

Alice Cookie Barron Oral History

Narrated by David Duffield

November 22, 2014 at Alice Barron's home

Transcribed by Amy Baltin

Abstract: Alice Cookie Barron talks about her life, and her work with the Jefferson County School district, and her efforts to bring girls sports to Colorado high schools.

Alice Cookie Barron. [David] [DD]; [Alice] [AB]

[00:03] [DD] My name is David Duffield. Today is November 22, 2014. I am sitting with Alice Cookie Barron at her home in Colorado. Alice, thank you for doing this interview as part of the Colorado LGBT History Project. Would you go ahead and state and spell your name for the record?

[AB] Yes, my name is Alice Cookie Barron. A-L-I-C-E, nickname C-O-O-K-I-E, Barron B-A-R-R-O-N

[DD] Alright, Alice lets go ahead and talk about your early childhood. Now that parable about how you got the name cookie is really interesting. Do you want to share that with us?

[AB] Yeah, well I was born in Austin, Texas; I just saw the receipt last night it cost \$20 in the hospital and \$2 for the ambulance to take me home. My dad would always sing a song that was popular called, "looky looky here comes cookie walking down the street 'aint she sweet". Word, has it that I would laugh, so I was forever known as cookie. Recently in the last 10 years someone looked that up and got that recording for me.

[DD] Ok, let's move on to your early childhood. You said you were born in Austin, Texas, but you didn't spend much time there. You moved to mount George or Georgetown, Texas, and that would have been about 1935? Tell us about you grew up in Georgetown.

[AB] The first I remember, we lived in five different houses, the first one was on one of my grandfather's farms, and it was by Southwestern University and we had goats and chickens and we could run and play and it was a fun fond memory of my two brothers, my sister and I. We did not have electricity, indoor plumbing or running water. So, we had a well outside, we would have to go get the water. My parents rented a horse for a month so we could learn to ride. I had a goat called snowball that only would come to me. Snowball disappeared, after he began to butt anybody that got close to me because he was like a watch goat, or a watchdog and he would only come to me. I missed him, but anyway after that we moved to another farm. I remember that one, it was down by the San Gabriel river park, and so we swam a lot, we did a lot of picnics we were very outdoors people. In fact, mother would even pack our lunch sometimes and tell us to go out and play and come in when she called us. We played in the barn, we built tunnels in hay, which was very dangerous as I look at it now. We would jump out of the barn, we would have corn cobb fights, we played a lot, we would get up on the windmill and sit there and look out. So, these were active farms, my father didn't farm but my grandfather and his sons did. So, we picked cotton, we picked corn, had our own garden. We're very county people and loved it, and we still didn't have the indoor facilities, I didn't know we were poor. We were really pretty happy at that time, enjoying life. I remember my brothers rolling me inside a tire. So, it was a very active childhood, I always loved being outside, everything seemed to come easy for me. The first time my dad was trying to teach me to swim, my mother tells me I kept saying let go, let go and I just started swimming, because I knew

how to kick and I knew how to swing my arms. Not a pretty sight but I could swim, so everything came easy riding a bicycle and I had two brothers who were very athletic who always tried to run away from me and I could run pretty fast so they had a hard time running away from me. Finally, I remember my one brother saying oh forget it, we can't lose her just let her come along, so I usually came along. My sister was not an athlete, never cared about that and still doesn't.

[DD] So where did you go to primary and secondary school?

[05:05] [AB] Georgetown Elementary School then Georgetown Junior High School and then Georgetown High School.

[DD] What were those high school years like for you?

[AB] Well, they were great. I was a good athlete, that's all I really cared about, and I played all the sports. I played four sports in high school for four years and I had to play tennis and softball simultaneously so my coaches had to work out the schedule that way, but in a small town you can do that, and unfortunately, I wasn't too interested in the academic side of high school, but I passed. I made my grades, but I wished I had applied myself more. I did later on, but not that time, it was just athletics that I loved.

[DD] Ok, now you had told me in our conversation before the interview about dating. You dated, what was it like to date in those periods in those times?

[AB] Well, I did what I was probably supposed to do as a young girl and a young woman. I remember my first date, it was with Wilber Lawbak, who just lived down the street he was one of my teammates I remember I threw the softball to him one time so hard it broke his thumb and I felt so bad. He wasn't a very good athlete. We went to the show together and he paid my way, and on the way home we were walking home I was in the- I think the sixth grade or fifth grade, and he bent over and kissed me on the cheek and then ran. But that didn't do anything for me, so we were friends for a while and then I started really dating a young man as a sophomore in high school... So, my dating and my first serious dating was with Frank Luxa, his parents were professors at southwestern university, he was a good athlete and one grade ahead of me, very successful man. Later in life he worked for the Dallas Star Tribune- I think it was, anyway, he wrote a book on Roger Staubach and traveled with the Dallas Cowboys for years as their reporter. So, he was a good guy, I thought I loved the guy but really as I look back I didn't. I saw him later in life and we talked, he's deceased now.

[DD] Now, you had told me that in that time period you had actually lost games to men, because you thought that was what you were supposed to do. Can you tell me what was it like to be a young woman living in the 1940's and early 1950's?

[AB] Yeah, there was one story that is a sad story to me and it still is, but I loved athletics so much and I was as good as the boys were for a long time, there came a period of time when you weren't but my brothers would always choose me first on the softball team because I was that good, because I was the only girl around, but I used to always go out in junior high and play with the boys, play during our lunch hour. Well, my brothers told my mother that I was embarrassing them because I was the only girl that did that, my mother, they didn't tell me, my mother said cookie your embarrassing your brothers and you shouldn't go out there and do that again. Well that just mortified me, and I never did it again, but it bothered me that I embarrassed them. I didn't want to embarrass them because I loved them, and they

were good athletes. So, that was my first experience that you can't be better than the boys, or play with the boys. I know that Frank was one that when I was dating him, we would play horse and basketball and when I beat him once everybody was teasing him so much that I just didn't do it anymore, and I played tennis with guys. One of my partners that went to the navy academy on a tennis scholarship, he and I did compete against each other as hard as we could and it didn't bother him. He made me a better player of course.

[DD] Growing up in Texas in the 1940's in this period of time, the 1930's to 1955, were you aware of what being gay was? Did you know anyone around you?

[AB] Yes, of course, queer as they called them, queers and there were these older girls who would talk about queers and I was a little mortified at who these people were, and I didn't know how they were supposed to act or exactly what I was supposed to think. I didn't know anyone that was gay, and of course I probably did but I didn't know it. Oh, and there were rumors about certain people, men in our town to be honest with you, but it was not appealing to me at that time. Although, as I look back I always had more fun with the girls and I was more comfortable with the girls and I didn't feel like I had to be a certain way, I could be who I was, say what I wanted, and do what I wanted. I didn't have to act like a lady, let me put it that way, as ladies were supposed to act in the 50's.

[11:03] [DD] So there was a gender pressure, it was like you had to be a certain way.

[AB] Yeah, absolutely

[DD] Culturally speaking where there any instances in this period of time that your aware of, dealing with like violence or discrimination against gay people?

[AB] I don't remember any of that, but no, but of course there was discrimination the way people talked about them, the manner in which they talked about them was never positive, it was always derogatory.

