

**Adairsville Oral History
Evan King Interview
Conducted by James Newberry
November 6, 2016**

Full Transcript

James Newberry: Okay. This is James Newberry and I'm here with Evan King on Sunday, November 6, 2016 at his home in Adairsville, Georgia, which is 112 King Street. Mr. King, do you agree to this interview?

Evan King: I do.

James Newberry: Thank you very much. We'll go ahead and start at the beginning. Can you tell me where and when you were born?

Evan King: I was actually born in Florida Hospital in Rome, Georgia, January 28, 1957. I actually still have a copy of one of the hospital bills that I had saved from that day.

James Newberry: Do you remember how much it was?

Evan King: I do not. I'd have to pull it out to get that figure but I can tell you it's not as much as it is today.

James Newberry: What were your parents' names?

Evan King: My father was Edward Walker King Sr. My mother was Hannah Mackolen-Teague. She was called Hannah Mack in her younger years, short for the Mackolen. Her father was Mack Teague and I'm sure the Mackolen came as a derivative of Mack. She was an only child.

James Newberry: Can you tell me about your father's work?

Evan King: In his younger years, he had a sawmill like my grandfather, like his father. Then he started a building contractor, house mover, kind of a jack of all trades. Mostly a builder, he built homes and built homes and remodeled, more of that type of thing.

James Newberry: Would you be willing to tell me about your mother?

Evan King: My mother was diagnosed with a mental illness in the sixties. She spent most of my life in a mental institution in Millersville. That was, of course, difficult at that time for people to talk about it. It's difficult for today for people to talk about it. It's something that needs to be talked about because the only way you're gonna reduce that stigma is to get it out in the

open. What a lot of people don't realize is there's about 20% of the population, about 1 in 5 have some degree, some sort of mental illness. Whether that be bipolar or that be depression or that be schizophrenia, mood disorders. That's something that we as a society need to do.

Of course, in those days it wasn't dealt with in the manner that we deal with it today because we didn't know. She had an aunt who had some sort of mental disability. My father and she had been married, this is the story that my father told. My father and she had been married two or three years and of course they dated prior to getting married of course. My dad said that they had been married two, three years before he even know that this aunt existed. She was kept in a back room in a house and she was fed meals. Essentially like a prisoner, is the way I envisioned it. I'm not saying that's the way it was, that's the way I envisioned it. Because if you didn't get out and you were fed meals in your room, that's essentially what you were. Again, she had a mental disability and through shame or whatever reason, that's the way it was dealt with. I don't think that she would've been isolated in that situation.

That's the way not just that family dealt with it, or my family dealt with it. That's the way a lot of families dealt with it. Hopefully we're working and evolving and reducing that type of stigma so people can get help because they're part of our society. There was a movie, a beautiful mind about the gentleman that had schizophrenia and he won a Nobel Peace Prize for his work in mathematics. These are intelligent people, these are people that can contribute to society if they have the tools to do so and the support system to do so. My family is just one family out of many who's had to deal with that issue.

James Newberry: Did your father both work and care for you?

Evan King: Essentially, yes. As best he could. My father also had a problem with alcohol. He was an alcoholic and I lived for a while with my grandparents, his parents because my mother's parents had passed away. My grandmother had a great, great influence on my life, as did my grandfather. I'm not wanting to get political here in this interview but in a very real sense, the community raised me in many, many ways. I can remember coming home from school at this house that's across the street, [Doc Plains 00:04:52] house. I got in a fight and my grandmother's house was on North Main Street. At the time I was living at my grandmother's house. By the time I finished the fight and walked home, and I lost the fight by the way. She knew about it.

What I'm saying is, people looked out the windows, saw what was taking place and they picked up the phone and they called. There was consequences to my actions. The church raised me, my local church, it

was a Baptist church that was a huge part of my life, my teenage years. Earlier years I can remember [Jed Caldwell 00:05:31], the pastor, on RA trips. Paul Baker, a Deacon in the church, taking us on RA trips. Those were great, great influences on my life. I guess what I'm trying to say, as difficult as it was in those circumstances, I could not have done anything of what I am today without those influences of my life.

James Newberry: Where was your childhood home?

Evan King: 100 Oak Street. That was my mother's father's house. My grandfather's house, which I still own. I have it as a rental house now. As a general rule, that was our base because my dad would move around to various places to work in various situations. That's generally where I was raised and then my grandmother's home, his mother's home at 301 North Main Street. Which my sister lives in now, she inherited that house. I had a thought that came through my head but it went.

That house, I still got the paper. I know what I was about to say. My grandfather was a veteran of World War I, Mack Teague. He was in the trenches in France and was exposed to mustard gas. He bought that house at 100 Oak Street on what we would call today, the GI Bill that came after World War II. They had some sort of program after World War I, I'm not familiar with the name of it. But he borrowed the money on that program to buy that house for \$750 dollars. I've got the paper that he signed for that. I've got the deeds to people, Mr. Whitworth was one of the owners of the house at one time. There was actually, when my granddaddy Teague bought it, it was about three different people that had it.

I heard now, I've not documented this but I've heard that at one time, Mr. Whitworth also had a store in town and he was a, for the time, established business man. He had a furniture store and he also had a funeral home business. I had heard he had used that house at one time as a place to embalm bodies. I don't know that, like I said, I have not documented that. But he was one of the owners that I have the deed when my granddaddy purchased that house. Like I said, I still got the paper where he and my grandma borrowed the money for that house. I'm kinda particular about that stuff.

James Newberry: What do you mean, particular?

Evan King: I like to keep old records. The camera can't go in there but I got a newspaper ad when my grandfather, my daddy's father, ran for county commissioner in 1940. There's a story behind that. Let me tell you about how I came about the newspaper article.

My grandfather passed away in 87, I believe. He had two sisters, one of those sisters lived in Lanett, Alabama and she had passed away. Her son, Bill Owens, sent me a manila envelope one day and I opened it up and it had this article. Full page newspaper article. I called him and I said, "Bill, I like money as well as the next guy. But you couldn't of sent me a thousand dollar bill and made me any prouder. Where did you find this"? He said, "Momma had this put back, this was in one of her Bibles that she put back when Cliff ran for county commissioner." He said, "I knew that you would appreciate it probably as much or more than anybody." He said, "I want yo to have it," I said, "I sure do appreciate it."

Another story about that time in those days, the elections took place in February. Or course the [inaudible 00:09:39] was on the north end of the county and there's a lot of talk about where the red heads were and some say still are the red headed step child of the county, that kind of thing. My granddad ran against a group of guys that were out of [Carter 00:09:52] which had a bigger population base and of course a bigger voter pool, those kinds of things. He lost the election, I'm saying all that to say he lost the election.

My granddad had a planter mill and saw mill out here where the Chenille building is now. Actually, it's an antique model now. All that was a big lumberyard that my grandfather had. Mister Cobb Green was my granddads right hand man for lack of a better word. Cobb told this story a lot. Cobb said the day after elections, he said, "Cliff lost," and he said, "there were several of us getting ready to go before we started work that morning, we'd build a fire out of the strips and slabs from the sawmill to get warmed up. Warm our hands up and stuff." He said, "Cliff drove up in his old black car," he said, "all cars were black in those days. You didn't have cars colors the day you do now." He said, "He got out of that car, he had a six gun strapped on his hip just like John Wayne." He said, "I knew that he was mad because he lost the election."

He said he walked up there and he said, "What's wrong, Cliff? Why are you wearing that gun?" He said, Mr. King looked at me just a straight face and just a serious because he was serious. He said, "A fellow that hasn't got any more friends than I got needs to wear a gun." That's been the story that's gone around many, many times in this community.

James Newberry: You've talked a little bit about your growing up years and living both at your father's house but also your grandparents. Can you just tell me, generally, what are some of your earliest memories growing up here in Adairsville?

Evan King: I can remember one of my favorite memories is the drugstore downtown. Albert Mitchell worked for first Mr. Bradley then Doc Walt Mason. Doc

Masons's daughter and I graduated at the same time, Decatur '75. Just as a youngster, you'd go in there and there was the old style table and chairs. Table wasn't very big and then they had a soda fountain. Getting Albert Mitchell to make cherry cups. That was wonderful, you'd die and go to heaven getting one of those cherry cokes. There was also a comic book rack. Comic books were what, a dime, \$.15 cents at the most?

You'd go in there and get a cherry coke after school or on a Saturday and go pull a comic book and read the comic book and then stick the comic book back in the rack. Thinking today, I'm sitting here thinking now if we did that today, they'd want us to pay for that comic book. Those guys, they never mentioned anything. They knew what we were doing. I was just sitting there, there would be several of us. I say several but one or two guys would go with me or sometimes I'd go by myself or my big Liam, my brother. We'd sit there and read the comic books as we was drinking our cherry cokes. I guess the comic books were the loss lenders for the cherry cokes, I don't know. But I know today that that couldn't happen. Number one we don't have a drugstore like that. Today the comic books in a bookstore, folks read those things online or on their tablets or that kind of thing. That's a great memory of mine.

