



*In collaboration with*  
**BARRY J. JAMES**

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**Interviewer(s):** Christina Boxberger, Megan Corey

<b>00:42</b>	<b>Barry James</b>	Okay. Y'all ready?
<b>00:43</b>	<b>Christina Boxberger</b>	<b>Yeah, yeah, we're ready.</b>
<b>00:44</b>	<b>Barry James</b>	My name is Barry Jerome James. I was born October 31st, 1953, in Washington, North Carolina. I was born in the old Tayloe Hospital. That's what my mama says. And my mama told me I was born around 10:00. If I was born after 12:00, I would be born in November. My home is right here in Piney Woods. I was on the Creek Road. And the school bus. We had so many students. When it came on the Creek Road and to the stop sign, it was about 30 kids up there at that time. We also had the Mill Road, which is right here. My mom and them said they grind mill there. I don't remember that. They grind mill there. And everybody would take their corn stuff to the grinder, and they would grind it and they would give the man who owned the mill probably some of their flour. I don't know whether they made molasses, did they Jan? I don't know whether they made molasses here.
<b>01:57</b>	<b>Janelle James</b>	I've never heard anything.
<b>01:58</b>	<b>BJ</b>	But I heard about making molasses. Mama said when they were little children, they would go swimming in the pond. I've seen the pond, but I've never been back there. Also that creek that runs down there, now

		<p>they have beavers down there and Canadian geese. And the guys that hunt now say the beavers is making a mess. They go blow the dam up, and in a little while the beavers come right back and dam it up again. And those Canadian geese, you know how a goose is, every time you step you've got some of the do. When you go out here you go to the brick hill, about [inaudible], you walk through the woods, it's the brick hill. I've never seen it, but they say they used to make brick there. Now we call him Willy Bear, which means Mr. Boston, but if I say Willy Bear, everybody knows what I'm talking about. And I say to the family, I'm not disrespecting Mr. Bear. And he was a student of the word. Mr. Willard Bear would read the Bible. And he knew it just by reading it. They told me he had a sawmill right there behind Miss [inaudible]. Out on the house? You know where I'm talking, right?</p>
<b>03:14</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Miss [inaudible]'s old house?
<b>03:16</b>	<b>BJ</b>	<p>Uh huh. Right there. It had a sawmill. I remember when I was a boy, they used to log with boxes. Anne Taylor said that she remembers the sawmill. And I remember, it might be bits and pieces down there now. I do know that we had some men that had an engineer mind. We called him B.C., but his name was Barber Columbus. And I heard that Mr. Willard Bear turned the house around that way [inaudible]. They turned it 360 degrees. They say they turned it around and that she had an engineer. And also, her grandma, and also right on the other side of—sis? B.C., do you remember when B.C. started turning that house around? Do you remember that? But he died before he finished.</p>
<b>04:14</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Who's your mama and daddy?
<b>04:16</b>	<b>BJ</b>	<p>My mother and daddy? My mother's name was Iradell Pierce James. My daddy's name was Woolard James. My mother was a Pierce. My daddy was a James and Brooks. My mother was a Pierce and Keyes. Because sister and brother married sister and brother. Do you remember that? Yeah, sister and brother married sister and brother. My mother worked on the farm and my daddy worked various jobs, mostly to the mill. My daddy was a World War Two veteran. And I regret today I never sat down and talked to my daddy about his experience. He was in Germany. And I believe my daddy suffered that PTSD. I believe he did. He told my sister Sweetie Pie. He was in Germany, he was walking</p>

		down the street, and a man got blowed up right beside him. Right when he was walking down and bam, they blowed him up. And in his life, he would cry all the time. And she would say “Daddy, what’s wrong with you?” He would say, “honey, you just don't know.” We had several World War Two veterans. My daddy, Warren Keyes, Buddy Howard, Elijah Keyes.
<b>05:43</b>	<b>JJ</b>	[inaudible] Corley.
<b>05:45</b>	<b>BJ</b>	[inaudible] Corley. He told the church about how he was in the ship and the water came up.
<b>05:50</b>	<b>JJ</b>	And he was on the USS Enterprise.
<b>05:55</b>	<b>BJ</b>	He was. And say, the other fella, [inaudible]. What bothered me is when they came back. They didn’t get no ticket parade. They didn’t get nothing. Everybody else got the parade but the African American soldiers didn’t get nothing. But anyway, I hope that’s passed. I went to school at [inaudible].
<b>06:19</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Was a bad boy at the back of the bus.
<b>06:25</b>	<b>BJ</b>	The school that I went to I think was built in 1959 or 60, because when we went there, it was a brand-new school, elementary school. They say a white man burned it down. That's what they say. The old part. I went there first eight years, and my first grade teacher was named Ms. Smith. Now, okay, we were poor, I know we were poor. We had wood heaters, kerosene lamps. So that year in the first grade, Ms. Smith would take our name, put it on the table and tape it down. It’d say, Barry James. That’s how I learned my name. And every kid in the school, that’s how she taught them their name, she’d write their name on a piece of paper and put it down there. So right about October it started getting cool. We had steam heat. So the heat is popping. You know when it starts heating up, that metal starts expanding. And all the kids in the school, that’s how we knew the heater was coming on. And my second grade teacher was named Ms. Knox. Ms. Knox I thought was ten feet tall. You remember Ms. Knox?

