had five Marks there.

TM: Right.

NM-M: But that was just a coincidence. But Mark Tanaka-Sanders was my boss, and he was a neat guy. He was my boss. He was originally from the mainland.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And he was haole like me, but he'd married a local girl. And so together, they hyphenated their last name.

TM: Oh, cool.

NM-M: And the cool thing about that is, you know, I went to visit at their house, and because she was native Hawaiian, I got invited to some real luaus and real ceremonies and real events that—

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: I remember at the first real luau I went to—and I'm not a fish food person. I was—actually, at that time, I was still eating fish and seafood. But I remember eating octopus and thinking, "This tastes and feels just like an octopus." You know, like with all the suckers and everything. But that's—you know, you did what you did.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And, so, it was just really, really cool.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And I... I felt very patriotic. I felt very proud to be there at the time. And, if I may give a little bit of an observation. I grew up in a family that's very proud. I'm liberal, and I was proud of the flag. And I feel like it's been usurped right now, the American flag, for nefarious means, and I—and it makes me sad that, when I see that, sometimes I don't feel the pride I used to feel in it. I feel like somebody's taken it and using it for nefarious means rather than the patriotism it should normally represent, you know? If that makes sense?

TM: Yeah. Yeah.

NM-M: Anyway, so the Department of the Navy ran the boats, and the National Park Service gave the tours out on the memorial.

TM: Oh, wow. That's an odd sort of memorandum of understanding there.

NM-M: It is. It is. And, so, it was a very small thing. It's not—it was not the big thing it was now. It had a little bookstore, and you could buy flags that got raised up on the flagpole over the *Arizona*, which was an arch over the battleship itself, BB-39. And, because it just had been refueled before the bombing at Pearl Harbor, it still has a drop of fuel that comes up every now and then and makes kind of a slick on the water. I still get—got asked the question—and I was warned I would get asked the question—"Is that blood of the sailors coming up?"

TM: Oh my gosh. Yeah.

NM-M: But they had won a band contest the night before, so they had the right to sleep in the next morning, so a lot of them died in their bunks. That's why 1,179 people—I gave all these statistics, you know, so they're sort of in my brain still.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And then the wall with all that names. So they would—people would come in, and you'd work the desk. And there would be announcements both in English and in Japanese, and so I could speak a lot of Japanese, but it's only what I had heard, like, 30,000 times over and over on the loudspeaker [laughs].

TM: Right.

NM-M: You know, I could tell them where the restroom was, but... And, people would start—because half the visitors to the memorial were Japanese.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: The other half were Americans.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: Or, you know, people who were not Japanese. And, so, the few things I could say in Japanese, you know, "Ohayou gozaimasu" and a few other things, they would just start to speak Japanese to me, and I'd go, "Whoa. Time out. That's it." [laughs] But we gave out free tickets. The memorial was free.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And, so, they—we'd give out free tickets. And, because we had to limit the number of people on the tour because of the number of people on boats—so, once you had a group, you did the introduction

to this marvelous movie they had put together and that was shown on big theater cameras and then—or projectors, excuse me. And then you would take them out, and then you'd get them on the boat. You'd go over with them, with the sailors, and they were often female sailors that were on the boat. And then they would take them across. We'd get up on the memorial, and we'd tell them before they got on, you know, "No talking, no chewing gum. I mean, whisper, you know, be very solemn, because we're basically in a graveyard here."

TM: Right.

NM-M: And, when you walked over there, as many times as I did it, you did get a feeling of reverence and respect.

TM: Ah, cool.

NM-M: I never had to ever tell anybody to—even kids, I never had to tell them to quit acting up. You could feel it, I guess. And because then you'd walk in and there's whole big wall with all their names on it, and... But I was privileged enough to be working there on December 7th, when they held the big ceremony every year. And I was so fortunate on this huge day to be assigned to be on the memorial itself. So I went out to the memorial. And Daniel Inouye, who was a senator at the time, and all these Congressmen and high-ranking admirals and stuff had come over for the ceremony, and they had what I call "Echo 'Taps.'" They had somebody at one end of the memorial go "doo doo doo," and the other one would go "doo doo doo," and they did "Taps" just back and forth to each other.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And then all these ships would go by—I mean, battleships and cruisers and destroyers and stuff. And everybody were in their whites, and they were all—they would just go by the memorial one after another, all saluting. And it was just—oh, it just gives me goosebumps to think about it.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: But I got to see all of that. It was very cool.

