

# **An Oral History of Sandi Sullivan**

4<sup>th</sup> Street | Prater Way History Project

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Interviewer: Alicia Barber, Ph.D.

Sandi Sullivan bought Windy Moon Quilts, then located in Tahoe City, in the 1980s, and moved the business to Reno—first to Kuenzli Street and then to a former bank building at 440 Spokane Street. She and her husband, Mike, were involved in the creation of the Reno-Sparks Business Corridor Association (RSCBA). Sullivan, whose family has lived in the Reno-Sparks area for several generations, also speaks about growing up in the community and the urban renewal project that targeted the neighborhood north of East 4th Street in the 1960s.

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## SANDI SULLIVAN

Interviewed on November 14, 2011  
Alicia Barber, Interviewer

*Sandi Sullivan bought Windy Moon Quilts, then located in Tahoe City, in the 1980s, and moved the business to Reno—first to Kuenzli Street and then to a former bank building at 440 Spokane Street. She and her husband, Mike, were involved in the creation of the Reno-Sparks Business Corridor Association (RSCBA). Sullivan, whose family has lived in the Reno-Sparks area for several generations, also speaks about growing up in the community.*

Photo by Patrick Cummings

Barber: I'm here with Sandi Sullivan, and we're on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno. Today is Monday, November 14, 2011. Can you tell me where you were born?

Sullivan: I was born in Reno, Nevada, at St. Mary's Hospital.

Barber: What was your maiden name?

Sullivan: Lagomarsino.

Barber: What are your parents' names?

Sullivan: Norma and Ed Lagomarsino, who were both also born in Reno, Nevada.

Barber: How many generations back does your family go in Reno?

Sullivan: Just the grandparents, both my grandparents. My mother's side was from Switzerland, and on my father's side, the Lagomarsinos were from Italy.

Barber: What was your mother's family name?

Sullivan: Lepori. They had a dairy farm on Pyramid Way.

Barber: On Pyramid Way north of town?

Sullivan: Right. All of that was their ranch.

Barber: We'll come back and talk about your grandparents and where they lived in a little bit. Can you describe the neighborhood that you grew up in?

Sullivan: For my early childhood, we lived on Wells. We had some houses on Wells Avenue. That was when I was very young. Then when I was probably about seven, we moved to Wilkerson, which is over by Veterans Memorial [Elementary]. It was a new part of town, with new homes, and we lived there until I was in the eighth grade. At that time, my parents bought a very large home that was on the side of St. Mary's Hospital that was to be destroyed for the new cardiac unit, and they moved it out onto the family ranch. It was the first house that went down Oddie Boulevard. They cut the house in half and brought it down Oddie Boulevard and put it on a far section of the ranch, and that's where it's been until now.

Barber: Where's that ranch?

Sullivan: The ranch is on Pyramid and McCarran. That was the whole ranch. It went all the way up there, and the house is on the east corner, right on Pyramid and McCarran, with a very large veranda porch and pillars. It was actually built in 1906 by a lumberman, and it has a huge history. My parents moved it out there and then remodeled it, brought it up to code and everything, and that's where we lived until—well, my mother still lives there.

Barber: Do you know who moved the house?

Sullivan: The Bevilacqua's.

Barber: Do you remember that happening?

Sullivan: Oh, I do, because I was absolutely devastated. By the time they got the house out to the property, the roof had caved in and the house was in two huge sections. Tons of dirt had been dumped around the home for fill, because that end of the ranch was much lower. Probasco, who was building that, wanted to get rid of the dirt, so he dumped all of the dirt for my dad to use there at the lower part of the house.

Barber: Who was that you said?

Sullivan: Probasco Building. He built many of the houses in that area. He was dumping this, and I went out to see it, and I went, "Oh, my gosh, my friends." You know, you're at an age when your friends will be impressionable. [laughs] I thought, "Oh, my gosh, no one will ever come out to this house." The inside ceilings were dropped and all that. But then, you know, Bevilacqua just squeezed it right back together. It was amazing how they did it, and then put the roof on it, and then they started remodeling it all.

Barber: Was that considered very far out of town at that point?

Sullivan: Very far. That was the one thing. I went to Bishop Manogue High School, which was right by the university at that time, and no one would come out there. I mean, that was way too far to come out and pick me up.

Barber: How did you get to school?

Sullivan: My dad was a policeman, and so I went into town with him and he dropped me off, and then my mom must have come and picked me up until I could start driving.

Barber: Did the family raise livestock out there?

Sullivan: We had sheep, and when my grandfather was alive, it was a dairy ranch. He had cows and that was the pasture for them. He did some haying.

Barber: Did you work on the ranch at all?

Sullivan: I went into the dairy barn frequently. The smell of raw milk, I can still smell it. It was like [demonstrates]. The barn is still there, the actual barn, and then the Catholic church has built their church up on part of the property.

Barber: Are there other houses of that same era still around that neighborhood now?

Sullivan: These houses came from St. Mary's, so they were right over here [near the university].

Barber: They were the biggest houses in the area?

Sullivan: Oh, yes, very definitely.

Barber: So it was kind of a shock for you to move out to the ranch when you'd lived in town before.

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: What do you remember of living in town in the area of Wilkerson? Do you remember that area much?

Sullivan: Yes, I went to Veterans Memorial Elementary School—walked to school, and just had a very close neighborhood. Houses were very close together, so we played in the streets and all kinds of things.

My father was a three-wheeler policeman. He did patrolling all around the downtown. He used to pull us up the street on his three-wheeler on a sled when there was snow, all the kids. It was a typical 1950s neighborhood, with the kids just playing. We didn't have computers, so we were always outside.

Barber: Your father's name?

Sullivan: Edward.

Barber: Was he a policeman during your whole childhood?

Sullivan: Yes. The whole time, until he retired.

Barber: So you went to Veterans Memorial, which was built, I think, in the thirties.

Sullivan: I think it was, too, because I went by some time ago and they had something up. It was quite old.

In the fourth grade, I came down with rheumatic fever, and I was confined to bed for a year, so I actually missed the fourth grade. Then I was okay, and I went to Otis Vaughn [Middle School], which had just opened. I went for one year there and then we moved out to the ranch, and I went to St. Thomas.

Barber: When you were confined in bed for a year, were you still doing schoolwork?

Sullivan: Yes, I had a homebound teacher.

Barber: Was that something that you remember other people experiencing at the same time?