[DD] Did you know of any family members who might have been gay?

[AB] I do know. On the Barron side, but not on the Gustensen side to be honest with you, but maybe. At that time, I've since learned there were quite a few Barron's, these three sons from this one family were all gay. One of them- two of the three got married and two of the three got divorces eventually and they all ended up living together.

[DD] So in 1954 you went to- or I'm sorry 1953 you went on to college?

[AB] Yes, I graduated in '53 and then I went to Cisco junior college at that time I had no idea that I would ever go to college because my parents were not financially able to do that. Although they were wonderful people, they were monetarily challenged to say the least. Naturally I said that we didn't have electricity, running water, indoor toilets at first but of course later we did when we moved into town and moved into three different places. I wanted to go to college I knew I wanted to teach and coach, but basketball got me there. Some people from Cisco junior college came and said that I could have a full scholarship, except for meals and I took that. I knew about Wayland Baptist College and the Flying Queens and that they flew to all their games because... The way I knew about Wayland- in those days they didn't go out and recruit this was AAU because that was all there was.

[DD] What does AAU stand for?

[AB] Amateur Athletic Union, they are still working with young kids today, but the NCAA has taken over women's sports. At that time when there were women's sports it was AAU, and these two ministers came to First Baptist Church in Georgetown, Texas at a revival in the summertime, and someone said we have a good athlete here that should be playing basketball for Wayland Flying Queens and they took me over to those two young preachers and they introduced me. They told me all about this team, I wanted to go there so bad, but my parents didn't have the money for a bus ride to go try out. So that was about four hundred miles or more. So I went to Cisco, but we went to the national tournament and Wayland saw me play, and so then they asked me to come up again the next year and my mother and father got me the money to take a bus up to Plainview. I tried out and here's how I met Kay Garms, so Wayland had one scholarship to give the next year, there were about 45 young women from throughout the united states basketball players trying out for that one scholarship. Kay Garms was one of them, I was one of them, and the other 43. I could see that she was a little bit better than me and I had a boyfriend back at Cisco, so I went back early, but the coach said don't give up on us, don't do anything until you hear from me. I ended up getting the scholarship, Kay got a scholarship and another woman got a scholarship, because they took a scholarship away from someone and I found out years later that the sponsor, Claude Hutcherson, gave me that scholarship, that year to get me there. The first person I remember competing against for a scholarship was Kay Garms.

[15:32] [DD] So you were competing with Kay, to get the scholarship.

[AB] We three of us got scholarships out of those 45, and they came from everywhere, up east, all different states.

[DD] If we can talk about Kay for a moment, what was it like when you first met each other?

[AB] I remember what she was wearing, she remembers what I was wearing.

[DD] We should note that Kay is your wife.

[AB] She's my wife.

[DD] And you've been together for 58 years.

[AB] 58 years, yes. That's when I met her, in 1954. That would have been the spring of 1954, and then we began college in '54 '55 together. I noticed her right away, she was fun, she was tall, she was a good athlete, she was beautiful. We just enjoyed each other. So, when I came to college that fall my mother and dad took me up there, and we unloaded the car and they went back to the motel. I got the car to go back and unload some things and I saw Kay walking across the campus and I stopped and hollered at her. I said do you want to go get a hamburger, and she got in the car and we went and got a hamburger. She was the first person I saw that I knew at Wayland when I went back. Then I met my roommate, Mary Ann Brown, later. She moved in with me, Kay was in the same dorm. From that day on we were friends.

[DD] So what was college like between 1954 and 1957 at WBU?

[AB] Wayland's a very small little college and we were the women basketball players who flew to all of our games, who stayed in the best hotels, and ate in the best restaurants and our men's team, that we were very close to, they rode in what looked like a limousine. We called the long john, they did not fly, it was kind of like reverse discrimination. But there didn't seem to be any jealousy between the teams, we

used to play together, and practice together a lot after hours because we didn't have any money to do anything other than socialize in that manner. So, college was fun, I enjoyed college, I worked pretty hard. Once again, I applied myself academically, my first year, my last year because I wanted to make good grades and then just played a lot of basketball, socialized a lot, joined a lot of clubs. I was involved in Athletes for Christ, I was involved in leadership roles in college. We were active, Kay wasn't quite as active in the clubs, but always a member. We dated, had our boyfriends.

[DD] You dated other men?

[AB] Dated other men, we never had any idea that we would be partners and married later in life, at that point.

[DD] And so, how does your personal relationship develop over this period? You're friends at first.

[AB] Just friends, well every day you practice basketball, so you spend two or three hours together with all these women. You develop very close relationships with all your teammates. If you don't, there's something wrong with your team because at that time, athletes are a little different today, they kind of spread out they always have something in their ear they have their computers, they have their laptops, they have their iPhones and their always busy with other things in their life. We weren't, we were busy with each other basically. So, people I think really developed a close relationship. Every one of those women I played with, that are still alive, I know where they are, that their married. Many of them are married, they have children, grandchildren. We've kept in touch over the years, not much, but kind of kept in touch at the appropriate times.

[DD] Now, what happens after college, you graduated in 1957...

[20:00] [AB] ...I just thought of something else that was kind of interesting. You know we were at a college of preachers, we called them preachers teachers in basketball players, and we were not a preacher, but we knew the preachers, we knew that we were going to be teachers and we were basketball players. Some of those preachers and religious people, we took bible- we had to take old testament, new testament; we opened classes with a prayer, closed classes with a prayer, we went to you can call it vespers three times a week. We had seats assigned to us and we had to be there in chapel three times a week. We went to Sunday school, we went to church, we went to training. We were into the Baptist religious side of that.

[DD] It was an identity.

[AB] It was and I was a Baptist, I was raised a Baptist. Kay was not, she was Seven Day Adventist but she joined the Baptist church eventually. Some of those preachers when they would have pep rallies for us they would go to the chapel and pray for us, because they thought that the university was spending too much time on basketball and emphasizing women's sports and they weren't always on our- well, they were praying for us. So, I guess they were on our team. The school was very supportive the cheerleaders, the band, everybody was basically except small groups of people who thought it was over emphasis. We were pampered pretty much, there's no doubt about that.

[DD] If I can get an aside real quick, were you aware at this time of any gay or LGBT people in the community in Plainview or was there anything about-

[AB] No, not at all... That's kind of strange because I know they were there.

[DD] They just weren't out.

[AB] No, not that I was aware. Our community basically was the university.

[DD] And so, after college where did you end up going?

[AB] Well, when I graduated our coach would send out letters to people though out the state of Texas saying we have these two women graduating, they would make good coaches and teachers. We began to have people call us. We never had to solicit a job, and I was offered a job at my hometown university, down in Ganado, Texas, down in a couple of oil places that really have a lot of money, but I went down to Clear Creek- Clear Creek schools were wealthy because of humble oil and that's where NASA first started and that's where they built NASA after I went down there.

[DD] And Clear Creek is near Huston?

