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MARY FOLTZ: [00:00:03] My name is Mary Foltz and I'm here today with Liz Bradbury to talk about her life and experiences in LGBT organizations in the Lehigh Valley, as a part of the Lehigh Valley LGBT Community Oral History Project. Our project has funding from the Lehigh Valley Engaged Humanities Consortium, and we're meeting on Zoom because there's a pandemic going on. Today is July 2, 2020. And I wanted to start by saying Liz, thank you so much for your willingness to speak with me today.

LIZ BRADBURY: I am so glad to be here. I'm raring to go.

MF: I'm so glad you're here too. So, just to start, could you please state your full name and spell it for me?

LB: My full name is Elizabeth Ann Bradbury. E-L-I-Z-A-B-E-T-H A-N-N B-R-A-D-B-U-R-Y.

MF: Thank you. And will you please share your birth date?

LB: [00:01:00] 6/15/57.

MF: Prior to this interview we talked a little bit about consent and I'm just going to ask you a few questions about the consenting to this interview, so the first one, really basic, do you consent to this interview today?

LB: Yes!

MF: And do you consent to having this interview transcribed, digitized, and made publicly available in online formats?

LB: Yes!

MF: Do you consent to the LGBT Community Archive using your interview for educational purposes in other formats, including films, articles, websites, presentations, and whatever else might come along?

LB: Yes!

MF: And do you understand that you will have 30 days after the electronic delivery of the transcript to review the interview, identify parts that you want to delete, or withdraw the interview from the project?

LB: Yes.

MF: Okay. Wonderful! So, we'll go ahead and start the interview, and I'm wondering Liz, if [00:02:00] would you mind telling me a little bit about the early years of your life?

LB: Nope. (laughs) I am perfectly willing to do that, but I really prefer to talk more about right now. I'll talk about that another time, because, you know, my life is so fascinating, I don't think it's drastically different than many other privileged young people, white young people in Connecticut in the 1960s, but I do want to talk about, I want to start by talking about what happened when we started to work on activism, LGBT activism, here in the Lehigh Valley, and when I met Patricia Sullivan, Trish

Sullivan, my wonderful beloved partner 33 years ago, and talk about how we worked with other people in the community to further HIV/AIDS work and, but particularly LGBT civil rights work [00:03:00] and stuff like that. So, should I just do it (laughs)?

MF: I will follow your lead!

LB: Oh, okay (laughs). So, Trish and I met in 1987, and we fell in love in 1988, and we made plans as to how we could live together. She was living in Eastern New York, outside of New York City, and I was living here in Allentown. I had just moved here to Allentown in 1987. And so, finally we decided that it would be the best plan, she was going to retire early from her job, to move here to Allentown, so, and to do some things to be able to sustain ourselves. And so we moved into a rowhouse in Allentown that I had already owned, and after about six years we realized although we had LGBT friends, we had gay and lesbian friends that we had met in the community, we didn't feel like we were [00:04:00] doing enough activism to support Civil Rights. And both of us really were very firm about being out, and being outspoken, and working for the rights of the LGBT community. We frequently had said in the past, you know, we work for ourselves, and our parents are dead, so what the heck? I mean, what's the worst thing that could happen

to us? Nobody, even at that point some of our family was still alive, but our family was supportive. We worked for ourselves; we weren't going to lose our job. We would often say, like, how could we expect other people to be out if we weren't 100 percent out? So, we started to really do out activism right away. And so, one of the things that happened was that in 1993, we had done a little bit of stuff, we were aware of some events that were happening. FACT was having some events, Fighting AIDS Continuously Together, that were fundraising for AIDS, and we went to a couple of things like that, but in 1993 [00:05:00] was a big march on Washington. Both Trish and I had been to the March on Washington in 1987, which was enormous. Just very big. We were not together then; it was just before we met. It was about four months before we met, but we were both there, we probably, you know, in the television video we probably walked right by each other, but there were hundreds of thousands of people there. 1997 a million people came to Washington, DC to speak out for and to demand equal rights for the LGBT community, and we drove, we had some friends that live in Baltimore, so we stayed there. You couldn't get a room in Washington. We tried to months, six months in advance we called the travel agent and said we would give them \$400 to get a room for one

night (inaudible) (laughs) "Oh, we won't have any problem with that!" And then she, I could hear her, like, flipping through the thing and then she's going, "There's no rooms! [00:06:00] We could get you one in Baltimore." I said, "Well, we know people in Baltimore, we'll just stay with them." So we stayed with a person, a good friend of ours in Baltimore, we went to the March, and at the same time in Allentown and Bethlehem, the bars-- we're not bar people. We don't drink and we don't smoke, and that was a big problem because people smoked so much in bars then, it was really hard to hang around in bars where people were smoking all the time. But we, so we didn't know a lot of the bar folks, and we weren't involved with the community that way, but the bars had organized a series of buses to go to The March on Washington in 1993, and we were very energized when we went there. We actually saw people that we hadn't seen in like 10 or 15 years. I saw, like, a really good friend of mine that I hadn't seen. Would you know, there'd be like parades of people walking by. At one point I was on, Trish and I and our friend Wayne, were on [00:07:00] one of those elevated trains going in-- I think we were coming out. It was the end of the day. We were in the train car, and people were just cheering and screaming you know, everywhere you went, on the subways and

everything, they were screaming, you know, "We're here! We're queer!" You know, "get used to it!" And then there were parades, and there was like contingencies of veterans and people from all these different states and countries, and there were like, the guys from Canada were saying: "We're here! We're queer! We're cross-border shopping!" You know, it was just, the whole thing was hilarious, and then every once in a while, you'd see some little, you know, white, cisgender, straight family from Iowa who came to Washington, you know, for their weekend. I heard one kid say, "Why are they making so much noise?" And I said (laughs) "Get used to it, kid. This is going to be the whole weekend for you."

MF: (laughs)

LB: It was really, really fabulous to have it [00:08:00] that way. So, we're on this train car and I look over, I was sitting with Wayne and Trish, and I look over and I say, "Oh, there's somebody I went to kindergarten with!" And I went all through high school, and I wave to her, and she jumped up. She came over. She's my Facebook friend now, this is from Connecticut, I grew up in Connecticut, and she came running over and I said, "When we were at the ten-year reunion ten years ago, I KNEW you were a lesbian!" She goes "I wasn't out then! I didn't even, I wasn't out to

myself then!" I said, "You shoulda asked me!" So (laughs) and this is a person that I'm in contact with all the time now, because we're Facebook friends, thank goodness for social media, but and that was happening over and over. We saw about 15 people that we knew from all different parts of our lives because we'd been out for a long, long time. Trish's been out since the 60s. So, it was very exciting, and it was very empowering, and brilliant people were speaking from the stage, and you know, it was just terrific. It was so empowering that what happened [00:09:00] in 1994, well at the end of that, all these buses that came back from the parade in DC, back to the Lehigh Valley, groups of people got together, and they began to talk about how we need to have something here in the Lehigh Valley that's like that, and that's how the Pride Festival was born. And I believe, because they told me this, that it was [Terry Courtney?] and [Renee Bennett?] who talked, they got off the bus and they talked for like two hours, and they said, "This is what we need to do," and they began to organize various different, it was a different kind of feeling of organizing. It wasn't like fighting AIDS, which was really important and very significant, but this was mobilizing groups of LGBT people so that we could get rights, and that's what that parade

was about, and that's what people were beginning to look at. So, in 1994, that was the first Pride Festival, and Trish and I did not organize that Pride Festival, but we had friends [00:10:00] who ran a little ice cream parlor called Jaffrey's at the corner of Tilghman and Seventh Street, and they had been in contact, they were lesbians, that's one of the ways I got Trish to move here, I said "There's lesbians running a vegetarian ice cream parlor at the corner of Tilghman and Seventh, and I think we could be friends with them," and actually it's pretty much how we know everybody, because I became friends with them, Trish came there, and we're still friends with both of them, even though they're not together anymore, we're still friends with them and they introduced us to almost everybody we knew. All that lesbian camp Girl Scout connection, actually. But [Barb Locke?], who was the head of that restaurant, said that the Philadelphia Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which was run by a woman named Rita Addessa, wants us to have a booth at the [00:11:00] Pride Festival. They have paid for it, we're going to cover the morning of the booth, and would you cover the afternoon? And I said, sure, you know, what the heck? We'd love to do that. And then I said to Trish, you know, if we do this, there's gonna be lots of booths there. What we should do is work



the room, we should go around at all the different booths and figure out which organization we think is really doing stuff that we want to be involved with to make change, and we should volunteer with that organization. So, there's a video in the archives of that Pride Festival, and the person who took the video, which was part of the time was Rob Hopkins, because I've actually talked to him about that, and he and I think [John Early?] was the other person who was making the video, and there's a lot of people I know in the video, but I kept thinking, like, where are the rest of the booths? But they sort of stayed up near the stage, and we were farther back from the stage. This was in the park, at Cedar Beach Park in Allentown, that was the first Pride Festival, and that was in 1994. [00:12:00] And there were a lot of booths there, it was about 800 people there, it was a significant event, and P-Flag was there, the people from P-Flag, there were people from different corporations, and the Gay Men's Chorus had already started, ACCO which was a lesbian, or which was a women's chorus, that we ended up to be really good friends with a lot of people that were involved with ACCO, we're still friends with those people. They performed on stage. There were people from the Harrisburg Pride Festival that were there, and there's a video of this happening, and in one section,