Sullivan: No, I don't remember anybody doing that, and they don't treat it like that today. They don't restrict you to bed now, but at that time that was how the treatment was. They thought that you had to stay in bed so that there was no stress on your heart to have any problems or anything. I went to bed for a year, but I survived. I was fine.

Barber: You have siblings, right?

Sullivan: Yes, my brother, Edward. He's five years younger.

Barber: You had one side of the family who had this ranch, and then you also had family who lived in the neighborhood around Fourth Street. Who was that?

Sullivan: That was my father's side, and they were from Italy. On that side of the family, my grandmother could not even speak English, hardly. They were very Italian, so we communicated, but most of the time it was in Italian.

On the Lepori side, my grandmother also spoke Italian, but she did speak more English, too. But Lagomarsino, she was pretty Italian-speaking, of which I don't know. They spoke Genovese, actually, not the true Italian. It was a dialect. My father spoke it, but I didn't.

Barber: Where was their home?

Sullivan: That was right off of Sage Street. It was a lovely brick home that had a small porch, probably a thirties style, built by—I asked my mother who it was built by some time ago, and she said probably Belli [unclear]. He was a contractor here, Belli Construction, because there are other homes in the area. I'd have to research that to see if it really was.

Barber: What do you remember about that neighborhood?

Sullivan: You drove into a kind of driveway, a big graveled area, and there was a large barn. It was all wooden. They had a great big garden, and chickens and rabbits and sheep. And then some smaller houses against the side to the right of the property, and she had tenants who lived in there. There was only one who I remember. My brother and I were discussing it. He remembers, too, it was a black woman who was very small in stature, very nice and very friendly, older, but I was young, I couldn't tell you how old. Everybody with gray hair looked old, and she did have gray hair. [laughs]

My brother said he called her Mary, and I always called her Mama. But she would come over frequently to my grandmother's and bring her things or just talk, always outside. When we were there, they were always outside.

Barber: And those were pretty small houses?

Sullivan: Yes, they were. I was never inside of one. They were wooden, so I couldn't tell you what it was like inside.

Barber: Pretty sizable lots then?

Sullivan: It was probably about ten, twelve acres. It was very large.

Barber: Was that pretty common for that area, do you think?

Sullivan: No, I would say that that was one of the largest parcels there, because it backed up to Wells Fargo Trucking, which is a big trucking area, where the surplus place is now.

Barber: Twin Cities Surplus?

Sullivan: Twin Cities Surplus, yes, it was all there.

Barber: Were there a lot of trucks there?

Sullivan: A lot of big trucks. And then there was the ballpark that is still there. When you drive around onto 395, as you turn right and go up to 395, you can look to the right and there's a ballpark there. That ballpark almost came to the edge of the property.

Barber: Did it seem to be a real city neighborhood, or did it seem not really dense?

Sullivan: It was very farm-ish, because we went to both of them and that's how it was. It was very country-ish. It seemed far away from where we lived, because to go out to Sparks at that time was miles. There wasn't an Oddie Boulevard. It was all just surface streets. You went down Fourth Street all the way down to Sparks, and then you hit Pyramid and went straight out Pyramid. It was a long ways to go.

Barber: So you took Fourth Street, which was Highway 40, all the way out there.

Sullivan: It was the only way to go.

Barber: What do you remember Highway 40 being like?

Sullivan: Very busy. All the motels were always very busy, and, of course, at that time they were at their peak. They weren't anything like they are now. It was very lively and pretty. The Nugget was just being built. There was not a lot of congestion. It was just kind of straight. The hotels that have the older signs, you can tell, were the older ones that were there. Businesses were along there. I couldn't tell you what businesses were as such.

Barber: Did people seem to travel back and forth from Sparks to Reno along Fourth Street a lot?

Sullivan: I think that was about the only way, because there wasn't an Oddie. There wasn't a freeway. Nothing.

Barber: Do you remember, as you were growing up, taking Highway 40 out the other direction west of town?

Sullivan: Oh, yes, because my aunt lived out that way. The Belli Ranch is out that way in Verdi, and that was my Grandmother Lepori's sister. We would go out that way if we were going up to visit at the ranch.

Barber: Did that get rural pretty quickly once you went out the west side?

Sullivan: Very, very quickly. It was very rural, and it was a long way to go. You wouldn't go in the winter, because they didn't keep up the roads. We had a '49 Chevy, I can remember. We still have that car. My son has it.

Barber: So was it just a little two-way road then, two-lane?

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: Would you ever go all the way to California on Highway 40?

Sullivan: Yes, we did, and then the freeway opened. Interstate 80 going over opened. I remember driving it before the freeway, and it was very windy, and, oh, you'd just kind of get frightened. As a child, it was kind of scary.

Barber: Did it seem that once the interstate went in, that it was a lot faster to get up there too?

Sullivan: Yes. I don't think we traveled as much as we travel now. I mean, that was a

long way to go, although we had relatives in Stockton who had fruit farms, and they used to bring food over in the summer, and we would go down and get fruit there. So we did go, you know. They had walnut ranches and peaches.

Barber: Do you remember spending much time downtown when you were growing up?

Sullivan: Absolutely, many times, because all your shopping was downtown. Joseph Magnin's was there. Lerner's was there. Out south, now, there was a Hansel and Gretel that was quite fashionable for young girls just going into high school, where one of the bars or something is now, but mostly everything was right downtown.

My first job was right downtown in a cigar store. Everything was very confined between Harolds, Harrah's, Primadonna, the Nevada Club, the five-and-dime. The Masonic Lodge was there. Penney's on the other side was there, so it was pretty—and then Parker's Western Wear, and Murdock's was also there. For Christmas, that's where you went shopping. Gray Reid's was down there.

Barber: Right, in a couple different locations. By that point, wasn't it where Circus Circus is now?

Sullivan: It was still further south at one point, and then it went up to where Circus Circus is now.

Barber: It was closer to First Street or Second Street.

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: Did you get the job with the cigar store during high school?

Sullivan: Right after. When I graduated, I got it. I was working. I was going to college at that time at Nevada, and I worked for Pop Southworth, who was a councilman. He had a vending—Southworth Vending is still working. He had a ranch out in Washoe Valley. He had apples. He just had a lot of history behind him.

Barber: What was it like working in that store?

