

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CAPT Gary Hall
CAPT Michael McDaniel
YNCS (AW) Kathleen Wright

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Historical Center
Navy Historical Center
Navy Historical Center

Interviewee:

Troy Allen
Mark Gillenwater
Steve McAtee
Doris Richardson
John Vaupel
Donald Peckinpaugh
Craig Taylor
James "Eric" Scheid
James Allen
James Buher
David Reece

Current Address:

NSWC, Crane, Indiana
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NSWC, Crane, Indiana
University of Indiana
University of Indiana

Date of Interview:

25 Feb 02

Place of Interview:

Embassy Suites
Washington, DC

Number of Cassettes:

One

Security Classification:

Unclassified

Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Pentagon Evacuation; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Crane, Indiana; Under Secretary of the Navy

Abstract of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

Troy Allen is from Norris City, IL. He works for the Navy at Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Crane in the Expeditionary Warfare Department as the Air Defense Systems Project Manager. Father served in the Army in the mid 60's in Germany.

Mark Gillenwater is from Bloomington, IN. He is the IPT lead for NAVAIR working two programs on the EA6B aircraft. Father was in the Navy, two brothers were in the Navy and one brother was in the Army.

Steven McAtee is from Loogootee, IN and has worked at NSWC for 20 years. He works in the Airborne Electronic Warfare area and is a section manager in the logistics area primarily for acquisition support. Father was in the Army in Korea.

Doris Richardson is from Bedford, IL. She is the Financial Analyst for the Public Works Center at NSWC Crane. Her father was an Army WWII veteran in the Philippines.

John Vaupel is from Logootee, IN. He works at NSWC in the Ordnance Engineering Directorate and his specialty is information technology.

Don Peckinpugh is from Springville, IN and has worked at NSWC for 18 years. He is the Environmental Test Supervisor. He is a 21-year veteran of the USAF and retired as an E7.

Craig Taylor is from Bloomington, IN. He is an Electrical Engineer / Test Engineer at NSWC in the Open Air System Branch. His father and uncle were both in the Navy.

Eric Scheid is from Bloomington, IN. He is a Mechanical Engineer working at NSWC Crane as a Combat Systems Analyst and also a Special Weapons Designer. His father served in the Army.

Jim Allen is from Springville IN. He is an Electrical Engineer and the Program Manager of the Expeditionary Warfare Department working mainly Marine Corps Air Defense and C2 matters. He is the brother of Troy Allen (see above).

Jim Buher is from Springville, IN. He is an employee of the Indiana University. He is the Director of Administrative Services for the School of Public Environmental Affairs. He coordinated all the logistical support for the class.

David Reece is from Bloomington, IN. He is also an employee of the Indiana University. He is the lead instructor for the course.

Topics Discussed:

Jim Buher began by explaining the background of the course and how/why the class was in Washington. The students were pursuing a Public Management Certificate by taking 5 classes for credit over a one-year period. Each “class” would be one week long. The program started in 1987-1988. The fifth “class” was a week in Washington, DC to expose the students to all aspects of the government. Monday of the week is an orientation day. Tuesday was the Pentagon day. It was a full day of speakers in the building. That is how the class came to be in the Pentagon on the morning of Tuesday, 11 September 2001. That week was a typical week in the program.

Troy Allen began by explaining the day of Tuesday, 11 September 2001. The class had breakfast and had a bus get them at about 8:30 to take them to the Pentagon, arriving there about 9:00. Until the group got checked in through security and up to the briefing room, it was about 9:10, approximately 10 minutes late for their planned briefing by Under Secretary of the Navy, Susan Livingstone. She informed the group about the events in NYC of airliners’ striking the World

Trade Center buildings. She then went through her brief (~ 20 minutes) and took one question before leaving.

John Vaupel recounted some thoughts in response to the news of the WTC attacks. He wondered if the Pentagon could be a target, but discounted it.

Eric Scheid recounted the sensation of an explosion but no warning. Doris Richardson echoed those thoughts. Craig Taylor added that the bus was late and there was some anxiety over the bus being late. The initial sound he heard was like a bomb and felt the concussion and dove under the table. He was the last one in the room and saw dark smoke in the hallway and smoke coming out of the ceiling.

The group reported that the time of the impact was just after 9:35. Jim Buher remembers looking at his watch as USECNAV finished her brief. The team was in the process of presenting Ms. Livingstone a picture from Crane when the impact hit.

The class left the conference room and was in the hallway. John Vaupel opened a nearby door to a stairwell and there was lots of smoke in the stairwell and the stairway was gone. He immediately closed the door. Therefore, the only way to go was back in the direction of where the impact had come.

Passageway walls and doors were hot to the touch and smoke was filling them. They crouched to get more air. Craig Taylor thought he was going to die but determined to try to get out. He mentioned a “new” step in the hallway (where the floor was already beginning to collapse) and reported that he could not see the strobe lighting high up in the passageway. All made it out but no one knew how to from the impact. They were lead out. They encountered others headed to the stairwell and told them that was not an option.

It was not until the next day that the team realized how close they were to not making it out. Jim Buher reported that the “new step” as about two feet. The team reported no panic during the evacuation. They discussed the voice from the passageway. Don P. reported a woman in the passageway with a walker. Some folks came along and picked up her and the walker and got her out of the building.

Right after the explosion, Ms. Livingstone said that it was a terrorist attack and to remain calm and leave the room. Steve McAtee reported the surprise of having the fire suppression walls closing in front of them and the anxiety that caused.

The class formed a line and held onto one another as they made their way down the smokey hallway. The voice beckoned them to keep coming through the smoke. The smoke got heavier before it got lighter. “Come to my voice, come to my voice. There is a light at the end of the tunnel.” All remember that. Most believe the “voice” was at the intersection of the fourth corridor and the E ring.

Once into the corridor the class was ushered down an escalator where more people were (“masses”) located, they proceeded out with the masses. During the evacuation Jim Buher tried

to ensure that the Crane folks stayed together and all were accounted for. Remarkably they all made it out.

They went to an Embassy Suites and a Marriott to try to get some cabs to get back to the hotel (in DC). Many decided to walk because it was so difficult to get cabs. It took almost two hours to get back to the hotel. Cell phones were blocked. They used a Blackberry to email someone at Crane who then called family members to let them know the class members were fine. Time of email was 9:52 so it only took approximately 17 minutes for the class to get out to the parking lot.

Jim Buher remarked at how calm everyone remained and how all stayed together. Ms.

Livingstone called and echoed the same sentiment.

