

AN INTERVIEW WITH GREGORY EARLE KOEHLER

CLAYTEE WHITE

MAY 15, 2019

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**Today is May 15, 2019. I am in the Oral History Research Center. This is Claytee White and I am with Greg.**

**Greg, could you please pronounce your entire name and spell it correctly for me?**

Sure. Gregory, G-R-E-G-O-R-Y. Koehler, K-O-E-H-L-E-R.

**Koehler. Thank you. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me about your early life; how you grew up, what your family did for a living; those kinds of things.**

I'll start with my father. He was a firefighter in the military in the sixties. He worked the '67 riots of Detroit. He was a battalion chief in the military, and then he left and he became an engineer for Ford Motor Company, and he spent twenty-five-plus years until retirement with the Ford Motor Company designing cars in Europe.

**Designing cars.**

Yes. He would design not the body style, but all the little things that go into it. I went in to Bring Your Kid to Work Day and he puts me in front of this computer. This is in the eighties, so computers were massive, and he did most things by hand, to be honest with you. In the brake light you have the diffusers that diffuse the light, and he was designing every little angle of the diffusers to show that the light would get the maximum visibility at the maximum distance. That is the one thing I remember about my dad's job. He was extremely intricately detailed. From him I learned to write in all capital letters.

**That's right. You still do.**

Yes. Mom, for the most part, was a homemaker. She was a stay-at-home mom. She never missed a track meet. I ran track in high school. I went from Cub Scouts to Eagle Scout, and she was a leader through the whole thing; den leader, pack mother, scoutmaster. My father was my

scoutmaster. They pushed me so hard I received my Eagle Scout Award at age fourteen. I earned it at thirteen and was presented it at fourteen. They pushed me so hard.

**It's usually seventeen or eighteen?**

Correct. My mom wanted me to get it done before I reached high school because she knew I would just blow it off. But every male in my family since the 1930s is an Eagle Scout, every single male, and that includes a family of seventeen, every male; both my grandfathers, my father, his brother, my brother, myself, were all Eagle Scouts.

**What does that mean to the family?**

It's huge. My mom was not going to let me be the one that did not get it. My brother now has two boys and they're in scouting themselves. I hope it's a tradition that carries on. That's three, four generations, maybe.

**What does it do for a man to become an Eagle Scout?**

Just scouting in general, I did more outdoor activities and I learned so much more before the age of fourteen than most non-scouting adults in their thirties. I went camping and fishing and hunting and camping in the wintertime where you clear the snow and pitch a tent, build a cabin, how to build a fire, how to teamwork, how to survive on your own. I always used to look up, well, if I go camping by myself, what do I eat; how do I build it? Even today I would recommend to anybody to buy the Boy Scout Handbook. It teaches you so much just about self-survival, self-preservation, and how to do things on your own the right way.

**Now they're allowing girls to go into Boy Scouts. What do you think about that?**

Honest opinion? Well, you don't see boys joining the Girl Scouts. There is Boy Scouts and there is Girl Scouts. If Girl Scouts want to do the same things that the Boy Scouts do, change the curriculum. It's been that way for decades. I'm not against integration of males and females in

certain things. But when you have girls join something that's called Boy Scouts, but you're not allowing boys to join something called Girl Scouts... There's been equal rights fought for, for generations, as you know. That's not very equal to me. I'm not for segregation. I believe in women get equal pay. If you can do the job, good for you. Women in the fire service, awesome. As long as you can do the job, I don't care who you are. I don't care what your orientation is, what you identify as. That's all up to you. But... I'm not currently involved in Boy Scouts, so I don't know the background too much on this.

**Right, but you have lots of...**

If the Girl Scouts feel that they're not getting the same opportunities that the boys are, so we're going to require the girls to join the boys. Why not just change the curriculum and allow the Boy Scouts to be the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts to be the Girl Scouts? They don't have Transgender Scouts. They don't label anything differently. Call me old school on this one. It's the one thing. I'm all about integration of the sexes, totally cool. Rename it and eliminate Girl Scouts because you now have scouting. They changed the name; it's no longer Boy Scouts.

**I didn't know they had changed the name.**

It's Scouting USA or something like that.

**I didn't realize they had changed it officially.**

But there is still Girl Scouts. They took away the moniker of Boy Scouts and just made it Scouting, but they've remained Girl Scouts, so girls have an option; boys have one. When you ask me about that...

**I can tell that you've thought about it just a bit.**

I have. I have. I'm not involved in it. I do some trauma, first aid training with a special needs Boy Scout troop. One of the EMTs that I know of from the ambulance company, she's the den

mother. I'll go in and teach them Band-Aids and bandages and slings and what have you, but that's currently the only involvement I have in scouting.

My daughter lives in Canada, so they don't have Boy Scouts of the United States. She's part of a different thing, but it's a non-integrated girls'—I don't know what it's called, to be honest with you. She's eight, so I'm not sure if she's involved in it yet or not. That sounds bad on a father's part that I don't know, but I don't hear everything that goes on. She and I are very close and she'll be here for an entire month this summer and we'll talk about it all.

**What are you going to do?**

I took the whole month of August off. She'll be here from July thirtieth to about August thirtieth. We're going camping on the beach. We're going to go basically scouting. This is the summer of scouting because I'm also the camp director for a pediatric burn survivor camp in Southern California. The Southern Nevada kids go to Southern California. We don't have a camp here in Southern Nevada. This is through the Firefighter Burn Foundation of Southern Nevada. I've been doing this for seven years.

**Fantastic.**

This year I got promoted to camp director of activities' personnel. Ironically this year's theme is the Great Outdoors in Scouting. I suggested that because this was the year that girls were allowed to be integrated into scouting. We're going to a brand-new camp that's a little bit more rural than the last camp we went to, so I'm like, why not scouting or the great outdoors? We've gone with the Great Outdoors, but it's going to be very much scouting oriented.

I'm just going to follow that through with my daughter and we're going to go camping. I have a little tent that sits on the back of my truck. It's on my truck now; it's always there. We're going to go to the Grand Canyon, Zion, and I have friends that live on the beaches in California

and we're just going to go park on the beach and just raise the tent, lay back there, go to the beach in the day, lower the tent, go to dinner, do whatever she wants to do. I'm not a big theme park guy. Everyone is like, take her to Disney. It's super expensive right now. If you're hearing this in 2050, you're probably paying ten times as much as what we're paying now, but the pay is still the same, so you just can't afford it.

**I love what you're going to do with her.**

Yes. We'll be camping and fishing and hiking. My parents still live in Detroit, so they're going to come out for a week of her visit; they always do. They're getting older and they have their illnesses.

**And they need to see her.**

But they need to see her. They've been coming out—they only missed one year that she came out. I promised them that next year I would just meet her, because she flies on her own now, so I'll meet her in Detroit, pick her up at the airport, and then we'll spend some time because she's never met my brother or her cousins in Michigan, so it's time to get her there. That will happen next year. There's still much to do. It's a busy summer, very busy summer, and I stay extremely busy. I started my own company. I work for the Burning Man Fire Department, the burn camp. I do laser engraving and T-shirts and apparel.

**What is laser engraving?**

I have a laser that sits on my desk and you put in wood and it will either engrave the wood or cut the wood. I have two lasers and I do cutting boards and awards and if people want a plaque, I can do all that. That's just a side hustle, if you will, that I started a couple of years ago. It doesn't substitute for the fire department by any means. I've spent more on getting the business running than I've made, but that's the nature of the beast.

**But that will change. Why did you decide to become a firefighter?**

I went through a process before I became a firefighter. My grandfather passed away before I was born, but he was a firefighter in Taylor, Michigan. All I heard were stories about my grandfather. His name was Earle Hess and my middle name is Earle; I'm named after him, so my name is Gregory Earle Koehler with an E on the end. He had to be different, so I like it. I definitely don't like following the crowd; I'm definitely a different kind of guy.

I heard all about my grandfather. In fact, my parents met at my grandfather's funeral. My father being a firefighter in the military and my grandfather being a firefighter, they were part of a group, a fire buffs club called Box 42, which I am now a member of, lifetime member. It's just people that follow the Detroit Fire Department. They go down and babysit the fire stations on Devil's Night, which is the night before Halloween. The city burns down. They call it Angel's Night now. But there was a night where they had over four hundred fires in a twelve-hour period. That's how they met, my parents. They met, got engaged and married in twelve weeks; something like that. They've been together for forty-seven years. True love is out there.

**I love it.**

My father left the fire department and the military, and he went to Ford Motor Company. His brother worked for GM, the rival carmaker. He was the fire battalion chief of Troy, Michigan Fire Department. It's the largest all-volunteer fire department in the nation. They have over three hundred firefighters and not one of them does it for pay.

**How big is Troy?**

Well, if you figure the world headquarters of several companies are there, I would say it has a population of two hundred thousand, maybe the same size as North Las Vegas, maybe bigger.

**And it's a volunteer fire department. That's excellent. That's amazing.**

Yes. They have more firefighters that volunteer than the City of North Las Vegas has paid. Yes, it's pretty wild.

My brother went through the fire academy, but he's an electrician now, never quite went that route. My uncle who was the fire chief, he passed away from cancer several years ago. He was younger than my father. His sons, one is a police officer, one is an engineer for Ford Motor Company, one is the chief of paramedicine at both a private ambulance company and a hospital, and then the other one is a pilot, so very successful kids on that side.