Sullivan: It was a very small little souvenir sort of thing. I knew nothing about retail at the time. We had a very old antique cash register that's probably worth a fortune now, cute little thing. But he was very much a businessman. Many of the policemen would stop in. He'd give them a cigar or something. He was friendly. He used to walk down to the bank with money, and nobody ever seemed to bother him. Nowadays you'd be really leery, and it was all silver dollars—the bag was quite big, full of silver dollars.

Barber: Which bank would they use?

Sullivan: Must have been the First National right there. I think it was called First National.



Barber: On Second and Virginia?

Sullivan: Second and Virginia, right. It was great. It was a big old-fashioned bank. And then he would always go over to Harolds Club for lunch. He had a special table, and once in a while he'd say, "Well, you can come over." I'd go to lunch over there with him. It was kind of cute. He was a very small little man.

Barber: How did you get that job?

Sullivan: My dad knew him, and he wanted somebody just on Saturdays. I think I only worked Saturdays and Sundays, and my dad thought it would probably be good if I earned a dollar. The wage was probably 29 cents. I don't remember my paycheck. [laughs]

Barber: So you were going to Nevada at that point?

Sullivan: Right.

Barber: Did you graduate from Nevada?

Sullivan: Well, I graduated from x-ray. I went to x-ray school here. At that time, the university had an x-ray school here. Now it's with Truckee Meadows, but at that time it was through the university here, so my diploma says university. I was working at Washoe [Hospital] and doing radiological technology.

The actual equipment that we used was out in Stead, because they had just vacated Stead Air Force Base, and they left their hospital mobile unit, so we would go out there and use the equipment. Then we would actually do our affiliation with the hospital, and I affiliated with Washoe—Renown now.

Barber: During your studies, you were working at the hospital?

Sullivan: Yes, we actually went in and had preceptors, and then you went to the classroom, very much, I imagine, like the program is now. I'm not quite sure, but it was ages ago.

Barber: That was before these new buildings that are now Renown were constructed. Did you work in the old building?

Sullivan: Quonset huts. They had Quonset huts. It was a very small main brick building plus the emergency. After I graduated, I probably worked for about six months before I went to nursing school.

Barber: Was that your plan all along, to go to nursing school?

Sullivan: No, not really. I worked emergency room and I really liked it, and I liked

nursing, and so I thought it would be a good combination. Today it's a great combination, but twenty years ago it was like you were a foreign object, you know. [laughs] Things weren't integrated as much. X-ray was there, all the nursing was theirs, and you released the patient and the x-ray people took it together. Now we're very sophisticated with all the equipment we have, so it became the same.

Barber: Where did you attend nursing school?

Sullivan: I went to San Francisco at St. Luke's.

Barber: Was that the only place you considered?

Sullivan: Yes, I guess so. I didn't like the University of Nevada because I hated their nursing hat. [laughter]

Barber: You'd better describe this hat now.

Sullivan: It's a cowboy hat. Have you ever seen it over at the School of Nursing?

Barber: No.

Sullivan: It's a cowboy hat, and it's flat here and it wings up here. I think that's why nobody ever wears it. And so I thought, oh, no, you shouldn't go to Nevada. [laughter]

Barber: Was it typical of schools to have their own version of a nursing hat?

Sullivan: They all do. Oh, yes. Nurses don't wear uniforms anymore now, but that was something that was very important.

The second reason that I really liked doing it is because of affiliation. There were many hospitals that I could affiliate with in San Francisco. We did burn traumas at St. Francis. We went to Berkeley for a lot of different things. We were down at Stanford, had open-heart at Stanford, just a lot of generalness. I liked the overall program. It was during Vietnam, so we had psych with actual returning vets, so the exposure was monumental at that time, busy, busy, busy. Haight-Ashbury, we worked Haight-Ashbury right in the middle of the drugs.

Barber: When were you working there?

Sullivan: Sixty-nine through '72.

Barber: Yes, quite a time to be in the area.

Sullivan: Yes, marching in the street. I mean, it was really the whole drug culture we got in the Emergency Room. At that time, doctors rode on ambulances and then they got killed, so we couldn't go on ambulances. We did San Francisco General because they affiliated the nurses just everywhere. All the nursing programs did in that area.

Barber: You were from a pretty small town in Nevada and then went to the Bay Area with all this going on. How did that feel for you?

Sullivan: The difficult part was probably relating it to your parents, because they were not there at all. To me it was huge. It was right in the middle of everything. Ben & Jerry's was just starting their ice cream right down from St. Luke's Hospital. They had a Ben & Jerry's there. It's kind of sad that you didn't know what was really happening at that time because you didn't know what it would ever turn out to be.

Barber: It was very unsettled.

Sullivan: Yes, that sort of thing, and of course the Vietnam War—Angela Davis was always on the street, marching, from Berkeley. It was a difficult time, but I think the nation was in a difficult time.

But the second part of it, in nursing, what we saw, of course, we were recruited very aggressively to obviously go to the war zone because they needed nurses so badly at that time, and most of my fellow classmates actually signed up for the reserve, signed up and went at some point. I didn't because I was engaged to my husband, who was already in the Marine Corps, so I thought I'd never see anybody. But it was just a fast-moving time.

Barber: Did you live in San Francisco?

Sullivan: Yes, we did. We had two different apartments, yes, with roommates.

Barber: With some other nurses?

Sullivan: Right.

Barber: When the nurses would go over and serve, did they do that through a specific military branch?

Sullivan: They do, whatever one you sign up for or were recruited for, yes, and my roommate chose the Navy. She went into the Navy and there were a few who went Air Force. I wouldn't have picked Air Force because I probably would have got air sickness or something. But they paid your tuition then. You could go on base, and so we went on base because my roommate signed up with the Navy. So we bought our food on base. It was quite discountable. Then I think they had to give back two years, I think it was.

Barber: Which base was that?

Sullivan: Right in San Francisco, whichever the name of that one is there.

Barber: How many years was that program?

Sullivan: St. Luke's was a three-year nursing program, three continuous years. You had

no time off. Your curriculum work was affiliated with the colleges, either San Francisco City College or Berkeley, where you went and took histories and those sorts of things. You had to have a prerequisite to get in, a lot of anatomy and physiology and microbiology and chemistry.

Barber: Had you taken those things at Nevada?

Sullivan: I had, yes.

Barber: Did you meet your husband in the Bay Area?

Sullivan: No, I met him here. I met him here, and then I was in school and then he just got back. Colorado State, he graduated from. He was back getting his master's here and then he got drafted, so then he decided to go into the Marine Corps. I met him three weeks or so before he went into the Marine Corps.

