

Interview with

BOBBY GRUBBS
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project: Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted at the Brown County Sheriff's Office
Brownwood, Texas
Thursday—September 25, 2008

Interviewed By: Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray
Longview, Texas

Present at Interview: Bobby Grubbs, Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray



Introduction

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BOBBY GRUBBS
TEXAS RANGER, RETIRED

NANCY RAY: We are visiting with Bobby Grubbs of Brownwood, Texas you live in Early, Texas. We are at the sheriff's office here in Brown County and today is Thursday, September 25th. Correct?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes, ma'am.

NANCY RAY: Uh, Eddie Ray is here with Sheriff Grubbs and myself. And the purpose of this interview is to discuss Ranger Grubbs' career as a Texas Ranger. Mr. Grubbs, do I have your permission to record this interview?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am, you do.

NANCY RAY: Mr. Grubbs, do you understand that this video will belong to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am, I do.

NANCY RAY: And, Mr. Grubbs, do I have your permission to present copies of this video to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools, and once transcribed, to place on the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum's website?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes, ma'am, you do.

NANCY RAY: OK, Sheriff Grubbs, what is your full name and where do you currently live?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I'm Bobby Rex Grubbs

NANCY RAY: Rex is your middle name?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am. And I live, I currently live in Early, Texas. I've lived there for there I guess for almost 23 years now.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I came here in I think July of 1987 when my transfer was approved to come down here.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well, where were you born and when?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I was born in Sweetwater, Texas, on June 18th, 1945.

NANCY RAY: All right. Out there with the rattlesnakes. Did you go to school there?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am I did. I went through all, I went through, I graduated from high school, Newman High School, in Sweetwater. And of course left there and went to the military a year later.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well, while you were in school did you have any subjects that you liked?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I wasn't the world's best student to tell you the truth. In fact, I was probably the class clown and you know I really, I guess the teachers would... they might have figured I'd probably end up going to the penitentiary more than I'd be a police officer I guess. But I was kind of the class cut-up and just... I could go in and take a test and I could tell you when I took the final test that I had to make an 85 to make a C to pass, I'm gonna make my 85 and go on. Rest of the time I didn't worry about it until the last minute. They questioned me about this pretty severely when I went to work for the DPS because I graduated in the bottom part of my class. They said, what was you doing? I said I was cutting up and running around, I guess and... Said, you didn't think you needed an education? And I said I guess at the time I didn't put this at the highest priority on my list. I had my goals in the wrong places about that time, I guess.

NANCY RAY: Probably so. OK, well you graduated. Were you in the band or play sports or anything?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I played football up until about the Ninth Grade and my Dad approached me one day and told me said boy, he said you know you can go out and get a job if you want to have some money to run around on or you can be a football player and you can be broke, just whatever you want to do. And I started working after that.

NANCY RAY: So what did you do, what kind of jobs?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I worked let's see... of course I worked through high school... I worked as a soda jerk one time.

NANCY RAY: Soda jerk?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Short term. Worked in a sporting goods store for a little while. More of a window washer and a "gofer" more than I was anything else. Then I worked in a parts store there in Sweetwater for a long time. My dad was a mechanic and worked in parts store in Sweetwater through high school... I don't know what they called the DE program at that time... you worked half a day and went to school a half day and I worked through that. And I was working there when I enlisted in the Navy.

NANCY RAY: So you were in the Navy. What year was that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I went in the Navy in 1964. July of '64.

NANCY RAY: And where did you go to your basic training?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Great Lakes, Illinois.

NANCY RAY: All right, tell us about that. Was it cold?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I had, when we went to Dallas we, they took us to Dallas on a bus you know to swear us in. I never had been anywhere anyway, never had been on many bus trips you know. But there was a guy in our group said you guys want to see if they'll let us go to Great Lakes, Illinois? And I go, yeah, I guess so. I never had been to California or Illinois either but...

so yeah, we can do that. That's before we got through signing on and then we found out we belonged to them right after that but... So I went to boot camp and machinist mate's A school in Great Lakes, Illinois.

NANCY RAY: OK. And what happened after that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: After that I was sent to Pearl Harbor. Report to the USS Fletcher, DD-445, which was a destroyer. And it was one of the oldest combat destroyers left on duty at that time and it fought in World War II, Korea, and of course we took it to Vietnam. And... I lost my train of thought for a minute. But uh...

NANCY RAY: Well, how long were you, would you go out, what, six months?

BOBBY GRUBBS: We was out six months at a time. Not necessarily six months at a time on water, we'd spend about 30 days out on the water. And on this destroyer 30 days, that crowded each other... so tempers got pretty short and it didn't take much to violate somebody's space. This, what I started to say while ago, this originally in World War II was destroyer escorts, it was a small destroyer.

NANCY RAY: Well, when you went to Vietnam on the ship, what, what was the role that you played?

BOBBY GRUBBS: OK, now I worked in the engine room primarily and on damage control and stuff when we were out there. We never received any shell fire actually. We replaced, which I believe it was the USS O'Bannon they were supposed to have shot, we went in behind them and we did a lot of shore fire missions up and down the coast... artillery.... Did a lot of... we were around aircraft carriers when they were doing flying, picking up pilots and whatever in the water or whatever. They sent us down, and I didn't know this until I got out of the service. The Koreans took the Pueblo. They sent us down in that area, of course I didn't know what we were

going for, they didn't bother to tell me. And I knew we'd hung machine guns all over the ship and we were part of a group that I found out, actually after I got out of the service, we were part of a group that was supposed to go down there and get those people back out. And they pulled us back off before we got there. And of course at that time, we went into some real cold weather and there was ice out there in the ocean and... kind of a funny feeling out there when there was ice over the everything and that water would freeze you to death in just a few minutes. And that old ship, everywhere we went... we had to go above deck, out on the open decks to get where we were going. You couldn't go through passageways and get where you were at, so that made you in go out in the air. That was the coolest, that was the best time to ever work in that engine room because down there in Vietnam it was about 115 degrees down there all the time, in the ventilated parts of it. The other parts of it were 130 and 40, you couldn't stay there. So we get over there where it was cold, that engine room felt pretty good. We had the best seat in the whole, whole ship. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: You might have had people coming to visit there.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And I went, I was E5 when I finished my military, I was petty officer second class, recommended for first class petty officer but I needed more time in service in grade to be able to compete for that. And I wanted to get out at that point, I was ready to get out.

NANCY RAY: Well, I'm gonna back up a minute. I forgot to ask you the name of your parents.

BOBBY GRUBBS: My dad was A. J. Grubbs, initials only. I had to do a lot of explaining in the military, he didn't have any other name than that. They wouldn't hardly buy it. My mother was Merle Alleene.

NANCY RAY: MERLE?

BOBBY GRUBBS: MERIEL. So their home, my dad was raised around Colorado City, in the little city of Dunn. My mother came from down around Snyder and that's where my grandparents lived. And...

NANCY RAY: What about brothers and sisters?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I've got an older brother, three years older than I am, Billy Don Grubbs. He's retired now and he's living in Sweetwater. And I've got a younger sister, Wanda, her name is Wanda Grubbs Walker now and she's living also in Sweetwater. She's sixteen years younger than I am, I was sixteen years old when she was born. By the time she started to walk, I went off to the military.

NANCY RAY: Right, um ummm.

BOBBY GRUBBS: So,

NANCY RAY: Well, when did uh, when you came out of the military, were you married at that time?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I got married for... and I don't talk about this a great lot. I married a girl from high school and when I came home from military I found out this was over with. Really it got over with before I came home.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And I have a son by that marriage that I hadn't saw in quite some time and recently he has shown up and he has moved to Sweetwater and we're seeing each other kind of reconciling things a little bit.

NANCY RAY: Well, how nice.

BOBBY GRUBBS: There's a big gap there that's hard to close. That's something that really did bother me a lot but I kind of lost that boy in the shuffle.

NANCY RAY: Right. Well, what about now, though? Are you married now?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes, I am, I sure am.

NANCY RAY: And what is your wife's name?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Joy.

NANCY RAY: JOY?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh huh.

NANCY RAY: And when did you and Joy marry? (laughter) Uh oh.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I didn't know you was gonna ask this. Let me... October of '70 or '71.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: You start tying me down on dates and...

NANCY RAY: Well, as long as she's OK with it, I'm OK too.

BOBBY GRUBBS: She's put up with it for nearly 38 years so (laughter) I think she's probably OK with it.

NANCY RAY: So what about children?

BOBBY GRUBBS: We've got uh a daughter, Janelle, and her and her husband, David Johnson, live in Early also. They've got two kids, I've got a grandson and a granddaughter. Grandson's eight and the granddaughter's six. I have a lot of fun with them.

NANCY RAY: Oh yes.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And my son lives in Fort Worth. He manages, he was managing a fitness center in Arlington up there.

NANCY RAY: What is his name?

BOBBY GRUBBS: John. And he had lived with a little girl for a while and they got a baby and it's one of them deals that, that aggravates us but I guess all we can do is accept it and go on.

NANCY RAY: It's not the baby's fault.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Huh?

NANCY RAY: It's not the baby's fault.

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, it's not, it's not so we got a grandson by that re... union, I guess that we... Chances of us really getting to know him are probably pretty slim. We have seen him a few times but...

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Not seen him... really.

NANCY RAY: Life's sometimes hard to understand.

BOBBY GRUBBS: It really is, it really is.

NANCY RAY: OK. So you're out of the Navy and now you're married, are you working somewhere or what?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I jumped the gun there because I went to the DPS Academy before I got married.

NANCY RAY: OK. So let's hear about that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I got out of the military for, really I'd been out of the military a little while and I decided I just wasn't seeing what I wanted to see around Sweetwater, my friends were pretty well scattered and gone. And uh I went down to the Marine Recruiter and intended to reenlist and go back, in the Marine Corps this time. And I guess I was always kind of goofy I guess to be doing this but... Anyway, I told the recruiter if he could guarantee me after I came out of boot camp that I would be E4, which would have been a corporal, that I would enlist right then. And of course he came back with a counter offer that he could give me E3 and I said no, that would be dropping two pay grades. I could go back to the Navy and pick up the same rank I

had there. And we couldn't agree on that and actually he did me a favor because if I'd gone in the Marine Corps and I'd went back overseas then and so he did me a big favor. And I worked for a short time for General Telephone in Plano, Texas. And it always had been in my mind that I wanted to be in the Highway Patrol. There was a Highway Patrolman by the name of Herman Seale of Sweetwater, Texas.

NANCY RAY: What was his last name?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Herman Seale, S E A L E.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And Herman was about 6'4", 6'5", and at that time I think he had a star for each five years. I didn't know what that meant. Looked like his whole arm was full of stars and, and we were all scared to death of him, we had a lot of respect as kids. And I thought boy, this is a good deal.