Myself, I took a little different path to become a firefighter. I graduated high school. I was a pole vaulter. I did several sports. I was in marching band in high school; I was the first trumpet. I wrestled and I was a springboard diver. I got injured springboard diving; I ruptured both my eardrums boxing my ear on the water.

**Explain what that means.**

I was doing a double flip and I came out of the water, and instead of going in straight, I turned and I boxed my ear on the water, so it blew out 97 percent of my left eardrum and 15 percent of my right eardrum, which affected everything. I couldn't play the trumpet anymore because air came out of my ears. You have your olfactory tube that connects your ears, nose and throat. If I was to hold my nose and blow, air would come out of my ears.

I could no longer dive and I could no longer play the trumpet until they healed, and so I became the manager of the girls' volleyball team and I learned to play volleyball very, very, very well. I went on to play curricular club volleyball in college along with track and field. I was an undefeated pole vaulter in the state of Michigan for two and a half years except for two track meets, the state meet and the state meet, the two that mattered.



But I took that experience and I coached track until three years ago. I coached pole vaulting for twenty-something years and I still pole vault for the Police and Fire Games every year. I will skip this year because I'm having some back issues. I travel internationally and I do pole vaulting at the World Police and Fire Games, so I went to Belfast, Northern Ireland in 2013 and in 2019 it goes to China. I probably will skip China. But in 2021 it's in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and I'll be going there and I'll either pole vault or run the hundred meter dash or something like that.

Going back to how I became a firefighter, I respected my track coach more than anything in the world. I was going to join the military. Before it was cool, I wanted to be a Navy SEAL. My best friend, his uncle was the Navy SEAL captain in San Juan, Puerto Rico. We spent our senior year spring break hanging out with the Navy SEALs of SEAL Team Two in San Juan, Puerto Rico. I wanted nothing more than to be this Navy SEAL. I was extremely in shape. I did sports. I only weighed a hundred and fifty pounds; it was perfect. My track coach kind of talked me out of it. He was like, "You'd make an amazing teacher." And I said, "Well, I don't want to be a teacher."

### **Teacher, like a schoolteacher?**

Yes, a high school teacher. I said, "Well, I would only be a gym teacher so I could work out every day and not do the same thing every day." I wanted a job where I didn't do the same thing every day.

I was also interested in becoming a stuntman. I followed several stuntmen, Jackie Chan being one of them. His name slips my mind, but another famous one from the seventies and eighties.

I went to Eastern Michigan University. I was on the track team. I discovered, to be totally honest, girls and alcohol, girls and beer. I had to drop out by the end of my second year because I was flunking out. I had a grade-point average of 1.6. Stay in school. You required a 2.0 to remain on the track team. I couldn't even maintain that. But I worked out every day. I went to track every day. I was one of the best pole vaulters on the team. I took the wrong path and started going to frat parties and what have you.

It's a lot of responsibility for an eighteen-year-old to just be like, ah, I'm living away from mom and dad. I was only thirty minutes from home, but I took full advantage of it. I also unfortunately took advantage of my parents because they paid for my college. Looking back on it—and I've talked to them since then. I have apologized immensely for... That was very irresponsible on my part. But my mom and I talked about being eighteen; I graduated at seventeen and then being eighteen years old in college and it's your first time really being away from your parents, you can either go "the study every single day and do the right thing" or meet the wrong people and become a product of your environment. I became a product of my environment.

What frustrates me is I had a 75 percent scholarship to pole vault at Hillsdale College and I denied it to go to Eastern Michigan because they were the MAC champions for twenty-three years straight. I was like, I'll be on a championship team; this and that. But I wasn't a scholarship athlete, so they didn't care about me. They didn't say, oh hey, get in here in study; make sure you're going... They didn't follow up on you. Where at Hillsdale, I guarantee you when they're paying 75 percent of your schooling, they're going to say, hey, get in here; work with a tutor; get to class; do this. They're going to follow up with you. Any advice I can give

somebody is take the money from the school because they will follow up with you and do the appropriate thing for you.

I dropped out of college. I went to community college. I got my basics done. I didn't graduate. Then I went through the fire academy. I was holding down several jobs; I had several part-time jobs. I worked at UPS for six months as a midnight sorter. You had to sort a thousand packages an hour. That was very, very difficult. You had to memorize five hundred ZIP codes and which conveyor belt they went on. You were just sweeping the package, looking at it, and then putting it on the appropriate thing. It was very, very difficult. I did it for about six months and I said, "I'm going to the fire academy." My brother had already been through the fire academy.

Here is how I decided to go through the fire academy. I'm sorry if I get too detailed for you.

**No, no, no. This is interesting.**

I've lived three lifetimes. It's really crazy. Not only did I coach track, I coached marching band. Every Sunday we would get the band together and play a football game, those who wanted to play. We were better than our high school football team and we were the band. It was pretty sad. We would go to the back of the school and play football and this and that.

We went on the infamous 7-Eleven Slurpee run. We were about a mile from 7-Eleven. I was in my 1987 Mercury Lynx with purple-tinted windows. My friend was in the passenger seat and I had two friends that were behind us. Well, they passed us on a two-lane road, houses on both sides, large lots, so half an acre to an acre. No traffic lights between the school and the next light, but there were the drainage ditches on the side of the road, but not concrete like Vegas, grass like the Midwest. The speed limit is forty and they probably passed us doing eighty-five

miles an hour. They got about a quarter-mile from us and I see the back end whip and then all you see after that is them leave the road and a cloud of dust come across the road.

Of course, I accelerated and then I skidded to a stop. The car was upside down and tangled in electrical wires. It probably cut the electrical pole in half, a wooden pole, about thirteen feet up in the air. Not only did they launch themselves, but they hit and then landed upside down. Miraculously, everyone was still alive. But electrical cords, electrical everything. One had crawled out. My friend Rachel had a big piece of glass stuck in her forehead. My friend Kyle, who currently lives in Las Vegas, ironically, had crawled out, but was laying there.

Well, at this point I was nineteen years old, twenty years old, but I was an Eagle Scout. I dragged him across the road away from it. A couple walked and helped Rachel across. I laid them all on the grass with their legs in the air; shock position is what it was called back in the day. I pulled the glass out of Rachel's face, took my shirt off and wrapped it on her head. I made sure everyone was still talking, everything was good.

An ambulance showed up. I rode into the hospital with Rachel. She was the one to me at the time—I didn't know triage at the time—was most—well, was bleeding and no one else was bleeding that you could visibly see. I went with her and she was the most scared. I sat up front with the firefighter paramedic from Westland, Michigan, Keith Barthauer. He is still a friend of mine to this day. He says, "Why don't you become a firefighter?" And I said, "Why would say that? I'm just curious." He goes, "Man, you did a really good job. You put them in shock position. You put a bandage on her head. You would do really good." He goes, "I teach at the fire academy at Schoolcraft College." I go, "Oh, my brother just went through there last year. Do you know Martin Koehler?" He goes, "I do. Yes, he did really well." He goes, "You should come in. Come in and talk to me."

Six months later, I was in the fire academy and I left UPS. I started the academy in January. This happened in, say, October. Not even six months, three months later. I graduated the fire academy.

Then I was like, *well, I'm going to move to Ohio with my buddy from college. I'll start as a volunteer firefighter.* Firefighting is cutthroat to get into. In Wayne County, Michigan there are twenty-nine jurisdictions, Detroit being the largest. Some are volunteer; some are full-time. They only hire one, maybe two people every two to three years. You really have to go look elsewhere to find a job. I was like, *well, I'll go down to Ohio. My buddy lives in the country.*

Culture shock, let me tell you. I lived in Carey, Ohio, land of thirty-five hundred farmers. We lived in a double-wide trailer home on four hundred acres of soybean fields. I spent a year down there. I was a lifeguard. I've been a lifeguard since I was fourteen; that was my very first job—I'm sorry, second job besides paperboy. I was a lifeguard at Trout Lake at the Boy Scout camp when I was fourteen years old, teaching canoeing and kayaking. Even as a fourteen-year-old mom was like, "You're good enough to go be a lifeguard and save other people's lives."

I moved in with my buddy Jimmy. That is his real name, Jimmy, a country boy at heart. I was a lifeguard for the whole summer, the tannest I've ever been. I looked so good.

Then I got a job at the Best Buy Distribution Center in Findlay, Ohio. It was a thirty-minute drive to work. My supervisor was so cool; his name was Kory. Kory sat me down and he was like, "What are your goals in life?" What a good supervisor would ask. I said, "Well, I really like it here." It was shipping and receiving. I was wrapping pallets and unloading trucks. But he goes, "What do you really want to do?" I said, "Well, I went to the fire academy. I'd love to be a fireman. I want to do something different every day with my life." I said, "I'd be a stuntman. Oh my gosh, it would be so amazing to be a stuntman."

I continued to come to work day after day. A week later he presents me with an application to Kim Kahana's Stunt School in Groveland, Florida. He goes, "Here's your chance." It was forty-five hundred dollars for twelve weeks. Well, I didn't have the money.

Then some issues happened in Carey and my parents came down. They were like, "We're taking you home. You're coming home to live with us." Little issues down there, just difference in culture. It got a little heated, if you will. My parents came down and took me home. It was fine.

I'm working at the Best Buy Service Center as a customer service rep at the front desk, dealing with some very angry people whose computers are broken or VCRs. I had about an eighty-year-old man throw his VCR and hit me in the head because he was so mad. I had to learn to tell people no because we closed at six o'clock and they arrived at 6:01 and they saw the line inside. I'm like, "I'm sorry." I had to learn to be a jerk, really, because that's what they were doing to me. I can't let every single person in that comes at 6:08; it's six o'clock, on time. I can't say I despised the job, but I wasn't a big fan of being up front.

