

KozulNan\_20200621\_Part2\_transcript

LIZ BRADBURY: So I have to say, with this Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center and the Trexler Library at Muhlenberg College will collaborate on this "40 Years of Public Health Experiences in the Lehigh Valley LGBT Community: Collecting and Curating Local LGBT Health Experiences from HIV/AIDS to COVID-19." My name is Liz Bradbury and I'm here with Nan Kozul to talk to her about her experiences in the Lehigh Valley LGBT community during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic as a part of the Lehigh Valley LGBT Community Archive. [Pause it?] here, hold on a minute. Okay. And thank you so much for your willingness to speak to us again. This is part two of Nan Kozul's interview, there were some technical difficulties the first time. So you can see part one that I've already uploaded. So to start, Nan, can you please give us [00:01:00] your full name and spell it for me?

NAN KOZUL: Nan Kozul. It's N-a-n K-o-z-u-l.

LB: And will you please share your birthdate?

NK: Five fifteen fifty-eight.

LB: Okay. Do you consent to this interview today?

NK: Yes.

LB: Do you consent to having this interview being transcribed, digitized, and made publicly available online in searchable formats?

NK: Yes.

LB: Do you consent to the LGBT Archive using your interview for educational purposes in other formats, including films, articles, websites, presentations, and other formats?

NK: Yes.

LB: Do you understand that you have thirty days after the electronic delivery of the transcript to review your interview and identify any parts you would like to delete and/or withdraw from the project?

NK: Yes.

LB: Okay. So we started talking before, so once again this is the second part, this is part two, [00:02:00] of Nan Kozul's interview of talking about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the nineteen eighties and nineties. So part one is already available and I think in part one we were talking a lot about -- well, we were talking about in general a lot of things, about some of the things you were doing and where you were working and people that you knew. And since we talked, because of those surprise technical difficulties, have you thought anymore about that? Like, I thought I should have said these things, or did it make you think

about those things more? I think it was -- what do you think?

NK: Well, I realized that AIDS wasn't a quick killer. Like I saw my friends who wound up with AIDS, they kind of -- it went slowly. I just remember some of my friends just kind of like losing weight, and just getting sickly, but it wasn't fast. It was just long. [00:03:00] And what was interesting, actually one thing that I did think about was I remember reading an article in the eighties, in *The New York Times* about reiki. And how a lot of reiki practitioners were working on AIDS patients in New York City and finding that it really helped. Which actually catapulted me into wanting to become a reiki master and pursue reiki. And I did work on a few people, which was really cool, and it did work. It just calmed them. It wasn't a -- no one was miraculously healed, it was just more of a comforting, calming, that some of my friends felt.

LB: What kind of [00:04:00] -- you were talking a lot about all the different things that happened with the bars and I think a universal theme of talking about HIV/AIDS with regard to the Lehigh Valley in the eighties is really the involvement with the bars. But you were talking about some people that you really knew that were sick and people who

were working through these things too. And did you want to talk any more about some of those folks that you knew, or things that you remembered about them, or what it was like then that people in the future could know?

NK: Well, the friends that I have now that are still positive, that are still here living, they just live life at the fullest. Danny, I think you know Danny, [00:05:00] he just was a wild and crazy guy in the eighties (laughs), and he still is today. But him and his partner have been together, oof, probably thirty-some years. And both are HIV but their constitution and their will to live, it's awesome. And my friend Pete, he's just amazing. I'm so glad we got to a point where we were able to find a cure somewhat, to be able to keep this HIV from killing so many people. It is, it's such a relief because I think I would have lost a lot more friends had that not happened.

[00:06:00] I think that's it as far as from what I remember of my friends that are still here today.

LB: What do you think -- for a lot of people at that time, and there were loads of deaths and it was really terrible in those days, and then some people didn't die and then some people -- what do you think was the difference there? What was it? What do you think?