NANCY RAY: And how did he know you, did you get stopped?

BOBBY GRUBBS: He... no, he never stopped me. Surprisingly, he never did. I was scared of him. (laughter) He knew my dad, my dad was a mechanic and worked on cars and knew him. And he'd just been a fixture there around Sweetwater. He retired when he was 65 and still a Highway Patrolman. And he was just a landmark in Sweetwater, law... you know we thought a law enforcement was if Herman Seale said it, it was the law. I don't guess it mattered what it was but... And he was fair to all the people that I know of, I never had any dealings with him and, thank goodness. (laughter) And I was a little rough around the edges about that time too, just luckily he and I didn't cross paths.

NANCY RAY: So he, you kind of looked up to him and he influenced...

BOBBY GRUBBS: I did. Yes, I really did. He was kind of an inspiration you know and I thought that's the place that I wanted to go to. And uh, I applied and finally after Sergeant called me in, Billy Buffet was sergeant there at Sweetwater at the time and he was real rough and gruff talking sort. And he realized I'd just come through this divorce and coming out of service also and that was pretty well frowned on by DPS at that time. And so they worked me over pretty good I guess until he was convinced enough that I really meant what I said. And uh kind of stood behind me and helped me through the interview process and testing and got me into the DPS Academy.

NANCY RAY: Well now, tell us a little bit about the interviewing process. What do you remember about that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's... maybe I'll be gone before all this comes in writing. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: I hope not.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Of course they asked me considerable things about the marriage situation and they had met of course my ex-wife at that time. And I think they kind of understood where I was coming from in that situation. Like I say that was kind of... I wasn't aware that was going on until I came home and then I found out that I wasn't part of it anymore. But anyway, and they questioned me pretty hard about this, about my conduct and so forth, and you know my values, what I... Of course my family, I guess we was poor but didn't realize it maybe. We didn't have a lot of money or anything but we did all right, we got by. I thought we did. And they were satisfied. They'd talked to all my neighbors and all , figured maybe I was gonna... They hit me with one question. We, we drank a lot when I was in service. I was Navy and you're supposed to drink and fight and we did. And so at the interview board in Abilene, there was a lieutenant there, I guess I'll never forget this. And everything they asked me you could have hooked me up

to a polygraph and it would have been the same answer. I told the truth, good, bad or indifferent, I told it like it was. And they asked me you know do I drink and I said yes sir, I do. And uh they said well, what do you on weekends around here in Sweetwater now that you come back from the military? And I said I get some of my buddies and we'll drink a beer or something you know and talk and.... They said how many beers to you drink? I said oh six or seven. They said well how do you get home? I said well I drive. And of course I just binged, I'd just told them that I was DWI on the way home. And uh how they forgave me for that I don't know to this day honestly. I figured... of course I didn't realize what I was telling them but I was telling them the truth. I guess they accepted that and so...

NANCY RAY: So you passed the interview board?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Passed the interview board and reported to the DPS Academy on March 4th, 1969, was in "A" School in 1969.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: At that time, they had three different schools going at the same time down there in the Academy and it wasn't near as big then as it is now. And we were shuffling around for space and hitting the floor pretty early in the morning for PT and we started with 117 of us and I think 63 of us graduated. And it wasn't so much that they ran people off it was just the fact that people I guess, said I don't want to put up with this and they'd just leave. And they were pretty tough on you.

NANCY RAY: Well, what... I know you learned about law and different things but what stands out in your mind. What did you come away from that school that helped you with your career the most?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I guess the background to build on. It's like They gave us. You don't really become a good officer, a good effective officer until you get out and start doing it, really. They gave me some knowledge and had they turned me loose just with the bare-boned knowledge they gave me I'd been dangerous. I'd arrested the whole world probably. And then you learn to temper this a little bit with good commonsense along the way too. But it just, I don't know they just, they instill a lot of pride in you and I still have that pride.

NANCY RAY: Well, what about monitors? Do you remember your monitors?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh, yes. One of them was a sergeant, Highway Patrol sergeant, by the name of James England. And he was I believe down there in Kerrville. And I guess one reason I remember him is he turned around backwards and outran all of us running frontwards just about. That guy was an older guy, I probably thought he was a hundred years old at the time, but of course he wasn't. And he was a real good man. We had another sergeant by the name of Smiley Moxley, never saw him smile the entire time we were there. And he was from down around the Valley somewhere down there. He may have been from McAllen, I don't remember. He was a good man, he was a fair man.

NANCY RAY: OK, what was their purpose? Being a monitor, what did that mean?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It was kind of like a drill instructor is what I compared it to. Now this was a whole lot like boot camp and only, uh I guess the only real difference was you could get up and leave if you wanted to. And at that time, they really didn't care if you did or not. You know, they'd come through while we were doing PT, they put us through the wringer on PT. They'd look at you and say boy, why don't you just go on home. Said we'll replace you with a five-cent stamp. They don't do it that way anymore, they kind of use a little more... maybe, but... And

they just... at times I thought about taking them up on their offer but I didn't want to go back and tell somebody I couldn't take it.

NANCY RAY: A little bit of pride there, wasn't there.

BOBBY GRUBBS: There was a lot of pride in that and I just didn't want to go face somebody and say hey, I just can't do this.

NANCY RAY: Well, what about the... did you have weapons training? What kind of training?

BOBBY GRUBBS: We did. We shot pistols, rifles and shotguns. Of course at that time we were shooting revolvers and .357 magnums, and uh pump shotguns, and .30-.30s. You know we didn't have any assault rifle. That would have hurt, assault rifles back then and... I had shot, I had hunted and stuff most of life and been around guns. I hadn't shot pistols a whole lot but I'd shot long guns. And so they worked with us a lot on that. Trained us, you know we fought, we boxed. It was more than...fight back in those times. There wasn't much finesse to it. They counted your time when you were swinging your fists.

NANCY RAY: Who, who was the one leading the boxing or the fighting? Do you remember that name?

BOBBY GRUBBS: There was a PT instructor.

NANCY RAY: Was his name Al Stone?

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, Al was down there but he wasn't... This guy was Jimmy Gilstrap. Al Stone was uh a well... when Al Stone came we were all kind of hiding in all the holes.

NANCY RAY: One person said he's the meanest man alive.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I thought Gilstrap was. (laughter) Of course I didn't have a lot of Al Stone.

NANCY RAY: So they had a purpose though.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah, they did. And uh you know they were there to test us and they did.

NANCY RAY: They did. Is there anything else about the training that pops into your mind that you want to talk about?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I can say usually we did a lot of running down there. And my speed always left a little bit to be desired. I think they kind of used me as a guide because guys from me back usually had to do the extra laps. I think I could have been first and they would have made all of them do an extra lap. Seems like it didn't matter (laughter)... I wasn't very fleet of foot. But it, it... you know after we got into about the eighth week down there, you was in good physical condition. And just to think that you're bottled up in there could kind of work on you. Actually, I didn't have any place to go anyway so it... You kind of get used to it I guess, you get climatized or whatever.

NANCY RAY: Well, when they finally let you graduate, where'd you go, what was your first duty station?

BOBBY GRUBBS: My first duty, we came out in khakis. They didn't have enough commission positions for Highway Patrolman at that time. In fact my class, there was one open Highway Patrol position.

NANCY RAY: And how many graduated?

BOBBY GRUBBS: 63. Now you could get your commission immediately if you wanted to go into Drivers License. And I didn't want to go into anything but the Highway Patrol, you know I wouldn't... didn't want anything but the Highway Patrol. That's what I came there wanting to do. And so they sent me to Garland to work in warrant office wearing khakis for a while. And Lieutenant C. H. Cheshire, he was an old Highway, old salty Highway Patrol lieutenant there in Garland.

NANCY RAY: Now what year was this?

BOBBY GRUBBS: This was '69.

NANCY RAY: '69, OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: After I'd been there... let's see, got there in September, I was there about three months and he finally came in there one day and had me sign... we had called people, tried to get them to come in on Friday for warrants, at that time they had a Warrant Division. We had spent all day calling people trying to talk them into coming in is basically what we did, what they call PEOs where people sent in drivers license and license plates out of accidents and stuff... just whatever duty they could think for us to do until they had a station for us. And so finally legislature had added some additional people to DPS, this was in the mill while we were in school. And Lieutenant came in there and told me one day and said I'm gonna send you to Lewisville. I didn't know where... I thought Lewisville was over on the Louisiana border. Of course I came from Sweetwater and I've already got a bigger city than I'm used to seeing. And I said Lieutenant, I don't know about this and he took me in there and showed me on the map where I was going and I said OK. I guess I'd gone anywhere they sent me anyway, I just wanted to be a Highway Patrolman. And...

NANCY RAY: So there you are in Lewisville. And what are you, what's your main responsibility?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's, of course, I've got a senior Highway Patrolman breaking me in at this time... and really teaching me the bare bones of being a Highway Patrolman.

NANCY RAY: What all did he teach that you didn't learn in school?

BOBBY GRUBBS: He taught you driving, shooting, and making contacts and taking care of business really.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know they teach you by the book way a lot of it in school and he teaches you the real way. I had a guy who broke me in, his name was Leroy Cooper. And he was a fairly short little German and you know if he thought you were sorry he'd tell you. And If he you were something else, he'd tell you. And uh I kind took up some of his attitudes. He was better about doing that without getting complaints than I was but... But he was a real good guy, really, and I thought a lot of him. He was moody and he'd always tell me when we'd be riding around... I'd make a mistake and he'd said... clean off that window with your stomach... that means I had my head in my butt, I ain't paying attention. And so... but he was good and I had a lot of respect for him, I thought a lot of him... and he taught me a lot.

NANCY RAY: OK. So you're, your're responsibility is working traffic, is that right?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Right, it was at that point. We made criminal apprehensions and we worked you know some crowd control and just various and assorted duties really. But he was a man that really took me in the lead and...

NANCY RAY: How long did you work with him?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Worked with him six months. Then they started rotating me with other officers and uh at that point you're able to work by yourself some too.

NANCY RAY: OK, all right. So, did you stay there in Lewisville after you...

BOBBY GRUBBS: Stayed there in Lewisville for until they closed the station actually, because uh Leroy Cooper made sergeant and they got down to two men and one left and they finally transferred me... by then I had moved out in the country to Roanoake in a little house in the country, which was almost unheard of at that time too. And they transferred me on paper to Denton, which was where the sergeant was based anyway, and that's really where my office

was... in Lewisville, and they were reporting stuff anyway. So they closed the Lewisville station down and just had everybody out of Denton... which the duties and the territory didn't change, it was just the... really didn't change a whole lot of anything really, just on paper where I was stationed. When I lived, when I moved out to the little community of Roanoake, at that time there wasn't anything out there really, that's before the days of Flower Mound and all this kind of stuff.