<b>08:03</b>	<b>Anita Whitehurst</b>	You know that was before my time.
<b>08:05</b>	<b>BJ</b>	But she was about five feet tall. But she was a good teacher. And every February she would have Black history. Jan, do you remember that? No that was too early. Every February we had Black history. And my teacher in third grade was Ms. Smith. Now again, Ms. Smith was from Plymouth. Ms. Knox was from Greenville. Fourth grade was Ms. Branch, she lived in the city. Fifth grade was Ms. Eric, she was from Williamston. Seventh grade was Mr. Moses, he was from Williamston. And eighth grade Ms. Love, and they were from Williamston. Then I went to E.J. Hayes School.
<b>08:45</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Did you say Ms. Bunch?
<b>08:48</b>	<b>AW</b>	Ms. Gladys Bunch. She was probably after y'all.
<b>08:54</b>	<b>BJ</b>	And I went to E.J. Hayes the first year. Growing up, we had a fishery right here in David's hill. There was a fishery down there. But they don't have it no more. They had a fishery and in January was when you had a herring festival, and the guys would go fishing. And at the end of the day they'd bring the fish home. The fish would last about maybe three weeks, that's when the herring came up to spawn. It might have been less, about three weeks. I went down there after school and I was in herring up to my knees. Catching up herring. And we went there until I got out of high school. I worked there at high school. And we had a lot of people that had chemical engineers. Y'all know what a chemical engineer is?
<b>10:00</b>	<b>JJ</b>	That's one of those people who used to make liquor.
<b>10:03</b>	<b>Christina Boxberger</b>	<b>Yeah, I remember from the last time I came to Piney Woods about the chemical engineers.</b>
<b>10:10</b>	<b>Barry James</b>	They could change corn, and they make good --
<b>10:19</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Good moonshine.

<b>10:21</b>	<b>BJ</b>	About everybody bought moonshine from us.
<b>10:25</b>	<b>CB</b>	<b>From your family?</b>
<b>10:26</b>	<b>BJ</b>	No, From the community. People would come from Williamston.
<b>10:32</b>	<b>AW</b>	People would come from near and far, all the way from New York all the way down.
<b>10:37</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Judges. Mr. Willard Bear said he sold liquor to judges. We had the Revenue, one of them was called six a bullet, I remember. Marshall Smith could run so fast, they could never catch him. Ask Marshall.
<b>11:01</b>	<b>JJ</b>	You talking about on foot or in a car?
<b>11:07</b>	<b>BJ</b>	On foot. So what they had to do, they had to get a team of professional runners to get Marshall. They were fast runners. They wasn't but about 15 or 16, and they had to get--
<b>11:19</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Take off through the woods.
<b>11:21</b>	<b>BJ</b>	And they had to get professional runners to catch our guys, that's how fast they were. And plus, they were scared. In 1965 I think, '65, '68. That's when the [Clydemore?] mill opened up right here in Plymouth. And African American was hired to the [inaudible], and the other was hired to the paper mill, which was two or three dollars difference in the pay. They said Marshall got a job down there, my brother got a job down there. I remember when the road I stay on was dirt. And the Creek Road was dirt. That road was dirt. And I remember where Mama usually stayed at, that was dirt. But I remember out there where y'all stay at now, that's all been paved.
<b>12:12</b>	<b>JJ</b>	I don't remember. The road that went by where your mama and daddy lived, I don't remember when that was dirt. But this road here, yes, I remember that, and the road down in the creek.

