

Code: 517004
Subject: Robert Greytak (Bob)
Date: Thursday, June 19, 2008
Interviewer: Rhonda Yaxley (Roni)
Special Notes: River, Roads, & Rails Oral History
Minutes:

Bob Greytak, born Sept.24, 1951, Cleveland, OH west side, childhood move part of "rush 0 to suburbs" in 1957

1 Considers Cleveland as a metropolitan approach to home, Parma is neighborhood education, grad of Valley Forge, liberal art degree assoc. from Cuyahoga Community

2 College , Cleveland State degree Civil Engineering

3 1 Years Civil engineer, Saw meeting for West Creek being held at library in the paper, found energetic group with a distinct mission to accomplish, Sue Verochek moderator,

4 signed up for grant committee

1st Grant meeting met around dinning room table of Board member - strategies, Became

4 involved because job background of waste water/sewage management

5 working locally, could do something for good of community and environment, made sense

6 Knew how important funding was to projects, grant committee was a good fit

Organization needed direction, feedback of priorities from WCR, schedule, accomplish

7 selected project

8 schedule, grant deadlines, vounteers doing what is comfortable, gaps needing to fill in identified grants, general, administrative get money into organization, goals in master

9 Plan fulfill

10 Committee members: Sue Zurovchak, Terry Stahurski, Laura McShane, and Bob

Timing good Clean Ohio Bond Issue #1 passing, available funds, perfect fit for WCRC,

11 focus on Clean Ohio, four grants

grant application process very technical, over \$700,000, over years \$2 million in grant

12 acquisition, Clean Ohio grants allow acquire land to keep in its natural state

told application was best of those submitted, funds for staffing \$700,000 in 2003-2004,

13 Watershed Coordinator position, 5 yr. from ODNR

ODNR grant money declines each year with expectation organization will find other

14 funding locally, other committees of WCR also getting money

15 Job description for volunteer position - Grants' coordinator

Stumbling block: For time WCRC no bookkeeper and Bob took on role, became more

16 than expected "No such thing as volunteering just a little bit"

Became treasurer for WCRC simple task became almost second full time job, 4 years

17 and asked WCRC to find a professional

18 Shinning star momement: day Metropark took over, felt sense of accomplishment, stability

Professional organization to handle management, provide maintence, security, WCRC

19 could be stewards, memorialize efforts of committee

Favorite places: 1) Gorge south of Snow Road too deep/narrow but would like to get

down in there, 2) south of TV towers in preserve, peaceful, wooded, shaded area,

20 appreciate what has been saved

Role gentle, success due to other people, passion of others, not heard of West Creek

21 until meeting

Group of unique people, passion for the project, foolish not to be a part of this group,

22 Bob's role is "gentle", saw childhood creeks destroyed by subdivisions

Grad from high school 1969, no clue what wanted to do with life, work factory with father,

23 discovered that was NOT the job he wanted to do all life

Father worked General Battery Corp., electrical technician, Remembers in HS study hall
drawn bridges, roads, etc not knowing what was, library book of professions discovered
24 this interest was called Civil Engineering

Not afford college, worked, 6 1/2 years way through college, HS guidance counselor
25 said should be a park ranger

"somehow you just stumble along and find profession that fits your personality", classic
26 engineer happy sitting solving problems

volunteered to use technical ability, lend talents, engineers work on projects have goals,
27 deadlines, see something built as result of effort

28 Family time involved as a volunteer: one son joined army after HS 2001

29 wife supported, went to meetings too

Volunteering helped keep occupied, a form of therapy as distraction to son being in Iraq,
30 Still challenges to find funding and keep relevant

Challenge for organization funding to keep operating and relevant, WCRC has purchased
lot of property with conservation easements which are only as only as ability to defend
31 them.

defend property from encroachment and development. Advice to others: Be prepared to
32 spend a lot of time, be committed

Anticipate continuing with grants and bringing more funding through grants to the
33 organization

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