

Some Like it Hot: Tales from the Firehouse
Interview with Mike Smith

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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Jen Weidner 00:03 Today is August the 17th 2023, I'm Jen Weidner with the Jeffersonville Township Public Library conducting interviews for Some Like It Hot: Tales from the Firehouse. I'm here today with retired firefighter Mike Smith of the Jeffersonville Fire Department. Thank you so much for being here today.

Mike Smith 00:25 Thanks for having me.

Jen Weidner 00:27 So how long were you with the department

Mike Smith 00:28 33 years.

Jen Weidner 00:31 What made you want to become a firefighter?

Mike Smith 00:34 Well, it's a little bit of a story, but when I was younger, my dad took me and I met with the guy that was driving a wrecker. And my dad said this guy wants to be mayor. Now my dad told me this story I would have been I was probably I don't know how whatever was eight, nine, ten and and I say why do you want to be mayor when you can drive a wrecker? It's so happened it was Rich Vising and Rich Vissing drove a wrecker. But anyway, when I decided to be a firefighter it was I had a good job. I was a maintenance mechanic, that Jeff Boat, And so at that time, I mean, Jeff Boat that's been years ago, but I mean, it was booming.

Jen Weidner 01:20 Everybody worked at Jeff Boat or knew somebody worked there.

Mike Smith 01:23 It was a union job, and I made good money, but it was one of them deals. Where my dad talked about, you know, security, stuff like that. So anyway, I decided to be a firefighter. My dad was a retired Jeff police officer. My dad was on the Jeffersonville Fire Department when he came out in the military for about a year and he didn't like it. So he became a police officer in 1953. And I was born in 52. So he was on the fire department when I was born. But anyway, he was he retired from the police department. But I went and talked to Rich Vising like I said, I knew and Rich even he told me the story about me asking him about why would he want to be mayor when he can drive a wrecker? So anyway, he said, well, you know, you have to be 21 And we talked about that a little bit. So when I turned 21, I went back and talked to him, and said, You know, I still like to be a firefighter. He said, Well, we have to wait for an opening. So then in June there was going to be an opening in June. So I went on June 16, 1974. So I was about 21. And, oh, I want to say October and eight months.

Jen Weidner 02:39 So if you hadn't become a firefighter, do you think you would have stayed at Jeff boat?

Mike Smith 02:42 Well, my, my trade is I'm a machinist. I was a machinist tool and dye that was my trade. So I went to school for that. So I had put in. I was a maintenance mechanic at Jeff Boat and I had put in a bid to transfer into the machine shop so I would have transferred into the machine shop because my vocation was machinist. So you know who I mean. You know, I grew up working in a service station by the Howard Steamboat Museum, and I love that work because everybody that went home all the people in Oak Park all the people in the East End, they would always come in and when I met so many people and it was like, it was like a bar without alcohol. People would pull in and get gas and well how's it going? Or how's this? You know, it was just you met so many people and on weekends, people would bring their car to us and we take them home and then we'd service it and stuff. So I really liked that atmosphere so I would have like to have on the service station, but I wouldn't know it would be that or if I would have stayed at Jeff Boat as a machinist. Probably would have done that but I haven't wanted to that was kind of my two things.

Jen Weidner 03:55 So you're glad you became a firefighter?

Mike Smith 03:56 Oh absolutely, firefighting is not a job. It's really it's a career.

Jen Weidner 04:01 That's what all of you all have said, that have come before you. Yep. So what were some of the challenges of being a firefighter?

Mike Smith 04:09 Well, it's there's a lot of different challenges. As you get older, for example, one of the toughest jobs I think as you get older, is when people call 911. You know that and they're asking for help. Are they needing you one of the first things you have to do is get out of bed and get dressed and I know that sounds silly, but when you get older, when you get older, it's not. It's not as easy to jump out of bed. Get all of your hawks(boots) and gear on in here on and get on the truck and be out the door and a minute and a half and being somebody's you know, helping somebody in a situation in three minutes or four minutes. As you get older. That's kind of the hard part. When you're younger, I would say nowadays because it's so my military, that a lot of the people that hadn't been in military, the young ones may struggle a little bit with the structure maybe, but it is semi military because of the rank structure.