12:22	BJ	I remember when the road I stay on was dirt. But the road that y'all stay on, I don't remember.
12:27	JJ	It's always been paved for as long as you can remember.
12:28	BJ	As long as I can remember. In fact, the gentleman that went to Vietnam. I don't think we lost a soldier in Piney Woods in Vietnam, I don't think so.
12:40	AW	No, it just mentally.
12:44	BJ	Mentally messed them up.
12:45	JJ	We had some folks that came back here that eventually died because of what they saw in Vietnam.
12:54	BJ	We had a young man that Jan knew down at Wayne State.
12:58	AW	Yeah. I heard that he's on that memorial in Houston.
13:02	BJ	We were fortunate that none of our soldiers lost their lives in Vietnam. But in our cemetery, we've got a big stone. You seen the stone? Y'all seen it? We've got a grave out there with a star about as big as that book there. A golden star. Y'all didn't see it? I don't remember, but I said, "Wow. What's that star doing out here?" I don't know if it was a veteran or if it was somebody's daddy. I remember when I was about 16, 17 I saw it out there. Now, my dad was raised [inaudible]. My mom was raised here in Piney Woods. And I'm gonna tell you something else that I never told nobody. Your grandma, Odie – when I call her by her first name, I don't mean to not respect. Who shot Mr. Kennedy?
14:07	JJ	Sirhan Sirhan?
14:10	BJ	Y'all know who killed Mr. Kennedy?
14:13	CB	<b>I don't remember his name, no.</b>

<b>14:16</b>	<b>BJ</b>	The gentleman that shot Mr. Kennedy.
<b>14:22</b>	<b>CB</b>	<b>Seymour or something?</b>
<b>14:26</b>	<b>BJ</b>	I remember that. [inaudible]. And the other gentleman shot him. Who shot Mr. Kennedy? I can't think of it right now, ah well.
<b>14:37</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Was that Oswald?
<b>14:40</b>	<b>BJ</b>	The gentleman that shot Mr. Kennedy. And they died. And he was coming down the hall and another man killed him. But I don't know the names.
<b>14:57</b>	<b>CB</b>	A Piney Woods resident?
<b>15:01</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Oh, no. It was on TV. Here's what I'm trying to say. We went to the store. You know, entered the store, mama and also daddy. And your grandmother came in there scared to death. And mama said, "What's wrong with you?" "They're shooting up there!" They go, we've seen it on TV but it's not live. You know, after it happened, they showed it. And your grandmother was scared. "I'm by myself!" They said "what happened?" and she told them what happened. And Odie was scared, so she came out to the store for comfort.
<b>15:42</b>	<b>JJ</b>	She was frightened by what she had seen on TV. Jack Ruby.
<b>15:52</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Yeah, yeah.
<b>15:52</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Oswald had killed Kennedy, it was Harvey Oswald. And then Jack Ruby killed Oswald. The [inaudible] have always said that they thought there was some kind of conspiracy going on. Because why did Jack Ruby kill Oswald?
<b>16:10</b>	<b>BJ</b>	But the point I was trying to make is that your grandmother got scared. I was in the fourth grade, in November. And my sister [inaudible] that passed, she was very, very disappointed. "They killed Mr. Kennedy," I said "huh?" "They killed Mr. Kennedy, the president. I didn't actually understand, but I knew something bad had happened. And Ms. Brown

		<p>went to her car and cut the radio on, and the news came up that Mr. Kennedy was killed. You know, I knew something bad had happened, but me being that young, I didn't know.</p> <p>It was not people. Just like in the Bible, you say a nation. When we say a nation, we're thinking about maybe 25, 30 million people. But in the Bible, the nation was maybe a couple million people. Anyway, in Piney Woods, there was maybe 10 or 12 families. And they intermarried casually. We the Whites and the Native Americans. They had an evening in paradise. Do I have to spell it out? Do I have to spell it out? Evening in paradise with a man and a woman.</p>
17:44	CB	<b>No, we understand.</b>
17:46	JJ	Do you remember when Martin Luther King was killed? Where were you?
18:04	BJ	I was in the eighth grade, but I didn't find out until the next day. So, the intermarriage. I don't think they married, but they had an evening in paradise. Okay, okay. So, that produced babies. I don't like to use the term mixed because it ain't one race, it's a human race. So I use that. So I think, when people wanted to come here and enslave us, the other man said "no, you can't." He said "why?" He said, "that's your brother."
18:47	JJ	They were born into freedom. And the people were free. Nobody was enslaved. As long as the folks were free, and they had children, the children were free.
19:01	BJ	So while we stayed here, my ancestors. "I'm going to come here and enslave us," they said "no," and they said "why?" Because that's your brother. That's my son. That's just one reason why. So we got this old saying that we would not let any people of a dark complexion come in here. That's an old saying, you know it's an old saying. But really what happened is that they knew that if a lot of people came in that were not born here, they would come enslave them. So that's why they said no no, don't come here. Because if you come here, you're gonna be enslaved.



