

Pat Barte
Interviewed by Elaine Vradenburgh
The Evergreen State College oral history project
September 25, 2021

FINAL

[Begin Part 1 of 2 of Pat Barte on September 25, 2021]

Vradenburgh: It is September 25, 2021 today. We're at the home of Pat Barte in Lacey, Washington. I'm Elaine Vradenburgh. I shared the questions with you. There's a lot of them and I don't expect to go through them all.

Barte: There are quite a few.

Vradenburgh: I just wanted to have a variety of things there for us to refer to. We'll see how things go and the direction that we want to head. Let's just start with you stating your full name, date of birth, and where you were born.

Barte: My name is Patricia Hanna Barte. I was born in the Bronx, New York. I was the seventh of eight children. My parents had a pretty interesting family situation: My dad was a Protestant from Belfast, Northern Ireland and my mom was a Catholic from Waterford, Republic of Ireland.

My dad's parents likewise had a pretty interesting life. My grandpa worked on the *Titanic*, and he was a Member of Parliament. He came over here to this country and made a good life for the family. They came down from Canada. They landed in Canada. In fact, I have here a picture of the boat they came over on, The *RMS Regina*.

From Canada they came down to the Bronx, and after living in the Bronx for several years they went up to Westchester County. They made their life's home in Bronxville, New York, which is where they established their business, which is still in the family today. It's still Hanna's Service. They had some amazing customers: the Kennedy family (the Kennedys lived right up the road from us on Pondfield Road); James Hagerty, President Eisenhower's cabinet member, I believe he was White House Press Secretary; Mr. Farber, who invented the Teflon pan, later of Farberware fame; Robert Abplanalp, the inventor of the crimp-on valve and founder of Precision Valve Corp., we always got a kick out of him 'cause he was closely related to Nixon and he got in so much trouble for hiding Nixon's money under the pool of his Bahamas home during Watergate; George Bianca, the Brooklyn Dodgers' pitcher who gave up the infamous "Shot Heard 'Round the world" to New York Giants' Bobby Thompson at the Polo Grounds in 1951 World Series; Frank Abagnale, of Leonardo DeCaprio's *Catch Me If You Can* fame worked for my dad—he stole a couple of cars from him! However, Frank did come to pay his respects to my dad at my

dad's funeral. Tom Hardart, President & Chairman of Horn and Hardart Automat; (as an aside, while working in Advancement, one of my duties was processing Activity Grants for students. One of our students, Lisa Hurwicz, applied for a grant to research and create a documentary on the Automat. When I related my fondness for the Automat and the wonderful memories I have of marveling at its opulence on a budget and the many movies that were filmed there, Lisa was overjoyed to meet someone who actually was familiar with the automat, but Tom Hardart was a customer of my Dad's! Lisa recently filmed a documentary featuring Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Colin Powell, Howard Schultz, Carl Reiner and Mel Brooks. Her documentary was aired on *Turner Classic Movies*. When *TCM* host Ben Mankewicz introduced Lisa and her documentary, she said her inspiration for the documentary originated when she sat in the Greenery at The Evergreen State College! Just goes to show—We Greeners are everywhere—even in Hollywood's *Turner Classic Movies!*).

I always admired my dad for his business acumen. He catered to a very high-maintenance clientele, yet never lost his cool. He was an incredibly patient man. Very accommodating, very charming. Yet, I often remember him charming a customer, he'd be so sweet, so obliging, then getting into the car, throwing his hat on the seat, mumbling, "What the hell does the Son of a B*** expect!" He was an amazing man. When he died the city planted a park in his memory. He touched a lot of lives and is obviously remembered quite fondly by all who knew him. Quite an extraordinary man, actually.

Vradenburgh: You said that it was interesting with a Protestant and Catholic combination.

Barte: Indeed. It was.

Vradenburgh: Can you say more about that?

Barte: My dad was extremely tolerant. My mom was the Catholic. He let her raise us as she will, so she raised us in the Catholic faith. But his family was not tolerant at all. I can remember, even as a very young girl, I discerned a very uncomfortable feeling of not belonging, or not being liked. Of being an outsider. Somewhat of an interloper. Nothing was ever said, but it was a very strained aura that led me to believe we're really different. I guess I'd call it a silent tolerance. But my mom seemed to bear the brunt of it. It always seemed to me whenever attending family functions she always sat by herself. Excluded. I remember sitting with her when I noticed her all by herself. No one seemed to acknowledge her. I learned very early that there was a distinct difference between what was viewed as "Lace-Curtain Irish as opposed to Shanty Irish."

Vradenburgh: That's sad.

Barte: It was, yeah, but that's what it is. Casual cruelty. But really, when I think about it, I regard it as a far sight better than what it had been for many years. I mean, the Catholics and Protestants have been

hating each other for hundreds of years, and it spilled out in very violent ways. Up until just a few years ago a couple would be tarred and feathered for going out with each other, much less marrying each other. It's very sad. Guess that's why William Butler Yeats regarded Ireland a "Tragic Beauty."

Vradenburgh: Tell me a little bit more about your parents, what they were like and some things that you draw from them.

Barte: A very strong work ethic. I inherited a very strong work ethic from them. My dad worked up until he was 95. Never missed a day of work. He was a very, very hardworking man. She also, although the only time she worked outside the home was when my younger brother was getting ready to go to college and she got a job outside the home, I guess to save up the tuition, I would assume. Although perhaps this was her first opportunity to get out of the house, since there were no longer babies left in the house.

She worked a lot. Always ironing. Always doing wash. Always cooking. I think that's what I gained from them was a very strong work ethic. I learned very early the value of hard work.

Vradenburgh: Taking care of the home then was a much bigger thing because we didn't have all the mechanized things.

Barte: Yes. She never had a dishwasher. She never had a clothes dryer. I can remember her hanging up the clothes in the backyard and in winter bringing them in and they'd be frozen. You'd have to bend the arms on the shirts to get them through the door. When it rained, she would have to hang the laundry in the basement to dry or lay them out on the radiators. You just didn't have the conveniences that we now have, so, yes, it was tough.

Vradenburgh: I'm going to pause for a minute.

[End Part 1 of 2 of Pat Barte on September 25, 2021]

[Begin Part 2 of 2 of Pat Barte on September 25, 2021]

Vradenburgh: I'm going to start again. Tell me a little bit about what school was like for you growing up in your community.

Barte: It was good. I went to Catholic schools, and I will admit, I got a good education from those nuns. I am very grateful, although not so much at the time. My younger brother also went to Catholic school, and he was in the same situation. My older brothers and sisters all went to Public Schools.

Vradenburgh: How come some of you went to Catholic school and others went to public? Was it an age difference thing?

Barte: Yes, age and money. It was a very typical situation in many families, I'm sure. By the time the younger kids come along, the family has the money to pay for tuition and uniforms, books, etc., whereas

when you're first starting a family and the older kids are going to school there is no money to devote to tuition or books. All the money went to food and clothing, nothing left for tuition or books, so the older children go to public schools. "Hey P.S. 14 is right up the block, and it's free!" She would have sent all of us to Catholic school if she had the money.

Vradenburgh: What was a typical day like for you at school?

Barte: Goodness. We always had just one teacher. We didn't have class changes or multiple teachers as some of my friends did. The typical day was history and math and English from 9:00 to 3:00, and then you went home and did loads of homework.

Vradenburgh: Were there any subjects or teachers that stuck out as far as piquing your interest in a certain direction?

Barte: Not in a certain direction. None of them ever steered me. But I will say one teacher who stands out—and I think I'm just aware of it now because of the voting rights situation that we have going on right now in Texas and so forth—I had one teacher, Miss Murphy—this was in high school—and we were her last class--the following September, she went over to Fordham University. Fordham had been a men's university, but they had just opened to women students that year. This was the first year they admitted women in Fordham, and they asked Miss Murphy to be their first Dean of Women students at Fordham University. We were very honored for her. We joked that 1965 was a rather momentous year for Fordham University—they got Miss Murphy and the return of football!

She was a wonderful teacher. I so remember when they were trying to put through the Voting Rights bill with President Johnson. We were talking about it in the classroom, and she was trying to explain it. We were talking about literacy tests--that the South made people take literacy tests before they could vote as their answer to voting restrictions. One of the kids said, "I don't understand what the problem is. It seems like you should be able to pass a literacy test. You have to be able to read—read the paper and read your history books—so in order to vote, you should be able to read."

I thought Miss Murphy was going to come unglued. But she did not. She did not bat an eyelash. Her expression did not change. She just very slowly walked across the front of the room and went to the first aisle and said to the first girl, Mary Miller, "Who was the first President of the United States?" Mary said, "Uh, George Washington?" Miss Murphy asked the second girl, "Who was President during the Civil War?" The same reaction—is this a trick question?—and the girl responded: "Abraham Lincoln?"

She came to the third girl, Cassandra Williams, who was black, and she asked Cassandra, "What is the third sentence of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution?" Poor Cassandra, her eyes just went huge. Miss Murphy just turned around and said to the class, "Because that's how the literacy tests

are handled in the South.” And that’s all she said about it. But each and every one of us now knew clearly that literacy tests, as were poll taxes, simply another means of suppression of the vote.

I’ll never forget that. It was the most . . . she brought it home so perfectly, and yet it was so kindly done, whereas I expected her to just erupt. It was good. I was really impressed with that. But, no, I never had any one of my teachers that I can recall try to steer me in any one direction.

Vradenburgh: It sounds like there was a lot of critical thinking happening in that classroom.

Barte: That’s a good way to put it. I never thought of that, but yeah, she was. Every lesson pretty much went in that vein. “I’m not going to tell you what’s right or wrong, but this is how I’m going to show you what it is.”

I remember when Kennedy was running—I think it was Kennedy—but on second thought it had to have been Johnson. But Miss Murphy made this list on the blackboard of what Johnson was for and what Goldwater was for, what they wanted, what they intended to do in office. At the end she pointed to the lists on the board and said, “Some people say this is Communism, and some people...”—I remember looking at that list and thinking, “oh, okay, she’s not telling us who to vote for, is she?” I never thought of it in those terms, but yeah, I guess she was teaching us to be critical thinkers. Critical thinking long before Evergreen invented it! [laughter]

Vradenburgh: Did it seem like that was a progressive school that you were going to?

Barte: No actually, it was very conservative. Very Catholic. Yeah, that’s true. If they steered you in any way, it was probably to be a nun. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: Was religious teaching part of your day?