I watched the entire two-hour video, and in one section way in the back, I'm thinking, "Yeah, I think that's me. I remember those pants." And I was sort of standing off, I was watching the stage, and you could see me there. You could see a lot of other people that were involved in that. So, we walked around, and we visited a lot of different booths, and one of the booths that was there [00:13:00] was a booth by the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, and we wanted to be involved with a political organization, because we firmly believed, and we still believe this, that political change is actually the most significant. To make political change requires political action. And you have to work within the electorate, with elected officials and law-making and the courts, and stuff like that. You have to work within that to make that happen. You can't just have a bunch of fundraiser parties. And really, at that time, and Pride Festival was wonderful, a wonderful, wonderful event, but it was never a political event. The thing that it did was it created a framework for loads and loads of different organizations to get together so that people could learn about those organizations, and that's what we were doing. So, we became fascinated by this, the idea that this organization, [00:14:00] which was called the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, was producing voter

information for voters, specific to how did candidates vote and support specific issues that were of really significant interest to the LGBT community. And really just LGBT issues, so we weren't talking about other progressive issues. We're talking about, you know, gay rights, hate crimes legislation, the potential of registering relationships-- we didn't even talk about marriage then in 1994. And so, at that time, we decided to, the guy that was running that booth was Steve Black, and we told Steve that we would volunteer with him, and we liked what this seemed to be doing, we thought this was a really good idea: to create voter information and interview candidates and stuff like that, so we told Steve that we would work with him. We saw the paper printed out, so he didn't have a very good booth, [00:15:00] but he had like a box of books, and we talked to him for a long time. He was great. And very dynamic. Young, blond guy. He was upbeat. But he spoke very well. Steve Black was a lawyer actually, and he was really very aware. He went to Temple to get his law degree. So, the next part of this was that after the Pride Festival-- Pride Festivals are always very hard, especially if you're working booths, you get very tired at the end of the day. But the next day we talked to Steve about, he said, "I want you to come to," I said "We would do work for

you. Like, what do you want us to do?" And so, Trish and I, and this is the hilarious part, at that point we said okay we're going to volunteer with this organization, we're going to get involved with this, but the only thing we ever want to do is stuff envelopes. And we really said that. And that was the first start, that always gets a laugh when I say that in public, but so the first thing we did was, Steve said, "I have all these envelopes. I'm doing this to have..." I think it was for a [00:16:00] fundraiser that he was going to do, sort of a "Meet the Candidate" fundraiser event, and he had about 100 envelopes, and he had labels to put on them with people's names, and he had collected some mailing lists and stuff like that. He had already done that. And he said, "These have to be stuffed, and here's the pieces of paper that go into it." He just gave us all the stuff, and then he said, "I'm going to have a stamp for the return address, and then you can seal the envelopes and then we'll stamp the return address, and then they'll be ready to go, and we then we can mail them next week." This was Sunday, actually. No, it was the Monday after the Pride Festival. So, we brought the stuff home, and we stuffed all the envelopes right then, that night. He said, "We'll get together and stuff them." He always thought that mailings were harder to do than they were,

because he hated to do them. So, we stuffed all the envelopes, we put all the stuff in, we didn't have the return address stamps so we just hand-wrote [00:17:00] the return address on everything. There were stamps on it. They were all ready to go. So, when he came over and said, "Here, I'll help you to work with this," we said, "We're done! We're done. Here they are." So, he realized that we were going to be really good volunteers, and we met with him, and we said one of the things we want to do is we want to create a group of events that will bring people together that aren't bar events. And they can have refreshments and stuff in it, but this would be an opportunity to have a dance. What we really wanted to do was meet more lesbians in town, because we wanted to know more people in the community and have a reason for everybody to get together. So, we created, Trish and I, and Trish and I really did the work to create a series of dances and events that would be at the [Celeron?] Fire Hall-- Cetronia! Cetronia Fire Hall. See? Good. Trish helped me with that. The Cetronia Fire Hall, out near, it's just past the Lehigh Parkway. [00:18:00] And they had a big space, and a stage and stuff. We had to pay for it. I think we ponied up and paid for it for the first six, (inaudible) it was like \$100 that we had to rent it each time, and we had a mailing list, and we

invited all these people to come, and we had like "Get To Know You" events, and it was sort of a dance, and we had music, and people got to know, and we think we did about six of them. They sort of changed as we were going along. But the first few of them were just that, it was that [Laura Guiteras?] who we already knew helped us come up, because she was part of the Girl Scouts then, she was one of the head people at the Girl Scouts of Greater Leigh Valley, the Girl Scouts council, and she had a lot of games that would get people to be comfortable with each other. We met DJ there. We already kind of knew DJ, but we, you know, you go around with the sheet--you'd have to check off who has a tattoo. DJ, as you know, has a lot of tattoos. So, she was very, [00:19:00] that was DJ Landis -- she was DJ [Golba?] in those days. And Steve was there. And we were getting people's names and addresses on our mailing list. So, the main thing that moved along on this, and this was really significant to recognize, that we began to realize that if we were going to produce this voter information, and that's what we did. We began to see how you produce voter information. How to do fundraising, how to organize people, how to organize volunteers to do mailings and stuff like that. One of the things we realized was that Steve, so Steve Black was, he was in his

early 30s, maybe his late 20s, he might have been 29 then. He was a lawyer, he had gone to law school, but he didn't have a lot of confidence in his ability as a lawyer. He did have a little law office that he paid \$60 a month for in Bethlehem, and he would do people's Wills and, you know, Powers of Attorney and stuff like that, but he was really not comfortable with the court idea. He didn't do that kind of stuff. On the other hand, he was a brilliant lawyer. He passed his bar exam the very first time he took it. He was really smart, and he was really politically savvy in a lot of ways. One of them was, he had been on School Board in North Hampton County. He was from Pen Argyl, and his family lived in Pen Argyl, and they owned Black's Café. And Steve worked and ran Black's Café, but he lived in Philadelphia in the Gayborhood, on Camack Street, and he worked at Susanna Foo's, which is a really fancy, REALLY fancy, five star Chinese restaurant run by this woman named Susanna Foo, who had books and stuff like that, and Trish when she found that out said, "I want you to get--" She had the cookbook! She said, "Go take this and have Susanna Foo sign the cookbook!" [00:21:00] And he was a waiter, and he made a lot of money, and half the week he would work there, and he had a tiny apartment that was about the size of this office. It was just one room, on

Camack Street, and then he had, then he would stay at his mother's house in Pen Argyl the other half of the week and run Blacks' Café with her. She ran it the other part of the week. And, I have to say that I don't think he had a terrific relationship with his family. They weren't very positive about his being a gay man. They were kind of in denial about that. His mother was married to someone who was very, very conservative. Not his father. And he had to sleep on the couch, I mean, it was very uncomfortable, but he did that for a long time. He did that for several years. So, Steve had figured out how to do some very significant fundraising by like, if he'd have a cocktail party for his-- if he had a birthday party, he'd make [00:22:00] everybody pay to come in, and then he would donate all the money, and he would have the party, he did that all the time. But he wasn't great at fundraising. It turned out that we were much better at it. So, Steve wanted us to, he wanted to really organize-- so, let me say this. The League of Gay and Lesbian Voters was run by a guy named Chris Young who was in Pittsburgh, and Chris Young had started the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters to collect voter information and disseminate it to people in the Pittsburgh area, and the Western part of Pennsylvania. And he and Steve had met at a Democratic Committee meeting.



Steve had been on School Board in, I guess, the Pen Argyl area, in the Pen Argyl School District, he was on School Board. He was openly gay, so he was an openly gay elected official in the state of Pennsylvania. It was a big deal. It was very early, and he was very openly gay. [0:23:00] And so, he met Chris, and Chris told him about this organization and asked him if he would run the Eastern part. So, that's why he was in the booth for the Pride Festival. They knew the Pride Festival, and Steve said, "Yeah, I'll be the Director of the Eastern part of the state." And Chris was a very savvy tech person. Remember, this was 1994, so this was just the beginning of the internet, just the beginning of email. Most people didn't have email. We had a computer, it was like, you know, the, it was a Mac Classic, it was like, you know, and the printers were those "eh-eh" digital ones, and everything was dial-up, and it was very, very slow still, but Chris had a lot of ability to do high-tech things, because he worked for a university, and he had a lot of savvy for that. So, he talked Steve into doing this, and Steve was very excited about that, and he wanted to do this, and he realized the potential of gathering really [00:24:00] cohesive and really clear information about where candidates stood on issues, and then giving that to voters.

Because, so, let me say that the model of this was that we would not just talk about presidential candidates or senators or congress people. We were going to talk about and give people information about every single office they would vote for. You know, School Board, City Council, Rural Boards of Supervisors, Row Offices like, you know, the Auditor of Deeds, the County Clerk's Office, any elected office. The Coroner's Office. And the model was there were these questionnaires, and we worked on the questions, and the questions evolved, depending on what the issues were and stuff, and there were instances, there were votes and stuff in the state with regard to [00:25:00] pieces of legislation, particularly on the Hate Crimes Bill, that was one of Chris' big things. He wanted to pass the Hate Crimes Bill. Actually, in the state of Pennsylvania, we have what's called the "Ethnic Intimidations Act." It is a Hate Crimes Bill, and it has a list of protected classes, but it doesn't include sexual orientation and gender identity, nor does it include a couple of other classes that should have been included, and Chris, his initial thing was he wanted to get the legislature to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the law. So, Steve also said that you know, that was a good idea, and we could do a lot of lobbying from that

point of view. Hate Crimes law is hard to argue with, and so it's a very positive thing. And one of the things we would say to people, is they'd say, "Well, that doesn't make people to stop hating people." I said, "Well, one of the things about passing a Hate Crimes law, is there is not one single piece of legislation at that time, in the state of Pennsylvania, or any mention [00:26:00] state-wide of sexual orientation and gender identity. Gay people don't exist for this state. Once we pass the Hate Crimes law, then we say, 'Well, you shouldn't beat them up. Well, if you shouldn't beat them up, don't you think you should also not discriminate against them in employment?' You open the door for that." Anyway, I'm digressing here, but Chris was running this organization, he was doing it very well, and he was in Pittsburgh, which is a huge city with three million people, and the only way that he raised money was that he would have these skating parties, and he would charge people to come in, and they were, there were a lot of drag people in skating, it was really terrific, and he had these roller skating parties, and he would make like a thousand dollars at these things. But it was in Pittsburgh, it was 1994, there was nothing else to do that was really queer that wasn't a bar thing, so it was very, very popular, and he said, "You should do that in Allentown

too. That's how you can raise money. You can make..."

