

People of the Sturgeon: Wisconsin's Love Affair with an Ancient Fish
Jerry Neumueller Oral History
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Dick Ristow: Today we're at Jerry Neumueller's house on Black Wolf Point, interviewing Jerry. Jerry, tell me a little bit about your family, sisters, brothers, dad, mom, where they're all from, and things like that.

Jerry Neumueller: I tell you, Dick, most of my dad was German. My mother was mostly German. I had a brother and a sister; sister was three years older than I was; and brother, approximately three years younger than I am. We always lived down on (Aurora?) Avenue, pretty close to the lake. We were pretty much always considered in the fish district. I grew up on Lake Winnebago per se. My sister was not into fishing at all. My dad did a lot of ice fishing. He used to go out to do some trolling. But that was about the only kind of fish that he was involved in. My mother, her brother was into fishing. He did a lot of set line fishing in the river at that time for catfish. I'm sure way back when sturgeon – I don't know if – I think it was legal at one time or something. I don't remember. But he used to do a lot of smoking of fish. I had a lot of smoked catfish when I was younger. I remember that. I never remembered too much about sturgeon until I got into it myself, pretty much when I started. Because I never started or knew anybody when I was younger about sturgeon spearing. I was a bricklayer. I was working on one of the buildings at the college. This was, I'd say approximately, about 1961, sixty-two, in that area. I was working there. I met a fellow by the name of (Merrill?) [unintelligible], who was a mason tender for me at that time. He always kept talking about fishing, which I was interested in. But then when sturgeon spearing came, he always kept talking about sturgeon spearing. I always got pretty interested about it. Then he kept telling me how he did it and things like that. He lived on the south side of Oshkosh, just outside of town. He had shanties. He had all the equipment. So, this one year, he was telling me he was going to be spearing north of Oshkosh, out by the Big Island. So, consequently I asked him, "Would it be feasible for me to just come out there and observe and see what goes on," which he agreed to. About that time, I went out there. I remember there was opening day. I was sitting with him. I had bought myself a license back then. I went, and I sat with him. We sat there until, well, maybe about 9:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. Then finally he said, "Well, you stay here." He said, "I'm going to make the rounds," because of the other shanties that were out there by us in our group. I remember, he wasn't out the door more than ten seconds – the water was clear where we were. We were in about 16-foot of water. I'll never forget this, that when he came out, I saw a sturgeon that was out in front of me coming in on the left side. I could see it right along the bottom because it was so clear. I remember yelling out to him, "Merrill, here comes one. What do I do?" He says [laughter], "You take the spear, and you throw at it." Not knowing the situation and pretty excited about it, like just that, I just picked up the spear. I threw the spear at the fish as it was coming in, which I knew afterwards was a total mistake. I should have waited until it came right in, underneath me, and then threw. But I threw out ahead of me. The spear went off to the side and then went over the fish. Because the fish was coming towards me. So, he came in, and I told him. Then he told me where I made my mistake and stuff. I learned from that. Because I think that was the first sturgeon. Since then, after that, it was about a good thirty years, thirty-five years or so since I ever missed another sturgeon that I threw at beyond that time. So, I was quite happy with the start that I had. That's where I got my start as far as the spearing aspect of it.

DR: I'm looking at your pictures while you're talking to me. Tell me though about the year that you had told me earlier, an experience you had, where one came up really high up to you. You stuck it, and you pulled it right in.