Barber: How did you meet him?

Sullivan: It was at a cousin's wedding. He was tending bar. [laughs] So I went back to San Francisco and he went back to OCS [Officer Candidate School]. Then we didn't see one another again until he got out of officers' school, engineering school, all of the schools that they send the officers to, and then I graduated from nursing school, and we came back and got married. Then we were stationed in Camp Pendleton for a few years, and then the war, of course, was decelerating, so they weren't sending any more troops over there.

Barber: Tell us his name.

Sullivan: Mike Sullivan, Colonel, United States Marine Corps, Marines, retired. So that's what happened. Then we came back to Reno.

Barber: Was that always the plan?

Sullivan: Well, actually, Mike was at University of Colorado because he was going to be a veterinarian and he was on a scholarship from here to there with a WUE, I believe is what they give when you don't have a school. I think it's a WUE. And then with the war, they cut out a lot of scholarships.

So when we came back, we had a little boy. Sean, our first-born, was born in California, and then we were coming back and he said, "No, I think we need to do something else."

He actually was given the job at Sierra Pacific as the first environmental department, so he started all the environmental for Sierra Pacific Power. They didn't have any smokestacks on and they were polluting, so he would go back to Washington and do all the environmental things for them. Then he retired from Sierra Pacific, too.

Barber: How long did he work there?

Sullivan: Twenty-five years.

Barber: Was that right in Reno?

Sullivan: It was here and then it was down on Terminal Way, but not where it currently is. The first Sierra Pacific that he went to was right on Virginia Street.

Barber: Right downtown?

Sullivan: Yes, pretty much, yes.

Barber: So there were still a lot of different resident-oriented businesses in downtown at that point. Was that in the seventies?

Sullivan: Yes, it was the seventies when we came back.

Barber: By the time you came back, was Interstate 80 completed?

Sullivan: Oh, yes. That was done.

Barber: Was the MGM Grand constructed, do you remember?

Sullivan: Yes, yes, that was constructed.

Barber: Did things seem different in Reno when you got back? Had a lot seemed to have changed?

Sullivan: No, it seemed very small, still. I went to work in nursing at St. Mary's and it was like the cerebral flow really stopped over the mountains. They did things very differently here. Yes, they did. Of course, it's California. It's more progressive. Its hospitals demanded a lot of different things. Nurses were given a lot more authority and different things to do. I thought it was just different.

Barber: What was the job that you got at St. Mary's when you got back?

Sullivan: I took a floor nursing job when we came back. I worked nights. The kids were little, so they went to school. When prospective payment was passed during the [Ronald] Reagan administration, which changed all of healthcare tremendously, Medicare became my specialty and I was department head of all of that. So that's what I did for—because we were not paid on a per-diem basis any longer. We were paid on a prospective payment under the diagnosis that the patient had, which is a completely different sort of thing, and so we had huge losses. We had rules that we couldn't afford. It was a very traumatic time, just like it is right now. It very much parallels it now because the ICD-10 will be coming in now. It's the same exact thing. It's breaking the code out, and your payor sources for medical records for any hospital. It became a real challenging time.

Barber: So did you have to do a lot of administrative work in conjunction with that? Was it more an administrative job than caregiving?

Sullivan: Yes, more administrative than actual hands-on. Just like now, we were watching what was happening to the patient in the hospital. Did they meet all the federal requirements? Were they sick enough to be in the hospital? All the same things that we're doing now, but more so. We didn't have short stays then, so we started short-stay units to get them underneath that DRG so we could be reimbursed. It was a very complicated time monetary-wise, just paralleling what will be happening now with Medicare issues.

Barber: How long did you work in that job?

Sullivan: Three years, and then I left to go to law school, the old college law school that we had here. I think we were enrolled for about six months, seven months, and then they closed the law school because they lost their accreditation.

Barber: Do you know why?

Sullivan: They didn't have enough funding, I think. I don't remember the exact reasons now why they lost it all, but I think it was kind of a political thing, too, because they never wanted the law school here. They wanted it in Las Vegas, where it is now, and then it went there. A lot of the people who were in my class went down to transfer to California or went somewhere else, but I had kids, small kids, and I said, "No, I don't want to do that."

Barber: What had inspired you to go to law school in the first place?

Sullivan: Probably two things. Water issues, because I saw so much of that with my family ranch, how vital water was and due to the need, how it would become a big legal issue in times to come. The second thing was healthcare. Healthcare was going to become a huge legal issue, the care of, the paying for it was going to really be at the forefront, I thought.

Barber: So going to law school then wasn't an option. You chose to stay in town.

Sullivan: I did. I stayed in town, and I thought, what am I going to do with my life? We had horses at that time and my daughter competed a lot with horses, and a friend of ours had Windy Moon at Lake Tahoe. She had this retail fabric store—they made quilts—and I thought, you know, I could really do this.

In the meantime, I went to Sierra Nevada College, which was here, and I got a degree in business, so I thought, gee, this is really interesting. I could do this. I kind of understand what I'm doing.

I decided, if I wasn't going to do law, I might as well go into something, and I was kind of glad because I worked with a lot of lawyers on different cases, medical cases, before all of this, and I thought, you know, I don't know if I would be really happy spending my whole life arguing. In the end it really worked out for the best. Then we

bought Windy Moon.

Barber: You bought the business that was in Tahoe?

Sullivan: It was in Tahoe for five years before we brought it down here, yes.

Barber: What town?

Sullivan: Tahoe City.

Barber: Who did you buy it from?

Sullivan: Kenneys [phonetic]. He was a physician, too, and she was a great lady, Jackie Kenney. He has passed away since then, but I think she's still up at the lake. She had a house on North Shore—no, on East Shore is where her house was and they lived up there, and she made comforters and quilts and fabrics. So that started, and quilting was just really starting at that time. It was like the baby.

Barber: Really?

Sullivan: Yes. The rotary cutter had just been invented. It was right at the very beginning, so I got into it at the beginning.

Barber: What year was that?

Sullivan: Eighty-six, I think it was, or '89.

Barber: What's a rotary cutter?

Sullivan: It's a cutter like a pizza cutter that you cut fabric with, and you can make very straight edges.

Barber: And it was just invented at that time for quilting in particular?

Sullivan: Yes, because we didn't use scissors anymore, and we could cut very straight angles. So I started. I knew nothing about quilting or anything. We just kind of fell into it and started going to shows and buying fabric and teaching people to quilt.