Well, (laughs) Allentown's a little bit [00:27:00] smaller than Pittsburgh, in the Lehigh Valley, but we considered that, and we didn't do it, actually. But so, he had created this model, and Steve thought it was a pretty good model, and it was. And a lot of that stuff is in the archives now. Some of the earliest voter guides that are from the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters. So, Steve said to me and Trish, "I want you to be the coordinators of the Lehigh Valley. I'll be the Executive Director, and we'll try to get other people that will coordinate other parts of the Eastern part of the state." And we did it by two county areas. So, Lehigh/North Hampton was our area, and we were the coordinators of that. But we also helped Steve make a lot of big decisions about what was going to go on in the community. We're almost done. No, so (laughs). I'm only talking about this very beginning part. So, the main thing that happened then, and I'll talk about the Voters Guide in a second [00:28:00] and how we ultimately became PA-GALA, but at that point, we were becoming very, very aware that Steve's lists of people were just piles of paper that had like people's names that he was trying to put into a sort of Excel format, and he had some names in Excel, and then he had like stacks of cards and junk, and

you know, and I said, "You know, we have to get this list together," because no one had a Queer list of telephone numbers and contact information and addresses, and we had to mail things to people, so we really needed to be able to have an automated list. So, one of the volunteers that we had was a woman named Joan [Tadero?] and she now lives in New Hope, but she was living in Easton then, and she worked for a company that was very high tech. And Joan, who was a wonderful activist at that time, [00:29:00] I'm so sad that she moved out of the area, said, "You know, if you get me that stuff, I will scan it into a list." Because, and that was just the dawn of scanning capabilities. And nobody had, you couldn't scan anything yourself. You had to have a big thing to be able to do that kind of stuff. And I said, "Okay, well, let's try to do that." Well, the thing is that Steve was scared to death that if he left, gave me the list, or he gave Joan the list, he would lose the list. It would get lost. He also, finally I said to him, "Is this, the reason that you're not giving this to me because you're afraid it's going to get lost, or because it's just a bunch of crap lying around your apartment and you don't know how, you know, it's just junk?" And he said, [00:30:00] "Yeah, it's that. It's that." And I said, "Steve, get a big box, and put every piece of paper that

has people's names into it, because the excel sheet will even weed out the duplicates!" Because that was a problem we were having too. It took me a month of pestering him. He was so reticent. He was a stubborn guy, and he was hard to work with, I have to say, but he was way easier to work than Chris Young. I wrested this stuff from him. I gave it to Joan. She went to her office in the, you know, dark of night, on the weekend, and fed little slips of paper through the scanning machine for hours and hours and hours and developed a usable list of about a thousand names. Which was extraordinary that we had the ability now to reach a thousand people, and we could even, we even sort of by names [00:31:00] knew whether people identified as male or female, we could do all sorts of sorting with this, and then we began to use this list, and Steve did this in a very positive way, when we would collect names at events, he would code the event so that if there was another similar event, we could invite people to those events. Like, the Pride Festival used to have a film festival in it, and so if people, if we collected the names at the film festival, and there was another film festival, or another film, or Theater Outlet in Allentown, which is not there anymore, used to have film festivals all the time, and they would be fundraisers for us, and we could invite people

who'd already gone to film festivals, and it was just brilliant the way he did that. And we also began to collect and meld that information with voters' lists, because whether or not you vote is a matter of public record. Your voter registration is a matter of public record, and so is whether or not [00:34:00] you have voted in each election. And if you vote in every election for five years, primary and...

MF: (inaudible)

LB: Huh? General election, that is a, and you do that for five years, so it would be ten times voting, you are a Super Voter. And elected officials are impressed by Super Voters. If you write them a letter, and you say, "I want you to do this and this," they'll look on the voter rolls to see if you voted in the last five elections, and if (laughs) "this person never votes! I don't care what they say!" And that's true. It's really true. So, we were beginning to encourage people to vote in every election, and how important that was. And we wanted to produce information that we could send directly to the ones, send them this booklet so that they could vote, and also have an endorsement card, so now we had that list. And once we had that list, our organization, [00:33:00] League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, and actually, it was PA-GALA that really

codified that list, we became gold. Because no one had that kind of list. People-- the only other kind of queer list you could get, this is kind of funny, you could buy a list from the Advocate, of LGBT people who, or no-- of people who got The Advocate. The problem is that The Advocate, publishers of The Advocate also published gay porn magazines. A lot of gay porn magazines. So, a lot of times it's not that the person's name was on The Advocate list, it was on, their name was on the gay porn list, and a lot of those people are very closeted people who may not identify publicly as gay. Dad. So, if you mail to those lists, sometimes those people feel like they're colossally being outed. On the other hand, we, our list was people who were [00:34:00] at gay events, and we actually asked them if we could use their name. We would say, we'd hand out a card that said you know, and we had a way of collecting those names that said if you don't want to be on a list, make an x here, and then we wouldn't put them on the list. But we'd say, if you do want to be on the list, we will send you really important information. So, now we had this really comprehensive list and it was from the Eastern part of the state, but we had a lot of names. We ultimately had about 40 thousand names on that list, which was colossal. It was really significant. There were



elections that were being won, state-wide elections that were being won with, you know, 400 votes, and we had 40 thousand names. So, it was very significant. So, we ended up working with Chris on League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, and we began to-- so what we would do is, [00:35:00] we would collect the voter information. So, we would, this is the process. People would have petitions, they would become candidates, they would file to be a candidate for a primary election, and when they filed, that's a matter of public record, and we would go, and usually this was Trish that would do this in Lehigh Valley, she would go the voter, county voter places and get the names of all the people who had just filed to be a candidate in the next election. And then we would get their addresses, and sometimes their addresses weren't in their filing, so we'd have to get their addresses, and then we would send them the questionnaires. And the questionnaires are actually in the archives, because there were earlier questionnaires and then they changed, and we would keep the questionnaires on file forever, so that we could say, "Oh, you said this in 1994." So, the person would be asked all these questions, where do you stand on these issues, and then Steve would collect information, and Trish would do this too, collect information on how people who were [00:36:00] already

elected officials had already voted on issues. So, a lot of times potential voters would say, "Well, people can say anything!" I'd say, "Yeah, but we're not just telling you what they said. We're telling you how they've already voted. How they've already voted on the Hate Crimes Bill. How they voted on a resolution for a Pride flag. What they said in specific things. If they'd written articles that were anti-gay. If they'd espoused a position absolutely anti-gay, we'd put a little skull and crossbones next to them. And then we had a grid that would have, like if they were part of an organization that was just, the whole, they were Focus on the Family, this was their-- they were anti-- that was their issue: They wanted to keep gays from having rights. Then we'd put a skull and crossbones. We would have a grid where we would have all the candidates, and we would say the categories of what they were voting on, and it would be like Rights, and then we'd have a different level of, you know, a one, a two, a three, and this was a five, they were really good, and then we'd [00:37:00] put a skull and crossbones if they were really-- I think we did it with checks, actually. You know, and then if they didn't answer, we'd say, Did Not Return the Questionnaire, and we'd encourage our voters to say, to actually take the voters guide to the voting booth, and when they got there

and there would be like somebody there saying, like, "Oh, vote for me," and we'd go "Well, you didn't even turn in the thing, so I'm not voting for you at all. Screw this." You know, "Well, I can't answer everybody." "Well, too bad. I can't vote for everybody." And this began to make change. And it was very significant, it was really making a difference for people, and it made it a lot easier for people to vote, because most people have absolutely no idea where School Board people stand, for example, and you can't even just pull a Democrat lever, because in The Lehigh Valley, and in the state of Pennsylvania, people who run for School Board can cross-file. They can file as a Democrat and a Republican. So, you have no idea where they stand on issues. And we would ask issues, you know, would you fire somebody who was a teacher who said, and it actually said, [00:38:00] "In Elizabethtown, PA, a teacher who was teaching a course on concentration camps during the holocaust, asked his students in any of them were Jewish and would have had to go into this. None of them said yes. So, he said, I am a gay man, and I would have had to have been in a concentration camp because of it." And then he was fired, because he said he was gay in a public school. So, my question, our question for a School Board person was, "Would you support this teacher for using this as an

education circumstance, or not?" And it created a lot of significant conversations, and people hadn't thought about that before. "Well, nobody should talk about their sexual orientation." Well straight people talk about their sexual orientation all the time. They can't shut up about it. "Look! I got married!" You know, they just talk about-- "Here's my husband!" You know, they talk about it all the time. So, we pointed that out to people, and it[00:39:00] became these pieces of information that people could have on candidates they had no idea about, and it was making a difference, and when you're talking about an election in Allentown, we actually had an election that we were involved with, where in the primary, the person who was running for Mayor as the primary candidate, so it was Emma Tropiano who was notoriously, she was a Democrat, but she was notoriously anti-gay. She was horribly anti-minority, and anti-Latino, and she was running against Marty Velazquez who was a very positive candidate, and Marty won the primary by one vote. And we had sent voter information to about 600 people, right before the election, and caused people to know that he was a positive person. And, by one vote. It was 2,640 to 2,641. Every [00:40:00] single person that voted for him, cast the winning vote. And I used that as a thing to vote, you know, as an impetus to

vote, for years. So, go back a little bit, back to the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters, and we're talking about how it was sort of hard, so we would Trish would do a lot of this work all through the time that we were running the organization, she would get the candidates, we would send the questionnaires, they would send the questionnaires back. If we decided that we were going to, we ultimately decided that if we were going to endorse a candidate, we would actually interview them because we wanted to be sure that they understood the questions. We would take that information; we would put it into a useable format and then we would send it to Chris Young who would put it into a Quark program, print the voters guides for the West and the East, but the East was a separate one, he would pile it up, he would rent a van, and then he would drive back across the state, give us 10,000 guides, of those booklets, that [00:41:00] had about 75 pages in them, they were the size of a TV Guide kind of thing, like that big, and then we would have to hand them out to 10,000 queers who were going to vote. So, what was happening was, that Chris was taking a very long time to process the information, and he would show up like, three days before the election with 10,000 booklets, going "Okay! Hand these out to people!" As though we had 10,000 people sitting around. And the only