[AB] Clear Creek is between Huston and Texas City, or Huston and Galveston, on the bay. That's where the school district is. It's still a very nice school district down there. They paid the highest, they promised the most, you can get the high school job next year, that women is going to get married and you can bring some one down here with you if your lonesome. Is there anyone graduating you want to bring down here? They wanted me as a coach, they weren't too interested in that teaching part, that's Texas for you though. I went and I never regretted that, but after the first year the women, Rita, got married and so immediately I said, I have the replacement Kay Garms, so, she graduated and came down. That's how we got started teaching together in a very good school district. They never told us we couldn't buy anything for our kids, we had good teams, ninth grade teams and eighth and seventh grade teams. We still hear from some of those kids occasionally.

[DD] That's wonderful... And so, you were with Clear Creek from 1957 to about 1967? In League City, Texas?

[AB] Yeah, that's where we taught, but we lived in Bay Cliff but there little bitty towns around, it was a district its Clear Lake City is where NASA is, Webster League City was where the administration building was. We taught in Webster, lived in Bay Cliff, right on the bay and had our own boat and fished and skied and had a good time.

[DD] During this period of time your growing and your being active, and your fishing, and your skiing- skiing did you say or swimming?

[AB] Water skiing.

[25:00] [DD] Water skiing... How are you feeling over this time, is there a change?

[AB] Well, yes, as with Kay and I had decided that finally after a couple years of teaching together, that we were going to quite dating men and just be with each other. Quite playing such big games, because that's what we were doing to hid our identity, from the school district, from our family, from- even though we had met some wonderful men, two former Marines that we dated.

[DD] Can you tell us a little bit more about that briefly?

[AB] Yes, well I cannot remember how in the world we met them, but I coached volleyball and so I was getting someone to come put on a clinic and I guess I called the right people and they sent this guy out

whose part of the U.S.A. volleyball team and he gave these clinics. Anyway, found out he was gay and his partner was gay so I began to date his partner who had previously married a debutant in Huston. A good-looking man, a Marine, and he was ideal partner for me to date, and then Kay dated Wes who was ideal for her, the athlete and so everyone thought of course we were going to marry those guys.

[DD] Were you out to each other?

[AB] They would go with us up to our- we had a cabin up in the big thicket area of Texas on the Trinity River and they would go with us up there on weekends and we just had a ball. They had a good time, and they would go to functions with us from time to time, if we needed escort. Or if we felt we needed an escort.

[DD] And how long did that last?

[AB] Not very long, because we decided that we needed to leave there and these people, our friends up in Colorado and in California, we had friends out in California who had left, gay friends who had said, come to California, gay friends here in Denver who said, come to Denver. So, we decided to come to Denver and fly out to California and try both places. We did, we came up here and we really like Colorado, we went up around the mountains, and then we flew out to California. We flew in there and saw the smog and the sea of people and houses and we decided, we're going to try Colorado and if we don't like that move to California.

[DD] In this period from about 1959 to 1965 your- is there a coming out experience?

[AB] Only with other gay people, because we had not met any other gay people. We never came out to any straight people, other than Rita our former teammate who was married. Very few other, there might have been one or two, but we did not come out to anyone.

[DD] How did your former teammate take it, Rita?

[AB] Oh, she was fine with that.

[DD] She didn't care at all?

[AB] No.

[DD] ... What was it like to live in late 1950's early 1960's Texas for a gay person, for a lesbian?

[AB] We had fun and we had a wonderful life going and we had a good job and we were doing what we wanted to do, it was no problem for us. I think the problems would occur when you came out and then you would feel discriminated against. We weren't discriminated against because people never knew we were gay, so they always thought we were straight, so we were treated very nicely and professionally and everything, which is too bad because at that point we knew a lot of gay people but everybody in the field of education that we dealt with that teachers and coaches and people and some of the administrators were all very closeted. So, we had that circle of friends that we had a good time with.

[DD] How did you get to know each other?

[AB] Its strange I guess, word of mouth. This friend we like real well, do mind if we invite this one here? We always kind of asked permission, we never told other people you were gay without your permission,

other friends or other people, and people would frequently ask us, well is she gay? I'd say well you would have to ask her. We just didn't do that it was just an unspoken thing.

[DD] So in terms of socialization, were there clubs that people would go to? Was it private parties in houses?

[AB] Private parties mainly in house. Occasionally- I can't remember ever going to a club in Huston, until after- a gay club.

[30:00] [DD] Or a gay bar?

[AB] No, never did that. But we had a lot of parties and we danced and we drank. We learned to drink after we got out of college, but we didn't in college. We began to drink and smoke, which was really stupid, we did quite smoking really quick. I always kind of felt guilty at not being a good example for the kids, I really did. You know, the funny thing is we exercised and quite smoking not for the health reasons, because at that time they didn't stress it that much, but just to be a good example.

[DD] I understand. So, were you aware of any discrimination in Huston around this period for gay people who did come out?

[AB] Well, you would read about it in the paper, but personally I didn't know anyone.

[DD] Ok, and so you would say you had a good life, and a healthy experience?

[AB] Kay and I had been so blessed with a good life and a good professional career and an athletic career and families. Kay's family life is quite different from mine and she never heard her mom and dad argue; while I don't know that I ever heard my mom and dad not argue, it was pretty volatile in the arguing in my family but not in Kay's

[DD] And so, you were self-identifying yourself as a lesbian around this period. What prompted the change, the move to Colorado? You had friends that said come up here.

[AB] Yeah, basically because we were just- in my opinion digging ourselves a deeper hole in pretending who we were and my family had moved in down there, my sister, her husband, and four children and my brother- another brother moved in close by and his wife and two children, and mother was expecting us to be up there, to see my mother and dad so much. I just felt the pressures of family so much that I thought that if we're in Colorado or California we don't have to come home as much, and we can be who we were. But it was hard because it deprived Kay and I both of watching our nieces and nephews grow up, although we're pretty close to all of them. We know them all and we stayed in touch with the nieces, nephews, great, great-greats and all of that. Kay has a huge family and mines pretty big, but you lose touch with them, and I hate that, but we've tried pretty hard to stay in touch.

[DD] Was it a tough decision?

[AB] Not really... Not for me.

[DD] It was easier to come here?

[AB] It was easy, we didn't realize it was going to be the best move of our life. We thought, well now if we could just move up there, I think the maximum salary we could make down there at that time was 10 thousand dollars. I think once we moved up here and we went to school, we had our masters, they gave

you raises based on your education. Kay and I both had our bachelor's degree, our master's degree from university of Oklahoma, then we began to take classes to get on the highest close to a doctorate degree. We got on the highest level of the pay scale we could, immediately. That was one of the smartest things we ever did. We did that before we got involved in all these other things, when we had time to do those things, and so, that proved to be very good for us monetarily. We were always motivated and besides by now academically motivating myself was a priority I wanted to do that.

[DD] So, let's move on to Colorado. You came here in 1965 and you settled down, you started working for Jefferson county public schools. What if you can describe in a word, what was the LGBT community like here at that time.