The class members were eager to return to their homes in Indiana. Jim Buher worked his magic to arrange for buses to come from Indiana to retrieve the class. The Star of Indiana company offered whatever they needed. The bus collected the students on Wednesday, September 12, 2001 and returned them to their homes, arriving about 10 pm that same day.

Reflectively, the class reported feeling that family is much more important to them now.

Abstracted by:
CAPT Gary Hall
14 Mar 2002

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Topics Discussed:

Q. (06:45) Could you tell us a little bit about the class and set the stage for what their week in

Washington was all about.

Jim Buher (06:52) In 1988, Indiana University, there's a school there by the name of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs. It's the largest school of Public Administration in the United States and we decided that we needed to start working with our Executive Education Program with the federal agencies. So we contacted Crane, actually 1987, and contacted Crane to try to see how we could set up executive education for credit at the Masters Level. The first thing

we designed was what we called a Public Management Certificate that consists of five classes, it's graduate level, that the students could take.

The first thing we tried to figure out was how they could do that with the travel schedule so what we arranged was a situation where students could take, over a one year period, five classes. Each class would have a one-week intensive session with a faculty member. Students would be given reading materials in advance. They would come together for one week of instruction, role-playing, teamwork, depending on the instructor they used, different kinds of methods in the classroom. Then approximately a month to six weeks after the class was over they would be responsible for writing a paper. Usually a team paper but writing a paper for what they learned. For that then they receive three hours credit. So at the beginning of the year we could arrange when all five classes would be held so that they could block it off in travel schedule and make, where otherwise it was just impossible to do it.

So we had the first series of this start in 1987 to 1988. The first four classes were held in Indianapolis, Indiana at a convention center there, and we decided that the fifth week would be treated more like a lab week, in a laboratory setting, where we would actually bring, have all the participants come to Washington, D.C. We'd house them here where we could expose them to all areas of the power in D.C. So that week is the week that we'd been to the Department of the Navy (in audible) (08:21) and we had done about thirty, thirty-five of these weeks over the past years in Washington.

When we come to Washington, D.C. we fairly well have it down as to what we do and typically we always, Monday as being an orientation day with the instructor letting people know who they're going to see during the week, what they're going to learn during the week, how the organization works, how the Defense Department works and is organized. How the Navy's

operating, or is organized, Capitol Hill, the Executive Branch, and then try to wrap it up at the end of the week. Try to expose people to all elements of that throughout the week.

Monday afternoon we also then bring in people from think tanks. People like LARRY FORB, he was a former Defense expert now with Council on Foreign Relations in New York City. We bring in people that are experts on Congress, and they would do that.

Tuesday was always the Pentagon day. Tuesday was the day we'd always show up at the Pentagon and have speakers there all day. It was easier for the speakers in the Pentagon to drop down to the classroom and speak to them as opposed to being at the hotel and it was an opportunity for us to take the class to the Pentagon. We always arranged a tour while we are there so they can at least see the building.

They would meet with Admiralty from FC. They would meet with the people from the Navy budget side, and both political appointees and in uniform. Wednesday, the day was always Capitol Hill where we'd meet at the House and Senate Armed Services Committee, and talk about both the Authorization Committees and Appropriations. Thursday morning was a little bit of a wrap-up. Thursday afternoon was usually spent in the old executive office building with (in audible) (11:15) the executive side and then the National Security Council staff. Friday then would usually be wrap-up from the Executive Director of Crane, and other people from AFC, sort of cap the week off, and that's been a fairly typical week. So what we try to do is make sure the people are exposed to the entire decision making process in the Navy. Everything from how threat analysis is determined. How the decisions are made about the type of equipment that's needed, whether it be ships or airplanes and then how the process works through the system. As how those come up through the Navy. How they come up through the Defense Department. How they come up through Congress and how they interact. Clearly not to try to answer the questions

how it works, because I don't think anyone knows how it really works. But to try to lay out the groundwork so that people see the decision points and who the players are, and hopefully by the end of the week they have a better understanding about how it all fits together. Whether we're successful or not depends on the kind of people that use the classes and usually we've found for the most part that's been a very good strategy for getting people that information.

The week we were here in September was a week that was typical. It was a week that day two was in the Pentagon and that's what we were doing there that day. It just happened that the first briefing that day was by the Under Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Susan Livingstone, and that's when it happened.

Q. (13:00) OK, would somebody like to start us off and tell us about that morning. Start from kind of when you got up and get us over to the Pentagon.

A. Troy Allen (13:18) I guess I can get us to the Pentagon. Woke up and as usual we gathered in the morning for, you know had breakfast before you left, and then we had a bus come through and actually pick us up that morning to take us to the Pentagon.

Q. (13:31) About what time was that?

A. Bus came here probably about 8:30, eight-thirty to twenty 'til, so while you know, we was waiting for the buses, was while everything was happening in New York. So we were unaware of what was happening in New York. So we got to the Pentagon right about nine o'clock and that was when we were suppose to meet with Susan Livingstone. By the time we got our badges and actually up to the classroom was probably running five or ten minutes late, I would say. But luckily she, her schedule had slipped just a little as well. So by the time we actually sit down

there it was probably ten after nine, and that's when she informed us of what had been going on in New York. She went through her brief and took questions.

Q. (14:21) About how long was her brief?

A. Troy Allen (14:21) Her brief was about twenty, twenty-five minutes, between the brief and the question and answer session.

Q. (14:28) OK.

A. Troy Allen – And then that took us up to the 9:30 timeframe.

Q. (14:34) OK. What were some of the thoughts that maybe were going through your mind when you heard what she mentioned had happened up in New York?

A. John Vaupel (14:45) It was really shocking, of course, because I mean it wasn't at all what any of us, of course, expected, the news we heard. What she had informed us of was a second plane had just hit, and that was our first knowledge. So I guess in the back of my mind I was thinking, "Where's it going to hit next?" I mean you know, "This isn't the last plane. There's got to be another one coming somewhere." Of course, what flashed through my mind was it might be the Pentagon. Might be another direction that a plane would be heading. And of course, you know, the likelihood of that happening you know, I just discounted that pretty quickly.

So you went on through the brief and there was like TROY said, about twenty minutes later when she got done and then we heard the blast. Several people mentioned that they thought it was a bomb. They wasn't really sure. In the back of my mind I just felt it had to be a plane, just because of the sequence of events as they unfolded. It was extremely (in audible) (15:56).

Q. (15:58) Did you all hear anything prior to whatever the first sound was? The shutter, or -?

Somebody describe what you heard.