NANCY RAY: So it was pretty rural at that time.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes, it was, it was. And uh I talked to my lieutenant, P. C. Wynn was the lieutenant there in Fort Worth. And it was hard to find really any housing to speak of in Lewisville because there just wasn't much there at the time. It hadn't blossomed like it has today. And uh I found a place out in the country and I told P.C. I'd like to get out there because like I say, it didn't happen very often. He said yeah and he approved it and so anyway I had to talk the major... and I went and talked to the major and the major said no, I don't want people living out in the country you know. So I came back and I told Lieutenant, I said he's not gonna let me move. Go ahead, start moving, he said I'll take care of it, and he did. And so we moved out in the country and I lived out there and... the people that rented me this house moved the houses in and redid them and rented them out and stuff. And I worked for this guy a lot because I think at this time we were making, I think we got \$565 a month and it didn't go far back then when you had kids and all too And so I painted houses, mowed grass or... this guy would let me take my rent... I got to know him pretty well and I got my rent off if I painted, keep my time and go show him what I had you know. If I did a whole lot well it applied to next month and if I didn't do quite enough, I paid him the difference. And I kept my time straight and it was honest work too... And he just more or less turned me loose to do it. Well he came over there one day and he finally

wanted to sell me the house. I'll take it back. The first house I lived in was a small house, a little two bedroom house. I just had a daughter then and when I found out I had a son on the way, or had another baby on the way, and I knew he had a bigger house over there and I told him I said I've even got to build another bedroom on this house, or gotta do something I said we've got another baby coming and I need some room. So he came over and he rented me this bigger house for \$200 a month. My wife and I, we scratched our heads about whether we could afford that or not, really it was a pretty good deal at that time. So we rented the house and then he came along and wanted to sell me the house, this same house. He said I want to sell you this house. I said I didn't have any money, really I didn't, you know it was a true statement you know. I said I can't afford a house. And at that time, I think in Lewisville they started government housing and we were making \$50 a month too much to qualify for these Fox and Jacobs low cost housing they had at that time. This old man told me, said I tell you what I'm gonna do. He said, he ... he said I'm gonna carry the note on this house. I'm not gonna charge you any interest and said the only thing I'm gonna put in there is that if you sell it in the first two years, I get first chance to buy it back. And he sold me that house for \$20,000, that and I think almost an acre of land. And, and we paid it off the year I made Ranger. In fact, I wasn't even living in it when I made we made the last payment.

NANCY RAY: Well, did you stay in Lewisville your entire career with the Highway Patrol?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I went to, I transferred into License and Weight. At that time License and Weight, when you went into it, it was kind of by invitation only. They, they kind of went out and found out who they wanted. And the new License and Weight trooper up there in Denton, I'd been working around him a lot, we were kind of friends, and he came to me one day and I... and we worked a lot of accidents at that time. We worked all the accidents on the interstates, the

city didn't do them, we did. We worked 14, 15 wrecks a month you know, we thought that was a lot back then. And uh I was working up accident reports and he came in and told me they're fixing to put another License and Weight trooper up here. He said would you be interested in it? I'll talk to the captain if you are. And I thought about that a while and I said yeah, I guess I would. And so he talked to the captain about it and they called me and I said well, and I still lived out in the country. He said we want our License and Weight man to live in Denton. I said well Captain, I'm the wrong man. I said I won't move for you. I said there's not but one thing I'll move for and that's to get in the Rangers. That's kind of the wrong thing to say because he took exception to that. But anyway, time rocked along and I figured I'd lost that position. And he called me back and he said we'll take you. So I worked License and Weight for almost three years. And at this time, shortly after this, I started taking the Ranger test. And he, captain, it was Captain Bob Jones got killed up there in a training accident in Norfolk. Got shot by a trooper coming back from school, it was an accident. But it, he was the kind of guy that if you wanted in License and Weight trooper, you were a great guy. Now if you're just a plain old trooper, he could tolerate you. But if you were one of those License and Weight troopers trying to leave the service, you were a traitor. And basically I was a traitor. And I could come to Garland and talk to the Rangers' captain because that's what I wanted to do. And my captain knew it and he just, he didn't like that.

NANCY RAY: Well, let me ask you, ub License and Weight, what, what did you do?

BOBBY GRUBBS: We were commercial vehicle enforcement weighing trucks, checking registration and papers. And honestly I was bored to death. I liked Highway Patrol better. But the poor guy breaking me in, the one that recruited me, you know he tried to get me to look at the truck coming down the road and I'm looking at the car behind it you know. And I really wasn't

all that happy in License and Weight. I, they told me well you know that's regulatory and I said I don't want regulatory, I want law enforcement. And a lot of them referred to me as their freelance Highway Patrolman I guess. In roadblocks, they usually chase cars and do whatever else comes... friend, tolerated me is what they did.

NANCY RAY: Well, can you think of a chase that stands out in your mind, something funny happened or...

BOBBY GRUBBS: We had several chases in the Highway Patrol but seems like License and Weight... because we'd get out and get into them. We ran uh... my partner and I one night got a call, this one stands out to me. We were working Highway Patrol up in Denton and it was raining. We were supposed to get off around 2 in the morning, it was around 12:30 or something like this when Narcotics called us. And they had information on a load of dope, marijuana, it was supposed to land in a field out by the city of Krum in Denton County, and wanted us to assist. Well it just so happened our sergeant... at that time Narcotics had a real rough reputation. Back in those days it was a rough outfit. And our standing orders were that we wouldn't work with them without our sergeant's permission, that he had to be aware of it. Well, our sergeant was check riding with us that night and he was the kind of sergeant that didn't like waves on te pond whatsoever. Need to take care of your traffic and don't cause any trouble. And we weren't really geared that way. Well anyway, Narcotics called and wanted to know if we'd help them out. And he told them well these guys are fixing to get off duty you know here in a minute. Well that was the first time in his whole career he was worried about me getting off duty on time but he didn't want me out there with Narcotics is what it was. So we kept after him and until he finally, he relented and went on home and left us with Narcotics. Well we pulled up to a little old church yard out in Krum and of course there were Narcotics agents and some Dallas PD officers, and

they had a plane so they it bugged with this plane trailing it And we were gonna hit it when it landed out there in this field. Of course we were all out there waiting on it. And we could hear them flying up there and of course the tail, the trailing planes you couldn't tell how many of them were your airplanes. Well when they got ready to set down, they just flashed on the landing light, turned it on and off just like a flashlight, just one time, going into that field. There were two planes and they off loaded 1500 pounds of marijuana in bales and got it into like a modular van and got away from that field before any realized that hey, they're down, they're loaded, they're moving. And they called us and said they're on the road. We got after them and we started chasing them. Krum is kind of west of Denton. Well they went back up in the northern, going north toward the Oklahoma line up there in this van and we were chasing them. And we didn't have anybody... these other guys were afoot at the airport and we were in a vehicle and we ran them a pretty good ways. There was a car and this van, or a pickup and a van. The pickup turned off and we couldn't get anybody else to help us get him so we stayed on this van. And after a short time, we went in the little city of Sanger and they cut across a yard and we did too. Went back out the way we went in. We was in the city limits, we decided this was enough of it, we didn't have ... back then, we used 12 gauge. And my partner looked like Daniel Boone hanging out the window shooting at that van.

NANCY RAY: You were driving?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I was driving. I had an M-1 carbine... and probably lucky I didn't get to shoot it because I laid it on a spotlight, I think it had a 20, or 30-round clip in it. And uh those old carbines, the first round in your chamber you gotta kinda hit it to get the bolt to close. Well, I just slammed it and laid it on that spotlight. I was gonna commence shooting, pulling it down too. Well, it misfired the first shot because I didn't sling it shut right. I just chunked it back and I

commenced driving. We were on a road that was real crooked and we were shooting. And we finally, we got all kinds of old... we were out in a field out there, he went through a field, so out in the field, we went with him. And we got him arrested out there. And I'm gonna tell on myself a little bit. We thought there was still one... they had thrown some guns out, we heard some shots... I think later we found out we had been shot at. We were running on so much adrenaline that we didn't know, wouldn't have mattered anyway I don't guess. And uh when we stopped this... one up of them jumped up and hollered something at my partner and he butt stroked him with his shotgun and down he went. But anyway, my partner did. And I thought there was still one of them in this van and I jerked it open and there was a curtain back there. And just as I jerked this curtain, I heard a gun go *poomph*. And it was my gun. I was so tense that I'd set mine off. I fell on the side of that van with my pistol as I was going in the back. Of course there wasn't anyone else in it and it was kind of hard to explain that one stray shot went out from the others. I'm not sure we ever did explain it really. (laughter) We got you know a good talking to.

NANCY RAY: Where did the dope come from, where were they from?

BOBBY GRUBBS: This came out of Mexico and it just... and we had a lot of chases and a lot of fun when I was in the Highway Patrol.

NANCY RAY: Who was your favorite partner?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh, I had some good ones, a bunch of them. I really enjoyed working with the guy that broke me in, Leroy Cooper, he was a good one to work with. Another trooper by the name, at that time we were patrolman, we weren't troopers. Jerry Rayburn was good. I had another partner named Buddy Downs who was a good guy. And uh the one that was with me the night we got all those dopers was Mike Norris. He was a good... I think he kept me from getting shot one day, I was always kind of partial to him. And... but he always had a girlfriend, he

couldn't keep his home life straight. And got him eventually run off from the Department, he got a disciplinary transfer and all but... and I liked him but he just couldn't get his head on straight. You could talk to him and talk to him and it didn't make any difference, you know. He... we'd stopped a car one night in Lewisville on the interstate down there and of course down there traffic was bad enough that some of your... were afraid of getting from behind when you were on the side of the road anyway. And I'd walked up on a pickup with, we'd stopped what we thought were drunk drivers, and uh there was a lady driving. This pickup had a camper shell on it so of course I was watching traffic and trying to watch to watch this. Well just as I did this was her husband or boyfriend, I don't remember which, had reached in her purse and had357 he had in his hand. I probably wouldn't have even saw the muzzle flash or it might have been the last thing I ever saw if he shot me. And I fully believe he intended to shoot me. He didn't, he wasn't aware that I had a partner with me. And my partner hollered that he had a gun and I hit the pavement and my partner put the gun on him and got it all worked out. And we filed on him with possession of a deadly weapon and I'm not even sure they prosecuted that really. And so I was always kind of partial to him for that. Because he couldn't.. I'd have smoothed things over for him at home if I could but he couldn't keep his own business straight. And uh...