place that we could really hand out these things at that time was in bars. And frankly, frequently, people who were in bars may not be the most likely people to rush out and vote on Tuesday. So, we needed, so we were seeing that he wasn't giving us enough time. We had a group of volunteers that would disseminate the information, they would be ready, "Here's the booklets!" And they would take them to Delaware County, they'd take them to New Hope, they'd take them to Philadelphia, we'd take them to all the bars here, we'd take them to the Unitarian Church, and MCC, and all these other places. We'd stack them up in various places, [00:42:00] but there wasn't even an opportunity to stack them up for them to be there at any time, because it was only a few days before the election. And then what happened was, this was the second Clinton election. So, we produced these booklets for every election. So, it's twice a year. So, including off year elections. But this was... The Clinton election. I think. Yeah, we did it for Governor, so one year it's the big Governor's race, two years later it's the President's race, two years later it's the Governor's race, because those are four-year terms. Okay. So, we get all the information together, we send it out to Chris, and, I don't know, like three or four weeks in advance, and we're waiting, and we're waiting, and we're

waiting, and we're waiting. And finally Chris shows up in his van with, you know, 20 boxes of these guides, and [00:43:00] he's at our house, and we're helping him bring the boxes in because the next day, some of, I think we had some on the porch, because the next day, or even that night, I think it was during the day, and it was like a Friday during the day that he'd taken the day off from work and then brought this stuff out. And he was exhausted because he'd stayed awake for hours and hours and hours to-- days! To process this work, and then he had to drive all the way across the state. So, he brings the boxes in, and they're there, and I call Steve. Steve was in Pen Argyl, and he goes, "Okay, I'll be there in a little while." And I said, "Well, Chris has to go because he has to take this stuff to Harrisburg. He just brought them here, and then he's going to drop them off on the way back," and he said, "Okay." So, Chris leaves, and Steve gets there, and we open up the boxes, and I give Steve one of the guides and he looks at the front of the guide and goes, "Is this a joke?" And I said, "What do you mean?" And he said, "Well, this is the Clinton Presidential Election, and the front of this guide says (inaudible), which was the Governor [00:44:00] election from two years before, and the date was wrong, and what Chris had done is

he'd used the template for the cover-- the covers were very drab, actually. They just kind of had a little bit of writing on them, and then they said League of Gay and Lesbian Voters Guide, and it said, you know, Presidential Election, and then it had the date, this was the wrong year, it was for two years before, everything was wrong on it, on the cover. And Steve said, "Is the whole thing wrong?" Everything was right in the guide, but the cover was wrong. So, (laughs) I said, "What are we going to do? We've got there days! And people are here to get the things!" And he said, "Well, we're gonna have to, let's see if we can get a label, we'll put it on the front, and it'll say the correct information. I said, "Steve, I have to tell you that I don't know how to set this up. You know, to print these labels. We're going to have to get labels. I can, we can go and get the labels, I think we have some," you know, we're thinking like, how? Where can we go? We'll go to [00:45:00] wherever, you know, some stationary store and get boxes and boxes of labels, because we have 10,000 guides. I said, "I can put the labels on, but I don't know how to set it up." He said, "I got two guys here who are tech guys, who live such and such," and they came over to our house, and they set it up, and we printed out the labels, and as the sheets were coming off,



Trish and I had stacks of these books, and we didn't have time to call volunteers. It was just going to be me and Trish. So, each one, each things that came off, you know it had about, you know, it had 33 labels on it, we'd take the label off, I would stick it on, Trish would pull the book out of the way, we figured out we could do, I think we could do 1,000 books an hour, and we did it for 10 hours, so that the next morning, all the books were done. And then, we had people come out Saturday morning, so we missed Friday night, Saturday morning all these people come to take the books, they take it out, and they're out of our hands now. You know, there's nothing we can really do, but we're thinking [00:46:00] "That was a fiasco!" I mean, you know, 10,000 books and we had three days to get them to people. It was ridiculous. So, so we were mad, and Steve was really mad, because we, one of the things that we did to finance these books was there was advertising in the voters' guides. Well, people who paid for the advertising were hoping for a little bit more exposure than a couple of days, and Steve wasn't even there to do the books. This was the kind of stuff that Trish and I always did. We were always doing things like, you know, staying up all night to label stuff, or doing colossal mailings in a very short amount of time. We did that for 18 years; we did these

enormous mailings. And actually, that was before we'd even gotten the second house, so we were really-- we had a row house, and then ultimately, I'll talk about this at another time, but we bought another row house next door, so we could have bigger space to do (laughs) more mailings. It was really the deal. [00:47:00] We had two big open rooms so that we could do enormous, we could have lots of people in the house, to do mailings, and to do volunteer work, and we really did that on purpose. We created spaces where we could fit a lot of people with a lot of tables, all working at the same time. So, soon after that we actually, because Steve was really running the Eastern part of the state, but Chris was in charge, and he said we needed to have a meeting of the board. So, we had about seven people on our board, and he had about six people on his board, which is kind of funny, since he was in Pittsburgh where there's a lot more people, but we had a meeting in State College, and one of the people who was in State College got a room, it was actually at the college, and we were able to have a big board meeting. And Steve, we had a woman named Ruth Rose who was running the Bucks/Montgomery part, [00:48:00] she was in charge of the Bucks/Montgomery area, and she was a pretty active volunteer for quite a long time. And she said that, so she was working with, and she also recognized

that this was, she said, "You know, look, I ended up with, I have 2,000 unused guides in my house because I couldn't give them out in time. I gave out," you know, "I gave out 700 guides in three days," which is, a lot! But to have all of those guides, the cost to print each guide was a dollar, so it was a huge waste of money, and it was very depressing for us, and we were upset. So, we all, so, we were going to say to Chris, we wanted to print and compile the voters' guides in the Eastern part of the state. We would take the information and we would do that. So, we wouldn't have to wait until the last minute and have him [00:49:00] do it all. So, we went to the meeting, and Chris was there with his, I guess boyfriend, and then his other four board members, and we had our seven people, and I can't remember who the other people were. I didn't really know them that well, but they were Steve's friends, and so, I think one of them was Ruth's friend and then there was three other people. We'd all converged on this space. And Steve and I and Trish and Ruth had talked about that we were really going to say this to Chris, that we couldn't do this kind of-- it was embarrassing to us, and it wasn't working. So, we, at one point, so Chris went on and on. The first part of the meeting was him talking about how tired he was, and how hard it was to compile the

guides, and how he had to stay up all night, and then he had to drive across the state, and then we said, "You know, there was this mistake, and stuff," we pointed out that there was this mistake at the meeting, we said, "We're very concerned about that," and stuff. Now we get to the point where Ruth [00:50:00] is supposed to say to Chris, she's supposed to say, so we're all board members, so she's supposed to say, "I would like to move that we're going to have a discussion to have the voters guide for the Eastern part of the state compiled and printed in the Eastern part of the state." So, she goes, so she comes to the point where there's going to happen, and she raises her hand, and she says, "I want to make a motion to do this." And Chris says, "Yeah, I don't want to talk about it. I don't think it's a good idea." So, she says, "Okay." (Laughs) And Steve is like... So, Trish, Steve, and I all go-- like this, and Steve looks at me, and he looks at me like this--. That's all he did. And I said, "Yeah, I understand that's a problem Chris for you, and you're not comfortable with that, but I would like to move that we are going to discuss this. And I'm going to move that, and I think we're going to discuss this, and here's why:

[00:51:00] You have just told us how hard it was for you to compile the Eastern part of the state. How you had to say

up all night. How you had to drive across the state. And you made a colossal mistake on the, because you were so tired. That's what you said. Because you were so tired." He said, "Well, that's my working style." I said, "Yeah, but you made a big mistake because you were so tired. That's why you said it. So, what we're talking about is that we're going to, we'll get all the information, we'll compile it into the booklet template, we'll have it, and once we've done that, we'll send the finished information to you to look over, you can decide whether you think it's all right, and if it's all right, then you can send it back to us. If you want to make changes, you can make changes, so then send it back to us, then we'll take it to the printer and we'll have it printed. You won't have to do all this work. All you'll have to do is look over the book and be sure that it's done right." He said, "No, I don't want to do it that way." [00:52:00] I said, "Okay, but I have already moved that we've had this discussion, and now I'm going to move that we're going to vote on it." There was more discussion, but in effect, "I think we should do it this way. I can't see how this would be a bad thing for you. It takes a lot of pressure off you. It will make it easier for everyone. We'll have a better circumstance. It's easier for us to get the advertising. And it just

won't be a problem. All you have to do is give us the template from what you've been using for the Western guide." So, he says, "No. I don't want to do it." So, I said, "Okay, well, I'm going to call the question. I want to have a vote on this, because this is the Board, and we have 13 people here, it's not just you." So, Steve seconds it, or somebody seconds it, maybe it was Trish, and then the next thing is we vote, and 11 of the 13 people there say yeah, we should do it that way. Of course! It doesn't make any sense. Including his board [00:53:00] members all thought that that was a good idea, except for him, except for Chris, and his little boyfriend. So, I said, "So, this is a decision that's been made. So, all you have to do," and you know, one of the things about two elections a year is they're always coming up. You know, the next one is coming up soon. The minute the primary is over you've got about a month and then people are filing again, to collect the petitions for the election in November, and then it happens again for the election in the spring. So, I said you know, "You're just going to have to give us the template, and that's the deal. That's all you have to do." Well, we go back to Allentown, we're waiting around, and he's not giving us anything. This actually happened in the fall, so the next election was going to be a spring

election. It was going to be in May, so that would be the Primary. So, he doesn't give it to us, and he's just ignoring us, and he's not paying attention to the emails, and he's [00:54:00] not sending it, and he's saying, "I don't think you can do this, you won't ever be able to do this, and you won't be able to compile it." Well, meanwhile, Steve has found in some of the stuff that we've been handing out to people that there is a person who volunteered named [Gayle Erich?] who happened to live a block from me and Trish, who said, "I am extraordinarily capable with Quark. I use it every minute of every day, and that's my job." And she's a lesbian. So, we go, "Great! Okay, well," so we go to Gayle. She's actually quite a, she still lives there, she's very reclusive in a lot of ways. Hard to get her to be in any situation where there's more than two or three people, she would never go to a party, she would never come, she would have dinner with us once in a while. Not really like to do that, but she was willing to work. Sometimes you'll get people who will volunteer, and they'll do the volunteer work, because they'll think like, "This is my task. I don't even have to social. I don't have to be social. I just do the task." And she's a wonderful person, [00:55:00] really love Gayle. So, she says, so she comes over, and we've also never been