They put me in the warehouse, shipping and receiving, and I'm much more comfortable. Well, back there is a Navy SEAL, a former Navy SEAL. He and I became the best of friends. We talked all the time. I'm like, "Oh my gosh, SEAL Team Two, San Juan, Puerto Rico, it's so awesome." He knew the guy I knew. I'm like, "That is so awesome." I told him about stunt school, and he's like, "Man, do it. Save up."

I spent nine months. I sent down my payments. In late August, early September of 1998, I drove from Michigan to Florida and I spent twelve weeks learning to be a stuntman. I was like, *this is it; I'm going to be a stuntman*. We got set on fire, hit by cars, dragged by cars, false fighting. I jumped off an eighty-foot tower into airbags. I tried to catch an alligator. That's that

beer thing again. I tried to catch a four-foot alligator at three o'clock in the morning, not the smartest thing to do, but definitely an experience.

**I'm going to trust you on that one.**

There were six of us trying to catch this thing. It was super dark in the orange grove fields of Florida. He is in his element; we are not. Thank God. I don't know what we would have done if we had caught him other than get bit. Awesome, awesome time. I'm still friends with people from stunt school. I just reconnected with them through Facebook in the last five years.

I got home to Michigan. I was watching a sports game, most likely hockey or football, at Ground Round; it was an amazing restaurant. My buddy from high school sits up next to me and we're catching up. I told him about stunt school and I said, "I'm either going to move back to Miami or go to Los Angeles and be a stuntman; that's what I'm going to do." And he goes, "Well, in the meantime, we're hiring part-time firefighters in Northville Township, Michigan." It bordered my hometown of Livonia. It's smaller: It was only eighteen square miles; Livonia is thirty-six, and we all know Detroit is massive, so kind of proportionate, I think Detroit is a hundred and fifty to two hundred square miles, very large.

**This is a paid position?**

This was a paid on-call, so only when I got called would I get pay. It was eight dollars an hour, a minimum of two hours. Even if you went for twenty minutes, you got sixteen bucks. But you were required to make 75 percent of the callouts throughout the year. It's called a combination fire department, combination of paid on-call and full-time guys. When I got hired the full-time guys only worked a forty-hour workweek, Monday through Friday, eight to five, nothing more; not conducive to save lives. They unionized. I started there in 1999 and they unionized in 2000. Then they started doing their one on, two off, so they were there twenty-four hours a day.

They were like, “But we want you to work with us as the paid on-call people.” There were forty of us paid on-call. By the middle of 2000, there were six of us because people just did not like the fact that they weren’t getting called out. It wasn’t worth their time. They wanted to get paid. I was doing it because I loved the job. Every Tuesday for twenty-four hours I worked with the fire department and they paid me. They were like, “You come in. We’ll give you eight dollars an hour, but every call you go on we’ll give you twelve dollars an hour, minimum of one hour.” I’m like, *come on, bring on the calls*. Some days I’d run nothing; some days six or seven calls a day. I was like, *yes, I’m in the money*.

Tuesday, September eleventh, 2001, I was at work and the Twin Towers collapsed. I still had to run calls. This is what I learned about the fire department that day. Can I just be frank?

**Of course.**

No matter what bullshit is going on out in the world, we’re still on duty. We have a job to do. We ran calls that day. Every single television was tuned in to the terror attacks. Well, man, that’s tough because you want to be back at the firehouse with your brothers trying to figure out—well, armchair quarterback really is what it’s going to be. *What would you do? Oh man, the tower is going to fall. No, it’s not. Yes, it is. No.* It’s actually training, believe it or not. You get to learn. Then the towers collapsed and it’s like, *oh my gosh*. Your heart broke. I’m like, *how many guys were in that tower?*

I just really want to give you a background of how I got to Route 91. I haven’t even gotten to Nevada yet.

It was a very long emotional day to work through that and it was tough, but we made it happen. I tried so hard to get on a team. *Oh, we’re going; we’re going*. Well, the full-time guys, but we’re not taking paid on-call guys. I’m like, *I’ve got to become a full-time guy*.



Northville Township paid me to go through emergency medical, EMT basic training. There are three levels of EMT: There's basic, intermediate, but it's now called advanced, and paramedic.

**The paramedic is the top.**

Paramedic is the top. You can go beyond that and become a CCT medic, which is critical care transport, or trauma technical medic; there are other stuff, lateral playing field, which I'm taking tactical soon. I'll get into that. That's post-Route 91.

They paid for me to go to EMT basic school. Then Michigan eliminated intermediate, so they were like, you're either basic or paramedic. Okay. Well, some of the guys that were there were like, "We want to go to paramedic school." My parents stepped up to the plate again and they paid for me to go to paramedic school, which I passed. Thank you.

**This is your thing.**

Right. This is 2002. They said, "Hey, if you're going to be a paramedic, Las Vegas will pretty much hire you on the spot."

**How did they know?**

The schools get emails from all over the county because out here they want paramedics, so they'll send it out to all the paramedic schools in the nation and say, "Hey, we're going to be hiring; we're going to be testing; send them out here." Well, neither myself or my parents had ever been to Las Vegas. I was testing in Macon, Georgia; Denver; Fort Worth, Texas; anywhere big. I wanted to get away from the snow except for Denver; I would have worked in Denver. It just needed to be a bigger, busier world, or I was going to work for Detroit. If I was going to be in the snow, I was going to work where I wanted to work.

I did apply for Detroit and they said—I'm going to be frank—they said, "You're male and you're white; that's not what we're looking for right now. We're looking for females and minorities. I'm sorry, but you're just not going to get hired."

Then my buddy who is blond-haired and blue-eyed gets hired. I'm like, *what?* He goes, "It's because I play hockey." They hired him to play on the Detroit Fire Department hockey team. I was like, "I hate you." He is still with the Detroit Fire Department and he is the captain now. He's doing amazing. I'm not bitter at all about it, but at the time I was so thrown off. I was like, "I was told this. They hired literally the opposite of what you are, blond-haired and blue-eyed." I'm like, "How does that happen?"

It is what it is, so you just move on. I believe if Plan A doesn't work, there are twenty-five more letters of the alphabet; there are twenty-five more plans. And if those don't work, there's AA, BB, CC, and you just continue to go. My girlfriend in 2000 used to say, "One of the things I love about you, Greg, is you have a plan for a plan for a plan." She goes, "You have so many plans in case this plan doesn't work." I've always been that guy. The Boy Scouts motto is "be prepared," and my parents drilled that into me, hammered it into me.

Detroit didn't work out. My dad and I took a couple of trips to Macon, Georgia. I got hired, but, at the same time, I got hired in Las Vegas. I like the outdoors. I was like, okay, Macon is near the ocean. I love the water. Not a whole lot of outdoors to do.

**Did you know about all the outdoor things at that time?**

I just knew that it was near the mountains. We had come out for the testing. That was a whole story in itself. A quick little aside here. We stayed at the MGM, but the testing was at the Texas Station. Nobody I spoke to at the MGM knew where the Texas Station was, nobody. Nobody could say, you're totally in the wrong area; you're not even close to Texas Station, nothing. We

showed up three days ahead of time. Nobody could tell me where the Texas Station was. We didn't Google at the time, so I'm like, *wow*.

Finally we figured it out. We got Map Quest or whatever. We finally found something. I'm like, okay, we're at the MGM and Texas Station is probably twelve miles away. Well, we didn't rent a car. This was a very, very minimal payment thing; you're going, you're testing, we're leaving.

Let's say, for example, I was testing on Monday morning. I went to bed at nine o'clock on Sunday night. The MGM fire alarms went off at midnight and did not turn off until four a.m. when I woke up. I was up all night before the testing. We could not sleep. It's in your room: *Stay in your room; do not move*. I'm like, *oh my gosh*. I'm trying to cover my head. Everyone is grumpy now and I have to get up and get on the RTC bus. But I didn't realize that I had to walk from the MGM to the Home Depot at Trop and Arville, which is a mile and a half away. In today's world I would not make that walk; there is a lot of trouble in that area, but I didn't know that. I was like, all right. I went to the Home Depot, got on the bus. It was an hour and a half. I had to be there at seven o'clock. I woke up at four thirty. I'm like, *oh my gosh*.

There were seven thousand people testing in 2002. I do not know how I got hired. I thought I was testing for the City of Las Vegas. It was a joint testing with Las Vegas and North Las Vegas. I received letters from both saying, hey, you're in tier four for Las Vegas and you're in tier two for North Las Vegas. Oh, hey, you've been bumped up; you're in tier one, you're in tier four. They're hiring or eliminating people.

North Las Vegas says, "Hey, come out and get your interview." I interviewed and I left there and everyone was laughing; I just made everyone laugh. I'm like, *oh man, I'm hired and*

*fired on the same day.* Then I said, “This is a long trip for me. Can I just do my physical agility test?” I made three trips to Vegas and on my fourth trip I moved here. They hired me.

**Which year was that?**

That was 2003. I arrived in Las Vegas on April first, April Fools’. Fooled you guys. I started the fire academy April seventh, so six days later. I had no idea where to live. I got an apartment across from the Air Force base.

**Oh, Nellis, okay.**

Yes, exactly. It is called Eagle Trace Apartments. It is directly across from the main gate. It is on the northwest corner of Craig and Las Vegas Boulevard. Today I would never tell anyone to move in there. But I made it through the fire academy and I bought a house. I bought a house ironically six hundred feet from the fire station I work in now.