NK: That's a really good question, Liz. I used to wonder why some people deteriorated at a much quicker time than others. It's interesting. About -- let's see, maybe ten years ago [00:07:00] I was at Candida's and a friend of mine that -- he started to lose weight. He was always healthy and I never knew that he was positive. And he actually came up to the bar and he had a bag and he had a port. And one of the -- the IV line had popped out and I saw it and he put it back in and he said, "oh, man" and he took me to the corner of the bar. We were sitting at a table and he was like, "you know, Nan, I actually have AIDS." And I'm like, "wow, I never knew that about you." Because he looked so healthy. And he said, "well, right now I have pneumonia and a nasty infection, but I have this bag and this port and it's really helping me a lot." And I'm like, "well, that's good. And hopefully [00:08:00] it'll knock it out." But one of the things that unfortunately as AIDS -- you know, as people that carry HIV, as it progresses, I think eventually it just wears on your organs and he wound up passing away maybe six or seven months later. But I was shocked. I had no clue. He kept that very private and he hadn't -- I mean, I'm sure other people knew but he had never said anything to me. So when he talked to me about it I was shocked because he always

looked healthy, he was always fun and we always had a lot of fun together. Picnics and stuff like that. But I think that -- I can't imagine that for anyone that was diagnosed in the eighties that has to take that medication for prolonged use, [00:09:00] inevitably I'm sure that it takes a toll on your liver and your kidneys and overall.

LB: Some people might not know what a port is. (inaudible)

NK: A port is typically a catheter that's put in a larger vein for quicker access for medications. So that's what a port is. It's a different type of catheter that IV medicine can be administered.

LB: I was talking to Larry Kleppinger and at the end of the interview he started to tell me about all the wacky things that two bars did to each other.

NK: Oh, my God.

LB: Do you remember any of those? [laughter] [00:10:00] I was talking to Trish about this and he was talking about all these crazy things. And then what ultimately happened was Candida's said okay, now we've got to do something. We've got to make this pay, in effect. So talk about that a little bit, what do you think?

NK: (laughs) That was just --

LB: The memories of --

NK: I want to tell you, Liz, it was so (laughs) -- just the things we did to each other were -- I can actually hear Larry laughing right now because he has such a boisterous laugh. And the things that him and the other bartenders would do to Dina's staff, like us, it was so dastardly. (laughs) It was so funny. The one Sunday afternoon I bartended, and I always bartended on Sunday afternoon. And I opened the bar up. And at two o'clock no customers would be in there. So I opened the bar up and [00:11:00] Dina used to have "Candida's" by Tony Orlando and Dawn in the jukebox. It was a little forty-five RPM that he had in the jukebox. And we had a key into the jukebox. Well, he and a couple other guys came in. And I'm like, "hey," and they just had this look on their face, and I'm like, "what are you guys doing?" And with that they took a chair, and they put it in the middle of the dance floor. And I'm like, "what are you guys doing?" And they're like, "come here, Nan." (laughs) And I'm like, "do I have a choice?" And they're like, "no." And I sat on the chair and they tied me to the chair. (laughs) And they went to the jukebox and stole "Candida," the record, and they left me there, tied up. And I'm sitting there. Dina can't hear me, so (laughs) I'm sitting there, I'm like, "oh, my gosh, a customer's going to walk in and think that we were robbed."

And who walked in [00:12:00] but Linda Mason. So Linda walks in and she goes, "what are you doing?" (laughs) And I'm like, "untie me" (laughs). And it was just the funniest thing. And then one night we went commando and Dean decided we were going to Silly String the Stonewall. We went one night and oh, my gosh. We busted in the front doors with Silly String and just annihilated everyone that was sitting around the bar. It was -- I want to tell you, Liz, those were some of the greatest times of just having just so much fun. And all for a good cause, just to eventually come down to that point where everyone got together and created FACT. And then to have the games at Rainbow Mountain. Everyone took it so seriously for a number of reasons: for competition and to win, but also to know that [00:13:00] the end result was we were getting money and creating something to help people. So it was really cool.

LB: Did you work at the games or did you have a table? What was that like?

NK: The games were -- (laughs) they came up with different things like drag racing, "drag" racing where they had to put on a hat -- it was hysterical. So there was a start and end. And there were all different kind of things, whether it was in the pool or whether it was out in the



grass, but I know the one year that I was going to compete on Dina's team and I actually dislocated my ankle and broke my foot. So I was in a cast so I couldn't do anything. But it was so funny because Larry Kleppinger sent me a picture [00:14:00] of me on my crutches at the games. He had a picture of me. And I'm like, "oh, my gosh."

(laughs) It was so bizarre. But it was neat. And then there was always a trophy at the end. And it was just fun. It was so meaningful at the time because we were setting a precedent for the future. I think that young people today get it. Back in the eighties there was a lot of promiscuity, like crazy stuff. And the HIV epidemic really curbed it. I just remember seeing a lot less traffic and stuff like that coming in and out [00:15:00] of the bar.