NANCY RAY: Well, sounds dangerous. So what did your wife think about this? Did she realize what all was going on?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know, we had the understanding... of course I had been in the Highway Patrol when we got married and I told her, I said I want to tell you something, I said this is something I want to do and if I ever decide I want to quit, I want it to be my idea, not yours. So don't ask me to quit. And I think years, years later she explained to me that a few times

she thought about leaving me and the Highway Patrol both but she stayed with me you know.
We have a good marriage.

NANCY RAY: Good.

BOBBY GRUBBS: But she didn't say much about it really, one way or the other, you know...
Mother didn't ask a whole lot and I didn't say a whole lot. Sometimes I'd come home and
make... be wound up a little still you know. And...

NANCY RAY: Well, you said earlier that you were the class clown. Were you the trooper
clown or the Highway Patrol clown too?

BOBBY GRUBBS: ... Oh, at times. At times we all were back then. We had a lot of fun.

NANCY RAY: Well, to deal with things though, do you use humor sometimes?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Huh?

NANCY RAY: To deal with some of the bad things though, did you use humor sometimes?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You kind of use that as a relief valve, really. Still do really. You know
someone's in a bad situation and you find that you laugh and cut up a lot after... kind of letting
off little steam We did a lot... of course a lot of stuff we did in the Highway Patrol we didn't
want the sergeant to know about. We, you know we were all in our 20s and we'd fight and
wrestled, and just a bunch of big old kids. And they gave us cars that would drive fast and we
had a lot of fun driving them that way and we did some good too. We made some good arrests.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I had one partner, we stayed down there at that Garza Little M, Lake
Dallas. We'd go write enough tickets to keep the sergeant off of us and we'd go prowl that lake.
And we'd make dope arrests or fights or we was always finding something down there to get
into. He was always threatening to get us Jeeps instead of patrol cars because he couldn't keep us

on the road. Probably the only thing that saved us, we made some good arrests down there. But we had a good time. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: You're thinking of some memories, aren't you? OK, is there anything else before we go to your Ranger career?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh, no we could just go on and on with this as far as that goes.... When you want to change, we'll change.

NANCY RAY: Well, how did you, how did you get into the Rangers, who influenced you? Is there a person?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's... that was always... after I got in the Highway Patrol, I was always just kind of in all of that and uh, of course everybody said oh that's so political, you can't get in it. You know if you haven't got a sponsor or something. And it's not easy to get into. But I didn't really think I could obtain that I guess, and we got a Ranger, I guess the first Ranger we ever got in Denton was by the name of Don Anderson. Don is the sheriff of Hunt County now. Pretty quiet guy, used to be a Highway Patrol sergeant before he came to the Rangers. And he and I was talking and I told him about the Rangers and I said yeah, I'm gonna try that some day. And he said well if you don't start trying pretty soon, you'll never do it. And I said I guess you got a point you know. And I said I don't even know anybody and I'm not flashy or whatever you know, and he said try it. And he was a good solid guy, I admired the way he worked and uh I started working at it and made it on the third try.

NANCY RAY: Now, what did you have to do, said you started working at it, what did you have to do?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, number one you better go over and meet the captain over there in that area and kind of explain to him what you're doing because they look at people coming out of

there and they kind of rank them. And, and so you know they got to get to know you a little bit. And I knew one of the Rangers over there already was Ralph Wadsworth, I had worked with him. He was in the warrant service for the Highway Patrol at that time that I was in khakis down there and worked with him. So he knew me. And I visited with this captain, it was G. W. Burks at that time and G. W. Burks would tell you how it was, he was a little rough around the edges too. But he was a little short captain but of course I admired him, I was kind of afraid of him, everybody was. And uh he dressed pretty flashy and but you know he just... had a pretty good name for himself I guess. And I was just, I was always just impressed with the Rangers, I really was. I told him what really impressed me was when I was in the Highway Patrol and they opened the LBJ Library in Austin. They had a bunch of protestors down there, protesting Vietnam at that time. And I told him, I said you know we were all standing there on the riot line in helmets and all this junk and it was hot, and they... I said I looked up on the hill and the Rangers were up there eating barbeque and I, you know, maybe I ought to be a Ranger. But that really wasn't what inspired me to be one, but I wanted to be a Ranger. It's just that... I thought it was a goal that I probably couldn't obtain, but I did.

NANCY RAY: Well, after you went and talked to the captain, what did you do next?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, you start taking the test. And you take a written test and normally the top 30 scores will be called to Austin to an interview board. And I know they had an interview board, there may be four or five Rangers made, you know they'll pick them out of these 30 men or whatever amount... they said it was around 30 usually. And if you took two or three days for interviews and then they'll do the selection process to see who gets the jobs and who doesn't. And they went on an eligibility list and an opening comes open at that time well you get the job. Well, they do, they do a separate background investigation of you every time you test. That

always kind of surprised me, I said here I am a Highway Patrolman and they trust me with a car and pistol and I work for these people already but they do another background investigation on me. And they did pretty thorough, which is good really. I mean it's good for the Ranger service. And uh, the time I was testing, is all this is in a short period there and I told them I said, you know, every time I look up they're investigating me again, doing a background investigation. And I made it on that third trip and.... lost my train I guess.

NANCY RAY: Well, when, when you went to the interview board, did any of the questions stand out that they asked you?

BOBBY GRUBBS: The way they handled it... I don't know if they do that any more. There was an old Ranger captain on the first board I went to, his name was Bob Mitchell out of Waco, a big man. Everybody was scared to death of Bob Mitchell you know, I mean you'd look at him and you'd think ooh... Well anyway, I got in on this interview board and I was scared to death. And I didn't interview well. I'd get around a crowd and I was nervous anyway and I can't remember what questions he asked me. But when I answered it, he had a number two lead pencil in his hand and he broke it half in to and threw it over his shoulder and nodded forward There that went. And uh, and I didn't do so well that time (laughter) to tell you the truth. I don't know what his question was but you know... and a lot of it I think looking back, they had already looked at the people coming to this board and you have some semblance of an idea to what you think is gonna be the best man before you sat down there, really. But still you can be changed in that board, you just wait. And so the second time I went back, Skippy Rundell was assistant senior captain and he was chairing that board at that time. And at the end of that he leaned back in his chair and he said Bobby, he said if you don't make Ranger this time, I'll see you coming back. And I said maybe I just heard my answer again so I came back. And I made Ranger. The

year I made it was 19... it was November 1984. And I'd been on this list for, eligibility list, there were five of us on it.

NANCY RAY: Do you remember the others?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh, there was me, right behind me was I think George Turner who is a Ranger lieutenant now, Richard Sweaney, a guy by the name of Jay Moses, who is now chief of police in Coleman, he later went into criminal intelligence. I can't think who the fifth was at this point.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: But first thing he did, well Burks called me and I was at deer lease when they called come to think about it. I was hunting with Danny Rhea and this friend of mine, Larry Wilson who I Highway Patrolled with and we were on a hunting lease down at Sweetwater. And I was sweating out the Ranger list. I'd been going out every morning to take, to try to hear the list when they put it out on the air you know. Of course you couldn't hear much up there... didn't do much for my deer hunting either. But anyway, they had called and got a hold of my mother because we hunted on a ranch south of town there and we'd go back in every now and then. Well, Mother made it out there, they'd called her and told her that I came up number one on the list. And I came into camp and my buddies got word of it before I did. And they told me, said you're number one on the Ranger list. I said let me tell you something, I said... and we jacked with each other all the time. I said some things are funny and I said this ain't funny so don't jack with me. And he said no, you really are and I said don't no, don't bullshit me, I ain't gonna go for this and... And they were really trying to tell me this and I was having a hard time believing them. Of course I went and got a phone and checked it anyway, I still couldn't... but, and well I was number one on the list and then Captain Burks called me and told me said,

congratulated me. He said the bad news is we really don't expect any openings right now. And you stay on that list for a year and if you don't make it in that year you start all over again with the whole process. Well, the next Ranger test was coming around in November of the next year. I sat there on that list until November 1st before I got a job. I'd already turned in a letter to retest again because I was afraid I was gonna do the whole process all over. And they called me and said you know the Ranger in Midland, Pete Montemayor, had retired. Said will you take Midland? I'd took anything they had, it didn't matter to me, I just wanted a place. And uh I said yeah. And so I got sent to Midland at that point.

NANCY RAY: OK, you were still living near Denton.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Right, I was still living out in the country in Roanoke.

NANCY RAY: So your first duty station was in Midland?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Uh huh. I reported into headquarters up there. At that time, Maurice Cook was the captain of that company and uh Bob Favor was the sergeant, they didn't have lieutenants at that time. And immediately I got there and got on the wrong foot with Bob Favor and we had some pretty rocky roads before the year was up. I called him, I guess his first words to me were, when I found out they were gonna fly me out there where this trooper would have they swore me in, they offered to fly me out there to go to a company meeting with them and to pick up my equipment and stuff. I thought that was great.

NANCY RAY: Now what equipment did they give you?

BOBBY GRUBBS: When I came into the Rangers?

NANCY RAY: Uh huh.

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know firearms, a car, handcuffs, vest, and whatever, just assorted police equipment. And uh they flew me out there and the first words from Bob Favor when I

talked to him he said let me tell you something, if you're coming out here to retire, you're coming to the wrong place. I'd always worked every where I'd been, it kind of made me mad really. And he was kind of crossways with the captain at that time, Maurice Cook, and one of Maurice's Rangers, I guess and I were friend, we'd Highway Patrolled together and he thought well I'm gonna come out to be part of this group and he already didn't like me when I got there. And it took us a long time to mend our fences. And part of it I brought on myself because I got mad, I provoked some of it myself I guess. It was kind of rocky out there for a while but Maurice Cook made senior captain, or assistant senior captain, and went to Austin and Gene Powell came in as captain. And I, I tried to be diplomatic, I'd been out in Midland a little better than two years and I went in and told Captain Powell, I said you know I'd like to get back where there's water and trees and things like this and uh you know San Angelo, Abilene, Brownwood. He said really you want out of the regional office. And I said yes sir, I really do. He said I don't blame you, if I was captain, I'd leave too. If I *wasn't* captain. So Norman Autrey retired, we kept hearing that he was going to. I'll back up just a minute. Because Captain Powell kept telling me, said you're gonna learn to like Midland and I said don't bet on it. He said no, it'll grow on you and I said I'm not planning on it growing on me. I'd told my wife and kids when we went out there, we didn't buy a house, I said don't put down roots too deep because we won't stay here. I'd never been in a headquarters station before and don't care anything about them. And so Captain Powell... we kept hearing that Norman Autrey was gonna retire here but he never would really tell me that I had the station. They just kept dancing around it. And so a vacancy came open when Stan Guffey was killed over close to Marble Falls over there. And so I went in and talked to Captain Powell. Captain at that time, he'd had a boy, he lost a boy and his... at times you'd be talking to him and he'd just kind of tune you out. Well I went in and talked to him because I was gonna put in for

Brady and I wanted to tell him about it. Well he kind of tuned me out so I got mad and walked out. He called me at home later and he said you wanted to talk to me and I said yeah, I was. He said come on to the house and I'll put the coffee pot on, so I went over there. I said Captain, I'm fixing to call Bob Mitchell and put in a transfer for me to go to Brady. He said I can't see why you're gonna do that, he said I'm holding Brownwood for you. I said I'll take it. And so I sat back down and I came to Brownwood.