**Where do you work now?**

I work at Station 57; it’s out by the VA Hospital at Pecos and Azure.

**The new fire station.**

It’s twelve years old now. There are eight fire stations in the City of North Las Vegas; there were four when I got hired. But I no longer live there. I live over by Meadows Mall. Lots of mistakes, living and learning, trial and error. When Myspace was big, my name was Learning Through Living; that was my moniker on there. I still believe in that; you learn through your living. You can’t be old and wise without being young and dumb, so you’ve got to make your mistakes.

I got hired as a fireman in North Las Vegas in 2003, but my paramedic didn’t count out here; it didn’t transfer. But they did allow me to test out with what they have as intermediates out here. For my first five years on the fire department I was an EMT intermediate. Then in 2007 I tested for the department to pay for me to go to paramedic school. They said, “Yes, you’ve

passed; you're good." It was a year and a half at CSN. I started in January of '08 and I completed it and was dubbed 'you are a paramedic' with national registry testing in May of 2009. I've been through paramedic school twice and it's definitely been a long ride with the EMS.

I like to utilize my paramedic skills. Guys don't always necessarily like EMS in Las Vegas because it's so busy and you run on bullshit calls. I had a call for a lady who called 9-1-1 at three o'clock in the morning because she had a nightmare and she is forty-three years old and she wanted to go to the hospital.

### **Don't you know what it's for before you get into the truck?**

There are notes that say and it said, "Had a nightmare; wants to go to the hospital." I got there and she said, "I had a nightmare. One of my eyelashes got in my eye. I want to go to the hospital." I walked out. I let my partner deal with it because she and I were just starting to argue. I'm like, "This is not an ambulance call. This is a 'wash your eye out with water and go back to sleep' call." If there is one thing I could tell people in any city in the United States, learn to take care of yourself. Learn to take care of yourself. We get calls for people who have had headaches for three days. I said, "Well, what have you done for your headache? Have you taken any Tylenol?" *No*. "Motrin? Bayer Aspirin?" *No*. "Are you dehydrated? Are you drinking water?" *No*. Of course, you have a headache. Take care of yourself. Look it up and don't Web MD it. You're going to have every cancer known to man if you put in your symptoms. But it's like, learn to take care of yourself.

### **Do you think that's nationwide?**

Oh yes. I will tell you another story here in just a second. I have traveled the nation and it is not isolated to Las Vegas. This is a nationwide—and I will refer to it as an epidemic of people that feel entitled, people that don't know how to take care of themselves, and people that just don't

understand what a true emergency is. But, on the other hand to that, I can't fault them for not knowing what a true emergency is if they are not medically trained, but there is some common sense to some things. I believe I am generation...I forget which generation I'm called, '76 to '84.

**Is that Gen X?**

No. It's got a little moniker to it.

**Are you a Millennial?**

No. Uh-huh.

**You're prior to that. Okay, sorry.**

I'm prior to X, I believe. Either way, we're the last ones that—personal opinion, total person opinion—we're the last ones that have been disciplined; you're able to be hit, spanked, swatted, mouth slapped for lying, flicked in the mouth for lying, mouth washed out with soap, disciplined in front of the other people, and basically have your parents raise you versus a cell phone, a tablet, PC, you can't hit your kid, your kid can sue you. I can't stand that. We became PC in the nineties. There are some things that deserve PC, don't get me wrong, but not discipline. We have a lot of problems in this world. Lack of discipline from parental units, both male and female. I know there's a lot of single moms raising kids; those are probably the toughest ones ever; they're the ones that are going to lay down the law more than anything. Dads, step up to the plate. Do your job; discipline that kid. Man, oh man. Anyway, that's a little rant there, sorry, 2050, sorry.

**Did you always like country music?**

No, not at all. I've gone in waves with country music. I liked it in high school because I liked a girl that liked it. I became a George Strait fan. Older, I like George Strait, Garth Brooks, Trace Adkins; that generation of the late eighties, early nineties, I really like it. Then I went to rock and roll and hard rock and then I like what now is called electronic dance music. I still get my groove

on at the house and I dance and I go to a nightclub and dance, no problem. Band helped me find the beat, so I have a pretty good rhythm.

But my number-one preset on my radio is definitely country now. I got into country several years ago again. I kind of like the route that it's taken. It's kind of cross-genre now. I like it. Pretty good beat to some of it. There is a new song on now; some call it rap, some call it country; it's called "Old Country Road," by a country singer called Lil Nas X. He did a remix of it with... "Achy Breaky Heart"...Billy Ray Cyrus. Some country artists are like, absolutely not. But what dictates country? Do you have to have a steel guitar? Do you have to know electric guitar? Do you have to have the plucker? What dictates country? That's really what it comes down to is just personal subjective preference. I do like country. I know we're trying to get to Route 91, sorry.

When I say I ran across the United States, thirty-six of us literally ran across the United States in 2010. It goes back to September eleventh. We got invited along with some Australians. It was their brainchild. It was called the Tour of Duty Run. We ran from Santa Monica Pier to Ground Zero in New York City over thirty-one days on foot. We stayed in some RVs that were donated by an RV dealership, by Jayco. It started off as two-mile increments; you ran for two miles and tagged the next guy and he ran, but then it downsized to one mile each. In thirty-one days each of us probably ran anywhere from four hundred to four hundred fifty miles. You're looking at about twelve to fifteen miles a day, give or take. You would run in time blocks.

You had your red, white and blue teams. And then every mile we ran for was dedicated to someone that died, all three thousand—I'm missing the number right now—just about four thousand people who passed away that day, firefighters, civilians, EMS, police. Every time—in my group; there were six in my RV, and I ran with a guy who now works for the Emergency

Management Office; his name is Bradley Iverson. There were eleven guys from North Las Vegas, one from Chicago, six from New York City, one from New Orleans, a police officer from the Port Authority, one Metro police officer, and sixteen guys from Australia from every state of Australia. In my RV was the captain of Rescue 2, New York City Fire Department, FDNY, and he knew every single person that died. He was friends with all of them. He had been on for twenty years at the time that we ran this. Every time we ran for a firefighter we put on our turnout gear and we ran in our gear for one mile to honor that guy; the civilians we did not, but we did run, obviously.

I personally would like to set up another run like that in 2022 or 2023. That's my goal is to do that again. We were raising money for the Nine Eleven Foundation, and so we were able to present them a check at the end of our thirty-day run.

**Would you do it in 2022 for New York or Las Vegas?**

New York. That's what that run is for. I have something coming up for Las Vegas.

That was 2010. That same year, in January of 2010, the earthquake occurred in Haiti and I went to Haiti on my own. My buddy was a photographer and he went with a group out of St. George, Utah, and he's like, "They're asking me to start IVs and give medication and I'm a photographer." I was friends with his girlfriend and she says, "Greg, is there anything you can do?" I said, "Well, yes, I can go." I got some trades at work and I found a flight down to Haiti and I met up with them and spent two weeks in Haiti. I was the only medical person for almost five square miles.

I learned a lot about Haiti and it will humble you. It is literally a fourth world country. They call it third world country, but it is so...It's got a long way to go. Unfortunately what's happened since then, they're still a mess. All the money that's been donated and what have



you...A little piece of my heart is in Haiti. I've been twice now. I went and taught kids arts and crafts and sports in 2015 with another group.

That was 2010. In 2006, going backwards for a second, I did a firefighter exchange program with Berlin, Germany. There were six of us from North Las Vegas.

**I've never heard of a firefighter exchange.**

We didn't either, but we made it happen. We went to Berlin, Germany and we ran calls in Berlin for five or six shifts out of twelve days.

**What did you do about the language?**

Charades. I played a lot of charades. Most of them spoke broken English. We had one guy that was a missionary in Germany and he spoke German fluently. That was only North Las Vegas and there were six of us. We're talking about maybe doing it again here in the next few years. I'd love to go back and do it again.

I'm trying to get a timeline for you. In 2010, if you want to get personal, I had a fling with a woman out of Canada.

**This is the wife?**

There is no wife. She was a fling.

**Okay, I got it.**

But she is the mother of my child. We are still very good friends. My daughter lives in Edmonton, Canada.

**Would you ever think about marrying her and having her come here?**

No.

**Just thought I'd ask.**

No. We were never in love. It was a fling. But we're friends and my daughter knows me very well and I know her. I'm involved in her life as best as I can be from Las Vegas. I haven't missed a birthday; I've been up there every year. I was going to deliver my daughter, but she ended up having an emergency C-section. But her mother and I get along very well. There is no relationship there other than a friendship. But my daughter and I, we're amazing. We get along great. She is just absolutely awesome. She speaks four languages. She's smarter than I am. She speaks English, French, Spanish and Tagalog. Tagalog and Spanish are not fluent, but she's getting there. She was conceived in 2010 and then she was born in 2011.

### **Same as Haiti?**

Yes, same year. Everyone makes fun of me at work; it was like Haiti, Canada, run across the United States. Then when I got back from Haiti, I got to meet President Obama at Green Valley High School when he spoke at Green Valley. He shook my hand. I'm in the annals of the White House speeches. He says my name on national television. It's pretty cool. I have a picture at my house; I was on the front page of the newspaper sitting next to Dirty Harry Reid, and I say that jokingly. I got interviewed by the local newspaper in North Las Vegas; I have that matted and framed on my wall, too.