LB: How long do you think it took for people to understand that there was a tie between promiscuity and getting the disease and then passing it around? This is a relatively small community so one would think that if people didn't understand how to get it, if somebody had been in New York, they got infected, they came back, that it could really go through the community? Was there that kind of feeling about that?

NK: Another awesome question, Liz. Just from what I saw, I thought it took quite a few years until it really made its

presence known that guys were becoming positive.

[00:16:00] In the beginning I remember thinking in my head it was going to stop. (laughs) And it didn't. It went on for awhile. It took years until it really rooted itself and guys realized, wow, we have to stop. That's --

LB: Was there a time when somebody stood up and said, "look, this is how we're getting it, we have to stop doing this"?

NK: I didn't see that. I just saw where people just -- they would just come in and drink and that traffic, going in and out of the bar, that just really slowed down. And people came in and stayed and drank and then left.

LB: I think you have to explain what you mean by that.

NK: Oh, well (laughs). [00:17:00] It was new to me. Hell, I never saw women do that (laughs) but guys would just hook up. I remember being behind the bar and seeing a guy nod and (laughs) and they would talk and they would leave and they would go out and whatever they did. And then they would come back in. And sometimes -- I know of one guy that came into the bar, he would do it a lot. I mean, I used to -- I know there were times I wanted to say, "would you stop already? Do you get what you're doing?" But it's not my business. And it's his life, if he chooses to live his life like that he did. Sweet guy but [whistles] he

just was very frisky, you know. (laughs) [00:18:00] Just to describe that, I don't know. (laughs)

LB: At times when people would say, "I can't believe this guy never got it" because he was so promiscuous, and then other people -- like Dave Moyer was saying, people who had one partner and would become positive. And I had people say to me, "I can't believe I didn't get this." I can't either.

NK: I know. Sometimes I just -- yeah. I don't understand it either. I just remember quite a few times in the eighties going to house parties and guys would be throwing the house parties. And it was men and women there but I walked into a room one time and there on TV was porn. Like male porn. And I'm like, "wow." (laughs) [00:19:00] I was just so new to this whole type of lifestyle. But that's how it was back then. I was just watching a really interesting documentary on Netflix about gay porn and how prominent it was in the eighties. And it really was. It was crazy. Watching that brought back memories of going to some house parties and them having that on TV and I'm thinking, "by gosh, why would you have that playing in an afternoon?" (laughs) But that's just how the lifestyle was back then.

LB: Yeah, I don't think you would have found that at a lesbian house party. I think that's true.

NK: (laughs) Exactly. (laughs) [00:20:00]

LB: I wanted to talk about what that kind of stuff that was happening and there were people that were in. So I'm trying to -- suddenly aware that there was an issue. And I think I asked you before about people that were -- everybody stepped up. I think people really stepped up. LGBT people suddenly thought, okay, this is about us. We have to take care of each other. And people started to really take care of each other, especially when families were ostracizing their children, their sons who were HIV positive. Not very many in those days got HIV in our community I don't think. I don't know. Did you know any women who were HIV positive that you were aware of?

NK: No, even though I have to tell you, [00:21:00] I work in a doctor's office and I marvel at the amount of women that are HIV now. Just having me go into their -- read their history with the patients. I marvel at how many women are positive today. Because you didn't see that in the eighties.

LB: But I guess what I was getting at -- and that's an interesting thing -- but what I was getting at was, did you know people that were taking care of other people, had a reputation that that person has taken this person into their house. Folks like that that you were friends --?

NK: Yeah, I'm trying to think if I knew of anyone that did that. I had taken in Don Horton but he had lymphoma. [00:22:00] But I'm trying to think of anyone that was positive. You know, I remember the Stonewall was so -- the older guys, like Dave Moyer, all those guys that frequented, they were really big caretakers. They were involved in that aspect of caretaking. And I know Markie Cummings. Markie helped a lot with -- she worked at the state but she really worked with Larry in helping people get support and funding just to help to live.

LB: And that was one of the reasons that FACT started up was to help people finance (inaudible). Because that wasn't -- in fact, I don't know that people really [00:23:00] understand that FACT wasn't around to raise money for research or something. It was direct aid.