NANCY RAY: Well, let's back up to Midland before we come to Brownwood. Uh, that was your first duty station, do you remember what was your first case?

BOBBY GRUBBS: A lot of small cases really. Just, I was... when I got out there I was assigned Midland County, Ector County, Upton County, Reagan County, and Crockett County which was Ozona, Big Lake, and all up in that country, they didn't have a Ranger in Ozona then, they'd close that station. And you know I worked burglaries, I just... when I first got there, I was new kid on the block and I was "hey boy," everywhere they needed a warm body, somebody to be... I was him. Of course I was in school a lot and I was there nine months before I moved my family down there but, well we had to sell the house and I lived in an apartment down there in ... apartment complex, lived there until my family got there and it wasn't the type of apartment complex I wanted my family to live in anyway. Of course this time Midland was pretty well vacant it had been..., you know the oilfield had gone bust and I think the FDIC owned most of that town. But uh but I did a lot of work down around Rankin, Big Lake, off down there and sometimes Ozona. I'll never forget, I went down to Ozona to meet the old sheriff and I think he'd been sheriff there about 34 years, his name was Billy Mills. His daddy had been a Ranger. And uh Billy was pretty salty and been, he pretty well ran Crockett County. Of course here I was a brand new Highway Patrolman... and old Highway Patrolman and a brand new rookie Ranger

today and I go down there to ask this 34-year sheriff, he'd probably been around the block more times than I'd ever thought about. And I told him, I said Billy, I said there's not a whole lot that I know yet but I'm learning and I'll find it out you know, and I want to work with you. And he liked that. He worked well with me.

NANCY RAY: So is that the best way to get in with the sheriff?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It varies sheriff to sheriff I think. Depends on what their personalities are. Some of them you don't get in with. The sheriff I worked with in Upland County I later placed in his jail after an investigation concerning him and ended up arresting him and three of his deputies.

NANCY RAY: He probably didn't like you too much.

BOBBY GRUBBS: He didn't like me, he just... but he was a problem and I had been kind of forewarned of him and we did what you call a special investigation on him and, and it was a bad deal but... He was planting dope on people, he was doing a lot of things down there really.

NANCY RAY: Well, what is the difference between a regional office and like the Brownwood office?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, when I was in the regional office I might talk with one of my sheriffs or somebody you know, say I'll be down there tomorrow and work with you and I'm gonna do this, this and that or, and if you need me tomorrow I'll be down there or whatever. Well meanwhile the Captain will get a phone call and need a Ranger somewhere and so the next day your plans get changed. The Captain will say well I need you here, so you call them and tell them the captain is sending you somewhere else. Well when I came to Brownwood, the captain wasn't there to make my assignments, I made them. And you know if I told them I was gonna be there tomorrow, more than likely I was gonna be there unless something special came up. But it

was just, I don't know, it was just a different style of Rangering, you're out on your own and you took care of your business. And I liked that.

NANCY RAY: Right. OK, were you ever in urban versus rural areas as a Ranger?

BOBBY GRUBBS: We did more work in the rural areas really than we did urban, I did some work in Midland and Odessa, not a great lot. They had you know, our, I guess expertise was needed more in the areas where they didn't have many people, many officers. ... what you find in small departments, I always felt like a Ranger's place was more in the rural areas myself. And they did a lot in urban areas too I'm sure but...

NANCY RAY: Well, did you have, what kind of cases did you have? Were they like oilfield thefts or

BOBBY GRUBBS: We worked a lot of oilfield thefts at that time. In fact, I got lucky, I didn't know that much about the oilfield and uh I worked some oilfield thefts and made some pretty good arrests down there. One of them was a guy stealing crude oil out of... he was in Crockett County in Ozona and we got wind that he was stealing oil and watched for a long time to catch him... no this was different, I'm getting my stories mixed up. This one guy, we were gonna spend a week or so down there waiting on him. Well the first day we tried to set up our cameras and stuff, we looked and he was coming across the pasture. We're going up on a hill to set up our cameras and stuff and he's down there... they got an 18-wheeler tanker truck siphoning off oil while we're sitting up there watching him and the driver pass whiskey back and forth while we're photographing him at this time. And so we knock him down real quick so that was a good hit. We worked another one out of, it was out of McCamey, I guess in Upland County, this guy was a member of the school board and was coming in and siphoning off oil out of tanks. And so the Railroad Commission investigator got with me and he'd have to draw me pictures and

explain to me how all these valves worked and how they did this because I didn't know that much about it anyway. But he was a good guy to work with by the name of Butch Purvis.

NANCY RAY: PURVIS?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am. In fact, Butch's dad had been a Ranger also. ... Purvis I believe. But Butch worked with me a lot and we started working on this other guy and we set up with some people from I believe from Exxon or Shell, they had some security people come in. One of them was an ex-FBI agent. And they sat there and watched this guy siphon some oil but it wasn't from their company so they didn't do anything, didn't photograph it you know. We were supposed to catch him stealing oil, we didn't care whose oil it was. We didn't think they did either but they did. But anyway, we finally got a driver talking about this guy and got him caught. We sat down there every Friday afternoon and wait on him.

NANCY RAY: When you steal the oil, how do you get rid of it?

BOBBY GRUBBS: They, some of it they'd pump down into a dry hole and pump it back out and sell it and a lot of ins and outs of that, I can't give you to this day, we don't do much of it down here. We don't have much oil production. I'm kind of glad of it.

NANCY RAY: Right, I guess so. OK. *(stop to change discs)* OK, so when you go into the Rangers, you go in as a private?

BOBBY GRUBBS: At the time I went in, now, now if you go in there now, you go in as a sergeant.

NANCY RAY: Oh, OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And at the time when I went in the Rangers, there were privates, sergeants, and captains, there wasn't lieutenant's position. And they went back and created a lieutenant position and made the field Rangers sergeants. That was another situation where I said... I found

out... if I'd ever know I was gonna be a sergeant, I wouldn't have said some of the things about them that I said.

NANCY RAY: OK, so is there anything else while you were at Midland that, that uh stands out in your mind?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I don't guess I'll ever forget that investigation involving the sheriff out there that I did. They had planted some narcotics on some people and uh, I'd worked for this sheriff before and in fact, had questioned him about why they didn't call me the night they did this raid they planted dope. Of course I didn't know they were going out there to plant dope to start with, that's probably why they didn't call me. And they went on a deal, this guy had a pretty rough track record, a sheriff by the name of Glenn Willeford, he had written a book about, that I read the other day, which is pretty well fiction as far as I'm concerned. But he had planted some dope on a lady and we got some information from it which implicated him and all of his field deputies. And they were later all indicted. I arrested the sheriff on one on indictments the first time and the second time we had another charge came up that I went out and got him out of his living room and literally... Captain Powell said I threw him upstairs, I kind of drug him upstairs. There was an old rock jail, a small jail, but I was mad and he was mad and, and I put him in his jail you know, I literally put him in his jail. And I remember when we got to the top of the stairs, he'd been mouthing. And I took my glasses and my hat off and I was hoping maybe we was fixing to have an understanding up there and it didn't come to pass. And uh he told me, said you planning on dumping me? And I said you give me a chance and I will, yeah, I've had a belly full of you. And I locked him up and he shut up and of course after we shut the door he got mouthy again but I left. And ironically he, usually you couldn't keep a sheriff locked up long enough to get an attorney down there to get them and his lawyer was out of pocket and he spent about six

hours locked up down there. And I thoroughly enjoyed that. I was sitting down there on a curb and just drank coffee, and just kind of snickered to myself I guessand... He deserved it, but anyway...

NANCY RAY: Did he do time?

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, he got probation and... and that seemed like in, in most cases on these public officials, most of them are first-time they've created you know an offense for something and they end up seems like with a probated sentence more than they do actual time. Now I worked a police officer here that did some actual time for some bank extortion stuff.

NANCY RAY: OK, uh is there anything else about Midland before we move to Brownwood?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Not that really stands out that much. Just, I just never did make Midland my place to be. I think I really came into my being when I got down here.

NANCY RAY: Well let's talk about Brownwood then. What year was that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I came here in I think it was July '86, '87. Maybe '87, I'm not totally sure on that. But anyway, uh I replaced Norman Autrey when he retired here. And I had a standing offer to Captain Powell. I said I'll take Brownwood, Abilene, or San Angelo, any one of the three. I said if you can start me out of Midland today and tell me where to turn when I get close and I said I'll take the one that's available. Norman, Norman Autrey retired here and I took this station.

NANCY RAY: OK. And you're the only Ranger here?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes ma'am. When I came here, I was the only DPS criminal officer they had here. They had troopers here, they didn't have anybody in Narcotics or Auto Theft...

NANCY RAY: Now what do you mean by, what do you mean by criminal officer?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's criminal investigator type, we've got you know investigators for auto Theft, investigators for Narcotics and... but the only one that represented the state in this county at this time was me.

NANCY RAY: OK. And what did you do as that person?

BOBBY GRUBBS: A little of everything OK... I guess really. Just whatever came along when somebody needed help. Here I was assigned Brown, Coleman, and Runnels County, had three counties. And most of my work was more out of Brown County and Runnels County than it did, I mean Coleman County, I'm sorry, than it did Runnels County. And normally if they had a murder or anything violent, major violent crime or... we did a lot of internal affairs type work that's when an officer messed up or something, we investigated that. And investigated burglaries, investigated auto theft, and chop shops and wherever we found to work, I worked, I worked it all. And I called, I got into uh an organized, what they call a chop shop, stolen vehicles been cut up and parted out. And that was not my area of expertise but they had an auto theft man out of Abilene who came up and helped me with it but I've got... somebody started some major rings that I got going.

NANCY RAY: Well the rings, were they from, from local areas or...

BOBBY GRUBBS: Some these were vehicles that were being stolen in the metroplex area coming down here they put in storage sheds and I got some information and we ended up with thirteen new vehicles hid out down here. And they were driven down, they had just enough mileage on them to get them here.

NANCY RAY: Well, how, how did you get your work? Did the sheriff say I need help or how did you do it?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You come in and you get with the sheriff and work around the people and get to know them a little bit. Of course people call on the you if they know you. And if they know you'll come, they'll call you. And if they called me, I came. And just, and... you know I got where I'd seen them on a pretty regular basis and uh they start working with you a little bit and you establish some trust. And uh after that, sometimes it was hard to turn the task down about what they will call you on. But it, but you build up this.