A. Eric Scheid (16:05) No, there wasn't any kind of warning about the thing. It was just a sudden Crunch, big impact, explosion or however you want to describe it. We were on a, the room 5E490, we didn't have any exterior windows so we had no way of having any warning that anything was about to happen.

A. Doris Richardson (16:34) When we heard the you know, it sounded like an explosion and since we heard it we didn't feel an impact for a second or two. You know I thought it was a bomb in a different area of the building, because it seemed to take a little bit of time before the vibrations got to us. It, you know, some may describe it as an earthquake, but I think it can even be described in the fact that the plane was hitting every support beam, because the building just steadily shook with each impact.

A. Craig Taylor (17:11) I guess my spin is just a little different starting from the start point. We were running late, and the bus didn't seem to be coming on time and you know everybody's getting a little antsy you know. "Where is this bus?"

By the time the bus did arrive you know, we're all happy. "It's here now," you know, "What happened?"

I looked up and I saw this plane make this one turn as we were driving and we just kind of dismissed it. Like "Yeah, right." I mentioned it to someone but it didn't really register. So we got to our destination like you said, and then a series of events happened. But the initial, initial sound

that I heard sounded like a bomb or something, not an airplane hitting. By the concussion later on, I was under the table.

Q. (18:19) So you heard something first and then felt it? Is that the right sequence?

A. Craig Taylor (18:22) Yeah, I guess that's how it happened. I heard something and then you feel the concussion, like she said then a bigger concussion. I said, "I'm not waiting around." I went under the table. I guess my logic says the ceiling will fall in on you or something like that. I looked down; there's a couple of other guys under the table with me now. OK, I'm not a coward. (chuckles)

Then everybody started getting up to leave. I said, "Well, I'll wait and make sure," you know. "the ceiling doesn't come down on my head." I waited and waited and everybody else was gone. I said, "Well, I think I'd better get up around now." Then there was a big crash and something hit the table. I'm like, "OK, well it's time to leave." So by that time the room was clear, but at the door about three-fourths down is like jet-black wall. Right at the door, didn't come in. It was just right there.

I was the last one in the room, and I go, "This is not good," and I looked to the side of me and smoke was coming in the ceiling. I'm like, "OK, how you going to do this one?" I'll let somebody else talk a while.

Q. (19:46) Anybody notice what time the impact was?

A. Jim Buher (19:50) The, when I looked at my watch, but I was expecting her to leave anytime and it was right at 9:35. She had finished and said, she asked the Captain if she had time for any

questions, and he said no, and she said, "I'm going to take them anyhow." DUSTIN WILSON's the one that asked the question.

Small clarification on the bus. The bus was supposed to be at the hotel at 7:45, ready to leave at eight o'clock. Five 'til eight it still wasn't there. We started calling and I called all my contacts in the Pentagon. They called the motor pool and they tried to track him down, and finally someone had this private cell phone number and they finally called him and he was very nonchalant about it. He said well he just got stuck in traffic and this was about 8:15 or so. He finally got there about 8:30. In addition to laughter we really loaded up quick and headed out, because we knew we had the Under Secretary waiting for us at nine o'clock and DAVE REECE the instructor never likes to keep those kind of people waiting. So it was a little hassle at that point.

Then when we got to the Pentagon, for the first time in all the trips we made, we had real trouble with security.

I don't think security knew anything about the World Trade Center. It was just one of those days when they said, "No, you've got the wrong kind of badges. No you can't have the 'no visitor, no escort required.' You've got to have 'escort required.'"

Half the class goes through OK with one badge and the other class didn't. Anyway it was just a big hassle. More of a hassle than we've ever had, and here we are, we're trying to hurry because we know she's waiting, or think she's waiting. I even commented to DAVE REECE as we left, I said, "Dave, this morning is not starting out right. Bus is late, can't get through security," you know. "What else can go wrong?"

Honestly my thought was that the speaker was not going to show up, and that would be what happened that day, but as it turned out other things happened. But that's why we were running late, but when we were in the room, when I looked at the watch it was around 9:35. It could have

been three or four minutes, or two, three minutes either way, according to my watch, but that was about the time, that it hit.

Q. (22:16) What other recollections do people have about - ?

A. Don Peckinpugh (22:19) As Jim said the bus was late, and we got there and we was held up in security, and I remember walking done the hallway and all these portraits of all these famous Navy people and military people, but we was going so fast, we didn't have time to look at anything.

(someone says, "Right.")

Then we got into part of the new construction and it seemed like the hallway narrowed down for some reason. Then we went around to this nice conference room. And I do believe that normal— Miss Livingstone was leaving the classroom and we called her back to give her a picture, and that's when actually, we, she came back into the room and we was all, "We're going to give you this thing for taking the time out for us today," and that's when the plane actually hit.

Q. (23:00) What was the picture of?

A. Don Peckinpugh (23:03) it was picture from Crane, of a scene at Crane. I don't think she ever got it. We never got to that part.

A. Craig Taylor (23:11) Yeah, I was supposed to do it.

A. Don Peckinpugh (23:12) That's right. So –

A. Craig Taylor (23:14) She was sitting right across from me.

A. Don Peckinpugh (23:18) Then when the plane hit, whether the sound came first, or the vibrations, I think that could be debated by anybody in here, but there was sort of a calm amongst all the people there whether we should evacuate that room, or stay put. Because you know, if something's going on in the other part of the building you sort of want to stay where you're at. But then when the smoke started coming in, people felt it would be best to evacuate. So that was up to that point.

Q. (23:44) Anybody say anything? Who, anybody say, "Let's go," or - ?

A. Doris Richardson (23:52) My memory of that when I made my way out to the hallway and then we were all bunched up there, because there seemed to be nowhere to go and I was near the back of those exiting the conference room into the hallway. The stairway was to the right of the door, and I saw JOHN VAUPEL open that, and he was not the first one to open that door. There may have been two or three that opened that door, but when he did open that, he looked out and then there was a pillar of smoke coming up at that time.

It was real thick smoke and it had a brown tint to it. I don't think it was a fire smoke. It may have been more from the collapse in that area by the time I saw the smoke. So JOHN would close that door, and the smoke was filling up all the available space in the hallway. So I squatted down low to try and get fresher air, I hoped, down low, but there didn't seem to be fresh air down there. So I got some Kleenexes out of my briefcase to put over my nose. But I was, as I was praying down there (chuckle) I was hearing the discussions going on, and it was you know, "We can't go down the stairway. It's not there anymore. But the damage is down the other direction."

Of course, we're on the fifth floor where there's no windows so we knew we had a concrete wall on the other side of us.

Finally I heard DUSTY's voice, DUSTY WILSON say, "OK, the damage is that way, but is there a way out." Then I heard someone say, "Let's go." So immediately everyone headed out that direction.

