

Poweshiek History Preservation Project

Interview Transcript

Interviewer: Zhi Chen

Speaker: Stan Greenwald

Date: November 8, 2014

Place: Grinnell, Iowa

Date: November 8, 2014

Persons Present: Zhi Chen-I

Stan Greenwald-S

Chen: My name is Zhi Chen and today is November the 8th, 2014, and I'm talking with Stan Greenwald for the Poweshiek His— Poweshiek History Preservation project. So, Stan, can you tell us a little bit about your history, beginning from your early life, and then maybe your career, until now?

Greenwald: I was born, uh, 1 May, 1934. Uh, of Grinnell College graduate parents, who had finished Grinnell College in 1918 and 1919. I was a third child, and was born in Grinnell in the Community Hospital on the west side of Grinnell, and then raised on a farm three miles north and a mile and a half west of Grinnell, and that farm is located in the District Number 9 of Chester Township, Poweshiek County, State of Iowa. I went to country school through 6th grade. I then went to town school in Grinnell for 7th and 8th grade, and continued my matriculation at Grinnell High School, finishing in 1951. I was privileged to get a Baker Scholarship to Grinnell College, and followed there, majoring in chemistry and zoology, in preparation for medical school. I matriculated medical school at the University of Iowa; and graduated with an M.D. in 1959. 1959-60 I interned at Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, followed that with two years in the United States Air Force as a general medical officer, working at an induction station at 6301 West Jefferson Street in Detroit, Michigan, doing 300 physicals a day, either to accept or reject for service for our country. They followed that with a year fellowship in endocrinology, of the reproductive system, at the University of Iowa, and did a three year residency in obstetrics and gynecology. During all of this time, I married my college sweetheart in 1957, and by the age of 27 was a father of three children. One child, our last child, had special needs due to cerebral palsy secondary to oxygen deprivation having been born 10 weeks early. I finished my residency, and was fortunate enough to go into private practice in Iowa City, and enjoyed 25 years of practice of obstetrics and gynecology there. At that time, I moved to Minneapolis and worked for Park Niklik Clinic for another 10 years before retiring at the age of 65. We continued to live in the Minneapolis area for 15 years, which we enjoyed immensely, and at that time we decided we would like to return to our old stamping grounds and return to live what I expect to be the rest of my life in Grinnell, Iowa.

Chen: What about Grinnell is, interests you?

Greenwald: Uh, Grinnell gave me a good basic education, and I loved the farm, I love my farming background, and I thrived in that climate, and have extended family in the area, and my wife and I realized that our college roots were very important and we could continue to enjoy the

fruits of the community life as well as the fruits of Grinnell College as alums, and really really thrive in that environment as we continued to age.

Chen: As a, if you can remember to when you were a child, are there any interesting stories or, can you go over what you did as a child on a farm?