JN: Okay. That one picture there, you'll see that there's two spears in it. I remember, at that year – I don't know if it's 1990, eighty-nine or ninety, something like that – anyway, I was in my shanty. I had a cook stove on a shelf right behind me. I was north of Oshkosh, fishing out there. I was in the shanty by myself. It was around noon and that or getting near noon. So, I decided to fry up some amber for myself. So, I was standing there by the stove, cooking, and at the same time, watching the hole as best I could. Anyway, all at once, I saw this sturgeon. It was fairly high, coming into the hole, in front of the shanty. I just caught the nose [unintelligible] as it was coming in. I had the chair in front of me that I usually sit in. I had that pushed off to the side. So, when I saw the sturgeon, it came in. From either the noise that I made by moving in the shanty or he could have seen the spear move, the head of the spear, because it was so high up, that all at once, he just pushed his tail and took off to my right fairly fast. So, at the time, I just grabbed the spear and got down to the side of the shanty as much as I could, low. I just turned the spear on an angle and just threw – you might as well say threw blind. I thought, "Well, you're not going to get it if you don't throw." So, I just threw. By luck, I did hit the fish. I pulled him back. I saw that when I pulled him back, there was only one tine in the back, near the tail on an angle. I saw this as I was leading the fish around into the hole. I always speared with two spears. I had my extra spear there. So, I just took my time. Because I didn't want to jerk the fish or anything else like that. So, I brought it the best I could into the hole. Then at the time, I just kind of let the rope go. I got the other spear. It hit right into the middle of the fish. Well, then I felt very safe. Because then I just pulled both ropes together. Then I got the girth into them and just pulled them out. But I believe that was, I think, a 77-pounder that I had at that time. I thought it was marked on the back there.

DR: Looking at your pictures here, it looks like you speared about a dozen fish over your spearing career.

JN: Well, prior to that, I was very fortunate through the years. We worked hard, the gang that we were in. We had a long season to do it. We used to move around quite a bit. I was looking for the fish. I was very fortunate. I had a lot of patience to sit. I usually sat by myself and a lot of times from 7:00 a.m., 7:30 a.m. until – we all used to spear until at least about 5:00 p.m. So, I had the occasion to at least see one. There was very few years that I didn't see a fish. But I remember one time when I went, I think, thirty-four days between seeing sturgeon. Because the water wasn't all that clear and stuff like that. But, as I said, I did have the patience. I was very successful as far as getting sturgeon quite very often. I think on these pictures here, there was about a six or seven-year period in there where I hit, what I would say, my biggest fish, all the way from – an 84-pounder was the biggest one that I ever had. I think that was 67 inches long. Then I think a 60-pounder was in that same five-year time period. So, as I say, I was very fortunate to see fish. But I think it's because of the just persistence I had and the patience that I had that it happened that way.

DR: All the years you've been spearing, you must have had some other unusual experiences that maybe are humorous or serious or whatever, things of interest other people would like to hear about.

JN: Well, just through the years of watching a sturgeon, I know I had them come in right on the

bottom. I've had them come in through slow. I had them come in fast. I've had them come right underneath the ice. All at once, they surprise you and come right out into the hole. Some of these were sitting there with some of the fellows. At the same time, we had a laugh of how some of these sturgeons would come in, what we used to call puppy shots, because they were pretty high. We just had a good time about it. One of the things is we didn't rush it. I think that helped because we weren't that excited. Because we saw enough sturgeon through the years. So, you learn to just take your time and watch first and then kind of react after you see how the sturgeon was coming in. But there's times that we used to grab the rope and stuff like that. You think when it was coming. Or you would go and all at once, the rope would come off of how you had it wrapped into the water. You'd have a laugh like that, how maybe you goofed one up, especially if a small one went through. You grabbed the spear, and you kind of watched. Then you figured, well, that was too small to throw at. So, you didn't throw. But all the equipment and the ropes was just lying in the water. You laugh because of a foolish thing you made. Because if it would've been maybe a decent one, you wouldn't have had a chance to throw at it. But I don't know. We used to just have a good time and enjoy it.

DR: Have you speared in other lakes?

JN: No. Well, just Lake Winnebago and Lake Poygan. I speared up there. The times that I was up there, we hit pretty much dirty water up in Poygan. Out of our bunch, we did get some fish. I was never successful up in Poygan. In Butte des Morts, I did. I speared there. I did get a sturgeon up in there. I never got a big one up there. They were smaller sturgeons that we had of our bunch. I know it was always shallow. I just never cared about spearing up there. So, I just kind of favor Winnebago because I live by the lake out here. So, I just plan on doing most of my spearing out on Winnebago.