Jen Weidner 05:13 Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Mike Smith 05:15 But when you're younger, you're ,you're gone from home 24 hours a day, 10 days a month. So you know if you're young and then you have a family and stuff, you know you're, you're away from home. But if you live close, you know your ,your, your wife or your kids they always stop by and see you. So it's just and then with EMS now it's a challenge because there are so many words I want to use. There are so many diseases, I guess you would say out there and I guess I think the fire service is very well respected by the community. I'm talking about everybody. Because firefighters when you call 911 and you ask for help. It doesn't matter

if you live in a \$100,000 house or a million dollar house. It doesn't matter if you're driving a Kia or a Cadillac . The fire service is going to give you everything, they got everything they got.

Jen Weidner 06:24 And oftentimes they're there before the police before ambulance so they really are the first responders.

Mike Smith 06:31 They are the first responders but my point being if I've made runs over the years where I've had people tell me just so you know, I have AIDS or I have hepatitis. So the trust factor with firefighters is people don't understand it. It's just there and when somebody they don't have to tell you anything when you arrive at an emergency scene or medical thing, they don't have to tell you but a lot of these people will come forward with that information. And that's that's basically trust.

Jen Weidner 07:08 Oh, they respect you.

Mike Smith 07:09 And respect and trust and are saying here, I've got this issue, you know, and what that does is it allows us to kind of suit up a little safer.

Jen Weidner 07:17 Yeah, a little bit not that you're not safe, always but just.

Mike Smith 07:20 Extra precautions. And so that's why EMS has changed a lot.

Jen Weidner 07:30 So you guys worked 24 hour shifts. How long does it take to get used to that?

Mike Smith 07:38 It's been a long time.

Jen Weidner 07:40 So how long have you been retired? Let's back up there.

Mike Smith 07:42 Well, I went on in I retired 2007 so

Jen Weidner 07:47 Okay

Mike Smith 07:48 What is that 16 years, maybe roughly 16 years. I spent eight years with that as a city councilor. Your dad might have influenced that I don't know. But anyway. The point it's different. You know, it's I think having the ability to have your family stop in especially when you're a young family and you have young kids. You know, if you have to work for Christmas or you have to work on Easter, you have to work Thanksgiving, you know, that helps quite a bit having that flexibility. But you know, there's times when, when, if you're out in the middle of night and getting back to being a little bit older, and you work that you work a second job and you go to work at a firehouse they always ask why firefighters takes naps. Well, you know, I've been I've been out from midnight to two or three in the morning and you know, as you get older you have to it's hard to recuperate after that. So sometimes we do take naps and it's needed. It's not something that you necessarily want to do but it helps you

Jen Weidner 08:57 Oh yeah,

Mike Smith 08:57 You could be out again that night.

Jen Weidner 08:59 Yeah, people don't, people don't realize this, like you're not just sitting around like who knows what could happen.

Mike Smith 09:04 I used to tell the council and in the old days, I would say I tell you what I want you to do. I want you to set your alarm clock for two in the morning 2:00 am. And then when that gets when the alarm goes off, I want you to jump out of bed, slip into your pants, hop in your car. And at that time, drive up to Kmart, which is now a Rural King. You get up there and nothing's going on but you investigate and I want you to come back home and if it's raining when you pull your car in the garage I want you to Shami it off. They don't want you to go to bed. Or if you go out in the middle of the night and you work a car wreck and you come back and it takes a long time for your heart rate everything to come down. Yeah, it's definitely young man and woman's job.

Jen Weidner 09:53 Absolutely, And I always tell people I'm like don't judge these people until you've talked to them and know what it's like.

Mike Smith 09:59 You have to be able to turn things off. You do your job and you give it 100% when you get back to the firehouse, you don't take it anywhere else.