Greenwald: Uh, one of the most interesting aspects of my life as a very young child was that I had a Shetland pony whose name was Bob. My mother was the typical farm housewife, and helper to my father, as we were farming 240 acres at that time, and so this last child, tagalong, I had a brother that was 9 years older and a sister that was 7 years older, needed some care, and rather than my mother seeking childcare outside of the farm community she delegated that childcare to Bob, Bob my Shetland pony. And that Shetland pony literally took care of me. Very dependable, wonderful relationship. And so my mom would put me on that pony, and we would spend the day together, and she could look out and see where the pony was, and she knew that I would be somewhere close-by. I also had a pony cart, and my first job was being a, uh, water boy for a thrashing crew. My dad belonged to a thrashing run, and all the neighbors in the community did, and one day my dad said, "Stan, why don't you go and ask Mr. Bailey" he was the one that owned the thrashing machine, "and see if you could become the water boy." And so, I got in the pony cart, and rode, drove, a mile east and, a half mile east and a half mile north, to interview Mr. Bailey and ask if he would be willing for me to be the water boy for the thrashing crew. The thrashing crew job of water boy paid a dollar and a half for the whole day's work. He said "yes, you can do that" so with glee I returned home and told Mom that I had had the job. She got two glass gallon jugs and sewed burlap around them, and we used a corn cob for the stopper. And then I had to learn where to get cold fresh water from the wells at the farm where the thrashing crew was working that day. And Bob and I did that and enjoyed it. That was my first contact with having a responsibility, and also, for a job, and also for meeting the people that wanted and partook of a drink of water, and I marveled at their ability to handle the jug in the crook of their arm without involving the other arm. And I, to this day, wonder how you can drink from a jug in that fashion but they had that skill down cold. Other things, as I aged, I enjoyed a great deal being in 4-H. My dad milked cows, Guernsey's, and I loved those cows, and in terms of my 4-H project I wanted to show dairy. I did this with varying results, but it was a great learning process for me, and I really appreciated my 4-H experience. I actually got to show at the State Fair on one occasion. My cousin had entered a contest, and if, you were supposed to write about the dairy breed, so my cousin wrote a nice essay about the breed, and then instead of putting down the most common breed he put down a rather uncommon breed, and it was his idea that there wouldn't be as many kids that would be writing an essay about that, which would increase his chances of winning. The prize was a young calf of that breed. So, would you believe that my cousin won that calf. The obligation was to exhibit that calf at the state fair. Well, two days before he was supposed to exhibit that calf at the State Fair he came down with appendicitis. So he contacted me and asked if I would be willing to show that calf at the State

Fair, which I did, and it was a marvelous experience. We, the calf and I, ended up at the bottom of the line when they were lined up for prizes, but it was still a wonderful experience.

Chen: Can you explain what a thrashing machine is, and why water is needed?

Greenwald: Uh, thrashing machine at that era, there were no combines, there was not that degree of mechanization. So the process of harvesting a grain, in Iowa it was almost always oats, is that you would plant the oats with an end-gate seeder, which basically would spread the seed, usually you would do that in the first 10 days of April, and then the oats would grow and reach maturity mid- to late July. Then you came in with what they called a binder which would cut the oats, and arrange it into bundles, tied with binder twine. Named, it was a kind of thread, rope, named after its purpose for a binder. Then you would walk through the fields and you would take the bundles and you would arrange them in what would be called a shock, which basically was a little collection of half a dozen or more bundles, and so then in the shock the idea was that the grain would dry, continue to ripen, but you still had to get it separated from the straw. So a thrashing machine is a machine that you feed the bundle in in one end and it separates the grain from the straw, and the straw comes out of one tube, making a straw pile, which is fun to play in, and then in the other spout comes out, the grain ready to be bagged or binned, put in a bin, and to be used as cattle feed or even, highly processed, as human feed in the form of oatmeal, oatmeal cookies, oatmeal cake, etc.

Chen: Can you talk about what fun you had with the straw?

Greenwald: Uh, the straw, a straw pile was always wonderful, as it stacked and developed some resistance, to climb in, to make slides in the straw, or perhaps even take a nap with a nice straw bed, the straw sometimes was used for a mattress or ticking, among our rural farmers, and also, vagabonds would seek out a straw pile, sometimes to use it as a place to hide, or sometimes to use it as a place to get warm, or sometimes just to use it as a place for comfort. There's nothing that beats taking a nap in a nice sunny day with the comfort of straw behind you giving you a bed.

Chen: Were vagabonds common in the area?

Greenwald: Uh, the area which I'm speaking of, there was the bank closing in the Crash of 1929, and they were. They would walk the country, and they'd need food and drink, and sometimes they could get a day laborer, and they usually used the trains for their transportation throughout the country if they didn't want to walk or didn't—get tired of that. And from that of course comes our name “hobo” and the hobo capital of the world happens to be in Britt, Iowa, and they still celebrate hobo days in that community, and it's fun to attend that and see the culture of this group of our society which obviously is homeless, but manages to seek out and maintain an existence with this kind of lifestyle.

Chen: Do you have any personal experiences with a vagabond?

