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James "Jim" Busby

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Bridges that Carried Us Over Project

Interview Summary

Interviewee:

James "Jim" Busby

Interviewer:

Carolyn Tillman

Interview Date:

July 3, 2017

Interview Location:

San Bernardino, California

Interview Summary completed by:

Alicia Lombardo and Valerie Nguyen, 2021-2022

Description:

James "Jim" Busby served 3 terms as the mayor of Victorville, California. To date (2021), Busby is the only African American to sit on the Victorville City Council, first elected in 1988. Here, Busby discusses why he moved to the high desert from Texas after serving in the Navy, his reasons for getting involved in local politics there, his experience on Victorville's City Council and his achievements as mayor. Busby also discusses the African American community in Victorville. As mayor, Busby focused on improving the lives of all residents, including making housing more affordable and strengthening welfare programs. He discusses his Christian faith was very important to him, and while in office he organized the Church of the Valley event, a oneness celebration to celebrate Christianity. Over 5,000 people attended. He also organized the largest March for Jesus march in the nation.

Though he lived in Victorville, he spent a good portion of his adult life in San Bernardino where he became active in community politics. Busby became a WAG member and served as president of the Board of Directors for the San Bernardino Boys and Girls Club. In the interview, Busby names the San Bernardino community leaders he encountered during that period, including Frances Grice (founder, Operation Second Chance), William "Bill" Jacocks (aka Ratibu Jacocks) of Westside Action Group (WAG), and Dr. Mildred Henry, founder of the Provisional Accelerated Learning Center (PAL).

Subject Topic:

- San Bernardino (Calif.)
- Victorville (Calif.)
- Mayor of Victorville
- African American Politicians
- Community Leadership
- Public Officers
- Westside Action Group
- TRW Bootstrap
- Provisional Accelerated Learning Center
- Oneness Celebration
- The March for Jesus Victorville

Spatial Coverage:

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Office	760 E Brier Dr, San Bernardino, CA 92408 OR 601 N E St, San Bernardino, CA 92415 (SB County Office of Education)
Westside Action Group met at San Bernardino Boys Club/ Boys Club in San Bernardino (now "Boys & Girls Club of San Bernardino)	1180 W 9th St San Bernardino, CA 92411
Provisional Accelerated Learning (PAL) Center	2450 Blake St San Bernardino, CA 92407 (May have been Ave. as on the picture of the sign on the website)
Norton Air Force Base (Part of Air Mobility Command (AMC))	Museum: 1601 E. 3rd Street, San Bernardino, CA 92408
Dr. King Statue, Downtown San Bernardino	Outside San Bernardino City Hall 290 N D St, San Bernardino, CA 92401
Mall on Bear Valley Road, Victorville	14400 Bear Valley Rd, Victorville, CA 92392
Emanuel Temple CME Church in	17288 Stoddard Wells Rd, Victorville, CA

Victorville	92394
Church of the Valley, Apple Valley (Oneness Celebration location)	20700 Standing Rock Ave, Apple Valley, CA 92307
Desert Valley Hospital	16850 Bear Valley Rd, Victorville, CA 92395

Temporal Coverage:

- 1960-1994

Key Events:

- Mayor of Victorville
- President of the Board of Directors at the Boys Club in San Bernardino
- Manager at TRW/Northrop Grumman
- Superintendent of Sunday school at Emanuel Temple CME Church
- Oneness Celebration
- The March for Jesus Victorville

Key Organizations:

- Victorville City Council
- TRW Bootstrap
- Operation Bootstrap
- Operation Second Chance
- Westside Action Group

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Digital Video	00:10:32	Mildred Henry and PAL Center
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Digital Video	00:14:45	Decision to run for Mayor, who he campaigned toward, what areas he worked on and issues addressed
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Digital Video	00:31:48	Oneness Celebration, creating racial unity in community vis church, The March for Jesus
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Digital Video	00:39:20	Advice to young people

Full interview transcript can be found below.