Barber: Did you buy the business with the intention of bringing it to Reno?

Sullivan: No, I never did until we were declared a foreign corporation and they put huge taxes on us, and I thought, oh, no, we're not foreign.

Barber: Because you were in California, but you were residents of Nevada.

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: Was that a new policy?

Sullivan: Well, I don't know that it was so new. They started enforcing foreign because they needed monies, and we said, "Ah, I don't think we're going to do this." So we moved it to Reno.

Barber: Before that, you commuted up to Tahoe City?

Sullivan: I did, for five years.

Barber: How was that?

Sullivan: Oh, that was horrible. The ride in the summer is usually wonderful— very traffic-congested to get all the way from here up to Tahoe City, but I enjoyed it. I left really early in the mornings and I enjoyed the drive. But in the wintertime—I did a quilt that I entered into a show called "A Trip Behind a Snowplow" because you're always coming down, especially because I came down Mt. Rose. You knew where the good parts were, but the rest of the people on the road didn't.

Barber: Then you made the decision that you wanted to keep the business, but you wanted to open it in Reno?

Sullivan: Right. I moved it to Reno, and about that time my husband retired and so he came on as the chief financial officer. I gave him the job of doing all that. Together we have three sewing-machine dealerships now, and he has a repair and we have a Longarm so we can do quilting for everyone. It's expanded quite a bit, so we've just grown with the industry, as the industry's grown.

Barber: Is the current site of the store the first location you had in Reno?

Sullivan: No, we were actually on Kuenzli in the old Kuenzli Building. It was a large building that was there. We were there for five years. The building that we're in now was a bank and it came up for sale, and so we bought that and moved.

Barber: What's that address?

Sullivan: 440 Spokane.

Barber: It had been an active bank until right before that?

Sullivan: Yes, it was a Wells Fargo. Wells Fargo sold all their banks off in that major move, and that's what was kind of interesting. They had a covenant on the deed that related back to the urban renewal.

Barber: How so?



Sullivan: You know, I told my husband I should have really looked into it more. It stated something about how this was built with urban renewal's something.

Barber: Do you have a copy of that?

Sullivan: I probably could dig it up, whatever it said, yes.

Barber: That's interesting.

Sullivan: Something referred to the urban renewal, and I thought, this is mystical. Here it's not that far from my grandparents' property, and obviously the only thing that got built in urban renewal was a hotel and a bank, basically.

Barber: Let's talk about that a little bit and then come back to why you chose that location for your store. What do you know about that urban renewal project?

Sullivan: I was young. I was probably in early high school when everything started, that somebody was going to take the grandparents' property away. The reason was always unclear why they would want to take anyone's property. I never really heard anyone say because it's old or because they were going to do something with it. It's just that they were going to clean up the area, whatever "clean up" meant. I mean, everybody can clean up something, but enough that you have to tear down a house that is beautiful?

It was very, very devastating to my grandparents. They did not understand that at all, that anyone could come in and take everything they'd saved for. It was a huge trauma in the family. I remember that. My grandmother became very ill, and exactly what she had, I don't know. Somebody said she kind of had a nervous breakdown or she was just really, really upset, but she became ill and eventually died. She was out of her home, but she was living with a nurse because she was ill. She was in a convalescent type of home. Then my grandfather also became ill, and he went to the hospital and then he died.

Barber: Was this in the early sixties?

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: Was their house demolished?

Sullivan: Yes, it was.

Barber: Was that after they passed away?

Sullivan: It seems like it was, because once they got sick, I didn't go over there. My dad didn't take me over there. Then I would hear them say, "They're going to rip down the house." I mean, that's a very tragic thing to have done to somebody who's come from another country and worked hard and had no reason. It was just very devastating.

Barber: And as a child, it's hard to understand.

Sullivan: Yes, and you don't ask a lot of questions. You just kind of listen. That's what I can remember.

Barber: So they had both died by the time you were in high school.

Sullivan: Right. And they were older. I couldn't tell you their exact age, but I'm sure this added to their stress. The exact causative situation, I don't know, but it was very, very stressful for them.

Barber: Do you have any memory of that demolition occurring?

Sullivan: No, no. I never saw it, no.

Barber: You really didn't have a reason to go back.

Sullivan: No, I never saw it.

Barber: Do you remember that being an especially Italian neighborhood? Any other families you remember that lived around there?

Sullivan: Well, it was kind of like a little miniature ridge. Other names they talked about, but I didn't actually meet them, or if I did, I just said, "Hi," or something if they came over, because there was a big hedge around the property.

Barber: It was pretty private?

Sullivan: Yes, it was pretty private.

Barber: So here you are moving your business. Did you move from the Kuenzli location because you wanted more room, or what were your reasons for looking for another location?

Sullivan: The lease came up for option and then a few things changed that we didn't particularly like, so we thought, well, since we're moving everything—at one point we had two stores. And since we're moving everything down here, it would be an opportunity to find a bigger place to do different sorts of things.

The bank was a very large building, obviously, with a big parking lot on Fourth Street, which was a difficult thing because Fourth Street has just steadily gone downhill, something that was at one time such a vital link. I remember at Christmas, everybody would decorate, with lights along these places, and to go from that to something where there's nothing but girlie saloons and drugs and prostitutes, and there were a lot of prostitutes walking up and down the streets. When we moved there, I thought, "Oh, my gosh, what have I done? This is probably the worst thing that we have done." We're off the main drag, but there were a lot of prostitutes around.

Barber: Did you and your husband have some discussions about the location?

Sullivan: Yes. “Why did we ever do this?” But we needed a big building that had a lot of parking, and it’s worked out really well. We’ve never had any issues. And Fourth Street is changing dramatically. It has changed, and then we formed a Business Association with Gaye [Canepa] and quite a few businesses in the area that were there. We all started going to Council meetings to say, “We want street enforcement” and things, and then things started changing. We became very verbal.

Barber: This is the Reno-Sparks Business Corridor Association. Did that start up after you opened your business?

Sullivan: I think it was there. I think they were just starting. I’m pretty sure, and Gaye could probably tell you exactly. They were just starting, but we joined, obviously, as soon as we could. They were very active. Gaye was the president and still is the president, and has just been wonderful keeping up with what was happening and meeting with officials. She and my husband did a lot of that sort of thing.

Barber: Did you know her before?

Sullivan: No.