Greenwald: Uh, vagabonds always had some anxiety, when they would come to our door, and my mother was alone, that was scary, there was potential there for some trouble. She usually said “Yes, I will give you a meal, but you have to stay outside”, and that seems to me to make good sense. There were some hobos that had gotten into alcohol to help them with the pain of their existence, and there was sometimes very rarely in that era, some lawlessness, but my general experience has no related horror stories.

Chen: Can you talk about what your mother did around the house?

Greenwald: My mother could do it all. First of all, our water supply was a cistern where the soft water off the roof of the house was collected, so we had a soft water system, and then we had a hard water system which came out of the ground of our well. So there was always need for water, whether it was for washing, or human consumption, and so she would help in those areas. The wash was in an era where the washing machines and driers of today didn't exist, and so sometimes there was just a plain old washboard to wash your clothes on in a tub of water. Then the ringer came into the picture where that was a crank ringer that you would put your clothes through to ring 'em out. And so Mom could do that, she could do the cooking, the cooking was usually wood-fired, for the fuel, another source of fuel which we used on the farm, which was excellent, was corncobs, after the cattle had eaten the corn off the cob, she would send me as a child with a bushel-basket to go out and get a bushel of corncobs. And there was nothing better than a cook-stove fire of corncobs for making fresh bread, as well as everything else that's done on the top of the cook-stove. So one of the memories I have of the cook-stove is that our bedrooms were unheated, we were warm with quilts and covers, and so we would jump out of bed after our mother had banged on the ceiling with a broom, of the floor below the bedroom, and we would run down to the kitchen, and Mother was already warming our clothes in the oven, having heat from a corncob fire, or whatever else that she was cooking for us for breakfast that morning, usually, most commonly, oatmeal.

Chen: What did you guys eat?

Greenwald: What did we eat? We ate everything. Mom's culinary skills ranked right up there with all of her peer group, and the, we had pork, we had beef, we had milk in many different areas. Vegetables were always creamed, creamed means that there was a sauce made that, the vegetables, and I never had a vegetable that didn't have a cream sauce on it until I left the farm. And, I still would love to have creamed vegetables. Creamed potatoes was a common source. The fruits, fruit of the season, and then fruit that my mother canned: peaches, plums, pears, strawberries, raspberries, in our fruit cellar. That was another job, that, that was hers, the males of the family were helpful in any way they could. And, so we had a wide variety of food. Having fresh milk, non-pasteurized, but not a problem for us. We had cottage cheese that my mother could make, and, so, milk, bread, potatoes and vegetables of the season or vegetables that had been canned in Ball Mason jars by my mom sustained us through the fall and winter and spring months until the garden was providing us with this plenty.

Chen: Are there any foods in the past, that only existed in the past and does not exist currently?

Greenwald: Uh, there is, there were some limitations on the foods we had that were related to the Iowa climate and the Iowa culture. I never experienced an avocado growing up. I never experienced a mango, and such things that have to be shipped in, from the coasts or from the South American countries, etc. Those were not part of what we had. What we had, I think I pretty well mentioned.

Chen: Can you go over some of the chores you and your siblings had to do?

Greenwald: Uh, one of the things that you learn as a farm child is responsibility. What do I mean by that? Well, one of the things that a child could do would be to open and shut gates. So I will never forget the lesson of leaving a gate open and the hogs got out. That night was to be a family night when we all got in the car in our clean clothes to go to Grinnell to shop. So this was an event that we had looked forward to for some time, but the hogs were out. And so, the whole family had to gather around to help me correct my obligation of having left the gate open and the hogs out. And we did. The penalty for that was that we were late for the event. I had caused that delay. And I can remember vividly to this day, and so that was a lesson in responsibility. You will not leave the gate open or there will be consequences. And so there was illustration after illustration as a farm boy of your responsibility, what you did or didn't do, and how it would not only affect you but it would affect the whole family working together to try to maintain a positive existence as a functioning family in a functioning community.