[AB] We didn't know anything about it other than our three friends, who worked for Mobil Oil, that we still know today. Two of them live in the Dallas area, one of them is still here now, in assisted living, 91 years old. Talk about lifelong friends, Kay and I have many lifelong friends, who live in different states, who seem to keep in touch with people. So, we didn't know the LGB community, we were so busy with our own careers and we did begin to meet friends and teachers through in-service meeting, through associations, coach's associations, or officials. The circle began to grow here in Colorado, and we did not realize what a great move this was going to be. I wanted to teach in high school, Kay and I were both in junior high seven and eight years down there. I always wanted to do another thing, Kay never seemed to, she's just happy where she is, she could have stayed down there or come up here it didn't really matter that much to her. I went to Arvada West high school, she went to Wheat Ridge junior high school stayed there one year, went to craton junior high stayed there the rest of her career, and I tried to get her to coach in high school, wanted her to, but she stayed right there and coached and taught and began to referee. She could referee during the winter and coach junior high girls' basketball in the fall because we had twenty-four junior highs and she could be a coach with her team, she was very good and then still referee. So, it worked for her, and so she went one direction into officiating and I went another direction after two years, I went into administration.

[36:28] [DD] And you went into administration about 1967 with Jeff Co.

[AB] Yeah, it was '67 now the thing was I didn't intend to go into administration, I was asked by the athletic director, Mel Schuatz, to apply. This woman was going on a one year sabbatical and he came over to Arvada West and asked me to apply. I said well I can't do that, I don't have administrative degree. He said oh sure you can, I said well I'll think about it, but I didn't do it. So, the day before the applications were due to close, he came over and he says, just put your name in, you can always take it out. Put your name in, so I did, and I had to gather around a team of people at the administration building and be interviews by them for this one year job. One question they asked me is now they knew my background in athletics, now you're not going to come in here and start girl's athletics, are you? Well I knew what they wanted me to say. I said, well I think girls should have opportunity to compete in athletics because if the values and everything that we learned is good in sports is good for the boys it has to be good for the girls. Well if you did start athletics what sports would you start. I knew what they wanted me to say, certainly not basketball because they wanted the girly sports like- pardon me for using that word, but that's kind of what we say, like gymnastics, dance, tennis, those kind of sports, individual sports. So, I named those and that was all, then I was offered the job and they said ok, later I got the letter that said, I'm offered the job, and they changed the salary from what it was, they had lowered it. So, I turned it down, and I got a phone call from the assistant superintendent saying why did

you turn it down? I said well you changed the salary. He said let me get back to you, so he called back and said ok, we're going to give you the original salary.

[DD] Do you remember how much?

[AB] No.

[DD] Was it a significant amount? Was it like 25% or 50%?

[AB] No it wasn't that significant, I just didn't like it because they changed it, they went back on their word... It's kind of ironic that I would even challenge that because most women wouldn't.

[DD] at the same time? Now do you think they brought you in expecting you to do that?

[AB] I think they expected me to start girl's athletics. I think that's why they brought me in, because I wasn't there for athletics I was there for physical education, elementary through high school, recourse specialist. Then my first year there I presented the first high school girls athletic budget, before the board of education. My boss knew I was doing it, naturally and he kind of prepped me a little bit, helped me there. I was so nervous that my legs were shaking as I stood at the podium I had to get a wider stance to keep my legs from shaking so bad in my little high heels. The way you always dressed in those days were to the nine's as good as you could. It was approved and that's how I started athletics. The women never came back, by the way, and I never went back to high school. Over the years, every two or three years I got a different title, always in physical education, then in athletics then it became only athletics because the program grew so fast and so big.

[40:28] [DD] Now in terms of growth, how many girls or how many people started to get involved with it, how many schools? What were the dynamics like?

[AB] Jefferson County and I – I could just remember I know we had the largest district in Colorado it wasn't Denver, because of the white flight out to the suburbs because of busing in Denver. Denver is now the largest today, but for many Jefferson County schools was largest. So, we had nine high schools, grew to twelve, to sixteen, kept growing. We had twenty-four junior high schools and I don't know how many elementary. We had close to seventy-five thousand kids in the district. Now they might have eighty-five thousand.

[DD] Did it expand right away? Was it every school at once?

[AB] Yeah, all the high schools. No, the schools didn't have a choice, they had to do it and it was my job to organize it with the athletic directors in the school. So, I worked directly with the athletic directors then I began to do in-services for coaches for officials, we had to start at ground zero, with sports. That's why I spent so much time in that job.

[DD] What were some of the early challenges?

[AB] Getting men to support you and not fight you.

[DD] Can you give us a good example?

[AB] Yeah, a couple, maybe... Well, the first one- did I tell you about the Colorado Athletic Directors Association?

[DD] Not yet.

[AB] Well, one of the challenges was that my boss said that he wanted me to join in the Colorado Athletic Directors Association, CADA, and I had researched that and that organization was only for men. You had to be in charge of football and some other things. I told him that and then he kind of looked at me, he came back a month later and he said you can join now, we changed the bylaws, in the constitution. So, I joined as the first women to ever join, and the guys, the men who were the administrators in charge of programs were easier to work with than the coaches in the building who were afraid that once girls started athletics, they wouldn't get as much money, their budgets would be cut, they wouldn't have the facilities that they needed to run their programs adequately. In a sense, I could see why they felt that way, because ignorance is bliss sometimes, you don't know what's going to happen. They didn't know that their budgets were going to get bigger, actually, and that facilities were going to increase. Particularly some of the outdoor facilities, because I ended up doing a big study, a title nine study and we added things to schools, we added outdoor storage, we added things that helped the men and the women...

One challenge that I think is the funniest- that I'll always remember that- I won't give the name of this guy, but he was a well-known coach at Wheat Ridge High School and we had this meeting between the boys' and girls' basketball coaches at Wheat Ridge and this one coach said, well, I'll tell you what- I was fighting for equal pay for coaches, equal pay for officials and equal facility usage, the girls were coming in at 6am or staying late at night, but the boys always got all the facilities first and then if there was any time the girls got it. So I wanted equal use of facilities and we worked that out through a task force- but anyway, this guy says, I'll tell you one thing, no girls are going to use my gym and if they do I may just quit. My boss, God bless him, said... you said two things wrong, number one it's not your facilities, and number two you're probably going to have to quit. He did quit, later. But one guy that felt the same way told me later, he said, Alice you know when we first started this I thought it was going to kill my program. He said, I have learned that the boys and girls really motivated one another. It kind of changed the comradery in our schools somewhat between the boys and the girls and I learned that I could do in two hours what I used to do in three. It made me organize my practices better. The kind of research shows after so many hours it's a dead time anyway, they kids don't need to be there. I appreciated that statement from him, so much. It only took him about a year and a half to discover that. Some of the faculty members said in various schools that once they started girls sports it was wonderful to see the comradery of the kids and how that changed.

[45:55] [DD] What does that mean?

[AB] Maybe they felt that the girls were more on an equal basis and that the boys learned that, look at that young woman, she's a good athlete. They kind of respected and admired each other. We worked very hard to get the coaches, the men's and the women's coaches and the athletic directors make sure they had good support for each other, and not competition.

[DD] So, a collaborative vs competitive environment.

[AB] That's so important, I came from that in Texas, I came from that in college. I didn't know that people would actually fight this. The guys did fight this, they would vote against proposal after proposal at the state, and I would have to work very hard to talk to them personally to get some of the guys to vote for things.

[DD] How did you do that?