Interview Transcript

Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

Carolyn Tillman [00:00:00] Now, I think she got all your signatures. Yes, she did, and I just need to sign behind them. Yep, she got it all. Alright. I'd like to start by asking you basically your journey to San Bernardino to, I guess I'll say San Bernardino County specifically, and then you can tell me, just like you told me, that you started here in San Bernardino and where you ended up. And I am probably going to prompt you if there's something that I hear that makes me feel like I want to dig a little deeper in that area. If not, then I'm going to basically let you sort of free flow your story. I see you've told it several times, so you have to have it here and it's your story. So I doubt that I'm going to, I won't stop you many times because it's about getting you and your interview and not necessarily me on tape, so. OK, ready? I'm supposed to read this script then, aren't I? I'm sorry I'm reading through this again and this is why I read through my notes OK I'm going to add that to it OK.

Unknown [00:02:54] Let me check something real fast.

Carolyn Tillman [00:02:55] OK.

Unknown [00:03:00] Alright.

Carolyn Tillman [00:03:00] Good morning.

James "Jim" Busby [00:03:04] Good morning, Carol.

Carolyn Tillman [00:03:05] This is Carolyn Tillman and I am interviewing Mr. Jim Busby. Mr. Jim Busby was the mayor of Victorville and he served for three terms beginning in the late 80s. His first name is spelled Jim. J-I-M. Last name spelled Busby. B-U-S-B-Y. We are interviewing here at the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Office. Thank you, Mr. Busby, for taking out the time to conduct an interview with us.

James "Jim" Busby [00:03:46] It's an honor to be here.

Carolyn Tillman [00:03:47] It's an honor to have you here with us for sure. So I'm just going to begin by asking you about your journey from Texas to California. Give us the details of how you got from Jim Busby from Texas to Jim Busby, Mayor of Victorville.

James "Jim" Busby [00:04:15] Well, I was born in Houston, Texas, finished high school, Booker T. Washington High School. And from high school, I enrolled at Texas Southern University in Houston, where I attended college for about a year, year and a half. And this was in the early 60s. So I was drafted into the Army and I chose not to go into the Army. So I actually volunteered for the Navy and I entered the Navy. I came to San Diego, did my basic training. From San Diego, I was assigned to the San Diego North Island, the nuclear weapons training center. And I spent a year there and I found it rather boring because I wanted to actually fight. I wanted to go to Vietnam. So I asked my commanding officer to put me on what we call a swift boat, which is a little PT looking boat in Vietnam. And he said, well, gee, if I put you on one of those, you'd probably get killed the first day. So I said, I want to go. I just want to fight. And the reason I was so adamant about that is that during World War Two, blacks in the Navy could only be cooks. And I wanted to make sure that my background showed that I was a fighting man. So it was very, very important to me. So I was assigned to a ship, a destroyer out of Yokohama, Yokohama, Japan. And so on January 1st, 1965, I went to Japan, caught my ship, and we were home ported it in Japan. But this was at the, during the beginning of the Vietnam War. So, uh, my ship was one of the first ones that was given assignment in Vietnam to do what was known as shore bombardment. That was to fire on the batteries on the shore in Vietnam. Offshore, we would go in about two miles and we would back up our troops and pick up pilots. And other things we did was we would stop little jump boats. They were running ammunitions down the rivers. So we would stop them and board the ships and search them for ammo. So, I spent about almost two years in Vietnam. Then I came back to Long Beach and from Long Beach, I lived there for several years. And then I moved to Cerritos. I had a child and I moved to Cerritos. And I wanted to make sure that my, at the time, daughter had the best opportunities for education. So Cerritos was a new community. I moved there and stayed there for several years, probably about 10, 15 years. I can't remember exactly. And during that time, I started working for then what was called TRW, it has now been absorbed or bought out, purchased by Northrop Grumman. And so I was working for TRW, Northrop Grumman, living and working in Redondo Beach and living in Cerritos. And I was offered an assignment for to come to Norton Air Force Base, where TRW was one of the base contractors for the ballistic missile division. And at that time, I was the manager of subcontracting and purchasing. So I accepted that assignment, which meant that I had to sell my home in Cerritos and I move to San Bernardino, purchased a condominium in downtown San Bernardino. And during that time, I, when I came out here, I found San Bernardino be an interesting community. And one of the most intriguing thing was that I was, while at TRW, I was the president of a group called TRW Bootstrap, which was a take off Operation Bootstrap out of South Central Los Angeles, South Central Los Angeles, headed by a guy by the name of Lou Smith. And one of