Chen: Are there other chores you had to do? Can you go over a day where you did all your chores?

Greenwald: I have already expressed my interest in dairy, and there was always milking to be done. Now, milking has to be done twice a day, three hundred and sixty five days. So as I went into my teens, "Dad, any possibility of me going out on a date Sunday night? Would the car be available?" "Well son, I think that can be arranged, after the milking is done." So the milking always was there and it always had to be done. The skill I learned continued to benefit me. So when I got to Grinnell College, I was known as somebody who had the skills to do some short-term care of a dairy herd while that farmer was seeking some rest and relaxation out of town. And they knew who I was, they knew who my father was, and they knew that I would be safe taking care of their beloved herd. That was seldom done because a farmer always knows his cattle as individuals best, and there was a shutdown in the amount of milk a cow would produce if she was not happy and taken care of by her—quote—master—unquote. So anyway, having developed that relationship, even as a college student, I was sought after to be a short-time herdsman. And so this gave me the opportunity to have a pickup. Now I had to get permission from the Dean of Men to have this pickup because there were no cars on campus during the time that I went to Grinnell College. So suddenly I would be big man on campus that had a pickup. Then, my obligation was to drive to the farm, and get the milking done, and get the herd taken

care of, and still make it to an 8 a.m. class in college, and not be in barn clothes at that college event. And I was very successful in this, and I pride myself in the discipline that I learned, being a farm boy, and being able to accomplish that, to the enjoyment of my fellow farmer peers that needed some rest and relaxation, and I would be able to take care of their herd and be the big man on campus while I was using the truck for transportation.

Chen: So I think we're going to go into your experiences in earlier education in rural schools. So can you tell us about a typical day, and walk us through what you would do?

Greenwald: A typical day was that the teacher, by the way, our teachers had some sort of certification only as high school graduates and a line of coursework called normal training. So until I got to town schools in the seventh grade I'd never had a teacher that had more than a high school education herself. You could not be married, you could not be pregnant, you had to be free of those encumbrances to be a schoolteacher. This was in an era where a female working in the community basically had to be a housewife, a teacher, or a nurse. There were not a lot of other occupations that were available. So one of the things that the teacher had to do is to be responsible for the whole covey of kids that would descend upon her about 8:30, 9 o'clock in the morning. So she had to be able to run the furnace with, sometimes coal, sometimes wood, she had to learn how to start the fire and get the place so that it was comfortable year-round. Spring and fall, not a problem, but during a winter, and to have a furnace fire banked that would last and still have live coals on Monday morning, from Friday to Monday, was a skill. And I'm not sure I could do it myself. So anyway, I would get to school, there would be a picture of Washington on one wall, and Abraham Lincoln on another wall, and there would be a wind clock, and the school room had very little other decoration. There would be a central register where the heat would come up from the furnace, and there would be a row of desks, and there would be eight grades as you've already surmised. The thing about country school is that, no matter what grade you were in, you could always hear what the recitation was for the other grade level. So a kid that was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed would be able to know what was being learned in 8th grade even though he or she might be in 3rd grade. I had that kind of skill, and that sometimes got me success, and sometimes got me into trouble when I would volunteer answers out of call. We carried our lunches. We had a mid-morning recess, we had a mid-afternoon recess. And we had marvelous times at recess. There was never any electricity in the school building. There was daylight only, and if we had an unusual day that became extremely dark we were sent home early. There was an outhouse for the boys and an outhouse for the girls. One finger meant you would go to the outhouse, and you would hold that up to try to get permission. Two fingers were for a drink of water. We did have a well on the school grounds, and that was another thing is that, if the water inside the school house would freeze overnight it could ruin your water tank, and so that had to be filled fresh on a daily, very seldom did you have the privilege of doing that. Games that we would play would be, "Annie Annie Over", it was fun to throw a ball over the roof of the school, and the other side was supposed to catch the ball, if they did they could run around and try and tag you, the throwing team, and that way, then you would join that team. We