Barber: I want to talk about your activities with that Business Association, but I’m wondering if you could describe what that building was like when you first encountered it and what you needed to do to transform it into your business.

Sullivan: Really, it was very much like it is right now. We didn’t have to do a lot except move the counter out with the banking counter and where the drawers were as you walked in. We had to remove that. But it was a big empty building that had a conference table in one room, which we still have, with orange conference chairs. Nothing else. A little tiny torn corner of a dollar bill, I think, is the only money we found. [laughter]

Barber: Nothing in the vault.

Sullivan: Maybe a penny or something. I was hoping maybe one of the safes—we had a very large vault.

Barber: Hadn’t it just closed as a bank, so it was in good condition?

Sullivan: It had just closed as a bank, yes. It was very well maintained and had a big empty room to stack more fabric in. Then we got the shelves and all this for our fabric. I think Linens and Things went out of business and it had huge racks and different things, so we went down and bought all their racks.

Barber: I wondered who bought those sort of things when a store gets liquidated.

Sullivan: Other stores, yes, because they're a really great price and you can fill your needs. At the big box stores, you can buy the nice expensive things.

Barber: And the building has two stories, so did they already have offices on that second floor?

Sullivan: They did have offices on the second floor. Parts of it were added on and we thought, oh, great, we can have people up here. But at that time the fire code said, no, you could not have people up there because we didn't have two fire escapes. So we couldn't do any classes on the second floor. Our bathrooms are on the second floor, which is okay, but we couldn't have anything but an office. Since then the code has changed and we don't have to put in a fire escape, and we can have a class up there. That was kind of fun.

Barber: So you got there. You made the commitment to open a business. Do you remember opening day or doing any advertising when you first moved there?

Sullivan: I think we did. I don't have any copy of it, but I think we did. Advertising in the newspaper was always pretty expensive, so we'd send out flyers. We always did a newsletter that we mailed out to everyone until just recently. We did our own newsletter for years, and we just now went online with it, but we mailed out a newsletter and told about our classes and what we were doing. In fact, people keep asking me to do it again. It's a lot of work to put out four newsletters a year, but people like that.

Barber: You said you had two locations. Where was the other one?

Sullivan: Kuenzli.

Barber: You had them both operating for a while?

Sullivan: No, just Kuenzli. The other location was at the lake when I was at Kuenzli, so I was still at Lake Tahoe.

Barber: Oh, you still did both.

Sullivan: Yes, yes.

Barber: So moving on to Spokane helped you consolidate.

Sullivan: Right, yes.

Barber: That's when you stopped commuting.

Sullivan: Yes. Thank you very much, yes.

Barber: So you learned about the Business Association pretty quickly as soon as you

moved to that area?

Sullivan: Right.

Barber: And what were some of the specific activities that that association was pursuing?

Sullivan: They met with the sheriff's department and the code enforcements to make sure that—and I'm sure Gaye will go into all of this—that everything was met. They met with City Council regarding the homeless shelter. The Business Association obviously wanted the homeless shelter to be moved further out of town so that our tourist area and all of these businesses would be not impinged by that sort of thing, because we wanted to clean up the entire area, which was a large issue. They did not prevail, but they were very strong in working with all of those sorts of things.

Barber: So that was still very much in discussion, the location for the homeless services that they have on Record Street now.

Sullivan: Oh, absolutely.

Barber: Did you testify?

Sullivan: I went there. I didn't testify. My husband testified. Oh, yes, all the business owners testified. They each took a different aspect of why it would not be the best, how it would impact businesses in the area, tourism, all of these sorts of things.

Barber: At that point, my understanding is that there wasn't one coordinated site that the city sponsored for homeless services. There were a couple of different locations, kind of scattered.

Sullivan: Yes, they were kind of scattered, so they wanted to consolidate it all into one place, and that's the location they chose. They had picked quite a few different spots that met the code and would have been good to get them away from the tourists.

It's an interesting thing. I just heard with this economic downswirl that we're in now, that many cities currently are looking at bringing tourists back into their towns, and the biggest thing that they're saying is that we have to clean it up, it has to be meticulous, and it has to be very safe-feeling. And that was our biggest issue, that we would not make our tourists feel safe if there were a lot of homeless people hanging around. We need to take care of the homeless and we care about the homeless, but we don't need to parade them in front of the people who are coming in to gamble and have a good time.

Barber: You were making that argument about tourism. Were you making arguments about how it would affect your businesses too?

Sullivan: Oh, obviously, very much so. The motels were very, very filled at that time. There were many, many children in the motels. In fact, we do a project at Christmastime. We make hats and we distribute them with the sheriff's department, and they have a lot

of toys. Gaye is head of all of that, so she can probably tell you about all of that. We have distributed for years all of the hats and toys to all the kids in the motels, because there was so many who were living in motels. This year we're not doing it because the sheriff's department says there aren't any children living in the motels anymore.

Barber: Why is that?

Sullivan: Because of the economics, because of the jobs. They've all moved away.

Barber: Out of town?

Sullivan: Evidently.

Barber: Really?

Sullivan: Yes, I was surprised too, and the sheriff's office said, no, there's no need to do that. So we're not doing it. This is the first year that we're not doing it, so we're giving blankets. We're making blankets and giving them to the convalescent hospitals and those sorts of things for our fundraiser. But there used to be lots—oh, the kids would just pour out of the motels. You couldn't believe it.

Barber: So you'd see them a lot.

Sullivan: Oh, hundreds of children, yes, and they'd have all kinds of toys and cookies. Bavarian World would make all the cookies. Every year we baked cookies to hand out, and they got donations from just everybody for toys, for all the kids. They said this year, there are none.

Barber: Is that a very sudden change? Do you remember last year there being a lot of kids?

Sullivan: There were a lot less last year. I remember we made eight hundred hats and we barely handed out four hundred, and we usually ran short before. And this year they said that there just hardly are any. There are a few. I see a few next door to us. They seem to be more stable. But the rest of them said no.

Barber: Do you have much interaction with the people who are living in those motels?

Sullivan: Not really. They're so transient. They were always so transient that they weren't permanent residents at all. The kids would come over once in a while if there were children there and, I don't know, ask for different sorts of things.

Barber: They'd come into your store?

Sullivan: Yes, once in a while they would, but nothing particular, that they got a ball on the roof or something, that sort of thing.

Barber: You said earlier there was a big prostitution issue along Fourth Street. Has that changed?

