

Interviewer: Jayden Verhaeghe and Ollie Johannsen
Interviewee: Nan Long
HBR modern US history
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Oral History of Hinckley Residents-Transcription

Jayden: Who was in your family growing up

Nan: Well, my parents were Jay and Diane Beane. I grew up with three siblings: my oldest sister Jaylen, Jack who owns the BP here in town, and my brother Dave.

Ollie: What did your parents do when you were growing up?

Nan: Both my parents worked out of town, so my sister was usually the babysitter. The whole town knew the bean kids, so everyone in the neighborhood looked out for each other's kids. I think we didn't do anything wrong or right that our parents didn't know it when I was growing up.

Jayden: What was high school like growing up?

Nan: I graduated from HBR in 1980; it was pretty much the same as today. I don't think a lot of the traditions have changed. I mean, something's changed over the years, but the main things, like homecoming and prom, are very memorable moments in your life.

Ollie: What was homecoming like growing up?

Nan: We always had a great parade, like 80 units in it. One year, I was part of the student council parade committee. It was fun, we had a great time, we did things like decorate the gym, like you do now, the fine arts center for our dance, so it was pretty much the same.

Jayden: What made you want to start a business in Hinckley?

Nan: Well, when I met my husband John, he was already in the parts business. He worked for Coffman Truck Sales in Aurora, and the opportunity arose about 8 months after we got married. With the help of my in-laws, we were able to take the leap of faith and give it a try, so we did in 1984.

Ollie: What was it like owning a business in a small town?

Nan: It was a good time. We enjoyed the whole 28 years we owned the business. We loved the community and were part of the first Hinckley Business Association. My husband was on the fire department and rose through the ranks to being assistant chief. A lot of things were made possible because we were here in a small town. I was also very active in the Hinckley Women's Club and our church.

Ollie: Why did you change the business to NAPA?

Nan: When we started the business, we were just learning to run the business and build our skills. After the first year, we found NAPA was promoting partnerships and decided to join them. It was probably the best decision we made to grow our business.

Jayden: How did you promote business in Hinckley?

Nan: When we started, we got the business group together and did some holiday things. One of the things that was kind of fun was giving the community a punch card and they would visit the business and get a stamp. The completed cards were put in a big barrel at the end of the week and drew names for the donated prizes. A lot of people won something. We also did Hinckley Bucks promoting the Hinckley businesses themselves.

Ollie: How were you involved with the Hinckley Food Pantry?

Nan: Well I was in the Women's Club for 15 years and noticed a lot of families were in need of food. A bunch of us in the Women's Club bought things and delivered them to the families. That led to starting the food pantry. We started out with the church ministers delivering food to the families in need once every week. Then we started a pickup where people would come to the Pantry and get food. We went through some hardships with a flood of the pantry, and we lost a bunch of food and our freezer with a bunch of meat. The Lions Club came through and bought us a new freezer.

Jayden: What was the cause of the flood?

Nan: A water pipe froze and burst in one of the winters when it was very cold. We didn't discover the flood until the food was spoiled but the very next Saturday everything was restocked.

Ollie: What made you want to be involved in the FFA Alumni group?

Nan: I saw what the FFA had to offer young people when I chaperoned a trip for FFA members and my son to their national convention. It was amazing to watch 50,000 or 60,000 kids engaged in meetings and walking through the career showroom. It was a light bulb experience, literally life changing, for some kids. It really improved my thoughts about the value of the FFA.

Jayden: How long have you been a part of FFA Alumni?

Nan: I think about 7 years. The FFA building has been under construction for 5 years and I think I was president for two years before that.

Jayden: What is the goal in the alumni?

Nan: Our main goal is to provide awareness to our community that FFA is not just about farming. There are many jobs that people don't realize kids can get and build their career on.

Ollie: What were some of your best memories growing up?

Nan: a lot of my memories focus around the community. This community just invests in their youth and always have because all these kids are the future of our community and we need to invest in them.

Jayden: Who would you like to shout out from your years of growing up?

Nan: I would say Lou Gourley, my high school home economics teacher, who gave me a lot of opportunities to grow.

Ollie: What was your favorite place growing up?

Nan: The Corner Pocket which is not the one that is here now. It was an arcade attached to a pizza place.

Jayden: What are you most proud of?

Nan: Well my parents. They were always givers and that meant a lot to me.

Ollie: What do you want to take or give away from this interview?

Nan: I viewed your interviews with other people. They bring back good memories; to remember the past and look forward to the future.