had a lot of sledding, the winter games were very fun. We would build fox and geese stories, we would build ice huts, snow huts. We would play ball. Kickball was our favorite because it required less athletic skills than softball. I don't ever remember a football in country school. And, when I was in this class of two other boys and myself, we would have this continuous game of kickball, and the idea was if they got you out, you had to go back to the field and work your way up. You got to, if you caught a flyball, you automatically got to move into bat, and whoever kicked the flyball then had to go to the field. And that was how kickball went. And so, oftentimes we would continue the game from one recess to another, and it was not unknown that some of the kids would sometimes be up to "bat" quote, unquote, for weeks at a time. Field trips, we would take a trip, always by walking, sometimes we would walk to another district school, and have an intramural type of ballgame. Other times we would walk the railroad track and look at the wildflowers and try to identify them. There was no art and no music, originally in country schools, the county thought that would be not proper, so then they would get an itinerant art teacher that would travel from country school to country school, and then we would use construction paper, and Halloween we would make stick figures or figures of animals that we had cut out like an angry cat, and then we would paste them, paste them, no scotch tape, paste them up on the windows to decorate the building for Halloween, and such, depending on the holiday of the season. So, music, then, the county superintendent hired an itinerant music teacher, that woman would come in, and there were certain songs that we were supposed to learn, and *My Country 'Tis of Thee* would be one of those, the national anthem would be another one, and there was no musical instrument, there was no piano until later times, and so the Victrola was really a breakthrough. The Victrola used a music record, and it was hand-cranked, so you'd crank it up and then put the needle on the record, and you'd sing along and try to learn the song from listening to that record. Obviously, everybody always sang the melody. I never heard any part singing or any of that kind of thing. Another function of the country school is that there was a lot of potluck dinners, where everybody would come in, and then, on holiday times there was often, what we would have is a program. The program involved, a, speech, learning pieces, little poems that the kid would do. Sometimes, we'd try to have a play. We had a wire across the front of the schoolhouse, and we would be able to put the sheets, curtain sheets, on that to make a off-stage right, off-stage left, and then you could pull the curtains and present your play. You had the props of the time, that would go along with the story, and you would have to memorize your piece. Sometimes people couldn't remember and so you would hear the teacher whisper from behind the curtains to get you started again. Another thing that was very interesting was the pre-Christmas party, and, uh, after the program, maybe Santa Claus would come, oh my goodness. Quite often they would arrange for a gift exchange by drawing members—uh, numbers, drawing names, sorry, do that also for Valentine's Day, that kind of thing. Well, anyway, Christmas time, we would hear near the front door of the church, uh, of the schoolhouse, what sounded like reindeer landing on the porch. And so we would all turn our heads, and then, suddenly we would turn back to look at the front of the schoolroom, and there was Santa Claus. Now, as the years went by, I discovered that Santa Claus was coming in

through one of the windows. And that Santa Claus would often turn out to be my dad, and he was boosted up to this window by neighbor Lee Bailey. And so then, as an upperclass person within the country school, you began to say, “Uh, I don’t know whether I believe in Santa Claus anymore” and all of that that goes with growing up.

Chen: What presents did Santa Claus bring?

Greenwald: Santa Claus would bring practical presents. Mittens were always a good gift, earmuffs were really special. And then there would be a simple toy, usually wood, maybe a small ball, such as that, something that was with the era of what was technically available and also what could be affordable for whomever was providing the gift. The thing that I remember particularly was, the, uh, the foods. For example, you don’t get custard pie much anymore in restaurants, but my goodness, the farm culture had the ingredients for custards, and they were wonderful. Uh, pumpkin pie! You could have 10 different mothers preparing pumpkin pie. They were given the recipe ahead of time but interestingly enough there was enough individualization so that one kind of pumpkin pie was not the same as the next kind of pumpkin pie, and it was kind of fun to try to figure out which mother had brought which pumpkin pie and really try to get a taste of all of them. Love those occasions! Scallop dishes were very popular, usually potatoes and some kind of meat. Scallop chicken, also fun. Soup suppers were not as common, little bit hard to handle, in particular when you bring something and keep it warm. There was no stove, so any hot dish had to be heated and rushed to the school happening.