NK: Direct aid. Absolutely, Liz. It was directly to help them. I remember when FACT first started out I just vaguely remember people getting groceries for people that were positive, taking them to doctor's appointments, stuff like that. The simplest acts that was taken care of which was awesome because it's what was needed. When there was -- I think it was such a hush-hush thing when someone was positive because people were so afraid. Just like COVID-19. People are so afraid of being around with

someone that's positive. Like me going to the dentist and getting my teeth cleaned and them donning gowns and masks. They didn't know [00:24:00] and there was such a fear that people that wound up being positive were really shunned if they came forward. And that was just heartbreaking.

LB: And there was a time -- were you aware of a time where people really thought if you just went into a gay bar, you just walked around people, or you might have been in the restroom. People thought you could get it from toilet seats, do you remember that?

NK: Yeah, some of it was such nonsense with how you could catch AIDS. It was idiotic. It was a blood-borne thing. And I was -- it was transmission through blood. So I remember [00:25:00] Johnny, this one guy that lived in Philly, we all kissed him. And it wasn't like, oh boy, now we're going to get AIDS. It was a shame and I think that was a huge stigma in the Valley. People didn't walk into a gay bar because I'm sure that hung in their minds, like ooh, you'd better watch it because you can get AIDS. And like you said, like a toilet seat. Like wow. It was the fear. It just went -- it was out of control. It had to be tough for people that were positive.

LB: There was a time that people really didn't know where it came from but too much information -- one of the whole

things about HIV/AIDS and the government and everything is that no one spoke about it publicly in the government for about, [00:26:00] well, some of the guys were saying -- I think it was Larry who was saying he was really angry at the government for not saying anything about it until about nineteen eighty-eight, nineteen eighty-seven. Here it had been eight -- seven, eight years, and one thing about we didn't have social media, so we didn't have any way to share information, even though people will say disparaging things about the way things are today, we do really get information today. It's not like COVID-19 that nobody really knows where it came from, which is what happened in the flu epidemic of nineteen-eighteen. People didn't really know what to do about it. And I think at the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, at the very beginning, people like Trish knew. Health care professionals really had no idea where it was coming from or how people got it. And they wouldn't talk about it, too. [00:27:00] Were you seeing that kind of thing? There must have been a changed time where people were saying, "okay, look, this is how you get it. You get it from having anal sex. That's why you have to wear condoms." It must have been uncommon.

NK: Yeah, I think that happened in the later eighties, where that actually came into fruition when they were just

stating that. Rachel Maddow interviewed the scientist who came up with the cure for HIV and he was really, really cool to listen to because he was so tenacious. [00:28:00] He worked around the clock trying to figure out a cure because he knew that it would wipe out millions if let go. And we're so blessed that we had that scientist just be so driven to find that cure.

LB: I don't know if it's a cure.

NK: Well, it's not a cure, but it --

LB: It keeps people from dying, let's put it that way.

NK: Right. It keeps the count down. Yeah.

LB: There must be twenty people dying at the beginning of the epidemic in six months and then improving forty years (inaudible).

NK: I'm just curious, my friends that are HIV today, how they'll fare [00:29:00] moving forward. Some of them are in their sixties, early-mid sixties, late sixties, and they're still plugging along (laughs) so it's really awesome to know that that medication was able to keep the numbers down that they're not symptomatic.

LB: When people were dying -- I think I was asking you this before -- were those people that you knew? Like one person I was interviewing was talking about how having to go to



all those funerals, it just got to be too much. It was so hard to keep doing that. Do you have a memory of that?

NK: You know, I don't. I just remember people getting -- some of the guys getting sicker, becoming more frail, and [00:30:00] then I didn't see them anymore. And that's how they -- because I was very active in the bar scene, working pretty much fulltime at the bar. So I would see guys coming in that were positive and as they became more ill they came in less and less and less and then they were replaced by new people. The traffic was always busy because in the eighties you didn't have straight bars that accepted gay people. Not like today where you can go into pretty much any straight bar and have fun. But back in the eighties you stuck to your bar (laughs). You stuck to the gay bars where you could feel safe. But I don't remember that. [00:31:00] I definitely remember people coming into the bar and saying this person died, or that person died, and I'm like, wow.