DR: I noticed on some of your pictures here, you got handsaws for ice and ice power saws. Tell me about the difference and when you come into power and whatnot.

JN: Time and exact years and stuff like that, I probably don't know too much. But I remember when we started back in the sixties, we used to cut everything by hand and chop corners out. We'd take these big ice saws. Then you'd start sawing by hand. You had push pulls like you do nowadays, just to shove the ice under the water. After a while, then the ice drills came out. So, you didn't have to chop by hand. We used to chop – just take the corners and cut those and then still use the ice saws. Then afterwards, we got into chainsaws, which we used for a good many years. Then afterwards, it was around eighty-nine or so, eighty-eight, eighty-nine, I think, at that time. We got together. Then we started to make what they call ice saws on sleds. We did make those. I think it was around eighty-nine or ninety, in that vicinity, that we started to do that. They were nice because you could start them up. They weren't heavy to use. You didn't get as wet sawing holes. You just start them up and run them and cut your holes in. It just made it a lot easier. Through the years, there's quite a few fellows that have made their own sleds like that with the saws on them. We've been using them since then. Some of the ice, if a guy's young, then the younger guys can handle a regular saw. I think that's the way to go. But when you get a little older, ice sleds are a lot easier to use. They cut a nice hole. You get a nice slant on it. So, that's pretty much the reason.

DR: Why do you need a slant on the hole?

JN: Well, it just makes – when you're sitting down and you move your shanty over the hole, when you're looking in the hole, the sides are beveled. So, it just increases your visibility. It makes the hole a lot bigger when you're looking at it because – it wouldn't make so much difference if it would be real shallow ice. But if you had ice that was 2-foot thick or 30 inches, and it would come down, with the ice being cut on an angle, your angle of vision just goes out quite a bit. I mean, it would really make your hole a lot bigger. Then you wouldn't have a chance of hitting into the sides of the ice as much either because of the slants on the ice.

DR: Oh, that's interesting. I noticed on one of your fish you speared in 1989, you got two spears in there. Why would that happen?

JN: That was the one where I hit that one kind of blind. I had that one tine in it. That was the first year I used a flying barb.

DR: What's a flying barb?

JN: Well, on the spear itself, the spears I always use, they were five-tined. That was common. A fellow by the name of John (Luft?) who used to spear with us, made – once he had made spears. [unintelligible], he and his boy made some spears. They did a very good job of welding. The barbs on the spears were good. Then finally, they came out. Some of the fellows came along, and they called it a flying barb. In other words, it was milled, and it had the barbs. But they were loose. What they did is when they speared, they go into a sturgeon. Then after you try to pull out all the spears, the barbs would open up. They would hold real good because they were wider. It was a double barb on it. So, when it'd open up, you'd go in maybe about a quarter-inch hole or what you had or seven-sixteenths. Then when you kind of pull it out, it would be like – the barb would open up to maybe an inch, inch and a quarter or something like that. So, it would just hold the fish better. But the reason why you saw that other spear in there is because when I saw the – I only had one tine in there. That was with the flying barb. I didn't know how it would hold. That's why threw the other spear to make darn sure that I got the fish, that it didn't pull away from the one barb that's all I had in it.

DR: I've got a picture here of a smaller fish that is not dated and standing next to your shanty. The name on your shanty is Dolly Neumueller. Who's this Dolly?

JN: [laughter] That's my wife, and that's my boss. I always kidded her that if I ever got picked up for anything and then they all see the name on the shanty, that she'd be the one that'd have to go and get wrote up for the violation and not me. It's just been a kind of a standing joke that I was going to buy her this for her birthday or this for Christmas. It was like, whether it'd be another piece of fishing equipment or something for spearing or anything for the shanty, it was always her shanty or things like that. So, it was just kind of a joke that we've been running between the two of us for years.