Chen: You said you brought lunch to school. Can you tell us what lunch you brought, and what lunches the other children brought?

Greenwald: Uh, my lunch was often homemade bread, butter, peanut butter was pretty big, and jelly. Peanut butter and jelly, awesome for me. Occasionally there was sliced bologna. That was a little bit more of a delicacy, and financially that was not very common among my peers, that that can be afforded. There was seldom other kinds of meats, sandwiches, ham salad, chicken salad, I never knew of anybody having something like that. There might have been a strip of bacon in those sandwiches sometimes, but there wasn’t a lot of variety. Uh, cookies, homemade. Maybe a loon and a dune. Once in a while, where part of it. And in season there would be a piece of fruit. Hardly anyone ever brought a beverage, never a soda, they weren’t around. And so, water was the beverage of choice for a sandwich. Then an era came in where we had thermos bottles. And thermos bottles came in different of sizes and shapes. There was always the possibility of being broken. If you’re familiar with what a thermos bottle is, and so that sometimes brought a hot soup or a hot beverage for a kid who that lucky enough to have a thermos bottle that would survive the trip in a lunch pail, which might get dropped, might get damaged in the process of being transported or walking to school.

Chen: Can you recount stories that you had with your classmates, and can you recount some of your classmates?

Greenwald: Uh, the two boys that I went through, uh, first through sixth grade, were always buddies. One of the things that we did is that, as the roads were being done, graded, with these big powerful machines, we would have a bank that would be cut and leave exposed dirt, and so right over there, we would use the bare ground to make a town, a city, a farm, and we would bring our farm toys in, and quite often we would have a tractor or a truck, and we would make buildings by caves into the bank. And we would play for hours, imitating the farming that our parents were doing, and imitating life in that fashion. Those boys followed me into high school. I'm sad to say that one of the boys was killed in a car accident towards the end of our first year of high school. The other one grew up and became a very successful farmer in the north side of the township, and has passed away, only within the last few years. Great friends for a while, but as you already know, I went a little different direction than back to the farm.

Chen: Can you go over the relative wealth of the community and of the neighbors, and their various occupations?

Greenwald: Uh, the farms have gotten larger, and generally speaking when you had a family with two children, which was rare, usually the families were much bigger, the first son had dibs on the farm, and the rest had to go elsewhere. So by and large, the trend that we had, starting even then, is that young people were leaving the farm. And depending on fortune and education level and intelligence, there's been different degrees of success. Generally speaking, Iowa farm kids have done extremely well. They know how to work, they know personal responsibility just as I already spoken of how I learned, they were highly valued in almost any situation, work situation, and having come back to the Grinnell area after being gone for fifty years, I'm renewing some of those acquaintances, and just as I went away, many of the others have gone away, but there still are some contacts that I can make of what the community was that I left.

Chen: How did agricultural seasons and practices influence your rural education, influence rural education?

Greenwald: First of all, summer vacation for school kids, always was understood to be around the time when the children would not be needed to put in the crops and harvest the crops. And so that's how there happened to be no school during the summer. Later on, as educational organizations developed on a statewide basis, that school sessions are set, both locally and statewide, and I have witnessed some pressure now to consider year-round schools as kids doing farm labor with \$250,000 machinery, that just doesn't happen anymore. Unfortunately, kids who are raised on the farms today seldom have experience comparable to what I've been telling you about.

Chen: What have you noticed, what differences have you noticed, additional differences have you noticed, between farm children currently and farm children from your generation?

