

Julia Thomas: My name is Julia Thomas. I am a student at Georgia Southern University. I am here with John Tyre, conducting an oral history interview as part of the project Fishing Traditions and Fishing Futures, Oral Histories of Commercial Fishing in Georgia. I have already received informed consent and permission to record. But could you please confirm that out loud?

John Tyre: Yes, you have.

JT: Thank you. So, I have some guiding questions and we just really want to hear your stories.

JT: Okay.

JT: So, with that being said, my first question is, can you tell me where and when you grew up?

JT: I grew up in Brunswick, Georgia. I was born in 1962. I started fishing when I was ten years old, 1970. Every summer, when I got out, instead of going and doing other things, I went and got on the commercial shrimp boat, and I learned how to shrimp fish. The first season I worked, it was me and my little brother, who's eighteen months younger than me. He went fishing too. My dad taught us how to work the winch and how to break nets down and pick up shrimp. A second year that we worked, we were paid half a share between the two of us. We were given a full share. The first year, there were two men on deck, plus us. Then the second summer that we went, he just had one guy. Me and my brother were the other crew member, the two of us together. But I loved it. We got to travel. If my dad was in Beaufort, South Carolina, or if he was in Florida, or if he was in Apalachicola, my mom would take us wherever it was. We'd get on the boat and we'd spend our summers fishing. We would travel around. Some summers it was here at Brunswick. We actually dragged out on the beach. I could see some of my friends from school playing on the beach. But we were out there. I just thought it was cool being on the shrimp boat. We got the fish off the back of the boat while we were shrimp fishing. My dad fixed us up a sharp pole. We'll be able to catch a shark, and turn around and release it when we got through. But it was just a very memorable time. I enjoyed it. That's where it got into my blood and became a way of life really because I continued to do it. I've had other careers, but I've fished ever since then. I've kept a boat, and it's because I just loved it. We were taught how to sew nets at a young age, splice cable. We could work on a winch. If he was down in the engine room, we went down there with him. He showed us how to be self-sufficient. He was very good at navigating. He was an ET, electronics technician in the service. He grew up fishing. But he went into the service. When he came back, he had a very extensive background in electronics. He was also in UDT, underwater demolition team. So, he was a frog man. So, he was pretty stringent about the way he had done things. But he wanted us to learn how to navigate and do it the right way. As little kids, I remember one of the things he would do is, we would leave Fort Myers, cutting across the Gulf, going to Apalachicola. He would make me and my brother take a chart and plot time and distance and way points to run back and forth. Because you had the digital – you didn't have the GPS then. You had lat-long that you had to run by. He would make us steer the boat and make sure you take, periodically, every couple hours. That's just neat. How many kids at 10, 11, 12 years old get to do something like that? On the boat, he stopped one time out in the middle of the Gulf, at about 500 or 600 foot of water, and I got to jump overboard. I was just thinking how far it is down to the bottom. You could see

what was going on. That same year, we went over to Dolphin Island, fished around over there. We got to visit the forts. He would pull up to different places like that and let us see it. When my mom would come over on the weekends and we'd unload. We'd go to whatever the attractions were around the place. So, where we worked, shrimp fishing, it was like a vacation sometimes too, because we got to go places and see different things. So, I just loved it. There were times that I slept on the deck all night or got up on the roof when the wind was blowing. Took my sleeping bag and my pillow and got up there and just looked at the stars. Actually, one time, we were off Apalachicola when Hurricane Dora came through, and he got us. Me and my brother were on the deck, and another gentleman. He told us at about 5 p.m., and we knew the hurricane was coming, but it had changed course. It was hitting some other boats about 30 miles away from us. He was telling us, "Get in the powerhouse right now." We still had shrimp on the deck. I'm saying, "We ain't finished here." He said, "Don't worry about that. Get in here now." In about 30 minutes, the wind hit us. It was like a train. So, yes, he stayed up all night running ahead on the anchor line as hard as the engine would go to keep it from breaking. So, where a lot of it was fun, there was some of it that was things that were kind of precarious at times. It would get rough out there. As I got older, it was my job to go on the outrigger. If something got messed up, climb out there in the middle of the night, and you had to fix it. But when you fish like that, you don't think of the dangerous part of it or what you're getting into. It's just part of the job. A lot of these guys here who still are in the business, they were brought up the same way. Their dads did it and they passed it down to them. So, I loved it growing up.