Barte: Yes. We had religion for at least one class every day. But frankly, most of our day was geared to religion in one way or another. Religion was entwined in every thought, every reading, every moment. Religion was greatly infused in every moment of every day. Religion was even incorporated into the annual plays—our plays were something like “The Song of Bernadette,” as opposed to dance and song like my friends in other schools!

Vradenburgh: When you were in school, did you have thoughts of what you wanted to do after you graduated, or ideas about furthering your education? What were you thinking at that time about?

Barte: I did. I wanted to go to teaching school. I thought I wanted to be a teacher. In fact, I was registered. After graduating high school, I was supposed to start in the fall at Good Counsel College in White Plains, New York. However, during the summer, I got a summer job in a bank, and I was making really good money for my age and skill set. I remember thinking throughout the summer, ooh, this is pretty good. I’m not spending any money, but I’m bringing in all this money every week.

This gal came to work for us who was my age, Anne Patti. She was attending Hunter College in New York. We'd go out for walks down to the water at lunchtime each day and she would moan, "Oh, gawd. If I was in school, I'd be working on a paper right now." "Oh! If I was in school, I'd be in the library right now." As we got closer and closer to the fall, she'd be "Oh, my gawd, I don't want to go back to school. I don't want to spend my weekends doing papers."

I became really scared. I'd look over at Anne and I'd think, "Oh, my goodness, is college really that awful?" [laughing] By the time fall came and I had all this money in the bank, I thought, do I really want to give up all this money and freedom, do I really want to give up my weekends and my nights? So, I didn't go to college; I guess I just decided the tassel wasn't worth the hassle. I never went until I came to Evergreen. Then I thought, hmm, I'm here, might as well take advantage of the opportunity. So, I ended up going to Evergreen.

Vradenburgh: When you were growing up, were your peers going off to school, or was it more of a working-class?

Barte: Some were, and some weren't. Especially, at that time, all the guys were going to college because otherwise, they'd go to Vietnam. So they all went to college. Some of the girls did, but most didn't.

Vradenburgh: What year was it that you graduated high school?

Barte: '66.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense.

Barte: The Vietnam War was gearing up at that time. By '68, it was REALLY gearing up, and then of course it progressed from there.

Vradenburgh: What kind of opportunities were there for women at that time, career path opportunities?

Barte: Opportunities were pretty good. All my sisters did quite well. My one sister started off at IBM right out of high school and did very well. The opportunities were good for young women just graduating from high school.

Vradenburgh: I think I'm just realizing, too, that college has become much more of a necessity for a job.

Barte: At the time, no. Even men could enjoy really successful careers without having a degree. My sister, Eileen, her husband never went to college, and he did very well at IBM. And when she went back to IBM after her girls were raised, she saw all these vice presidents who were copyboys when she was there formerly. Of my brothers, only one, my youngest brother, went to college. My oldest brother never graduated high school; he left school to help my grandfather run the business when all the men

were called up for World War II. But despite not having a high school diploma, he went on to become a pilot in the New York City Fire Department--one of only four pilots in the entire department at the time. My other brothers did quite well with only a high school education. So, no, college was not really the necessity we were told it was.

Vradenburgh: Tell me about your journey out West. How did that happen?

Barte: My husband was from where I am in New York. He came out here to go to college and graduated in 1968. After graduating he went back to New York, we met, got married, and we both came back out here in '71. We've been out here ever since.

Vradenburgh: You weren't together before he left to come out to Washington?

Barte: No.

Vradenburgh: Was that common, to go all the way to the West Coast for Saint Martin's at the time? Because he went to Saint Martin's, right?

Barte: He did.

Vradenburgh: Was it because of the Catholic...?

Barte: No, not at all. What happened was at that time in New York State, they had this thing called the Regents Exam. I believe it was run by the Regents Board of New York State. At any rate, you had to pass a Regents Exam in addition to your SAT and your ACT. But the Regents Exam was really hard, and nobody could pass it. NOBODY passed it. [laughing]

Consequently, most of the kids went to college out of state for a year or so, and then came back as a transfer student, and then you didn't have to take the Regents. It was a way of bypassing the Regents Exam. That's what most of the kids did, especially the boys because they were so pressured to get into a college. Otherwise, they'd be sleeping in rice paddies in Southeast Asia rather than in the sands of Jones Beach.

That was kind of sad, but that's what my husband did. He came out to Saint Martin's fully expecting to stay here a year and then go back to a college in New York as a transfer student, but as it turned out he loved it out here. By the end of his freshman year he had no desire to ever go back.

Vradenburgh: How did he hear about Saint Martin's?

Barte: Ironically, from his high school. The way he puts it, every college application fee was \$35 to submit an application, and his high school advisor suggested, "Why don't you go through this placement service? You just give them one \$35.00 fee and they blast your application out to all these different colleges around the country."

He did, and one of the colleges that came back was Saint Martin's. Ironically, he had a cousin who was in the military, stationed up at Fort Lewis, so he thought, "At least at that school, I'd have somebody within some reasonable distance." So he chose Saint Martin's, and never looked back.

[laughing]

Vradenburgh: What did he study at Saint Martin's?

Barte: Sociology.

Vradenburgh: Then he comes back. How did you two meet?

Barte: In an Irish bar. [laughter] We were both working second jobs catering weddings in White Plains, New York.

Vradenburgh: Did he grow up in the community that you grew up in, in the Bronx?

Barte: He was born in the Bronx, in Little Italy, by the Bronx Zoo. When he started school his family moved up to Westchester County. Harrison, New York.

Vradenburgh: He comes back in '69 and then you move out here in '71. Remind me again. He got a job, right?

Barte: Yes, he got a job with the Thurston County Sheriff's Department. I got a job in a bank. We lived out there in the Delphi Valley by Evergreen. Watched Evergreen being built.

Vradenburgh: Tell me a little bit about that. Before we go into that—Evergreen being built—what were some of your early memories or impressions of the community when you came out, if you remember?

Barte: Oh, yes. I remember it vividly. It was very small. Lots of trees. There was nothing here. There was no Westside, no Capital Mall. All of those stores on Black Lake Boulevard—they were all trees. Nothing but trees. The only store was Peterson's Foodtown, then Desco, then nothing until you got to Shelton. I mean nothing. But trees! West Olympia was the outskirts. After Desco you had nothing until Shelton. Nothing but trees. We used to call the Westside the Last Frontier. Olympia was small. There were no restaurants. Very, very few restaurants.

Vradenburgh: At all in the whole town, not just on the Westside? Downtown?

Barte: Yes, downtown, King Solomon's Reef, Ben Moore's and the Spar was about it.

Vradenburgh: Oh, so the Reef was there at that point.

Barte: It was big. And the Spar. Very popular.

Vradenburgh: Wow. Yeah, I knew about the Spar and Ben Moore's.

Barte: Yes. Sometimes when I drive along Black Lake Boulevard and look over at Capital Mall, I remember when this wasn't here. I remember when they put in the red light on the corner of Harrison and Cooper Point Road. I remember, all of a sudden, this red light was there. I stopped for the red light

one morning, and I'm waiting and waiting for it to turn green, and then all of a sudden, there's this knock on my window and it's the man behind me, telling me, "Ma'am, you have to move forward. You have to turn the light on."

Vradenburgh: Trip the light. [laughter]

Barte: I went, "Oh. This is a brand-new light. This has never been here before," and he said, "Yes, I know." And he went back to his car. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: How did it feel for you coming from such a populous area out to here? What was going through your mind?

Barte: In many ways, it was hard, because if you wanted to buy anything, you had to go to Tacoma. The Capital Mall wasn't there. None of the malls. There was nothing. There was absolutely no outlet to buy anything. But in many ways, it was good. You didn't have the traffic problems. [laughing] There were no red lights to wait for. You took the good with the bad.

Vradenburgh: What was downtown? The Reef was there, Ben Moore's, the Spar. What else do you remember?

Barte: Miller's department store. They were in the building where Starbucks is now. It was a two-story department store. It was just like what you would see on TV of the old, old department store. You walked up the stairs. There was no elevator, no escalator.

In fact, I was in Walla Walla recently and I walked into a department store in downtown Walla Walla. I said, "Oh, I feel like I'm in Miller's." [laughing] Because you walked in and there's the staircase. You go up the stairs if you want to reach the second floor.

We had a Sears downtown, but it was only a catalog pickup site, same with J. C. Penny. So, I take back my earlier statement--there were places to buy clothes in Olympia, but you didn't have very much choice. Very limited options. Downtown, you had the Governor Hotel, and that was a very lovely hotel. You had the Olympian Hotel where the Urban Onion is now, and that was a very lovely hotel. The Olympian Hotel lobby always reminded me of the Thayer Hotel in West Point. When my husband tended bar in the Olympian Hotel, the lounge was called the Valley Forge Room. I always thought that ironic—someone must have planned it on West Point's Thayer Hotel.

Vradenburgh: What did people do for fun—entertainment—at that time?

Barte: There were two movie houses in town. The Olympic Theater and the State Theater.

Vradenburgh: Going to the movies, and what else did people do for fun? Or where did people gather if you wanted to go out and see people? What would that be like?

Barte: I think we were just mainly in each other's homes, because I really don't remember too many places to go. The Evergreen Ballroom was always referred to as the Green, and for some reason, I heard more about The Green before I came out here than any other place. My cousin, as well as a man I worked with were both stationed at Fort Lewis in the Army, and when I told them I was moving to Olympia, WA, they both said—I thought it was so ironic—they EACH said, "Oh, I really don't know much about Olympia. All I know about Olympia is this sleazy place called the Green." [laughing] One of them told me that Fort Lewis declared The Evergreen Ballroom off-limits to them up in Fort Lewis. But I remember when I drove by one time, I went, "Oh, so that's the Green? Yeah, I heard about that place." [laughing]

But I don't remember too many things to do. I think we just met at each other's houses and either played cards or ate. Or probably both.

Vradenburgh: When you got here, how did you create community? How did that happen?

Barte: I think a lot of it was through the church and work. I remember a couple of little clubs that the church had, young adults' groups. And through work. Some of the girls would invite you over.

Vradenburgh: What church were you attending?

Barte: St. Michael's downtown.

Vradenburgh: I don't remember which one that was.

Barte: It was on Eastside and 11th.

Vradenburgh: Okay. Oh, yeah, they have Saint Mike's Tikes.

Barte: Yes, exactly.

Vradenburgh: They've been around for a while.