Greenwald: Farm children currently are transported by bus or parents, or their own vehicle as they become old enough to have licenses, and so the education is town-based, athletics, drama,

music, is town-based, and consolidated schools and larger, and actually we are approaching in Iowa what some of my Grinnell College peers experienced years ago where there would be farm kids, ranch kids, Wyoming, Montana, who came to Grinnell College, and they would go to a school during the week that was 80 miles away from the ranch, and be home on weekends, and so they would have to have situations for both room and board as they continue their education, rather than it being local. And the farm, rural schools that I've just described previously, I know of no functioning farm, rural schools like I had in existence in Iowa anymore.

Chen: How did the school serve as a community center, if it did?

Greenwald: Uh, if you go back to my era, telephones were just coming available, usually it was a party line, and usually if the community had enough wealth, ten or so neighbors, farmers, would get together and put up the line, and they would communicate that way. Another way you communicated was through farm organizations; Grange, Farm Bureau, etc. Another way, through extension programs, and they were very helpful, very prominent. Our land grant college, Iowa State, would send educated people with those kind of skills that could be hired by the county governments, etc. And then you'd have workshops in finance, workshops in agricultural spheres, etc. We also had the sociability of a thrashing run. If a person on the farm became disabled with a broken hip, or something like that, then the farmers would all get together and they quite often would go in and harvest or plant the crops for that one person's... leaving their own farms and do this collectively, then there was the country school which was also a place of social interaction, even sometimes, romances developed from such. So I had the district, Chester Number 9, socialization, and I had the township, Farm Bureau, 4H club for socialization, before I moved on to have the town school socialization. Still, during World War II, when I was in country school, I had a 35 mile an hour speed limit, we had re-cap tires if you could even get tires, we had rationing, ration boards, and there wasn't a lot of plenty. So there, as a younger child in the family, my brother had passed away, my sister was seven years older and had gone off to school, I spent many, many an evening with encyclopedias and other things my parents tried to get, there was a children's magazine called *Jack and Jill*, there was one called *Highlights*, there was another one called *Child Life*, there was another one called *Boy's Life* which was a Boy Scout magazine. Which they tried to use for me to do my spare time. Ultimately, model airplanes became available. I never got into that like some people did.

Chen: Can you recall some of the social activities you were involved in, or social activities in the town or in the school?

Greenwald: Uh, one of my strengths was that I could sing, and so I went to the first all-state chorus in Des Moines. I was chosen for that, and I did that my sophomore, junior and senior years in high school, and that organization still exists, and is competitive to get into. So as I developed this skill of being able to sing, sing parts, sing in quartets, sing in duets, sing solo, music contests, again through the school system, and drama, was very important to me. So even though I had to drive to attend the practices etc., as I got my driver's license, this became

possible, and I also was prominent in the pep band, as well as played football in high school. I did not participate in the other sports other than as a member of the Honor G Club I was given the responsibility to go out and sell ads for the program of our ball games. And I became quite good at that, so I was quite often chosen, and so I would visit the town merchants, they'd see me coming, and "do you want the same ad that you had for the last ballgame?" or "could you possibly consider a more expensive one? So, for 2 inches, or 4 inches, 6 inches in our program," somewhere between, \$25, \$50, \$100. And they'd even give me the money to carry back to Ms. Rule, who was our Honor G gal that would send me out to do those ad sales.

Chen: How did your interest or passion for singing, music and drama develop?

Greenwald: My dad was a chorister. A chorister is someone that gets people to sing publicly. And so my dad would be, whether it was church or Farm Bureau, or a political meeting, quite often times they would start those with some kind of a sing-along, and he was very good at that and I was very proud of him. And so I grew up in a family that sang, a lot of it was church related, and that was important to me and it was important. I mean, I had the privilege of singing duets with my dad that a lot of kids probably never thought of. What a gift. My dad played the piano, my mother played the piano a little bit, my sister did, and I took lessons for a while but didn't stick with it, sorry to say.

Chen: Are there any things from your childhood that you might wish would continue nowadays, like, anything you wish that would carry over?