TM: I bet. Gosh.

NM-M: And I got to raise the flags and put them down. So, because I was out on the memorial before everybody came and after everybody left, just to be the presence, I put up a flag on December 7th for my parents and brought it down. You know, I bought it in the bookstore, put it up, brought it down, and then I sent it to my mom and dad. They've—that's still part of the family. So that was a fun thing to be able to do.

TM: Cool.

NM-M: That picture's actually in my book, *Park Ranger*. And it was a rainy kind of a day, kind of a gloomy day, but it kind of fit, to be that day. But my favorite days at the memorial were Tuesdays. Tuesdays were when the Navy Band came and played with their band on the grass in front of the flagpole. So I always volunteered to go out and put up the flag. I mean, it's one of those huge, huge flags, like you see over car dealerships sometimes.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And gigantic, so it took two of us to put up the flags. So the band would be all lined up. And we're talking about, like, 30 people, and they're playing all these songs, and they sound as good as you might think they might sound—

TM: Boy, I bet.

NM-M: —at, like, five feet away [laughs]. So we would clip it up, and they did it. And it would go up, and they would play, you know, "The Star-Spangled Banner," and they'd play "America the Beautiful" and all that kind of stuff, and the flag would go up. And you'd have hundreds of people just gathering on the grass, listening to the Navy Band as you put the flag up. I mean, we put this flag up every single day, but on Tuesdays the band came.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And that was very special.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And, my added duties, was to walk through the parking lot to make sure people didn't break into cars, and nobody ever did. I worked as a paramedic and had a couple calls there at the memorial. One was very sad. I remember specifically her name was Virginia and she was 72. And she had chest pain, and they called me over, and I said, "Yes, we need the ambulance." And as I was doing my patient assessment and asking about her medical history, I said, "Well, what medications are you on?" And she told me, and I said, "Well, did you take them today?" She goes, "No. I haven't taken them since we got here. I'm on vacation. I didn't think I needed to."

TM: Oh.

NM-M: And, sadly, she passed away. So I—that always—I always teach my students that now. I say, "People just don't understand. It's your job to explain stuff to them."

TM: Right. Right. Right.

NM-M: Anyway, so I had a—made really good friends, kept in touch with them for years. And a couple that I met there, Yvonne Menard and Marc Senning, later went to Channel Islands. But, while they were in Hawaii, they wanted to get married at Sequoia National Park. So, when I was there, I set it all up for them and found the places they could legally get married, and they brought their own minister. So that was a lot of fun. And, so, anyway, they were really great people. He was one of the many Marks, you know.

TM: Yeah. Yeah.

NM-M: Mark Tanaka-Sanders, Mark Senning, and on and on. And, let's see, what else about the *Arizona* Memorial? I just took advantage of being there and going to all the islands, went scuba diving every chance, took the bus—that's what Hawaii calls their public transportation, "the Bus"—

TM: Okay.

NM-M: —to Ala Moana or to the zoo or something, and I—I really explored. I did something all of my free time and rode my bike where I could. There are a lot of hills. I realized after a while the bike wasn't the smartest thing to take unless I had, like, a little motor on it, because it was either uphill or downhill.

TM: Oh, gosh. You mentioned this was the first time you had a chance to dive on wrecks.

NM-M: Yes.

TM: What was that like?

NM-M: It was very cool cause, you know, as a scuba diver since I—you know, since 1969, 1970 and so forth, I've been diving in Catalina Island or off the coast of California, at the time legally getting abalone and all that stuff. It was all natural history. It was all nature. But to actually go down and see a ship that had been—during World War II that had been bombed or a minesweeper or something like that, that was very special. And, even since then, I—just about five years ago, I think, in Hawaii, off of Maui, I dove on a Douglas Dauntless—I'm saying that correctly—fighter plane—

TM: Wow.

NM-M: —that somebody found. So I got to dive on the fighter plane—more recently, not back then because they hadn't found it yet. So to see these things underwater and to see part of history and know how much was going on was very special. But it was also the time of the humpback whales, and it was just a whole other wonderful adventure to go to Hawaii and to get to know that area. And, as a result, when Kent and I got together, we went there on our first-year anniversary, and we've gone there every year since then, for the most part. We've missed two or three years.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: We have a friend who's got a place on Maui, so we stay there for two weeks every year, except for COVID and a few other times.

TM: Nice.

NM-M: Yes.

TM: Nice.