### **I love it.**

In 2011, I also started working on the fire department at Burning Man, the big arts festival in Northern Nevada. I had never been, but my best friend who worked with me in Northville Township, he and his wife were going and he was working on the fire department. I told him, "Man, that's not my gig. I'm not into that. I've heard all about it down here." But what you hear down here is not what goes on up there. Everyone says, "What is Burning Man?" And I said, "What do you want it to be?"

**Yes, because Nevada Humanities is the sponsor.**

Yes. I said, "Burning Man is whatever you want to be, as crazy, freaky, weird, or subtle as you want it to be; that's what Burning Man is. It's for you to decide your experience at Burning Man." But being at Burning Man taught me a lot. They have their ten principles of Burning Man: self-reliance, leave it cleaner than you found it, no mess, no commerce. You can't sell anything. It's based on gifting. I would maybe make with my laser machine five hundred little medallions and I would say, "Oh, nice to meet you. Here, take a medallion." And you're like, "Oh, here, take a hamburger." Well, you gifted me a hamburger and I gifted you that. It's a bartering system. There is no selling of anything. It's based on giving something to someone without expecting something in return, truly one of the Burning Man principles. I can't tell you all ten of them; I can't remember.

Definitely an experience. I did that for several years. I was the fire chief of Black Rock City, not the actual burn, the night that the guy jumped in the fire and killed himself in 2017. In an eight-week period I went through that and Route 91.

Then in 2013, I went to Belfast, Northern Ireland and I competed in the World Police and Fire Games and I represented North Las Vegas. I took second in the world in pole vaulting and second in the world for the four-by-one relay. They teamed me up with three guys that have never run together, and we got beat by the Tokyo Police Department, and well-deserved second place because they beat us by about eleven meters, so they definitely deserved their first place. But as the Americans, we did absolutely fantastic. I still have two silver medals from the World Police and Fire Games, an awesome experience.

Then I traveled Europe for two weeks and I met up with the German firefighters that I met in 2006. I was able to meet up with them. Just a total awesome experience traveling Europe on your own on the train and just whatever. It was so cool.

The reason I tell you all this about Greg Koehler is to what put me in a mindset at Route 91. I'm an independent person. I can handle most things. I'm not afraid to go out and do something on my own. I'm not comfort zone; I like to be here outside of my comfort zone because that's where life starts. There is that saying. I have several sayings. I'm a quoter, if you will. I like the one that's like, most people die at twenty-five, but they're not buried until they're seventy-five. You have to live, not just exist. The purpose of life is a life of purpose. When you're writing the story of your life, don't let anyone else hold the pen, but use a pencil because shit changes. I told that to some NFL Hall of Famers in a speech and they were all rolling. One man, he has a church in Ferguson, Missouri—am I right, Missouri?

**Yes, I think it is.**

Yes, where the big police thing happened. He's like, "I'm taking that back. I want you to come speak to my congregation." I need to connect with him again and see if he'll still let me go. I think that was amazing.

I have quotes like that. On my Instagram I'll put a quote that someone else wrote and then I'll follow it up with mine. My partner at work keeps telling me I should work for Hallmark. He's like, "What you say brings me to tears sometimes." I'm like, "I'm sorry. It just comes from the heart." If I'm heartbroken or I'm having a bad day, I write the best stuff.

Then in 2014, I started with the burn camp. One of my captains had been going. I love to volunteer. I worked with the Salvation Army from age three to age twenty-six. I spent every Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter serving breakfast to the homeless. I started off by taking a

pitcher of water at three years old and pouring water to running the entire kitchen at age twenty-six. I ran it; I did this; I was a cook at the Outback Steakhouse, and so I was like, “Okay, turkey steamer is done, good; got this; got this.” It was a line and we served several hundred homeless people of Detroit at the Harbor Light Mission, which is no longer there, Salvation Army every Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter for twenty-three years.

I have yet to be able to get to a soup kitchen here, but I volunteer in other ways and I try very hard to give back to the city. I coached track at Centennial and Bishop Gorman. I work with the Burn Foundation. I danced on stage for the Firefighter Bachelor Auction for thirteen years. They just asked me to come back this year and I said, “No, you don’t want to see this on stage again.” But it was fun. Talk about being out of your comfort zone; that is definitely, definitely out of your comfort zone. But for anyone that is listening, it’s a great ladies night out, I’ll tell you that. Gals night out, GNO, take it to the...But it raises money to send kids to these burn camps. I’ve been involved with it since 2004. I started doing the auction and now I’m a camp counselor.

This year I’m the camp—this is what makes me proud is I’m the only firefighter currently for the last few years, the only firefighter from Southern Nevada to go to Southern California for a burn camp, and we have pediatric burn survivors from Southern Nevada that go every year. I’m the only firefighter to attend this camp currently. There will be more. I’m recruiting this year, anyway. There are firefighters from all over Southern California. They chose me as a Southern Nevada guy to be the camp director in Southern California. That’s something I’m very proud of and flattered, absolutely flattered that they chose me.

In 2017, I was living with a girlfriend in Henderson and we had gone to Route 91 for two years and this was going to be our third one. Then we had our issues and she got tickets to Route 91 and I did not. The summer of 2017, we broke up. I went broke because of it. I had a negative

balance in my bank account. I went through a breakup, a financial disaster, we had to move, and then I went through the Burning Man incident where the gentleman killed himself, and then she and I weren't talking for two months, then we started talking, and I got tickets to Route 91 from a friend of mine who works at MGM. He got me VIP tickets. He is currently the general manager of the Aces and he is a friend of mine. He's like, "Hey, there will be four tickets waiting for you at will call." I was like, "Awesome."

**Four?**

Yes. It was a set of four. He goes, "I'll give you four. Grab some friends and go ahead and go down." I was like, "All right, cool." Well, nobody could join me. I was like, *seriously, I'm by myself?* So I'm like, *okay, cool, whatever.* I Ubered down there, so my car was nowhere near down there. But that afternoon—

**We're talking about Sunday already.**

October first, yes. I snuck in on Friday.

**Why?**

Because I didn't have tickets.

**Oh. So, these were only for Sunday?**

Correct. He was supposed to get me Friday and Saturday, but—

**I thought you had to get the entire package; you couldn't get one day.**

Not when somebody is given the VIP tickets. He had a very specific days.

**How do you sneak in?**

I just exchanged wristbands with someone through the fence; that's how that worked. We did old-school, just a little transfer.

**I see, okay. Don't tell me.**

I'm not proud of it, but we made it happen. I didn't cause any problems. There wasn't anything going on. Either way, I was there Friday night and I was there Sunday night. Saturday I skipped it.

**Did you see your girlfriend Friday night, the friend that you started speaking to again?**

No. We were still living together, but October first, the afternoon of the shooting, we moved; I moved her to her apartment and I moved me back to my house, a little townhouse I own. It was an emotional day, but it was a good day. We felt like things were cool.

She didn't think that I was going to get tickets. She's like, oh, he's never going to get these VIP tickets. Well, my buddy texted me. He's like, "Hey, they're waiting for you at will call."

I went down there. I got my tickets. They were VIP in the Coca-Cola VIP booths, so looking at the stage I was in the left-hand side, second VIP building from the stage. It was VIP number seven. I was on the roof all day. I was getting free drinks. They were basically Jack and Coke and just having a good time.

Something I'm not proud of, I did pass the ex-girlfriend and I'm like, "What's up, loser? *Hahahaha.*" She's like, *Haha.* What's up, asshole?" We called each other names and then this all went down. I kind of regret that. It was in fun and jest; we weren't being rude to each other, but later she accused me of being...She threw it in my face and I'm like, "I apologize. What can I say?" We were all just kind of joking around.

I ran into my buddy who is a Metro police officer; he was there on duty. It was getting near the end of the concert, I don't know, nine forty-five, ten o'clock. I'm having a drink. I was probably four or five drinks in. I was sitting on a stool at a bar on the roof of these little

buildings. It's about the size of your room. Two stories are enclosed and then you can be on the roof, and I was on the roof.

I have a Facebook Live video of the shooting. I was filming Jason Aldean when it was going down. Then I stopped filming and then I started filming again and that's when there is a video of a little bit of chaos. I didn't think it was real. If you were to hear my video, I'm like, "Well, there might be an active shooter at the festival."

### **Why did you doubt it?**

I was at a country concert. Why would this be going on? I had no idea. Like a thousand other people, I thought it was fireworks. I've worked in nightclubs. Throughout my college days I was a security guard. I was the smallest one, but I still did security. You see people run. I'm like, *oh, there must be a fight*. Then they always come back when the fight relaxes and things get under control. I saw people run and then they came back. The fireworks went off. Fireworks went off at the front stage. I was like, *whatever, fireworks, weird, okay*.

I ended up getting a friend of mine and my other friend's wife to come up. One of my firefighter buddies, his wife and his twin brother came and they were my guests, so they were sitting up there with me. He's a hunter and he's like, "Dude, that's gunfire." I go, "No. How could it be gunfire? It's a country concert." I continued to film. He's like, "Get down behind the bar." Now, mind you, the bar is only this big. If I was to be shot, it would have still gotten me. I'm like, "No, no, no, no." You see me drink my drink in the video. I'm like, "All right, fine, I'll get down."