A. Craig Taylor (25:42) No, everyone except me, I was still under the table and I didn't know everyone had left. I figured there was at least another person in there. On my way out, I guess they had all touched the same door that I did, since I didn't really have any bearings. I had a nice suit jacket on, I must say, and I figured that that would shield me from all of this smoke. A big wall of black smoke, had brown. I walked through it, and I felt the side of the wall. Figured that's the sane thing to do, and I grabbed the doorknob, which was very hot and I said, "Oops, can't go here."

About this time, it dawned on me, you're trying to breathe something that you can't breathe. So I had wrapped my coat around my head. Dropped down like a guerilla and tried to suck the air off the ground. I guess I took about twelve steps or so or less when I realized I was out of oxygen. I started getting real dizzy, real quick. So like DORIS, I'm praying and I'm getting real dizzy. So I kind of grunted out, "Help." No one was there, because I'm the last guy. That's when I started to have that panic feeling, like I'm having right now, and like I'm about to die.

So, I said to myself, "Well, if I'm going to die, I just got to change the channel in my head, and say let's be psychotic about it." I stood up straight and straightened up my jacket and said, "Hell, if you're going to die, you might as well go looking good, and walk as fast as you can. Got nothing to lose." So I felt the wall again to get a bearing. Then I stumbled, because it was a step,

and I said, “This step wasn’t here before, but don’t worry about it.” I tried to walk, seems like it was strobe lights and then I could hear voices down the hall. The strobe light was flashing. At least I thought it was. I’ve talked to people about it and one guy said he saw the same strobe light I did. It was either the strobe light or the lights that were above us, and you couldn’t really see those lights, the smoke was so thick. You knew it was lights there when you came in, but you really couldn’t see the lights. So I just started walking as fast as I could and right when I figured I was going to pass out, I heard some other voices and I walked into this, this real soft cushion. It was great and I knew that that was TRENT FRADY. I’m like “Yeah, this whale is moving. Hold on,” and that’s exactly what I did.

(someone is chuckling)

So I wasn’t the last the guy out the building.

A. John Vaupel (28:47) I think the amazing thing, we’re hearing it from everybody is we all made it out of the building that day. I don’t think if you ask anybody that any of us knew how to get out, because of how much we rushed to get into the room that morning. We were just running so far behind schedule. I didn’t pay a bit of attention to how I got to the room, and I guess you always look in these hotels and look and figure how to get out of there, and when you ever go visit a strange place, and that’s something all of us, I think, probably neglected to do that morning. And it’s just one of those things I look back on and notice that that’s something I’m always going to do, you know, is pay attention to how I got there and how to get out, because it was amazing that we made it out.

Q. (29:38) Was anybody here at the front of the pack?

A. Eric Scheid (29:40) I was I believe somewhere near the front. At least at the time of the impact I was sitting next to the Under Secretary. So I think along with MISS LIVINGSTONE and her aide (EA) and DAVE REECE, I think I was one of the first individuals out of the room. Although the stairway to our left had already, or to our right, had already been investigated, maybe for the first time, or second time, or any – one thing I remember is as we, when we learned that we couldn't use the stairs, and we turned left to go back in the direction we came from, we, there were other Pentagon employees that were coming out of their offices that were headed from, away from the smoke toward the stairs that we knew that we, that we found were already collapsed. So there was, I can't really guess at the number of seconds or minutes of hesitation there was while this discussion by panicked committee going on about, "We can't go down the hallway. We can't use the stairs." So we decided that we needed to go, the only way we could go was back up the hallway where, where the smoke was the heaviest.

In general from being in the front of the pack, maybe my experience was somewhat less harrowing than Craig's or whether I just had those kinds of instincts turned off, or what, but I think I was maybe close enough to the front, and got to where there were people telling us we could come this way that I never had a personal feeling of being in grave danger.

Maybe because there may have been two or three or longer less minutes that I was involved than maybe some of the others.

But to me, it was this surreal adventure of encountering the collapsed, partially collapsed floor. We had to take a step down. It was just business-like. The person in front of me told me to step down. I told the person behind me there's a step down. He took the step down and walked up the cantilevered hallway where we encountered a couple of other doors that were warm. A place in the wall that was hot and made the left turn I believe and then we started hearing the voices from

the people that had come from the less damaged area, telling us we could get out. So I don't have a recollection of feeling lost, but I do remember the hesitation of, "Well, we can't proceed down the hallway. Well we can't use these stairs. What are we going to do or need to do?" That seemed to take longer than it should have before we decided we'd need, actually we needed to leave any way we could. But it was sort of, it was a surreal adventure going through the thick smoke and feeling the hot walls and then I guess before I had a chance to really be scared, I was out. At least away from the severe danger.

It wasn't until the next, that afternoon, the next day, that we realized how close we were to being involved in the collapse and losing our own lives.

A. Jim Buher (32:58) Couple of things I remember. At least I think I remember, in connection with some of the things that were just said was that I was toward the back. I wasn't in the very back, but I was toward the back. Coordinating the class I always sit in the back of the room, and it made me think I may always sit in the door.

(everyone chuckles)

I always sit in the back of the room and I was in the back of the room when it happened. I was one of the last people out and by the time I got out, I know they'd already tried the hallway. Then they tried the stairs, and then the people at the stairs in front of me yelled, "You can't get to the stairs, you'll have to go in the other direction!"

When I turned, and I am familiar with the Pentagon. I've spent a lot of time there and knew where we were and how to get out, but I was in the back there, but that wouldn't change anything whatsoever. But as we started down the hallway, the first, the first part of the hallway by the classroom, like DORIS, I immediately grabbed my handkerchief out of my pocket and put

it over my mouth and my nose so I could breath better. But at least at that point you could see. I mean it seemed to me the smoke was down about halfway in the hallway, and the smoke was partway down there, but you could still see at that point. But you're bending over trying to stay out of smoke, and I just heard someone up in front of me yell, I have no idea who, said, "Watch your step!"

The thing that registered real quick was that there are no steps and this is a flat hallway. But then forty, fifty feet you came to a step that you looked at and the size differs by the people you talk to. I just remember it was large enough that I couldn't easily just step to it. I mean it wasn't where I could just not break stride and step to it. It was sort of a hop into it. My guess was about two feet or so, maybe twenty inches, maybe thirty inches, but it was enough that I had to hop down to get to it. And just after that was when whether it was a combination of the smoke getting blacker and the emergency lights going out, I'm not sure, but along about that time was when I felt that I was in total darkness. That I couldn't see in front of me. I did remember kicking something and I looked down and there was a light fixture at my feet. And it was about that time with that total darkness that all of a sudden, I mean I can remember saying to myself, "Jim, you've done everything you can to get out of here." You know, "You couldn't go back. There's smoke ahead of you," and it was the calmest feeling I ever had in my life that just said, "This is probably the end. You're probably not going to make it out of here."