Another great memory is when the Great Locomotive Chase festival started. You've probably heard this in some of the interviews that you've been. We would have what we call Halloween carnivals in the old, old gymnasium. They made some kind of rule that some level, was that we couldn't have those type of functions on school grounds anymore. Our principal at the time, Mr. Lacey, decided one of the ways to circumvent that rule would be is to just move the whole thing downtown. That's how it started, instead of having the Halloween carnival, we had a festival downtown because it was a fundraiser for various school activities, the Halloween carnival was. That's how this festival started.

I can remember the first time, we would have the old fashioned stuff. Apple bobbing, or hitting the thing, the hammer where you ring the bell at the top. Lots of different things, people would dress up. I've got photos that y'all have taken some scans of, of how people would dress. They would dress back in the 1800s with the big hoop dresses and the guys would have overalls on or the string ties and things of that nature. To me, it was a great community ... I don't remember what the word I'm looking for is. It created community within the community. My father was not much of one to participate in those type of activities.

I can remember one year he grew a mustache because they had asked everybody to grow mustaches. He grew a mustache that left an impression. What I'm saying is that was a great way and it's still a great thing for our community. I don't know if you've experienced, I forgot one

of the interviews we did was during the festival. You saw the activities going on down there and a lot of people that's just like a homecoming. You can measure your era of time like when you graduated a lot of times just going to the festival. A lot of folks now they'll plan their class reunions and things around the festival because they know people are coming back to town for the festival.

We've planned several for my class and my wife's class around the festival because we know people are coming back to town to visit, for the festival and visit family and things of that nature. It's a great community, increases community within the community. Where you go within the country ... A lot of people have grown up and went to school then moved on and did other things in life. But they remember the Great Locomotive festival and they come back for a day or two and that's a great thing.

James Newberry: Do you have a general idea of how many people attend, on average?

Evan King: I've heard some numbers but I don't know exactly how you can pinpoint that number. I'm saying that but I know that they have ticket sales and things of that nature. But over a three day period, it fluctuates. Just as a guesstimate I would say somewhere in the neighborhood of 30,000 people range, about 30,000 people. That's a ballpark and I wouldn't want you to go to a big ballpark because I don't know if I'm anywhere close.

I've heard people say 50,000 but I don't know how you can actually pinpoint that number but I know it's a lot of people. Sometimes you can't walk through town because there's so many people. It's wall to wall people.

James Newberry: Right. You mentioned the drugstore just now. Can you tell me about the barber shop?

Evan King: Which one? There was a barbershop downtown, Andy's Barbershop, that I remember.

James Newberry: Tell me about that.

Evan King: I can't remember his last name. I remember it was Andy and he had a barber shop near where Culberson's store is. My biggest memory was, there was a bench that was on that side of it. An old gentleman named [Noel McCallister 00:17:25] would sit on that bench. Mr. McCallister, like a lot of folks in those days, liked to dip snuff and a lot of it ran down his chin. He always had on overalls and a denim coat. I can remember Mr. Noel McCallister sitting on that bench. I don't remember going into Andy's much to get a haircut because I always went to [Doe Moss's 00:17:51] barber shop. His barber shop was on the south end of town

where Susan's Barber Shop is now. Doe Moss cut my hair until I graduated from high school. Of course Doe is passed away now but that's the barbershop that we frequented.

There was another barber shop on the north end of town called Slim's Barber Shop. Slim Collin ran a barber shop up there. I would go in there every so often, mainly because my grandfather owned the building and Mr. Slim rented a spot from him. What I remember about that barber shop, he had mirrors on both walls. When you were sitting in the barber chair, you looked at a thousand faces or a thousand back of the head because you were looking at the back of your head from the other mirror. As a kid, that was always funny to me that you were able to do that. Slim Collins ran a barber shop on the north end of town.

James Newberry: What are your memories of the train depot as a kid?

Evan King: Playing around there. The depot I don't remember it being what I would call active, I mean commerce going in and out of the depot. I can remember playing around the train depot as a kid. They had ramps all around it and we would go down there and play tag or chase or whatever. Get into, I'm sure, all sorts of mischief around the railroad. Throwing rocks, I'm sure we broke some windows just being kids. I hope I don't get, I might need to be taking the fifth on that one.

I just remember we weren't able to go in it. Then when Mr. [Penfield 00:19:40] was the mayor, I think he's the one that entered into a lease with the railroad and he and his wife had antiques in there. I remember Mr. [Lycee 00:19:52] Mayor Lycee had an office on the south end of the depot. This was after I was an adult and he had an insurance business. Mayor named Reed Hopson built houses there. That was an office that they used. As far as a kid, I never did go in it, we just played around it. It was just a place to play for us when I was a kid.

James Newberry: You mentioned the passenger train was not coming through regularly.

Evan King: No, not during my lifetime. I do have an instant story about ... I don't remember this, I'm not saying that I remember this. What I'm saying is, we have a VHS tape that I want my wife to get converted to whatever they are now. That Joe Penn did from Kennesaw about the last gentleman that engineered the general. Happens to be Angie's uncle, Jeff Moss. They stopped there in 1964, again that's according to the tape. I don't remember that, there's some people there that I can recall that were there but I was not there on the day that that happened. They actually were bringing the general back from Chattanooga back to Atlanta where it's located now. I think Kennesaw but Jeff Moss was the last one that engineered that train. I asked him one day before he passed away I said, "Jeff," I said, "How did

you get that honor?" And he said [inaudible 00:21:33] and he said "I was a senior engineer on the railroad at that time," he said, "And I bid to get that job." I think that's a pretty neat story.

James Newberry: It was still being used very late, then, the general?

Evan King: No, it was actually had been in Chattanooga. They had climbed it but they had some sort of legal thing that went on. I don't know the details of that. They agreed, had some sort of settlement that it was coming back to Georgia and of course they had to have an engineer to drive the train. It was a big deal because the Governor was on that train. A lot of dignitaries on the train, for the time.

James Newberry: I see. What were those main drivers in the economy in Adairsville when you were growing up?

Evan King: Mr. [Cooveman 00:22:21] has [chenille 00:22:24] mill on the highway. Like I mentioned earlier my grandfather had a lumberyard before that in the late 40s and early 50s after World War II. Right here at the end of this Kings Street, it was a little shirt manufacturing location called Tri-State. Later it was called Kenmores, some other people bought it and called it Kenmore. Those employed a lot of folks.

Other things was agriculture was big in those days. A lot bigger than it is now. We were mostly a bedroom community, as I remember. I've mentioned my father, a lot of things that he did. He might have to go to Rome or Calhoun or [Carhart 00:23:08], or Atlanta. Or even over into Alabama depending on where the job was located as far as the contractor was concerned.

Tourism some, we had the motels that used to be out on the 41 before the tornado took them out. That was small business of that nature. As far as a major, major industry like we have today, that was really nonexistent in that sense.

Several people that lived here worked at Lockheed, that type of thing. We were mostly a bedroom community as I would describe it. People would go out of the community for their livelihood.

James Newberry: When you said earlier, "Red headed stepchild of the county," could you explore that, unpack that a little bit?

Evan King: My grandfather who was a pretty large business man for the time, always said that the county line should be down on Cartersville. Because he said as a trading partner we actually traded more with Calhoun than we did with Cartersville. Of course, a lot of this you have to remember is slanted

because from his election [dupont 00:24:32] back in the forties, that was his failed mindset. A lot of folks think that Cartersville gets more than Adairsville does in many ways, as far as resources are concerned.

What a lot of people don't realize, Cartersville's got a bigger population base. There has always been a mindset that it's an us verse them. I don't necessarily buy into that mindset now. I think over the last several years, we've worked together more cooperatively which is very, very good. There has been a time where it has been very strained. I think anybody who would say otherwise is not dealing with the truth, exactly.

Were there strains justified on either side? I wasn't there, I can't really say that. I can just say what I've heard through the years. I do remember my grandfather, one of his strongest saying was, "The county line needs to be down on [Cartersville 00:25:30] mine." That always got a big laugh and sometimes a big argument.

James Newberry: Where did you attend school?

Evan King: Right across the street at Adairsville High School. I graduated in 1975. I went in there, I can remember when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Mrs. [Farmer 00:25:49] was my first grade teacher and we had to lay our heads on the desk because everybody ... That was just a calming effect. I think we did that more because the teachers were more concerned than we were. They were more in shock than we were because we didn't really know as six year olds, what was taking place. I can remember Mrs. Farmer having everyone lay their heads on the desk, that kind of thing. I went all through school at Adairsville and had some great teachers, had some great influence.