DR: Does your wife spear?

JN: No, she doesn't. She doesn't have the patience. She has sat with me a few times through the years. But it's just not her thing to do, to sit out there, and –

DR: Patience. Why do you need patience? I thought there were a lot of fish in the lake.

JN: Well, as I said before, I went thirty-four days between seeing fish. That was long days, like from 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 a.m. That wasn't all in one year. At that time, you could spear the whole month of February. So, it went into either two years or maybe part of one year, all of the next year, and then part of the next year before I saw a fish. But I remember that was thirty-four days. I know one of my sons sat the whole season. I forget how long that was. He went every day. Because he was out of college and at that time, he had a chance to do this. He did go every day, very faithful and had the kind of patience to do it. He went the whole season. All he saw was a few minnows. Since then, he got so disgusted. He said the heck with it. He said he was not going to go anymore which up until the present time, he hasn't gone. He's come out and sat with me for maybe an hour or so, just to come out and eat. Then he'd take off and go. But it kind of just burnt him right out, just sitting all those days without seeing anything. So –

DR: So, between you and your sons, you're the only one left of the three that are spearing now.

JN: That's right.

DR: I've got a picture here from 1989. That's a whole bunch of guys with a shanty tipped up and saws. Talk about that a little bit. What kind of a crew did you have that you could do all that stuff?

JN: Well, that was the time that we were going – because the ice was pretty thin, we had snowmobiles out there as you could see and a three-wheeler. There were no cars. But I remember some of the fellows that were there was Ronnie Harrison and Bruce and Bob Schoenberger. I know Steve Fisher was there, John (Senderhoff?). I can't remember anybody else at that time. But I know we had some tip-up shanties and shanties with wheels. We had sleds, I mean, skis with the shanties. My son, Bob, and Steve Fisher were on the other ones, there with the ice saw. We were cutting in. There was another one. So, through the years, I can remember, before you had four-wheel drives out there, you had to have chains on trucks on the older vehicles. I remember Mel [unintelligible] ran a honey farm also. He had one of the first early Cats that came out. It was a big one. I remember we had to go, and he made a sled for it. There were maybe about eight or ten of us on the machine and on the sled. That's how we used to get out into the lake in the snow. We had sleds or skis on these shanties. We could hook three or four of these shanties together. It was just an effort to get around, some of those years, to keep moving and cutting holes in. Because it was a lot of work involved way back then. But even before my time, I know in order to get out there, they used to – (Harold Damel?) was a farmer and then Herb [unintelligible], some of them had to bring a tractor out there in order to even pull the shanties around. That was way back in the early sixties there when we first started.

DR: What's thin ice?

JN: Thin ice, at that time, that one year where there was only about 8 inches of ice out there

when we started spearing. That's what I call thin ice. Because we speared in 6 inches, 8 inches of ice. All the way up to some years, we've hit about 3-foot of ice. So, it's quite a bit of difference. So, I just call it thin ice. There isn't a lot of ice there. It's under a foot. That's what I'd say I call thin ice.

DR: In the process of spearing, do you have something down there to alert the fish, to draw them in? How do they know you're there?

JN: Okay. When I started out, at that time, you could put stuff down in the water. A few farmers that we speared with, we used to put down corn on the bottoms. We'd take a drainpipe and just dump corn. Then you could take it and move it around on the bottom, spread it out that way. Or you could just take the corn and just kind of cast it and just let it sink. It would just kind of make your bottom yellow. I always used to take potatoes. I used to just cut them real thin and just slice them off maybe a sixteenth of an inch thin. I used to cut them at home a lot of times, just take them out there. Then you'd just throw these potato peels out. They would kind of just float down into the bottom. Then they would spread out way over.

DR: Would the fish eat this stuff?