But that didn't keep me from you know, bending down and kept moving. But I really, it was a calming, it was the calmest I ever felt in my life that this is probably it. This is the end, and you think, and I did think of the wife and the kids, but you can't move. And I don't know if it was ten seconds, or thirty seconds after that that I did hear the voice. What it said I'll never know for sure. I'd like to ask him what he said.

What I heard was, “There’s light at the end of the tunnel. Follow my voice. Stay low and grab the person in front of you, and just keep moving.”

I do remember reaching up to someone. There was a male in front of me, because it was a suit coat and I remember grabbing a hold of that. I probably put fingerprints in the back.

(everyone laughs)

Because I did, I grabbed as hard as I could and I felt someone grab me in the back, and but you kept moving, but the minute you heard the voice, it was almost like, because at that point I mean I knew we were probably a hundred and fifty, two hundred feet from the E ring, and we were on the E ring to get to corridor 4. I didn’t know how far we’d moved ‘til we’d gotten there, but I still knew it was a long way. So when I saw that black smoke in the ring, I really thought it (in audible) (36:51, but when you heard the voice you knew, and all of a sudden everything just sort of changed gears and then you knew that you could get out. And I think the people, when you grab people and I think you know at least the group I was in you know, start walking faster and there was real relief when you got to the point that you saw the daylight. And I’ll have to admit I never saw him. People said we passed him. I mean I never saw the person. I saw the person at corridor 4 that was directing us to go down corridor 4 towards the A ring, and I saw that person bending down low, but I never, ever saw COMMANDER BRASWELL at all. He was there but I didn’t see him.

A. Don Peckinpugh (37:34) Like some of the rest of the class has said, there was this step and I remember stepping down. I couldn’t step down, because I’m too short legged, so I had to jump down, but as I proceeded down the hallway, the smoke was getting real thick, and there was a lady who had joined in with the rest of the people out, that was coming out of different offices,

that had a walker. She was walking along and she explain, “Can’t walk fast. Please help me. Please help me,” and the next thing I know two people picked her up and she was going down the hall and I could see her feet about six inches off the floor, moving down the hall. I was trying to figure out where the walker went to. I never did find, see that walker after that. Whether she hanged onto it, or going, and I kept looking at the wall. They kept saying, “Touch the wall,” but it was too hot, and I kept wondering, does this wall have a black baseboard or is the floor falling. It separated, but I couldn’t determine whether it was black or it was the wall or were we sinking away. I mean it was just hard to determine.

A. Craig Taylor (38:34) My story basically is like theirs, but I had the feeling like VAUPEL there. I didn’t really study the place when I walked in, but coming out you know like which way is, you know which way did you go and unlike the rest I didn’t really hear the voices immediately, because I was the last guy. So I won’t do that again. I’ll sit by the door.
(everyone laughs)

But that step, I think it was the step that scared me because I did have a memory, not able to remember stepping up and that was a step down and being six foot two like you said it wasn’t like a little step — OK, I forgot it was a little metal strip there — no I stepped down and like all
(in audible)(39:29)

But the one thing that kept me going other than the prayer was my wife and my kid. I remember I asked God, I said, “Please let me see my son.” Because he’s only, at the time he was turning one. I said, “Please let me see him grow up. I’ve just got to get out of here.”

I burned my lungs. I went to the hospital about it, but it wasn’t really serious, but it’s enough where it still bothers my esophagus now. And the black smoke that we inhaled, I wonder what

kind of damage that's going to come back on us, you know ten years from now. What really, what were we you know, inhaling? Because it wasn't like a thirty-second blast of you know, real black smoke. We were in there, deep in the belly of this thing and as far as I'm concerned we're blessed to be alive today. I mean there's no doubt in my mind that at least for myself, I was basically dead. I didn't have the hope that he did, that ERIC did, but I really thought the game was over you know. If I'm going to die I want to look good and it won't be because I quit. So that's all I want to say.

A. Mark Gillenwater (40:51) Nobody mentioned right after the explosion I remember Susan Livingstone, she basically said it's a terrorist attack. She said, "Stay calm, and let's get out of here." That's when everybody started feeding out of the conference room.

A. Steve McAtee (41:10) Probably three things kind of safety related that stuck out in my mind. No sprinkler system, at least none that was hooked up. No safety lights, or at least very limited flood lights of any type, and I'm surprised nobody mentioned after we kind of cleared the darkness point, a fire suppression wall, actually, you know its lights were flashing or whatever, but the wall was closing and sliding across and we were going – it was hazier and still a lot of smoke, but it was much better than it was and actually the wall was coming across to seal us off in that area. Part of their fire safety you know, equipment I guess. But I mean I got there just about the time it was about four to five feet from going all the way across. I stopped it. I made it through. Somebody grabbed it and dragged it back across and that's all I know. I don't know who drug it and how many was behind me, but I was really surprised that something that's supposedly for safety reasons was actually sealing us off. I mean it would have been very

difficult to convince yourself if it was covered with smoke, try to punch your way through it or whatever, or you may not even have went down there had the smoke filled up more.

A. (someone says) Never saw it.

A. Steve McAtee (42:28) You were impressed. (everyone laughs)

A. Doris Richardson (42:32) At the end of the 4th corridor, I'm not even sure that's where we came out at, but when we got to the center ring, one of the gentleman in uniform was holding back a fire curtain or something at that point. But also there was a, even, for me it was an even larger step down to get onto that center ring where we were on solid ground again. I think maybe in the E ring where we had to step down, when we stepped down there, the floor didn't feel solid under you. We were almost going uphill or a little slanted, but it wasn't a large step down at that time, but that could have kept growing with every person that went over it. But I remember coming out of the 4th corridor onto the E ring, that it was two and a half foot or so that I had to step down at that point, and then it felt solid when we got on the center ring.

Q. (43:37) How many voices were there? Was it, and where were the voices?

A. Doris Richardson (43:47) I was in pitch black at that time so I couldn't tell you where it was.

Q. (43:50) Were you in the corridor as opposed to the ring?

A. Doris Richardson (43:56) I believe we were in the E ring, and that we found –

Q. (43:58) When you first heard the voices.

A. Doris Richardson (43:58) and that we found the 4th corridor. I believe was the point we were at, but that was at the point where I was the most desperate, because it was total black. The heat continued to build to my left and you know, I didn't know if we were finding the way out or if we were leading into a trap, and then that was when I heard the voice up ahead and started to seeing a flashing light that direction, saying, "You guys have a good line formed, keep coming." You know, "Get over to the wall, and keep coming."