Jen Weidner 10:11 So that's kind of my next question. What are some of the best, what were some of the best parts and worst parts of the job?

Mike Smith 10:22 I can think of many, both well obviously helping people. When we first started me personally, when I first started doing EMS and I'm gonna keep this kind of some level of detail, but I was able to use a defibrillator me and my crew and bring a guy back. And the next day that we was on shift his wife and then came to the firehouse, it was the old Crestview station to up on Crestview the real fire house and brought cookies. Oh, yeah, it from the defibrillator, because he didn't have any heart rate. And at that time we had a semi automatic defibrillator and I put pads on him and we defibulated him and we got a rhythm and then paramedics got there and a follow up but I don't know anything after that. But that was that was a pretty good experience.

Jen Weidner 11:19 Absolutely.

Mike Smith 11:21 You know, fatalities. Working around that is not a good experience. And that's when you have to be have learn to turn it off. I mean, sounds rough or crude, but that's what you do.

Jen Weidner 11:33 What you have to do

Mike Smith 11:34 That's what you have to do

Jen Weidner 11:35 Otherwise I mean, it leads to

Mike Smith 11:37 Well mentally bad yeah.

Jen Weidner 11:40 So um, you mentioned Crestview is that the station you were at?

Mike Smith 11:44 I was at all of them at one time. In your tenure you are going to travel everywhere.

Jen Weidner 11:48 Because probably when you started it was just the firehouse over here, and then one on Crestview. Yeah.

Mike Smith 11:54 And then we hit station three and now we got five and I think they're calling about possibly six at some point. Crestview was Crestview was, was built in the early 50s. And so it was by far, even today's standard. It was probably one of the best firehouses. It was what I call a neighborhood firehouse. You could be cooking supper, and the alarm go off. And when you went out that door, there were older guys in the neighborhood that would come down and watch that firehouse and they would either turn the stove off or they would finish your meal for you every time. And the firehouse was their firehouse if you will. And it was a neighborhood firehouse.

Jen Weidner 12:00 Yeah. Literally it's like there's residential housing on both sides across the street. Yeah, like people don't realize that like we had a firehouse literally in the neighborhood.

Mike Smith 12:51 I mean, kids, kids would come down and we'd air their bicycle tires up because we had air compressor, the Little League park behind us we had a dozen keys to fit all the gates and everything and coaches and everybody would always come in now the fire I mean it was it was a constant flurry of activity.

Jen Weidner 12:51 But I think that's neat, I think that's important.

Mike Smith 13:00 That's why I say even by today's standard, that's a true neighborhood firehouse. There's no firehouse like that anymore. Yeah, if you look at them there on the highway or whatever, and it's just not in a neighborhood.

Jen Weidner 13:27 Not in a neighborhood literally anyway.

Mike Smith 13:29 And at that time two people don't remember this, I'm sure but a coke bottle was three cents. So we had a Coke machine and we used the money for our commissary. That's what we bought coffee and tea and yeah, for the paper. Most people don't get the paper anymore but we had a rack so if you bought a if you bought a soft drink, you had to bring a bottle with you. And you'd have to put a bottle or you'd have to leave three cents.

Jen Weidner 13:57 Oh, that's nice.

Mike Smith 13:59 And so there was people again? Come kids, mostly kids or young people coming in and out of the firehouse on Crestview

Jen Weidner 14:06 It's a novelty for them.

Mike Smith 14:07 They come and get a soft drink and leave a bottle. Yeah, and so those are things that is part of history is kind of long gone. But that's ,that's a true neighborhood firehouse. We kept doors open all day and most of the time they were open at night. And I mean in the summer,

Jen Weidner 14:28 Well you want people to feel comfortable if they needed something you guys were there.