LB: What were the other bars? There was Jeff's. Tell me about Jeff's. I went to Jeff's maybe all of one time and then it was kind of not there. I think I came to the Lehigh Valley in nineteen eighty-seven so I think I went one time. And then I met Trish and we weren't really hitting bars but it was right then when we met. But what was that bar? I

don't think it was there much longer after nineteen eighty-seven or eight. Is that true?

NK: No. That's funny because I actually (laughs) googled it because I was curious, like, wow, when did Jeff close his bar? Because I couldn't remember when he closed it. I know it was up for [00:32:00] eighty-eight, eighty-nine, and then it closed. And then Diamonds opened up in ninety-two I think. So the only bars -- and Jeff's City Line Pub was frequented by guys and girls. It was a mixed bar. But Candida's and Stonewall were primarily gay men with a splattering of women here and there.

LB: I think the first or second time I went to Candida's Suzanne Westenhoefer was doing a show. Do you remember that? You were probably there I'm sure. Everyone was there. Every woman in the -- that was -- I don't think I was even involved in the community yet then, I didn't really start being involved [00:33:00] until nineteen ninety-four. It was before ninety-four I'm pretty sure.  
(inaudible)

NK: What's that?

LB: That was one of the best nights I've ever had when I was involved in that kind of stuff. (inaudible)

NK: What?

LB: Was she there more than once?

NK: I don't know. I know that she was at Dina's bar and I know that she was at Diamonds. And Lea DeLaria. But I can't remember if she was. Now, I left Candida's in eighty-eight and I came back in nineteen-ninety. Yeah, because I think that's when I worked at Jeff's City Line Pub. But Suzanne Westenhoefer, she's still around. I've [00:34:00] watched some of --

LB: [We're Facebook friends?].

NK: Pardon?

LB: She's my Facebook friend.

NK: Is she? (laughs)

LB: Yeah.

NK (laughs) That's awesome.

LB: She was famous then. She was famous. For some reason she was doing a gig where there were three other lesbian comedians and there were so many people in the bar. So many lesbians. There must have been two-hundred women in the bar. I think we were just standing up for an hour and a half or something. That was something.

NK: (laughs) It's crazy. Dina's bar was so -- Candida's was a small bar but I just remember how much of a family -- like we were talking. It was such a family. We did such things [00:35:00] in that bar that were just so crazy. Like just fun things that it would be wall to wall people. Like you

could not move. And it was just amazing. And we accepted everybody. And that's what was so great about Candida's. And even during that time when HIV was prominent there was never anyone that was shunned. And that's the beauty of what gay people are about because we are so loving and so accepting, do you know what I mean?

LB: Yeah, I do.

NK: And it created a nurturing place that people knew that they could come and they would be loved.

LB: Did you ever have a circumstance -- and this happened to me -- a circumstance where you [00:36:00] were talking to somebody about HIV who was not in the know and they said negative things about it and you said, "that's not true." That kind of thing. Did that ever happen to you, where people --?

NK: Not in the bar.

LB: I mean anytime in your experience.

NK: Oh, in anytime? Oh, yeah. (laughs) People were just -- I mean, before they came out with the -- about it being transferred through anal sex, they were -- I would hear people say, "no, you can get it from spit, you can get it from kissing, you can get it from touching." And I'm like, "no, you can't. If that was the case, we'd all be HIV." You know what I mean? Sometimes it's just common sense.

But again, fear just ruled a lot of people. Especially straight people. [00:37:00]

LB: Do you remember -- I think right when Clinton was first elected, so that was into the nineties, but there was a letter sent that went out to every person in the United States that explained where you got HIV and why. And it was to remove stigma, to make people understand that you couldn't just get it. You couldn't fire somebody for being HIV positive. That was included in the Civil Rights Act. And I remember my father was a very smart man, very, very smart man. Absolutely did not know anything about -- and when he gets the letter, I said, "well, did you read the letter?" And he said, "well, yeah, how would I even know this?" And I'm like, "how would you know this? I've known it for five years already." And it wasn't just because I was --

NK: Wow.

LB: -- and he was -- I mean, this was a guy who did *The New York Times* crossword puzzle every day and he still had no idea. [00:38:00] He thought you could get it at the salad bar or something like that. And I think that we as people who are part of the LGBT community don't always understand how out of the know so many people were. That people should have known better and you just -- how could you not

know this? And one time, it's hard to not be. Did you think there was a circumstance where people were judgmental when people got it and they'd say -- did you ever find people in the community being judgmental of each other if people --?