NM-M: So when I finished there, that's when I went to Santa Rosa, to the Criminal Justice Training Center. And it was interesting because until—

TM: Oh. Nancy—

NM-M: Oh, sorry.

TM: I'm sorry. I'm going to jump in here. You mentioned that you had a seasonal commission.

NM-M: Yes, but I got it after Hawaii, I misspoke.

TM: What's that?

NM-M: When you are—you go to school and—oh, one of the cool things that I did, I should—well, I'm about to tell you that when I get to that.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: But when you get a commission—let me put it—I have to correct myself because I didn't have my commission when I was at the *Arizona* Memorial at Pearl Harbor.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: They had us do those walking-through parking lots, and I was thinking, “Maybe I need to do this.” So that was part of the instigation for me doing that, because I was walking through, looking for bad guys, when I had no clue what I was looking for.

TM: Got it.

NM-M: So I misspoke when I said I had it. This is one of the things that made me go get it—

TM: Okay.

NM-M: —plus wanting to work, continue to work, in emergency medical services. And then I found out that people who are in protection are the ones who do search and rescue, and they’re do the ones who do firefighting and all this stuff. So it became a wonderful adventure. I thought maybe I’d like to explore that part of being a park ranger.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: But, anyway, when you work for the National Park Service in protection, you are given a very extensive background check and your fingerprints and making sure you’re not a bad guy, and they go talk to your neighbors. And, so, if you are okey-dokey, then you are given a commission, which gives you the right to enforce the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and anything that is absorbed from the state laws that’s not covered by the CFR. As a seasonal, though, you are limited on what you can do. You cannot serve warrants. You can arrest, but you can’t present in certain cases. You’re limited in your abilities. When you become a permanent, which I did years later, you are then sent to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And that’s a very, very, you know, extensive—you know, more than the six-week classes. It’s months and months and months of taking law classes and criminal investigations and interviewing techniques, and it’s—it’s a—it’s a police school, basically—

TM: Got it.

NM-M: —for land management agencies. But then, once you get a full commission—not a seasonal, but a full commission—then you can serve warrants. Then you can do all kinds of things that you couldn’t do as a seasonal, for instance.

TM: Okay. So—

NM-M: But the seasonal gets you in the door.

TM: The Santa Rosa Training Center was—when you went through that training, you would then become a seasonal commissioned officer?

NM-M: If I passed my background investigations.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: If I passed and I was hired. I didn’t have a commission unless I worked for the Park Service.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: So it's not like I'm walking around there with a seasonal commission. You know, in the off-season when I worked as a paramedic, I had absolutely no power whatsoever.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: The only—your power is only in areas of the federal government that gives you the permission to do that.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, national parks, that kind of stuff. But the school was neat because it was held at the old juvenile facility in Santa Rosa, up in the hills. And, because we lived on campus and went to school on campus, our—my room was an old prison—and my room was an old cell. So the door was, like, several inches thick. It made a big clunk when it closed. My bed was on chains hanging from the wall with a thin mattress.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And I had a steel toilet [laughs] in the corner.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: Yeah. But—and then we went to classes, and—we had great ping-pong tournaments, I remember. We had great ping-pong tournaments. But what—you know, we learned all kinds of stuff—you know, how to handle a weapon—

TM: Okay.

NM-M: —how to do search and rescue. But the thing that impressed me most was the constitutional law we learned.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: I thought everybody in the country should go to this class just to learn—

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: —the law of the country and how it works.

TM: Yeah. Huh.

NM-M: And, to give you an example of the things that I learned, is: If you were cold and you found a cabin and you broke in to get warm and, on the way out, you stole the stereo, okay, that is theft—breaking and entering and theft. If you looked in the window, saw the stereo, and broke in with the intent to take that stereo, that's burglary—the difference between a misdemeanor and a felony.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: So you learned the fine little things that go on, you know, and it was really interesting to learn all of that. But then we went to Sears Point over on the coast of California to the Bob Bondurant School of Driving.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: And we learned how to drive patrol cars down slick oil, so they could make them spin and we could take them in and out of spin, and how to drive and talk on the radio at the same time and how to do a safe vehicle stop. I mean, it was—for a young person, it was just everything was new and different and enriching.

TM: I bet.

NM-M: And I made lots of friends, and so it was very, very cool and—I thought, at the time, you know. And my mom thought it was very cool that I went to the Bob Bondurant School of Driving.

TM: [laughs] I bet. And this was, like, six weeks, the Santa Rosa—?