[AB] You just try to convince them that it's not going to hurt their program, their programs are not going to go broke. That if they can do it in other states and its acceptable and working, why isn't it going to work here? But they said well football makes so much more money than anything else, well they really don't and they really didn't. when you really look at the budgets they spent more money, they did not support the other sports. The boards of education had to put more money in the athletic program, if they felt that sports are good for young people and that you can set up life time habits of exercising, fitness that's good, the brain and the body go together. Then that's investing in kids and in education... I joined the organizations, these guys got to know me, know who I was and they began to see how it worked; some of them never could come around because their boards wouldn't allow them to do it because they didn't want to put the money into it. Denver was one of the last to come around, on all of them, but I liked the guys, I tried to work with them and I did work with them. Cherry Creek came around fast, Boulder did, Colorado Springs, little communities came around pretty fast.

[DD] Your professional association, you're a woman and in many cases, there's a string of firsts for you. Your first on this committee, first on that committee, and it's a person to person relationship if I understand it correctly that helps change and foster the dynamic. Now I have to ask the question, they come to know you as a woman, but did they come to know you as a lesbian?

[AB] Of course not, and yes as a woman. The thing is I always dressed nice, in those days I looked a lot better than I do now, so some of the guys would hit on me of course. I'm single, they didn't know I was gay, and of course it was some of the married men, of course. You had to learn how to handle them, and how to answer their questions and I was- time after time it was Alice why aren't you married and I did meet this man who was gay, he and his partner, and he would be my date. So, one thing I did to get to know the men was I went to these events. I didn't divorce myself of them and stay away from them. I would go to social events, I went to national conferences every time and I went to the social events and I buddied around with them as much as they allowed me to buddy around with them. I drank with them I told jokes with them, I never was one of the boys, but they got to know me as a person. One that Colorado Athletic Association I was the first women selected on the board of the CADA, and then I became the first women president. I was a little surprised that they- I didn't solicited these offices, I was always being solicited by men who I think were kind of looking for a woman to fill certain positions on committees, but not the Colorado Athletic Association. The first board meeting I had with them I'll never forget, I was sitting around this board meeting and there were all men, and I said here's Rob Conklin from Denver Public Schools and here's big old' Lyle from Littleton Schools, and here's Al Hower from out district 14... These men, heads of all the districts throughout the state of Colorado... I said I have to tell you I am a little bit nervous but I'm just going to do the best I can and we're going to get a lot done, continue to grow the organization, and let me know if there's anything I can ever do or change in these meetings and we'll just get moving. Then, I just became more comfortable with them and they were real comfortable with me. I got to know every one of those guys well, and vice versa. One guy after a social event gave me a kiss- I said, I don't need that! The next day he said, Alice- I won't tell you where he's from, I got to get out of podoc, I was drinking too much I'm so sorry. He apologized and I said don't worry about it, and he and I ended up going and getting our administrative degree together. We were good buddies, but he never tried to kiss me again, it was a good open mouth kiss too, but other guys did things sometimes but I never just put them down or said they were harassing me.

[52:28] [DD] If I can make a supposition for a moment, if you go back to your early career, the coach Claude Hutchenson, he was a benefactor in a way, is that a good qualification? And then would you say that some of the members of these boards who helped you into these positions or solicited you for these positions their benefactors as well?

[AB] Absolutely...

[DD] So we were talking briefly about Coach Hutchenson and others in your life, these men who may have been benefactors for your career. Why do you think that was?

[AB] I'm not really sure, but I know this, as I get older I look back, I never looked at myself as a leader but as I look back I was always a leader. I was a leader in my high school...so almost everywhere I went I was in leadership positions. I was co-captain of the team, when I graduated, Rita and I graduated someone heard our coach say there goes my leaders and I never forgot that comment. So, my coach was a benefactor, Claude was a benefactor and here Mel Schuatz was and Ray Ball, the commissioner at that time was a benefactor. Although, he was never really a supporter because he was just doing what he kind of had to, but he would never push girls' sports. Whereas, my boss did, Jefferson County did, so a lot of these men I think it was my experience and I guess it's just that when I did something- if I said I was going to do it, I would do it, and I usually did it well, and I worked very hard at it to make it be right. I served on committees and when I wanted to get something done I knew the best way to do that was to get on a committee, and work hard...if it was the right thing to do... So many of these men that I met at the Colorado Athletic Association I picked their minds, they knew I was interested in how they did things, how did you run your basketball- how do you run your officials- how do you do this, how do you do that. They knew, so I talked to them a lot and got their ideas and they loved to share their ideas so I took the best ideas that I thought they gave and I would implement them in the girl's program. My boss began to then take a lot of my ideas to use for the boy's program, as I organized books, an athletes book, a coach's book, he never did that, and then soon what we did was we just had an athletes book for boys and girls together. Then we did the coaches handbook for boys and girls, he thought it was a good idea. I was always into that type of thing; how do I make this better...

[56:00] [DD] What do you think the effect was on maybe the lives of young women, at this time?

[AB] I think it was very good, and now of course the women today they had no idea what the young women back then went through. They had a couple of meets, it was a year or two before we could afford to buy uniforms. We never paid officials, we didn't pay coaches at first. Everything was volunteers and we had a lot of volunteers around. You don't have those kinds of volunteers today, you can't get them, you have to pay them. That's ok, everyone has to make a living, but there are still volunteers.

[DD] And your volunteers, who were these folks?

[AB] Teachers, some of them were teachers that didn't know much about athletics, but they would be basically a sponsor, and then we would do in-service meetings and trainings and bring people in to try and teach them coaching techniques, to teach them officiating. I helped organize the gymnastics association, the basketball official's association, then they combined with the boy's; you didn't need two associations. I really promoted that a lot, the women's many times made the men's programs and associations better and vice versa.

[DD] Were these teachers mostly men, or women, or mixed?

[AB] Mixed.

[DD] Were any of them gay?

[AB] Well, of course.

[DD] Did you know them socially speaking?

[AB] Some of them.

[DD] Was it easy to be- were there a lot of gay teachers?

[AB] I don't know about that for sure. The only ones that I knew were gay were the ones that I began to meet in the circle, this one introduces you to that one. It's not like they looked gay, because then you just dressed like your supposed to, young women your supposed to be, and act the part, but they were there.

[DD] And was the environment- even if they're in the closet was it safe, was there any discrimination?

[AB] Well, other people didn't know their gay, but in those days, all of those people, the coaches would socialize together a lot. They really formed, in the coach's association, they formed friendships and it wasn't based on whether you were gay or straight, and so they got to know one another and they were promoting girls' sports too. So, we were all busy working hard for them and having fun.

[DD] And in the long view is there anything else you think you would like to say about girls' sports and development in Colorado? What changed, what's the legacy?