Barte: Yes, they have. In fact, the original St. Mike's is—do you know Swing?

Vradenburgh: Yes.

Barte: It's right above the railroad station downtown Olympia.

Vradenburgh: Mm-hm.

Barte: That building, what is The Swing restaurant now, was the original St. Mike's. My husband and I were in Swing one evening not too very long ago and a couple that we knew from church came in, and when we said, "Hello," the man said, "Well, we were married in this very room 60 years ago today, so we figured the most fitting place to have our 60th anniversary dinner was here." "Oh, that's right. This used to be St. Michael's."

Vradenburgh: That's wild, thinking about different spaces and what they used to be.

Barte: Yes, what they used to be. Every time I pass by Top Foods on the Westside, I think back to when it was the dump. All those warehouses and housing developments in Hawks Prairie used to be a pig farm, then a racetrack that never materialized, and now houses and warehouses.

Vradenburgh: Definitely. Evergreen graduated its first class in '71, didn't it?

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: Tell me a little bit about that story. What were you hearing at the time about the college, and it being built? What were the dynamics around that in town? What were people saying and feeling about it?

Barte: What I heard from Olympians was not favorable at all. The town's people were not happy about Evergreen. I think what happened was that when the people of Olympia heard that Olympia would host the new college—the legislation came in to create an institution of higher education in southwest Washington in '67. However, the legislation didn't specify where in southwest Washington, so there was this big fight in the Legislature over its location. Everyone was vying for it. Vancouver wanted it, Centralia wanted it, Tacoma wanted it.

Vradenburgh: Tacoma was considered a part of that region?

Barte: Yeah. Well, they would have made themselves part of the region if they weren't if it meant getting a college.

Vradenburgh: I guess Tacoma is kind of South Sound, isn't it?

Barte: Yeah. And they didn't have anything. They were a lot closer to PLU and UPS, but as far as a public institution, they were as much a higher education desert as any other area . . . So, when it was finally decided on Olympia, I think Olympia expected ivy-covered brick buildings and professors wearing tweed or houndstooth jackets with elbow patches. However, they were astonished when what they saw coming into town were professors wearing Birkenstocks, and students wearing blankets and waffle stompers. It threw them for a loop. Olympia was very . . . very red. In fact, the whole state was quite red at the time.

Vradenburgh: The whole state was? Really?

Barte: Yes. That was my perception. Olympia, especially for being the capital, there was nothing here. There was no industry here other than logging and Fort Lewis, so these people were knocked off the boat when they saw what was coming in. So they did not take kindly to Evergreen.

I remember Rudy Martin was one of our very first faculty, one of our founding faculty. In fact, when we published the 20th Anniversary book, *20 Years of Making a Difference*, Rudy told me the story of his coming to Olympia, and being at a stoplight downtown Olympia, and the man in the car next to

him yelled out to him, "Go home N****." Rudy just sat there and nodded his head and said to himself, "Well, Rudy, welcome to your new home." A lot of that went on.

Another incident that comes to mind is when Joe Olander became our president. Mark Clemens, Director of College Relations, took Joe around to local media outlets, introducing Joe to the Editorial Boards of the various news outlets. When Mark took him to the Centralia *Chronicle*, they were waiting at a red light when all of a sudden Joe screams to Mark, "Mark, Mark, did you see that? That man pointed down to the TESC logo on the door and then flipped me off!" Joe was astounded. He was outraged. Mark simply rolled his eyes and encouraged Joe to get used to it.

I also think a lot of the townspeople were disappointed because I think they expected this big, sprawling university. I think they saw a lot of jobs coming in, a lot of state contracts. I think they expected ivy-covered brick buildings. But when they saw this brutalist architecture, these concrete bunkers in the woods, I think that's not what they expected, so they took it out on us.

I do remember a story: Once they decided the school would be located in Olympia, then the big fight was, where in Olympia? One of the sites mentioned was up where the Courthouse is now. Because, again, there was nothing up there but trees. All those auto malls weren't there. All those apartment complexes weren't there. The Courthouse complex wasn't there. Nothing was there but trees, so that was considered as a site for Evergreen.

A bunch of businessmen in Olympia discovered the Courthouse hill was on the short list of locations for the school and bought the corner property on the hill, and built the Evergreen Inn, thinking, "Well, if we're going to have this big university, we're going to have parents coming, interim faculty coming, and guest speakers coming, and they will need a hotel." So, they built the Evergreen Inn, which is now the Red Lion, or RL. In fact, they even named the circle Evergreen Park Drive. That's what they named it, which drives me crazy because I'm always getting phone calls from people saying, "Where are you? I'm on Evergreen Park Drive. Where is Evergreen?" "No, go back out to 101 and go one exit more." I was very annoyed at the city planners for naming it Evergreen Park Drive, as I'm sure many of our visitors are.

Anyway, these business folks were angry because now we're way out in the woods on Cooper Point, not on the Courthouse Hill after they built a hotel to house us up on the hill. So a lot of people were very upset with us for various reasons. Ironically, the Evergreen Inn never did seem to prosper. It's turned over ownership several times and now I believe it's vacant.

Vradenburgh: It wasn't so much the idea of a college coming, it was the idea of this particular version of a college coming.

Barte: Yes. Exactly. From what I perceived, they wanted the college and were very happy to see it coming to Olympia. In fact, I seem to recall quite a bit of campaigning for it to be located in Olympia. But they just didn't expect what they got. They didn't expect a bunch of hippies plodding along Harrison in blankets and ponchos. But really, when you think about it, they HAD to plod along Harrison—walking was their only way to get downtown. Their waffle-stompers were their only mode of transportation. There was no bus service to campus. Larry Stenberg, who was Dean of Student Services, worked tirelessly to get the bus to come out to campus, but Intercity Transit denied every request. They adamantly refused to extend service to us. Finally, after several years, Larry got a van and one of the students drove a regular route from campus to town. When IT saw how lucrative the route was I think they just got tired of Larry coming in with his spreadsheets and reports and they gave us bus service. So, the townsfolk saw fewer 'hippies plodding down Harrison in their ponchos and waffle-stompers.'"

Vradenburgh: I was surprised that Dan Evans was a Republican.

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: Some of the things that I read him say, I was surprised hearing it come from a Republican, because I expected he would be like a Democratic, liberal person. I don't know. I'm wondering if you have any thoughts on that. Was the Republican Party different at that point? Because it definitely sounded like they wanted something really unconventional, like he did.

Barte: Yes, that was his vision.

Vradenburgh: I was really surprised. [laughing]

Barte: "A school like no other." He had often been referred to as the most Democratic Republican we've ever had." [laughing]

Vradenburgh: Okay, so he wasn't necessarily reflective of the rest of the party?

Barte: In my mind, the party at that time was not the Republican party as it is now. Not as conservative as it is now. Not as hateful as it is now. But, yes, he was a little bit removed. He had great visions. He was the one who started the tradition of rappelling down the Clock Tower. He was the first one to do it.

Vradenburgh: What did you see the need at that time around having such an unconventional approach to education? How did you see it fit in with what was going on?

Barte: I thought it was great. I thought they just should have been left alone. In my mind, Evergreen filled the need for so many who couldn't, or wouldn't, make it in a more conventional school. It offered a lot that more conventional schools did not.

Vradenburgh: Can you say more about that? Over the years, maybe some examples of how you feel like it was offering something that was valuable to others who aren't fitting into different boxes? Are there some examples you can point to?

Barte: I really can't. I know there are so many, but I just can't think of any right now.

Vradenburgh: That definitely resonates with me for sure. It seems like it's such a . . . for those students. For me anyway, when I came out, it was just that community-based, project-based, applying what you're learning in the real world. That was so appealing to me. Rather than the book learning.

Barte: Yeah, that you're just going to forget in two weeks after the test is over. I witnessed over the years a lot of students who were happy with what they were getting here. A lot of them had come from other schools. They were able to weigh the difference, and they appreciated that difference. I think a lot of them were very contented, very happy, and a lot of them did very, very well.

Vradenburgh: It was here for 10 years or so before you joined the staff. Is that right?

Barte: Yes, it was.

Vradenburgh: I understand that first decade was very—people working really hard, getting things off the ground, needing to prove themselves and make things happen. But from a community member's standpoint, what were you watching happen during that first decade? Was the community embracing Evergreen?

Barte: No. Most definitely not.

Vradenburgh: How was it integrating?

Barte: Not very well. I think the struggle went on for years beyond that. I know there were a lot of neighbors—for instance, a lot of the faculty and staff moved to Ken Lake when they came to work at Evergreen. I think Ken Lake was brand new at the time, if I remember right. The staff and faculty were just blown away, they would come in and say, "Whenever I meet new neighbors, they sneer, 'Oh, Evergreen? You work at Evergreen?'" But no, Evergreen was never embraced as far as I know. Whenever I went to a gathering and introduced myself to folks, I'd get "oh, you work at THAT place. Do you still shave your legs?" It was very disheartening.

Vradenburgh: How did you see the school influence the community during that time? Were you noticing a cultural shift in stores and things happening?

Barte: Yes. Although very slowly. I think once Greeners started buying businesses and establishing themselves downtown, and establishing themselves up on the Hill--we had a lot of graduates going into the Legislature, Denny Heck and Eleanor Lee were our first--I think then it changed, and the town itself changed. The town grew. The town grew up. Outside folks moved in. So, I think it was a little bit of

both. And, the campus did go to great lengths to befriend the community. Larry Stenberg established ECCO (Evergreen Campus Community Organization). I often likened it to the Faculty Wives Tea. It was a wonderful vehicle to embrace the community, display student presentations and act as a goodwill ambassador for Olympia. I remember Russ Fox had a class that planned the new Olympia Community Center to replace the building that was about to fall down. He also had a class where the students had to go out and spend a certain amount of hours each week working with a senior citizen in the community. Another class conducted a noise-abatement survey when I-5 was expanded. So I think many of the local community members saw Greeners performing these projects and services that benefited the local citizens and they started to view us in a new light.

Vradenburgh: If I'm remembering this correctly, at the time also, was it simultaneously more State agencies were coming and being housed in Olympia or having their home base here?

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: It was this influx of college plus State.

Barte: Yes. Because many of the State agencies, ironically, used to be headquartered up in Seattle. They started moving down to Thurston County, building State agencies in the Olympia area, so that created jobs.

Vradenburgh: But it sounds like you always embraced this unconventional school.

Barte: I did.

Vradenburgh: What is it about Evergreen that resonated with you?