NANCY RAY: Well do you have, is there a case that uh just really stands out in your mind as far as making you feel good... giving you a lot of satisfaction?

BOBBY GRUBBS: This is gonna sound cold hearted but I worked a case on a fellow by the name of Ricky McGeehan He had beat his stepdaughter. He sexually assaulted his stepdaughter and beat her to death with the flat side of a roofing ax, very brutal. And it turned out later through DNA that I was able, we found another body that had been sexually violated, was female, and was beat to death with what appeared to be a roofing hammer. Both of them real brutal. And I found Ricky's DNA on that one. We convicted him for his stepdaughter's death and rape and got him the death penalty. And uh which was the first death penalty in this county in a bunch of years, I can't give an exact amount, forty or fifty. And uh you know as it turned out, Ricky had been a suspect in a shooting of his brother-in-law in Concho County. They were not able to prove this I don't... George Frasier worked on this some I think. And also I have another murder over here that's still open to this day of a girl by the name of Sherry Newman which was beat to death with a roofing hammer and all... pretty, by the killing it opens a signature killing. I didn't have DNA on this last one to put it on Ricky McGeehan but we got him convicted and sentenced to the death penalty. This took considerable amount of time and through DNA and at that time, labs, our labs, didn't do that much DNA you had to get extra lab to do all

this, start it. And you know they, I think that man today I think killed a bunch of people that I don't know about yet. I tried, I've made several trips down there to try to talk to him and the last time he told the deputy and the district attorney investigator, I was with them also, he said when ya'll come back, don't bring him, meaning me. He didn't like me. And the feeling is mutual, I didn't like him either. And...

NANCY RAY: He's still on death row?

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, they executed him.

NANCY RAY: He did, OK....

BOBBY GRUBBS: My wife thinks I'm crazy, I went down there and witnessed that one. I told him I said I'll be there the day you die. And I was. And I also told him I guess ...we worked his stepdaughter's... I told him I'd like to shoot you and leave you in a ditch but... and I would have like to have, I really would have for what he did to his stepdaughter, but I didn't do that. And it just, but... and I looked... you know that would give you some satisfaction I guess if you go to the execution but it really doesn't because they're sedated to the point that they can almost do surgery on these people... You know it's not near justice for what they've done to their victims. It just...

NANCY RAY: Well, when you go home at night, how do you leave things like that behind, not take it home with you?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You don't. It goes home with you, it really does. I never figured out a way...

NANCY RAY: To separate it?

BOBBY GRUBBS: To turn it off I guess, you know. You know you kind of kick it back in your mind but it's still there. When I was really heavily involved in a murder investigation and things

like that, I'd go home and go to bed and I'd wake up in the middle of the night thinking about it again. Go back and get in my recliner and sleep a little bit more and just kind of bounce around because you're just kind of livid, until you get it put together really, so...

NANCY RAY: Right. Well, and your job wasn't an 8 to 5 job either.

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, it wasn't, it wasn't.

NANCY RAY: It was pretty much all the time, right?

BOBBY GRUBBS: When the phone rang and of course this is not much different now. The phone rings or something at night, I go, if they need me. Of course I've got officers that go out. I still go out on a lot of stuff, I guess I'm too hardheaded to quit. And I've gotta be out there and look over their shoulders.

NANCY RAY: Well now you spent the rest of your time as a Ranger here in Brownwood area?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes.

NANCY RAY: Well you were very fortunate with that.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I was. And you know they never did move us much unless you requested to or tried to promote. And I got the kids and everybody settled here where we kind of, it kinda got to be home.

NANCY RAY: Right. Now did you ever try to promote or decide...

BOBBY GRUBBS: No.

NANCY RAY: Not for you.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I used to joke, I was joking with Captain Weathers one day. I told him I said Captain, I guess I gave up so I'm not gonna make lieutenant. He said Bobby, you have to take a test to make lieutenant. I said, Oh! And I never... I was pretty content right here and... You know, basically, I knew what the Rangers expected out of me and I felt like I did it, they

didn't bother me and we got along great. You know they just... I'd call... I guess when the... it was kind of a rude awakening when they came with computers and stuff. And I still don't get along with computers well to this day. I've got one. I've got an agreement with that one that if it won't bother me I won't bother it.

NANCY RAY: So it, it's not used much then?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I don't know that its been used much at all, really. Somebody comes in and turns it off now and then and then they turn it back on, and I don't touch it. I told them, said I don't want the thing. We couldn't operate without them but I've got good secretaries and... And you know I ran one a little bit in the Rangers and if I wasn't so hardheaded I could do it, but... I said I don't like this and that's not the right outlook in this day and age. My grandson can do more on a computer than I can and so can my granddaughter. Nearly anybody can, I guess.

NANCY RAY: Well, do you think uh that's probably one of the biggest differences now between Rangers, what they do...

BOBBY GRUBBS: It is. You know, we used to hand write our reports on, in notepad, and we'd mail them into Midland and they'd type them and mail them back to us. And, sometimes I would use a tape recorder and tape record part of mine and mail it in and they'd transcribe it. And I got along with that pretty well. I don't type anyway, I type with two fingers and I was slow and that computer, I guess, it ate a 28-page report I'd written one time and we never could find it and I've never forgave it yet, I guess. It was a shooting and it was a pretty detailed report and, and I don't know what I did but it went away, my whole report went *chhhhh*. And Captain Cavers came in, who was my captain at that time, tried to find it and he couldn't it. I went to Eastland and met with him and he said I guess it was operator error. I said the operator's gonna roll down that window and throw that thing out at about 95 miles per hour and see how it bounces behind me.

And I think he was afraid I'd really do it but, and... Barry was a good captain to me but he was a computer man and I wasn't. And I was kind of vocal about it so it just... (laughter)

NANCY RAY: Well what other cases did you have here, uh...

BOBBY GRUBBS: Worked a lot of murders here.

NANCY RAY: A lot? Why? Why were there so many murders?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I guess it was basically... if they had a murder they called me. You know I mean they just, and if they didn't call me, I'd come hunt them up and want to know why they didn't call me, I guess.

NANCY RAY: Well, was it uh... families, or was it drugs, or was...

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's... we had, of course we had, let's see, three murders that I attributed to Ricky McGeehan And we've still got one murder down here for a little girl nearly twenty years ago, just about that... A little girl by the name of Amanda Goodwin that had just turned thirteen and had left junior high one day and never made it back home. Somebody picked her up and we found her body outside of town. And of course we didn't have any... well the first two weeks during the investigation I was in Austin in a school but I came in and picked up after that. And to this day I kind of feel like I know who killed the little girl but I can't prove it and, there's not any physical evidence left to work with. And that's pretty frustrating to me.

NANCY RAY: Well, I was gonna ask. Is there a case that maybe you haven't been able to solve...

BOBBY GRUBBS: That is my albatross around my neck right there.

NANCY RAY: That's the one, huh.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I've got another one that the man that was executed out here on a service road and we've made, I've got it moving again right now. We've got some suspects developed.

We've got, in my mind I know who did it. We need just a little bit more to take it to the Grand Jury. I could probably get them indicted now but I don't know if I could convict them. And just indict them without a conviction is a waste of time. And that's not what you want to do because you can't come back to it. So...

NANCY RAY: Have you ever, do you use polygraph operators much or do you...

BOBBY GRUBBS: I did, uh huh, periodically, as a need arose. We used them in these murders quite a lot at that time.

NANCY RAY: Pretty successful with that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's, it depends on the operator.

NANCY RAY: The operator.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I'm finding out now that this one murder that I've got moving again, we had tried to work with some of these people, polygraphed them, and this... I hate to say this but this operator didn't follow through or wasn't aggressive enough to make it work and we've got one now that is and we're getting better results.

NANCY RAY: Good. So...

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know we're getting, before we'd come up with uh inconclusive. Well when you run a polygraph, inconclus... you're inconclusive when you went in there. No need for ifs...

NANCY RAY: Don't need a polygraph for that.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah, don't need a polygraph. And I think just, I think the operator was somewhat burn out and these guys... and moved around and that defeats the purpose of the thing if you can't control the situation. And he didn't at that time. And just luckily for us, they came back thinking they could do all this again and it didn't work the second time and we got results.

NANCY RAY: So that one's moving again then.

BOBBY GRUBBS: It is moving again and I'm hoping we can clear it.

NANCY RAY: Did you spend much time in the courtroom?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's... I spent a fair amount as a Ranger you know on murder trials and stuff. I didn't usually go to Grand Jury a whole lot because I worked with other officers and I let them present the case and I went from there with them you know. And it just wasn't... spent a lot of time on murder trials on the stand.

NANCY RAY: Right. OK. What about the Branch Davidian incident, were you in that one?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah, I was. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: What can you tell us about that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: *Whoa...* It's... you know when this happened, I think this went down on Sunday, right? When that ATF first initially raided it and they got started the shooting part of it I believe... but anyway, I turned the television on for some reason and found out that this was going on in Waco, and they'd had some ATF agents shot. Well I called Captain Powell in Midland and I said Captain, I said are we doing anything on this? He said no, in fact he didn't know about it at that time so he turned... said no, don't worry about it. And uh... well then you know they were denned up in that house for a long time and I called him again the next day and I said Captain, are we sending anybody because I knew on Company E, I would have been the logical man to go because I border Company F, Waco District, where that was out of. And I figured if any other company sent anybody I'd be going. And of course I guess we'd all... I'd been mad if they hadn't sent me and later, looking back on it, I might have been glad if they'd left me along. But no, but... anyway, the third day he called me. They told me get clothes for two weeks and go to Waco, as quick as you can get there. So I gathered up my clothes and

headed for Waco... no, we won't be gone two weeks. And we wasn't, seemed like we were gone forever down there. We were there nearly the entire siege. And my first job down there was to start doing interviews with the ATF agents that went in on this, taking written statements and recorded statements. And then we tried to talk with some of the Davidians that came out, which periodically... I talked to a guy by the name of Clive Doyle which has been on television somewhat with the Discovery Channel and all. Myself and Bill Gerth, who was was a Ranger in Wichita Falls, went to Parkland Hospital to interview him after it had burned. And he would tell us about throwing out lantern fuel and stuff in that house. And his hands were just totally burnt, I mean totally. You know if you're trying to get away from a fire you might be burned on this side but your whole hand, it's not logical that it's all... And he would tell us about preparation to start the fire but he wouldn't talk to us about the fire. And he just shut down there. And of course he had lost a daughter and a dog in the fire. And he talked to us about his dog but he never mentioned his daughter. We finally brought that up well you lost a daughter too, didn't you? Yeah, and uh, I can't to this day comprehend the mindset of the people in this thing. And it was just you know was a bad deal but probably everybody with the exception of the little kids had an opportunity of coming out of there if they wanted to. The little kids didn't have a choice and that was a bad deal, but... That was, you know we dug in the ashes and gathered up evidence. Those people had enough guns and supplies down there, water and food and ammunition... the amount of guns, I guess we could have still been sitting down there waiting on them to come out by now I guess. They might be running short by now.