NM-M: Yes. I think so.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: I think so. But the other thing is on the weekends, they had special classes for anyone who wanted to pay for it and go to it. So I took Firefighter 1 and learned my basic structural firefighting there. And on another couple of weekends, I did high-angle rescue—

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: —how to do ropes, how to tie ropes. And we went to the Russian River, and I did a Tyrolean traverse across the Russian River. We did all kinds of rope things and stuff. So it was the beginning of using the athleticism in me and the desire to learn in me and wanting to do things that didn't take me away from natural history but enhance my life with these other skills.

TM: Okay. All right. That makes sense. Wow.

NM-M: Yes.

TM: That's—that's very cool. That was a—so just a month and a half, but a very packed-in...

NM-M: It was. And then, of course, every year, you'd go to 40 hours of continuing education. And, almost every day, you're learning something new on the job, so that was cool.

TM: Okay. Yeah.

NM-M: So, right after that ended, I started my many years of being a park medic instructor because I was already a paramedic and I was working as a paramedic in the national parks. I'd worked at Sequoia and had the calls at the *Arizona* Memorial and Everglades. I was contacted by Valley Medical Center in Fresno and the National Parks Service to become the skills instructor. So the park medics would not be paramedics. They had a much shorter time. They wouldn't be EMTs, but they could start IV, give a handful of drugs, and do an advanced airway. And, so, my job was to teach them the skills part, where the didactic or the school was taught by physicians.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And every national park that has park medics has a liaison physician who's in charge of the program. Usually they are residents, which are people who've graduated from medical school and now

they're learning how to become physicians in emergency medicine. And they all have to have special projects. So one of them is usually assigned as a park medic coordinator.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And ours—the very first one was a man named Ben Schifrin, Dr. Ben Schifrin, Emergency Medicine. And he's notable because he's one of the coauthors of the classic set of books on the Pacific Crest Trail later on.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: So we worked together. We did that. And then, when they would come up in the summertime, when I would work at Sequoia National Park, they'd check in and they would do continuing education for the EMTs and all that kind of stuff. And then they'd go off on a hike. So it was win-win for them, for sure.

TM: Fun. And so—and so you were training people, I'm assuming, coming out of Yellowstone and coming out of—

NM-M: Yes. Yes.

TM: Gosh. I—Crater Lake and—

NM-M: Tetons, Death Valley, Yosemite, you bet. Anybody who wanted to have a park medic program. Not all national parks had a park medic program at the beginning.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: But, after a while, they began to see the wisdom of it. And at Grand Canyon, there was, I think, one or two paramedics prior to my arrival that had been in the system. I showed up, and there were park medics and paramedics. And then after—I think I was there for 18 years or something. And then, when I was done, they'd gone from park medics to paramedics being park rangers. Still have some of those, but then they came and brought outside ambulance companies in to do a lot of the transport and some of the initial response. So it's gone through this great big cycle in time, I think.

TM: Interesting. Yeah.

NM-M: Yes.

TM: So, after the Santa Rosa Training Center, where did you go from there?

NM-M: I became the park medic instructor at VMC (Valley Medical Center) in Fresno, and then I went to Sequoia National Park.

TM: Okay. So, when you were at Sequoia, this would be the summer of '83?

NM-M: '85.

TM: Okay. So summer 1985—

NM-M: Well, I—

TM: That's right, because you'd gone to Everglades, and then you'd gone to Hawaii.

NM-M: Right. And then I went to Sequoia in '84 in the summer.

TM: Right.

NM-M: And then—I went to Everglades, Sequoia, *Arizona* Memorial, Santa Rosa, park medic. And then now it's the summer of '85, where I worked as a naturalist and where they started calling me out as a paramedic now. And there was a—the district ranger was a man named Tom Tschohl. And we had been friends for a while, and he'd use me occasionally as an EMT. But, now that I had these skills, when they could call me, they did. And he eventually put a phone—one of those old black phones that you'd pick up, and it's a regular handset and everything—

TM: Right.

NM-M: —on—I slept outside on a porch, out of choice, a screened-in porch. And, so, he had a—actually had a phone installed so he can call me. But I was young, and I didn't care if they woke me up in the middle of the night. But I think I already told the story of helping the person who got sick—

TM: Yes.

NM-M: —who was irritated when I got called out.

TM: Who was poo-pooing the program.

NM-M: Until I helped her and then she said, "Well, do whatever it takes." [laughs]

TM: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. That's right.