unique characteristics of that was that San Bernardino at that time, Frances Grice of Operation Second Chance had a, also had a chapter of Bootstraps. So I knew Frances Grice. I knew Wesley Jefferson and Bobby Bivans and many of the old timers in San Bernardino. And at that time, they had just resurrected the Dr. Martin Luther King statue in downtown San Bernardino. And I was very, very impressed by that in those days that the city actually placed a statue of Dr. King downtown. And I knew that Frances Grice had been very active in making sure that that happened. I think Bob Hope was the mayor at that time. So very, very interested in that. So I started interacting with Frances Grice and Operation Second Chance, I think, is what she headed up. And many of those people. And, through that, I ran into good friend, got to be one of my better friends, was Bill Jacocks, Ratibu and Ratibu was involved in the Westside Action Group. So, I got involved in that. And we were meeting in those days at the San Bernardino Boys Club and actually I ended up becoming the president of the board of directors at the Boys Club in San Bernardino. And I also met during those days Frances Grice. She was she had not started the PAL Center in those days and she needed some assistance. Assistance in.

Carolyn Tillman [00:10:41] Is that Frances or Mildred Henry?

James "Jim" Busby [00:10:43] Mildred Henry.

Carolyn Tillman [00:10:45] There you go. Okay.

James "Jim" Busby [00:10:45] I'm sorry, Mildred Henry. Dr. Henry. Dr. Henry at the PAL Center. And she needed some things like typewriter. In those day, we didn't have computers that, everyone was not computerized. So she needs some things, typewriters and things of that nature. And as manager of procurement and all of that at TRW, one of the things I was also in charge of was surplus. And so we were in the process of switching from one type of IBM typewriter to another. So I was able to convince our management at TRW to donate, uh, supplies and typewriters to Dr. Henry at the PAL Center. So I got to be very good friends with her. In other words, I was just really, really, got to know the community. I was always interested in politics and just an active community person and with emphasis on making sure that our black young people had an opportunity to grow.

Carolyn Tillman [00:11:55] Yes, so that's San Bernardino, but you ended up in the high desert.

James "Jim" Busby [00:12:03] OK, well, I decided to move from San Bernardino to Victorville, primarily because the smog started coming in. I want to go up a little higher, to a higher elevation. And also I was in the process of getting married.

Carolyn Tillman [00:12:22] OK.

James "Jim" Busby [00:12:23] And so my wife at that time was living in Los Angeles. So we moved to Victorville and I didn't know anything about Victorville. Actually, I was on my way to Las Vegas and I saw a home, I saw a sign giving homes at a very reasonable price that I could afford that was near a golf course. So I just stopped off and bought a home. I didn't know anything about the school system or anything. It was very, and it was really a blessing because when my wife and I got married, which she had a son, at those days, who had cerebral palsy. So he needed special, you know, special needs kid. And so his name was Wayne, he passed a few years ago. And, you know, obviously, when you marry a woman, you marry the child. So Wayne became my son, loved him to death. And so we, we moved we enrolled Wayne up there in school and I was commuting both. Oh, my wife, by the way, was working at TRW. That's where we met in Los Angeles. So she had prior experience as a GS-12 with the Army. So when I moved to San Bernardino, we got married. She decided to become a civil servant again, and she went to work for the Air Force at Norton Air Force Base. And I was also working there through TRW as a contractor. So we both were commuting from Victorville to San Bernardino, leaving our kid at a special needs up in Victorville. So we did that for many, many years. And, uh, but one of the things that got me interested in politics was that I noticed that there were no blacks on any of the councils in the high desert. And we have four cities in the high desert. We have Victorville, Adelanto, Apple Valley and Hesperia. And I just found it appalling that there were no blacks involved in the government. And I knew that San Bernardino was very progressive because they had a Dr. King statue. We did not only didn't have a statue we didn't have any real black people in office, and so I knew that I could offer something to the community and not really emphasizing black. Black was not my emphasis. My emphasis was that I brought a lot of skills as a manager from TRW and a guy that knew how who was systems trained, knew how to put things together and make things work. So I thought that I, I if I could get elected and eventually become mayor, then I would be able to integrate and put together a hybrid of the best of business with the best of government. So I really, really thought that I could make a difference. And so I ran, I decided to run for the city council, and in the city council you run for the city councilman from the city council they elect a mayor is normally the top vote getter in the city of Victorville.

Carolyn Tillman [00:15:48] Right. What year was this?