NANCY RAY: What year was that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: That was '93, I believe.

NANCY RAY: '93, oh goodness, it doesn't seem that long.

BOBBY GRUBBS: It just, it just... in fact George Frasier, I guess one of... George retired shortly after that. I don't know why I got that in my mind, I kind of linked the two... and of course he was starting to preach some then and uh... but he left right after that. And we all worked you know very close together. It's unusual to work that close with other Rangers because most of us are use to working... but sometime it caused a little bit of trial and tribulation because we're used to doing it our way. And when you got all of us down there used to doing it our way, somebody has to give and take a little. But we worked good together, we really did. You really got to know some people really well like that.

NANCY RAY: Well, at the, at the Davidian compound, then you had Federal law enforcement also and who had charge, I mean who was in charge?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, the way it really came about, the investigation was supposed to be ours. But it, it was being presented by Federal prosecutors and so they were really kind of calling the shots the way we did this. Now they assigned us a team at one point when we were working through the rubble is where it burned, comprised of some FBI agents and they worked for us. I never had an FBI agent work for me before. Some of them didn't work very hard but they did and some of them worked real hard. Some of them did a real good job. But they were on, you know we were divided into teams and sectors and grids that we worked to recover evidence and so forth and they worked with us there. Now the investigation part of it where the statements and things like this, we did primarily. And uh of course they were the entry team that went back, the FBI did.

NANCY RAY: Was there anything else about that incident that stands out in your mind?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I'm just basically glad it's over.

NANCY RAY: Glad it's over.

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know we had a, we established a lot of rapport with other Rangers and stuff down there and we more and less lived together and ate together, we spent all our time together. You got to know some of them real well and like some guys that you knew in passing... make you know what I consider to be really good friends out of this.

NANCY RAY: Well uh, did you ever use a psychic in any of your cases?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yes, I talked to a psychic, I didn't go out hunting one and uh, it's... you know they'd tell me stuff... I went over to Austin with a deputy, he got some information on this man Gundenberg. And didn't know this lady was a psychic but we drove to Austin to see what information she had. We talked to her and we get in there and I find out she's a psychic. I thought, wait, I don't know about this. But anyway, and I'd listen to anybody if they could give me an answer to what I was hunting for, it didn't really matter. But she kind of hedged around and the deputy left the room and she said that's the guy that killed that little girl. Well the deputy still works for me today and he didn't kill that little girl but... and how this psychic... it kind of...

NANCY RAY: She didn't win many points, did she?

BOBBY GRUBBS: No, she really didn't. You know what's ironic? You know I told you I lived out in the country in Roanoke? The man and lady that I bought this house from, the lady was a psychic. And she would tell me said uh... the year I made Ranger, she said you're gonna make Ranger this year. And I said OK. She said well maybe next year. I said yeah, OK. And uh, but she'd told me things... we were hunting for a little girl disappeared... kind of bouncing again, I don't know if you want to do this or not. The little girl disappeared up in Denton and we were all trying to find her. Well this lady, the psychic, contacted me and said come by the house and talk to me. And I knew... I went over and drank coffee with her husband quite a lot, we were friends

anyway. But I stayed out of the psychic part of it. She had offered to do a reading on me one time and I said I don't think I want to know. Just leave me alone. But anyway, and they honored that but she told me I've got some information, come over here. So I didn't tell my Highway Patrol partner because I figured he'd thought I was nuts, you know. I told him I'm gonna take the spare car and I'm gonna leave for a little while. He said where're you going? I said I'm gonna go talk to some people. He said what are you gonna do? I said I'm gonna go talk to a psychic you know. So he went with me but she talked to me. And this little girl that was missing, the psychic told me said she'll be found in a body of water, her body will be, south of Denton. Well the little girl's body was found in a gravel pit, full of water in Dallas County, which is south of Denton. I thought maybe, maybe not... I don't know. So anyway, I'm really, I'm not convinced yet, I don't know. I guess I'm so skeptical about that that I think well, it's kind of like a horoscope, you can make it fit if you work at it long enough, maybe. And so, but I never had any success using psychics.

NANCY RAY: OK, what is the most unusual responsibility you had as a Ranger?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Umm...

NANCY RAY: I've heard... well I didn't realize that uh Rangers would drive governors and things like that.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I did that.

NANCY RAY: Did you, who did you drive?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I drove Mark White, George Bush, uh Ann...

NANCY RAY: Richards?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Ann Richards, *shooo...*

NANCY RAY: You had quite a few.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I'm thinking who else. I got tickled... I drove Mark White up in Midland one time. And me and one of the other Rangers, C. J. Havrda, who later went on to be senior captain, were assigned to drive him. Well I was lead car we were gonna drive the governor and he was bringing the entourage and his airplane was late. And he got off that plane just snapping and grabbing at all his crew, just steady eating them out. And he turned around at us you know and said I'm not mad at ya'll... and we thought good, you know. But anyway, he got in the car with me and I said Governor, and we were running late, that's what he was so hot about to start with. I said I can try to make up some time or we can be later, I said whatever you want to do. He said try to make up some time. So we made a pretty good trip down through Midland and the Ranger following me and I think I scared his entourage, I don't think I scared the governor, he didn't say nothing. But the rest of the entourage did and went and told on me to the captain and he was like... and the captain made a remark to the secretary... said I hate to send him off with the governor because you can't ever tell what he might tell him. And I pop off a lot. If I got something on my mind, I'll tell you. And if I get mad, I'd tell you. I don't go around jumping on governors but if something comes to mind, I'm liable to pop off about it and sometimes it's not the right thing to say. It's hard for me to be politically correct. (laughter) But... and I always got along with these guys, I enjoyed... I really enjoyed being around Ann Richards. She's kind of strange but... I took her to the old DPS office here one time. They had a fish fry down here and I drove her out there and when she left, brought her back to the airport. And I asked her, I said... the airport was closed up, it was a small airport. I said if you need to make a restroom stop or something like that, there's a DPS over here and we can pull in there. We go in, make a stop... well there's some coffee been there from probably no telling how many hours, it was just stout. And she said I think I'll get some of that coffee. And I said Governor, we can make some more, I

said that coffee's been there for a while. She said well I've drank some rough coffee before so we got us both a cup of rough coffee and... she's a pretty salty lady... a lot of times I thought I don't know about her but in some... in some ways you had to kind of admire the way she makes a stand on things too. I really never drove a governor that I really felt like I had a problem with, and it just seemed like always had a pretty good rapport with all of them, they, just... George Bush, before he got to be president, came down here and I got tickled. His entourage called ahead you know and they said we were gonna take him from Republican headquarters to the courthouse. Well, Republican headquarters was across the street and they're used to dealing with Houston and Austin and they said you know, can you predict how long it will take you to get the governor from Point A to Point B... from the courthouse to the Republican headquarters? I said, well it depends on how fast he walks... or if the light's red or green. And you know they said well we need a time. I said it's just across the street, it's not gonna take us long. And so anyway, we get over there... and my daughter was there, she was teaching school at that time, and married. And so she comes over there and asks me, said do you think I could get my picture made with the governor? I said, I'll ask him. And so I asked him, I said you think I could let her daughter get her picture made? He said yeah. So I got back well then he motioned to me, he said you come over here too. And so he got a picture with me and my daughter and George Bush together there. And I wish I'd a got it autographed. I guess if I run into him again today I'd probably do that. I'm kind of proud of that.

NANCY RAY: You should be.

BOBBY GRUBBS: But he was just a real easy person to be around, real personable type person... sit down and talk with him and you know, wasn't a problem at all. In fact, he drove his entourage crazy because he always had deadlines to meet and he visited with everybody. So...

NANCY RAY: Well, what was the uh, what was the most unusual responsibility? I mean um anything that's just different? In my mind, I think of a Ranger as you know very well respected, very focused, uh you know... solving crimes, what would I not think a Ranger would be doing?

BOBBY GRUBBS: There's really not much that we wouldn't do if somebody asked us to help them. I mean it just... I did a lot of things from little bitty nothing to sometimes I just didn't write a report if it was very little because I didn't want to mess with it.

NANCY RAY: Too much trouble?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Wasn't much to it. But you know, I've gone out and helped deputies serve warrants, arrest warrants, and just of course that kind of falls in the scope of this too but you know if I could help them some, I'd help them. And just... they knew I would.

NANCY RAY: Well, when you put the badge on, that, that Ranger badge is... I mean you had a Highway Patrol badge but you put the Ranger badge on, how was that different?

BOBBY GRUBBS: It just... it seemed like it was just almost impossible to obtain that position you know, and I was beyond proud of that badge.

NANCY RAY: Beyond proud, still.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Still am. I guess I'll always... I said something to somebody one day, I said I'm an ex-Ranger and they said no, you won't ever be an ex-Ranger, and I don't guess I am. You know it's in your heart. It's kind of a brotherhood and it just and... I'm proud of that. I'm more proud of that than probably anything else I'll do, really. You know, I had a good career.

NANCY RAY: Sure. Now what year did you retire?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Retired in 2003.

NANCY RAY: 2003.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Actually, in 2001, they quit taking retirement out of my check. And I maxed out my retirement and uh you know I knew I was working basically for nothing. But you know, I was doing what I wanted to do and I still worked until 2003 and they started getting these rumors going around then that they were, might do a cash incentive buy out. And the first time you were eligible for this you either had to take it or lose it. Well the first time it came into being, I'd already been eligible for it two years. And at that point I said well, I said I guess it's time for me to go and I'd figure it up again and try to figure out a way where there was an initiative enough for me to stay... you know my wife's gonna hold a job and help us work and I'm over here working for nothing, I said that's not really right anymore and it's time for me to do something. And so I finally made a decision to retire and it's probably one of the hardest decisions I ever made. I wrote a letter, Danny Rhea was with me, and we finally got the letter wrote, we FAXed it because we couldn't get the email to work between the two of us. But at nearly 5 o'clock on a Friday afternoon as the big office was closing, I'd be retired as of Sunday night at Midnight, would my retirement take effect, the first of September. And Danny come over because he didn't think I'd do it, he was already retired. And I came pretty close not to doing it... no I ain't gonna do it. He said just get it over with and so I said OK, I'll do it. We sent it in. We tried to send an email and it wouldn't go so we finally sent them a FAX and so I took the senior captain's home phone number home with me that night or that weekend. And on that Sunday night, I put it beside my bed and about 11:30... I wasn't sleeping good anyway because I knew that effective at Midnight, I was retired. And uh I woke up about 11:30 and I said I'm gonna call him and tell him to forget it, I'll be at work Monday morning. I didn't do it. Laid back down, dosed off again and woke up about a quarter to 12 and said I'm gonna call him. I said no,

I'm gonna lay back down. I probably woke up after Midnight and I said I guess it's over.
(laughter) But that was hard for me to do, it really was. I had a good career.