Barte: That's hard to say. I don't know, because I never really knew anyone from Evergreen before I came to work here. My husband took a couple of graduate classes, and I remember him coming home quite impressed with the equipment on campus. He'd say, "It's like the State gave that place a blank check. They have the best of everything." But unfortunately, that state-of-the-art equipment became outdated and obsolete quickly and it didn't hold for very many years.

Vradenburgh: Tell me about how you came to work there. Were you looking for a new job?

Barte: I was working in a bank over in Lacey. They were expanding I-5—they were widening it—so construction was always backing traffic up. Every single day, it was a mess. And going through downtown was very hard because I-5 was backed up.

Also, I was administrative assistant to the president, so I took care of the stockholders, the stockholder meetings, and all the Board of Directors meetings and their committee meetings, so I was there at 6:30-7:00 every morning for the various meetings, and then there were meetings in the evenings, so I was putting in 15-hour days. Finally, one night, I just came home, and I said, "What am I

doing?" [laughing] So, between I-5 and the intensity of the position, I started looking around, and I got a job at Evergreen.

Vradenburgh: Did you have children at that time?

Barte: I did. Two.

Vradenburgh: Wow. That's a lot.

Barte: It really was. [laughing]

Vradenburgh: What years were your children born?

Barte: '73 and '75.

Vradenburgh: Okay, so you were here a few years. What was the first position you held at Evergreen?

Barte: I started in the Registrar's Office. Walker Allen was the Registrar at the time. His assistant was Judy Huntley. I always viewed that as unfortunate because she did all the work. Everybody knew Judy ran the place. Judy was the de facto Registrar. Everyone—faculty, staff, students went to Judy for help or guidance—no one dared approach Walker. Ironically, when Joe Olander came, the first thing he did was ask Walker to leave, and made Judy Registrar, which she should have been all those years.

Vradenburgh: Was he just checking out in his office or just wasn't really doing his job?

Barte: Both. It was sad. I long viewed it as a classic example of the man never should have been hired in the first place. He was put in a position that he wasn't able to perform. He was a good man and I'm sure tried his best but he was just overwhelmed.

Vradenburgh: Judy was the assistant?

Barte: Yes, she was his assistant.

Vradenburgh: What was your role there?

Barte: I was the Certification Clerk, which meant when students graduate or leave campus, they get that letter: "You're going to start paying on your student loans now that you're no longer in school." At the time—I don't know how they handle it now—but in those days they would write the school a letter and ask, "Oh, is So-and-So still a registered student?" And I'd write back and say, "No, she left about three quarters ago." "Okay, we'll track her down." A lot of paperwork. I'm sure it's all done online now, but a lot of paperwork back then.

Vradenburgh: How long did you hold that position?

Barte: Not very long because I think it was the following June, I went up to College Relations. I remember I started the week before Super Saturday, and I remember thinking, "What have I done?" [laughing] Because it was so—I don't know if you remember Super Saturday?

Vradenburgh: I remember the event. To be honest, I don't think I ever went to it. I think it ended shortly after I was here.

Barte: It was sad when it ended. It was a great event. It was unbelievable. Quite extraordinary. I remember staff members would put on costumes, and I mean costumes. Huge costumes. One was a giraffe, one was a huge, huge, Geoduck. Giant costumes. The staff would wear these various costumes and walk through the throngs of people at Super Saturday.

I remember the first thing they had me do on my first day in College Relations was go over to the scene shop and bring the costumes back to the College Relations office so the staff members could put them on the day of Super Saturday. Here I am walking across campus with these big, giant costumes that were probably as big as my car. [laughing] I'm thinking, what have I done? Then I'd go back and get another costume and bring it over. That went on for the whole first day I was there, and the rest of the week didn't get much better. Then Super Saturday came, and we put the stuff back. It was good. It was a wonderful event.

Vradenburgh: College Relations put on Super Saturday?

Barte: Yes, they were the main coordinator. There were different committees: they had the food committee, the vendors committee, the music committee, the Kids' Country committee. But College Relations was the main event coordinator.

Vradenburgh: Tell me a little bit about that event, what the purpose was and who were they hoping would come, and what were they hoping to share about Evergreen through that event?

Barte: I think they just tried to share Evergreen, to invite the community to come out and see what was going on here. Because in the very beginning, they would display all the student projects, all the students' artwork, all the students' presentations. There was a lot of emphasis on that. I think that was the main impetus in the beginning. It was to say, "Hey, look! We're not that bad. We have wonderful things that our students get done. This is what we look like."

Another reason—justification—for it was to offer an entertainment venue for the graduates and their families. Super Saturday was always the Saturday of graduation weekend. Graduation used to be held on Sunday, and they'd have Super Saturday on the Saturday prior. It always amazed me how those Facilities folks cleaned up that campus overnight. On Saturday you'd walk around campus and you'd see the snow cones and the ice cream on the ground, the spilled soda. Oh, my goodness! What a mess! But then you'd come 7:00 the next morning, Sunday, to start putting up the chairs for graduation and there was not a cigarette butt, there's not a paper cup, there's not an ice cream stain. That Facilities crew really outdid themselves every year.

In fact, I often thought that was the beginning of the demise of Super Saturday, because it was just so much work. It was so much work, and with work comes the money. I think money was a big factor why we can't do this anymore.

Vradenburgh: Do you remember what year they stopped doing it?

Barte: The last Super Saturday was 2009. Larry Stenberg was the first staff member to put it on. He was the inspiration for Super Saturday. He was its Founding Father. It went on for 30 years.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, it felt like the very tag end of it. I never went to it.

Barte: They tried to resurrect it a couple of times. They tried to bring about a strictly music festival type thing. Then they brought out Tribute to Japan, although that was much earlier. It was probably in the '90s they brought out Tribute to Japan. That was a lovely event. It was geared toward the Japanese culture and community. That was pretty high blown. Keith Eisner was pretty instrumental in putting that on. He brought in the Consul General from Japan. It was wonderful. They did a good job of that, but it just couldn't keep going. Just like Super Saturday, it required so much volunteer staffing. It just couldn't be sustained.

Vradenburgh: Were there other events that College Relations put on? I guess in some ways I was thinking it's like a bridge between the community and the college to attract people.

Barte: Yes. They put on so many community events, plays, talks.

Vradenburgh: Were there other things that they were doing?

Barte: They used to put on a lot more music events. They had this series called Evergreen Expressions, where every quarter, they would put on another performance, another musical, live performance. They had that for quite a while, several years.

They used to put on a lot more plays. They tried.

Vradenburgh: What do you feel the impact was in terms of the perception of the community with those kinds of outreach activities or events?

Barte: A lot of folks enjoyed them. Evergreen Expressions--a lot of folks came out. One event they had was Neil de Grasse Tyson, and that was standing room only. You could not get near the building for his talk. They managed to bring out a lot of high-blown folks like that: bell hooks, Vonda McIntyre, Sherman Alexie, Angela Davis, Carlotta Walls, Robert Fulghum, Bryan Stevenson, Bobby Seales, Ken Kesey. Yeah, a lot of community members came and appreciated them.

A rather funny story about Ken Kesey: on a personal note—I had emergency surgery at RiverBend hospital in Eugene, Oregon. Every time one of the nurses came into my room to take me downstairs for a test, procedure, or surgery, etc., she would look at my bed and say, "oh, you have one

of the old beds, I need help.” And she would come back with two other people, and all three of them would push me and my old bed downstairs. This happened every day, sometimes twice a day for six days. This all happened shortly after Ken Kesey died, which was not too long after he presented at Evergreen. When I read about his death, the article indicated he died in Eugene, Oregon, in RiverBend Hospital, which made perfect sense cause he lived in that area, right on the river, the area which was the inspiration for *Sometimes a Great Notion*, I immediately remembered the nurses having such a hard time pushing me down the halls in my “old bed” and I wondered if perhaps I did indeed sleep in the bed Ken Kesey died in? [laughter]

But back to tesc events on campus: the place was always overrun on Super Saturday. You couldn’t get near the parking lot. Then we arranged with IT Transit to have buses, back and forth, back and forth—shuttle buses—constantly, all day. They were always packed. Always.

The community enjoyed Super Saturday, and the folks did enjoy Evergreen Expressions and the plays and different shows. And, oh yes, the kids just LOVED Alice in Chains, Smashing Pumpkins and Nirvana when they performed on campus!

Vradenburgh: I suppose now they do the Return to Evergreen. That’s probably their latest iteration. Do you think that’s equivalent, at least in terms of goals?

Barte: Return to Evergreen is pretty much geared toward alumni, it’s more of an academic educational type series.

Vradenburgh: Rather than just a fun event for the whole community. Let’s see. You’re at the Registrar, and then you went up to College Relations. Tell me a little bit about what you did there.

Barte: We did all of the publications, the graphics, and we did all the media outreach. We worked with the media whenever Evergreen was in the news, or whenever we wanted to put Evergreen in the news. We sent out the news releases to different media.

That’s what I did. I did publications editing, proofreading, and all the paperwork for getting publications to the printer, and paying the bills, and getting them sent out. I worked with Keith mainly with the news media.

Vradenburgh: When you think back on both positive and challenging or more negative, what were some of the stories you were trying to get out to the world, and what were some of the stories you were having to be reactive to? [laughter]

Barte: There were so many. The thing that immediately comes to mind was the Joe Olander debacle, when that was falling apart. To me, that was a very painful situation because the man came to us with

this spiel that he left high school illiterate, got into trouble with the law, and the judge said, “You either go in the military or you’re going to jail.”

So, he joined the Air Force. Got sent up to Baffin Island. He claims there were only two books in the entire base library. One was *How to Fix Your Volkswagen*, and he claimed that from going over that book, because it had illustrations of the different car parts, he could figure out what the words were, and that’s how he taught himself to read.

Vradenburgh: Wow.

Barte: He claimed that from that, he got his GED through the military. He finally graduated high school, and then went on and got college credits through the military, then got scholarships to get his master’s. He came to us with this spiel, and from a media perspective, it was up to Keith Eisner and his boss, Mark Clemens, to really get this fantastic story out there.

Wow! Look at this story. This guy never graduated high school, was illiterate, and now he’s a college president! Mark and Keith worked tirelessly to promote that story. And they did, very admirably so. He was on national media. He got a lot of ink. When it was discovered that the whole story was bogus, it was very painful—very painful—because now you’re trying to keep a lid on it.