At three minutes and seven seconds of my video you hear two bullets hit the bar right in front of my face and one ricochets and fractures and the shrapnel goes into my friend's wife's



foot. I'm still filming, trying to talk. I turn around and now everybody is gone; I'm by myself. I'm like, *I need to do something.*

I stop filming at like five minutes and some seconds and I ran down. Now, mind you, just mass chaos, pandemonium leaving, and I'm fighting against the crowd. I don't know why. It was just the right thing to do. I fought the crowd, helped some people stand up. Some of this is still fuzzy to me. I helped some people stand up, just kind of shoved them towards the gate, like, *get out of here*, a lot of cussing and swearing and *get the hell out of here.*

I came across a body but—so this is what I want people to know is there were hundreds of heroes that night, hundreds of non-trained heroes. I am trained, somewhat, but not for that. I am trained to triage and treat and hold my shit together when things go crazy, but not like that. I wasn't trained for that.

But I will tell you I went skydiving years ago and I opted for the video. Ah, they're going to film me while I'm going up there. They're like, "How do you feel, Greg? Are you super excited?" I'm like, "Cool." My heartrate was like at sixty; I was just chilling the whole way out. The only time I got excited was when they got me outside and the wind is in your face and you're like, *oh my gosh, this is really happening.*

My mom never freaked out; growing up, if I got hurt, she would just wait and see if I got up, and if I didn't she'd come over and check on me. My brother went through our door wall. This is before tempered glass. Glass slid down and caught him on the leg. It filleted his leg open. My mom was super chill. "Hey, let's get you wrapped up." This and that. As soon as the fire department arrived, she was like, "Oh, oh, oh my God." Then she freaked out. But my mom, in the face of adversity, when looking it in the eye, is super calm. I think that's where I got it because I was super calm.

He continued to fire down on us and I just...I don't know if you're so hyper focused that things just slow down and you can think so clear. You're like, *all right, get behind the bar*. So I went and I hid behind a bar. When that barrage of bullets stopped, I ran over to another bar. If I found a body...

Now, this is what I was going to tell you. Every human body that was lying on the ground was surrounded by a group of people. Not one person died or was injured without a group of angels around them doing everything they could to save that person, not one. I went from body to body to body. My triage was very quick; breathing or not breathing. People would be like, "Not breathing." Shot or not shot. Not shot. Well, what's wrong? Let's see what's going on. If they're not shot, we have an issue. Okay, let's fix their head; let's tilt their head; let's see if they can start breathing, okay. One maybe got fixed; I don't know. There was only one, I think, that told me, "Not breathing, but not shot." Then it was shot or not shot. Shot. Okay, where? In the head. I've got to go; move on. But they're breathing. Not viable, unfortunately.

This is what still gets to me today. This is a cliché thing to say. I don't know how else to put it, but you're playing God. I don't like to say that because I'm a religious man and there's no way that I'm either remotely there. You're playing a role you do not want to play. You are not going to help this person because there are others that aren't hurt. He is going to die. They teach us that in triage and you label them: green, yellow, red or black. In my head, red: I'll come back to you if you're not black by the time I get back. Or you're green; you can walk. *Let's go; get out of here. You've got a broken ankle? I don't care. Let's go; let's go; let's go. Hobble your way out of here. If you can walk, if you can crawl, you can get out of here right now.* Yellow: Oh, you've got stomach pain; you got shot in the hand. *Let's go; we've got to go.* Reds and blacks: We've got to do something.

I remember of the fifty-eight that passed away—I know several died in the hospital—before police and fire and everything showed up, I probably put my hands on around twenty-five of them. I would say total I probably touched between thirty and thirty-five of the fifty-eight that passed away. Several injured people. I put a tourniquet on several legs.

I remember a gentleman—I wish I could find him—his name is Kirk or Kurt out of Colorado. He's a sheriff's deputy. He got shot in the femoral artery on his right leg and shattered his tib fib. We put two tourniquets on his leg and I cannot find him. I've tried. I'm going to start calling around to different sheriffs' departments and see if I can find him. I ran into him twice that night. There was a group of us that put a tourniquet on his leg and shoved him under the bleachers. Then about what seems like hours later, but probably twenty minutes later, I ran into him outside on Giles Street.

Then we started carrying people, and I say we because I ran into another firefighter from Phoenix Fire Department. He refused to give me his name. I go, "What's your name?" He goes, "Does it really matter?" I go, "Well, where do you work?" He goes, "Phoenix Fire Department." I go, "Phoenix; that's your name. Let's go." We started carrying people, firemen carry, double buddy carry. He's like, "Well, what about the dead ones?" I'm like, "Just bring them out, man. They'll sort them out." We just started carrying people. We were shoving people in cars. The real heroes are the Uber drivers and the guy that stole the truck. It's just like, oh my gosh.

I saw a guy with no police uniform on and he was carrying a rifle. I'm like, "Who is that?" He goes, "I work for Orange County Sheriff's Department." And so, Metro...He was able to prove that he was one and they were short staffed at that moment. He got a gun and he covered the crowd until things...

Police and fire obviously started showing up very quickly. EMS One, which is a Las Vegas Fire and Rescue unit, I knew them; I knew EMS One, the guy in the driver's seat. He gave me a ballistic vest and a ballistic helmet and he's like, "Dude, just so they don't shoot you or get you in trouble." It says *fire* on it or *paramedic*. I'm walking around with a ballistic vest—it weighs about twenty-five pounds—and a hat that's made out of Kevlar.

I knew several of the firefighters just through burn camp or what have you. He's like, "Greg, we need another paramedic. We're going on the body count team." I'm like, "Okay, let's go." There is a video out there of body cam footage. I'm on it for about forty-five minutes.

### **What are you doing?**

Checking the bodies to make sure that they're dead and to count the bodies that are still in the festival grounds. This is a bit of time after it has been evacuated and people are slowly getting off the street and whatever. There was a group of several Metro officers and eight or nine of us from Clark County Fire Department. I'm not sure if there was a city guy. I was just the bystander that I happened to know the right people.

As far as I know, there were only three North Las Vegas firefighters there attending the concert: Myself and two others. One other one did several tourniquets on his way out. They were both with family. One threw his wife over a bar and then they ended up exiting. The other one left with his family, took his shirt off, took his belt off because they were doing tourniquets on their way out, and they left. When it comes to actual police involvement to the actual job, I believe I'm the only one from North Las Vegas that stayed and did anything. There were family members; several of the guys' daughters were there and kids and what have you. But everyone got out.

I didn't know a friend of mine from California was there, but he got shot in the chest and it travels through and it's still to this day in his liver.

I got recruited to go on the body count team. We entered and as Metro went through and cleared each building, we could move forward and what have you. We started finding bodies that were—it was difficult to find the bodies, but honorable from what other people did. They covered them with the banners. They covered their bodies, which religiously and what have you, I just feel it was very respectful to the deceased.

Now, I have since met several family members of the people that passed away. I have no idea who I put my hands on. But as I walked through I was checking pulses, checking breathing, gunshot wounds, what have you. I had no gloves. I was just a bloody mess from head to toe.

We ended up finding nineteen bodies in the festival grounds. We had to hide in a bar as Metro came in and evacuated Jason Aldean and his band from their hiding place.

Now, if I may backtrack to during the shooting. I'm sorry, I just remembered this. There was a—how would I describe this? The stage is directly ahead of you. In the middle of the stage, coming out from the stage, are two fences that kept the crowd to the right or to the left. In between those fences were all the wires and cords and electrical stuff that powered the stage. Now, about a hundred and fifty feet, two hundred feet out from the stage was the sound stage. It had all the mixing boards and a bar, all this stuff.

Part of the struggle for people were clearing these two fences to get out. I call it the kill zone. It was on the Las Vegas Boulevard side. If you're looking at it, it was on the right side. Most people were trying to run away from it and they had to clear those two fences and a lot of people couldn't do it whether they were heavy—

**How tall were the fences?**

Four-foot fences. Your normal chain-link fence-type thing. You're looking at heavysset people, injured people, shot people, short people trying to clear this fence, so it became pretty rough. As those came out they expanded out and they protected this soundboard area so nobody could enter into them.

Well, halfway through a little bit of time into my running around—now, in this time I got a phone call from two people. I got a phone call from the ex-girlfriend who was there, but we were not together, and she was crying her eyes out. I swear at the time she told me she was shot. But she had been trampled and dislocated her left elbow and she was at the MGM. She's like, "What do I do? I'm injured." I said, "Find an ambulance. Get to the hospital." You could still hear the shooting in the background. She could hear it. I lost that phone call. I was talking through my watch, my Apple watch.

I was supposed to be working that night, but I took that day on vacation to attend the concert. My partner at work called me. He's like, "It's all over the news." I'm talking to him and he could hear the bullets hitting around me in the background. We talk about it now and I cry about it. I start to tear up when we talk about it. He's like, "I woke up the captain. I woke up the paramedic. I woke up the engineer. We were going to come down and try to find you and this and that, but we're not allowed."

**What do you mean you're not allowed?**

You're not allowed. North Las Vegas is so far from the shooting. You still have to run the calls at North Las Vegas. You can't just up and leave and self-dispatch. You have to be dispatched to that incident. Now, Henderson, Clark County...The Route 91 festival grounds they called the MGM Village, I believe. It is technically within the jurisdiction of the Clark County Fire

Department, unincorporated Clark County. But it's so close to Henderson, so Henderson got called in and then Las Vegas got called in.

**Exactly. I would expect Las Vegas.**

But North Las Vegas was too far north to get called. You had so many police there: UNLV, the airport, Metro, North Town, Henderson; you name it. If they have a uniform and a gun, they were showing up.

Halfway through this—and I'll get back on point, I'm sorry. I get distracted.