in her house, and we've known her for 20 years, and she lives a block away. But she comes over and she looks at the book, and she says, "Sure! Piece of cake. I do this every day. This is nothing for me to do, I know how to do this, I can set it up, it's not a problem." She said, "If we're going to do it, we'll have to, it's going to be a little bit complicated, but we'll do it." So, now we say to, because Chris is saying, "There's no way that you have somebody that knows how to do this." I said, "Well, we do. We have somebody." He says, "She's not going to be able to do it." He says, (inaudible). So, Steve comes to us, and he says, "Okay, he's not going to do it." So, he said, "I'm blowing him off, I'm starting a new political organization, are you with me?" And we said, "Of course! Of course, we're with you." He says, "We're going to call it PA-GALA, [00:56:00] because I want it to be an alliance. I want this imply allies, and we will, we'll do this, and I made the logo for it, and we'll just do it, and do you think Gayle can do it?" And I said, "I really think Gayle can do this. I mean, I saw it, she sets up whole books!" You know, at her company they made preliminary books for when you're doing a book before it's published, when they used to not have print on demand, they would do short runs for critics and reviewers and she just, she did it every



day. So, she said yeah, she can do this. So, now it's like the winter, and we say to Chris, "We're gone. We're done. Nobody's going to run League of Gay and Lesbian Voters Eastern part of the state." Chris kind of got Rob Hopkins to do it for a while, but nobody would produce the information because you have to be on the ground to do it, and it's really hard. [00:57:00] So, we go to Gayle, and we say we're going to have a new guide, and you can see that the, what are we called? PA-GALA Guides, they're called Gay and Lesbian Vote, and they're really dynamic. They have really dynamic covers, they're very different looking that the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters. And we came up with a couple of other things about how we wanted to set up the book, but for the most part it was pretty similar. So, we input the information, and we also talked about past information too, which was, you know, for the previous books that we had, from League of Gay and Lesbian Voters. So, Gayle and Trish are working on it. Trish does-- at that time, I really couldn't type. I never really was able to type very well. I'm better now just because I have to do it all the time, but I can't, but Trish could really type, and Gayle and Trish just start to work on it, and it's March, [00:58:00] we have to have this ready and printed by May. We had the information, but my

father died. We were about to have a fundraiser-- so, I do want to say, let me just digress a little bit and say this: One of the things we did was, we did have the skating parties. We had skating parties at roller rinks, and they were called "Gay Skating." (laughs) We actually called them "Gay Skating." You didn't say "LGBT" in those days, so just like, "Gay Skating Parties," right? Wasn't that it? And I made a little, you can see pictures of the different, because we have these things, and we, they were great! I mean, they were like, you know, drag queens would come, and they'd be dancing and skating, and they had, and Steve was a very good skater, and I can't, I'd never skated because (laughs) I said I like being able to use my arms, and I didn't want to break anything, and so Trish and I didn't skate, but the other folks were just, they were terrific, and it was very, very fun. And we would advertise, and one of the places we [00:59:00] wanted to advertise was on the Service Electric has a little line that goes under it, when you watch the weather, and the news thing, and then at the bottom is has announcements and stuff, so I went to Service Electric to say, "We want to advertise Gay Skating." This was the first really public thing. And the woman at the desk said, "We can't do that." And I said, "Why?" And she said, "Well, it's taking

sides." I said, "What do you mean it's taking sides? What do you mean by that?" And she said, "Well it's a political thing." I said, "No it isn't! It's gay people skating! You have, you know, you have church skating, that's okay." She said, "But it's political." I said, "You have political advertising! Vote for Pat Brown! It's on the thing!" You know, and she goes (laughs), "Well, we can't do it." So, I say, now this is me, because, I'm the wrong person to say this to, instead of me going, "Oh, okay," I call up the CEO of Service Electric and I say, "I've just been denied this," there was no law, so we weren't protected by law at all, there's no law in Allentown at that time, [01:00:00] but I call (inaudible) and I say they're telling me that we can't have this skating thing, and I don't understand. He said, "Well, is it a political thing?" I said, "No! It's a skating party! It's a gay skating party! It's for-- we're not telling people they can't come, it's just, it just says Gay Skating!" He said, "Well, it's just skating, why are they saying no to you?" I said, "I don't know, I guess they're anti-gay!" So, he calls the woman back and tells her she has to do it. So, then I go back in, because now I'm all, you know, "Up yours!" And I got the stuff, and she says, "Well, just for this as long as it's not political." I'm like, "Okay..."

So, now we're like every day we're watching, like "There it is again!" As it's going on the little thing, and we got a lot of people that came to that because, for some reason people watch that all the time. (laughs) Oddly enough, in those days, so that was one of the first, and we used that as an example of public accommodation and [01:01:00] discrimination frequently. Also, one of the things I said is, "You know, if people say no to you, ask somebody higher up. Because it might often be just a middle management martinet, who's decided that they're not going to be supportive of you when that's not the policy at all. And making up the policy." And that was very successful, to be able to point that out. So, we have Gay Skating, and we did, we made some money from it. It wasn't as successful as, what we did, was we had Candidate Nights, and we would invite candidates to come and talk to people, and they were often in John Cochran's office. He was a chiropractor in Bethlehem, and he would let us use his whole big office space, which is enormous area, to have these, and it was great. It was in a mall in Bethlehem over in the middle, near where the Carmike Theater is. And they were very well-attended, and they would get bigger and bigger, and lots of people would come and they would [01:02:00] talk to candidates, and sometimes candidates would say really bad

things, and I would accuse them in the voters' guide. One person said that the "n" word wasn't a bad word to use. She was white, and I said, "Okay, I'm going to be writing that down." (laughs) Because it was wrong! So, anyway, it was really wrong. But and we would get people to get this information. So, now we create, so my dad dies, and it's two days before a skating party that was going to be in that Morristown skating rink on the Ben Franklin Parkway there, and it was all set up, and wonderful Laura Guiteras our good friend, and my dad had died at St. Luke's, and you know, it was a very calm death. He had emphysema, and I held his hand when he died, with my sister, [01:03:00] and Trish was there for most of the time too, but I was upset, he'd been sick for a long time, but he was perfectly lucid at the end of his life, but Laura and another friend of hers and ours, Lynn Rogers who was a member of ACCO, said, I haven't seen Lynn in a while, but she lives in Easton, she said, "We will cover the skating thing. Don't come, don't worry about it. We'll take care of the whole thing." Well, we were working on the voters' guide at that point, and this was actually earlier when... I think that was still League of Gay and Lesbian Voters. Or maybe this was a later one. I think this was a later one, because this wasn't the first one that we did. And Steve said to me,

this was an example of Steve being hard to work with, but he actually said, [01:04:00] "Don't worry, I know this is very upsetting for you. Don't worry about doing any of the work for the voters' guide, just don't do it, we'll cover it, it won't be a problem." So, the punchline of this is, he didn't do any of the work, and once I, you know, a week after he's figuring I should be okay now, and then I would come back and do all the work, so he just didn't do anything. You know, it's sort of like when somebody says, "Oh, take a day off." Well, you still gotta get your work done! You know? And so, that was the thing. Anyway, the thing that happened with Gayle and Trish's work, that's not the issue that my dad died. My dad had died, that was the year before. I know this is the chronology. So the next year is when we were not with League of Gay and Lesbian Voters anymore, and we were PA-GALA, and I think that was around 1996, and so Trish and Gayle are working on the new voters' guide, and it's very hard, because it's not just creating the templates, it's entering all the [01:05:00] information into it, because it wasn't just Lehigh/North Hampton, it was seven counties that had all these different, every town could have a race in it, and in fact we covered every single race, and if people didn't send the information in, we'd just say no information came in, but

if we had people working there, we would have significant information. So, Trish and Gayle are working on this, and in the meanwhile, Chris Young is furious that we're doing this. So, he is actually saying, "There's no way that you're going to be able to do this, and you don't have a right to that, you've stolen the information, it's proprietary, it's against the law for you to do that," and Steve Black, who is a lawyer, goes to the bar, because as he used to say, "I'm a bar queen, and that's my strength!" And he talked to another lawyer, it was in Philadelphia, and he said, "Do you think it's illegal for us to take information and then, in our new organization, [01:06:00] create a similar guide that uses some of the information that was public information that we gathered, and produce this again?" And this woman, who was a business lawyer, said, "It's absolutely illegal. You're going to get sued. You can't possibly do this." And Steve comes back to me and says that's what she said, I said, "Steve! We're not a business! We're a not-for-profit that gives this information away for free!" So, I go to my lawyer, who was Susan Mauer, who is a wonderful lawyer, who had always been very supportive, and she says that she was a lawyer for not-for-profits, she said, "Not-for-profits that produce free information have no rights to that information. If

you give information away on the street, you have no rights to that information." And so, therefore, somebody could take his guide, tear off the cover, put their own cover on it, give it out, and it would be completely legal to do that. There is no way, nobody's making any money from it, nobody's losing any money from it, all of us were volunteer. There's absolutely nothing wrong with doing it.

[01:07:00] I come back, and I say that to him, and he goes, "Is she sure?" (laughs) I mean, he's the lawyer! And I said, "Yeah, I actually researched it. I'll research it some more, but I think it's really true." Then, so they're working on the guide and stuff, meanwhile we have bought the second house, so we have our second house, and we're scheduling the guy to break through the walls and put, the new side of the house has no electricity in it, there's no plumbing, we've got holes through the wall, there's all this dust and everything, we're working on that, and then my best friend from growing up, who is still one of my dearest best friends, husband suddenly dies. And she called me up, she said, "Paul is very, very sick." And I grew up with her, she's like my sister. And I said to her, "What's wrong?" And she said, "We don't know what's wrong with him, but he's in Mass General, and [01:08:00] he's in a coma, and it's looking very bad." So, I was very



worried, and I said, "Do you want me to come there?" And she said, "No, but if he dies, I want you to come." And I said, "Okay." Well, three days later she called me up, it was about seven in the morning, and she said, "He died." And I said, "I will be right there. I'll be there today." And I packed a bag, I didn't even ask her how to get there, I had been there a couple times, but it's hard to get to, it was in Cambridge. He worked at Emerson, he was a professor at Emerson, and she worked at Harvard. She still works at Harvard. And so, I said, "I'll be there right away." So, I dropped everything, I said to Trish and Gayle, "I am really sorry, but I have to go." And so, I went there, and she was a mess. She was really devastated. He had a superinfection, which is like the kind of infection that Jim Henson died from, the creator of the Muppets. [01:09:00] It just ripped through his body and killed him, and also Mass General lost his tests when he first got there, and actually didn't treat him fast enough. He couldn't breathe. His last words were, "Tape Chicago Hope!" I mean, he had no idea. He said, "I can't breathe," they rushed him to the hospital, and three days later he was dead. So, I went there and I, she had a terrible time. There were a lot of people there, his friends had come. He was friends with Mark Jepsen, who was

the head of the senate of Connecticut, and he had gone to Harvard, so he had a bunch of friends from Harvard.