NM-M: So then I worked there. And then, at the end of that summer in October—I worked until October—was my first big trip anywhere. And I grabbed my mom, and we went to Ireland to visit family.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And that was very exciting because it was me taking my mom—my dad wasn't really interested—to Ireland, rather than my parents taking me somewhere.

TM: Nice.

NM-M: So I saved the money, and off we went. And we visited family, and we kissed the Blarney Stone, and we had such a grand time.

TM: Wow. Nice.

NM-M: And I've been back many, many, many times since then as we have family there. Then, when I came back, I worked that winter for Mobile Life Support, which is what used to be Modesto-Ceres Ambulance—

TM: Okay.

NM-M: —from October of '85 until May of '86. And then, from May to October, back to naturalist/[inter-]paramedic, Sequoia National Park.

TM: Of 1986. So all that winter of '85, you continued to work on your skills as a paramedic—

NM-M: Right.

TM: —getting those stronger. At that time, in the winter of '85, did you have a vision of where you wanted to take this, or were you just kind of going from seasonal to—you know, position to position? Did you have an idea where you going yet?

NM-M: I had no clue.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: I loved my life. I loved moving every six months, being challenged. I was—I'm very fortunate to have an ability to remember things well.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And I am very adventurous. Bring it on. Anything new, I'm all for it.

TM: Yes.

NM-M: I'm a gregarious person who likes to be with people. So it's anything that allows me to be with people and to help people. It was really hitting all of the high points. But I had—at this point, you know, I'm—I'm a very ... "bring it on" kind of a thing. And I—I always wanted to get married and have a family. That was always in the back of my mind. But I thought, "It would happen. You know, I'm not too worried about when it happens."

TM: Right.

NM-M: "And, until then, I am just going to play." So, every six months, I did something different.

TM: Cool. Okay.

NM-M: Yeah.

TM: And so you're on that track. But—except you're anchoring back to Sequoia [laughs] a lot.

NM-M: Oh, Sequoia's my heart park.

TM: Yeah. Okay.

NM-M: Sequoia's my—that's home.

TM: Got it.

NM-M: That's home.

TM: Fun.

NM-M: I went home every summer that I could.

TM: All right. Makes sense.

NM-M: That was kind of the deal.

TM: Yeah. And you would have known the people there, and they would have known you.

NM-M: Oh, yes.

TM: So it would have been a...

NM-M: And, see, when you are a—when you're a seasonal, you have no expectation or right to come back. They don't have to bring you back.

TM: Got it.

NM-M: So you have an evaluation at the end of the season which says "highly recommended for rehire," "recommended for rehire," "forget about it," you know. You have different tiers, the "don't even think about it" kind of stuff.

TM: Right.

NM-M: So it is—behooves the one or two permanent people—and, at that time, we had 15 to 17 seasonals at Sequoia National Park.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: That was the golden era. Now they, I think, have three.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: But that is when they—it behooved them to bring you back, and I was, you know, one of the people that helped with the scheduling. And you could put me in, and I would help with the training of the new people, and they'd see you do a Moro Rock geology talk or follow you on—you'd go through your Tharp's Logs or your giant sequoia walk on the Congress Trail. And then—and being such a huge backpacker, you know, every weekend or days off, I would be off hitting the trails as soon as I got home from work.

TM: Nice.

NM-M: Man, I—backpack on my back, and off I would go.

TM: Okay. And that was the summer of 1986.

NM-M: Yeah.

TM: So were you thinking you were going to go back to work in the ambulance that winter?

NM-M: No. I had other plans. My goal when I was in school as an undergraduate at UCLA was to—I had met Jane Goodall.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And I've had the great fortune of meeting her two other times since then.

TM: Right.

NM-M: And I always have been inspired. I think I told you about *Daktari* and things and—so I wanted to go to East Africa. And I had applied for a Fulbright scholarship, but I didn't get it as a student. And, so, I decided I'd save my money until my next big adventure, where I was off to Africa for four months. And I

went to Africa for four months—Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi. But we got kind of run out of Burundi because they were having a coup d'état at the time, but—

TM: Wow.

NM-M: —other than that... So I went to Africa, and I spent four months in Africa, and it was the most wonderful time. I saw mountain gorillas. It was just right after Dian Fossey had been killed, so I was up in the Virunga Mountains, and—I think I've already told that story of the gorilla that grabbed me—

TM: Yes.