James "Jim" Busby [00:15:52] This was 1988, May of 1988. And in those days we didn't run into, they changed the election now to fit the presidential cycle. But it was like an off year election where you have low turnout and incumbents always get reelected. Well, I just knew that we could do something different and I.

Carolyn Tillman [00:16:14] Had no empty seat.

James "Jim" Busby [00:16:16] No, no, it was an empty seat. And by the way, most of the people that had been in office had been grandfathered in by empty seats and things of that nature. But I said, you know, I just know we can win. And people told me that I couldn't. And they said it was only five percent black population. I said, well, I'm not looking for no black people. I'm looking for people. I mean, I'll take any vote I get, but I'm looking for people. They said we don't have money. I said, well, I don't have that, I can't get a lot of money from the community. But the people at TRW are not poor people. These people make good money. So I asked two of my best friends to give me five hundred dollars, and they did, they said you're going to run, I said yeah and I think I can win. So they wrote me checks immediately. They said, we think you can too. And so then I had to come up with, you know, what are the real issues? Well, as I saw them, the issues were that people were not really being represented throughout the government. What I mean by that, one of the biggest groups, the golfers, they wanted to put their golf carts on the Victorville golf on the golf course and the city wouldn't let them. And I told the golfers, I say, hey, if I'm elected and eventually I'll become mayor, I will bring your golf course on your privately owned golf course carts. And the reason that that was so important is that people move there and they bought their privately owned golf course carts to put on the course, and they actually just drive from their house to the course. So it's very, very important. So I got a large group of golfers behind me a large group, and it had nothing to do again with race. And then also in those days, we had built a mall and one of the main arteries there was Bear Valley Road well Bear Valley Road going to the mall was just terrific traffic back up. And I said, hey, I can create some I can come up with some schemes of better improving the traffic flow in this area. And so one of the things I did was to concentrate on that. Another thing was police response, making sure that we I think in those days we had a five or six minute response time. I said we should be no less than four or five. And not to say that they weren't doing a good job, I'm just saying that I thought we could improve it. And also I thought that we could improve our law enforcement by making sure that we had an integrated force. And this was very important see cities like Ferguson, where they had no black representation on the city council and they have very few police officers. this starts at the city level and it starts with the city council getting involved in the community and working with the sheriff's department. So in those days, our sheriff was Floyd Tidwell and Floyd, Sheriff Tidwell was a very conservative guy. And I think we had one

black police officer on our force at the time, a guy by the name of Cliff Harris. And I said, hey, Sheriff Tidwell, we need to have more officers on the force because it'll actually bring about better community relations and things of that nature. And he balked at it and I said, no, we got a sheriff and we just got to work at this thing because if we can improve it, you know, I don't see why the why the city shouldn't instead of contracting with the sheriff's department, why we don't start our own police department. Sheriff Tidwell heard me. And he said, you know, that maybe we can look into that. And he looked into it. And to be honest, he worked with me. And he then brought in a guy by the name of Lieutenant Burris, who worked in the local sheriffs. He was actually he was working at the jail and he was a sergeant. So Sheriff Tidwell promoted him to a lieutenant and he came to Victorville as our second in charge. And then they began to do some things again. They were doing OK, but I just thought we could do a better job. So that worked. And things of that nature, improving the traffic to the bus system. And I got elected. I got elected to city council and I came in second. It was just unheard of, and it was shock, it shocked everybody but me. And, you know, because I knew I knew that we could do it. And again, I didn't just run. I did. I had I'm a person that believes in faith in God. And I didn't just run out of clearness and I knew I wasn't by myself and, you know, not to get too religious on you, but God put me there, God put me there, and I knew I could win. It didn't surprise me at all. It didn't surprise my wife. And so we came in second. Everybody was all shook up and didn't know what they were going to do, even though they got this black guy coming in. They didn't know anything about me. They obviously did their research and found out that I came back, had pretty good credentials. I had secret clearance all my life, never been arrested, sterling credentials, educated, knew what I was doing and I was a manager, top manager at TRW, now Northrop Grumman, and so eventually after I got into office, things settle down and we all started working together.

Carolyn Tillman [00:22:10] How about the community and the African-American community in Victorville? Did you did that coalesce the community, knowing now that they had an African-American on the city council? Did you do more faces start to come together? Or how did how did that impact?