[AB] I think that I had more influence in that then I thought, at the time. I know that the Jefferson county schools, the board of education and my boss allowed me to pursue anything I wanted to. I was never told no you can't propose softball, you can't propose golf, but I would have to do all the work. I had to do all the leg work, make the proposals, do the rationale, try to drum up politically drum up the votes and get our own athletic league to pass it. If they didn't, I couldn't submit it to the state. Then I became the first women and I was just reading yesterday, the first women on the Colorado activities association board of control. The board of control is the board that votes in on sports and votes them out. I just read yesterday I was the first women appointed on that board. Lloyd Gaskill from Lamare, great guy, he said I never thought, he was the president, I never thought I'd see the day when we would have a woman sitting out there. Then about a few minutes later they voted on the second women, which was Bev Peterson from Denver, and then in that quote that I read yesterday Ray Ball, the commissioner, said well from now on your going to have to try how to find money to run your schools. He never supported the women's program, but he got me on national committees because they would ask him to find a woman in the state and he would put me on there. So, he promoted me in that respect, but his vote was always no against the girls.

[1:00:50] [DD] So they never said no, but they always let you do-

[AB] Jefferson County school district never said no. Of course, CHSA Board of Control, that voted it in, they would say no. I submitted golf maybe five times, before it was finally accepted and the reason it was, I called some of- the board of control is composed of men and women throughout the entire state

of Colorado, so some of them are from little bitty schools some of them are from the big schools and we had certain representation. We had three members from Jeff Co. because we were so big, and there might be one out there in...wherever. So, I began to get to know these guys too, so I called them and I said I want you to vote on golf. The one said, Alice you're the first person to ever call us out here, nobody ever calls us, I'm going to vote on it, but you're going to have to vote on this. I said ok, and another one he says no I can't do that- it was all men, I can't vote on golf because we don't even have golf and they abstained. I said when you abstain that's a no, so what your r doing is keeping us from offering golf and you don't have to offer it, you don't offer it for boys you're not going to, but a yes vote then would get an approval for us because I can't get our guys to do it. We finally won golf by five votes, and they were all the small schools in different places around here.

[DD] Did you notice more women as time went on in these positions?

[AB] oh yeah, there's a lot of them now, good ones. The women that took my place, Chris Bullard, has done a great job she became the president of the Colorado Athletic Directors Association, and she was on the board and she did really well before she retired.

[DD] And so there's a professional legacy there as well, that your leadership helped inspire.

[AB] I hope so, I don't know, but you never know those things.

[DD] So, let's turn from the professional, so you're with Jeff Co until 1990, then you retire in 1990.

[AB] Yes.

[DD] Did you see any changes from say 1967 to 1990 over the long course, you see more women's sports, do you see full equality? Do you see between boys' and girls' sports?

[AB] sometimes it's hard to define full equality, we had the same coaches pay, the same officials pay, seasons were the same, same number of games, we had uniforms, everything like that but when it came to the athletic directors advertising the job, say for physical education and football, or physical education and head wrestling coach you wouldn't see them advertise jobs for a head girls' basketball coach. They would just find anybody they could and many times they would use a man who didn't make it on the boys- he wasn't a good boys basketball coach, but yet they would put that coach usually a man- always a man in as a head girls' basketball coach, who would also be not a very good girls' basketball coach.

[DD] So there's subordination that goes on in terms of the value of the roles.

[AB] Value of the roles and- now sometimes those guys if I really pushed them they would advertise a job, and I had a couple of them do it. That's where the discrimination came in is hiring of quality coaches. Now a days their doing a much better job of doing that, it depends on the athletic director. Now we have many women athletic directors, so it depends on the athletic director and whether you had equality they do in budgets, if they distributed out properly and they used to have to, now there's no one monitoring that. We used to monitor those kind of things, now there's no watch dog, and it wasn't fun being a watch dog. That was a good thing to do that at that time. So, the equity is pretty much there now.

[1:05:19] [DD] So, you achieved equal access, you achieved equal pay for coaches, there may be some subordination with the roles but that has declined over time, and you achieved equal budgetary procurement. So over all would you say that having women in power has been, even if it's a legacy that's not really well understood right now, but putting women in positions of power and putting women in terms of equal access and equal positions has fostered this?

[AB] It helped a great deal. But you know ironically when you first start out on this some of the men were better supporters and colleagues of mine than some of the women. They were back in the dark ages when they didn't want women to keep score, for crying out loud! We would have track meets and gymnastics meets and you could win an individual medal, but you could not keep team scoring. That was a fight, hard to believe but it was true and it was a fight with other women, through an organization called, DGWS Division of Girls and Women's Sports, and they didn't want the programs to be like the men's. I wanted the programs to be athletically like the men's, and there's some bad things in the men's programs, but there are now some bad things in some of the girl's programs too.

[DD] What are- specifically?

[AB] If you have a coach that is just not very good.

[DD] So, coach quality?

[AB] Coach quality, but point being some of the women were not as good as supporters of moving on with the women's programs as the some of the men were.

[DD] So some of the women clung to- not clung to but remained within the roles that they had been assigned by society while they, others broke out of them. So, some found comfort in those roles and others broke out of them. So, those gender roles shifted. Is there anything else you think you want to cover on this subject, on women's sports and athletics?

[AB] No, I just- we had to start a girl's coach's association for our girls' sports and I ask a couple of our coaches to start that, because when I would present something and I would say, this is what the coaches want, they would say how do you know what the coaches want. They don't even have an organization. So, I got these two women and we went over to cafeteria I remember and had our first coaches meeting, months later I turned it over to them, and I was never involved in their- other than to get their ideas and their wishes because if I didn't have their support then they talked to their athletic directors and I talked to the athletic directors, board of control, our Jeff Co one and that's how you get things done. You get everybody on your side.

[DD] You formed your own network of women coaches and then that branched outwards, do you think that those growing networks had a lasting effect on the change and the dynamics for men and women?

[AB] Yeah, it's a big organization now, the Colorado coaches of girls' sports are- many of our women are still involved. First it was pretty much all women coaching, because they barely got any money, and the men wouldn't do it, no once the salaries became equal, now you're having more men apply.

[DD] So it was really women organizing women? And it was women advocating for women, that helped spur the change?

[AB] Yes, at first.

[DD] And then, over time it became self-motivating? That's phenomenal. Alright, so if its ok we're going to turn from the professional life to more of the personal. Let's talk about- so the gay and lesbian identity, you lived in Colorado from 1965 to the present and you're with Jeff Co from 1967 to 1990, over that course of time how would you describe your involvement if any in the community?

[1:10:00][AB] Kay and I at first were both very- love athletics, were athletic and so we begin to do things in the mountains we joined the Colorado mountain club, we learned to snow ski, we snowshoed, we backpacked into huts, we learned winter survival, we began to climb 14 thousand foot peaks, ended up climbing 48 of the 54 14 thousand foot peaks before my knees gave out and in doing these things we met other women. Some of them with the Colorado athletic club others that liked to do outdoor things and began to- that's where our social and recreation actives, that where we spent most of our time. We bought a place at copper mountain, every spare minute that we weren't working we were playing and playing with our friends, and so we got to know more and more gay women. I don't know how that happens, I honestly don't, never got involved in the community other than- all of those sports we bought dirt bikes... three or four dirt bikes. I mean they would climb a tree if we had the nerve to do it and we would go camping and we would put backpacks on those dirt bikes and we would go camp out. We were pretty rugged mountain women you might say.

[DD] So, it's through sports and athletics that your primary engagement with other gay people comes from. What kind of bonds did that form?

[AB] Life long bonds.