<b>19:47</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Slave catchers come in, so they kept the community free.
<b>19:48</b>	<b>BJ</b>	That kept us together. Now, her grandmama had a pathway on the underground railway. But it's not official yet.
<b>20:02</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Not my grandmother, cousin Gladys. It's not official yet. It has not been officially stated. But there is a trapdoor in the bottom of that house, and that trap door leads to the river. And the river, the Roanoke River, has been declared part of Underground Railroad. So go figure. If you got a trap door with a tunnel that goes to the river, and that river is part of the underground, you figure it out.
<b>20:38</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Everybody when I was growing up had a mule stable. Everybody had a mule stable, we called it a mule stable. But I'm not sure that they plowed with horses or plowed with mules, I don't remember. But I know they did not care nothing for a donkey. Or either a jenny.
<b>21:05</b>	<b>JJ</b>	A jenny?
<b>21:06</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Yeah. You mix a horse with a donkey, you get a mule, and you mix that one with a horse, you get a jenny. And they were real hard to get along with. But I know that each person had what we called a mule stable. And they had tractors. When the first tractors came out, with those big old iron wheels – do you remember those big iron wheels?
<b>21:28</b>	<b>AW</b>	You're a lot older than we are.
<b>21:33</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Thank you. But next time you go to a museum look at those tractors with the big iron wheels. That thing would kick dirt all over everywhere. Most of us, we raised tobacco. And our cash crop was the farmed tobacco. That's the cash crop.
<b>21:47</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Other than the liquor that was being made.
<b>21:54</b>	<b>AW</b>	You guys did soybeans too, right?
<b>22:01</b>	<b>JJ</b>	But the two cash crops were tobacco and liquor.

22:06	BJ	The main cash crop was tobacco, but they had soybeans and peanuts. I don't remember no cotton being raised here. I don't remember people picking cotton. But I remember that we'd have peanuts. Peanuts, soybeans, and corn. But tobacco was the cash crop. And one man could till maybe 6, 7 acres a day of land because it would take you all day to break an acre of land. And when tractors came along, the men started renting their land out. And right now, one man, with the right equipment, could tend everybody's land in Piney Woods. Anybody with a tractor could tend all our land. So that's how much we came. Like I was telling my cousin, we want county water. We tried to get it a couple times before. Some people in Piney Woods was against it. "I don't want no water. I don't want no water bill. They meant well, but they couldn't see that –
23:08	JJ	They didn't know that the water table was dry. And that we had sediment and rust and all this kind of stuff in the water.
23:14	BJ	They could see the trees, but it couldn't see the forest. You know, the big picture is that it will reduce our house insurance, and it's good for firefighters. You know when a fire breaks out in the woods?
23:28	JJ	It'll stop tearing up washing machines and refrigerators. You cannot have a water dispenser on your refrigerator because the sediment is in the water. It will corrode the working parts and you won't be able to have water.
23:43	BJ	And also, we have people with stones.
23:45	JJ	Kidney stones, gall stones, all of that. From that hard water.
23:54	BJ	People had wells, not pumps, wells. They dug a well and the spring water would come up. It was good water. Don't quote me on this, now, but I heard Texaco, by digging for phosphate, dropped our water table. I don't know about that. Texaco sold out to another phosphate company, but it dropped our water table. I do know where you live out on [inaudible], at first bridge, there used to be a pump that ran all the tme, remember that? It ran all the time. But our water table dropped. And then our water got real bad. I got people saying I had dropped my pipes

		so many feet because I've got bad water. And I'm hoping to get county water and get better internet. Mr. Collins' son, Jerry, is working on some kind of internet they want to get right here. Broadband. And we really, really, really, really need it. Somebody said I don't know what you need it for and that we don't need broadband. One of the tough sides, I'm not going to say dark sides. You got a funeral car, it's black. Go to a funeral, it's black. Night. Black. [inaudible], the deposits is red, and the negatives, black. If I've never seen a Black man and saw one, what would I think?
<b>25:33</b>	<b>AW</b>	He was bad.
<b>25:34</b>	<b>BJ</b>	I hope you don't get offended. I'll bite your head off. You see now, if you bring these things up, you can learn better. And two things happened in Piney Woods in my lifetime, which bothered me. There were two murders.
<b>25:57</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Who got murdered in Piney Woods?
<b>26:03</b>	<b>BJ</b>	The Smith man.
<b>26:04</b>	<b>JJ</b>	What Smith man?
<b>26:08</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Lily. Lily husband.
<b>26:10</b>	<b>JJ</b>	I don't even remember that.
<b>26:12</b>	<b>AW</b>	Because we weren't born.
<b>26:13</b>	<b>JJ</b>	You were probably in Germany then.
<b>26:15</b>	<b>JJ</b>	What year was that? I understand it, but year was that, because I never knew Ms. Lily's husband at all.
<b>26:30</b>	<b>AW</b>	That's before our time. What you're talking about is way before our time.