Mike Smith 14:31 We were there. I worked at the Louisville Fire Department for 30 days on HAZMAT and it was a different experience. I worked on Preston Street and yeah, at that time it was engine 15. But the fire truck would pull out the firehouse and they would stop and they would watch and make sure that door came all the way down and touched before they continued on. At our firehouse we

Jen Weidner 14:57 Just go

Mike Smith 14:58 We went and there was a guy across the street. I think his name was Mr. Mattingly. There was some up the street and then guys watched us like a baby. I mean, they really did and like I said they watched the firehouse and if we when we would leave, they would come and kind of stand by or stand guard and if we was cooking if someone could cook they would finish the meal.

Jen Weidner 15:22 Yeah, I mean people I don't know if people realize that or they just don't think about it. But like when you get a call you gotta go no matter what you're doing. You'd be in the middle of breakfast, lunch, dinner, cooking and whatever, but you gotta go I mean how many times you come back and have to throw a meal out because you know it sat around too long or

Mike Smith 15:37 Now they're allowed to take a truck and and go out like at a restaurant and you know if you ever notice if firefighters are eating at a restaurant, if they have a run they leave their meal there, but the people the restaurant will take that table and whatever and they will somewhat protect it. And you'll see people pay for their meal.

Jen Weidner 15:46 Oh, I have never seen that. But that's awesome.

Mike Smith 16:01 Yeah, yeah, that's what they do.

Jen Weidner 16:04 Is there one call that stands out to you more than the others?

Mike Smith 16:08 Probably the gentleman with the defibrillator that I can think of a lot.

Jen Weidner 16:15 Were you on the department during the Wall Street Methodist Church fire. That was one of the bigger ones that we had.

Mike Smith 16:21 In that day. Because it was ice. Yep. And you know when you fire trucks, firefighting is water, obviously. So you've got a pump and you got water. So any water that gets inside the truck mechanics around the pump is going to start freezing all of your valves and stuff and so once you once you set a truck up on a fire like that, you're pretty much committed.

Jen Weidner 16:21 Yeah

Mike Smith 16:52 Because it freezes. I was on duty when the Quadrangle in the Quadrangle burnt and that was the same thing.

Jen Weidner 17:00 That was in the in that was in the early 90s.

Mike Smith 17:02 It was at that time that was that the fire chief was, well the fire chief prior to that was Ronnie Collins, and he just passed away within a year or two. And then he was back on the line as a major and I was working with him, and we was getting ready to eat it was it was dark. It was getting ready to eat. It was getting dark might have been dark, he's getting ready to eat. And somebody was banging at the bay door we were sitting at the table on the apparatus doors and was like, what is that so we walked out opened the door about the time the alarm went off, said the Quadrangle is on fire and then we went up. In fact, I've got some pictures of that far good pictures and when we got there, the back of it was just rolling. So they had it must have been a Friday or Saturday night because they had a Jeffersonville ballgame, I guess basketball game and they said don't go down 10th Street because there's a major fire something and guess where everybody went down 10th St.

Jen Weidner 18:06 I was in high school when that happened. Yeah, that's how I remember. Yeah.

Mike Smith 18:11 But I think the defibrillator was cause you use a lot of that EMS stuff a lot. But when you actually bring somebody back that's that's, that's hard to. I still don't I don't understand. No, I know how they work. But it's like a second chance and I felt pretty good.

Jen Weidner 18:32 Yeah, absolutely.

Mike Smith 18:33 That's what comes to mind.

Jen Weidner 18:33 You gave someone their life back their family back and yeah. So what are some of the misconceptions about firefighting? There's all these shows on TV that, you know, fictionalized show was what did they get wrong?

Mike Smith 18:46 Smoke

Jen Weidner 18:50 That's what everyone has said.

Mike Smith 18:52 You can't, you can't, you cannot film a fire scene realistically, because the smoke would be so thick that the camera wouldn't work. So I would say I would smoke probably,

course you've got the heat. If you get really close to the inside of a fire that's being contained. It's it's hot. That smoke is the biggest misconception.

Jen Weidner 19:24 Do you feel that heat through your gear?