[DD] Just as with the women in the Flying Queens?

[AB] Yes, life long bonds.

[DD] Did you notice any changes in the Denver LGBT community over that course in time?

[AB] Yes, they were always growing and we would hear about them, but no one ever solicited us and we never solicited them, and we never went to the gay clubs, but after we retired occasionally we would go to one. When we were out of town at conventions, or conferences, or visiting people we would seek out gay clubs, when we were on summer vacations and go to them and always enjoyed them a lot.

[DD] What did you enjoy so much about them?

[AB] Dancing, and having a good time. We loved to dance.

[DD] But never in Denver?

[AB] Not much, a little bit later. We'd go to Charlies.

[DD] Later on, after retirement? What influenced that choice?

[AB] Yeah, after retirement. We felt more comfortable getting out and knowing that we didn't have to answer to anyone and it was getting to be ok. I didn't care if it did get out, now I was a little more liberal in that respect than Kay. I did come out to my family after my mother and father were deceased, they were all just fine with that, they've always been that way. My nephew who did the family tree quite a few years ago, put Kay in there. I loved it, my sister said what do you think about that, I said I love it.

[DD] Did the professional life have an influence on the way you engaged with the community?

[AB] Probably, so when we started being engaged with The Center at one fund raising event, when we learned about it. See we never took the time to say what are you doing? How are you organized? What is this association doing for women? We'd not only become involved in that association, we became involved in the ATL.

[DD] What is that?

[AB] ATL is All Terrain Lesbians, which I hate that name, but I said, why do you name that all terrain lesbians? Well, this is an organization that has been around for many years, it was organized because this one woman who had cancer, no insurance, wonderful person needed some help and a group of people said we've got to help her. We'll take her to her doctor's appointments, we'll take her meals, that organization has grown tremendously.

[DD] Was that here in Colorado?

[AB] It is here in Colorado.

[DD] When was it started?

[AB] Maybe 25 or 30 years ago.

[1:15:00] [DD] So circa 1980?

[AB] Maybe. It's a good organization and they do things for women in need, its temporary things it's not permanent. They have a board that takes no money, and they have good people on that board, we liked the way that's run, what they do for women, we used to do a lot for the Alexander foundation, but it's been renamed, or doesn't exist anymore, I'm not sure. So, we are kind of involved in, not personally but the ATL and the Center, and our church and our former college team foundation.

[DD] And you've been out at your church, your place of worship?

[AB] Its Mile High Church. Mile High Church of spiritual living is a better way to put it.

[DD] Is it a Baptist church?

[AB] No, it's not what you call a denominational church. It's down here, it's one they say looks like a space ship. It's down here on Garrison and Alameda. They have about five thousand members, it's a wonderful church, they have about eight ministers, they have a GLBT group that we've never been involved in. We're just not really a joiner in those groups, we've been there before and listened to people and we've taken classes there. We've kind of gotten involved in some of those things in retirement.

[DD] Going to the matter of your faith, you said you were raised Baptist, you practiced for some period of time, but it's unclear when did you... Did you have a falling out with your faith?

[AB] Personally I did, here's the thing that I always felt, once I accepted my identity as a lesbian, I said, I can't go to a church who doesn't accept me. I can't belong to that church if they can't accept me, I can't accept them. So, we quit going to church.

[DD] And this was in Texas, or by the time you got up here?

[AB] It was in Texas, we quit going. I accepted our identity, our sexual identity but just said I can't do that anymore, and if God is that kind of God then I can't accept that I just don't believe it, that we're judged that way.

[DD] Was there a moment of crisis or certainty?

[AB] No, just quit going. We came up here and then I kind of missed that and so we would go to this church or that church, we'd go on those crucial days Thanksgiving, Easter, Christmas. Then someone said you've got to go to church with us. We went to Mile High and we've been there almost 20 years probably, maybe fifteen.

[DD] You're happy at this church?

[AB] Very happy, when we go out to California for three months, we'd go to the same church out there.

[DD] Alright, I want to touch briefly on, going back to the community engagement. Now you said you'd never really been involved with the community- did you feel uncomfortable here Denver, but you did elsewhere?

[AB] I just felt like I never had time to get involved... If we weren't involved professionally, we didn't sit around here at home and watch T.V. We were either out doing something, we were doing our own- I was doing my thing, but I would go to schools, I would work all day, and at night I would go to games or starting in the afternoon I would go to school after school. I knew all the coaches, I knew all the athletic directors, I knew the administrators. I was getting around, and Kay was either officiating, coaching, or doing her thing. We would meet here maybe for dinner, and then back out again until bedtime.

[DD] So, your community is the sports community?

[AB] Pretty much.

[DD] And your identity as a lesbian is incidental in some cases with that. You just happen to be a coach who happens to be a lesbian?

[AB] Yeah, but we have other friends now who are in other occupations who we met later in life, but on this GLBT, the Center, after we met at Karen Jessie's house and Jewel Armstrong's house and we learned about the center, and we went down and Debbie took us, Debbie Pollock, took us through the Center we were so impressed and became involved. I got on the community, the women's circle of giving committee so I've been on that committee, and that's the only one I've been on. Kay and another friend and I gave a fund raising function for the Center. That's what we try to do, raise money.

[1:20:22] [DD] For community engagement. Do you believe there's been a significant change over the course of your life in what it means to be gay or lesbian, and if so, what do you think that is?

[AB] I don't know about my life. So many young gay and lesbians, young people commit suicide. So, they went through horrible times, they just don't have a social life, they become reclusive, or they get married because they feel that's what they must do. So, those kinds of things are out there and they happen. They never happened to Kay and I, we never felt like we had to get married, I never wanted to commit suicide, we've always been very happy. Although our relationship lasts as long as we do and we're as strong personalities as each of us are there's going to be a few little problems there, I want my way and she wants her way. So, we've always worked that out and we've always worked that out so

we're together as much as we possibly can, not apart. We would make sure that our involvement didn't take us apart too long. So no, I've never felt that way, it's been a good life.

When I accepted the fact that I was gay did I feel any different, you mean? I felt better, and when Kay and I, when I came out to my family, it's so good that my family knows about us. I like that feeling and when we got married after all those years we were in several commitment ceremonies before, that were very meaningful, but I never realized that marriage would be that meaningful. We both said that we felt so different about our relationship. It was just something we really couldn't explain, I can't really put it in word why we feel different now that we're married, but we love it. It's a good thing, it's a better thing even still. Even though we've always had the commitment, it's just something we like.

[DD] Now it's only been since July, 2014 and where did you get married?

[AB] Albuquerque.

[DD] Can you tell us a little bit about that?