<b>26:33</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Did that happen in the 60s?
<b>26:36</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Yeah, in the early 60s.
<b>26:38</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Yeah, because I had no conscious memory. I never knew her husband at all.
<b>26:41</b>	<b>BJ</b>	And there was another man killed over on the right side of that big house. Right there, there was a man killed right along there. My mama said that, and I know that Miles Pierce knows it. Those are the tragedies that happened in Piney Woods that I know about. Oh yeah, I know another one. Do you remember Ira Dell? She killed her husband. And guess what? Both of them were brothers. Lily's husband Raymond. And Ira Dell's husband [inaudible], they were brothers. And the domestic violence bothered me, since there's been three. That's a long time in Piney Woods since we've had a real, real, real big tragedy. I had five friends that never reached the age of 21. There was [inaudible], there was Fred Wood. I think [inaudible] might have reached the age of 21.
<b>28:23</b>	<b>AW</b>	G-man's son or something. Some kind of drag race there by the railroad track or something.
<b>28:30</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Yeah, Linette's brother, Jerry G.
<b>28:37</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Was that Ben and them?
<b>28:39</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Yeah, that was Ben and a car wreck. And then my classmate's car turned around, he was in Germany, I think and a car hit him. And Jerry Smith, he died young. Most of them were car racing.
<b>29:05</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Drag racing, driving fast cars.
<b>29:07</b>	<b>BJ</b>	They died real, real, real, real young. And it kind of bothered me. But that's life, you know? My first cousin Jimmy Dale, he got killed in Germany, that would have been about ten years ago. Jimmy Dale James. Jan, you spent time in Germany, right?

29:51	JJ	Yeah, but that was between '62 and '64. I was two years old when we came home.
29:55	BJ	But Jimmy hasn't been dead that long. He might have been dead 8, 10 years. Lizzie Mae and my Uncle Jim. On the Creek Road, there's a dead end. It needs a turnaround spot. It's got a hole back there that deep. On the Creek Road and the Mill Road, you go back there and you'll be scared to turn around. On the Creek Road it needs a turnaround spot.
30:37	CB	<b>What else can you tell me about your family history and the history of Piney Woods?</b>
30:42	BJ	The history? I don't remember my daddy's daddy.
30:52	JJ	But do you know the name?
30:53	BJ	His name was Haywood James and my grandma's name was Roberta James. And on my mama's side, my granddad's name was Matthews and my grandma's name was Meyer.
31:08	JJ	There was two sisters and two brothers marrying each other?
31:11	BJ	Matthews Pierce sister was Sally. Grandma Molly's brother was Lewis. Sister and brother married sister and brother. I don't know about them. We used to go down there and watch TV at night because there weren't but one or two TVs in Piney Woods.
31:38	AW	But do you remember Leanna?
31:40	JJ	Do you remember Andrew's wife? Andrew's wife was Leanna James. No, Andrew's mama was Leanna James.
31:48	BJ	Andrew's mom? I don't remember her.
31:52	JJ	You don't remember her?

31:55	AW	And John. John Pierce.
32:00	BJ	John Pierce is my uncle.
32:02	AW	Not your grandmama's brother. I'm talking about Andrew's dad.
32:08	BJ	Marge can tell you about that. We had one of our generals go to World War One. That was Whitacre, Ida Mae Whitacre's daddy.
32:23	JJ	You talking about Seri Whitaker? He was in World War One? I did not know that.
32:30	BJ	Yeah, he was in World War One.
32:33	JJ	Seri Whitaker.
32:38	BJ	He was in World War One.
32:44	JJ	So that is Earl Whitaker's brother, and Seri Whitacre's daddy was Chultz Whitaker.
32:49	BJ	Now, I was told that this part of the old part of church got pegs in it. I don't know whether it's true or not. Pegs in the old part of the church. I know that they've got round logs for the foundation. Bishop Ronald Keyes told me that the first person buried in the cemetery was a Lady. And I think this church done produced 19 preachers.
33:14	CB	<b>Wow.</b>
33:15	BJ	I'm not sure. And mostly that's how they lived, it mostly was farmers. In 1965, when the mill opened, a lot of people went down to the mill and worked. They had a paycheck, you know. They could make 65, 70 dollars a week, you know, when there's a paycheck. Now, on my daddy's side, I don't remember his family that much. But all those kin. Yeah. If you went right on back all the way, it's got the same DNA.