NK: Actually, I didn't, and that, to me, I thought that was really beautiful that no one judged anybody. At least I didn't find that. Bartending at Candida's I didn't. [00:39:00] Or even the Stonewall. It was just a happy place to go to. And you had those interjections of sadness when someone was positive or someone passed away. But for the most part, the gay bars in Lehigh Valley were just an escape for people to just meet where they knew that it was like-minded and they would be liked and cared for and talked to, where you didn't feel lonely in your life if you were. You could go to the gay bar and feel safe.

LB: We're coming down to a little bit of time left because we did the first part, so since this is part two and you said some great, really interesting things in part one.

[00:40:00] Was there anything else that you thought of or you said to Barb, "hey, I forgot to talk about this, this is something that I've thought of since we talked."

NK: Well, I remembered after we were done talking, I said to Barb, wow, I forgot to tell Liz about the *New York Times*

article about the reiki because in the eighties it was all about being spiritual (laughs) and just tapping into your quiet place and reiki was a great modality. People didn't understand it but I thought it was really progressive for *The New York Times* to have such a big article and how impacted a lot of the gay men and giving them a moment of peace or calm by just administering reiki to them. That was really awesome. But that's I thought of [00:41:00] after we broke the last time. But I feel so blessed to be able to be a part -- remember, I said to Dina I would never want to redo the eighties because there were some sad times but there were so many good times. And I think it was because we were all interconnected. We all felt safe. What's really funny is because I bartended in the gay bars for so many years, I mean I bartended at the Stonewall, I bartended at Candida's and Jeff's City Line Pub, 13<sup>th</sup> Street Pub in Easton, I mean I tended Rainbow Mountain, I went down to New Hope and I bartended there sometimes. And so being in that community, it allowed me to just be myself and just have fun. [00:42:00] And I remember (laughs) finally actually moving. I wound up managing a straight bar that was the sister to the Chicken Lounge. It was Marble's down in Phillipsburg. And it was the first time that I was out of my gay element. And I didn't realize

that when you're in that, working in a gay bar and feeling so safe around men, you're going to feel safe that men aren't going to hit on you if you call them "hon" or "dear." And that was a huge shift for me because all of a sudden I found guys treating me differently. And I'm like, what is this. And I forgot. When you're around gay men you feel safe (laughs) because there's no pretense there. It's interesting.

LB: I remember one time Trish and I were leaving Candida's [00:43:00] and something happened. We had a friend, Judy Art, who lives right around the corner. She still lives there, right around the corner from Candida's. Trish had to go in and talk to her and then there was some kids that were giving us a hard time. And guys came out of the bar and they were there for us in about two seconds. And it is true. But there is one other thing that we have to remember about the eighties besides all of that stuff that made it so much fun. And it was because we were young.  
(laughs)

NK: Yeah, that's true. (laughs)

LB: We weren't in our sixties then. We were --

NK: Nope, no we weren't. (laughs)

LB: The bars that are like that -- there's no bars that are like that anymore.



NK: Not anymore. You know, Liz, this is a true story. I was bartending one Sunday afternoon, and it was probably [00:44:00] eighty-seven, eighty-eight. I was bartending and these three guys came in. Older, like middle-aged guys. And they sat at the bar so I was talking to them, and they were like, "why are you friendly to us?" And I'm like, "what do you mean?" And they were like, "well, why are you nice to us?" And I'm like, "well, why wouldn't I be nice to you? Where are you from?" And they said, "well, we're from Connecticut, and in Connecticut, there's women's bars and men's bars, and women don't talk to us gay men." And I'm like, "well, that's not how it is in the Lehigh Valley." (laughs) "Why would you discriminate, we're already discriminated against through sex, like men and women. Why would there be a division?" I said, "no, that's not how we are in the Lehigh Valley. We all work together." And they were like, "wow." They were blown away by that.

LB: Do you think [00:45:00] that that's because -- I think there was a big difference between the seventies and the eighties in terms of the division between men's bars -- men's and women's bars -- because I went to a woman's bar. And I talk about this all the time and now I can't think of the name. It's in Baltimore and it was --

NK: In New York?