James "Jim" Busby [00:22:29] Well, the black the, Victorville is a little different than San Bernardino in that we don't have a Muscoy area, but Victorville is fairly well integrated with the exception of where the, back in the day when blacks had to live across the tracks, what they call across the track, blacks and Hispanics live across the tracks. And so there are a couple of housing areas out there that were predominantly black. But basically because of all the new development people, blacks were moving in from all over and the blacks were coming in from Los Angeles because the houses were not as expensive. They could sell their home in Los Angeles for half a million dollars in

those days and move to Victorville and buy a home for one hundred thousand. And they had a four hundred thousand dollar capital gain. And these were not poor people. Right. So so. So we didn't have a real poor black area, but we did have areas out there that had been there for a long time with blacks in them. And yes, those blacks were very, very supportive of me. And, you know, many of the blacks I had met through church and I've walked the precincts. I walked the whole city and I shook hands with them. And people got to know me and they started trusting. And then I brought my mom, my mother, LayDonia Busby. She passed about five years ago. But my mom had always been active in politics. So as a matter of fact, just.

Carolyn Tillman [00:24:07] From Texas?

James "Jim" Busby [00:24:08] From Texas, she lived in Texas. As a matter of fact, when I was probably about three, four, maybe no older than five, my mom took me. And this is a very important part of my life. I think it was the beginning of building the character James Busby was. She took me with her to vote and she had to pay a poll tax. And those days she had to pay 75 cents to to vote. Most people don't know about the poll, P-O-L-L tax. And mom made like five dollars a day. So that was like almost one fifth of her earnings for a day. But she took me with her to vote. And again, remember, let's say I was five. She asked the voting official if I could come inside of the voting booth with her so that she could show me what it was like, what the process was like he said, no, I don't, don't let that little nigger in here. Say he may vote one day. And low and behold, that set it for me. I never forgot it, and I said, I have never missed a vote when I reached the age of 17 or whatever, 18, I never missed a vote because my mom said, okay, son, do you see how they treat you? And that's why you got to vote. So when you grow up, never fail to vote and I never failed to vote. So that's a very, very part of my life that I don't even remember the person that day but the little guy, that little white guy just told me I don't want niggers voting so I said, OK, well I'll always vote. But he didn't know he was creating a monster.

Carolyn Tillman [00:25:51] Monster! I love it. So your mom came to Victorville.

James "Jim" Busby [00:25:54] She came to Victorville and went to. See my mom is just a folksy person. She's the type of person that she goes to the airport. And when she she go meet everybody in the airport, you know, everybody on the plane, she's going to talk to them about Jesus Christ and she's going to tell them about her son. She is just very proud of me and the family. So mom came out and those there were a couple of people that were a little skeptical of me that, you know, he's just all right, he's going to be one of these fancy guys and he's not going to do anything good to me. After I brought my mom they said we love you. They, they loved my mom before they did me

they really fell in love with mom because she just [inaudible]. One day I said, Mom, I want to take you. She like going to the Hometown Buffet I said, Mom, I'm take you to this fancy restaurant, a nice restaurant that I wanted to take you to called Chateau Chang. She said, Son, I want to be where people are. I don't want a fancy restaurant, and she said if you can't eat with the people that you serve, you don't need to be there. So I said OK mom I'm going to Hometown Buffet she said, If they can't, if every person can't afford it, then you shouldn't be there. So she was that kind of a person, just a very basic person, same thing with my wife, she's just a she was educated at Alabama A&M and straight A's all the way from elementary school to college. Just a scholar, one of the smartest people I've ever met. And so they always kept me grounded and they always made sure that I was in church working with the young people. And eventually one of the things I did is I became superintendent of our Sunday school at Emanuel Temple CME Church in Victorville. So my whole background is just that of a basic guy that grew up loving people and doing the things that I could do

Carolyn Tillman [00:27:57] with a servant mentality. Obviously, you didn't come for a title. You came, you made you assessed the needs in the community and you had the confidence to say, I have a I have a I can solve that problem. We can work on that and we can make things better. What are the accomplishments that you treasure during your time as an elected official?