As I've said earlier, the whole town sort of kind of raised me. As much as I rebelled a lot of years, those folks had a great positive influence on me. I was the last, the class of '75 was the last class that graduated from the old, old gymnasium. My wife's class, the class of '76, graduated from the new auditorium that has just been torn to make way for when they built the school south of town and they're about to build a new elementary school now.

I graduated from the auditorium my mother and my father graduated from. They were beginning to tear the school down in the spring of '75 to make way for the new things that they were about to build. We're in election season, this is November of 2016. Our high school civics teacher, Ms. Claire Sutton, those that had turned 18, she made sure they were registered to vote. She's passed away now, I never go vote that I don't think of Claire Sutton. The responsibility of civic duty of voting that she instilled in me. I hope that she instilled it in all of us but I know she instilled it in me.

James Newberry: How many students were there in the school, approximate number?

Evan King: I can't tell you that but I can tell you there weren't many in that graduating class. There were 40. Again, I'm gonna go with my wife's class. She was the class of 1976 and there were 76 that graduated in her class. That's how I remember that. From one class to another almost doubled. As far as knowing the number of students, I don't really recall that and I don't know that I ever paid attention to that. Just to be frank with you. When I mentioned the increase of my wife's class, through redistricting and things of that nature that school boards do. I'm sure that had a lot to do with the increase in the students that graduated from her class.

James Newberry: When you were in high school, how many students, what percentage of students assumed or knew or planned to go to college.

Evan King: Good question, very good question. Let's see, let me think. If you give me just a minute on the camera to think a minute. While I wasn't one of the smarter ones to say the least, I aspired to go to college. Mainly because the group that I ran around with, several of those wanted to go to college. I'm gonna say out of those 40 probably 25%, 10 maybe 15 aspired to go to college. Some went into the military, I can think of one that made a career in the military. That was actually military intelligence. There are actually more than one but he made a career. I'm thinking of another one who was in the military and he went and made a career in law enforcement as a lot of military folks do. He was military police when he was in the military.

As we're younger we don't think much about the future. We don't think about retirement accounts, there's a lot of things we don't think about. Young and dumb is what I like to say. I've often wondered how many, when they got in the workforce, they took that extra initiative to go to school to increase their knowledge of their job, their employment. I don't know that. Now I've wandered off. This question sparked one, how many from our original first grade class made it to a senior? I don't know the answer to that question. I'm thinking out loud, I don't know.

James Newberry: Tell me about your teacher, Julie Woodington.

Evan King: Great inspiration, great inspiration. Ms. Woodington was a short lady. She had gone to school at Berea College in Kentucky. She was a high school senior English teacher. If you took her class, you kind of ... I'm not gonna say it was prerequisite. There's a lot of things I could say about it in that regard. What I'm trying to say is, you had aspirations to go to college if you took her class. You knew that because of the reputation she had as a teacher. She was a very strict teacher. Her class was the closest class and that's no reflection on anything it's just the way that it was, of what you might experience when you went to the next level when you went to

college. She was extremely strict in her expectation because she wanted you to do your very best.

Of course I had known Ms. Woodington through my high school years and I took her class. I actually was an aid to her in the library. She was also the librarian. She taught high school senior English and she was a librarian for the school. She was firm. Firm might be a better word than strict as far as when you interacted with her in school. She liked to travel. Her husband had passed away about 15 or 16 years earlier and Ms. Woodington traveled in the summertime. She had lots of experiences that she was able to share with us. Most of us haven't got out of the state. The most we probably got to was Florida or the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee if we took a weekend trip. That kind of thing, for the majority of us, that's what I'm saying. There were several of us that had the finances to travel with their family, but most of us didn't.

I specifically, I hung on her every word. When she talked about going to Russia, she traveled to Russia. She loved England, English is what she taught and she loved England. She would tell about these various places named the Tams River and the Abbey and all those types of places. I remember one day in class we were talking to the effect, just off hand, "Well, I'll never get to go to those places." She looked at me straight in the eyes, she says, "Don't say that, Evan. There's no telling the things that you'll go."

When I see that book, "Oh The Places You'll Go" I think of Ms. Woodington. Just the fact of her traveling and her sharing those experiences inspired me more than the subject that she taught in English because it opened my eyes up. Just like books do when we read we're able to visit a lot of places just by going to the library. You're able to go back in time, you're able to go ahead in time, you're able to go to other countries just by reading. She put the actual legs to those readings because she had been there. She was able to relate personal experiences of what she had seen and she should share photographs and things of that nature. She was a great, great lady. Like I said, strict is a word a lot of folks used. Firm might be a more fair word to use.

The funny thing is, we went to church together. After I graduated we became great, great friends. She was a different person because she had a different responsibility, as opposed to being high school teacher. When you're a high school teacher, if you're not firm, you kind of lose control sometimes. As a friend, she was a dear, dear friend. I would go to her house and help her do things. She was a very private person, very private person but she was a great inspiration to me. I'm sure to others but I'm just speaking to me personally about how she affected me and how I looked up to her.

James Newberry: You were in school at the time of integration in local schools. What did you notice about that? How did that affect you?

Evan King: I was probably in about the third, fourth or fifth grade when I noticed there are black students in our school and we hadn't had it. It was the south in the 1960s. Which wasn't much different than the south of the 1950s or the 40s or the 30s. It was a great social change. To say that it went smoothly would not be fair. It would not be fair, it would not be the truth and it would not be fair to the black students that came.

What I remember now and what I regret now is some of the comments that I made. They were just people. They are just people. We're all just people. We want things better for our children. But it had to be difficult for those folks. No one has ever said that to me. No one has ever mentioned that to me. Folks that I know now that I went to school with, some of my black friends. They never mentioned it. I'm not wanting to go so far as to say they took it in stride. I think that's unfair because I know there were some hurtful things that had to be going on. We're products of our environment and our environment, again, was the 1940s, 50s and 60s south.

You cross the state line and you have the governor trying to keep black folks from going to the university. You have the Little Rock situation in '57 where the National Guard had to come in and allow citizens of this country of color to enter a public university. There was that resistance in that regard, but kids being kids they reflect a lot of times what they hear around the dinner table. It was difficult in the sense, looking back. You can't rewrite history, history is what it is. In the sense that those were the thoughts of the time. Thankfully, that's changed for the better, I hope. I'm not in school today, so I can't speak to that from firsthand knowledge. I'll give you a story. When my grandmother was ill, my dad's mother was ill, she was 93. We were sitting with her. We would rotate. Sundays we had somebody to help stay, during the week, those kinds of things. I would listen to the stories that she would tell, because they were important.

One story she told was her father was the foreman for [inaudible 00:00:48] up on Boyd Mountain. It was the Boyd family and the Hayes family. My grandmother was a Hayes. She talked about, they were the only white family on the mountain. Everybody else was black, because they did the labor. My great-grandfather was the foreman of those folks. The stories she told that stuck to me was, she can remember it, because we didn't have TV, they didn't have TV. Their entertainment was, when they were playing, they were playing.

I'm going back. The story that she told me that stuck to me was she remembered hearing the black children play, wherever they were located, she could hear them. Thinking, "Man, I'd love to go play with those

children, because they're having fun." When you're a kid, that's what you want to do is have fun. You're a kid. I thought to myself when she told me that, after she told me that story, how radical that thought was. That's not 1940's, 50's, or 60's South, that's 1910, '15, '20 South. If we thought the lines were drawn in the 40's, 50's, and 60's, or if we think the lines are drawn now, what were they in 1915, '20, and '25?

For her to have to realize as a young girl, before that influence, the negative influence of racism can come into play, you just want to play with kids. That's what she wanted to do. I can remember Mr. J.D. McConnell, a black gentleman, before he passed away. He talked about that he remembered ... He passed away after my grandfather. I was a mailman in town, so I talked to a lot of different people. Mr. J.D. was one of them. He was one of the people that lived on the mountain when my grandmother was a girl. He was one of the ones she couldn't play with. We've come a long way, we got a long way to go. I hope I'm answering your questions.

James Newberry: That was great. Can you tell me what you did after graduation from high school?

Evan King: I went to Shorter College for a short time. For about a year and a half, then thought that I knew more than Shorter did, so I thought that I wanted to make a living. I worked with my father some, and then I went to Truett McConnell in Cleveland for a little bit, and I went to Dalton Junior for a little bit, and decided I knew more than all of those places. I was very wrong about that, by the way, but I went to work with my father. He was, like I said, a contractor and we were in business together. Got married in '78 to my wife, who you met earlier. Started doing my life.

My father got ill, about, I don't know, eight or 10 years after that. He passed away, and then the opportunity came for me to go work for the Post Office. That's what, I took a job with the Postal Service here in town. I was fortunate to do that. Most folks to get a job at the Post Office, they might have to go to Marietta, Smyrna, Canton, a place like that. I was fortunate enough to get one in the town that I lived in. Been with them, I'm working on my 32nd year.