Sullivan: Yes, it changed really dramatically. There were streetwalkers all the time, and now once in a while you can see one or two and they look very obvious. You can tell, but nothing like it used to be. Too bad we didn't take movie videos or something, because there were a lot.

Barber: Is that change pretty recent?

Sullivan: Well, we've been there about thirteen, fourteen years, so ten, eleven years ago, it was pretty bad.

Barber: Do you have any idea why that would have changed?

Sullivan: One, they said the Internet. A lot of prostitution was moving onto the Internet rather than onto the street, and then I think the police presence. And lights. They put all the lights up.

Barber: They did that a couple years ago, didn't they, with the pretty close streetlights?

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: Does that come all the way down to where your property is?

Sullivan: Yes. So it's not dark anymore. It's very lit up.

Barber: What other issues besides the toys and hats for the children and the homeless shelter has the Business Association been involved in, do you know?

Sullivan: Zoning areas, putting us in the corridor, different taxation areas that would be zoned, and obviously meeting to encourage businesses to come down into the older buildings. It's kind of difficult to take over an older building, though, because of the code issues and the parking. I think probably some of those issues will start resolving a little bit, particularly parking issues because they want to get people down here. This is a hard economic time, though, to start a new business. And then they built some apartments, too, and the streetfronts. I think they were done with some federal dollars.

Barber: So you would be encouraging the city to try to encourage businesses to open in the corridor?

Sullivan: Sure. They were trying to make it into an arts district. Because of its older uniqueness, it tends to attract artists, as such, and that's kind of struggled. It's gone more towards the west versus the east.

Barber: West Fourth Street?

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: With Wildflower Village and there are some arts-related things over there.

Sullivan: Yes.

Barber: When you mentioned parking, what's the parking issue?

Sullivan: Well, it's just difficult—some of these buildings don't have any parking except on the street, and I think there's a certain amount of parking that you need to have per square footage of your building, so that's difficult for businesses to comply with.

Barber: Have there been zoning changes that you're aware of since you've been there?

Sullivan: They did, and I'm not exact on what they did. They changed it so that they would prevent some businesses from going in. Gaye would probably be specific and I'll let her speak to that because she really knows all that from when they first started the association.

Barber: Is that association still active?

Sullivan: Yes, we are still active. We're not really fighting any issues right now like they were in the very beginning, with the zoning and all of that. We still have the usual issues—law enforcement, police presence, drugs, gangs.

Barber: Are those big issues?

Sullivan: It was more so. Graffiti and all that sort of thing was. It doesn't seem to be as high of an area now that I'm aware of. There were a lot more abandoned vehicles. You don't see as many.

Barber: Have you had crime that's affected your business?

Sullivan: No, we really haven't around us. No.

Barber: Do you remember when the homeless services were being discussed, other people who were active in that discussion about one side or another, about where it should be located? You're saying your husband was involved in it and so was Gaye.

Sullivan: Yes, of course, most of the businesses did not want it there at all. Mike could probably speak to this very well because he did all of that. I was kind of in the background. He and Gaye did it all. They wanted it to be strictly a business corridor and to develop business, because it's difficult. The homeless shelter has been a very difficult thing. There have been a lot of issues around it and a lot of businesses hoping to come in



now, they don't like that. So it could be very historic and very artsy, but it has to meet all the criteria for a lot of businesses to want to invest their money in.

Barber: Who do you find that your clientele is?

Sullivan: Well, we're a destination, obviously, so they have to want to come to me. The majority of our business is from women, tourists. We get a lot of tourists during the big events. Hot August Nights is a big draw because the ladies come with their husbands and their cars. It's been kind of interesting over the years, because I had a big group that came with the Corvettes and, as the husbands pass away, the wives don't come anymore, so you can see the change. Of course, the demographic is getting older. It's getting to become an older generation. I know some people from Hot August Nights have asked what other businesses can do to keep them coming here because that age group is aging. Maybe do different things for the wives, because they have found that if the wife doesn't like to come, the husband usually won't come.

Barber: Obviously, you're such a draw for women, and not just as a quilt shop, but as a fabric shop, too, right?

Sullivan: Right, although we have mainly cotton fabrics, but most of the women are quilters. We do classes and we do different events during Hot August Nights. We do t-shirt quilts. Many of the clubs give out t-shirts every time they have a club meeting, a Harley meeting or any of those kinds of clubs. They give out t-shirts, so we do big t-shirt quilts and people love them. I mean, what do you do with a t-shirt? Keep it in the drawer. We free up that drawer space.

Barber: I hadn't thought before about how your business taps into a lot of different special events that draw tourists. Have you always kind of seen yourself in that way?

Sullivan: Yes, very much so, and because of the proximity to the downtown clubs, too, people can get to us easily, but quilters will find you. There are books and now with the smartphones, you can obviously just Google it and it will tell you where you are and people rate you. Everything that you see on the Internet, you're subject to all of that.

Barber: You're tapped into that now. You said you've been emailing your newsletter.

Sullivan: Yes, we're beginning to. We have an online store. We email our customers and let them know, but everything is pretty much going towards high-tech. Our sewing machines are very high-tech.

Barber: I noticed that.

Sullivan: So our ladies are kind of all getting dragged into the computer age. [laughter]

Barber: Kicking and screaming.

Sullivan: Kicking and screaming, yes.

Barber: Aside from the Business Association, are there other ways in which you engage with the other businesses on the street?

Sullivan: As far as the Ramada, it was the Holiday Inn when we first started, but the Ramada, and the Holiday before that—have been great. We do a lot of workshops over there. We bring in guest speakers, and they have a beautiful space—their top floor just overlooks the whole city—it's like the Sky Room of the Mapes, almost, like a second Mapes. It's kind of the jewel, the diamond in the rough. We've had workshops up there that have been very pleasant, and different events. If we need extra space that the store can't handle, then we go over there. And people can have their car fixed on the street and just come to the store. A tire place is right down the street, too. Fourth Street has been mostly auto.

Barber: The Ramada has a lot of land. Did there used to be something else there that you remember?

Sullivan: No. They have a huge parking lot. They own a lot of the land all the way around it, too. I don't know if that sold with the Holiday—Mr. Harmon [phonetic] owned it—he is a very wealthy hotel man who owned and bought a lot of the land.

Barber: He's not local, is he?

Sullivan: No, no.

Barber: Have you gone back to see where your grandparents' house was? Do you know what's there now?

Sullivan: Yes, the McGregor Inn.