JT: You mentioned learning to sew nets and to navigate and how cool it was doing that when you were a kid. Can you just go into a little bit more about what you thought of that when you were learning?

JT: I didn't know if I wanted to do it for a living. My little brother always said he wanted to fish. I didn't know if I wanted to do it for a living, but I didn't think it was a bad thing to learn. Where probably most kids were all playing ball or doing something, we were learning how to cut panels out, sew nets together, and what the right length, types of gear to put on. [laughter] Yes, it was how to run a ticker chain, how to set doors to make them work right to get them to fish like they were supposed to. It was interesting, but it was monotonous. So, yes, I got bored with it pretty [laughter] quick if things didn't change. But we would sew holes up on the way in, in the evening. There were times my dad would cut out panels while we were fishing, dragging cut out panels of net and have us sew it together. He was really big on splicing. So, we did a lot of that. There was always a piece of rope laying on the table or something. He'd tell us to put a splicing and the dimensions of it he wanted. He taught us how to splice cable, which is totally different from splicing rope. Because a lot of times you're out there, if something tears up, you can be hours from a dock or from somewhere that can fix it. So, you needed to know how to do it yourself instead of having to run all the way into a dock to get somebody to splice cable or take a net to a net shop. We had the supplies and stuff on the boat just to fix it right there. So, we would stop and fix it. I know there were times we tore up that he would stay up all night and sew nets. We'd have to get up periodically and fill needles up with sew entwined on them. Now he would let us sleep in between. But he would holler when he got low. We'd have to – that was one of our duties was to get up and fill them up just so he could keep sewing the nets up so we could go back to work the next day. So, it wasn't a very glamorous job, but I enjoyed doing it.

JT: So, growing up with that experience, did it influence your decision to continue shrimping later on in life?

JT: Yes. I loved it enough. It was a release to go out on the ocean. It seemed like even though you're only a couple miles offshore, you're not a part of everyday society. So, it was a change from what I was used to. Like I told you earlier, I have a career as a – I worked my way up through the fire department. Started a firefighter, and I've been a deputy chief with them almost twenty-nine years now. But I always kept a boat because of the way we worked twenty-four on, forty-eight off. I worked twenty-four hours. That gave me two days to go fishing or do whatever I wanted to. If you go out there and work and are conscientious with your money, you can make money. But a lot of the fishermen, that's their only means. Six months out of the year. So, if you didn't make enough money out of the six months of the year to sustain yourself through the other six months, then you had to have fish houses. And you had to borrow money and get nets fixed. So, when you started back fishing again, you were already behind the eight ball. Like my granddad, he already owed the company store. So, a lot of that first money you made or into the middle of the year, you were paying back money. So, it just decreased how much you got to keep. Like he said, it's not as much how much money you make, it's how much you keep. But learning how to do all those things when I was younger kept me from having to pay someone else to do it. So, everything my dad taught me growing up made it more cost-efficient and made it more sustainable where I could do it part-time and make money at it. The fishing, it wasn't so much to subsidize my income, money-wise, as it was I enjoyed being out there doing it. There's a sense of competition with the other boats and the guys that are out there fishing. See who can catch what. I just enjoyed it.

JT: Can you tell me more about balancing your career and then shrimping in your free time?

JT: If I hadn't had the fire department job, I doubt I would've had a boat. The fire department, the stability, the insurance, the regular paycheck, allowed me to make it through the hard times. Through the fuel price crisis, I just tied my boat up and waited it out until fuel prices came back down to where it was economical, feasible to go fishing. When they had all the imports on the shrimp come in and the price of shrimp here dropped to 60 cents a pound, it didn't matter. You had to catch a lot of shrimp at 60 cents a pound just to overcome your fuel. If you go out shrimp fishing and you catch 1,000 pounds, you've got to go to a market and sell them. You can't eat 1,000 pounds no matter how hungry you are. You've got to do something with them. But there were times that – well, when it was rough like that, I was able to weather it because I had the other career. That's where we lost a lot of our boats at, a lot of our fishermen and generations, is they just couldn't do it any longer. They had to go find other careers that would let them five days a week, pipe-fit and welders, doing something different. It wasn't conducive to just fish on Saturday and Sunday. They had Monday through Friday regular jobs. The way I work, twenty-four on, forty-eight off, every – I worked one day and then the next two days, if I wanted to go fishing, I went fishing. If there was something to catch, I went. If there wasn't, I stayed home, because I had an income -- a source of income coming in. So, I was pretty fortunate.