JN: No, the fish wouldn't eat it. But it would help you see the fish on the bottom. At that time, you could put things down. Paper plates was another thing. You used to put a little stone on it. We did. The thing would just automatically drop. I remember these paper plates were always fun. Because at the end of the night, when we were quitting, we would take the spear and throw. As long as you were in mud, you didn't ruin – dull the tip of the spear. But we always used to spear. So, you could practice throwing at these plates. It would help you. Because otherwise, how often would you ever have a chance to throw a spear? There's a trick to, I would say, throwing a spear. You don't jerk it or anything else like that. You get it, and it's a constant – you just kind of guide it pretty much. Because the spears are weighted. They're all the way from 15 to 20 pounds. You just take it and kind of guide it and follow through with it. Your spear's going to go fairly straight. If you try to throw it and jerk it and don't follow through, then the thing will be off. It is not going to go straight for you. But getting back to the stuff you put down, you hang down – a sturgeon is, you might as well say, very inquisitive. I think everything that's been on the outside of the upper part of the ice has been hung down in the ice, coffee cups, cobs of corn, anything pale, anything shiny. Then they start to make little decoys, fish decoys. They've made them. You can hang them down. They're all the way from maybe 6, 8 inches, all the way up to maybe 4-foot. Anything that comes into your mind, bowling balls, bowling pins, any of that stuff, I've seen all that stuff hanging in the hole. Just something that they think will maybe draw fish and they'll see that.

DR: It doesn't have to be a fish then. It can be anything that they're inquisitive. Nature would draw their attention too then.

JN: That's correct. Yes.

DR: You said something about decoys carving like fish. You have a favorite decoy carved fish that you use?

JN: Well, I have ones through the years by a fellow by the name of Art Sonnenberg from Van Dyne. I got to know him fairly good. Not only did he spear sturgeon, but he lived down near [unintelligible] in the middle of the lake on the southern part here. Or I should say on the west side. He made decoys. They were all the way from maybe 15 to 22, 23 inches long. I just liked the kind that he had. One was like a garfish. It was green and white and black. Then also, he had two other ones. The way he had them, they used to sail and glide pretty much through the water. Because during the times, I always like to just keep moving them around. The fish would sail back and forth, the decoys would, in the water, and kind of just attract the fish that way. You see them. I just like them. I know there are a lot of other fellows that do make the decoys. But Art Sonnenberg is the one that I've been using for maybe fifteen, twenty years. I've had good luck with them. So, I just kind of continued to use them.

DR: While you're sitting in your shanty, is this thing heated? I mean, it gets pretty cold out there, doesn't it?

JN: Yes. It's different. When I first started spearing, the first shanty outside of [unintelligible] that I sat in was out here on Winnebago and right off of where we used to spear out here too, off of Black Wolf Point out near the Long Point. The shack wasn't insulated. There used to be a little wood stove in it. We used to take and burn wood and carry coal along and put coal in it. So, once you heat it up or get the fire going, it was wood, and then you put pieces of coal in. The only thing was because it wasn't insulated, so for the first hour or so in the morning when the shack would heat up, all the moisture used to drip on you from the ceiling. So, you used to get water on you from that way. Then when you come out at night, you'd be coughing and spitting. Because you had all this smoke from the cold and the fire. Your face had a little blackish residue on it from what would go into the air. So, I was glad when these propane gas heaters came along that would eliminate all that.

DR: Why would anybody want to sit out there, get wet, inhale all of those fumes, and like you said, you didn't spear one year – for three, four years, you didn't get one? What drives a man to do that?