Barber: Is that a little motel?

Sullivan: Yes, it's that big building right there by the gas station.

Barber: What street is that on?

Sullivan: Sage.

Barber: It's on Sage just off of Fourth?

Sullivan: Yes, right there.

Barber: I can look this up, but does it seem like that might have gone in pretty quickly after this renewal project?

Sullivan: I don't think so. I don't know.

Barber: We're going to do some detective work about all this.

Sullivan: Yes, we'd have to detect the dates to see about that.

Barber: What do you like about being located near Fourth Street?

Sullivan: It's central to a lot of things. I live out south, and if I didn't have a reason to come because of my business, I probably would be like a lot of residents; I wouldn't go to the downtown. But I'm kind of forced to go there because I have a business there. And it's really enjoyable. It's nice.

Our downtown needs a lot of work, and I wish more people would be putting their energy into it. I think it's probably going to happen because of the condos and the younger people wanting to move more downtown. I don't know that it'll happen in Reno as such.

I travel quite a bit, so I always go to different trade shows in different places, and some of the big downtowns, like Minneapolis, they've just done unbelievable things with their downtowns, just really creative architecturally, fun. I wish those people could come here and inspire us to do that, because there are some great buildings and young people who like that upscale condo sort of look. And businesses. I think you can see now with the ballpark and a lot of law offices are moving right downtown, so it's maybe a start.

Barber: Yes, and some restaurants.

Sullivan: Yes, restaurants, and I have some younger employees and they love some of those little dining places. We're smaller than Minneapolis, too, so we are going to take a little bit longer. When I'm a tourist in another town, I want to go see things that I wouldn't see in my town. I don't want to go to a McDonald's in the middle of downtown. So that uniqueness of keeping your structure is important. We destroyed so many structures that were so wonderful that we have very few left that we should really treasure and help reconstruct and facilitate, because that's what the tourists like. If you want the tourists to come back, they want uniqueness. They want to see something that they haven't seen wherever they're from. And now gaming has no longer got that edge, because they see gaming everywhere, and pretty fabulous gaming. They're going to really look at shopping, but unique shopping, unique things.

Barber: Do you think that anything could be done to the infrastructure along Fourth Street or around Fourth Street that could help contribute to that?

Sullivan: I think so. We have a lot of major industries along Fourth Street. Some of the motels, they're all private property, so I don't know what you'd do to make them become something different, unless they sell and new ownership takes over and changes something. I think probably some code enforcement would help, to say you can't have this looking like this, or inspection to see what it's actually like inside. I think that would force them to be more presentable and more encouraging to people, because those

buildings represent a period of time that I think you want to preserve, but I think it needs to be brought up to today's standards.

That era is very classic and retro and very much in, restoration is. Restore America, that's what they're all saying. So I think that that could be a very big positive thing, because we do have some of that classic infrastructure left.

Barber: Are there any transportation safety issues you're aware of along the street that could be improved by changing lanes or changing bike lanes or sidewalks or anything?

Sullivan: Well, I don't see that you could make the street any wider. Obviously, you'd have to destroy a lot of vintage properties, and so you kind of defeat your purpose. I don't think it was ever intended, as time goes on, to be a busy, busy street, although it is getting busier.

When going from Reno to Sparks, obviously it is about the fastest way, so there are large trucks on it versus just passenger vehicles. Perhaps limiting that, limiting the big trucks from going back and forth, to keep it just to vehicles would be a safer for bikers and all. Even the buses, it's really amazing. I'm not into the bus study, but buses pile up three and four at a time. I'm wondering, how does this happen?

Barber: Is there a stop near your store?

Sullivan: Yes, there is. There's one right there on the corner, and it seems like I'm never on Fourth Street that I'm not behind a bus, not necessarily going east, but coming west there seem to be more buses. And then they go down Sutro, so there are a lot of buses coming from the bus station, too.

Barber: How are the sidewalks around your store?

Sullivan: They're fine. They're sidewalks. The side streets off of Fourth, in the snowstorm, are the last to get cleaned. They stay covered for a really long time with snow, so they didn't have a high city priority. But Fourth Street got cleaned, and with the lights—Reno just absolutely amazes me. When you go to Las Vegas or when you travel, there are people outside sweeping and cleaning and just picking up everything. Reno has none of that. That alone should be the presence that we should be having. I guess it's the clubs' responsibility to be doing some of that. I imagine some of the larger casinos in Las Vegas clean up and do all of that. But cleanliness is where we have to really look to, I think. That seems to be the focus, and cleanliness, with the trash on the streets, we need to pay a little better attention.

Barber: Do you find that you go downtown, into the heart of downtown, very much for anything these days?

Sullivan: If you have company coming in, yes, you do. The clubs have some great deals, and their food is pleasurable. My kids won't go downtown because they can't stand the smell of smoke. They just hate that smell and they don't want it on their clothes. That's just the bottom line, so you don't drag them into it. We're older. I guess we're kind of

used to it, not that we particularly like it. I don't like it, either. But it seems to be something that they can't get over. Smoke stays in your carpeting, stays in everything.

I know myself at my store, if I have an employee who smokes, they can walk in and the whole place just gets fumigated and I get complaints from customers, from everyone instantly. So you have to do something about it, and you would think that other people would act on that when they get complaints, too, but they don't.

Barber: In our continuing exploration of this whole Fourth Street area, is there anything else you think we should be looking into or any other stories or people or places that you can think of that we should research a little more?

Sullivan: I think that there are a lot of people who are really interested in doing something, but everybody's just kind of doing their own thing. I think it's like anything. When you plan an event, you have to have a focus or a theme, and I think it needs a theme. If U.S. 40 is going to be what it is and what it should be, then I think that that needs to be where we start. Do we bring it back and make that theme what it is? And then look at everything we need to do to meet the standards of that environment, rather than everybody just doing whatever they want to do. I think if people have a direction, they'll say, "Well, my business can fit in this way versus going the other way." I think they need to build the structure and say, "This is what we want it to be, the vision."

Barber: And give it an identity.

Sullivan: And give it an identity. If you want to, bring it back retro to what it was so that our tourists and our residents moving from Sparks to Reno—which is not very far now, really—have some continuity of what the towns were, because they seem to have remained the same. They haven't changed. There's no new fancy businesses, no hotels that have popped up there. They're pretty much vintage, which is okay. We can keep it like that, but it needs to be improved along the way. That's my story. I'm sticking to it. [laughter]