33:47	JJ	Barry has a sister that did an interview today. Her name is Jennifer Smith.
33:56	BJ	Better known as Sweetie Pie.
33:58	JJ	Better known as Sweetie Pie.
34:00	BJ	My daddy's name for her. You could actually live on the land until about December. From December to March, you couldn't, but from this time of year, we had [inaudible]berries, blueberries, strawberries, apples, pears, peaches. We had all of them that grew natural here. And a man can live off the land. But what people did, they put pesticide out and they killed the natural plants. That's why we don't have no butterflies now.
34:45	JJ	Most of the fields around here had a pear tree or two standing in the fields. And that was like that until in the last 20 years they raised cotton. And when they started raising cotton in the fields, and they sprayed that defoliant, it killed the pear trees out. I know of one field that I can go to right now where there's a pear tree standing, and it's because there ain't no cotton ever been in that field.
35:18	BJ	Out at your house there was a pear tree, remember?
35:21	JJ	Yeah, but they put cotton out there, and it killed the tree.
35:25	CB	<b>So, who was it that started planting cotton?</b>
35:39	BJ	Cotton just came back in the last 20 years.
35:31	JJ	Yeah, cotton just came back in the last 20 years. It wasn't a crop that was raised out here.
35:36	BJ	I've never seen no cotton being raised when I was growing up. And I heard something about that cotton was a fruit. Cotton is a fruit.

35:45	JJ	Just like tomatoes are a fruit.
35:48	BJ	And pumpkin. Now, is a pumpkin a fruit or a vegetable? I think it's a fruit, but anyway, we're not talking about that.
35:55	CB	<b>I think it is a fruit, but yeah.</b>
35:57	BJ	When we finished school, most of us moved jobs and went into that great migration, went to the cities. Some of us the Lord really blessed and we had some that fell in the cracks. One thing about this church is that there were not a lot of different denominations to split us up, it was just one body. We produced 19 preachers. We did log our land out. When you come down here and you get to the end of the road and you make a left, you see that that a piece of wood that's just been logged out? I think this is my third or fourth time seeing it logged. I know three times, but I'm not sure about that fourth time that I've seen it in my life.
37:01	JJ	It's my first time ever seeing that piece logged.
37:03	BJ	I've seen it three times. Some things I can remember real good. If you asked me what I did in the last 15 minutes, now, I'd have to think about it. I'll tell you what, I've got long time memory, but short time, I can't tell you. And this church I heard there was one man killed in the door.
37:26	JJ	In the door of this church? When?
37:31	BJ	I don't know, Jan, you're asking hard questions.
37:35	JJ	If you say a thing like that, I'm going to want to know when.
37:37	BJ	It's time to go?
37:39	Megan Corey	<b>Oh no, we were just wondering. We have a few questions we wanted to make sure to get to.</b>
37:44	BJ	Before we bought the church in '72, there was a shooting. Apparently, the bullet went through the door. The man shot him. He wasn't in



		church, he was just killed there. Okay, now ask me your question. But I've got a joke to tell you about too. Can I tell you the joke?
38:07	CB	<b>Sure.</b>
38:10	BJ	We had a funeral. There was a lady, and she was took up from the floor up. When they come around to view the body, she got right up to the casket. Said "Oh Precious Lord." And she was drunk. That's a joke. Alright, now you've got my attention. Talk to me young lady, I ain't gonna bite you.
39:02	CB	<b>I had just a few more questions. Maybe like two or three. Yeah. I was just wondering if you could tell me about your closest family members and if there is a family member that you grew up with that was particularly impactful to your life, that made a really big difference?</b>
39:18	BJ	That's a tough question, now that I'm older.
39:25	CB	<b>Or multiple, if you have more than one.</b>
39:27	BJ	My life is like a big puzzle, one of those big puzzles. Everybody had a part in my life. You know, I can't say, Janice. I can't say her. I can't say you. It's a big puzzle, now that I'm older. If I go back 40 years, and I want to know what kind of tree was it, I would ask Billy Ray. I would ask Will. I would ask B.C. I would ask [inaudible]. Them guys could walk through the woods and tell that's a pine, that's an oak, that's a white oak, that's a red oak. So, I can't. Because it's a puzzle.
40:17	JJ	You have so many people right close to you. It's a close community.
40:21	BJ	Right. And I can't pull one person out, because if I do, the puzzle would be incomplete. Am I making sense?
40:28	CB	<b>Yeah, that totally makes sense.</b>
40:29	BJ	Okay, next question.