James "Jim" Busby [00:28:28] One of the, one of the, one of the things that I did was the city was there was a project that was being built some condominiums in Victorville off of Stoddard Wells Road. It was it was a complex of about, let's say, three or four hundred condominiums, very nice, large two and three bedroom condominiums. And the builder defaulted and could not complete the project. It sat idle for several years. And when I became mayor one of the first things I did was work with the city council and convince the city to buy to buy that that that particular area, to invest in it so that we could create low and moderate income housing. I don't think anybody remembers that. But there's just, you know, hundreds of people living there now and not even aware of the fact that during those days it was Jim Busby and the city council that made those apartments available. So that was one of the things another thing that was an area in that in that same general area where blacks had to live at one time, they didn't have bus service. So one of the things I did is make sure that our transit system went to that area. And so we did that right after I got elected mayor. And let me back up a little bit. When I ran, I came in second behind a guy by the name of Jeff Goodwill. Jeff Goodwill and I were opponents. We didn't know one another. But once we both got elected, we realized that we had alike values. Now, he was someone that the establishment had had championed. He was their guy. He was going to be the guy to be the mayor forever. Well, Jeff and I got to be very good friends. So we started working together and he

knew where all the bones were buried. He knew the weak areas, the low areas, and so we made and we made an agreement to work and to promote one another. And we did, unfortunately. As a matter of fact, Jeff and I, And our wives would go to events together. But unfortunately, probably six or seven months after Jeff, less than a year after he got elected, he and his wife were killed in an automobile accident. So then I became the mayor, I was the vice mayor. So and by the way, there were people when I became vice mayor second vote, you know they didn't want me to become the vice. And these are not people, by the way not the people of the community. These are political figures. The people that when we talk about race, the problem is not with the people in general, it's that the political parties that have something to gain. And so eventually the council voted me in as mayor. I even spoken at the late Jeff Goodwill's funeral and as mayor, then I started leading the agenda. And one of the things I wanted to do was work on race relationship. And people got along and things were moving in a positive way, but they weren't, as people didn't seem to talk in terms of race the way that I felt we should be working together. In other words, you've got a white Masonic lodge up there. You've got a black Masonic lodge, it's still that way. But I'm saying there should be some times when people get together. And so I my wife and I actually came up with the concept, where does, in terms of working together where do most people go on Sunday and we came over, we said everybody goes to church, especially in Victorville. Eighty nine percent of the people out there go to church. Some go to White some go to Hispanic, some go to Black, But I said, well, what if we all got together as one? So we called it a Oneness Celebration. And one thing and one thing that we have as Christians is that we all believe that Jesus Christ is our lord and savior. We all believe, regardless of race regardless of faith as Christians that's the one thing we believe in. So we we started well, as mayor, I have access and I most of the churches ask me to speak. And I was speaking at all the churches, regardless of faith, I would always speak. So I use my, you know, position as mayor to talk to some of the ministers. And so I got together with some of the larger churches up there, pastor Tommy Anderson of the Church of God and Christ, and did some of the churches in Apple Valley. And we formed a committee to hold a Oneness Celebration in the High Desert we had it at Church of the Valley. And also during that time, I said who can we get to help us as to attract people. So I talked to Dale Evans and Roy Rogers. So Roy and Dale agreed to join. They are big, big Christian's, especially Dale in those days. And she actually had a program called A Date with Dale on the Trinity Broadcasting Network. So Dale got involved. She invited me to come to the record on her show. I did several times. And my wife sang on the show, so we're on it three or four times. And so when we held this, we held this Oneness Celebration. It was at Church of the Valley in Apple Valley. We had over five thousand people come out. And that was God, say that was God I'm just saying it was all races, all religions of the Christian faith. And we had bagpipe processional. We had an integrated choir with, you know, five or six hundred members. And we did this we had