I remember this so vividly. I remember Joe coming into our office. Mark and Keith were standing right by my desk, and Joe came in, telling them that he’d just had a call from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, which is the primo publication in the education world. Joe said, “This is my worst nightmare come true. You guys have got to get rid of this. You have to make it go away.”

I’m sitting there at my desk, I’m looking up at the three of them and I’m looking at Joe and I said to myself, “Now wait just a minute, you are the one who came here to us and said, ‘Get me in this paper. Get me on this talk show. Get me this interview.’” I remember him coming in and telling us he wanted to be . . . there was some talk show . . . I can’t remember the name. It’s not on anymore so it doesn’t matter, but it was a pretty high-blown national talk show with a very attractive moderator, and he wanted Keith and Mark to get him on that show.

That’s how he was. He was constantly “Get me more coverage. Get me more. Get me more ink.” And yet, when it was going sour, he says, “You’ve got to stop this. You’ve got to get rid of this.”

Vradenburgh: Evergreen was totally in the dark about his actual credentials until this moment, and then they’re like, oh.

Barte: Yes. Exactly. To me, the most excruciating part was we didn’t find out all at once. We learned that he not only graduated high school—he graduated with an A in Latin and A’s in Math and several other classes. If you get an A in these subjects, you were not illiterate. There were so many things on his

resume that he had lied about, but we learned of them in dribs and drabs. It was the daily drip, drip, drip of dreadful deceptions. It seemed like every day another appalling untruth was uncovered. New day, new Joe revelation.

Vradenburgh: That's really horrible.

Barte: Yes. To me, it was devastating, because he divided the staff and faculty. The Board itself was very divided. Half the faculty wanted to draw-and-quarter him in Red Square. Half the staff loved him and thought he was—and he was, he was very charming.

I remember when he came for his interview, and whenever he would give talks, he never had a note in front of him. Just talked to us. I remember he would walk back and forth on the stage. Constantly moving. We didn't have wireless microphones at that time, so he was always getting tied up in the microphone cord. [laughing] But it was wonderful to listen to him because he was so very charming. Very personable. During his interview he said he was going to learn each job on campus. And he did. He worked in the Mailroom for a week, delivering our mail, wearing a Post Office uniform, pushing the little wheeled mailbag cart; he worked in the cafeteria for a week, flipping our burgers; he worked in the Program Secretaries office for a week, typing evaluations. He rolled around campus in a wheelchair for a week, just to get a feel for what it was like to maneuver from place to place on campus while confined in a wheelchair. Another charming gesture—he would come around to each of our offices each Friday and tell us to “Have a good weekend. Don't give this place a thought over the weekend.” He was very supportive of the staff. To me it was the little things that counted. So when the Big Divide came, half the staff said, “Hey, so what if he said he had an MED instead of an MIT. Big deal! Leave him alone.” But then, when you found out more and more untruths, that's what was sad, because it just came to us in dribs and drabs. A daily drip, drip, drip of dreadful deceptions.

Vradenburgh: Did the staff and the faculty finally come together toward the end?

Barte: I think they did. Somewhat. But the damage had been long done.

Vradenburgh: As they found out more and more?

Barte: Yes. And for a long time after he left. The school had to buy out the remainder of his contract and the staff and faculty were quite resentful that all that money had to go to a charlatan. For several years, every time a budget request was denied—the response was, “Oh, so that went to fill the Joe Hole!” But by the same token, many folks were happy to see him gone. He created an intolerable situation. There were just too many deceptions. I remember *The Olympian*, ran a six-page article one Sunday morning—I mean, full, full article, six full pages long. They went everywhere. They went to

every school he'd ever been to, talked to the faculty, talked to the staff at that school. They uncovered every foible the man had.

He came to us from University of Texas, but he had been at Florida prior to Texas. Someone on staff in Florida told the *Olympian* reporter that Joe came to a faculty party with five different women. He would come with a woman, and then leave, and then come back a short time later with another woman, and then leave, and then come back escorting someone else. FIVE! That's too exhausting for me! I am reminded of the scene in *Mrs. Doubtfire* where Robin Williams had dinner with both his boss and his girlfriend in the same restaurant and he would run out, get dressed, then go to the other table, just to do it all again and continue eating at the other table. At least Joe didn't have to get dressed in a different costume for each girl! [laughing] But six pages of stuff like that. They uncovered every deceitful, embarrassing move he ever made.

Vradenburgh: He'd been lying for a long time.

Barte: Evidently.

Vradenburgh: It wasn't just Evergreen. This is his life.

Barte: It would appear he hoodwinked a lot of folks in a lot of different places.

Vradenburgh: Yeah. Wow. That's something. How long did it take for the whole truth to come out? Was it over the course of a year, a few months?

Barte: I think it was almost a year before it finally came to a head.

Vradenburgh: That must have been so challenging from the College Relations perspective of how do you deal with public perception around this?

Barte: Exactly. It created a very agonizing atmosphere.

Vradenburgh: Do you remember how you all were making decisions about what to share?

Barte: As little as possible, but yet, when they ask you a question, you've got to answer them. We didn't hide anything.

Vradenburgh: They weren't sharing, but they were answering.

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: What was the climate like internally within the staff and the faculty at that time?

Barte: I think once they got over the initial divide of, c'mon, you never made a mistake on your resume? I think once they got over the divide and they were like, whoa, you don't do this, they were in tandem and were happy to see the back of him.

Vradenburgh: Was there any finger pointing internally?

Barte: A lot of people, I think, were disappointed in the Board that they didn't take action sooner. A lot of people were disappointed that a more thorough background check had not been performed when he was hired. A lot of people were angry at the two faculty members who brought it all to light. They thought, just leave it alone. Don't go there. It was hard. So many different feelings. So many different views.

Vradenburgh: Yeah.

Barte: The tranquil little campus in the woods.

Vradenburgh: Yeah. Did it take a while for you to get to the other side of that as a community?

Barte: I think it did. Although I think it was a wound that took a long time to heal. I think people were apprehensive about hiring someone ever again. "Whoa, this person better have clean socks on." But you get over it. You move on.

Vradenburgh: I want to shift gears a little bit and talk about people you worked with who were influential. Can you think of a few people that either were people you admired and were mentors, or influential in a day-to-day way?

Barte: I think the persons who come to mind would be Mark Clemens and Keith Eisner. They taught me everything I know about the written word and gave me a larger appreciation for writing. They gave me a love for the written word. They taught me everything about proofreading, writing and grammar.

They were an amazing team, Mark and Keith. Mark had all the rules of grammar. "Oh, should this be which or that?" And he would spout out the relevant rule. Whereas Keith had the spirit of the written word. I think they were a wonderful team, and they taught me a lot. Taught me pretty much everything that I know now, whereas I thought I knew a lot [laughing] before I went to work with them. They gave me a good education. They taught me to write.

Vradenburgh: How long did the three of you work together?

Barte: Mark left first, and then Keith left. Oh, I can't remember. It was a lot of years, I know that. At least 10 years.

Vradenburgh: Each person brings a different spirit or creates a vibe, I guess, within the department.

Barte: Yes. Definitely.

Vradenburgh: Can you share a little bit about what they brought, how they shaped the day-to-day feeling of the department?

Barte: Keith was very, very energetic. Had an extreme amount of energy. He had an incredibly vivid imagination, a delightful sense of humor. He gave the perception of being this rattled, unorganized, disheveled "Just get it done. Get it done." Whereas in reality he was the most organized, never-missed-

a-deadline man I ever worked with. The Publications Office is very deadline oriented. But he never missed a deadline. He often referred to himself as the “Mouth of Evergreen.”

He was the main event coordinator for Tribute to Japan. Super Saturday had all the other committee heads—the food vendor committee, the craft vendor committee, etc. But with Tribute to Japan, Keith ran it all by himself, for the most part. This was before we had these handy-dandy little calendar spreadsheets. Pre-desktop computers. It was unheard of then.

I walked in one morning and Keith has this butcherblock paper about this high taped to his wall, and then down into the corner, and taped across the other wall into the corner, and then down the other wall. “What has he done?” When I looked closely at it, I realized it was all deadlines. It was a timeline, and it took up his whole entire office! It was the timeline for Tribute for Japan. It had all the little marks indicating everything that had to be done at certain times.

When Tribute to Japan came, I was in there one day and I was looking up at his timeline. He did not miss one of those deadlines! It was remarkable. That’s the way he did everything. But yet, if you saw him, you’d think he was the absentminded professor, dropping things, disheveled. But he wasn’t. He was so incredibly organized. My son called me one day and said, “Mom, I watched this incredible movie and it’s Keith Eisner—*Life is Beautiful*—and this guy is exactly like Keith!” And it’s so true. Roberto Benigni is Keith Eisner. In the beginning of the movie Roberto is throwing his hands in the air, telling the very staid banker, “Just sign the papers! Give me money to buy my restaurant!” But later in the movie, he uses every creative, ingenious means at his disposable to save his young son while they are incarcerated in a Nazi concentration camp. I so remember thinking to myself, while watching the movie, “Oh Brian was so right, this guy IS Keith Eisner.” So very passionate, excitable, yet so very patient and imaginative. So creative.

Mark was very concerned about the artistic. He was a good artist. He should have been an artist. Networking was his forte. He would be out on Red Square or Downtown Olympia networking with people, finding out things, gleaning information, and then bringing it back. They had the creative side, and they had the organized, getting-it-done side.

Mark was the soul of Evergreen, the vision of Evergreen. Keith was the spirit of Evergreen, the heart of Evergreen. Or, as he so often put it—the Mouth of Evergreen.

Vradenburgh: Sounds like a good team.

Barte: They were. They were a remarkable team. And they organized a lot of fun events. They organized staff/faculty dances up in 4300. They organized staff/faculty baseball games. They organized the most imaginative and productive retreats and staff meetings I have attended. Yes, Mark and Keith

were a very good team. They complemented each other quite well and created a very efficient, well-oiled office.

Vradenburgh: Where do you feel like you fit into that?

Barte: Oh, I think I was right there, pushing them both up. I think I was the third leg of the stool. I supported them both and admired them both very much.

Vradenburgh: When you say you supported them both, can you give me more specifics about what your day-to-day job looked like?

Barte: The paperwork, answering the calls, arranging meetings, paying the bills, proofing the pubs.

Vradenburgh: When you think back on your time at Evergreen and the different roles that you played, what do you think are some of how you contributed or some things you feel proud of during your time there?