JT: Can you tell me about what it was like when you did sell what you – when you were talking about making a profit, if you were smart with how you did it and not really needing the money, can you tell me what that was like? Because it was not your main source of income, but when

you were selling what you caught.

JT: Yes. The main thing is to have something that was marketable. I had a source of income too, with a few people that would come down to the dock. The guy that owned the fish house, since I didn't owe him any money, would let me sell. It's only right that the boat should owe the man money. He should get all their product. But I paid for my own ice. I paid for my own fuel. I paid for all my own nets out of my pocket. So, I didn't owe the company store anything. So, I wasn't obligated to sell everything to them. So, I could sell some of my shrimp to people from different places for \$3 a pound or \$4 a pound, which was less than what they would pay at a market, \$6 or \$7 a pound, and it gave me a better source of income. Now, I still sold shrimp to the fish house because I tied up there. I used their facility. But I was pretty smart with managing my money. If there's one thing that would probably help today if the industry ever came back, would be taking these people and doing some kind of financial or something budgetary wise really, with the fishermen. When you make X amount of money, you might want to think about this, that, and the other. A lot of your fishermen doesn't make them bad people, but they weren't highly educated. They were brought up and passed down from one generation to the next. For a long time, it was really, really abnormal for your fishermen, your captains, and all to have high school educations. If it was a family business, they would have to quit school at 14, 15, 16 years old to go fishing to help take care of the family. So, as things progressed, my dad and some of the other ones saw the handwriting on the wall, how it was getting harder and harder to make a living at that. So, they really stressed education, that you need to go graduate from high school. You could fish in the summertime, but you don't need to quit that. Because it looks as though the future's going to be where you can't just make a living doing this. As it pretty much beared out, that's what's happened to us.

JT: So, before we started this, I was told to ask about your daddy's photo. Can you tell me about that?

JT: Yes. He had a boat named the *Dora F*. That's right along the time that I started fishing because she said Richard was like 18 or 20. So, I was 9 or 10. That was the first boat that I ever went fishing on, that picture, the *Dora F*. I remember it was one of the fastest boats around here. So, I was all the time asking my dad to race with everybody and my dad's telling me, "The harder I run it, the more fuel I burn. [laughter] I've got to stay out of it." I kept wanting to push the thing and make it go faster. So, [laughter] I don't know what difference it made to get to the dock two minutes quicker than somebody else. But I'd remember about that for a long time. If we went to, especially, Beaufort, anywhere up around there, or down towards Fernandina, all the other fishermen had heard of the boat and how fast it was. So, my dad would be running along half speed. They'd all run up beside him and put – like little kids racing or trying to see. As soon as they pulled up beside him, you could tell that they pushed their engine wide open because smoke would come out of – you could hear their engine speed up. You didn't even talk to them on the radio. That was just a sign, "Hey, I want to see if you can run with me." So, we were always having the shrimp boat races, even when we were just somewhere else because they had heard that then he had a boat named the *Dora F* and that it was fast. I remember that as a kid. That's the boat that was in the photo of my dad. That other gentleman, (Bo Sam?), there was another gentleman in there. He was a [inaudible]. He lived on Jekyll Island. He was actually from up there around Beaufort. He had been in the portable toilet business. The telling

is that he buried enough money in his yard in mason jars, to buy his first shrimp boat with and that he went in the shrimp boat business. He was really something else. Him and my dad were very good friends. The other gentlemen that were standing around were crew members. They were guys that worked on different boats. One of the guys named Mutt had worked for my dad for a while. I knew because I had worked on the boat with him when I was little.

JT: So, it seems like there was really a community aspect.

JT: Oh, yes.