this Oneness Celebration for five or six years. Wow. So I for some reason, the press never really talked about it that much, but I really see that as one of my biggest achievements. And then also during those days we had there was a group that sponsored marches all over the nation called The March for Jesus and, you know, they have them in Los Angeles, they had March with Jesus and all that. But we held one in Victorville. And one of my friends was a guy by the name of Pastor Eddie Angel, who headed up while he was pastor of one of the Hispanic churches and he asked me to get involved. And we worked on it. And we actually had the largest march in the nation for The March with Jesus larger than Los Angeles, right there in Victorville. So that's why I said God put me there. He put me there for a reason. And I did those things that I was supposed to do with. Those are just some of the few things. But, you know, real simple things that I've done, people that were on welfare that were being mistreated and couldn't get their welfare check, I've had people call me and I would actually go down I went and picked one lady up took her to the welfare office. And, you know, they would they asked Who is this? and she said, this is my mayor. Yes, ma'am. I'm here with Mrs. such and so, and I understand she's having difficulties. She couldn't find an attorney. We're not looking to sue anybody, but she needs some money. So I work with them. And she got her welfare and other things I've done. There was one lady came to me. She said, Mayor Busby she had a leg amputated. She said, I need a wheelchair. And I said, well, I'm in the city, we don't really get involved in that she said Mayor Busby I need your help, and I know you're a good mayor. I see you at church. You said you a good man, so I said, OK, so I called one of the hospitals up there. Um, I knew a doctor Prim Ready who owned Desert Valley Hospital. And the Doctor Ready I got a parishioner. Really? She has one leg, she needs a wheelchair. He gave her wheelchair. And I really the reason that I can remember this, I ran into her son about 15 years later and he said, Mayor Busby, I was a little boy. And he said, my mom had a leg amputated and we couldn't move around. And she came to you and you got a wheelchair. He said, I'll never forget that. So it's those kind of things that are meaningful. Going to the elementary schools, talking to the young people. I would go I had a young girl call me. She must be about the seventh grade. And she said, Mayor Busby, a little Hispanic girl, she said, I'm I would like to invite you to school to speak. I said, well, OK, but make sure you clear it. She gave me a date and time and I showed up and the teacher said the teacher said Mayor Busby why are you here I said, well, such and so told me to come and I'm here to speak. And she said, Oh, she said that you were coming. But I didn't believe her. I don't know why she invited me. So I work with the people, that's all. As a matter of fact as my wife said, you are the people's mayor. So that's really where I am

Carolyn Tillman [00:38:29] Awesome. We are about to close from the hour that we're taping in. So I want to offer you this opportunity to give a summary of your life experience. It can be personal. It can be about your professional achievements. But as

you reflect on the fact that God put you here and that you have served and are serving, and as you look at generations that are coming, because this tape is going to be a message to people you'll never meet at some point in the future, what would you like them to know about you and your service?

James "Jim" Busby [00:39:20] I think that the most important thing, especially for the young people, is to understand that anything is really possible. You just have to believe and you have to have faith in something. I say God, but you have to have faith and you know, and follow the examples of those people that are trail, blazed a trail before you, because there are very few things that haven't been done. And it's up to you to kind of just take what they've done and improve upon it. You're like the we all were into music. Now we all have iPhones with little iPods and things. And, well, records have always been around. They were vinyl then they went to the tape and now they own CDs so improve upon what was already there. And a primary thing is to get it to be able to do that. You got to be educated. You've got to go to school. High school won't do high school is a good start, but from high school as a minimum, go to some trade school or junior college it doesn't cost that much to go to junior college or trade school. And you can do it. So do those things. The ultimate is to try and get a four year degree. But not everybody is going to get a four year degree. And that's one of the things I liked about President Obama. He wants to make the two year education free to everyone. And so you know get your education. And again, just keep in mind, I'm just a simple guy. And by the way, I'm the oldest of nine children. My, eight or nine children, my father died when I was 12. So when my father died, I went to work. I started going to work at 2:00 in the morning and throwing papers. I had worked with a guy who had a large paper route. So I worked on that job until I left to go to the service. I was actually 19. And in college I started at twelve and worked my way through that. And that gave me the background. As a matter of fact, one, since I was getting up at two o'clock all the time when I went to the service, they said, boy, you've got to get up at five o'clock, I would say, I had three I had, like I had overslept for three hours. So and it's what your, life is what you make of it and you just got to grab it and run with it. I teach my children that now and I have grandchildren that have finished, finished from the University of Texas. They finished from Iowa. And by the way, half of my grandchildren are Hispanic and Black the other half are just Black. So we have an integrated family. And one of the things I teach them is that the ones who have they have a Hispanic father is to understand their Hispanic heritage and also to understand their Black heritage. And they do. They do, I mean, they understand it perfectly and they do it very well.

Carolyn Tillman [00:42:36] Wonderful. Wonderful. Well, again, I want to thank, Jim Busby, for so much for this interview. It's been a pleasure.

James "Jim" Busby [00:42:48] Thank you.

End of Interview:
[00:42:50]