JN: Sometimes I wonder myself. I don't know. I like to eat sturgeon. I've had a lot of smoked sturgeon and baked sturgeon and, I guess, fried or any way you can think of it. But I like the taste of it. But going after sturgeon is just like a person going deer hunting or turkey hunting or anything else like that. It's a challenge. It's something different. You think that you're going to sit and see a lot of other fish. At times, you maybe will see walleyes. You'll see minnows and stuff like that. Years ago, we never saw a shad like you do, maybe in the last ten, twelve years, something like that. But it was always something different. It's intriguing what's underneath. Because I spent a lot of time on a boat, on top of the water, and this was a chance to see what's going around, swimming in the water, especially if it's clear. It just looks like a different world when it is clear. Because the sensation you get of looking into that type of water., it's just a different feeling. It just keeps you interested. It keeps you going and keeps bringing you back that way, when you have to look down in 4-, 5-foot of water, just like looking at a television, and all you see is snow on it, hoping something is going to come through that. It's tough. Your chances of getting one aren't very good. But I don't know. It seemed like in the lean years was

when I always had the luck that I did get a sturgeon. Some of the times that I did get one is when everybody else was filling up. I sat there and said, "Where are they all?" So, it goes from one spectrum to the other of what you see.

DR: What do they taste like?

JN: To me a sturgeon is – I don't know if people have had catfish, smoked catfish. It's all together a different tasting fish than a walleye or a perch, which around here is mostly what we eat. But smoked sturgeon just has a different flavor to itself. We've had baked sturgeon, which you put them in roasters. We used to have parties at the time when we'd get through. I remember when [unintelligible] and the whole bunch that some of those parties with the wives and stuff like that. We got up to maybe eighty, ninety people that used to be there. It was just a good fashioned get together at the end of the season. We used to do this with other groups too, is have kind of a party. If they get too big, they're no fun. If they're too small, then they'll kind of fade out. So, here again, it's been the ups and downs on this kind of thing through the years. But then you run into the caviar if you get it. Some people like it, and some don't.

DR: What does caviar taste like?

JN: Well, most of it, I guess, you just get kind of a salty taste out of it. I don't know. I always like to fry up perch eggs. I don't know if you ever fried perch. But it's altogether different than trying to eat fish. It just has a unique flavor. But, as I say, caviar doesn't. I don't know. I wouldn't go down and spend the money to pay as much as they sell it for. I'll tell you that.

DR: What does it cost?

JN: I think you can get it up to – on these little cans that they buy it in. It's not from around here. It's all mostly imported stuff. All the way from maybe \$50 to \$200 for one of these little cans. I guess it goes up quite high if you kind of figure per pound. But it's a black egg. It's only at a certain time. Myself, all these years, I've never speared a fish that had ripe black eggs. I've had fish that were maybe a year or two years away from being ripe eggs. They're just starting and stuff like that. So, there's nothing you can do with that kind. But they have to be getting black or gray that they're going to spawn out that year. Those are the fish that you – about four or five years, in between, that they spear. So, that's why if you get them after the second or third year after they've spawned out, they're only maybe half ripe, the fish that you would get the females.

DR: Who's the best spearer that you know?

JN: Well, I hate to say it, when I look in the mirror, you mean, outside of that? Well, through the [laughter] years, there was a lot of them. I don't know if you would say the best spearer is somebody that gets one every year, or they have the – there's a lot of the fellows that, through the years, have the knowledge. They've had the occasion to spear a lot. They know kind of how sturgeon works. From the stories and the groups that you get together, you kind of just picture this all together. The fellows themselves, some of the older ones that I mentioned before, [unintelligible] and that bunch. I spear with George Brennan and his kids and the fellows that

spear that with him. You guys kind of all get together, and you kind of talk about this. I think everybody has the equivalent, to throw at a fish, if they see one, they can hit it. So, I wouldn't say that that's basically what you would say is a good spearer. I would say somebody that finally had the knowledge of, "Well, where do you think the fish are at? Where should we go to find them?" Maybe that's what I would say is – that's what I would call a good spearer. Not just somebody that can throw a spear.

DR: You mean somebody that's a good scout that can go out and find the signs. What are the signs? If you're going to open up a hole in the ice and look for something on the bottom, what would you look for?