James Newberry: With your father's lumber business, who were your customers?

Evan King: We did what you call custom sawing. Farmers, we would custom saw with them. Most of what I did, cut crossties for Southern Wood, who sells crossties to the railroad. That was a big part of what we did. That was pretty hard work. We didn't have the modern equipment that a lot of folks had. I did it the way that my grandfather did. I remember he said one day before he died, he said, "If we had had a forklift, we could have done a lot

more than what we did." As far as the actual mill itself, I just had what was called an old peckerwood sawmill. We did a lot of hard work.

James Newberry: Where was the sawmill located?

Evan King: It was right here where they're building the new highway, four lane highway on the north end of Adairsville, so you cross 140 where North Main Street crosses 140 and becomes Old Dixie Highway. It was sitting there on the left. Before I put it there, I had it on my wife's family farm, out on Iron Mountain Road. We sawed there for a long time.

James Newberry: Let's talk about this transition to working for the Post Office. You said that became available. Can you go into more detail?

Evan King: Of course, you have to take a test to work for the Post Office. My father passed away and so those shared responsibilities became my responsibilities. As much as I thought that I knew more than Shorter and Truett McConnell and Dalton College, I realized there's a whole lot that I didn't know, and my thoughts were, I might need to be looking for just a regular job. I had a friend ... Let me back up. I can't remember how I became aware of the testing process, but somehow I came aware. I went to Roland to take a test for the Post Office. Then at the time, I didn't know that there would be a job in Adairsville. I had a friend that worked at Adairsville, and they gave me a call and said my name had come up on a register.

Again, it's a little bit of a fluke or a coincidence, or some people would say it's more than that, but my name on the register had expired, but there was some sort of technicality, so they came up and they renewed those names for another two years. My name was actually on a register for four years instead of the two years. After two years, it lapsed and you have to go through the whole process again. Anyway, I got a call that there was going to be a slot opening in Adairsville and was I interested. Of course I was interested, because I had taken the test.

I was still working for myself, then. Still self-employed. I went and talked with the Postmaster at that time, Mr. Roger Finley, and he hired me. At that time, we were called part-time flexibles. It was not a full-time job, like a 40 hour a week job. You might just work Saturdays, or you might just work in the mornings or things of that nature. It worked out for me, because at the time, my wife and I were thinking about building a house. When I wasn't working at the Post Office, I was working on my house. I'd let my other interest, I'd sold my other interest, sold equipment, things of that nature, and decided, this will either work or it won't, but I'm going down this road, mainly because just wanted or get our house built.

That was in ... I went to work for the Post Office in May of '85, and my father passed away, actually, then we started working on the house, building my house. In August of '86, if I remember correctly, Mr. Finley had gotten a city route approved for Adairsville. Before that time, everybody had to come to the Post Office which was located near the Methodist church here in town to pick up their mail. There were four rural routes for the outlying areas. The Post Office covers a portion of three counties, Bartow, Boyd, and Floyd County. There was no city delivery within the city here.

Mr. Finley had applied and gotten approved for a city route. He talked to me and asked if I would be interested in that, and of course I was, because that meant more hours which meant more pay. He started the city route, like say in August of '86, and it was still a part-time job, because not everybody transitioned to get their mail on the street at that time. A lot of people still had their mail in the PO box. As time went on, more and more people got their mail on the street. It became a full-time job. Then somewhere along about, let me think, 2008, I developed a little heart situation and had to have an aortic valve replaced. Had surgery on April Fool's Day, April the 1st of 2008, and when I came back to go to work in June or July of '08 after rehab and recuperation, the heat was very difficult for somebody with a heart condition.

A supervisor job came open in Adairsville, again, locally, and I was encouraged to apply for it, and I did, and I got the job, through some gracious decisions by my boss. Then not long, about a year or so after that, I got the job, but then district management abolished the job. They had abolished that job, and I had some choices of where to go. One of the choices, there was a Postmaster job open in a little town west of Roland, Coosa, little Post Office west of Roland in Coosa. I took that job and then another opening came in Armuchee, and I was able to lateral transfer to that location which is where I'm at now. Like I say, I'm working on my 32nd year.

James Newberry: How did the city route change the city? Was there an impact?

Evan King: It was very convenient. When you think about older individuals having to get up and in order to get, what we think is routine, going to get your mail, instead of having to get into a vehicle or walk or whatever their mode of transportation of going to Post Office now was in front of their house. Convenience factor I think was very big. As far as if there was a dynamic change, I really can't say that that took place. Convenience, I think, would be the biggest thing that you would see as far as the community's concerned.

James Newberry: What had been the impetus for it, why did the Postmaster decide to create a city route?

Evan King: Of course it looks good in his job reviews. The more routes you have, the bigger level of your office in the Postal Service. That was, I'm sure, a part of that decision. I don't know exactly how to put this. As Mr. Finley's personality was perceived in the community, he had a ... He inherited a situation that he had to take care of, community-wise, from the Postal Service standpoint. A lot of times, that's difficult. His perception by those within the community in many ways was not positive. I always had a very positive view of him, because I was able to see what he was trying to implement.

One of the things he tried to implement was a city route. I'm saying that to say, even though he might not have had a very positive perception by the community, what he was trying to do was to help the community to create that convenience. That's my perception of it. As far as anything else, I really can't speak to, because I'm just trying to think ... There's what I would call the positive perception, when you've got, like for instance, when the tornado hit in '13, or when you have a snow storm, and things come to a standstill. Whether you're in the city of Adairsville or you're in the city of Atlanta or if you're in wherever you're at, you can even say 9/11 in New York City, the disaster that that was for our whole country.

One of the first things that you see that brings you back to normal is seeing the mailman go up and down the road. In that vein of thinking, you've got a good PR thing going on when you've got the postal truck going up and down the road. That's a visual that no matter what your thoughts are towards your government, there's a government representative stopping in front of your house every day, and the Postal Service is the only one that does that. You can talk about the military, as great as they are, you can talk about the FBI or you can talk about Department of Agriculture. You can talk about a lot of different entities that are under the umbrella of the federal government, but the US Postal Service is the only one that stops in front of your house every day. That's a sense of normalcy when you have tornadoes, snow storms where everything comes to a standstill. Any type of natural disaster. When that Post Office truck is stopping in front of your house, things are getting back to normal.

James Newberry: Can you talk about, in the lead up to talking about you running for mayor, I wanted to just get some quick thoughts on major changes in Adairsville economically, socially, 1980's, 1990's, 2000's.

Evan King: Prior to my becoming mayor, Mr. Doyle Penson was mayor. I'm sure that you've had some interviews where his name's come up. Probably, during

Doyle's tenure, was the most dramatic change as far as growth in the community that I remember. I want to back up even before Doyle. There was a gentleman that actually lived in this house who was [Pretcher 00:16:43] Williams, DF Williams, who was the mayor at that time, who was very progressive in his business pursuits and when he became mayor in his growth for the community. Then following [Pretcher 00:16:57] Williams, Mr. Towe, Alan Towe, current city councilman, his father was the mayor. He continued that process, and in fact was city councilman when Mr. Williams was mayor.

They created and put into place various entities to help growth. When I say that, things like the Development Authority, where you could create tools to get financing and grants and things from the state, and/or the federal government in order to build things like when Mr. Towe was the mayor, they created ... We had an investor that had come in with the Georgia North Park, out near the industrial park, and the Development Authority, through a lot of his leadership, I'm sure, got a grant in building an industrial spec building. Those type of tools were instrumental in having a lot of growth that we saw during those years and then through Mr. Penson's years.

In either Mr. Towe or Mr. Penson's years, 140 was four lane between 41 and 75, which opened up all that commercial area, and the industrial area, because that industrial park's on the north side. I like to say that Mr. Penson saw the growth that Mr. Towe helped create. It was more chains, like the McDonald's, the Hardee's, the Taco Bell, Burger King, all those fast food outlets that you see is a result of a lot of that timeframe. With all that comes infrastructure as far as water, sewage, and gas is concerned, and they had the foresight to see a lot of that and put things in place to make that kind of stuff happen.

Those are the things that I saw, observed for those timeframes. We're still seeing the results of [inaudible 00:19:24]. There's the YANMAR manufacturing facility, it came into play. A lot of folks don't realize, if I remember correctly, and don't ... You're recording this, so I guess you will be quoting me in a manner of speaking, I think there's eight Japanese firms in Bartow County, five of those are located in Adairsville. That puts an international flavor on a small Southern community that you wouldn't have thought of in the 60's.