NANCY RAY: OK, so you retired and then how long did you stay retired before you did something else?

BOBBY GRUBBS: I retired in September and in November 2003, I announced for sheriff.

NANCY RAY: OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I didn't stay long.

NANCY RAY: No you didn't.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Danny Rhea and I went deer hunting and I thought about it and I came back from that deer hunt and announced. We sat down there, in fact I sat down there and wrote some of my campaign stuff in the deer stand... there scratching around looking for a deer.

NANCY RAY: Did you get a deer?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Huh?

NANCY RAY: Did you get a deer?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: You did?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Finally did.

NANCY RAY: OK, so you came back from hunting and you have to campaign, the election is in November, right? That's not much time, and you won... and so

BOBBY GRUBBS: I ran, of course I ran on Republican ticket and I ran against the former chief deputy here who was running for sheriff and this Houston police officer, there were three of us on the Republican ticket. And we got in a run-off, I had to do a run-off for that and I won the run-off. And then there was a lieutenant who had, I guess he was a lieutenant in the sheriff's

office that was running on the Democratic ticket so I had to beat him in the general election. So I beat three people to get here that time. I don't know who won, me or them. I ain't sure yet, but it just... I just wasn't ready to quit yet. Just wasn't ready to quit.

NANCY RAY: Well, how is being sheriff different from being a Ranger?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, I'm not the lead investigator anymore, I guess. I guess I still could be, I don't actually have time. And sometimes I'm tied a lot closer to this desk than what I used to be in the Rangers. Sometimes, I miss the fact that when I was a Ranger, I could get in the car and just go... just go for a long time or go about wherever I wanted to go... my responsibilities are here now.

NANCY RAY: Yeah... probably a lot more administrative responsibilities too.

BOBBY GRUBBS: It is, sure is. And there's one thing that as a Ranger, I'd worked these with these agencies and I'd see some things that didn't suit me and I'd make suggestions and stuff but you don't control their agencies. You try to work with them hand in hand. And there were some things when, that I thought when I was running for this that I'd changed, and I have. You know I've made quite a few changes.

NANCY RAY: So what change are you the most proud of, that you've made?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know, really this is gonna sound like I'm blowing my horn, but the sheriff's office, at the time I took office, had a reputation of... there was getting to be a little clique. And the little ... clique wasn't anything and the job really wasn't getting done anyway. And I was getting... really I didn't enjoy working that much with the Rangers. And uh you know, I said I'd like to change that and I have. I think we got an agency now that everybody's working together. My chief deputy is assistant, was assistant commander of DPS Narcotics prior to coming to work for me. He brings lots of experience with him. And then I've got a captain

who was a former Houston PD SWAT sergeant. And I think he's got 26 years on himBobby ... the chief deputy's 30 on, I believe, and I had 34 years, 6 months before I left the state. And of course people kind of called this a mini-DPS but all my background was DPS, it was a good outfit, it's not a bad one to pattern after, really. You know we had a lot of structure to what we did, give people a lot of freedom, expect a lot out of them... and you know until they violate that trust, you work with them.

NANCY RAY: Sure.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And it's hard for me, sometimes we start a murder and I want to look over their shoulder but I've learned to kind of get back out of the way and let them run. We had a murder at Bangs here not long ago and uh our investigator... the body ended up out at the city dump out here. Of course I went and waded in the dump with the rest of them... but, and... but kind of stood back and let them do it and they did a good job. You know they're capable of it, they don't need me... pushing them... they don't have to have me looking over their shoulder all the time.

NANCY RAY: You'd just like to be.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, some of it is just engrained in me to do, I've gotta go see. I guess that's the way I've always done... I guess the chief deputy that I beat that was running for sheriff here, the night I retired they had a retirement dinner for me. And him, sheriff at that time, came out there. And they made the comment said there's one thing about him, said he'll always come if you call him. And if you don't call him, you catch hell the next morning when he shows up. And I was pretty blunt about some of the things I said, I just you know... and I thought... I had my job to do. And I took it real serious.

NANCY RAY: Surely, right. Well if, if I asked you, you know, if a future generation looks at this video or they read the document from your interview, what would your legacy be, what would you..., what would you want people to say about you?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Well, first and foremost I guess, and I've always said this. If I was remembered for something, I would want to be remembered as a working Ranger. Because that's a pretty high compliment, it means I took care of business.

NANCY RAY: Yeah. And you'd come.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And it just... you know I had a good career. I got what I wanted or what I always thought I wanted to obtain, I did. And so I've, I've got no regrets and I was... I did.

NANCY RAY: Well, as a sheriff, I would say there must be... you'd have to be keep up the political side of things... and you have to put up a good front.

BOBBY GRUBBS: That's harder to do.

NANCY RAY: Yeah. And you have to be in the community and uh, what is... I think you were at some kind of a fund raiser or something for CASA?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: Do you want to tell us about that?

BOBBY GRUBBS: This is for you know families that are having problems, the children's abuse and so forth. And they have a dinner every year, a fund raiser, and they have a bunch of the law enforcement and the district judge and a bunch of us come out there and wait on tables and they sell tickets and we... and this year they showed up with a karaoke machine and uh they raised \$300 for me and the county judge to get up here and sing into this karaoke machine. I don't sing in church, I don't sing at home, I just don't sing. And I said, well I don't know about this. And they said it's a good cause, and it was, and I thought this is totally out of character for

me to do this. Well I asked the county judge, I said I'll do it if you'll do it. I just felt like... we go to church together. And uh we get up there. Well the song we end up going to sing is "I'm in the Jailhouse Now" by the Foagy Bottom Boys or whatever that is.

NANCY RAY: Foggy Bottom?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Anyway... it's, it's pretty pathetic when we got up there, we were doing a duet. And I think people were falling out on the floor over there laughing because it was pretty... it was pretty funny to us after we got started. I was scared to death before I started, I thought now how can I get out of this?

NANCY RAY: That's the scariest you've ever been?

BOBBY GRUBBS: (laughter) Yeah, really. I'd rather take a beating than I had stand up and talk to an audience or... I don't like making speeches. Now I can get up, I can visit with anybody but when you make it a formal proceeding or something, I don't like it. And I still have to make myself go to a, you know, deal like that.

NANCY RAY: Well, did you raise quite a bit of money off your singing?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Its... we got a little over \$300 for the song and we slaughtered the song. I haven't had any record contracts offered to me yet and...

NANCY RAY: You're not rolling in money yet.

BOBBY GRUBBS: (laughter) No. I went home and I told people, I said I can't believe I did this. And we did pretty good... and I forgot about that song having yodeling in it... it showed the words to us and we'd sing at it and I'm not much of a singer anyway but then here it comes up with all this yodeling... I can't sing and sure enough can't yodel. But I told them I'd looked at that and I'd go yodel yodel yodel yodel you know, la de da and... It just... and I guess the crowd got a kick out of but... (laughter)

NANCY RAY: They were probably laughing so hard they couldn't hear you anyway.

BOBBY GRUBBS: They were, and we were before it was over with. I told them this is a first. I went home and told my wife I did that and she said I can't believe you did that. She said I'm glad I wasn't with you. She said I'd a got under the table or something. I said well... I said I didn't know I was going to do it. In fact I'd just went outside and got... the justice of peace and I were standing there smoking a cigar and he said they'd get some of these people to do this karaoke deal and I said not me. I'd run off before I'd do that. I went back in there and they had me snared, you know. And of course they'd stand there and tell you, you know, this is for a good cause and it's a good way to raise some money and it is. I said well, I guess I'll do it.

NANCY RAY: Yeah, guess you'll do it. (laughter) Well, is there anything else you'd like to tell us about uh your Ranger days or your, your days as a sheriff? Of course you're coming up for reelection of Brown County so you're busy.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I had, you know I hope to win, it's my intentions to try and win another term and at the end of that term I'll be 67, I'll look at it again. I don't know, I might quit... I don't want to carve that in stone. I had a friend tell me one time they'll bury you with a badge on your chest and they might, I don't know. Gotta bury me some way. It could be worse.

NANCY RAY: Surely could.

BOBBY GRUBBS: It's, you know uh, it's kind of what I do I guess. You know I don't do much fishing anymore, hunt a little bit but just to take my grandson and stuff but...

NANCY RAY: So that's, that's your job.

BOBBY GRUBBS: This is what I do I guess.

NANCY RAY: Well, if you could go back, think back through your career, if you could go back and change something that you did, that just sticks out in your mind and you think I wish I had done it this way.

BOBBY GRUBBS: Different?

NANCY RAY: Can you think of anything?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah, I'd probably start competing to get in the Rangers a lot sooner than what I did, really. Because I always.... And said no, they won't take me. And uh, of course there's a lot of things I'd gone back and changed. And, I guess that marriage I made when I was in service is one that was destined to fail when I did it so that'll bother me I guess for the rest of my life because of that boy.

NANCY RAY: Sure. OK.

BOBBY GRUBBS: And that's something I don't really even talk about, most people don't know about that.

NANCY RAY: Well, if you were giving advice to uh a new Ranger, somebody who's just coming into the Rangers, what would you tell that person?

BOBBY GRUBBS: You know, do what's right, tell the truth irregardless of the consequences, and I firmly believe that. And I've got on the stand before and they asked me a question, did you do this or did you not do this... and if you didn't do it, tell them you didn't. Don't try to cover your tracks, be honest. Because the only thing you got to offer is your integrity and your credibility. And if you'll take care of that, it'll work out. That's the best product you got. Really that, and remember you still got a family too, take care of them. I mean because when it's all over with, they'll still be there.

NANCY RAY: That's true. OK. Well, Eddie, do you have any questions? Do you have anything else you'd like to share?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Can't really think of anything. You know, I guess now of course I got grandkids here and that's my tranquilizers. I've got a six year old granddaughter kind of leading me around by the nose. I smoke cigars and she started on a crusade to get me to quit and... she'll probably succeed where nobody else has ever been able to probably because she's figured out how to work me pretty good.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I thoroughly them. So...

NANCY RAY: They're the light of your life, right?

BOBBY GRUBBS: Yeah, they really are. That they are. (laughter)

NANCY RAY: Well, thank you very much for your time and uh we thank you for your service to the state.

BOBBY GRUBBS: I've enjoyed your visit.

NANCY RAY: Thank you.