Barte: Oh, dear. I don't know. I can't think of any, other than that I was always there, and I was always trying to get it done. I was there to lend moral support and keep the lights on. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: We talked about Olander, which felt like something that we should talk about. Can you think of other big moments or events that you would want to reflect on during your time? Things that bubbled up?

Barte: I think the saddest would have been all the murders. Sometimes I look back and I think about it and I think, how could this magical little college out in the woods have so many murders?

It started out with Ted Bundy. One of Ted Bundy's victims was a Greener, Donna Manson. She left her dorm to go to a concert on campus and nobody ever saw her again. They found her up in Capitol Peak. When they tracked down Ted Bundy, he admitted that he murdered her.

The next was Elisa Tissot. She was a student about to graduate. It happened in April, and she was going to graduate in June. She had been dating this mercenary, Mike Pimentel—he'd go around the world working for different country's armies. He most recently returned from serving as a Lance Corporal in the Rhodesian army. They had been dating, but when they broke up, she went to Campus Police and Olympia Police because he was stalking her, all to no avail. He walked into the CAB one day and shot her while she was drinking coffee. Right there in the CAB.

Vradenburgh: Wow! Really?

Barte: Just shot her. One of the students who was at her table in the CAB testified at his trial that he very calmly walked up to the table, gun in hand, and emptied it into her, saying, "Guess that'll teach you," until his gun clicked, empty.

Vradenburgh: My gosh!

Barte: It was a very sad day on our sleepy little campus. It really put a pall on our cozy little campus in the woods. But her case led to the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act and the Anti-Harassment Act. He was sentenced to 30 years.

Joanne Jirovec was the supervisor for the program secretaries. That was really sad. I had worked with her husband, Dave Jirovec, previously at Boone Ford in Olympia. He was a car salesman, and he was a skunk then. He would skate sales. He would see another salesman out on the lot talking with a customer, and Dave would come into the showroom, pick up the phone on one of the lower lines, call the dealership's main line, and ask for that salesman who was out on the lot with the customer.

He'd call in and say, "Oh, let me talk to Joe Brown." I'd call over the loudspeaker "Joe Brown, to the office," and when Joe Brown walked into the showroom, Dave would run out and skate the sale Joe Brown had been working on. I was so angry that I was stupid enough to fall for it so many times, until he got caught.

He stole a bunch of computers from Evergreen when we first got computers. Then he sold them. He sold his boat to someone in Idaho, then reported the boat stolen and filed an insurance claim.

Anyway, what he did was, Joanne, his wife, drove the vanpool bus. We had an employee vanpool bus at the time. The bus would come to your house, pick you up, take you to campus, and then drive you home at night. You paid for it—it wasn't free—but Joanne drove the bus. This one Monday morning, she just didn't show up. Didn't pick anybody up. They found her body down at the Centralia rest stop later that day.

The police determined that Dave, her husband, was at Denny's over where Buffalo Wild Wings is now on Black Lake Boulevard. It used to be a Denny's. Dave was in Denny's, and he called Joanne and said, "I'm here having lunch with a buddy, but now I can't start the car. Bring my van over because it has my tools in the back."

So, Joanne drove their van over to Denny's. Dave said, "Let's go in and have a cup of coffee." They did. When she got back in the van, Dave's hired hitman was in the back of the van, killed her, and left Joanne down at the rest stop in their van. That was awful. There was an extreme pall on campus then.

It seems like we've had a couple of other murders. I was just astounded at how we could be such a low-population school and have all this horror happen.

Vradenburgh: Was it all within a close time period, or just over the years you were there?

Barte: Joanne was killed by her husband in 1986. Elisa Tissot was killed by Mike Pimental in April, 1984. Donna Manson was killed by Ted Bundy in March, 1974. Yeah, it wasn't that far apart. But I think it was

especially shocking because it was still in this small town, Olympia. We weren't nearly as big as we are now. Our enchanting little college town was in the big, bad times.

Vradenburgh: I was aware of the Ted Bundy thing, but I didn't know about these others. That's terrible.

Barte: I know I'm missing one or two.

Vradenburgh: Hmm. Yuk. [laughter]

Barte: Okay, on that positive note.

Vradenburgh: That's really new to me. I hadn't heard about that. How did the Evergreen community respond when those kinds of things happened?

Barte: Very supportive. Amazingly supportive. We had this tree planting ceremony in the Library meadow and memorial service for Elisa, which was a kind of catharsis. Joanne, they had a memorial service up in 4300, which was amazing. You couldn't get on the floor, much less into the room, it was so overcrowded. But the school was very supportive. You couldn't get through the hallway with all the flowers that were left at her office door. It was pretty amazing.

Vradenburgh: Did it cause any fear on campus, but they weren't incidents that would make you afraid to be there? Because it sounded more like interpersonal, other than Ted Bundy.

Barte: Yeah. Joanne, he was a creep, and I just didn't have any fear about that. The Elisa thing, that kind of scared me. I was told she broke up with him after she went into his house and realized it was filled with guns. It scared her off. I was like, wow! This evil can come in on campus even when we're . . .

Vradenburgh: Scary stuff.

Barte: Yeah, it was.

Vradenburgh: At what point did you decide to get your undergraduate?

Barte: It wasn't too long after I came to work here. I remember when I was in the Registrar's Office, I worked with a woman, Maureen Ferguson, who later became Maureen Eddy. She was taking classes. She was the one who took me under her wing and told me about the facts of life of Evergreen, to a certain extent. She told me, "It's wonderful. You can get your education for free. You have to do this, Pat, because believe me, 10 years from now, you'll be kicking yourself if you don't. "Look, I could have had my degree already."

She pretty much badgered me into it. I was, all right, maybe when my kids are a little bit older. But it wasn't too long after I went up to College Relations and Mark and Keith were very supportive, encouraged me to go for it. I said, maybe I should. And I did.

Vradenburgh: What did you study?

Barte: It was very hard because as an employee, you could only take—I forget if it was four or eight—it must have been eight credits a quarter. What happened is we didn't have that many part-time studies, we didn't have that many eight-credit classes, so it was hard. I didn't really take anything, I just grabbed anything that was eight credits.

Vradenburgh: It was the Evening and Weekend Studies that you did?

Barte: Pretty much.

Vradenburgh: Do you remember what year that started, the Evening and Weekend Studies? Was it something that was there all along from the beginning?

Barte: The Evening/Weekend Program was there all along. However, it was formally established in 1981 by Betsy Diffendal.

Vradenburgh: I guess that makes sense. I remember Keith talking about that.

Barte: If I remember right, I think it was tied in with Leisure Ed, because they had a full course structure of the Leisure Ed programs. I remember we used to do a publication that was combined Evening and Weekend classes and Leisure Ed classes, which was more community enrichment oriented.

Vradenburgh: Community education kind of thing.

Barte: Exactly, community enrichment. I do remember we did the combined publication, and then at one point, Leisure Ed was cut off from that and it was just Evening and Weekend. But it seems to me, it was always there, always offered.

Vradenburgh: Were there certain courses that stuck out that you really enjoyed, or faculty that you had?

Barte: I remember Rudy Martin was an amazing teacher. I did a class about the World War II Japanese internment camps with him. Stone Thomas was incredible. He had some great classes.

Vradenburgh: You're doing this while you're working fulltime?

Barte: Oh, yeah.

Vradenburgh: Wow. And raising kids.

Barte: That was part of the deal. It was only offered to full-time employees. It was how you got the—and it wasn't free tuition. I think we paid \$35 a quarter tuition. [laughter] But the rub was you were only allowed to register on the tenth day of classes. Because they wanted the paying customers to get in first, they didn't want you to bump the paying students, which I understand. But the problem was, by the tenth day, you were in the middle of no-man's land.

Vradenburgh: The quarter had already started, so you were getting in a week and a half in.

Barte: Exactly, so it was hard. I will say, though, that every single one of the faculty signed me in. Because they did have that discretion, they could sign you in even if their class was full. "I'll take her. You don't have to pay me for her. I'll take her anyway." Every one of the faculty I went and asked, let me in. I'll always remember that not one of them said, "I'm not getting paid for you, so why should I let you in?" But they did. Every single one of them.

In fact, one faculty, didn't know about that system. When I went to him and asked, "Would you mind signing my registration slip and let me in your class?" He didn't know what I was talking about, and when I explained it to him, he was appalled. He went to Judy Huntley and said, "How can we be doing this to these people? Ten days? The quarter's half over!"

Vradenburgh: I know, it's a short quarter.

Barte: What do we do? Do we buy the books and then return them if we don't get into the class? It was a logistical nightmare to suffer each quarter. Judy was like, "It's not my decision. I didn't have anything to do with it." But I remember Judy telling me later that "Steve Blakeslee reamed me over the coals about the tenth day thing."

Vradenburgh: It is kind of odd.

Barte: It was.

Vradenburgh: Do they still do that?

Barte: I don't know.

Vradenburgh: Interesting. How long did it take for you to get through?

Barte: A long time. I think it was 10 years.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, just taking a few credits at a time.

Barte: I remember I was tenacious. I went every summer. I didn't miss a quarter, but it took a long time, which was okay. I wasn't going anywhere. I was determined.

Vradenburgh: That's impressive though, to be working and going to school and raising kids.

Barte: Yeah. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: How did you manage all of that? I have small kids right now and I'm like, uh.

Barte: I remember my daughter was in Pony Club, and they had a fieldtrip up to Longacres, the racetrack in Auburn, and I can remember sitting there in the bleachers of Longacres doing my paper. [laughing] And we didn't have laptops or tablets or anything like that at the time. But I remember reading the book and writing notes. Oh, yeah, that's right. And I'd drop down part of the paper when it was time to get up and cheer for our horse. Someone said, "They're making us go down to the paddock now," so I had to pack up everything and walk her down to the paddock. "Wait a minute! I've got two

more paragraphs to go!” [laughter] It was good. I was able to earn a degree, whereas I would not have if not for Evergreen offering that benefit.

Vradenburgh: You just made it work?

Barte: Yes, I did. How old are your kids?

Vradenburgh: They’re little. They’re three and eight. But I have a hard time after they go to bed, I’m like, ah, I can’t do anything else. I want to go to sleep or just relax. It’s hard to imagine having to then read.

Barte: Or do a paper.

Vradenburgh: Or do a paper. I’m just always so impressed. I don’t have the stamina for that, I guess.

Barte: Yeah, you would.

Vradenburgh: How was it for you in terms of being a staff member, and you were an older student at that time, too than a lot of the enrolled students?

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: How was that experience for you?