JN: Throughout the years, being here with the red worms from the lake larvae, which the fish always fed on. They were so prevalent in the whole lake that I don't care where you go in Lake Winnebago, through the years. Consequently, every time you take mud or take samples of the mud, you'd bring it up, you'd see these red worms in there. So, I don't care if you went right out here where I live off of Black Wolf out in the mud out here or if you would go all the way north up to Waverly Beach. Any place where there was mud, you had a lot of red worms. So, you could go all over, and the fish would be pretty well scattered out. It just seems that maybe in about the last four or five years, there was a decline in the red worms and in the lake flies. You didn't see that many. The more of the emphasis went on the shad. There was so many shads. Of course, the shad always seemed to go towards the warmer water, which I always thought was in the south in the lake off of Fond du Lac because of it being shallower and a lot of sand and stuff like that down there, that this is where your sturgeon would go there. Because they're going to go after the feed. I believe also, when the zebra mussels came into the lake, which we never had years ago, that they do grow up on the reefs, and they do feed on these. Because you could see, when you would spear a sturgeon and cut it open, you'd always look to see in the stomach area what it was feeding on. You always could tell where this sturgeon – at least the past few days, what it was feeding on. But years ago, as I said, when you go out to start, it was just through – because you speared so much, and you got together, there was enough fellows involved in it, that you always knew pretty much where you were going to start to spear as long as you're in mud.

DR: One time I heard an old guy say he always looks for blow holes. What does that mean?

JN: Blow holes is – you can see that when the water's very clear. You can see down in the mud on the bottom. That's what I was mentioning before, is that it's a unique world, under the water. Blow holes would be where sturgeon would be feeding. I've had the occasion to watch a sturgeon come in that was feeding. You can see how the sturgeon would be sucking it in and blowing it out its gills. Because they're feeding, taking the red worms out of the mud or the silt that's on the bottom. When they do it, they blow a hole, and it'll make a bigger impression down in the mud. This is what you see. This is what you would call a blow hole on there. That would be my interpretation of what they're talking about.

DR: Do you think your sons will ever be as good at this sport as what you've done?

JN: Well, I think, through the years, I don't know. One of them, I think, got burnt out. The other son, he's interested in it. Then his two boys that he has are interested in it. It's just a matter

of time until they grow up that they can start getting involved in it. In their situations, of course, they have to have the time to do it. Years ago, we didn't have the sports to come into play like they do now, outside. They keep their interests elsewhere. But they still like the fishing aspect and the sturgeon part of it. If they get the right situation, yes, they would be interested as much. Sometimes, they go at it harder than I had it or would want to go into it. But they don't have the time. I was just very fortunate in my occupation. I was a bricklayer. Then I did get out of that, and I was into selling insurance. I was self-employed. So, I could always kind of take the time to go spearing. That's where I could – when I was in insurance, I worked a lot with dairy farmers. For the month of February, I did spend a lot of time out on Lake Winnebago. Because I knew who I was talking to were dairy farmers. I knew where their shanties were. I'd go out there and sit with them. More than once, I did sell policies out in the sturgeon shack. I mean, it was unique. Just talking to all these fellows and all these farmers, you always learn a little from everybody and you –

DR: It sounds like you'd be passing this more on to your grandsons. Because your sons, for whatever reason, are burned out on it. The two boys, your two grandsons, are probably more interested than your own sons.

JN: Well, that could be very true, Dick. I say you have to patience for it. You have to have backing from your wife to let you do it.

DR: Well, you have to get permission from your wife to do this?

JN: Well, it's kind of a – not permission. It's just automatically something you will learn to work with. One hand helps the other. So, there's things that you have to kind of do that it works hand in hand this way [laughter].

DR: Well, Jerry, in conclusion, it's been very interesting. Your wife just walked in the room and poked me. I think she was listening on the other side of the wall. I'm going to go outside and take some pictures of your decoys. We'll see what happens with the rest of the stories in the future. Thank you.

JN: Thank you.

[end of transcript]