Greenwald: I had a remarkable childhood, and I thrived in it. And I had the privilege of having educated parents, but I was privileged to have wonderful parenting, and so what you see in me represents the fruit of my parents, father and mother, concerned, wanting the best that I was capable of. And I was told that if I did my best, that was enough, but if I didn't do my best I was shirking the potential of the gift I had been given. The way that I can continue that is, uh, passing it forward, passing it on, and now I have three children, I have six grandchildren, one great grandchild, and I've tried to be the male father figure for them that my parents provided me with.

Chen: A weird question that deals with guns in school nowadays. How common were guns in schools during that time?

Greenwald: There was no guns. Within my family, we had a BB gun and we had a rifle. My personality and my interests were anti-gun. There was a lot of hunting, pheasant hunting was particularly strong. Sometimes there was an animal that needed the dignity of a death by gun in our farm life. But I am one that does not care for guns and I particularly don't care for what they represent in terms of death.

Chen: Do you remember any pranks or any particularly fun things you did at school?

Greenwald: Nothing really trips my trigger at this moment.

Chen: How much did you prepare for class every day?

Greenwald: Uh, actually, school was pretty easy for me until I got to Grinnell College. So I was not one to do more than the assignment, but I did the assignments, and then I had other interests, which I developed, as you know from this interview. I did a lot of reading for pleasure, as well as interest in education that comes with such. Grinnell College was a real challenge for me, and medical school was easier than Grinnell College. And without Grinnell College's experience, medical school would've been a lot more difficult. I was the first one in my family to be in that kind of a profession, and it was new territory that I plowed every day, and I grew tremendously. But I had the tools to do it with and I'm grateful for such.

Chen: How did your career differ from the career of your neighbors and classmates of your community?

Greenwald: When I graduated from Grinnell High School we graduated about 74. I did not know whose diplomas were unsigned, so I don't know what the exact number was. Out of that class of 74, we had the one attorney and one physician, and that was me. And the rest all did not, to my knowledge, have a professional calling that I'm aware of. Still, they found their role. A lot of them went into the service, the Korean War was breathing down our neck. And if you didn't go to college you almost always went into the service if you were male. Even if you were female there was that opportunity. And some of those that went into the service then had the GI bill when they came out of the service, and some of them have made excellent use of that. But I, as far as I know, I was the only physician. It was interesting then, the University of Iowa's medical school class had a lot of doctors' sons and a lot of farmboys. Those were the two predominant backgrounds of my classmates. There were two girls in the class of 120, they made it. Now, most medical school classes are 50, 60% women and the rest are male. In that 120, only 90 of us made it through medical school and graduated. So the washout rate was significant.

Chen: What did people in the Grinnell community do? You became a physician, what did everyone else do? Did they continue farming?

Greenwald: No, the majorly only a few privileged ones continued farming. The rest went all over the country, and did a multitude of different things. A few years ago we had a Grinnell High School all-class reunion, and a number of wonderful old friends came in, and there was clergymen, there was college professors. There was, in other classes there were significant number of physicians and businessmen and it was a wonderful happening because it continued to identify my comment that Iowa kids are well-appreciated and do well, from that era. Highly sought after. When I practiced in Minnesota, I wondered how I would be received, and one of my mentors up there said, 'hey, you're from the Middle West. You'll do well'. And I feel that I did.

Chen: What would you say describes the Middle West characteristic? Or the spirit?

Greenwald: Middle West is financially conservative, somewhat socially conservative, big-hearted, generous once they get to know you, a little bit fearful until you get past the dialogue and then they'll give you the shirt off their back to help you. In Minnesota they call it 'Minnesota Nice'. In Iowa I think you could also call it 'Iowa Nice' but, a little less generous than the people of Minnesota, and I don't know how to describe that, that's just an impression.

Chen: I don't have any more questions at the moment, but are there anything else you would like to say for the time being?

Greenwald: Nope.

Chen: Okay, then, we might continue this conversation at a later time. We have covered your early life so far, and we might continue to your later stages in life. And so this concludes the first part of this interview.

Greenwald: Alright!

[End]