Barte: Evening and Weekend, I think, was geared toward the older students, because most of the folks in each of the classes seemed to be my age. It was never an issue for me.

No, as far as being a staff member, the only little scratch (to use a Jane Jarvis term) was that I often felt staff members were treated as third-class citizens by Evergreen. For instance, at graduation there was always the guest speaker, a faculty speaker, a graduate speaker and a staff speaker. The year I graduated the staff speaker was eliminated. I remember being so sad about that because Marda Moore, a Bookstore employee from Evergreen’s beginning, was in class with me and she told me she REALLY wanted to be staff speaker at our graduation. She ended up being voted class speaker, then we learned it had been eliminated. Marda was devastated. At the graduation ceremony, the graduate speaker, MaryRose Livingston, in her speech, asked “Why is there no staff speaker at this ceremony? Are you telling me those people are good enough to clean your toilets and type your evaluations, but they are not good enough to address you here today?” With each word of her talk she’s getting louder and louder, to a really high-pitched scream during the last sentence, while pounding on the podium for emphasis. It was quite incredible. Dean Jose Gomez was sitting next to me in the audience, and he leaned over, asking me why there was no staff speaker. I told him we were eliminated in the interest of time—the ceremony was just getting too long. Jose leaned back in his chair. It made me realize the students noticed but the faculty and deans hadn’t a clue that the staff speaker was no longer. I still am frustrated about the years administrative staff got pay raises but classified staff did not.

Vradenburgh: Was your son going to school at the same time that you were? Were you graduating around the same time?

Barte: No, they were both in high school when I graduated. I graduated in '92. She graduated high school the following year, and he came up two years later.

Vradenburgh: For some reason, I thought you were there at the same time. That would have been kind of fun.

Barte: Yeah, we practically were. Brian started Evergreen not too long after. He would come into the office and ask me for stuff or help with papers.

They just started this, I guess you would call it a blog, on the campus Internet. It was called TESCTalk and TESCCrier. Anybody could write into it.

All of a sudden, this student by the name of David Bart started chiming in on TESCTalk. Just ranting and raving about the staff, telling us, "When are you people going to learn that you work for me? I'm paying your salary." He was vile. Very disrespectful. Very hateful. Constant mean postings.

I would run out into the hall, and I'd yell, "David Bart is not my son!" [laughter] Everyone would laugh. "Oh, Pat, I never thought of that. He doesn't have an E." Well, I thought of it.

I have to praise Helena Meyer Knapp, because I bumped into her, and somehow or another, this David Bart came up. She was one of my son's faculty. I mentioned to her that I was so embarrassed about this David Bart, and she said, "Oh, no, David is one of my students." Helena wrote on the TESCCrier and brought him to task right there on the all-staff and faculty blog and said, "David, I am appalled at your behavior. You owe every one of these staff members at Evergreen an apology. You are better than this."

He did apologize. To his credit, he did. He did, on the TESCCrier. He apologized. Now, he did start up again a couple months later. He started back. But it was so sad because he would write this nonsense, and then you'd look up the time of the email and it was 3:30 this morning. Oh, 2:30 this morning. David, go back to bed and talk to me at 9:00. That was amazing. David Bart. And my son Brian Barte was taking classes at the time. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: That's really funny.

Barte: Yeah, it was.

Vradenburgh: Tell me about your decision to retire. Were you just ready to be done?

Barte: It's so ironic you should ask because you will find, that when you reach a certain age everyone asks, "When are you going to retire?" I'm like, "why? Do you think I'm old? Do you think I've lost all of

whatever I can give?” This had been going on for quite some time, and I would have this panic attack every time someone said that.

Vradenburgh: I guess I could see people saying that, but I hadn’t thought of it like [laughter].

Barte: When you reach a certain age, an alarm clock goes off and everyone asks you when you’re going to retire. Plus, I’ve long feared that I have no idea what I would do when I retired. My dad worked till he was 95 because he had nothing else to do, and I think I’m in the same boat. I didn’t have any hobbies. There’s nothing I would want to do.

Fortunately, Evergreen had an investment counselor come to campus regularly. I think every quarter he came to campus. He was tied in with TIAA-CREF, so if you had money in TIAA-CREF, you were allowed to go and talk with him. He was a wonderful man. I really enjoyed him. Unfortunately, I can’t remember his name.

One time he came, and I asked him that. “When do you know when you can retire? When do I know financially? I don’t want to be living on hot dogs the rest of my life.”

He told me to come back the next day with all my paperwork. What are all my bills? What do you have coming in? What’s all your Social Security balances, all that? So, I did. I brought it in to him, and it was really funny because I was sitting at the corner of the table. He was on the other corner, and he’s looking down at all these statements spread out before him, and he looks up at me and says, “I don’t know why you’re working. You’ll be bringing in more money than you’re bringing home now.”

I said, “You’ve got to be kidding!” He said, “Yeah. If all this is right—all this paperwork, all these balances, are right—you’re going to be bringing home more money.” “Okay, that answers that!” [laughter]

Vradenburgh: That’s really funny.

Barte: It was. I was astounded. “Oh, I didn’t know I had planned so well.” But ironically it took me longer to retire than I think anything else I’ve done in my life, because you have to get all these entities coordinated. You have to get Social Security, Department of Retirement Systems, Healthcare Authority, and Evergreen all coordinated.

I remember, every night I would come home and there was a letter from one of those entities saying, “I need this letter signed by Evergreen.” Next day, I would bring it in to Evergreen and say, “Here, you need to sign this.” They’d sign it, and I’d bring it back to them. The next night, there’s a letter from the Department of Retirement Systems. “I need this letter signed by Social Security.”

Vradenburgh: Lots of paperwork.

Barte: I tell everybody, “Start a year in advance.” Because it was amazing. Each one of them would have been fine, but getting them all to coordinate and, I guess, talk with each other was like, you’ve got to be kidding me. I’m too old for this. [laughing]

Vradenburgh: It was knowing financially, oh, I’m fine, that gave you the feeling that maybe I’ll step away at this point?

Barte: Yes. Exactly.

Vradenburgh: Do you remember what that was like for you when you left your office? I know you’ve gone back since, but what was that like for you?

Barte: It was weird. In fact, my office was up on the Library fourth floor since the remodel. However, I worked with both. I worked with College Relations, which is now on the fourth floor, and half of my time was devoted to Advancement, who’s down on the third floor.

On my last day, Stella Chang and Meagan Oszkewicz from Advancement came into my office. It was so funny. I knew something was up. The two of them came in and they sat in the two chairs opposite my desk. “What’s up?” They both had this Cheshire cat grin on their faces. They kept saying, “When are you leaving? When are you leaving?” I said, “Well, as soon as I get this all tidied up.”

“Why don’t you leave now?”

Finally, Stella told me that when her mom left her job, it was so devastating for her to walk away from the building all by herself. So Stella gathered all my colleagues all together and they walked me out to my car. [laughter] Oh, the rest of them were all out—you know the little lobby on the fourth floor where we have the bathrooms and the elevator?

Vradenburgh: Mm-hm.

Barte: The rest of them were all in a gauntlet in that hallway. They were all lined up for me, so I had to run the gauntlet out. They made it sweet. They made it very, very sweet.

Vradenburgh: I can imagine being all teary-eyed.

Barte: Oh, it was. It really was. It was crazy.

Vradenburgh: Because that was a good 35 years you were there?

Barte: Yeah, it was.

Vradenburgh: That’s a long time.

Barte: Yeah.

Vradenburgh: And since you’ve been back. You get called back in for different things?

Barte: Yes, I’m totally amazed. The first time I was called was Sandy Kaiser and Susan Bustetter in College Relations. What happened was they were one unit. The College Relations Office and

Advancement was one unit. When George Bridges came, he split them. He said, "I want College Relations by themselves and then Advancement by themselves."

In doing that, they lost me. College Relations lost my position. My position stayed down with Advancement, so Sandy said, "If you do this, I need some kind of support staff up here." George gave her money to hire support staff, so Sandy called me back to tidy up the place because there had been no one for maybe nine months or so, and also to help hire a permanent support staff. That was my first time back.

Right after that ended, when we hired a person for that position, Advancement called me back because they were losing a position—actually, the position that I was down there as well—so they asked me to come down and catch up on that position, and then help hire the new person. I've been doing that ever since. It's good.

Then the program secretaries called me because they lost a position, so I worked over there. Then Advancement called me back and I worked there. Then the President's Office called me.

Vradenburgh: Just recently?

Barte: Yeah.

Vradenburgh: When they had the transition?

Barte: Yeah. Sophie Bustetter left and that left Susan Harris without a support person in the President's Office. However, that's ending this week. This is my last week in the President's Office. I tell everybody I've worked in every office on campus except Custodial and Police Services. [laughter]

Vradenburgh: How are you feeling about being free in another week?

Barte: It's good. People ask, "Why do you come back?" To a certain extent, it's fun, because you can always see the end. "I'm not going to be doing this the rest of my life." When you can see the end, it's pretty much fun. When I start to get bored at home, when I've cleaned up the house and there's nothing else for me to do, someone else at Evergreen calls me. [laughter]

It's funny because George Bridges, I will say—I tell everybody I've worked for eight Presidents—eight—and George Bridges is the first to do as much as he's done for the staff. The first thing he did when he came on campus—he came in September—in December, he did the tree lighting. He put the tree lights up and he had a tree-lighting ceremony on campus for the staff. He had hot chocolate. I thought that was really sweet. Then he had a staff party up at the RL [Red Lion Hotel], which I thought was exquisite. We've never had a staff anything. If we wanted any kind of holiday celebration, we had to potluck it. He also had the clambake during the summer for staff.

Oh, that's why I started saying that. He did a staff clambake right before school started in September. I was in line to get my clams and I looked up and here was the police chief, who was also a rehire from retirement. They were without a police chief, and they asked him back. I can't remember his name, and he used to work with my husband at Thurston County Sheriff's Office. Oh, I remember now, Ed Sorger.

Vradenburgh: You mean out at Evergreen or in the City of Olympia?

Barte: Yes. Both. He retired from the Sheriff's Department then came to Evergreen. He retired from Evergreen, and then they called him back. I turn around and I look up at him and I ask him, "Did you ever stop to think, do they keep calling us back out of desperation, or out of flattery?" He took a doubletake and answered, "Probably both." I said, "Yeah, you're probably right. Probably both."

Vradenburgh: You have so much institutional knowledge. How valuable is that, with all those years?