40:33	CB	<b>Yeah. You told me a lot about your childhood in Piney Woods and the different things that happened. If you could remember any details, any smells or sounds that were really important and special to your childhood? Do you remember any of those?</b>
40:50	BJ	Smells and sounds?
40:52	CB	<b>Yeah. Or images.</b>
40:54	JJ	What about when they had 'que in the back of the barn and you open up the back barn door and go "oohh."
41:01	BJ	That's a nice scent. And also, the last of September and first of October they dug peanuts.
41:15	JJ	In the ground.
41:17	BJ	And when you come to school, you would smell those peanuts. You smell them. You really could smell those peanuts. And if you cook some bacon back there, you could really smell it. I could walk by her house. Girl, I'd say, you've got a pot of coffee on. You can smell the coffee. And then if the wind was blowing right, you can smell when they was doing a home work. After you go to school you practice on being a chemical engineer. You know what I'm trying to say. If the wind blows right, You could smell the mash. But that was the thing, nobody told on nobody. I didn't tell on my cousin because he got a still. I would tell a lie. Yeah, we'd lie. And what they would do was the guys would make two stills. One I ran. And one I didn't, I had it up there where Internal Revenue could blow it up. They'd blow it up. And they'd write a report, "we've blown up 16 stills in Martin County". That's all they want on the record. "Well I never knew that still was back in the woods." It's like when they plant watermelon. A good farmer will plant two patches. He will plant a patch close, where he can find it, because those boys would steal watermelon. That's a nice flavor. When you open a watermelon up. Whew. That's nice. And cooking. Oh God, you could smell that food. You can smell them biscuits. A water biscuit.

		Molasses biscuit. And a sweet potato biscuit. My mama made white potato pudding.
43:24	JJ	What's white potato pudding?
43:26	BJ	White potatoes and put it in a pudding. You make it up and put it in a pan and bake it.
43:31	William Barber III	Chief, I think there's about two or three questions Cameron asked me about the history. We want to make sure we get you. Their time is running down, so there's about two or three rapid-fire that they want to make sure to have.
43:55	JJ	She did ask about smells and foods and stuff. What else did you have?
43:56	CB	<b>And then I asked a little bit about family history before, and you gave me some of that. But I also want to know what the legacy of Piney Woods, and the family, and the history. What does that mean to you?</b>
44:12	BJ	Inheritance. When I come down here it feels good. I feel safe. I feel good. Everybody's kin, I feel safe. I feel good. And I don't like people coming here and disturbing. Inheritance. Because everybody helps everybody and everybody's trying to survive. And we're here to make this place. When I leave this place, it ought to be better because I was here. Not worser because I lived. Now, we had a gentlemen. I ain't calling no name, [inaudible]. I ain't calling no name. When he left, I did not know how important that man was.
45:03	JJ	But you found out.
45:04	BJ	After he left. And that's the way I want to be.
45:10	CB	<b>Yeah. Like, Piney Woods is a puzzle, and every person who lives here is an important piece of that puzzle.</b>
45:17	JJ	That's one of the reasons why it's important for us, this water situation. We got to get this water situation taken care of. Because if there's no

		water here, this place won't be. People won't be able to live here. So, it's very important. I mean, yeah, we need Wi-Fi. We need high speed internet. But you can live without Wi-Fi and high speed. You can't live without water.
<b>45:49</b>	<b>BJ</b>	His grandchildren's not going to move here if we ain't got no water.
<b>45:52</b>	<b>JJ</b>	That's right. Great grandchildren and nobody else, because you don't have no water.
<b>45:56</b>	<b>BJ</b>	Just like I said with that big puzzle, if you take anybody out of Piney Woods, if you take any piece out, that puzzle is incomplete.
<b>46:10</b>	<b>Megan Corey</b>	I was actually wondering. So you guys mentioned the sediment in the water. That's still what you're dealing with now?
<b>46:15</b>	<b>JJ</b>	Yeah. This is an ongoing issue now. We are talking to the people in Williamston and trying to figure out how long will it be before they start to lay lines this way to run city water or county water into this area because we need water.
<b>46:43</b>	<b>BJ</b>	This certain man, I ain't calling no name. He was doing taxes. [inaudible]. I ain't calling no name. My old boy was about eight, nine years old. He took a bath and his skin would just get dry. So I asked your grandfather, I say: If I put a water softener in here, could that be a tax deduction? And your father said no, unless it's a medical purpose, you know. Not unless it's for a medical reason. Because of my son's skin.
<b>47:31</b>	<b>AW</b>	He had bad skin because of the water.
<b>47:33</b>	<b>BJ</b>	It was just real, real, real dry. I wish that we had professional people sitting here right now. I would think that what I need is Medicaid, Medicare, and all the things that we got, benefits. I don't know them big words.
<b>48:03</b>	<b>JJ</b>	In other words, basically what you're saying is how Buster came in this community. When your granddaddy was living and Social Security