Q. (44:31) OK.

A. James Buher (44:36) If I may, we do have another person that just came in later, that I'd like to have introduce himself and join in and that's DAVE REECE who was the instructor for the class that day.

A. Dave Reece (44:46) I've already introduced myself.

Q. (44:57) Dave, give us your recollection of that.

A. Dave Reece (44:59) Well, I think it corresponds to what I've been listening to. I mean there's some things, like I did not see the fire door close at all. I probably exited the room somewhere about two-thirds back or halfway to two-thirds back in terms of the number of people exiting. I certainly was by the walker, whoever mentioned the walker. I remember the walker as well. When we exited and we kind of got messed up in our sequence, because we exited and then came back. We were searching for which way do we go. Someone opened the door and said, "We can't go that way. The fire door, we can't go that way."

So we turned and went back the way we came into the conference room in the first place, down through the E ring and as everyone else has said, by that time, by the time we made that false right turn and then went back to the left, smoke had gotten very heavy. The heat had started to build. There was trash all over the floor. We went over that step and by that time you could hardly see anything. It was really black. We were still in a group. We were in group kind of helping, or at least staying calm with each other and all progressing the same way and then the voice came through and I only remember initially the one voice. The voice that said, "Come to my voice. There's a light at the end of the tunnel. Come to my voice."

Then I think when we went pass that person then the other two folks, and we didn't know at that point, we kind of thought they were security guards that had stayed or were suppose to stay and help us out, but that turns out not to be the case, of course. But then the rest of them directing us down the escalator and toward the center of the building. (in audible)(47:03) now heard their voices, but initially I just think it was the one voice that I remember. And it was clear, I mean, I think everyone kind of remembers the same thing. "Come to my voice. Come to my voice. There's a light at the end of the tunnel." And that I guess was COMMANDER BRASWELL.

Q. (47:21) And he was in that corridor? Or was he –

A. David Reece (47:25) I think he was at the junction of the 4th corridor and the E ring is where I think he was, because when we got to him is where we, essentially, and he may have been back five feet or something or other, but where we made the turn and then he direct us, and then we picked up the other two guys who told us to go down the escalator. Then when we got down to the escalator essentially we were in the crowd of the masses that were evacuating the building

and the voice, you know, the alarm system and all that was “Evacuate the building. Evacuate the building.”

And then we went for a little distance and then we stopped and trying to get out there to the Crane group and the Under Secretary and DENNY KERN were still with us at that point. And I think we got just about everyone with us and all of a sudden the security guards were on us, “Get out, get out!”

So we started moving again and then the other time was at the bottom of the escalators into the Metro area, where you then turn either right or left to go back up and out. We stopped again and tried to gather all the Crane folks. When we got outside we were essentially all together, which was amazing to me.

A. Eric Scheid (48:47) I have a little comment that it was just amazing we were able to stay together and I, if we hadn't stayed together I may have been guilty of getting some of this ahead, because I remember being somewhat annoyed. I was in front of the rallying point and having to go back, (everyone laughs) thinking OK well, and I remember grabbing RICHARD MARSHALL and saying, “We'll just buddy up. There's no way we're going to get out of here together, so the two of us will keep track of each other. Then we'll find everybody else once we get outside.”

But fortunately we didn't have to do that, but I remember being annoyed to have to go back to rally when I was ahead with some of the rest of us that were toward the front of the group. We were ahead and had to go back to rally.

A. James Buher (49:33) I guess I was partly responsible for that because one of the things that I kept doing was as I went down the 4th corridor and I (in audible) (49:42) other places until we got out. I kept holding my briefcase over my head yelling, “Crane! Crane! Crane!” Whether anybody heard me I don’t know, but I was going, I want everybody to stay at least together and in a couple of places that we stopped I tried to get them together. Tried to yell for Crane and security would continue to say you know, “Get on out of the building. You can’t stop here.” We stopped at least one time out of the building and they again said you know, “You’ve got to move away from the building,” and we were quite a ways out in the parking lot until it was clear that we were away from the danger immediately and that it looked like everyone was together. It looked like everyone was there.

I said, “I’m going to call attendance,” and I tried to find my roster that I had with me and I was digging it out and someone else in the class, I don’t know who it was, beat me to it and said, “Here use mine.” I knew it wasn’t an official one because there were two or three people on the list that didn’t make the class. There was an earlier, earlier list and I called two or three names that weren’t in the class. But I got it out and I called out the names individual and made every person sort of look at me and say, “I’m here.” “I’m here.” “I’m here.”

I still have that roster and I’ve saved that roster and I have it back at the office. It has some dirty marks on it and smudges and some scribbles on it, but it has the names. It has the people marked out that I called the name and they said they didn’t come. So I marked that name out, but I checked off everyone in alphabetical order to make sure that everyone was there. And everyone was, and I was, it was a good feeling at that point to know that everyone was together and everyone was safety.

A. Dave Reece (51:28) Along that same line, which I think is an attribute to the class, we form up teams for in the end, paper writing focuses. So there are like five teams that the class is divided into. We got out. The first thing I did was “Teams one through five, make sure your teams are all here,” and they all reported back that they were all here. So we knew then that pretty much we were all together, and everyone, again I attribute was calm and clearheaded and able to do that kind of stuff. It was good.

Q. (52:03) Once you got outside and realized you had all, everybody, then what happened? What were some of the – I mean what did you do? Did you go around and see what really had happened? How did you contact your families? Did you kind of stay put? What happened?

A. Dave Reece (52:19) Well, interesting, I’ll start with this as (in audible) (52:24) but one of the things that we found out immediately was it was impossible to get out and notify anybody. All the cell phones wouldn’t work and you know, I’ll say something else about that in a little bit. But we had to decide OK, what are we going to do now? Because it was a confused mess out there, I mean no one knew what was happening for sure. People were running around, emergency vehicles and all that stuff, and we decided OK, well we want to go back to the hotel. We want away from this place. Want to go back to the hotel. We want to go back there as safely as we can, not knowing what was going on in the whole area, actually. So we decided that we would go to the nearest hotel, as probably a good place to gather some cabs and come back. So we went down to the Embassy Suites and the Marriott. They’re close there to the Pentagon in Crystal City, and we went to the Marriott and some of the folks got on a cab and we asked the class how

about would you like a walk back. We know if we can walk back—some of the folks weren't too happy actually about taking cabs that we found. We had no idea what was going on, of course. So the majority of the class that felt that they could, wanted to walk. So we decided after we saw a problem getting cabs in the first place, after one group took a cab, the rest of us decided to walk. So we took off to go over the foot trail that goes up along the river and then we would cross over on the bridge and we wanted to get beyond the other monuments that might be targets. Well we got, I don't know if you're familiar with Crystal City, but you go under this, under the railroad tracks essentially, in a tunnel to get over on the foot trail, the jogging trail that runs up along the airport. We were in the tunnel when a jogger or a person came the other way and said they've shut it off.