Barte: It's funny. Last time I was with Advancement, they had this one little area behind us with, I think, three student desks. We're all in the same room and every time someone's name was mentioned, I start talking about, "Oh, yeah, she did such-and-such." I always seemed to recall a funny story about that person. I thought, oh, these kids must be so sick of me, thinking, "oh, no, here she goes again with her stories." However, one day one of the students said, "oh Pat, I just love your stories. You have a story on everyone who walks through the door." [laughter] "Well, yeah, I guess I do." I've long considered myself the Seanchai (Irish Storyteller) of Evergreen!

Vradenburgh: That makes sense.

Barte: AmyLyn Ribera was the former Susan Harris. On the little signs on our office doors, she wrote a sign on my door that said, "Be nice to Pat. She's the only one who knows where the life vests are, and we truly are sinking." [laughter] Yep, that's true. I do know where the life vests are. My grandpa who worked on the *Titanic* told me where they are stored! (the ones that won't sink, anyway!)

Vradenburgh: That's funny. When you think about what's ahead for Evergreen, what are some of your hopes?

Barte: I hope it continues the way it is. I've heard a lot of dire predictions, many fearful prophecies, but I think they're unfounded. We've had our ups before. We've had our downs before. And we managed to survive them all. Yesterday in the hallway, someone said something about "I remember when we were at 4,000 students." Ha! I remember when we were at 1,200. We've gone up, and we'll come down. And we'll go up again. I think there's just too much invested out there for them to just shut the door.

Vradenburgh: Is there really some concern that they might close it?

Barte: I think my biggest concern is we'll become a campus of UW.

Vradenburgh: Oh-h-h.

Barte: That's what I say. But there have been suggestions to do just that since we opened. It has been introduced in the Legislature, along with transforming us into a police academy, several times.

Vradenburgh: They did open one in Tacoma.

Barte: Yeah, which makes me think, c'mon, they can't have one in Tacoma and in one in Olympia.

Vradenburgh: I could see them want out like the Harbor or something like that.

Barte: We used to have a campus in the Harbor.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, I know. I used to teach out there.

Barte: Did you really? My husband did, too.

Vradenburgh: Did he?

Barte: Yeah, he did.

Vradenburgh: Oh! What did he teach?

Barte: Criminal Justice.

Vradenburgh: That's cool. I loved it.

Barte: I've heard that from a lot of people.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, I loved it. It was really sad when they closed that campus.

Barte: Yes.

Vradenburgh: Many of the students I work with, there's no option for them to come.

Barte: Yeah, where are they going to go?

Vradenburgh: Yeah. They're not going to come to Olympia. And the fact they have that daycare on campus out there. Some of those students would have their kids there until 9:00 at night to go to class. That was a bummer.

Barte: Always comes down to money. I remember when we had the full-time program at the Vancouver campus, as well as a campus in Port Angeles.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, they had to make hard decisions. It's good that they've preserved the program in Tacoma, though.

Barte: Yes, I'm amazed. I'm totally amazed that they have been able to keep that going.

Vradenburgh: Yeah.

Barte: When Maxine Mimms left, I thought, okay, that's the end of Tacoma.

Vradenburgh: Oh, really?

Barte: Yeah, I really feared that. But no, they kept going. She started that at her kitchen table.

Vradenburgh: Yeah, I remember reading about that.

Barte: She kept it going. A Walker Allen story: You know how they always had this process, this rule, that when you registered for a class, if you didn't pay your tuition by the second day of class, you were dropped from the class. So one day Maxine Mimms came storming—now, she was from Tacoma. She was housed at Tacoma at the time. She came storming in, yelling, screaming at Walker Allen because one of her students in the Tacoma program had been dropped for not paying his tuition. According to her, the reason he didn't pay his tuition was because he was up in Madigan Army Hospital.

She's screaming at Walker. I'm at my desk and I could look right into Walker's office from where my desk was, and I remember sitting there looking, watching this woman screaming at the Registrar. She insisted that Walker was not only going to reinstate this student, but Walker was going to walk the reinstatement up to his bedroom in Madigan Army Hospital. [laughing] The woman was ferocious about her students. They were not going to be dropped, and if for some reason you mistakenly dropped them, you were going to fix it, and you were going to drive the registration up to him. She was a mother hen.

Vradenburgh: Good for her.

Barte: She's got a wonderful program up there.

Vradenburgh: That's a good one that they kept on going.

Barte: Yeah, I really am glad they did, because those folks, all they have is UW or UPS or PLU.

Vradenburgh: But those are both private, right?

Barte: Mm-hm.

Vradenburgh: Probably more expensive. Let me check the time and see how we're doing. How are you feeling? We've been talking for quite a while.

Barte: Ten after 3:00.

Vradenburgh: Okay. I feel like we've talked about lots of things. Is there anything that you feel, hopes for today of things we would have talked about that we haven't shared? Things you want to go more in depth in?

Barte: Did you know that there was a previous college on Evergreen's site?

Vradenburgh: I did not know that.

Barte: I'm so disappointed that so many people don't. . . yeah, it was exactly 100 years before Evergreen opened its doors. 1871.

Vradenburgh: I feel like that sounds really familiar to me.

Barte: I want to say . . . what's the name of the Friends? Quakers. I want to say he was a Quaker. I know he was some kind of religious person who founded it. It was called People's University. It was founded exactly 100 years ago. 1871. It was on the same site on Cooper Point.

Vradenburgh: How long was it there?

Barte: Shortly after the turn of the century, maybe 1910 or 1920 or something like that. It wasn't very long, but that always amazed me. I thought, whoa.

Vradenburgh: Wow! That's really interesting. I feel like I read something about aspirations about a college before Evergreen, but I don't know if it was that one. Interesting.

Barte: Yeah. Let's see. No, other than that I always viewed Evergreen as a magical place. An enchanting place to be. I remember when I went for my interview, I was walking up the bus loop, and there was a woman a little bit in front of me, and all of a sudden, she turned back to me and said something, but I couldn't hear what she was saying. Rather than "What'd ya say?" I just let it go.

But when I got to the point where she was when she said that I saw this little rabbit right there on the sidewalk. I looked and thought, oh, that must have been what she was commenting on. Wow. What a place to work. You've got rabbits to greet you. How enchanting. How magical. And, when I walked in for my interview, that same woman was on the interview panel! So I recall thinking to myself, "oh thank goodness I didn't yell, 'what'd ya say,' to her!

I remember one morning, we were all coming in and Susan Bustetter was—you know the main lobby, where you go into the main door of the Library? In that mezzanine, there was a little baby deer, Susan figured it must have gotten in with the handicapped door, because they stay open so long. He must have gotten in there, and now he can't get out. Susan took him down to Police Services where they had the kennels. As she was walking away, I thought, "what a cool place to work—where else do you get to wrangle deer in the building?"

It was just a magical place. Stuff like that happened. Where else can you go walk to the beach on your lunchtime? It was pretty cool. A little world of fantasy. Now, I know they have their foibles and their scratches, (and Lord knows I suffered through a few of them) but those are mostly outweighed by the magic.

Vradenburgh: It's such a beautiful campus.

Barte: It is. And they try so hard to keep it so pristine, but yet keep the walkways cleared and de-iced. Our Facilities folks always do an amazing job.

Vradenburgh: I have one other question for you. When you were out and about in your community in your daily life, at social events or whatever, how did you deal with public perception? Did things come up around Evergreen?

Barte: Oh, yeah. Constantly.

Vradenburgh: How did you respond to that just in the course of your daily life?

Barte: Some of them were very frustrating, and some of them you could address. Because the perception, you're not going to change. It's like now, if someone's not going to get vaccinated right now, we are not going to talk them into getting vaccinated.

All these years, I knew I wasn't going to change anyone's mind about Evergreen unless it was a solid something I could counter them with. One that immediately comes to mind was when we had a slew of women students who were very upset with the administration. They felt that the administration was not addressing their problems or concerns with sexual abuse on campus. If it was a date rape, they thought the administration was just trying to shove it under the rug.

One night these women went out and graffitied several buildings. They did \$6,000 worth of damage. The administration caught the girls. Jane Jervis was President at the time. Jane went back to the students' parents and said, "Look, we've got this \$6,000 bill to remove the graffiti your daughters painted on our buildings. Do you guys want to pool your resources and pay it, or do you want me to press charges, and have your students end up in jail?"

At this time I went to a party and a friend of mine hit me with "Hey, what's with this Jane Jervis letting those girls off scot-free?" I said, "Would you, as a taxpayer, rather Jane get the money from the parents to clean up the campus, or would you rather Jane put the girls in jail, whereby you, as a taxpayer, are going to pay for them to be in jail for the next however long they're sentenced? And when they get out of jail and can't get a job because now, they've got a record, you're still going to be paying as a taxpayer." "Oh, I didn't know Jane got the money." "Yes, that's the deal Jane cut. Either the parents pay the money or I'm going to press charges." "Oh, *The Olympian* didn't say that. *The Olympian* just said the school chose not to press charges." I just smiled. [laughter]

I took a class with a deputy sheriff from the Lewis County Sheriff's Department. I asked him if he took any flack from his co-workers about studying at Evergreen. He just gasped and said, "Are you kidding? I have to defend this place on a daily basis!"

There was stuff like that. Oh, okay, I have an answer for this. But a lot of it, you just walk away. You can't change their minds. Although I will say that as time went on, I was faced with that less and

less. I think a lot of the resentment toward Evergreen has decimated considerably. Although, it is still there.

I know one of my bosses, when he left Evergreen, I remember him saying, “Well, at least I don’t have to put up with ‘Oh, you work at THAT place?’ anymore.” Yeah, I know what you’re talking about, but that does occur less and less frequently, for sure.

Vradenburgh: That’s encouraging that it’s gotten a little bit more openminded over the years.

Barte: I believe so. I believe it has.

Vradenburgh: Anything else that you feel like you want to say?

Barte: Well, actually, I’d like to offer my parting words by posing a question to all my Greener friends, most especially the Facilities folks, who used to hold the most raucous parties both on-campus and off. To them I ask: “Did you ever find out who Lady Godiva REALLY was?” (Explanation provided upon request.) [laughter]

But, on a serious note, or perhaps on a thoughtful note would be a better word, I’d like to reiterate that I feel genuinely blessed to have enjoyed an extraordinary career at Evergreen, for which I will be forever grateful.

Vradenburgh: Okay.

[End Part 2 of 2 of Pat Barte on September 25, 2021]