JT: Is that right?

JT: Yes. There was a group that I grew up with that were all the older captains that you knew them and that's what you called them, captains. Then there were the strikers, the guys that worked on the deck. There was a group of them, like a pool of strikers, that worked. They would trade sometimes. Some of them wanted to go to South Carolina. They worked on some boats. Some of them wanted to work here. Some of them didn't want to travel. If you wanted somebody to travel, you got one of the guys that didn't mind going away from home for a month or so and come back, but, yes. These guys were all very efficient too. They could all splice cable. They could all sew nets. Most of them, you could put them at the wheel and they could run a boat. They just didn't want the responsibility of being overall in charge or owning a boat. They would rather work the deck for a percentage than have to have the upkeep and everything else, the financial part of it. But most of your strikers back then, they would've done okay if they'd have had their own business.

JT: So, today, with working twenty-four hours on, forty-eight off, when you do have that forty-eight off and go out on the water, can you just describe to me what your routine is like? So, from the start of your day to getting out, the first thing that you do to the very end of your day, just describe that to me.

JT: Well, the morning I get off, I don't get off until 8:00 a.m., from the fire department. I go out fishing. I'll get to the fishing ground about 9:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. because it takes 45 minutes to an hour to get out according, if I'm running with the tide or I'm having to back it out there. I've usually called on the phone and talked to some of the guys that work every day. I got a good relationship with guys like Johnny Bennett and some of these other ones, and Captain (Thurman?). They know me. They knew my dad. I'll say, "Hey, where are you all working at?" They'll tell me what area they're in. Or if they're hunting shrimp and then I'll tell them – if they're in a certain area, I'll run to where they're at and fish around them. My boat draws a lot less water than they do. But their boat draws like 7, 8-foot, to float. Mine's the same size, but it's built a different style. It's got a tunnel in it. So, it only draws about 3.5-foot. So, I can get up closer on the beach quicker than they can. So, they normally send me up there to see if there's anything up there. I'll go up there on the beach, look around where the sandbars are to see if there's anything there. I'll call them and let them know. As the tide comes in, they'll work that way, and vice versa. If there's nothing on the beach, they'll say, "Hey, we were up there yesterday. There's nothing there. You may want to come out by the channel or out where it's a little deeper." So, we go out. I'll drag about 2 hours, 2.5 hours. Normally, I don't usually go

over 3 because I want my shrimp to look real good when I take up. That's where turtle shooters have come in and helped a lot. It makes your shrimp a lot more marketable. You don't get the big horseshoe crabs and a whole bunch of crabs. It's biting them. It shoots them out the bottom. The fisheye keeps your bullheads and stuff from compacting everything in the bag. So, where it helps.

JT: So, how have you seen the fishing community or your role in the fishing community change over time?

JT: Just economically, it's just got harder to make it. Fuel prices, nets, I mean, I keep harping on the same stuff, but then the imported shrimp, the price of shrimp, it just made it to where you've got to work harder for less. You cross the line to where you're at a deficit all the time. Then once you start playing catch-up, you get behind it. It's hard to make it. It's not a given. You've got a lot of different variables. You've got the weather. These past few years, the hurricanes have hurt us pretty bad. We were doing pretty good last year before the hurricane hit. After the hurricane, didn't do anything. Started coming back. Right at Christmas time, a few shrimps started showing up. Then we had the cold snap where the water temperature dropped like 20 degrees in twenty-four hours. It shocked everything, made everything leave. They did an emergency closure. They closed it in 25 miles, which we were in agreement with. But there's another, from when the storm hit, August 1st, September, October, November, December, three months of a six-month season, that is gone. So, it's climate change. A lot of that's affected us.

JT: What are some positive changes that you have seen over time?