Well, we talked to a police and he said there's a fourth plane and the F-16s are trying to get it forced down here at Reagan and so they've shut off all the area around the airport. You can't go this way. So we debated and we figured out well we can get, I think I remember how to get on this foot trail - I used to jog around there a lot, another way and so we went up around the Pentagon City Hotel right by the parking lot of the Pentagon. Went over George Washington Parkway, and got on the foot trail and walked up 'til we got to the Memorial Bridge, and went across that and came back to the hotel.

Took us about, I don't know, hour, hour and a half to walk back, I guess. We got there before the people that took the cab, (everyone laughs) which is interesting because everything had become gridlock and they closed the bridges and everything else. So it was probably a good decision, and the whole class got together for that whole operation.

A. Craig Taylor (55:26) In between that time that our fearless leader was getting us back to the hotel, the cell phones, we got messages to our wives and to our families. Some guys had cell phones. I think Troy's wife reached mine and I was happy about that.

A. Dave Reece (55:55) One other thing, it was interesting. I forgot to mention this, is the cell phones were blocked and occasionally somebody would get through, but in general we couldn't, and so DWAYNE EMBRY (phonetic) who's the Executive Director of Crane was with a class at the time, had one of these Blackberries that are email things you know. You've got something like that. Some of you've got those. Here's one.

I was, there you go, he's a Crane guy. Anyway DWAYNE EMBRY (phonetic) had one of those and he, no problem he could get out on that. So he used that to email his secretary at Crane who then started calling our families that were up here with us in the hotels, and notifying them that we were OK.

Yeah, it was interesting, because all the cells were blocked completely. Only the Blackberry could get through with no problem.

A. Jim Buher (56:44) Real quick, on that, DWAYNE could get out with that and later in the day, or maybe dinner that night I asked him, I said—I wasn't sure how quick that we got out of the building, so I asked him to go back on to his machine and see what time that his email was sent and sent back to Crane that he sent from the parking lot. And the time on it was 10:52, but that was Indiana time which would have been 9:52 here.

So if the plane hit about 9:35 or 9:36 we were in the parking lot at 9:52, because that was when we sent the email, because it registers the time when the email at the time it was sent and that was the time it was sent. So we were out of the building fairly quickly.

(?) (57:30) I think you got your time just backwards.

A. Jim Buher (57:34) Yeah, it was 8:52, and it was 9:52 there. It was 8:52 Indiana time (57:37). I remember being an hour off because it was 9:52 Washington time.

Q. (57:42) So seventeen minutes, is that right?

A. James Buher (57:46) At the most, by the time we were in the parking lot.

A. Steve McAtee (57:51) I have to admit when we were walking away from the Pentagon is when the fourth and fifth floor fell, and I was amazed at how loud. I mean to me the explosion, what sounded like an explosion at those floors falling, sounded every bit as loud as when the plane hit.

Q. (58:09) Did you know that's what it was when you heard?

A. Craig Taylor (58:10) No.

(several people) No.

A. Steve McAtee (58:13) No, we were looking across the Pentagon and basically just heard this huge explosion. Again big smoke and like another bomb, really is what I thought, you know I mean.

(someone else) Right.

A. Steve McAtee (58:21) It sounded like another bomb had went off in the building.

(someone) Right.

A. James Buher (58:26) There was a lot of rumor on the street that they (in audible)(58:30) various other (in audible)(58:35) Of course that was a big question in our mind, in my mind anyway was “Where else?” You know, what are they going to hit next? What’s next? You know where are they at, the planes? What’s going on in the rest of the country? Because we had no news, just word on the street at that time.

A. Craig Taylor (58:52) I didn’t get to come back with the guys on the bus. My brother-in-law, Reverend Moody, came and picked me up a little bit early, because he had heard about it, and that was enough to keep me shaken up for a little while. I’m just glad to be with this particular class in history. (everyone laughs) We made it out, so our team work skills, remember this, we attribute to you. So we need to get all "A’s” in here.

(everyone laughs)

A. Doris Richardson (59:33) I was in the cab. We were able to find that first cab and they insisted that the women get in and so JOANN MOUBRAY and DORIS RICHARDSON, we got in the cab, and we asked DON PECKINPAUGH and ERIC MOODY who has gout in his foot, we asked them to get in the cab also. You know it was a long trip back with all the roads that

were closed and all the security that were out on the street trying to keep traffic moving, and all the federal employees that were immediately released from work that flooded the streets. But you know, people were being kind to each other. They weren't irritable. There were vendors on the street bringing out free sandwiches and people were trying too help each other out.

Q. (01:00:24) How long did the cab ride take to get back?

A. (01:00:27) Doris Richardson. We got back at 1:15 I think it was.

A. (One of the group, I think) (01:00:31) How much did it cost?

Q. (01:00:34) Yeah, how much did it cost? (everyone laughs) How much was the fare?

A. Doris Richardson – Sixty dollars. (said with emphasis)

A. Jim Buher (01:00:43) One of the things I'd like to pick up on the day mission was that I was totally amazed and impressed by how calm everyone stayed through the entire process. I never saw a hint of anyone panicking. But people stayed together. They sort of followed. There was sort of unanimous consent in the group. No one was arguing about you ought to do this, you ought to do that. I mean people weren't blindly following somebody, you know, there was good discussion and people were making decisions. Very rational and very calm and I was very impressed with them, and Tuesday evening at the hotel, I received a phone call about six o'clock from SUSAN LIVINGSTONE. She just called and she said, "Jim, I just want to let you know I want to be sure. Did everyone get out OK?"

I said, "Yes."

She said, “Well I just want to let you know that I’m sorry I had to leave when I did, but I had to go take care of my other duties. But I just wanted to let you, I wanted to check and make sure everyone was OK,” and she said, “Whatever you do, please tell the class how impressed I was with how calm everyone stayed. How they followed orders and followed directions, “ and she reiterated again, that it would have been so easy for lives to have been lost had anyone panicked in that hallway. It would have been utter confusion, and people really could have lost their lives, but no one panicked. You know, and for whatever reason it was just a real tribute to this group of people that everyone did get out.