		came into being, who was it from Piney Woods who signed all the old-timers up? It was your granddaddy. Because it's an isolated community. You did not know, and even if you had heard about it, you didn't know how you were gonna get it. Buster Barber got the forms, he went to everybody's house, he sat down with everybody, filled out the government paperwork, submitted it to Washington, D.C., and everybody started getting Social Security.
48:52	BJ	It's like Medicaid, Medicare. It might be some benefits that I need that I don't know about. Now, if I'm being cheated, I'm going to sue you. I'm gonna take you to Judge Judy.
49:09	AW	I was trying to get it out to everybody in the community, and I was texting everybody and I told them to give everyone they knew this information about Medicare and Medicaid. That you can call this person on the phone, and they will walk you through it. I told everybody.
49:29	BJ	You need to make a flyer.
49:33	CB	<b>Just a few more things, I promise.</b>
49:35	JJ	Call this person and this person, call this representative.
49:41	BJ	We are mandated by scriptures. The Lord. Somebody asked the Lord a dumb question. The Lord said, have you fed the hungry? Have you clothed the naked? Have you been to the prison door? Someone dumb will say, why did I do this? We have done this to the least of us and you've done it to me. So we're mandated by the word of God.
50:14	JJ	To try to help one another.
50:16	BJ	That that one thing can make things better. We're mandated, right preacher? We're mandated by the word of God. Like we're the disciples, we're mandated by the holy scriptures. We've gotta love thy brother, love thy neighbor, and thyself. [inaudible]. But we have been

		mandated. This community spiritually is cleaner now than it's ever been. Spiritually clean.
50:57	CB	<b>Yeah, I just I just have two more questions, and one of them is if you have anything to add. I wanted to ask if you could tell me about the work that the Rural Beacon Initiative is doing in Piney Woods. Rural Beacon Initiative.</b>
51:14	BJ	You put a fire in me that I didn't think could be there. What this organization is going to do, it's going to help people. It's going to help people. Listen. I don't want you to give me nothing. All I want you to do is help me. I don't want a handout. Just give me a hand. Because if you help people out, it makes more people. So, this organization is gonna really help people. Now, you know, you have [inaudible]. But I think it's beautiful. I'm willing to work. Because if you hold me down, if you put your thumb on me, I'll show you something now. What's your name?
52:17	CB	<b>Christina.</b>
52:18	BJ	Christina. If that's me right there, and you put your thumb down on me, guess what? I can't get up. And you can't either. Because once you get up, I'm going. So when you hold anybody down, you gotta stay down there with them. And there's a God. You want to make God mad? You oppress the poor. Now you get drunk and cut the fool and that's still wrong. But you met that poor man and hold him down. That upsets heaven. But you can get drunk, and play in the woods, and act a fool, that's all right. But you take a person that's down and poor and you put your foot on them? [inaudible]. I think it's beautiful and I'm willing to work with it as much as I can.
53:17	CB	<b>Awesome. That was the last question that we had for you. If you have any last things you would like to share that we haven't touched on about your family or the community here in Piney Woods?</b>
53:29	BJ	Well, I know that in the Keyes family we can't drink. In the Keyes family, we can't drink. We can't drink alcohol. We go plum crazy. That's

		that Native American in us. I heard that Native Americans, First People can't handle booze. They can't handle liquor. And our kids. Now, you just think about all our people down here that have a problem with alcohol.
54:09	JJ	It's been all over the community.
54:12	BJ	The Keyes, we say, they never pick that glass up. Because in our genes, it mess us up. Something about it's crazy, and it just mess us up. When my daddy died, he died an alcoholic. A lot of people that die alcoholics [inaudible]. I had a young man about 30 years ago, I said, cousin don't never take that bottle up, don't do it. That's in the genes.
54:50	CB	<b>Awesome. Well, thank you so much. Yeah. I hope you have a great rest of your day. This was a lot of amazing, amazing information, and we're so excited to hear your story.</b>
55:01	BJ	Okay.
55:02	Megan Corey	<b>Yeah, I know we only scratched the surface.</b>