[AB] Yes, we have two friends there that got married in New York, one of them is a retired police woman and the other one is a CEO of a- I don't know if I should talk about this too much, but a very high profile job. I think she's out everywhere so it doesn't really matter, and so she's says, come down to Albuquerque and get married. When we decided to do that, I called and got together and they said what are your plans, so I said we're just going to get our license and go to the justice of the peace because there's no waiting period. She says, you don't want to do that, get married in our house, we know retired police Chaplin who wants to do the ceremony for you, she wants to do that and she's gay. They set up everything and took us down- we have great pictures of it, she took pictures, being in the T.V business, and she put a little clip tighter to send everybody of the ceremony, and they had this great Champaign that cost about \$250 a bottle, and then they took us out to dinner and it was just a beautiful experience. They had been together quite a while, and we had met them, we used to go to a ranch in New Mexico for over thirty years, you couldn't pay for this experience, but it's all women and we would do branding, round up, shipping, pregnancy testing, building fences, corrals, that's where we met them. We met women ranchers, and other people coming in cowgirls for a day, and when we did branding the women who ran the ranch, the two women, wouldn't let men participate, they could come and some of them had husbands, but the husbands couldn't participate in the branding, just the women. Just for fun...

[1:25:30] [DD] And so, you got married in July.

[AB] We got married July 11th in Albuquerque and seem to be doing ok.

[DD] Well, that brings me to my last question, which is reflection. What changes have you seen in- well, this may be restating an old question, but if you have seen any changes over the course of say your life for the meaning of being gay, what do you think those changes are?

[AB] Well, I think the people who come out, if every gay person came out there would be no problems because then I think people frequently say, well I don't know any gay people. Of course, they do, they just don't know who they are. So, I think so many gay and lesbians have come out now that straight people are beginning to know them, and they're saying hey, their no different than us. So many heterosexual people that I've talked to, and I've talked to more and more they say we have gay friends.

Now the young people are the ones who know- the heterosexuals know the gay people. I think that gay people are more respected by a lot of people, particularly the young people and more understood and I can't believe that we can get married. Kay and I have always said in our lifetime we'll never be able to get married. I cannot believe that we were allowed to get married legally and you know that so many of the gay people and straight people still don't understand that we really are legally married. Even though we live in Colorado, they don't understand it. Well now, what happens when you go back to Colorado is the question so that the legal issues that are happening and happening so fast out of all of it I just appreciate the fact that we now have some of the same benefits, but I hope that the young people that are getting married understand that you have the same benefits getting married as you do getting divorced. That can be the difficult situation, they don't understand what their getting themselves into.

[DD] Did you ever fear when you were in such a high-profile position with Jeff Co that if you had come out, or if someone had found out about you that you would lose your job?

[AB] I did a little bit... I wouldn't say an anxiety. I think my very next thing would be well, that's their problem.

[DD] and no one ever tried to use it against you?

[AB] No, but we were interviewed for a big magazine story in a magazine called, Texas Monthly, it was a big article about the team and this reporter-

[DD] Which team?

[AB] The Flying Queens- this reporter tried and tried to get me to say something about me being gay. He really wanted that story, and I didn't give it to him, but the question he posed to me, one of them was, he flew here to visit us and be with us, was well now you worked all that time in Jefferson County didn't you make anyone mad. I said of course, he said and you made some men mad, well didn't they start rumors about you, about being gay? Number one, we had never mentioned I was gay or not gay, and I stopped a second and I said well let me think about that, if they did I never found out about it. If they did the powers that be never worried about it, because they knew who I was and what I did for the district. He said, they never accused you of being gay? I said accused? He says oh excuse me, I didn't mean to use that word, I said no they never accused me of being gay and no one ever asked if I was, and we never talk about it... So, he really pushed me on that and it yet in the article when it came out, there was the innuendo of longtime friend, he had to put it in there that lives with her roommate, but couldn't give him that story.

[1:30:08] [DD] Did you feel anger at that?

[AB] At not giving him that story?

[DD] No, at him using that?

[AB] A little bit, kind of ticked me off a little bit. He was trying to trick me, he thought I was stupid. Well, he would ask me questions in a circle, and that was just one of the last ones that I kind of stopped it right there.

[DD] The question I feel we really haven't answered is you always maintained it feels like, if this is a way I can put it, is there's a fine line between the professional and personal life. Did that affect your choosing to not go or engage more socially in your local community verses when you're in another community?

[AB] Yeah, I'm sure it was... it was never one I was told I had to do, I guess I felt I had to be growing up in the 50's and growing up when I did. A young person today wouldn't feel that way I don't think at all. Matter of fact we do have gay teachers now, and their openly gay and people are coming out more and more in education and there's no problem with that in most school districts and if these teachers and coaches then begin to socialize and interact with their students in that manner; that's a whole different scenario, that's illegal age and all that, and we occasionally have that, but you have that with heterosexuals too, probably more so. At least in the days- I knew things that were going on, but more of it was with the male coaches and the females.

[DD] Do you feel confident and secure in your choices; do you have any regrets?

[AB] No, no I can't say that I wished that I'd come out sooner because I guess that depends- what was so sad and bad was every time we got awards and honors we never could recognize our spouse. They never brought Kay along, paid for her trip like they did the wives or the husbands. The last big award I got, they did that, up there the National Federation Association, they paid for Kay's round trip airfare, and hotel, everything for her to come with me, and she was introduced, but not as my partner, she was just introduced as my guest. That was big, because that was the organization that runs all high school sports.

[DD] So you got the professional recognition, in a way. What year was that?

[AB] Just maybe five years ago, I can't remember I lose track. Maybe 2000 something.

[DD] Ok then, my last question then is, have we missed anything, is there anything else you think you want to talk about? A couple areas we didn't cover were, focusing on your athletic career with the Flying Queens.

[AB] ...The Hall of Fame, the Trailblazer Hall of Fame award that was fun. It's always fun to share athletic- I like team sports because I like to share with teammates. I'm a team sport person I guess you might say. I played individual sports, but my most fond memories are of my playing days, I'll have to say that. That was fun, I still dream about that sometimes. Being an athlete and playing and competing, probably helped me in my job compete, and getting athletics. One time I was told, you can't change that because it's a legislative rule that non-teachers cannot coach. It took about two, two and a half years but we changed the legislative with the help of a women, doctor Sue Shafer and I and some other people working with the legislators to get that changed. I don't like people to tell me, you can't do that, you got to have a better reason than that.

[1:25:03] [DD] So, to contrast with the young women who felt embarrassed, or who was told to feel embarrassed about doing better than the boys, to a woman now who hates it when you tell her she can't do something. You changed over time.

[AB] but you know, my brothers were my best advocates, and they were my best cheering squad and they always were, later in life. They put up the first basket in the yard and brought me my first basketball, they did that. I played golf with them and I could beat them in golf, I could beat them in

table tennis, but they were good athletes. They're both gone now, but they were my best advocates and they didn't tell me about being embarrassed, they told mother and I'm not sure she ever told them that she told me that. I never addressed it with them. My brother did call me a flaming liberal one time when he was here. I said wait a minute, he became a high up manager in Shell Oil and he would hire women, but he would say I don't like people telling me I have to hire women. I said, now way a minute I'm a liberal, but I'm not flaming

[DD] If there's one thing you want other people, say a generation or two or three, from today- if you want them to learn about your experience, maybe in particular young women, what would that be?

[AB] Maybe that I gave back, that I enjoyed all my athletic experiences so much as I was growing up. After that experience was over, I gave back, and helped other young people get involved in athletics that never had the opportunity. I think that would be nice to be remembered for giving back

[DD] Alright Alice, it has been a great pleasure, thank you so much.

[AB] Your welcome, thank you.