NM-M: Yes. And, so, I got to go and see cheetahs in Ngorongoro and go to Maasai Mara and have the best shower of my life out of an old [butter can] at Maasai Mara [laughs]. It was—it was quite the wonderful adventure, and it just instilled in me that I really loved wildlife and I love natural history and I love to draw. And I would be drawing and all that kind of stuff. And then, when I came back in January—

TM: Hang on. Let's not go through there quite so fast.

NM-M: Oh.

TM: So did you kind of plan out where you were going to go?

NM-M: Yes.

TM: Did you rent a car? How did you travel? How'd you work it out?

NM-M: The first part I went was a—it was in Nairobi, and it was a set safari. And I'd asked my friend Mary Anne if she wanted to go, and she didn't want to go.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: So I was all set to go by myself. And, like, three weeks before we left, she goes, "Well, maybe I will go." Well, she had to run around and get her polio vaccination and all this other stuff done, but she joined me for three weeks.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: Then she went back. And, to tell you what the era was at that time, I was collecting shields—I'm looking at them right now as I speak to you. I've got bows and arrows and masks and shield and all kinds of things that I had traded to the Maasai and the Bantu and the other people, and she was kind enough to take them home for me as carry-ons [laughs]—

TM: Oh, wow. Great.

NM-M: —things like that. So that was a nice thing for her to do.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And then I got on a specific trip with a big truck that pulled a trailer. And there were 11 of us. And it was a set trip, but we were self-sufficient. We went to market. We learned as we went in, and learned to buy our food when you didn't buy any food that was—any meat that was hanging because you would see the different maggots and you'd know it'd be there for a while.

TM: Oh, yeah.

NM-M: So we would pick out the animal we wanted, and we'd watch it be killed.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And then we would take the meat then. But we would buy onions and stuff. And we'd travel for months this way. And one of the ladies on the trip, Terry, she was a veterinarian. And I was only one of two Americans. There was Canadians, a great lady who was Dutch, another lady, two Britishers, and one of the [Britishers] was a veterinarian. And we were going through somewhere in Tanzania, and there were these big, whistling thorn acacia trees. And the thorns are probably two to three inches long—

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: —on these little round balls. Once someone said, "Look over there. There's a, you know, a Masai giraffe." And I turned my head, and just as we went through an acacia tree, because we're high up in the truck, and it just slashed me right open, from my upper lip all the way across my cheek.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: So I got all this blood coming down my face. And, so, I'm doing direct pressure and I said, "Who's got a mirror?" Terry said, "Well, I'll just sew you up." And I said, "No, I'll just butterfly it. You only work on dogs and cats." [laughs] So I still have a little scar above my lip, but you can't see the one on the cheek anymore. But you could for a long time.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: But that was a trip that, you know, you learned an awful lot about humanity, people, human beings. We always had somebody in the trailer at all times when we were stopped. And, if we were in a city, we had two people because it was not unusual for somebody to distract the watcher and then somebody would come up the other side to try to get belongings.

TM: Oh, interesting. Yeah.

NM-M: And so when you went to market, there was always two people watching everything.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And we stopped at Lake Victoria, and there was this big Nile perch. And a Nile perch is as big as a bed, so it's like six feet long and maybe four feet wide.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: I mean, this is one big, huge thing. And they bought it for the equivalent of an American nickel.

TM: Oh my gosh.

NM-M: I was disgusted at the time when I found out how much they paid for it. And at that—that—I got—and by that time I had stopped eating seafood and fish and stuff, so—so they cooked it out on a grill, and I said, "You know"—when they started cutting, I said, "That doesn't look cooked very well, you guys."

TM: Oops.

NM-M: They're like, "Oh, that's fine. It's fine. It's fine." Everybody but me was sick the next day.

TM: Oops.

NM-M: Everybody. I mean, I was bringing fluids to people. I was helping them with their diarrhea. It was just awful, awful. I almost wish I had gotten sick so I didn't have to take care of ten other people, but—oh, well.

TM: Right.

NM-M: That was—I never was sick. For four months, I was never sick, ever.

TM: Gosh. Good for you.

NM-M: I just got sliced that one time.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And let's see. When I went to Virunga—let's see. And then—oh, we climbed Mount Kilimanjaro.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: We went to the market, and we got what we needed. And it was three gals—one, two, three—four gals. And a couple of guys decided they wanted to go, so there was seven of us. So it took five days, and you go up—each night you stay at a hut, Kibo hut, in the different huts, because you're going up to 19,000 feet, so you want to acclimatize a little bit.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And it's got the most incredible trees. They'd look like something Dr. Seuss would draw. It was just amazing and—it was really great. And then we got to the point where we started to lose our appetites because of the beginning of altitude sickness.