Another guy was there who was the Attorney General of the state of Arizona, and they were all staying there. And after a while, after a few days I said, "Why are these guys staying here? We've already had the memorial service. Why are they here?" And she said, "Well, you know, they're taking a break." I said, "They're [01:10:00] not helping." They were expecting her to make food for them, to clean up after them, they were guys. They were also hitting on her. They were all hitting on her. This happens all the time apparently when straight women's husband die, their friends hit on the widow. So, this really happened. So, anyway, I was very proprietary as far as this went. I was there for a week, and then I came home, and I mean, I settled some things, and I helped her do stuff. I covered the-- I actually negotiated the cremation and... When my dad died, we inherited some money that was made it so I didn't have to work as hard, and we had, I was able to, you know, cover some of the stuff that she needed, and it was tax time, and he had to do his taxes, and I actually took, I called up my tax person [01:11:00] here, this is an important plug for her, Cindy Ernst who works in Emmaus, and I explained this stuff. She said, "Take everything she has, put it in a big

envelope mail it to me, and I'll take care of it. You don't have to do anything, I'll even--" and then she actually said, you know, "I'll cover everything, I'll do an electronic signature, you don't even have to do anything." And [Shani?] actually used her for years after that because she was so terrific. We use her still. And so that, but she needed somebody to tell her that. People were hard on her. Other people were wonderful. I mean, people would just come in the door and say, "I'll wash all the dishes." You know, or "take care of everything." You know, people brought food over, like they do. But people get tired of grief, and they don't, they're not always there as long as the person needs it. So, I came home after a week, and then she called me three days later, and she said, "I can't do it. I can't... I can't..." And I said, "Okay, I'll come back. I'll come back! Don't worry about it! I'll be there, [01:12:00] come back tomorrow." And she said, "Well, actually I'm so relieved that you're coming back, take a couple of days." So, I said to Trish, I have to go back, had to pack more clothes, and I said, "I don't know when I'll be able to come back." She was at risk. She was really at risk. So, I went back, and I did a lot of things that she wanted, and I ended up sort of taking apart, like he had an office, he was, Paul used to say that he was like

me, and it was a little creepy, right, that we were similar to each other. When I went back, she kept calling me Paul. And I said, okay, you can't do that. You have to recognize that I'm not Paul. But I did stay there, and she said that she'd always had a hard time with the way his office was, it was very cluttered, so I actually went through every single--ruthlessly! Went through every single paper in his office to be sure that he didn't have any bills.

[01:13:00] He had a problem with buying stuff and running up bills, and I found everything. And I thought, and people were, like one of his friends said, "Well, I don't think it's really appropriate that you're reading through his notes about his psychologicals." I said, "I don't care! I don't care. I'm not here for him. He's dead. And he didn't take care of himself when he had an infection, and he died. And now, she's alone, and she's my sister, and I don't care about anybody but her. So, I'm going to do all this stuff, shut up unless you're going to do it." So, I did all the stuff, and I moved the things for her and everything. It took about three weeks, and at the end of the three weeks, so I'd been there four weeks about, she said, "Okay, you can go now." Truthfully, she really wasn't okay, and she needed a lot more support, but other people were supporting, and she had other

(inaudible). Now I come back, you know, Trish and Gayle are pretty much done with the thing, and the walls are [01:14:00] finished with all the dust and everything, and I'm so sorry. Trish, I was just reminding her about that, and she was going, "Oh yeah, I forgot about the walls. Yeah, that was a mess." Because everything was covered with dust and everything, and we're still trying to do all this stuff. So, we produce the voters' guide. Now we've got the voters' guide, we're about ready to print it. We take it over to Roblin Press, and Roblin Press is a gay-owned organization that they had done lots of stuff for the FACT guys, and they said, "We'll print this, we'll give you a good deal on it," and they were generous about this, and then Robin, of Roblin Press, Rob calls me up and he goes, "I just got this fax from Chris Young who says you're not going to pay your bill." And I said, "What?!" And he said, "Well, first of all I know that's not true, but I think you should see this letter." So, I go over, and I get the letter, and I think, "How dare he say that!" First of all, we had the money, and second of all, I would have paid the bill out of my own pocket if I had to, but it was [01:15:00] absolutely libel. So, we went to Sue Mauer, our lawyer, and she wrote Chris a cease-and-desist letter and said if you ever do this again, we will-- I mean this is,

it's one thing if somebody says something about you. It's another thing if somebody writes to a business contact and says they're not going to pay their bill! It's the definition of libel. So, we turned around to Chris and said, "cut it out. If you do this again, we will sue you, and you're going to be really sorry." Because this was a personal thing, you can't do that. And obviously that's not true. So, we didn't have any trouble. I said to Robin, "I will pay you right now. I've got the money in the thing." It was \$1,000 to pay for those books, and we paid. So, we were very successful in doing that. The books were much better, we had them there, we were able to get them out to people. But after a while, Trish and I began to realize that the booklets were a problem. Because the booklets had lots and lots of information, and people really didn't need to know who was [01:16:00] running in Abington if you lived in Carbon County. Who cares? You know? Who cares about the School Board in an area where you're not voting? So, what we suggested to Steve was, that we would no longer print, also it was expensive to print the booklets, and there was a lot of storage and stuff like that, so what we decided-- Oh, we're already past, oh we've got a little bit more time. So, we decided that we would print just a page of interest to the person

based on their own district, and where they lived, and what town they lived in, so that they wouldn't have to look up in the booklet. You looked in the booklet by the number of your state representative district. Do you know what the number of your state representative district is? I'm asking you. Just nod or shake your head. You do?! Good for you! Because most people don't. [01:17:00] Most people don't. Because congressional district numbers, state representative district, and state senate districts are all different numbers, and if you had to look through that, nobody knew that! They'd be like, and then people would immediately turn to their partner, and they'd say, "Well, what's our district?" And they'd say, "I don't know!" So, what we wanted to do was send a letter to people, and in the envelope, it would say, "This is your district. These are the people that you're going to vote for." And then the label on the front said you're registered to vote, or you're not registered to vote, register now, voter registration must be done by this time. At the top it said their polling place, where they voted, because that was a matter of information, so it actually said, "Your polling place is on the 400<sup>th</sup> block of Seventh Street at ST. Luke's church. You go there to vote." And then, it had their name and address, and then on the inside

it had these are the people, this is how they stack up against their candidates, [01:18:00] that are the people that they're running against, and then there was an endorsement cards, these are the ones we really think you should vote for, but you can go back, and lots of people said, "You know, you endorse a (inaudible), I don't want to just go by your endorsement. I want to know where they stand." Well, we were sending information that told them. This is their past voting record, this is their current voting, this is what they say they're going to do, this is a quote from them, this is that kind of information. And we were able then to, then we mailed that directly to people, and we also had an envelope in there that they would give us, a donation. To mail a donation.

Pennsylvania, PA-GALA was a 501-c(4) organization, which means that they can endorse candidates, but donations to that organization are not tax-deductible, because you can't, we don't want people to be able to tax-deduct, in effect, lobbying [01:19:00] for a candidate, because in effect that looks like you are paying the candidate to do something. Businesses could do that, and we don't, that's not able to do. So, we didn't have sponsorships, and stuff like that. What happened in the middle of that was two things, because we were doing now colossal mailings. They



were enormous mailings; we'd have sometimes have 20 or 30 people be in the house to do the mailings. They were going to seven different districts, seven different counties, sometimes it would be 30, 40 thousand pieces of mail, and each piece of mail had different pieces of information in it. We'd actually have the cards that were the endorsement cards be color coded, so we didn't accidentally put the endorsement card of the wrong place into somebody else's envelope, so we had to keep those, we had to have enough space to really make that separate. We used to do the mailings before Trish and I had the two houses, we would do the mailings at the [01:20:00] Unitarian church, because they used to let people use space like that. They got so that they didn't do that anymore, but then we intentionally set it up so that we could do it in our own house. So, we did two things that happened in the middle of that, and one of them was that we recognized that Pride, which was running its Pride Festival since 1994, wasn't doing very good outreach to places to tell people when the Pride, even when the Pride Festival was. So, we allowed Pride to print a piece of, a flyer, a folded flyer, that we would put in that mailing that would tell people where, about the Pride Festival, because we were sending it out to 35,000 people, and Steve used to say, he lived in Philly then, he'd say,