We have several convenience stores who have Indians who are their managers or owners, small Southern community. We had a Godfrey Hirst who currently in the spec building that we mentioned, that I mentioned a little earlier, an Australian firm. Small southern community. There's a good international flavor within Adairsville that we don't recognize a lot. One of the things that I think that we miss in our community is a lot of

these firms that I just mentioned, their middle and upper level management don't necessarily live in the community. I think we miss that because we're not able to draw on that from a non-profit community way. We need that brainpower.

In that sense, it's a brain drain, because you get a lot of your non-profit faith-based community-based initiatives from that segment of the demographic. I'm not saying ... We appreciate their being in our community, I would see us have more of those living within our community, so that we can create non-profit boards that have those be a very integral part of bettering our community.

James Newberry: When did you run for mayor and what motivated your run?

Evan King: I ran in '07 and was sworn in in January of '08, before I had the heart surgery in April of '08. Motivation to run, that probably's going to be a wide ranging question depending on who you talk to, and you're asking me. My motivation to run really stemmed from making sure that the growth that's coming our way, that continues to come our way, is growth that we can handle from a financial standpoint, and that we can manage just from a general growth standpoint.

Atlanta has grown leaps and bounds. I remember reading one time in Time Magazine, it says, by the time you read this sentence, another acre will have been cleared for some sort of development within metro Atlanta. That struck me a lot. Of course, that's way before the fall-off of '08 when everything died, economically, around, falling off a cliff nationally. I'm saying all that to go back to say, managing that growth. There's lots of places that we can look to in Atlanta and see that growth was mismanaged. It's not like we don't see that template out there, that they overgrew their capacity as far as sewage or water to supply.

That was an issue in my mind. At that time, we were going through a drought, similar to what we're going through now. The issues of water resources at that time during the drought, you may or may not remember, there was much more than there is now. The governor had issued water restrictions and painted a broad brush, because Lake Lanier was down and Atlanta was suffering. There were odd and even days, and then I think it went to no days for watering the lawn, or lots of different things. That didn't impact us as much, and actually hurt us probably some, because our water is not surface-based as far as our water supply. We're spring based.

Those were issues about how do you manage that? Where does judgment come in? Some folks thought I have some judgment. I've questioned their judgment in thinking that, but they talked to me about running, whenever Mr. Penson decided that he wouldn't run. Mr. Penson had come to that, he

decided he wasn't going to run that particular year. I threw my hat in the ring and I had great respect for Mr. Penson and again what he had done and how he represented our community. I would not have ever run against Mr. Penson at all. When that time came, I threw my hat in the ring and made my wife anxious, for lack of a better way to put that.

James Newberry: How did you campaign?

Evan King: Door to door. I knocked on every door within the city limits at least once. I got that from my grandfather. I talked earlier about he had ran for county commissioner, and he had stayed involved in politics all my life, up until he died. I can remember him, when different ones from the county or the state would come to his house and sit in his living room and talk, he would always say, "Nothing beats meeting somebody face to face and shaking their hand and asking for their consideration." I can say that's what I did. I shouldn't say that I never did ask for a vote, all I asked for was consideration. I can remember my grandfather saying, "Would you consider me?"

That's all it is. It comes back to that consideration and do you think he has the judgment to do the job? We're in a presidential election. It's been as bad as any that I ever remembered. It comes down to, who has the judgment to do the job? That's what it comes down to. Everything else is everything else. They can talk about whatever they want to talk about. It comes down to who do you think has the judgment to do the job?

James Newberry: I assume it helped that you had served as city carrier for the Post Office.

Evan King: I'm sure that had a lot to do with it. Everybody knew me. In a sense, everybody knew me anyway. Like I say, I grew up here. My life is pretty much an open book. That's different now. It's been eight years, eight, nine years since I ran, and that's a little different now because a lot of those people now are dead. I could fill up two legal pages of people that have faith in me that aren't with us anymore, those people that I talked about that influenced my life. They're not here, and so the fact that I was sitting here certainly had a lot to do with it, I'm sure. I was in front of their houses every day.

There was some issues about that during the election process, that ... Very hesitant to go into, because of personalities and so forth. At the end of the day, it's still just a job, you know? It still comes down to judgment. It still comes down to ... It's kind of like a mutual fund advertisement. Past history is no indicator of future performance. In a sense, it is. They have to do that disclaimer, but my past behavior was an indicator of how I looked for our community. The love of my community, I was interviewed by

somebody at the Daily Tribune. They said, "What do you think about your community?" Something to that effect, that's not verbatim.

I said, "I love my community. Why else would anybody put their self in this position?" You don't have to. It's pretty much a thankless job. I always remembered thinking, "Well, if I made 50% of the people mad, that means hopefully I may 50% of people happy, and I must be doing pretty good." That's kind of a flippant way to put it, but there's a little truth to that, because you can't please everybody. You got to do, again, it comes down to that judgment that you do on the information that you have at that time. I'm an amateur student of history, and we talk about now about how dropping the bomb on Japan, how we think about it now was different than how it was then.

President Truman didn't have the luxury of knowing what we know now. President Truman had the information that he had in front of him right then, and the casualty reports and the projections and those things. He had to make a decision right then. We can rewrite history all we want to after the fact, but all you have is that judgment that you have with the information you have in front of you. If you don't make a judgment, you've made a judgment. If you don't act, you've acted. By that, I mean, no act is inaction. Inaction is status quo. I made a judgment call to run. I hope we did some good things. I hope we did some things that are positive for the community. I didn't do it by myself. I did not do any of that by myself.

James Newberry: I want to address that quickly. How is the city government structured here in Adairsville?

Evan King: City government is with a mayor and four councilman with a city manager, with the city manager being employed by the mayor and council. It's what's classified in the Georgia Municipal Association, it's called a weak mayor, strong council type government. The only vote that I would have had is if the council tied. As far as being able to give influence to anything, I could influence, but I couldn't vote on them unless they tied. I liked to think that I influenced things in a positive way. There's some things that, again, I came in in '08, and Erwin Holcomb came in at the same time that I did new to the council.

A lot of the community was divided, much like our country is today. Don't know that we'll ever get in a united way again in that regard. Anyway, our community was divided. Different people pulled in different directions. It's kind of like the dog chasing the car. What do you do when you catch it? It's kind of like running for election. What do you do when you're elected? One of the things I knew I needed to do was listen. Listening is very important part of communication that we've lost, because what I mean is, I had to learn how things ran within the government. Formally

and informally, and by that I mean, you have formal and informal leaders. You have a mayor and you have a council, are they necessarily the leaders in your community? In a very formal way, yes, but you also have informal leaders out there that are influencing things that are going on and you need to be listening and knowing where they're coming from.

One of the things that I learned during my listening process, just treading water and figuring out how things work was, what are the motivations of some of these informal leaders? Are their motivations for the betterment of our community, or are their motivations for the betterment of themselves, or the entities that they represent? When you can discern that, you can discern what you need to do as a formal leader. The influence that you need to make as a formal leader, to be positive for your community. What I tried to do, and I hope was a little successful, and what I tried to talk with the council to do and tried to talk with the staff at City Hall to do. We need to be listening to those who have the best interest of the community at heart, first and foremost.

That's not to say that you don't listen to others that have their own interest at heart, but you got to decide, "I'm in here, and I'm doing this job not for Joe Blow, or John Doe, or Jane Crew, I'm in here for the betterment of the community." When you can ground your feet in that, those other decisions become much easier to make. There are other difficult decisions that you're going to have to face, because there's pull from lots of different directions.

James Newberry: Did you pursue specific initiatives, objectives, as mayor?

Evan King: In one sense, I was a little fortunate. The community had approached some SPLOST plans, and the SPLOST plans had specific projects in place, when the money got there. Again, through some fiscal responsibility, we worked on the premise, let's don't borrow the money to do these projects and pay a portion of that in interest, let's get the money, then do the project so when it's done, it's paid for. In that regard, yes, I was able to implement some things that had already been approved. That gave me, personally, some breathing room in my listening process.

We had some street and sidewalk projects that had been approved and they came to me and said, "Which one you want to do first?" I said, "How much money we got?" "We've got enough to do all of them." I said, "In order to take the politics, we've got these other things that we could do too." The most visible thing, of course, is street and sidewalks in front of people's houses. I said, "In order to take the politics out of it, let's do all the street projects first." That way you can't say, "He favored them over them," because if they're all done at the same time, [inaudible 00:35:24].

We did that. Some other things that we were able to do ... We had some companies after '08 that was hard to get financing. They had to leave our community. We had some vacant buildings, industrial buildings. Fortunately, as the national economy and the state economy and the local Northwest Georgia economy climbed out of that Great Recession, we were able to fill up every vacant building in the community from an economic standpoint. I count that as a huge achievement. We created some ... I'm pulling this number out of the air, somewhere in the neighborhood of 350 to 400 jobs. Vista Metals came in and purchased the property that had been vacated from a company that had just been there about two or three years. Home Legend came in and purchased a property near Food Lion from a company that had gone out.