TM: Oh, okay.

NM-M: We're hydrating as best we can. So at 15,500 feet, we're getting up at 1:00 in the morning to do our ascent to the top, which is going to be another 4,000 feet.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: And turns out—and I never slept that night. I really tried to drink the tea, couldn't eat. I just had this pounding headache, but I was in an upper bunk, and the ceiling was right above my head, so I really couldn't sit up. It was really awful. So I was awake most of the night. And then it turns out that it was a blizzard outside.

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: And I had specifically brought my down bag for this trip and my hiking boots and my down jacket. So I had—all through Africa, I had brought all this stuff with me in a bag. And, so, I was bundled up. I was warm enough. I had my headlamp and flashlight. And we went outside, and the snow was probably only about mid-calf height at that point.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: But there was no trail that you could see.

TM: Right.

NM-M: Could not see the trail. And the guides, there were one, two, three—three guides were guiding us with oil lanterns.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And, so, here we're setting off on the trail. The wind is blowing. The snow is going sideways. Within five minutes, four people drop out. I mean, five minutes. They're puking their brains out. They're sitting in the snow. And one of them went back to get somebody to take them back. So it turns out there's just three of us left, and all three are ladies.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: One Canadian, one Brit, and myself. And because there were three guides, the guides—I don't know if they thought—did this on purpose, but they all took one of us, and we headed up at different paces.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: There was no trail to see. So what made it difficult is when we went straight up the side of the frigging mountain. And, because there were no switchbacks to see, and I thought, "This is awful." So I felt like I was on Mount Everest. I'd take three steps, and I'd stop and gasp and take three steps. And I would look at pictures in my mind of my family and thinking how much I love them and "What the hell am I doing this for?" But in Arusha—and this is before Africa was really commercial. I bought a t-shirt in Arusha that was hand-painted. It said "I Climbed Mount Kilimanjaro." And I thought, "If I don't do this, I can't ever wear that t-shirt." [laughs] So halfway up, I stop in Hans Meyer Cave, which is a very famous cave. It's got icicles in it, named for some explorer some time ago. And the Chagga guide—he doesn't speak much English, but he goes, "Come on, mama. Come on, sister. You make it. You do it. Come on, mama." And I had, by this time, had given him my woolly cap because I had the hood on my jacket. He had tennis shoes on without socks.

TM: Oh, gee.

NM-M: I gave him my sweater, and I gave him a flashlight. He had nothing else on. He just had a windbreaker on.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: So it was just something. But he knew if he got me to the top, he would get, you know, nice things, money and stuff.

TM: Yeah.

NM-M: So we made it to the top.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: And I showed him how to use my camera, and I—there I am in the blizzard, crouched down. And he took a picture of me with a sign, “Mount Kilimanjaro,” above my head. And here the snow was about mid-thigh thick.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: But, by golly, we made it at sunrise. And as we started down, the other two we could see across the crater. So we all got together, and it was like *The Wizard of Oz*. All of us linked our arms, the guides and the gals, and we went straight down the side of the mountains like going through a poppy field, just stepping and sliding and stepping and sliding in the snow and the cinders of the volcano underneath us. [laughs]

TM: Wow.

NM-M: Picked up our stuff at fifteen-thousand-five and went down to 12,000 feet and had the first thing I’d eaten in two days.

TM: Wow.

NM-M: Yeah. And then made our way out. But it was—it was a very special time. And we got back there, to the bottom, and then they taught us a song. “Kilimanjaro, Kilimanjaro, doodle-doo-doo, doo-doo-doo, doo-doo-doo.” Anyways, we learned how to sing this song. And I gave him my headlamp, and I gave him extra batteries, and I gave him the watch cap, and I gave him socks, and I gave him money.

TM: Cool.

NM-M: He was right. I rewarded him for getting me up there.

TM: Nice. Wow, that’s amazing.

NM-M: Yes.

TM: Very cool.

NM-M: So that was—and then just getting out of Kenya was a trial. I don’t know if you want to hear that story, but it is—it was very difficult getting out of the country and—

TM: Why? Yeah.

NM-M: Well, when—when I went to get—to leave, I went to the single-strip airport, and the building was closed. And I said, “Well, I’m supposed to fly out today. I’ve paid for this ahead of time.” And they said, “Well, there’s no flights today.” And I said, “What? Look at this.” He goes, “Oh, that flight will be tomorrow.” And I said, “But I—my visa expires today.”