"People in Philadelphia love to go outside of the city in the summer, so they could go someplace cooler and go to a fun gay event! So, this will be very successful." And it is true [01:21:00] that once we started to do those mailings, the numbers of people going to Pride jumped from about 3,000 to about 7,000 in the next year, because we're mailing to thousands of people! And the deal was that they would then help us with the mailing. They would print their own flyer, and then we would all get together, stuff the whole mailing together, and you know, that's when we had the 20 or 30 people, and then they would do this. Those were the biggest mailings that we were doing. We did a couple of other things for other issues, but that was particularly for that. And that was very successful for a while, although Pride frequently would not quite get the need to, like, they wouldn't fold, I would say to them, "Pay for the printer to fold the piece of paper, because otherwise all the work that your team will be doing, is folding your flyer. We want everybody to work together." And one time I remember having an argument with a guy who was supposed to be [01:22:00] in charge of that. I can't remember his name, he was a problematic guy on the Pride board, he ended up quitting the Pride board on the day of the (laughs) festival for some reason, not very smart, but

he wasn't responding, and he was the one who was supposed to be giving me the information, and he just wasn't responding and stuff, so I couldn't make public the information, I couldn't even tell people when the festival was, because we didn't know what day it was going to be. So, he would, so he said that he was printing the things, and I said, "Okay, we're going to do a mailing that's about 35,000, so you're going to need 35,000 or 30,000 pieces of paper that have your information but pay for them to fold it." And he said, "We don't want to do that." And I said, "Well then fold it before you get here." And then he said, "Well, I don't know that we'll have time." I said, "Well, look. I will pay-- I personally will pay for the folding machine so that you can fold the papers before." And he said, "No, we don't want to do it that way." [01:23:00] I said, "So, you're going to come to my house with 1,000, you know, 30,000 pieces of paper and sit there and fold your folder, how does that help us to do the mailing?" But they did it. They did that, and it was very stressful for us. I really, when they showed up, they actually came and they had the papers and I said, "These are supposed to be folded." And they said, "Well, we'll fold them now." (laughs) They were also really slow, so one of the things that we found out that was really terrific was that some

people can do mailings really fast, and some people can't. And if you have people, like Jill [Dewan?] was one that was a friend of ours, and she had several other friends, Lauren, Judy [Arden?] and a bunch of other people could do these mailings pretty fast, and they could do fast, but Jill could, she was amazing! And she could do the work of five slow people. Well, we didn't need to have the five slow people around they were in the way. So, we were trying to develop a team of people who could really do fast. Now, Trish and I can do mailings very, very quickly [01:24:00] although we haven't done them in a while. But so we were very successful in doing that, and doing those mailings, and we set up the house to be able to do that. Another thing that happened was, and I was talking about how we collected names, what we did was we were trying very hard to pass the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity to the state Hate Crimes Bill, and that was our first big effort, and that was Chris Young's thing, he really had wanted to do that, and he had advocated for that, and he was working on that right from the beginning in 1994, and when we were working on it, and one of the things about Steve Black was he was pretty good at lobbying. One of the things I said that I never really wanted to do was I didn't want to go to Harrisburg and talk

to legislators. I don't like doing that. I look like a dyke. They're not comfortable with pushy women. Those kinds of guys aren't. It just didn't work very well.

[01:25:00] And we actually did it a few times, but we did it, we ended up doing it for other reasons. We weren't really lobbying for, we were helping people lobby, helping our own community of people lobby, because they would often go, they were nervous, so we would go with them. But we didn't want to do that. Steve, on the other hand, was quite good at doing it, and he was working on the Hate Crimes Bill, and he figured out that Charlie Dent, who ended up being a congressman, he was a state representative at the time, and he was republican, and he was supportive of the bill, and we also had a prime sponsor, and I can't remember that guy's name, but he was a prime sponsor of the bill, but Charlie Dent said that he would work behind the scenes as a republican to get republicans on the legislature to pass the Hate Crimes Bill. So, and he and Steve really worked on that together, and [01:26:00] one of the ways we lobbied state legislators was that we would take a sheet of yellow card stock, bright yellow card stock, and we would, and you could make two four by six cards next to each other, so it was a long thing, one to the representative and one to the senate, and you would

get, we would get people, it would say we want you to pass the Hate Crimes Bill, in effect. The other side would say, Dear State Senator, Dear Representative, and then there was a blank, and then there was a space that said we want to add sexual orientation and gender identity for the Hate Crimes Bill, you know, stuff like that, and then it had your name and address and your other contact-- I think your telephone number. And so, we would get those, and then at the top there was a place for an X if they didn't want to be on our mailing list. Well, we were going to Pride festivals and we were collecting like four or five, six hundred cards from people at [01:27:00] every festival. Trish and I were particularly good at getting people to do that. We would call people over to do that. We would stand in the middle of the road at the Pride Festival and say, "Come and do this!" Other people who were working on those kinds of efforts would sit at a desk and hope somebody would come over to them. They would get 20 cards done, and that was the way Chris Young was. He would sit there, he would get a booth, he wouldn't have a table, he wouldn't have a tent, he would take off his shirt, he would sit in the middle of the thing with a box of cards, no pens, nothing, and then hope that somebody would come up to him, and Steve Black said, "You're really good at the

booth." Well, we were antique dealers. We had a tent, we had tables, we had black table clothes, we had signage, we had things that stood up, we had water that we would give away to people, we knew everybody. We would say, "Come over here! Come over here! [01:28:00] No, you have to do this today! Look, you can have fun, but you have to do this thing today. This is the one thing that you have to do." We'd have 15 people in a row signing the cards. We did it at Redding Pride, as soon as Reading Pride opened, we did it at Reading Pride, and we would get, you know, hundreds and hundreds. Like at the end of the day we'd have stacks of cards like this, we'd put them in the thing, and there would be the representative and the senator, and then Steve, this was one of his strengths, he would look at the person's address, and he could tell what legislative district they were in. Almost always. And he would sit down, and he would, we would like "district" the cards. We were calling it district the cards. People could call him up and say, "This person lives on such and such a street," I mean, Allentown has three, four districts, and he could figure out which district it was by where they lived, by looking at their address. He was really good at that. And he understood the districting maps too, which are very gerrymandered. Much better than even [01:29:00] people in

Harrisburg. So, he would be able to do that, and that was one of his big jobs to be able to figure out the district. We would district all the cards so that the representative and the senators' names were, and people said, "I don't know my senator." We said, "We'll put them in. Don't worry about it." Because they'll put the wrong, they put the US senator. "No, no. We'll write that in, don't worry about it." And then we would send these stacks in big envelopes to the state representative. Oh, 700 people just told me they wanted, you know, this Hate Crimes Bill to pass. But at the same time, we were gathering those people's names on our mailing list for to be able to send them voter information. That's how we were growing the lists up significantly. And Steve actually would sit at, he ended up, he stopped living in Philadelphia. He kept the apartment for a long time, but he stopped, it was very expensive, he stopped living there and he just was running Black's Luncheonette. He took half of the Luncheonette, and it was set up as his political office. And all day [01:30:00] when he had a break, he would sit down at his computer, which was in the Luncheonette, and he would type into, he would type the names and addresses into the mailing list, and he did that. Trish also managed the membership list. We had a membership list too, and Trish



managed the membership list, I think for a long time. And did that, it's very hard to do that, actually. It's very, very time consuming. It's a full-time job. But Steve was doing that, and he actually got a lot of PR from that, and he was in The Advocate as one of the Out 100, and there's a picture, I have it in my office actually, of him and me, sitting at his computer in Black's Luncheonette with his tie one, which he never wore in any other situation, and he is typing in to the, you know, from these stacks of cards that we had this voter information, and it was really significant that we had this enormous list, because [01:31:00] nobody else in any other state nobody had lists like this, so this was a big deal. So, soon we began to see that voter information like this was winning elections. That people who were running for office were very impressed at the number of supervoters that we had. And one time, Roy Offerbach was running for Mayor, and he was running as a democrat, and he said that he would support the addition of sexual orientation and gender identity to the non-discrimination ordinance in the city of Allentown. So, one of the things that people who are running for offices have is a list of registered voters, and it's something you buy for your campaign, that's completely public. And you can actually sort the list to see if they're supervoters.

So, Roy Offerbach said that he was going to share the list with PA-GALA for a [01:32:00] couple of reasons, and it had to do with being able to figure out how to send certain information to people. So, he was showing me how to use the list, I was in his legislative office, he was running for, I think that was when he was running for, he was running for Mayor of Allentown. So, I sit down with him, and he says, "Well, let's just take your city district, which is the eight one ward." And I said, "Okay." So, he puts it in, and he goes, "So, we're going to just take the democrat supervoters out of this." And this was because I was working on a campaign. I was working on Gayle Hoover's campaign to pass the ordinance. So, he shows me this thing and what pops up is there's ten supervoters, okay? Because most people are not supervoters, and I live in a small district, so at any given time we'd maybe only have 125 people who actually vote, sometimes less. Maybe 57. But of those, are supervoters. It's a small district, though. We have a small population. So, [01:33:00] the ten people who pop up, I look at the list, and there's me, and Trish, and Gayle Erich, and then there's I think Ann [Slechter?] and Jim Gallucci and Gayle Hoover lived in the district, and I said, at the end of it, I said, "Seven of those ten supervoters are on our list as LGBT people." And I could

sort of see his face blanch. Now, he wasn't afraid of us, because he was on our, but he was realizing that we had become an enormously successful and significant block vote. We could control the vote by giving people information. We could win elections for people. Now we ultimately did that, but one of the things was that Marty Velazquez and Emma Tropiano election where Marty won by one vote, there was no question, that he [01:34:00] would not have won the primary had we not told people to vote for him. Because even if just four people voted for him, he won the election based on that thing. So, people were becoming aware of that, and it was very successful and significant. So, let's see, I've talked about that, so we're collecting the information, we're collecting this, okay. So, now we get to the point where Steve says, so in 2002 there's a vote for the Hate Crimes Bill, and it passes, and it was a big deal. And I remember Steve says that Charlie Dent, after it passed, he was dancing a jig, because he made it pass. Even though our prime sponsor was someone else, he had taken guys out to dinner, it was the quintessential lobbying, you know, "You really should do this," you know, and we were able to pass that, and Steve was very, very happy about that. [01:35:00] At the same time, Chris Young was furious. Because Steve, everyone knew, state-wide, and

there was another organization called SPARK that was kind of working on it, but they didn't, they weren't very effective, and they ended up dissolving, they were a state-wide organization. They dissolved after six months and they'd done some, they had some problems and stuff, but there were people involved that were pretty significant. And but Steve was the one that was working on it. Also, there was an organization in Philadelphia called Gay and Lesbian Legal Defense and then they became Equality Pennsylvania, which ultimately Adrienne was involved with. They're not really running anymore. At that time, it was just a Philadelphia organization and Stacey Sobel who was a lawyer in Philadelphia was the one that was the executive director of that organization, she was working on this too, and trying to work on this piece of legislation, but really it was Steve Black who [01:36:00] made the Hate Crimes Bill pass, because he, we just chipped away at that. I mean we sent to legislators 10,000 lobbying cards to support the passage of that piece of legislation. It's an enormous amount of people. It's hard to ignore something like that. And it was to every, and Steve said it was to every single district. Every single district across the state got at least one card. Now, one of the things that we had at the beginning, when we were saying to people, we want you to