JT: I think the willingness for government agencies to get our input has grown, has gotten better over the years. Allowing us to try different things, taking our advice, suggestions on the TEDs and the birds. Actually, having commercial fishermen test them. I was one of the first ones in the state back in the late [19]80s and early [19]90s. I owned a boat. I worked with National Marine Fisheries when they were here. FLETC, Dick Smith, they used my boat. I was one of the first ones to pull TEDS to get the right angle set on them, so it worked. It was more efficient where it was shooting turtles, but it wasn't shooting all your shrimp. When we first started pulling them things, you were losing 90 percent of the shrimp that came through it. Then we got it down to about 15 percent by adjusting it and working back and forth. So, I knew that was coming. So, I figured, let's embrace it and try to work together because the only thing constant is change. Things are going to change constantly. You can either resist it or try to make the best out of it. So, I figured, let's see how we can do it. Most of your fishermen, they're not against – we don't want to put ourselves out of business catching turtles or catching shrimp or stuff like that. But there's got to be a happy medium somewhere between –like farming. You can over-farm something, or you can under-farm. If land's not tilled, it gets stagnant. This bottom's the same way out here. There's somewhere between staying open twenty-four hours a day and being drugged to death and being closed forever and never being done. The other biggest change is the bottom has changed up pretty bad. Some of it's got to do with industry. Some of it's got to do with the regulations, the closures, the different things. There are places in the Sound out here, which is inside where they let us fish now. They closed it I think in eighty or something, twenty or thirty years ago, that you could go drag 20 minutes, and your net would be full of shrimp, fish, crabs, trout. Now, the bottom's stagnant. It looks like some kind of mud with some kind of

sediment in it and little worms growing on it. It's just my opinion. I think that bottom probably needs to be tilled. Black gill, a lot of it's got to do with industry. I think some of it's got to do with rising water temperatures. The other part of it is that the sediment that does come down, it just piles up and piles up. When we used to drag into sound when it was open, it kind of dissipated. It kind of tilled up. But like I said, you've got to find a happy medium between all or nothing, fishing-wise.

JT: What have been the primary causes of the changes you have seen?

JT: Oh, the ones I just listed. Probably, some I would say regulations. The people had good intentions, but they didn't know what the consequences really were going to be when they did it. But they had to do something. Industry, change of bottom closures, fishing where we were allowed to drag at. Weather had a lot to do – still has a lot to do with it. It's a lot more volatile than it was back. Back when I was young fishing, in the summer, we'd have what was called a squall. It would rain from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. You'd get a little squall. The wind was blowing and once it came through, it would go back to being calm again. But it seems like you always caught a few more shrimp right after that squall because rainwater has nitrogen in it. Nitrogen causes things to grow. It seems like the shrimp actually would do better. Everybody would leave before the squall hit because the wind was going to blow for 30 minutes real hard. Well, my dad would just say, "Close the doors. Let's get inside and drag through it." Then in the evening, we had some of our better drags. But now, it's a lot more. You get north easters for twenty-eight days. The wind blows out of one direction. That one used to be very uncommon. So, between climate change, regulations, shrimp farming, pond-raised shrimp, shrimp prices, it's just made it a lot harder to keep doing it.

JT: So, what have been some of the most rewarding parts of working out on the water?

JT: Self-fulfillment, pride in accomplishing something. I've had eight boats. I've managed to pay for every single one of them by taking them out there and working them myself on my days off. I usually paid every one of them off within one season. But I was conscious with my money. I could afford to get things fixed when they broke. Instead of just patching them, like a lot of these guys did, I went ahead and fixed it the right way because I had the extra money from my other career, plus the money that I had made fishing. The boats paid for their sales. You follow me? I didn't have to borrow money and pay a bank back. I let the boat pay for itself. So, that was probably one of the things I learned, hard work. You could pretty much write your own paycheck as hard as you wanted to work fishing.

JT: Can you tell me a little bit more about your eight boats?

JT: The first one that I bought, my dad advised me it was a really good deal. It was really cheap. It was a wood hull. My dad said, "There's a reason that he doesn't want no more money for that than that." I said, "Well, why is that?" He said, "Well, you ever seen a colander that you put spaghetti in?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "What happens when you dump it?" I said, "The water runs through it." He said, "That boat's in that kind of shape. You don't need it." I was 15 at the time. I had made enough money. I kept on and he said, "Go on." He helped me get some nets ready to go. But I couldn't drag any further off Jekyll Beach than I thought I could swim