Mike Smith 19:26 Oh, absolutely. I don't care what you wear. Eventually. You know you're gonna feel it and the closer you get the more you feel. So hopefully you can get it out.

Jen Weidner 19:35 Everybody has said the smoke. Yeah, me and my mom watch that. We're just like, I don't think that I don't think that's gonna happen like that and real life.

Mike Smith 19:46 Well, I've been in a lot of firefighter will tell you. I've been in houses or structures, I guess. And well, I'll make one down on Spring Street. It was a printing company. And me one of the firefighters we made entry we was going in the front door didn't see any fire but we could see nothing. And we was on the ground crawling and we had our hose with us. We know that was far because there was smoke. And we kept running into printing presses.

Jen Weidner 20:11 Oh my gosh.

Mike Smith 20:14 And we went through the front of the building and ended up coming in. We walked all the way or went all the way through the building and came out the back and didn't know what caused the smoke.

Jen Weidner 20:25 So I know a lot of firefighters have jobs besides firefighting. Did you have a side job?

Mike Smith 20:33 Most firefighters do. I did a lot of work with some of the firefighters and that's why they work on crews. And I don't know if you've interviewed Joe Lee Joe's retired. But a funny story about Joe went to St. Augustins and I went to St. Augustins. But the story the funny story about that was when he was taking our EMT, EMS class medical training class. So we would be working in a house doing heating and air work. And we would be either in the attic or crawling around the house and all we did was fire questions, CPR questions this question and we did that and we'd be driving to the job in Corydon maybe Corydon Indiana and we would be asking questions back and forth. And we took the test and we both got the same score. So we got everything right and everything wrong. And because all we did was fire off questions and that was and that was kind of that was, that was fun.

Jen Weidner 21:34 That's a good way to study though. If you ask the exact same thing.

Mike Smith 21:38 Yeah as long as you got the right. Evidently we had some wrong answers got the exact same score but

Jen Weidner 21:44 You passed?

Mike Smith We passed 21:46

Jen Weidner 21:47 Okay, okay.

Mike Smith 21:48 Don't know if we passed by a whole lot but we passed. But yeah, we had the same thing, exact same score, and probably missed the same questions. I don't remember that but that's cause we studied together. Yeah. And we did that but I worked on I'm old school I've got, I've got a 37 Chevy out there. I'm kind of a hot rodder so I worked on cars that's really kind of my hobby was car

Jen Weidner 22:16 Okay.

Mike Smith 22:17 So and then I got so I would somebody had a dent or a rust spot and then I would weld in metal and be bodywork and paint and stuff. So I basically worked on cars, but when me and Joe worked together I was we had great times together. It was hard, but it was fun, got the same score.

Jen Weidner 22:35 That's to funny , they probably like what is going on here. So how was being a firefighter? How did that affect your home life?

Mike Smith 22:48 You know, it's no let's see here you know, of course you got to adapt to the the 24 hour shifts that's different everybody else works 8 hour shifts 10 hours and then you you're you have to work a lot on holidays. And a lot of times, especially when I was younger, when I had kids, some of the firefighters like on Christmas morning they may hang or hang over to the older guys. May hang at the firehouse for me for a couple three hours. So I could be there for Christmas morning. So there is a balance but you're around so much death and tragedy. I don't know. I think that could really have a negative impact on your home life. And I think that's to me, I just I was fortunate enough to be able to have a switch and turn it off. I don't know if everybody can. So I would say it would be challenging in that, in that way with your home life. But the scheduling and stuff is tough but on the other side, when you're off you can, you can hit all the ballgames you can take the kids to school, as long as your second job permits it. So it's the hours are very unusual. So maybe that was your home life that takes some adjusting.

Jen Weidner 24:10 But you were already a firefighter when your kids were born?