**Oh no, this is excellent.**

I don't know how much time had passed, but there was a group of guys screaming and yelling, laying over their friend. This is the one that got me the bloodiest. I came up. I walked over a fence that had already been knocked down. He's lying there. I'll try to describe this as best I can. I came up to him from his head. He's lying on his back. He's on his head. The gentleman to my right, the victim's right shoulder was pushing his head to the left. I said, "What are you doing?" He goes, "He keeps throwing up and he's not breathing." I said, "Watch this." I took his head and I put it in what we call the sniffing position or neutral position and he took a breath. I go, "Man, this is how it works."

Now, mind you, there is a lot of yelling and I'm going to cuss here in a minute, so I apologize. It's going to be an F bomb, but I'm trying to put myself into the situation, so I apologize. He's yelling me. He's like, "That's not how you fucking do it." He's like, "Push his head." And I go, "Stop." I go, "Are you a fucking paramedic?" And he goes, "No." I go, "Then shut the fuck up because I am." I'm squatting down. I'm in cowboy boots. I'm on uneven ground. I'm holding this guy's head straight, and he's still trying to shove it to the left. I go, "Look, if he goes to throw up, turn the whole body. Roll the whole body so he doesn't choke on

it because every time you turn his head, it cuts his windpipe off. You're going to kill your friend."

Then it happened. I regret the next forty-five seconds, but in the heat of the moment. The gentleman to the right—mind you, there's people all around—he takes his right hand, he face palms my face, and he just shoves me to the ground. My initial thought was, *everyone's pissed; it's super stressful right now*. This is what I remember about it. In my mind I was like, *don't do it; don't do it. Fuck it*. I stood up. I punched him. He blocked it. I hooked his mouth, his nose and his eye, I made a fist with it, I flipped him around and I start punching him in the face, and he's punching me over the shoulder. His friends separate us and they rip him away and they took him away from me. I'm like, "Fuck you." And he's like, "I'll fucking kill you." And I'm like, "Whatever. Bring it on." A total man-man moment, total, total livid moment, totally the wrong place for this.

This guy turns me around and just kind of like shakes me and he's like, "Hey, hey," and he slaps me in the head and he goes, "Are you really a paramedic?" I said, "I am." He goes, "Help my friend." I go, "I got you; I got you." I said, "I'm sorry." I go, "You keep him away from me." He goes, "Don't worry about him. He's gone." And so, *whew*.

I grabbed his head the second time and my right hand, my pinkie, my ring finger and my middle finger went into his brain. I found the hole in the back of his head. He was still breathing, just...I already knew. When you have brain matter, it's a lost cause. But he's still breathing and I have a job to do. That is my job in the real world is if they're breathing, keep them alive. I was to the point where I had already—he was pretty much one of the last people that I was...I didn't really have much more to go.



They're like, "What do you want us to do?" I'm like, "Listen, we're going to work together." There are six or seven people. I go, "Roll him onto his left shoulder." I kept his head still just like we do. We put them onto a red fence. There was the fencing that separated VIP yard; it was red fencing. Then you had the walkway and then you had more red fencing. It was just crowd control fencing. I probably used twenty-five of those that night as a stretcher. We put him on there. I'm like, "All right, let's go out the back."

We're carrying him and I'm holding his head, and the guy comes up to me. He's like, "Hey, man, I'm an EMT. How can I help?" I go, "Can you hold his head like this and make sure he keeps breathing?" He's like, "Yes." I go, "Here, take this. I've got to go." And so I continued on.

In the middle of all this chaos I got into a fistfight through emotion. To this day I wish I could find that guy and tell him that I love him; that I'm sorry; and just give him a big ole hug.

**But you had to do what you did at that point.**

I did. I needed to save his life and he was in my way. He was going to fight me and keep killing his friend because he didn't know what to do. I give him credit. To this day I give him credit for doing what he thought was right because he didn't know. But, damn it, if he didn't have to fight me. It got out of control very fast, but it calmed down very fast, too. His friends got involved. I don't know what I would have done because I was seeing red and I would have probably done things I regret; same with him. He might have killed me or I might have killed him. Who knows what could have happened? I don't know him or what training he has and he doesn't know me and what I've done in my life. But I'd love to give him a hug and just say I'm sorry and just tell him I love him and I'm glad he's still here, but I don't know that I'll ever meet that guy. That sucks.

**Did you hear about the Healing Garden?**

I have been there. Lauren, I know, helped build it. I've been there a few times. I have not been there since they've renovated it. I only live two miles away. I should probably get my butt down there.

**The Healing Garden, as you know, is controlled by the city, and this other agency called Get Outdoors Nevada, they help to run it. As our part, we started collecting oral interviews about two months after the event. We've put together a book with some of the quotes from oral histories and some of the professional photographs from the Healing Garden to try to start raising money to help the city support the Healing Garden. You've said a couple of things today—there was one very powerful thing you said about helping people that I might put in the book, so I want you to know that in advance.**

Sure.

**That there is a quote that I might use.**

I signed your paper. It's all good.

**That's correct. We are at the point that we already have probably a hundred pages done.**

**It's going to be a hundred-and-twenty-eight-page book. Nevada Press is doing it for us.**

Well, I'm glad I could be a part of it.

**I really, really appreciate—**

I haven't gone this in depth in a very long time.

**Well, I'm so glad you did today.**

I've told you more about my life than I have my therapist.

**I'm just happy because I just love the person you are and the way that you've lived your life.**

It's been crazy.

**Tell me about the girl that had gotten upset with you after the October One event. Is she okay now, the one that you lived with?**

Kris? Yes. Her name is Kris.

**Are you okay now?**

We are on speaking terms. We went several months without talking. She went the route of drugs and alcohol. Sex, drugs, and rock and roll is what I say. Then I went the route of womanizing, so I went to sex. But I have never done drugs and I'm not a big drinker.

**But this is after the event?**

Yes.

**Why do you think that happened?**

With me or with her?

**Either. Both.**

I went to what I'm comfortable with. To not—off the record.

**Is this not to think about it?**

Maybe. I don't know. Really I had a lot to deal with in eight weeks leading up to Route 91. Take Route 91 out of the picture and the one therapist is like, "Each one of those can break a man." Financial ruin. A breakup. Moving. You witnessed a guy die in a fire, which—whatever. No offense, but I'm a little more callus to some things than others. And then Route 91.

I was one hundred percent unconditionally in love with her. After Route 91, I dealt with the breakup first; I didn't really deal with Route 91, though I attended Route 91 events. I went every Wednesday night to Stoney's. But I didn't tell my story; I would just listen to other people's [stories]. I wanted to help others. But I went to several events, like in Lake Havasu.

But then Route 91 became so jaded with people; the survivors have become assholes.

Forgive me for saying that.

**In what way?**

I'm very deeply involved in several charities and there are people that are just jerks to other people about their recovery. We have people that have stolen money from charities, tens of thousands of dollars. You don't see this from Parkland. You don't see this from Nine Eleven.

**Well, we don't see it, but we don't know if it happened or not.**

Correct. But this is one that I am involved in and there's two particular names. North Las Vegas just canceled 24 Hours of Country. There was a concert; it was just canceled last week was the thing because the lady involved, she stole the money from a concert that was in October and everybody knew, do not allow this woman to put on a thing. Then there is another woman that started the charity in California and she's taken—this is allegedly, let me just put that out there—allegedly the MGM donated a hundred thousand dollars to their—

**Yes, we heard about that donation.**

—to their donation. That donation went to a charity that is run by the lawyer that is suing the MGM. That is what people don't know. There is such a conflict of interest with that particular charity. And then she pays herself eighty thousand dollars a year from her nonprofit and her sister gets sixty thousand dollars a year and the lawyer gets the money. They've raised over a million dollars and only donated back to survivors like a hundred thousand dollars; something like that. There are a lot of charities that people really need to do their research on. I am part of Route 91 Facebook pages and people are just rude to each other and they're just mean and there is some shady stuff going on.

**I'm sorry to hear this.**

I stepped away from Route 91 for several months. There are a couple of people that are deeply, heavily involved that are just amazing people. I went to the one-year anniversary of the park in Centennial and it was great. I met a lot of good people. About that time I met Lauren and then I met another girl, also, at the same time. That's a whole other story. But Lauren and I are still amazing friends. I actually told her that she was going to come in and join me today, but she said, "I think you'd do better one on one with her."

My goal moving forward is, September thirtieth, October first, at midnight—this is what I want to do; I just have to figure out how to make it happen—I'm going to start fifty-eight miles north and walk into town for twenty hours and arrive at the festival ground at 10:05 p.m., the first shots.

**Are you going to do that with a group of people?**

I'm doing it by myself. Now, I've told a couple of people. We have a firefighter in our fire department that he's a former NHL hockey player. He's friend with Coach Gallant and several Knights' guys. He's like, "As long as you don't make it something huge, I can get a couple of Knights to come out and walk with you for a couple of hours."

**That would be wonderful.**

My thing is I'm going to be walking down the Strip. I can't have a thousand people mobbing these guys, right?

**Where does it start? Where is fifty-eight miles out?**

I think it's around Valley of Fire. I'm starting north.

**Okay, so you would be coming that direction.**

The reason I'm doing that—there is a reason for this—it goes through all but one of the jurisdictions; North Las Vegas, which is where I work—I'm pretty biased to that—Las Vegas

and Clark County. I will miss Henderson and they were a big part of it. I'm trying to figure out how I can incorporate Henderson, but I really can't. It's just not going to happen.