because I had to have two 5-horsepower gasoline pumps running all the time to keep it floating. No joke. If either one of the pumps quit, it wasn't going to – I've got it. I fished it. Got it paid for. The guy, I had some money. I gave him some money. He said, "I don't want to take all your money." I had the money to pay for the whole boat. He said, "I don't want to take all your money," because he wasn't trying to pull anything. He said, "The boat's in bad shape. You're going to have to spend some money on it." So, he said, "You pay me half and then you work it and pay me the other half." So, I got him paid off that year and I learned, don't buy any leaky, wooden boats. Okay? So, after that I moved up to wooden hulls with fiberglass and they did better. They floated longer. They stayed in better shape. But the wood inside them would rot. Do you know what I mean? So, you were constantly having to take the wood. While your hull on the outside was good, the inside was having trouble. So, I was having to work on it. That's when I decided I was going to start paying a little more money to buy boats made of fiberglass. You don't have the upkeep on them. They don't get holes in them. Worms don't eat through them. Electrolysis doesn't make them rust. [laughter] So, I evolved. I've had bigger boats, smaller boats. I bought a couple of boats when my dad retired, bigger boats for him to fish, and I fished with him on my days off. So, I got to spend a lot of time with my dad when he was older. It didn't matter if we went fishing or not. In the end, he was pretty sick and he would only go the days that I was off because he had kind of a form of dementia from low oxygen and couldn't remember things and would have to ask me. There were times I let him drive the boat. He would try to run from point A to point B and there was a sandbar between us there under the water where he had taught me that it was at. But I would have to tell him, "You don't want to go that way. You've got to run out here." He'd have to ask me why. I'd have to explain to him like he had taught me, "Because you've got to run to here, here and the other." A lot of good lessons that I learned off of it. So, actually getting to spend time with my dad after he was older and sick. Then the accomplishment of paying for things, being out there with the elements, fishing, and being in a friendly competition with the other guys, and having to drive to get up and go in the morning. The second day that I'm off, I usually leave home about 3:30 a.m. or 4:00 a.m. So, I could get out there by daylight when you could start dragging. So, to be successful, you had to have a pretty good work ethic. You had to be a self-starter. You're self-motivated. You had to just take responsibility that if it was going to get done, you were probably the one that was going to have to do it. But I did move up on the class of boats that I bought and what shape they were in. I learned that just because it was a good deal, didn't mean it was the best deal you could get. [laughter] You might better spend a little more money and get something that was going to actually float under you, but the engine ran or something. It really evolved over. I learned more and more about boats. You had to go down inside them, inspect them, and I could look at something that looked like it was okay, but I would know that eventually or pretty soon, it was going to need some kind of attention. How much it cost, engines, nets, winches, the electronics it had on it, the rigging. What kind of shape was it in? Were you going to have to do any major kind of stuff on that? Never buy one without pulling it out of the water and looking at the bottom of it and looking at the propeller and the shaft and the rudder. So, there was a lot of it. There was an evolution to where I got a little smarter. Because once it's yours, you're responsible for it. You've got to fix it no matter what it takes. That's time and money. So, I probably got a little wiser at not buying junk.

JT: Well, thank you for sharing that. What do you think younger people or maybe those who do not live on the coast, should understand about the history and the heritage of Coastal Georgia?



JT: We farm the sea just like they – a lot of people in America understand they're farmers. They're people that are from the Midwest. That's what they do for a living. They don't understand the fishing. But the commercial fishing industry is like sea farmers. They're basically doing the same thing that the people are doing on land that plant crops and everything. We're just ploughing the sea to do it.

JT: So, what are your thoughts on the future of your fishing community and the fishing industry as a whole?

JT: Concern. Concern that there's going to be, in the next – I mean, I'm not talking about fallout short term. In the next three to five years, if something's not done, it's gone. This way of life will cease to exist. I looked at a picture yesterday that was actually at the fire department. They had taken an aerial view of the port, but it had all these docks lined up. I counted. This was ninety-one. It might have been eighty-nine or ninety-one. I counted eighty-eight boats. There are actually six of us that are still fishing from this port. There were eighty-eight. What was that? Twenty years ago? So, percentage-wise, if you do that, you can keep cutting down on it. I'm afraid that there won't be – Johnny Bennett and these guys, they're the last ones that will do it. That is their career. That is their primary source of income. That it's either going to get done by factory boats that are owned by corporations and they got the big money behind them and all. They don't own the boats themselves. There's no private ownership. They work for the company that has the big boats. Or it will go to somebody with a little small boat that can afford to go do it and not make any money. Just do it because they love to do it or catch shrimp for themselves. I don't think there's going to be any medium unless there's something done about it. It's sad.