Mike Smith 24:16 No, no, no. When my when my, my ,my wife tells this story. When my daughter was born, she said you need to come home, I'm going in labor. And she said I said something like, Well, I'm cooking hot dogs now. Or whatever. She said no, you need to come home now. So that's her story. But no, I didn't have any. I got married then went on the fire department June 16 of 1974 and I got married June 28 1975. Matter of fact by your dad's house Sacred Heart where we had our as well we had our reception we got married at St Agustins because that's my parish.

Jen Weidner 24:56 So your kids didn't know any different than their dad being a firefighter. So it was just it was normal.

Mike Smith 25:05 Well yeah, they come to the firehouse I mean, they played on the trucks or hung out or whatever and I mean some kids it's a special treat to see fire trucks and my kids I

got a picture of my daughter sitting in the front of one of the trucks it's it's gone now but it's a Mack firetruck and she had on a helmet. And we took a picture of her and on her mantle at her house, she has that picture and the helmet.

Jen Weidner 25:29 Oh, that's cool.

Mike Smith 25:33 Yeah.

Jen Weidner 25:35 So what's some advice you would give anyone that wants to become a firefighter?

Mike Smith 25:41 Well, you have to be 21 you know, in the state of Indiana, that could change I think Kentucky might be 18. But if that's what you want to do, I think early on maybe starting in high school or thereafter, I would start taking courses like EMS because now everything is EMS related. So I would look into going like to an Ivy Tech or some maybe a vocational type school that offers EMS stuff or equivalent. I think that's a big plus as I stated getting that and I think Prosser offers some firefighting type classes. I think I would take them too.

Jen Weidner 26:29 So that would be a great way if it's something you're thinking about to see if it's actually something you want to do instead of going through all of it getting on and then being like

Mike Smith 26:36 There has been some people, a guy that I worked with, and I've been friends with since 75, still friends today. In fact I worked for an electrician. He lasted I think about five years and he quit. There are people that do quit. And a lot of it gets back to what I've told you earlier. I think it's the scheduling the 24 hour schedules and wives and they had kids or whatever and you'd have to know it's an adjustment and once you, you know once you do that, I'll tell you a story about that. I served here eight years as fire chief before I retired. And so fire chief a fire chief works eight hours a day, once a shift eight hours a day, five days a week. I don't work the swing shift all that and my wife told my one of the kids or something said is daddy gonna be home every night? Because when I was at the firehouse it was party time. I don't know they probably had pizza. They probably didn't do their homework. They didn't go to bed at nine o'clock. I don't know what I don't really know

Jen Weidner 27:38 What was happening when you're at the firehouse.

Mike Smith 27:40 I hear stories, but, but they're one of the one of the kids asked Is he gonna be home every night? Because as a fire chief, I worked eight hour shifts. And then if I go out in the middle of the night on an incident or something, you know, I would come and go would they still be in bed? They wouldn't know. So but I would say vocational stuff looking into some of that because we I know Ivy Tech offers EMS stuff. I know Prosser offers some EMS fire stuff. So I think some of these classes would probably be pretty good. By no it would be good because when you ,you know when you're turning 21 and you're really ready to step up. And you know you have that and like you say if you may not like it, I don't know how aggressive it gets because they probably got fake smoke and fake stuff. It's not quite that way. But at least it's it's a start,

Jen Weidner 28:31 Or you know real fast if you're claustrophobic. At least if you take those classes.

Mike Smith 28:35 Yeah, you know if you're claustrophobic and I think everybody, to a certain extent is when you put that mask on. It's on your face. The older masks were a little bit different the air packs we wore because they were what they were demand. In other words, you would have to inhale to get the air and the newer ones are pressure a little bit pressurized. So it is, it is it is different. Because there's nothing you do, maybe scuba diving would be equivalent, but there's nothing you do that would have that sensation or that feel. But but that would at least get you in the door and then you know if you want to spend your next 20-30 years, I guess now it's 30-35 years doing it, you would know ahead of time but I tell a lot of kids that I've talked to younger whatever especially fire in the fire service is two things. Number one is, is it's dirty. It's really dirty. And that's just I mean stuff burns. If you go out your bonfire and you have weenie roast and all the wood is dirty and gets third on it is dirty. And it's, it's when you're on the job it's physical. I mean it's you know, you're carrying all that gear on you. And it's, it it's hard on your it's hard on your heart, it's hard on your body.