Godfrey Hirst came in, the Australian company, and took the building over that a company had left in the spec building. We had some companies that came in out on the interstate, behind Quick Trip, those names don't come to me right now. Just different ones and, like I said, somewhere in the neighborhood of 350 to 400 jobs over about a three to five year period. For a community like Adairsville, that's pretty big. Then, we got the Shaw plant announcement. That came in August of '13 after the tornado hit us in January of '13. That was big. I talked about the Post Office truck being in front of people's houses after a disaster. We had been through that disastrous tornado. That was a shot in the arm, in my opinion, for our community. That's a- It's projected to be somewhere in the neighborhood, in that one facility, five to six hundred jobs. So that's big. When you go back and you talk about going through school and you talk about some of your early questions about people who want to go to college. What all of us want our children to do and what we all want to do is to be able to live and work and play in a community that's healthy, that has activities, that is beautiful. Has amenities that families can enjoy. These type of economic projects help create those possibilities. I said all that to say when we've got kids that are coming out of school now they're not necessarily going to have to go to Atlanta, Greenville, South Carolina, Birmingham, Alabama, to get a job. They're going to be able to do that here. As I said after the announcement that y'all was coming, what people need to be doing now is preparing for those jobs. The jobs at Shaw now aren't the jobs that Shaw had in 1960 and 1970. They're much more modern so you've got to have training for those jobs, so that's what you need to be getting.

You know if that's what your plan is. The job market, I hear a lot of people talk about unemployment today. Well they're not riding down the same streets I'm riding. Because what I see is help wanted, hiring, those type of signs are out there. Now is it job that an individual might want? Well none of us start at the top. When I started at the post office some 30 years ago, I started as a PTF. I'm a postmaster now, but I didn't start out as a postmaster. I had to learn what needed to be done at the job that I was at.

While that might not be the job that you want when you see that hiring or help wanted sign in front of a specific business, you can do that job until you get the skills needed to do a better job. But the easiest way to get a job is to have a job. I've heard that all my life. I know I'm rambling with your question.

James Newberry: How did you go out of office?

Evan King: My son had a medical condition. Pretty serious medical condition, and at the time that it was diagnosed we did not know the amount of time and energy we would have to put into that situation. In one sense it was a shock on a personal level. My thought was this is my son. I've only got one. Whatever I can do to make this situation better I've got to do that. I say it now in a laughing manner, I know it wasn't. We had just hired a new city manager and I missed the opportunity of getting to work with her because I think she did a great job. She's got a difficult job. But I hopefully used some positive influence in her being here. She had been hired a month or two and was transitioning from an interim city manager to her job when I announced my resignation. It's selfish of me I know, but I chose my son. I did not feel that I could devote my thought process on what I thought was going to be needed to make his situation better and divide that thought process with the energy that it took to be mayor.

Again I know that's selfish but given the situation I would have done it again. I mean it's family. It also illustrates the point of why there are nepotism laws. Because the natural inclination is to help your family.

James Newberry: Can you tell me about your interest in historic preservation in Adairsville?

Evan King: Well I owned one of the buildings on the square through an uncle who I inherited it from. He gave it to me. My grandfather bought the building in 78, the year that my wife and I got married. When I was a kid it was a hardware store. My granddad bought it in 78 and when he passed away of course it went to my grandmother. When my grandmother passed away she left it to my Uncle Raymond. Raymond rehabbed the building in 99 and 2000, top to bottom, in and out. Sprinkler system, the whole nine yards. But I actually have an interest in historical preservation that goes beyond that. That's my interest in historic downtown [inaudible 00:05:59]. From a financial perspective as well as a aesthetic perspective. As you've heard me mention, I've got documents from where my grandfather bought a house in 1932 when he borrowed the money from whatever the program was for World War I veterans. I live in a house that was built in 38. We bought this house 16 years ago this past Monday on Halloween Day, the year 2000. We do a little something to it all the time. We've got a project going in the living room right now.

I like to say, or I had made the comments to my close friends, I was born in the wrong century. I'd liked to have been born in the 1800s instead of the 1900s because I like old things. I'm not real good on modern technology. I wouldn't know how to set up the camera you just set up, and probably the scary part is I don't want to know. I like old trucks, I like old people. I like knowing when somebody tells me - The most important thing that I think that we have lost as a society is when somebody tells me that they're going to do something that they do it and they don't waver in that. Or if they can't do it they let me know ahead of time so that I can make arrangements. What my grandmother and my grandfather on my father's side instilled in me is if you're going to say you're going to do something, do it. If I'm going to be at work at 8:00 in the morning, I'm going to be there. If I'm going to meet you at 2:30, come hell or high water I'm going to be here.

Or I'm going to let you know why I can't be here, one or the other. But this, and I'm not one to dis anybody in that regard, but I don't know the word. I guess the word might be integrity. You lose a sense of integrity when you don't keep your word. I don't want us to lose that. That's important. That's important stuff. Go back to my resignation as mayor. To me it was the decision from a community standpoint, of can I give what I need to give to my community and what I need to give to my son? I couldn't do that. I didn't think I could do that. So go back to my comments about, in my listening phase of being mayor, about motivations. Is it better for the community or is it better for the individual? I made a choice. To me it was better for the community to know that I couldn't be there on certain situations because I might have to be with my son on certain situations. Now people can disagree with that, that's fine. But for me, for my integrity, I couldn't commit to both. That's the reason I say, in a funny sort of way, that is integrity.

Does that make sense? I'm not trying to, I don't know what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to make whoever listens to this understand, integrity is an important part of what we do in life. If we lose integrity we don't have much left. You know the old saying, 'my word is my bond'? Well we've lost a lot of that. We've got to try to get that back some way or another. Again I'm rambling, I'm rambling.

James Newberry: Did you get a lot of blow back?

Evan King: I got a lot of questions. I'm not going to say blow back. I had no one come to my face. I had a lot of people that questioned me. Surprisingly to me, of course it was not a pleasant time, I got a lot of notes. A lot of handwritten notes thanking me for my efforts for the community. I'm sure some of that was probably sympathetic because of our situation personally, but I like to think some of it was because of what I did for the community. Newspaper

reporters wanted to know more than I was wanting to let on, because my son was at the time 21 years old. While I'm not under the restrictions of HIPAA laws, it was a medical situation for him and it was a situation that if somebody wanted to say something it should be him to say it and not necessarily me. My reason for resigning was I wanted to be able to help him. That doesn't mean I had to tell people what his situation was. I had newspaper reports call me and say well why did you do that? I would just say I resigned. Of course they wanted more, as newspaper folks do.

So I'm sure that folks outside of my circle of friends or outside of people who have knowledge of me, might have big questions about that. At the time then, and my thinking now is, when you're dealing with your family and your family is what you decide is the most important thing to deal with - Which I hope everybody thinks that. You can't let that influence that decision. That goes back to that integrity issue. I had to be able to say no. Whatever hit me, in whichever way it hit me, let it slide off of me. That's what I did.

James Newberry: Well I want you to talk some of the residents of Adairsville you previously mentioned. Who is Lloyd Mauldin?

Evan King: Lloyd Mauldin ran a grocery store at the corner when you go out King Street. On the left it's a vacant lot now. He had a little grocery store, meat market. Lots of folks talked about the last good steak that they had Lloyd bought and cut because he had a meat market in the back. When I was a kid, a friend of mine and I would, they would print flyers about this size, about 8 and 1/2 by 11. Again, Tristate was the shirt maker and Cummin, Chenille was the other employer, Chenille mill out there. People came and parked their cars in their parking lot. Well Mark and I would go leave the weekly specials behind their windshield wipers. Mr. Mauldin was a quiet man. After I went to work for the post office he told me this story. I was out one morning loading up to go on my route and he came up and we were talking. He said you know, I was a substitute mail carrier one time. I said I didn't know that Mr. Mauldin. He said yeah, I was a substitute mail carrier for Regan Barton. And said Regan's route went up Old Dixie Highway and it stopped at Burt Chambly's house.

Said Mr. Burt Chambly had a subscription to the Carnesville paper. Said of course being a substitute mail carrier I wasn't as familiar with the route and the time it took to put the mail up to pull it down in order to get it on route. So I was a little bit later than Regan was as far as delivering the mail. Said one time, Mr. Burt Chambly met me at the box as I was delivering the mail and said you know Mauldin, Regan Barton always has this paper here at such and such a time. Said well Mr. Chambly, I'm sorry I run a little bit later than he does. Mr. Chambly looked at me and said you know I can have your job over this don't you? He said I just looked at him

and said well, Mr. Chambly, he said, you wouldn't have very much then. Mr. Mauldin's son, Ballard, is in Carnesville. They only had one child, he and Pauline, but he was a great man, she was a great lady. Their son went to Georgia Tech and head of chemical products. He might be retired now, I haven't seen Ballard in a year or so, he might be retired now. But they were the salt of the earth kind of people.