LB: Club Mitchell. It was in Baltimore. And this was a bar that would not allow men in unless they knew the men. And there was a reason for that because in the seventies there was guys, straight guys would come in and really cause problems for the women. I mean, really scary problems for the women.

NK: Wow.

LB: So if they knew gay men they would let them come in. But because of the AIDS epidemic and because of those circumstances, [00:46:00] women who were lesbians really rose to help and support the gay men community.

NK: I agree. I agree totally, Liz. I'm with you on that. And it helped, too, that when Dina opened her bar she was so interconnected with so many of the older gay men, like the old guys (laughs) that it created such a great foundation. It was just natural. And when HIV rose and came to prominence we all just banded together and took care of each other.

LB: Because a lot of people who were involved with this FACT events, may not have been the board of FACT, but the FACT events, were women too. They were doing (inaudible), don't you think? [00:47:00] Dina was so involved in that.

NK: Sure she was. And then you have Gail Hoover, she was a realtor forever. So there was all those ties into everybody all just getting together to do the best they could to raise as much money as they could.

LB: Well, great. So anything else that you want to toss in there?

NK: You know, Liz, thanks for giving me this opportunity. I don't know how much I shared, (laughs) whether was -- (inaudible) but it was a lot of fun. And just even bringing up Larry Kleppinger's name just brings back such -- my heart is just filled with joy because that man is just a hoot and a half. He was just so much fun. And he's just such a great guy. But I appreciate [00:48:00] it, Liz.

LB: One of the things that people need to understand, I think, is that in the nineteen-eighties, while we did have just the beginnings of some other groups that weren't bar-oriented, like we had GLOSS, that sports group, and Force was kind of starting up, and MCC had been going for awhile. And then we had the League -- Gay and Lesbian Task -- or Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Task Force. And then just after that we started PA-GALA. And there had been Le-Hi-Ho, which had been both men and women. But really in the eighties, the only thing that was really going in the

eighties was the bars. And if the bars hadn't existed, nothing else would have come out of that because that's where people started out where they started to make --

NK: Wow. That's so true. When did your Valley Press come out, when did that come out?

LB: Valley Gay Press, we started the Valley Gay Press [00:49:00] in nineteen-- so Trish and I met Steve Black in nineteen ninety-four and we began to work on political stuff with him that year. I think we started the Valley Gay Press in nineteen ninety-eight. So it wasn't until ninety-eight. We were doing voter's guide information for about three years but he had been -- we sort of knew him, we knew him from the Pride Festival. We met him at the first Pride Festival. But at the same time there was that effort to start the Gay and Lesbian Task Force that was running in the Lehigh Valley for a little while. But what happened with that was that people tended to be -- there was no focus of it. And there was no -- I think that people just ended up to be -- because this is the point. FACT had an extraordinary [00:50:00] focus. Everybody knew what had to be done and they did it. But for general stuff, even Le-Hi-Ho became AIDS Services Center because people had to deal with AIDS. They had to deal. But also that really codified our folks together. It made us all

begin to work together. And the very first thing that Trish and I did that was part of the LGBT life here, because we've been here since eighty-seven together, was that we went to an event that was put on by FACT, that if you went that flamingo ice cream place that some of the money would go to -- and the Red Ribbon Restaurant thing. They were doing that and all of those things were happening at the very beginning of FACT. [00:51:00] They were doing lots of different events and we got involved with that. But out of the bars also grew that thing of going to the March on Washington in nineteen ninety-three because the bars organized the buses. We went on our own and people came back and said now we have to have the Pride Festival. And I think everything changed because people could see that the organizational circumstances of FACT could happen. That people could do this and that there were a lot of people who were willing to be involved. And that really came out of the bars' response to AIDS. I think that's really --

NK: Yeah, you're right. They truly were the foundation of everything getting started. At least getting the community involved where everyone met. Wow, that's so true. [00:52:00] I just remember when you would bring in your newsletters from the Gay -- how quickly they would go.

People just waited for them to come in (laughs) and then they'd scarf 'em and they were gone. (laughs) Yeah.

LB: Well, I'm going to thank you again, and I'm just going to turn this off since we're okay.

NK: Okay.

LB: I'm going to turn this off and I'm going to turn off the recording, but thank you again, Nan. This has just been --

NK: Thanks so much, Liz. (laughs)

LB: I'm going to turn off the -- no, I have to turn off -- oh, it says stop.

END OF AUDIO FILE