fill out this questionnaire that said, so that gay and lesbian voters could vote for you, they would say, "We don't have any gay and lesbian voters in our district." And we were showing people that that was absolutely not true, because here we have these 10,000 cards. And people frequently said, "We don't have any gay people!" I said, "Yes, you do. You really do." And there were a number of things that proved that, but one of the things was, we were in the 90s, we were generating [01:37:00] thousands and thousands of cards for people, and so it passed in 2002, and Steve was really, really happy about that. Meanwhile, while that was happening, in 1998 Trish and I decided, and Steve and Trish and I decided, that it was time to try to pass an anti-discrimination ordinance in the city of Allentown, and one of the reasons we were going to do it in Allentown was because Trish and I lived in Allentown, we had worked on campaigns, we had people that could help to make that happen, and we had the largest number of our people on our list in Allentown. But also, because we lived here. Because you can't push a piece of legislation unless you have local people. And we lived here. So, the city of Allentown already had an anti-discrimination ordinance that was passed. It was the only city in Lehigh Valley that already had an ordinance, and the ordinance was

passed in 1965 in conjunction [01:38:00] with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that was in the United States. And the primary reason that those acts were passed, was to support people based on race. Because people were discriminated against routinely who were black, frankly. It was really about that, it was the time of Martin Luther King, responding to Martin Luther King's death, all that kind of stuff happened. And it was true that people who were black were rampantly discriminated against, so the state, so our law and the state law and the federal law said we'll protect people based on religion and race and national origin and sex and creed I think, and ancestry I think that's what the Allentown law said. So, we were going to have to add sexual orientation and gender identity into that law. We also wanted to add the words "actual and perceived," and by the way, the Hate Crimes law when it passed also had the protected classes of disability, because [01:39:00] people who are disabled are often discriminated against as hate crimes, and we also had actual and perceived in the law, because that was a loophole, people would say "I was beating up that person because they were black, it turns out they weren't black. So, I'm not," or "I beat up somebody outside of the gay bar. The person wasn't really gay, so even though I beat

them up, I didn't do it as, it wasn't a hate crime because I perceived them, it doesn't matter, because they aren't really gay." Well, actual and perceived takes care of that circumstance. At the time that the Hate Crimes Bill passed, it was the absolute most progressive Hate Crimes Bill in the United States at the time. It was very, very significant, and we talked about that at length all over the place. It was a big deal. And it was a big feather for Steve, he was really, really happy about that. Meanwhile, I just want to toss in, that Chris Young was furious about it. But [01:40:00] (laughs) and he said stuff about it, and he said like you know there's problem with it, and there was a problem with it, in that it was put into another piece of legislation that as actually a farm terrorism bill, and it was supposed to protect, as Steve said, they gutted it. They took out the farm terrorism, but they put in that you can't discriminate against gay people. And that's actually a technique that legislators do all the time. Steve said, "It's too bad that vegetables are no longer protected, but fruits are." So (laughs) I thought that was very funny. Steve also said that Chris Young was furious about the passage of this because, (laughs) and Steve said, I remember him calling me up, and he goes, "Yeah, I can hear Chris now: 'Steve stole

my bill! And he passed it!" (laughs) Because Chris had been trying to [01:41:00] pass this bill for eight years. So, it passed. And there were some problems, some very serious problems with the way they passed it, but it did pass, and it was in 2002. Okay, so, go back to 1998 when we were talking about adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the Hate Crimes Bill, and we really wanted to do that. I mean to the Civil Rights Bill in the city of Allentown. And we talked about doing it, but we weren't ready to do it. I mean, for one thing you shouldn't really try to pass that kind of bill unless you're pretty sure that you have the votes to do it on a council, because losing is really debilitating. All of the sudden, the Human Relations Commission of the city of Allentown, and at the time it was the only city in the Lehigh Valley that had a Human Relations Commission, because you have to legislate that, usually with a non-discrimination law, [01:42:00] the guy who was the head of the Human Relations Commission of the City of Allentown was a guy named Felix Molina, and we knew Felix. We had known Felix. And he calls me up and he goes, "Last night at the Human Relations Commission, we made a public announcement that we're going to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Non-Discrimination Bill." I said, "How are you going to do that?" And he



goes, "Well, we're going to get City Council to support it." I said, "Have you talked to anybody on City Council about this?" And he goes, "No." And I said, "Well, how do you know that they're going to do that?" And he said, "Well, there's a way to do that that is, in Allentown where if you have 35 signatures from voters in the city, that they will introduce a piece of legislation." Because you can't introduce a piece of legislation unless you have a sponsor and a co-sponsor. They have to be a sponsor and at least a second to move the legislation [01:43:00], and then a second, and then it goes to committee, and then it goes to a vote after the committee passes it through. Well, they didn't do any of that! They had no idea as to whether or not it was going to pass! So, okay. So now it's 12 o'clock, does that mean we're at the end (laughs)?

MF: Well, what I'm wondering, so really, we probably shouldn't go over 90 minutes, but I'm wondering if this isn't a good place to stop, because we kind of have that PA-GALA arc right to the Hate Crimes Bill in Pennsylvania in 2002. What if we set up our next interview, we start here with the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance in 1998? I mean, that adding to the Civil Rights legislation, does that seem like a good plan?

LB: Yes. Did I say anything wrong that I should (inaudible?)

F1: No, you didn't.

LB: (laughs) She says no. So, yes. See how long? I can go on forever, Mary. I can talk for the rest--

MF: It's so great! [01:44:00] I mean, the kind of stories you share are so fabulous. And I like this idea that we're sort of seeing from the Gay and Lesbian League of Voters to PA-GALA, it's sort of a nice arc for the story, and maybe we it, we can take as long as we want on the Anti-Discrimination Ordinance.

LB: Well, the ordinance and 2002 were significant, because when we started the ordinance in 98 it didn't pass until 2002. And several other things happened in 2002 that were very significant, so, it is probably a good idea to stop here.

MF: Okay.

LB: No, I can go on forever. But, yeah, that would be tiresome for somebody to watch (laughs).

MF: So, I know you're busy next Friday, so what I'm going to do is, and I'm busy next Friday afternoon, I'm going to send a few times to see if we could, because we have good momentum, I think if you're available to try and do it once a week, I think would be good.

LB: Sure!

MF: [01:45:00] Okay, so I guess just to end, although now we've had a conversation about dates, I'll just say it is such a

pleasure to hear this sort of deep history of those two organizations, especially the information about the voters' guide, I mean, I'm just so grateful that you took the time today, thank you so much.

LB: I want to add at the end of this that that model of, that voters' guide with that voter information, I firmly believe, and I'm not even done talking about it, but I firmly believe, that if Progressives in every state had that kind of organization, we could win every election. We just could. And we did! We changed the entire direction of Civil Rights and of Progressive politics in Allentown because of that thing, frankly. So, yeah. I would love to keep talking about it, and I love talking about this, this is great, and you know I can go on forever, so...

MF: Well, Danielle and I talk about that frequently, like [01:46:00] if one of us didn't have a full-time job, we would do that voters' guide. I mean, every, I can't tell you, every time we go to vote, and we're supervoters, you know, we've done our research, but we have friends consistently, even my parents, "Who should we vote for? I can't find it in The Morning Call." You know, it's a huge issue, and you really gave that incredible model and as you already have articulated, it was transformative!

LB: Yeah, it was totally--

MF: --For our region, for our state! I mean, you have that arc to the 2002 Hate Crimes Bill, I mean, that is an arc that shows like that kind of work really changes things! But also, what you show, and I think this is the piece that Danielle and I keep talking about, like oh we'd love to do that as a kind of model, is like how much time it took (laughs).

LB: Oh, God. Remember, that in effect, for Trish and me at that time, we were antique dealers. We started doing that antique dealer thing [01:47:00] when... And we were landlords. So, and we all through the 90s and the end of the 80s that's what we did, up until, until my dad died in 1997, we stopped doing it in 1997. We were able to do this stuff because we didn't have a regular job. And Steve didn't have a regular job. He worked for himself, he was doing it in his business, and we can see as I go on to talk about this, some of the other people who were key to do this, they had to have the kind of jobs that allowed them to be extremely autonomous, and that's one of the things about elected officials. You know, if you have a fulltime job, it is really hard to run for office. So, but yeah, [01:48:00] to produce that information, it worked particularly well-- well, I can go on and on. But in producing that information, it worked particularly well to

mail it to people, because sometimes when you put that online, it can be exploited in a negative way, and you have to be careful about that. Plus, it was really significant for people to get this in the mail. It was another thing that Trish, that I haven't even mentioned, but the day before the primary, we would get a whole group of volunteers to call up every single person on our list and tell them, thousands of people and say, "Tomorrow is the primary election. Do you have your voters' guide, do you have your endorsement card? Don't forget to vote." In those days everybody had answering machines. Nobody had cell phones. Or few people. Really nobody had cellphones. We would pray, I would PRAY that [01:49:00] no one would answer the phone, because I didn't want to talk to them. I just wanted to remind them. Because it's hard for me not to talk. But I could do a hundred people in an hour, and if we had, if I had, if my job was to call 1000 people, then I could finish it in 10 hours, but if I got someone on the phone and I talked to them for ten minutes, it blew the whole thing. So, now, it would be much harder, because it's much harder to get people's telephone numbers. I mean, we can, but people don't answer their phone unless they recognize the number. Many people don't. And many people don't even pay attention to their messages. So, on

the other hand, social media makes it much easier to reach large amounts of people by pressing a button. And that is very significant. I think most people are more aware of when the [01:50:00] primary election is now than they were then. I remember one time Candida, who is now a City Councilwoman, we were driving by the bar, and she was standing on the steps of the bar, I rolled down the window and I said, "Did you vote?" It was a primary day, and she goes, "What?" And I said, "It's primary day!" And she said, "It is?" I mean, and now she's a councilperson! And she didn't even know that it was a primary day. Now she's, you know, a savvy political person. So, you know, lots of people don't know. Lots of people don't even know there is a primary, or off year elections. That you vote for coroner (laughs). You know. And that there can be LGBT issues with regard to being a coroner. So. Anyway.

MF: Well, I am so grateful to talk to you today, and I'm going to stop recording, but then I want to talk to you for a minute out of the recording. Thank you, Liz!

LB: Bye! Thank you. It was great.

MF: So, let me--

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