Jen Weidner 30:04 Why does all that gear weigh?

Mike Smith 30:05 You know it changes, it changes when I went to the department the air bottles were steel and the new ones are like aluminum composite bottles so I would say I don't know this 30-50 pounds. You know everything has changed and it's gotten lighter. The stuff we had was bulky but uhh I'd say 30-50 pounds so you add that on and then you add you know a hot humid day and you can dehydrate Real fast. Yeah and that's why it's younger you are the better it is. When you get older the harder it is to recuperate

Jen Weidner 30:47 Everything's hard when you get older. Yeah, but having to go in and fight a fire and yeah.

Mike Smith 30:53 And drag hoses and carry ladders in

Jen Weidner 30:56 Maybe you have to drag this person out, and

Mike Smith 30:59 yeah, you got to do that sometimes. You actually carry him out but

Jen Weidner 31:04 So is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

Mike Smith 31:08 No, you know, I tell kids if you, if you don't mind grunt work because the fire service is grunt work. I'll tell you that. I don't care if you're man or a woman. It's grunt work because you anything you pick up you're moving is heavy. And it's physical. If you don't mind grunt work and getting dirty and being up half the time in the middle of the night. I'm just saying, man It's one hell of a career and if people really look up to and respect firefighters.

Jen Weidner 31:39 Everyone that I've interviewed has said it's the best job they've ever had.

Mike Smith 31:45 You have a lot of downtime. But when you don't have downtime, I mean it's it's kind of like all or nothing.

Jen Weidner 31:51 You deserve that downtime when you get it.

Mike Smith 31:53 Well you don't realize when the older you get the more you appreciate it. But you know when you come back, we made a car wreck and a lady ran into an abutment and on to 62 to 65 Well, there were three of us on duty. One of us I don't know if you interviewed Billy Davis. Okay, Billy was my Yeah,

Jen Weidner 32:16 Yeah I have , yeah,

Mike Smith 32:16 He was my deputy chief and I was a fire chief. And Chris Kinard

Jen Weidner 32:21 I know that name.

Mike Smith 32:22 Okay, Chris he's an African American black ,I hired him I hired a bunch of guys you probably interviewed. We made a car wreck and we was coming back. It was a rescue. And we was coming back and White Castle on Sharon up there was now about two or three in the morning. So we decided me and Bill are gonna get a big red. Well Chris wanted a big red. So we got a big red and we got back to station two Crestview and I'll tell you what we were so all three of us after drinking that big red was so wound I don't think any of us went to sleep until well, we left at seven o'clock. But yeah, a lot of guys you interviewed Kempf, Josh Kempf, I hired him. Did you, did you interview Shawn Grant, the fire chief?

Jen Weidner 33:15 course. Yeah.

Mike Smith 33:16 I hired him.

Jen Weidner 33:17 Oh my gosh. Oh, wow.

Mike Smith 33:19ml went to his house. Yeah, he lived up off of Ewing Lane at that time.

Jen Weidner 33:25 Yeah. It's a small world around here.

Mike Smith 33:28 Well, I Yeah. His dad was Marvin Grant. And Marvin was a kind of I know your dad knew him and you may have known him. My dad when Marvin first went to the police department he rode with my dad. Oh, my dad would have been a senior officer and he was younger.

Jen Weidner 33:44 My uncle was on the police department Jerry Priest.

Mike Smith 33:46 Okay, I know I worked with Mike. Okay, so but that's how I knew the Grants. I really didn't know the kids, obviously. But I knew Marvin. And then when I came up, you know, we had some to pick from, and I went up and offered Shawn the job. So a lot of you talked to I hired.

Jen Weidner 34:0 Oh, that's neat. Well, thank you so much for being here today and sharing your experience with us.