**Yes, it can't.**

I can adjust my pace. I figure if I start at midnight, I'll walk down Las Vegas Boulevard, which goes almost to the Valley of Fire, believe it or not, because I run calls up there. I run calls to the Valley of Fire. I just have to figure out the fifty-eight-mile marker. I'm only going to let it be known about a week out and I'm going to say, "Will you sponsor me a dollar a mile?" Fifty-eight bucks; that's it. Fifty-eight miles, fifty-eight dollars. If I can get a hundred people to do that...

**Oh, you could easily do that.**

If I can get two hundred people—

**Because you've got my fifty-eight.**

—that's ten thousand dollars and the money is going to go to the children of the fifty-eight.

Neysa Tonks, her sister, Mynda Smith who I'm friends with—but this is the last year that the Children of the 58 Fund is going to be around. I'm not supposed to tell you that.

**Why?**

That's not supposed to be on there. You'll have to talk to Mynda Smith about it. But it will be around October first of 2019 for me to do this. It's a very legitimate reason, absolutely legitimate.

**Okay, good. I would expect it to be legitimate coming from her.**

Yes, a hundred percent. There is a reason for it and it totally makes sense. It totally makes sense. There were fifty-five kids and now there's fifty-three; well, two are currently going through college, so they've already started giving out money. Now, imagine when you're the very last

one and there is four million dollars in the thing. She's like, "So this one person gets..." She has to cut it off somewhere and that's where this is coming from.

**Now it makes sense.**

It does make sense. There is a financial goal. Hopefully I can add to that.

**Tell her that she can donate some to the Healing Garden at that point.**

Yes, if it gets to that point.

**Twenty-five years from now or whenever.**

Between you and I and off record, Children of 58 will probably be done by the end of 2019.

**She's done a fantastic job.**

Yes. I just met her about four months ago and I've been to several events with her. Another one of our friends, Kimbur, her son just passed away, and so there was a big funeral last week, and so a lot of us came together. Kimbur runs Warrior Wear and she's another good one to speak to.

**What is her name?**

Kimbur Presmyk.

**K-I-M-B-E-R?**

K-I-M-B-U-R. Let me double-check for you. K-I-M-B-U-R. P-R-E-S-M-Y-K, Presmyk. But she is still grieving her son's death, so just something to keep in mind.

**We won't contact her.**

She is the most legitimate charity person ever. Her boyfriend is a Metro cop. They give away—if you see survivors wearing a black shirt and it has these multicolored wings that come down, that is her design; that is her. It's called Warrior Wear dot com. That would be...She doesn't like to refer to herself as a survivor; she likes to refer to herself as a warrior because you survived war.

**That's exactly what it was.**

That was a raining hellfire for fifteen, sixteen minutes.

Since then, a little, quick thing also is recently I just went through MACTAC training with Metro.

**What is that?**

I can't remember the last two words, but it's Multi Assault Counter Terrorism...Action, Ability, Response or something like that. I can't remember what it is. But I will tell you what, I had to apply for it and now I'm on the MACTAC cadre and now we're going to teach RTF, Rescue Task Force, which is what we did that night.

To follow up on what I did, I did the body counting. From there, I went to the command post outside the Tropicana. It was between the Tropicana and Hooters across from MGM. There I got issued to be on Task Force 8. What a task force is—or Force Protection Team, I'm sorry, Force Pro, Force Protection Team; it's two Metro officers and four firefighters. You go in to get injured people out. If there is an active assailant, the Metro officers engage the assailant and we can get...and the firefighters leave and then we all just get out.

I just took a class on how to teach that with Metro and it was a four-day course. It's so cool. Things I've never done before. I have a whole new respect for cops, let me tell you. But it's something I want to continue to do as I move forward and teach this. It's an opportunity to teach outside of the fire department, too, if I can get the appropriate certificates and everything and it's something I'm going to continue to work for.

Moving forward, I don't do a lot with Route 91 right now. I just did a therapy session yesterday at the Resiliency Center. I did sign up for Victims of Crime. I do go to therapy. Here is the part that nobody wants to hear. In December I almost killed myself. I did put a gun in my mouth. I do not know what triggered me. I wish I could tell you. I broke down. It was the first



time I cried about Route 91 since the night of Route 91. I sat in my office. I woke up; it was like nine o'clock in the morning. I started bawling, just crying and crying and crying. I went and got my gun. And then something clicked and I'm like, *I've got to call somebody*. I tried calling my partner from work. He was at home. He didn't pick up. And I'm like, *oh, that's a sign; I've got to do it*. We have a peer support team on the fire department. I called my last guy I was going to call and he picked up and he talked to me for like thirty-five, forty minutes. He got me to a counselor and I've been seeing him since. I've never had another...

That's called suicidal ideation, not a suicide attempt because I didn't pull the trigger. I don't have suicidal thoughts. I've never had it. By definition, suicidal ideation is impulsive; you didn't think about it; you've never thought about it before and you've never thought about it since, but you've had a suicidal ideation, and so I did.

### **You still have your gun?**

Here's what's weird. I think I do. I can't find it. I have yet to—I went through MACTAC training and they handed me a gun and we had to do simulation rounds and we were firing at an active shooter and this and that. I'm like, *all right, I'm more comfortable with it*, this and that. I can't find my gun to save my life, no pun intended.

### **One of your buddies probably took it.**

Nobody's been at my house. I don't have roommates. I have two dogs. I don't know where I put it. I don't know if that's good or bad. But I've never thought about it since. Even if I did, obviously I can't find it. But it's never crossed my mind again.

### **But this is a thing that happens obviously because they have a name for it and they...**

Oh yes. It's not just trauma. It's anywhere in the world. It happens. People can have suicidal ideations and not have been through what we went through, just having a rough day or whatever.

**Are you doing yoga or anything like that?**

Oh God, I hurt my back so bad. Yoga, I did trauma recovery yoga yesterday. My back hurts so bad that I can't even walk straight today.

**You think it was because of the yoga or you just did it indirectly?**

Yes. I've been going to a massage therapist trying to release my back and I'm just struggling, so my back has just been really hurting. It's the one part of your body you use every day, so I can't get away from it. I have one of those massagers that heats up and you put it behind your back. I sit on that for about two hours and then for the next week everything is so sore and I'm like, *oh my gosh, I'm getting older; I can't keep pole vaulting*. But I'm trying to get back in the gym. I'd like to lose twenty pounds and just try to get my life in order.

**That's going to happen because you're so dedicated to physical fitness.**

I'm just so busy.

**Yes, but you'll make time for that.**

I will. I make time for everything, yes. I named my company Irons in the Fire Apparel because I always have so many irons in the fire.

**That's a good name.**

I just stay busy and I have a bunch of stuff to do today when I get home. I'm trying to clean out my garage so I can move my office and everything out into the garage. It is just one thing after another.

**You don't park your cars in there?**

No. That's another thing I did and I have no money for it. I spent twenty-five thousand dollars and I rebuilt a 1974 Ford F100 and I was going to lift it and wrap it and make it a Route 91 tribute truck so that when people see it they could be like, *I love that guy*. They can stop me and

talk to me. I got it running. It has four hundred and fifty horsepower. It's super-fast. It's super-awesome. But it's not lifted and it's not wrapped because I can't afford it. It's very, very, very expensive. Over the next couple of years I'll continue to work on it. If I decide to continue with the wrap, I will, but if not it's okay. But I had good intentions when I started. We'll see.

That's me; that's Greg Koehler, for the majority of it. There is more, but it's not worth it.

**Thank you. This is fabulous.**

But I wanted you to know who I was and how I got to why I stayed because people are like, why did you stay?

**Oh, I expected you to.**

I'm like, I don't know; it just was the right thing to do.

**Yes, I expected you to. You're an Eagle Scout.**

People ask me and I say I would do it again, without a doubt. I wouldn't change a thing other than the obvious; it should have never happened. But assuming that I could go back in history, if I could do anything differently, I would help more people.

**You wouldn't have had that fight with that guy.**

No. I would just change things. I would stay—maybe I wouldn't bounce around so much. I would stay with particular people maybe a little bit longer.

**I don't think you should second-guess that part.**

Oh man. Man, it's tough sometimes. I wonder what I could have done differently.

**I think you did more than your share.**

I can't believe I wasn't shot.

**Exactly, me either.**

Because the bar I hid under literally is only like a two-inch bar and it was on the fence, right? When I got down I was still...All he had to do from six hundred feet away was breathe differently, just move the gun just a little bit, and it would have caught me in the chest or in the head.

**It wasn't meant for you to. What you did was what was meant for you to do that night.**

Earle is my guardian angel, I swear to God. I've often said I have more respect for my grandfather than I do almost any living person other than my mom and my dad and my brother, from the stories my mom told me. He would stop on the side of the road and help people. Well, I've stopped on I-15 coming back from California twice now. I've had to land a helicopter for car accidents. I worked with San Bernardino Fire Department twice to get people extricated out of a car. I did CPR on a guy. I was headed to a concert, but I came across this accident and I did CPR on this guy for twenty minutes on I-15 northbound underneath the Russell overpass because the fire department got dispatched to the overpass, not the underpass. By the time they started getting there, the traffic was so backed up. I was doing just doing CPR and doing CPR and doing CPR. This guy kept shocking me; he had an internal defibrillator and he kept shocking my hand. Man, whew, that will wake you up, I tell you what. Then I'm that guy; I will stop and help people. I stopped to make sure everyone was okay on a car fire just recently on the way to California. I don't mind. When it's my day, it's my day. It'll...whatever.

**This is life. That's the way it's supposed to happen.**

Yes. There is no guarantees.

**Thank you so much.**

No problem.

**I really, really appreciate this. [End of recorded interview]**