They just ran a small business, saved their money, worked hard and just salt of the earth kind of people.

James Newberry: Who was Hill Johnson?

Evan King: Hill Johnson, he was on the economic development board planning commission. His wife, excuse me, his wife Martha was on the planning and zoning commission here in town. She worked for Georgia Power. He worked for [inaudible 00:15:50] in Rome. They lived over here on Summer Street next to Kenny and Linda Bass. He was on the board of directors at the bank for many, many years. He was a deacon at the Adairsville Baptist Church. Hill Johnson was a very quiet man, a short man, about my height, maybe a little shorter than I am. And tall in stature, that type of individual. He was treasurer at the church for many, many years. He was one of those type of people when you were in a deacon's meeting with him or a civic meeting with him, he was also in the Lion's Club for many years. He didn't say much. He didn't speak much but he was the type of individual that when he spoke you leaned a little closer to hear what he had to say because what he had to say was important. What he had to say was relevant to the situation and he had good judgment.

He had integrity and those are things that I learned from Hill Johnson. That it's not always what you say, a lot of times it's what you listen to and how you process what other people are trying to say to you in order to have a response that's positive. A lot of that I learned from Hill Johnson.

James Newberry: What about Willis Boyd?

Evan King: Willis Boyd, called him Chief. I'm sure that during some interviews y'all have run across his name more than a time or two. Willis Boyd, I mentioned earlier my grandmother's father was Mr. Boyd's foreman. The Boyd that he was foreman for Willis Boyd's daddy. Mr. Boyd was a WWI veteran. Mr. Boyd started the Boy Scout troupe in Adairsville, between I would guess 1915 to 1920 because he had seen the scouts and the positive things that they had when he was overseas. Mr. Boyd was an officer in WWI. I don't know specifically, I've got some papers in that could I know let me know what that is. He wrote letters to my grandparents when he was in Dublin at the Veterans Home down there that I've still got originals of. Some of which y'all have scanned. He had a house in town, The Boyd

House which is at the corner of Summer Street and Main Street. It's right on the south side of town. The stories that I've always heard about it and stories that he's relayed was his father built that house because when he would come to town, in those days we didn't have a car. You didn't just run down the mountain that type of thing.

You had to hitch up a wagon, that kind of stuff. So when he come to town he might come to town and stay two or three days to conduct business or whatever he was conducting. Then he had a house up on his farm. The house up on the farm is called High Lonesome. I don't ever remember a name for the house in town, but what I'm trying to get to is you could sit on the porch, the porch on the house in town and see the house at High Lonesome up on the mountain. And you could sit on the porch on the house at High Lonesome and see the house in town. I always thought that was a neat story, neat thing to have. There's another story related to that, related to my grandmother. I don't recall Chief Boyd's daddy's name, but when my grandmother was a girl she of course lived on the Boyd place. Mr. Boyd had gone out to Texas. Caught a train and gone out to Texas to buy a white faced Hereford bull, because he was wanting to improve his herd I'm sure. So when he got back to Adairsville, my grandmother and her father met Mr. Boyd to take the bull back up the mountain to the farm.

My grandmother said as they were putting the bull in the barn, said Mr. Boyd looked at me and said Bertha if the first calf off of this bull is a bull calf I'm going to give it to you because you met me. Must have had a soft place in his heart for her. He said but it's a heifer calf I'm going to keep it. It just so happens the first calf off that bull was a bull calf and he gave it to my grandmother. My grandmother kept it I guess as a pet, in a funny sort of way, until after she and my grandfather got married. This is one of the stories she told me when she was sick, when I told you the earlier story about playing with the children up on the mountain. This is another one of those stories. She said after we got married we still had that bull. At the time I was working at the mills in Shannon, would have to drive back and forth to the mills in Shannon to work. Cotton mills. Said I came home one day and Clifford had butchered that calf and sold the meat.

She said I was so mad at him I didn't speak to him for two weeks. That's kind of an interesting family story. I'm trying to think of another story. Oh, this is a very cool story. She said while they were on that farm, they had peach orchards up there. At the time Adairsville was the peach shipping capital of the world was the PR thing that they had. I'm sure they shipped a lot of peaches. She said she and her older sister, Aunt Beulla was picking peaches in the peach orchard. Said they heard something, then they saw something in the sky. Said they ran to the house to their mother because they didn't know what it was and that was the first plane that she had ever seen. I sat with her when she saw Neil Armstrong walk on the moon, and

I've always said that it would be hard pressed for any generation to see that much progress in a lifetime. To see a plane coming across, and being afraid because of not knowing it was, and then seeing somebody walk on the moon. It's going to be hard pressed.

James Newberry: Is High Lonesome still there?

Evan King: High Lonesome's still there, Jimmy Boyd lives there, it's a grandson, still lives there.

James Newberry: So when I was preparing to come interview you you had mentioned that I could ask anybody in town or on the street where do you live and they would know. With that in mind, what does living in Adairsville today mean to you?

Evan King: Well when you get to be older, a lot of it's memories. A lot of it. You think about people that have influenced your life. That have encouraged you. You think about structures, the downtown area and historic homes. About the people who lived in those homes, and you have to think about change. By that I mean the only thing we know in life for sure is it's going to change. Where that's a family medical situation, whether that's a death in the family, whether that's a piece of property being developed, where that's a different style of automobile, or now we talk about automobiles that drive themselves. You know all we know is it's going to change. We talk about my grandmother who saw a plane coming across that she ran from to a man walking on the moon. That's change. So when I think about living in Adairsville, and I think about where I came from and what I have lived through to this point, because I have a lot of living I plan to do by the way. The word change is never far from that thought. We're going to see more change in this community in the next five years I say, then we've probably seen in the previous 30 years.

I say that because of a highway that's being formed. That's going to bring tremendous change. That's going to bring tremendous opportunities for developers, for people to get jobs, for lots of different things for those who currently live in the community. The challenge is in that change, do we let those outside influences change us or do we take a step forward and mold the change so that it enhances us as a community. As a community you drill it down to individuals. I think about, our school system is much better than what it was when I grew up. They've got more resources. We've got a new middle school, we've got a new high school, we've got a new elementary school about to be built. These things will be institutions within our community that's going to last the next 30 to 40 years from an educational standpoint. But what is education? Education is people coming through that process. People coming through that institution, through those buildings, through those classrooms. And at the end of the

day, there's going to be a point where they're complete with that. So what are they going to do next? I know I'm rambling, but there's an organization to my rambling in my mind if in nobody else's mind.

One of the things I see living in Adairsville now, is a lot of kids, a lot of students make the choice not to complete school. High school. I said earlier, young and dumb. That could be from a selfish standpoint, could be from a family situation, could be from lots of different situations. Then they're 16, 17, 18 years old and they say well I don't want to finish this. Or they complete school and say I don't want to do anything else, I just want to get a job. Goes back to my earlier comment about those in my class, did they attend school to enhance their other vocational aspirations after we got out of school and that type of question. I'm saying all that to say this. One of the things I would like to see as a community is, and a local GED program is helping in that regard for those folks that at 16, 17, 18 said I don't want any more school, and then they realize they can't get any job unless they've got at least a GED. Important program. Then you've got again folks that have graduated and said well this is it. Then they realize there's no advancement unless I can improve my skills.

In order to improve my skills I've got to go to Kennesaw, which is 35 miles away or I've got to go to Floyd and Carnesville which is 20 miles away or Georgia Northwestern which is in Calhoun. One of the things I'd like to see is some sort of satellite classroom with the technical/college university system schools within our community. Because not everybody has the resources to provide for that transportation and it's disingenuous to expect that they do when a lot of them are walking on the sidewalks because they don't have the financial resources to make those trips. That's a thing that I'd like to see. I think it would be a big improvement for our community. We'll see where that goes. There's conversations I'm sure besides my individual conversation to that regard because I've put that out there at community meetings and things of that nature. But change in being able to adapt yourself and hopefully mold your community so that the outside influences don't bring change that's not a positive change, is one of the things I think about living in Adairsville currently. I think about a lot of times we as a community, and lots of communities, not just Adairsville, lots of communities.

They react instead of planning when they should be planning instead of reacting because if you do the plan you don't have to react to be able to move forward. That's another thing I think about living currently in Adairsville. I think we've got a good core of people, a good city government staff that's interested in making positive change and making sure that the community values, the transparency that they've been having with community meetings over the last couple years is a very good thing. They're getting that feedback as opposed to supposing what the feedback

is. They're actually getting direct feedback so that's a good thing, very good thing.

James Newberry: Can you recount for me the story involving Carl Hollaran that we spoke about before I turned the camera on?

Evan King: The story, I can't remember the story.

James Newberry: Football parking? In your driveway?

Evan King: Oh, oh, oh. With my son?