Q. (01:02:19) Tell us how you all got home?

A. Jim Buher (01:02:25) Shear _____ (1:02:22). (everyone laughs) As we were walking back to the hotel, DAVE and I conferred and the first thing we decided was that we needed to get everyone together for a group meal if we could when we got back. So I, once the cell phones were working I called the hotel and asked them to arrange a luncheon for us so that when we got people there, we could get them together and we could talk about the experience and decide what to do.

On the walk back it also became really clear that this was serious enough that the people were saying, “Regardless of whether the class continues or not, I’m going home. I’m getting out of DC. I’m not staying here,” and it became fairly clear that it was serious enough that we ought to think about getting people home.

So when I got back to the hotel room, and by this time people were fairly hot and sweaty from walking back, plus smoke and smoky clothes and so we got here and we told them that we did

have a luncheon scheduled. Where it was, but you had thirty minutes to go clean up, call home, take a shower. Whatever you wanted to do.

So I went to my room and called my secretary. Her husband works for a corporation in Bloomington, that one of their divisions is a bus line called the Star of Indiana. So I called her and said, “Kathy, I’m going to get in the shower, but while I’m in the shower, call and find out, get a contact for me at the Star of Indiana to see if there is anyway that we can get a bus to come out and pick us up.”

Rather than try to purchase a bus here, or rent a bus here, I thought it just might be easier to get one from Indiana to come out. So when I got out of the shower I called her back and she said, “Just a minute I’ve got the President of the Star of Indiana waiting.”

She had called the Vice President of (in audible) Incorporated, which is a large umbrella corporation, who’s a friend of hers, and he called the Star of Indiana President and said, “Give them anything. Anything that they need, give it to them.”

So when I talked to him, he said, “Jim, you wouldn’t believe the number of calls we have already from all over the country for cancellations. We have some of our people stranded different places.” But he said, “They said give you whatever you want.”

He said, “What do you need and what do you want me to do?”

I said, “How quick can you have a bus on the way out to D.C. to pick us up?”

He said, “I can have a bus and two drivers,” because it’ll take two because of the size, length of the trip, he said, “I can have a bus and two drivers on the road within the hour.”

I said, “Go ahead and arrange it. Get them started, and I’ll call you back and confirm it in just a little bit, because I’m going to go down and talk to the class and see for sure that’s what they want to do.”

So I went down there for lunch and I knew some of them had organized rental cars, some had cars out here, but I asked the rest of the class, I said, you know, "I've talked to Star of Indiana and I have a bus that's ready to go. Do you want it?" And I think it was fairly unanimous that that was the feeling, "Yes, we do." So I went back upstairs and called and said, "Finalize it. Get it out here."

Someone asked me later how much was it going to cost, and I said, "You know I haven't even asked yet. I haven't the faintest idea what it's going to cost to get it out here." The idea was just to get it here.

They were terrific to work with and they were here about ten o'clock the next morning, and they took us back, We loaded up everyone that wanted to go back, We got back to Indianapolis as I recall about 10:30 PM Wednesday night.

A. Dave Reece (01:06:11) I might mention, that since we had the bus coming we again called back to Crane and then they notified the rest of the employees, that were not part of the class, but were in the area visiting various people and so we got ten or twelve other pieces of Crane that went back on the bus as well.

Q. (01:06:33) Well as we end the session I guess I would like to just offer anybody here an opportunity to share some final thoughts with something they'd like to have on the record about the experience.

Q. (01:06:47) Well, to add that too, just kind of for further thought is, how has this impacted you with the kind of work that you do, or has it? If it has, how has it?

A. Donald Peckinpaugh (01:07:01) I don't know if it's effected our work, but I think that all of us here can say that we cherish life a lot more and we're more tuned into the emotional concerns of our families. We do a lot more things that's more family orientated then maybe we did before. Maybe we don't really think that work is that critical to us now a days as it used to be. I mean to be in this class you more or less have to be a go-getter, or aggressive to make it through this class. I think most of us now a days think that family's important, life is important and I think it has changed our lives in a lot of ways along those type of lines.

A. Craig Taylor (01:07:43) As I said, I didn't come back with the class and Thomas Moody, Reverend Thomas Moody picked me up and I guess I can only speak for myself, after the incident was over, I was angry. Yeah, I was angry. I really, really didn't know why, but then we got to know that a number of people had just been killed in New York didn't even have any warning that they were going to be taken out and we were in line to be next. So I, after surviving it, I really got angry. Not angry at my classmates, because I was so happy that we all made it out, but as we were driving you know, it just built up very intensely that I just wanted to go get this guy you know. It wasn't a comfortable feeling, but I'm like guy (phonetic) here, I don't think it's really effected my work directly, but I know I did want to get closer to my son from that second on. Yeah, I was so tense.

A. Jim Buher (01:09:07) I would say that, I mean there's a lot of things, I think I had life fairly well in focus, but it sharpens that focus, but as far as work, up until that point I was going through a difficult time with the current administration I was working with, and it had not been pleasant. The first thing I did when I got back to Indiana was to call another gentleman and say,

“I realize how short life is, and I’m not happy with what I’m doing and you’re starting a brand new school,” and if, in addition to the conversation we’ve had in the past about me helping him with advise on starting a new school, I said, “Would you like for me to join you in that endeavor, because I really did realize that life’s too short and I’m not happy.”

Within two weeks we made the finally arrangements for me to take a new job at the university and I’ve been happier then I’ve been in two or three years. So it, in fact in that way it really did focus me enough that I made a change.

A. John Vaupel (01:10:31) One thing, I mean you know I think maybe I could speak for everybody. I think we all feel a bit closer, or at least I do to the work I do for the government for our defense of the nation and I definitely feel a lot closer to the action (chuckle) then I ever had before, or have ever experienced. So I definitely think that has changed among other things.

A. Doris Richardson (01:50:58) I agree, I think it’s a privilege that we support the Navy, and that you know we take our work seriously, and you know, wonder if anyone that doesn’t should maybe rethink you know what we’re doing there. Also, I’ve been involved in some discussion with Force Protection, they’re our other activity and that’s something I you know, take more seriously now. That there is a threat there and we should be concerned. Personally I’ve always felt like we’re sure to (in audible)(01:11:37) so I haven’t changed too much personally.

Q. If nobody has anything else, I thank you all for taking time to meet with us and tell us your story.

A. Thank you.

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