TM: Oops.

NM-M: “Well, you can’t be here if you—you can’t be in Tanzania.” I said, “I know.” And he said, “Well, maybe you could fly out Thursday.” I said, “But my visa expires.” [laughs] So there was a bunch of people in little market cars, and I said, “Who’s going to Kenya?” Mix of English and Swahili, “Who’s going to Kenya?” And this man with a kind of a Datsun wagon thing, he’s going to Kenya. And I said, “Are you going right now?” and he goes, “I’m going right now.” And I said, “How much to take me there?” It was

like 40 bucks. I said, "Okay. Here's 20 dollars now and then 20 dollars for when we cross the border," because I'm not giving it all to him ahead of time.

TM: Right.

NM-M: And, so, he goes, "Oh, good." So I had my backpack. So he takes the person in the front seat out of the front seat, which I feel really bad about, and puts me in the front seat with my backpack on my lap. And that person gets squished in the back with the six other people that are already in the back there—women, children, all that kind of stuff. So I thought, "Ooh." So I had—went out and I bought a stalk of bananas. And I brought it back to the car, and I distribute the bananas to everybody. So that helped a lot. So off we went, and we're headed on the bumpiest road, and I don't know if we're, like—what we're doing, but we head in there, and then it's nighttime. It's dark. It's—the car stops. We get going again. We stop at a checkpoint. He looks in at us. He waves us through. And then, right before we get to the border, the muffler falls off. No problem. He picks it up, and he ties it to the top of the car. And we come into the border of Kenya and Tanzania sounding like something out of the Indy 500. [engine revving sounds]

TM: [laughs] Yeah.

NM-M: So I hand him my—the other 20-dollar bill. I walk across the border with my backpack. And then the Kenyan police are there—immigration police—and I go into the border station and say, "You see, I've already come into Kenya, you know, and I'm back again." And they said, "Well, we can't have you come into Kenya." And I said, "Well, why not?" And he says, "Well, your papers are not all in order." And, so, I walk outside. I thought, "My papers are not in order." I take two 20-dollar bills because there's two guys inside. I put the two 20-dollar bills in the passport. I walk back inside. I said, "I found the paper that I was missing." And I handed it to him, and he goes, "Your paperwork is now in order."

TM: Oh, wow.

NM-M: Stamped my passport. I went out. There's loads of cars on the other side. I said, "Who will take me to Nairobi?" [laughs]

TM: Oh my gosh.

NM-M: So I get in a car, and I—or, actually, I think the muffler fell off on the way to Nairobi. I forget when that happened, but it was—it was pretty fun. And then I get to Nairobi, and I stay at the hotel that I had a reservation for. And I get there at half-past dark-thirty. I don't know. But so, yeah, Africa is a whole—was a whole other place, and I'm sure it still is.

TM: Yeah. Yeah. Amazing. Wow.

NM-M: Yeah.

TM: Very fun.

NM-M: And then—let's see. Where are we on time?

TM: Well, so this is—my next question for you is: Where did you go from there? And let's talk about that next time.

NM-M: Okay. Yeah. I just—I had a cousin living in London, so—

TM: Oh.

NM-M: —I stayed with her on the way up, and I stayed with her on the way back.

TM: Okay. And then where were you heading to on your way back?

NM-M: Well, I—I also, I believe, visited my family in Ireland.

TM: Okay.

NM-M: And then—then I came back and was a park medic instructor again. And then I worked for a company called Naturalists at Large, which is a fun place to stop and tell you about that.

TM: Okay. And, so, this is 1987? Is that right?

NM-M: It is 1987.

TM: Okay. That's where we will bring this back up again. Excellent. Is there anything else you want to bring into this before we wrap this up, then?

NM-M: No, but this has been such a fun review of my life that I never expected when you asked me about this. I thought I was going to talk being a ranger at Grand Canyon, but what a fun review. Thank you.

TM: We're getting there. But, when we get to Grand Canyon, we'll know that you spent four months in Africa. I mean, we would be amiss if we left that out. [NM-M laughs] So this is great. And, with that, this will conclude Part 4 Grand Canyon Oral History Interview with Nancy Eileen Muleady-Mecham. Today is Wednesday, February 10th, 2021. My name is Tom Martin. Nancy, thank you so very much.

NM-M: Thank you, Tom.