JT: Yes, it is. But what do you hope to see if something were to change?

JT: For it to get back to where, if somebody wanted to raise a family, have a family and raise a family and pass that on from one generation to the next, like mine had been, that it's a viable source of income. That they can sustain a family. That they can buy a home by shrimp fishing. They can have cars and they can afford insurance. They can send their kids to college. A lot of different things that go on that people that go into industry are afforded, or some kind of private business or construction business, what they can do. I'd like to see it up at least parity to where you could do this and sustain a family. But working together with people. The University of Georgia, this place here, has been one of the – it's kept guys going that they could not afford. Marty, Captain Lindsey, Captain (Truck?) come down, sewed nets, did cable, a lot of supplies, a lot of different things that the guys couldn't figure out. They couldn't afford to do it anymore. These guys are ex-fishermen. They are experts at it. They've had years and years of problem solving and fixing. Maybe more stuff like this, more places or more funding for places like this to help what's left. Because before it can regenerate, you've got to stop the bleeding. [laughter] You've got to stop what's here from going away. Okay? Places like these, they're just an immeasurable asset to the fishing community. So, working together with – government's got a place in helping it with these regulations, maybe some subsidies or something. Farmers get subsidies. Why don't the fishermen, if they can prove this is their livelihood? Why aren't there some kind of subsidies for them? The only thing they get is a disaster, if it's a big enough

disaster. You follow me? Just a regular bad season, there's no money. Farmers, if they have an off-season or something, they're subsidized. So, just maybe somehow that they can work, educational-wise and through the government and with the fishermen, to keep it a viable business that people could do.

JT: You mentioned earlier something about helping upcoming fishermen in budgeting and education. Do you think that could also be something?

JT: Yes. Some kind of workshops, some kind of seminars about how to keep a budget. That sounds kind of basic to people that's been to school. But you've got these people that were brought up in the family businesses. That's not necessarily passed down. How to budget and how to plan and how to make a growth chart or something. Or to have some kind of – where do you want to be in five years – some kind of goals and stuff like that. It probably wouldn't hurt at all. How to invest what money they make. I've had some fishermen that have made some money. They are older and I've seen them and I ask them how they're doing, and not so well. They've run out of money. They don't have enough money for their retirement. I've asked them, "You made a lot of money fishing. You did pretty good." They said, "Well, I didn't apply it anywhere. I didn't invest in anything. So, it just sat there." So, they need to learn to take the money that they have and let it make money for them. Invest it somewhere for the future. So, it would really be good if we had college students like you all or somebody that's doing or going through economics or something to come in and teach classes. It would help them and help us. It'd be a cooperative thing. On-the-job training for you all and something that they need. I think it's not any one thing. It's going to take a collection of people working together to save it.

JT: So, before we finish, do you have any stories, insights, thoughts, predictions, anything else that you would like to share with us?

JT: Well, I said I was concerned about the industry. I am still optimistic that it's not over until it's over. That we do have people that are reaching out to us, like the University of Georgia. These are legitimate concerns, what's going to happen to this? That our voices are heard and that there's a way out if we pull together. I don't think it's time to throw in the towel yet, but it's precariously close. If there's not some major help given the industry and some things change, that it's going to be a struggle to exist if it even does. But people working together, I think, we can get it going again. It's worth having. Have you ever tasted a Georgia white shrimp? There's no better in the world than to have a Georgia white shrimp. The way they're marketed the way they are, that's helped a lot too, the marketing. I think if there were more fishermen coops set up, more stuff like that where we have the shrimp advisory committee where we can meet and have a say so on what's going on with it, it would help too. But like I said earlier, it's just going to take a combination of things. But people working together, it could be a viable industry again. That's about it.

JT: Great. Well, thank you so much.

JT: Yes, ladies. Thank you all for your...

[end of transcript]