James Newberry: Correct.

Evan King: Yes. Carl and I had been over to do some work on his mother's grave, had passed away prior to that. We came back home. We left before the ballgame had started, before there was a lot of traffic on the street out there. When we came back home I asked my wife where all these cars, because the driveway was full. The east side driveway it was double. I mean he had them parked double on that side. On the west side he had a single lane because I could pull my truck into the garage. So Carl and I walked in because my wife had fixed supper for us and Carl was going to eat with us that night. I asked my wife, I said Angie, where are all these cars from? She said I don't know, but Avery got three dollars out of every one of them.

James Newberry: This is because the football field, at that time the game was still being played?

Evan King: The ball game was still being played there.

James Newberry: And it's located across the street from your home.

Evan King: From my house, yes. Chambly Field is the name of the field, after Ken Chambly. At the time they had rebuilt the school. Again, I talked about the class of '75 and '76. I was from the old, old, auditorium and my wife graduated in the new auditorium. But when they built the new school they built that football field and they named it Chambly Field for Ken Chambly because at the time he was chairman of the school board for the county. That's the reason they named it Chambly Field.

James Newberry: So to finish up can you tell me about your family today, your wife and your children?

Evan King: I have a wife, Angie King, Angie Hawken King. We've been married since November 25th of '78. We'll soon be celebrating an anniversary,

somewhat 38 years I think that will be. One son, James Avery King was born in 1993. The Atlanta Braves beat the Montreal Expos that night 14 to 2, John Smoltz was pitching. He's 23, goes to University of North Georgia at Dahlonega. He'll be graduating May of 17 with his degree in Computer Science and he plans to get his Master's Degree. He's doing very well.

James Newberry: Wonderful, well Mr. King if you have nothing else you'd like to add ...

Evan King: If you don't mind let me look at my notebook because I did jot down a few notes.

James Newberry: Sure, please.

Evan King: One of the things that we did not get into a lot was when the tornado hit. At that time I was working and that was at the post office in Kingston. I had been assigned as an OIC down there. Our city manager at the time was Pat Crook. We knew bad weather was coming in, you know we saw the weather reports. I got a call in the morning, mid-morning that the storm had hit Adairsville. Of course I had responsibility at the post office where I was at and Kingston is about 10 or 12 miles south of here on Hall Station Road, and I had people out on the road, carriers out on the road, rural carriers. One of those routes joins an Adairsville route. So I was concerned about her on the route, knowing that the storms were coming through and then Pat like I say called about mid-morning. I called that carrier and told the carrier that I was responsible for be careful, there are storms out, one has hit Adairsville. Well a few minutes later Pat called me back and then she was able to have gotten out to see what was going on.

She said it's bad. I said well Pat I'll be up there as soon as I can get there. So I made some arrangements where I was at and started coming up the road. And I could tell where the scout hut was down here on Hall Station Road, that that was the beginning of the storm. I didn't know exactly what direction it was. I came up Hall Station Road and made a right in front of the city shop and went out West George, hit George and then hit East George and then went to the post office. It was pouring down rain, I mean it was pouring buckets of rain. Of course that's the post office that I had worked at for many, many years and I left my vehicle there and some of the folks in the office was saying traffic was tied up, chaos, chaos, chaos. Traffic was tied up out on the highway because at that time the storm had already gone through. News outlets were saying that a tornado hit Adairsville. Some of the folks in the office had had some feedback about where some of the damage was. You could look out the front of the post office and see how the traffic was tied up.

So I called the local radio stations. When I say local, Calhoun was the most local station. At that time there was a local guy that worked at the

radio station in Rome. I called both of them and told them what we needed was for people to stay home. For our roads to be where emergency vehicles and utility crews could get to where the damage was. It's essential. I did that, and then I started walking toward 40. From where the post office is out to where the Daiki plant is. I've got an uncle who's got a farm on the right there, the brick house before Clarenceville Road. As I started walking I got to about where the Bank of Ozarks is. You could see power lines everywhere, power posts down. And as I got to Daiki, the end of that building was gone, and I didn't know how many lives were lost. Fortunately, no lives were lost in that building. There were some injuries, but no lives were lost, and some people had gone. The storm had hit, and some people had got in the Northside Bank Building. Some people had got in safe room in the [inaudible 00:00:23].

At the truck stop, that was on the south side of 140, there were tractor trailers flipped over on their side, just lots of damage, live wires flickering, power lines flickering, that kind of stuff. Over the course of the next several days, it was a cleanup time, restoration time. They set up a command post out on 41 because then when I cut through there and saw that people were okay and things were good, I walked back, got in my car, couldn't go anywhere, so I left my car at the post office, starting walking south on 41.

I saw where the damage hit. Adairsville Supermarket was rubble. The old Gulf station was rubble. Across the street, there was rubble, an old motel, and that's where they had set up a command post. Steve had just become county commissioner, and he was actually that morning, he was with the road superintendent, the county road superintendent. The road superintendent was just showing him different things, and they made their way to Adairsville, and they made their way to the command post.

He was so ... Both of them was so helpful. They said, "Whatever you need, Evan whatever you need." We had a sturdy cleanup crews. The county sent cleanup crews, and they had National Guard people come in to help clean up, a major, major cleanup crew. At the vacant lot at the end of this street, we had a guy set up a chipper, and all the tree debris we brought there, and they run that chipper. We had a mountain of chips, a mountain of chips there just from the debris.

Everybody was help. We had people come in that following Saturday. I mean it was just descended upon us. People were just coming to help, individuals coming to help. Had an army. My concern was we're going to have chainsaw running everywhere. We're going to have people doing stuff. We're going to have kids running everywhere. Somebody's going to get their arm hacked off. I think we had a splinter.

Cartersville Medical Center sent up a team. I think Floyd sent a team just in case those type things happened. Very well coordinated. We had a group come in called ... I can't think of the name of the group. It left me. They were ex-Army, ex-military. Shoot. They set up, and they put us in coordinates, sector segments and dispatched these volunteers to these various locations. They had their people there to coordinate those efforts. Very, very helpful.

Various food vendors, Krystal. Different ones would come in, and they would set up portable food things for the volunteers and didn't charge them anything. Just an amazing thing to be a part of, more amazing to observe. We had person that was killed probably as a result of a tree falling on a mobile home. Other than that, cuts and bruises. Pretty powerful F3 tornado, so we're pretty fortunate in that regard, but the faith-based community responded in a spectacular way.

In fact, we became a model for the Georgia Emergency Management Association to use when disasters hit as far as [inaudible 00:04:52] the faith-based community with the government resources. Huge. We had a water tank that had gotten hit near Iron Mountain Road, a 2 million gallon water tank. The people who constructed that water tank, they'd been in the water tank business some 60 years. Built them all over the south, all over the Caribbean.

They've had them exposed to hurricanes, lots of different things. They said that's the first one they've ever had damaged in that regard. We had to build a new 2 million gallon water tank, and so we had gas crews to come in because we're a natural gas provider. We had to crews come in to help in that regard, just making sure that people's houses didn't explode because we had gas lines that were disrupted.

Had lots and lots of help, but that goes back to the fact that when other communities need help, you've got to reach out to those because it's a two-way street. That, in my tenure, in my lifetime, that was probably the most dynamic thing to hit our community as far as, well, as far as anything. We, after the fact, after we got the cleanup done, after we got people's damaged houses, we implemented some things because we got people ... I mean, we started having people from Kentucky, from Florida.

These contractors come in. They were wanting to rip people off, so we had to implement some things to make sure that, as much as we could, to make sure that didn't happen. Then after we got the cleanup done, we had lots of, again, faith-based volunteers to come in, and a lot of people's living situations actually improved because of that incident because where they might have had substandard housing, these faith-based people cleaned up

a lot and built new housing. They had a house that they could ... A good house to live in, and they didn't have a payment for it.

In some sense, some things can improve. It's, to go back to the word change, and change has to do with how we interpret it and how positively. We could have dug our hands in the sand and said, "This tornado's going to set us back." People didn't do that. They're gritty. They're resilient, and they just went to work and rebuilding a good [inaudible 00:07:54] opportunity.

Again, I go back, and I said, Adairsville's Supermarket was in rubble. There's a brand new convenience store there now, an asset to any community from that standpoint. That guy didn't have to make that reinvestment in that community. The [inaudible 00:08:09], the one I talked about earlier, the whole east end of that build. A third of the east end of that building was blown away. They didn't have to reinvest back in this community.

They saw something, I believe, that sometimes we don't see in ourselves because these are outside entities that invested in our community, and that what they saw was but this is a good place to be. These are good people to work with, and when I think about living in Adairsville now, I reinforce that thought. This is a good place to be, and these are good people to live with, and that's all you can ask for.

James Newberry: Thank you very much, Mr. King.

Evan King: Thank you.