

Transcript of Oral History Interview of Alan and Kathy Trout

Interviewed by Kathy Bradford on October 27, 2006

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Kathy Bradford: Today is Friday, October 27, 2006. I'm speaking with Alan and Kathy Trout at their home in North Ogden. First I would like to ask you, Alan, about your background - where you were born and grew up and how you two got together.

Alan Trout: I was born way back in the year 1948 in Denver, Colorado. I went to high there and lived there all my life until I moved away to go to me in. In my high school years, I met my wife Kathy Moore. We dated in high school. I was always interested in wildlife, so I went to Colorado State University in Fort Collins right after high school. I entered college immediately after graduating from high school in 1967 and went for a four-year degree in Wildlife Management. During that time Kathy and I got married. I graduated in the spring of 1971--right on time - and was offered employment at J. Clark Salyer Refuge in north central North Dakota. We had hoped to stay in Colorado at the time. Looking back on it now, it was really the best thing that we didn't, but at that time we wanted to stay close to home. I was really looking for a job there with the Colorado Game and Fish Department. That didn't work out, and we were very much in prayer and so it of worried about whether there would be anything for us.

This job opportunity came up, and so we packed our bags and went all the way to the northern border of North Dakota where we knew nobody and knew nothing about North Dakota. I had to get a map out to even see how that set from Fort Collins. We went up there and spent three years at that refuge, which was a wonderful experience We had a child along the way. Then we moved to Lake Andes, South Dakota in 1974 and spend 3 1/2 years there, and then we eventually moved to the Platte River Valley of Nebraska in a district termed the Rain Water Basin District. I eventually became Manager there. By applying for a job here, I told my wife I wouldn't stand a chance of getting a job at the Bear River Refuge.

KB: Why would be so hard to get on here? Is Bear River a bigger refuge?

AT: Bear River has always been a prestigious refuge, and it was really the flagship of the National Wildlife Refuge system. It was a famous refuge with very high visibility. Bear River had had very few managers. VA. Wilson was the second manager, but he managed the place for 30 years, followed by Lloyd Gunther, then Ned Peabody for a few years, and then myself. All that was between 1928 and 1989. Not very many federal facilities have that kind of longevity. Most managers average three to five years. It was a very prestigious place. Very few managers had been able to manage this famous place A lot of people who had come through Bear River had gone on to some notoriety in the service. I threw my name in the hat but assured my wife that we wouldn't get it. I thought, Well, if I put my name in the hat, they won't bug me about applying for stuff.

Then we found out I got the job, and I should say that part of it was not because I was such a hotshot guy. It was because the area had been destroyed by flood. A big part of Bear River Refuge's history was that in 1983, the flood of Great Salt Lake had completely destroyed the refuge. That made it a lot less attractive for folks to apply for in 1989 because I came down with

no promises for a long-term job here. They weren't sure at that time in the regional offices what they were going to do with it. They were even considering giving management of it to the state of Utah and just walking away from it. So with those kinds of caveats, not a lot of people were interested in coming, so that really made it easier. It thinned out the ranks of those that would have been highly competitive and would have knocked me out. They looked for greener pastures at the time, so that kind of led up to us getting the job here. In August of 1989 we left Kearney, Nebraska and ventured into this area for the first time in our lives. We'd never seen Brigham City, had never seen the refuge, knew nothing about the culture here. It was a, total surprise. My wife turned 40 that same month. There was a bit of a shock.

Kathy Trout: And we did have two other children, one in South Dakota and one in Nebraska.

KB: Well, Kathy, I would like to stop right here and get you up to that point, and then we'll go on from there. Tell me the same things about your background.

KT: I was born and raised in Golden, Colorado and had what I think is an ideal childhood. I played. That's mainly what I did - built forts, made reptile zoos, rode bicycles, had a horse. They were just fun, fun years.

KB: More children should have fun like that instep of being so over-programmed, I think.

AT: That's true.

KT: That's what I wish for all children. So I was born there; I went to high school there. Al and I had met in high school and were in the same church. I went to Colorado State University for two years, ran out of money, and we chose to get married at that point. Then, as Al said, after he graduated we moved to North Dakota and had our oldest son Chad. We moved to South Dakota and had Ryan, then moved to Nebraska and had our daughter Amy.

KB: Were those moves difficult for you after you'd been in just one location most of your life, or did you like it?

KT: I had lived in the same location all my life, same house. My folks are still in that same house, the house I was born in, so yes, it was really difficult to move to North Dakota because that was a long, long distance. But the other two moves were glorious because we were moving closer to home and into more populated areas. North Dakota was very good to us, and I'm glad we were there, but I'm glad it was only three years base the winters were harsh. Our area was very remote, so I was unable to work or get out much.

I can tell you kind of a cut story about the Refuge Manager there. He told the men that the women had one night a month when we went to birthday club, and one night a week that we went to ceramics and they were not to mess with that. Those men that had children were to stay home and take care of the kids. That was an order of the Refuge Manager.

We lived right on the refuge. We lived with the people Al worked with. We socialized with them. They were our family. In fact, the Refuge Manager was here just last week and spent three or four days. So you do become more like family in the refuge system.

Then in Nebraska I had the opportunity to go back to school at Kearney State University and did finish my degree at that time.

AT: And we did have one child in each state.

KT: Except Utah, and we won't have one here. Maybe we'll have a grandchild in Utah.

AT: Maybe we will! That would kind of round it all out.

KB: What was your major, Kathy?

KT: Business Administration, and all of those years I was a stay-at-home mom. I stayed home with the children.

KB: Well, that brings you to Brigham City, and Al mentioned the cultural shock. Was that a hard issue for both of you?

KT: I don't think it was for us as adults. I think we were very well revved into the community. The neighbors were great. It was a little more difficult for our children because they didn't go to some of the activities that some of the other children were going to, so it was a little more of a struggle for them. However, our oldest son adjusted very, very well. He immediately found six male friends, and they climbed. He loved the mountains here, and he said it was the best thing that ever happened him to move to Utah.

Our second son didn't do quite as well. However, as time progressed he probably became the child with the most friends.

AT: He was very social.

KT: To begin with we thought that would never happens but he is a very social young man and had tons of friends. Everywhere I went, they'd said, "Are you Ryan's mom?"

So he did well after a time, but it took him a little time to adjust. Our daughter was just in the third grade, and she's very adaptable, did very well, stills lives in Utah. She met a young man from Utah and they're married.

KB: So everybody is happy, and it worked out well.

AT: It worked out in the long run.

KT: We moved them at awkward times in their lives. Our oldest son was a junior in high school, and our middle son was a seventh grader, so that may have been why he had more problems. Seventh grade is a hard year. Amy was just in third grade, so she adapted pretty quickly.

KB: It sounds like they did well, and do you think they may be a little stronger after that bit of a struggle than they would have been staying in just one place as you did?

KT: Oh sure.

AT: I think that definitely makes a difference. They experienced the regional and cultural difference you get in different places, and I think you come to the conclusion that people are mostly alike wherever you go. Even though things look different, you're struck eventually by how similar people are, not how different they are.

KT: That's a lesson we all should learn at some point in our lives. Well, now tell me about the Refuge.

AT: The Refuge, well, its establishment in 1928 was really a unique thing. Let me back up just a just one more step. Bear River is part of the National Wildlife System. That was started in 1903 by Teddy Roosevelt, and he designated Pelican Island as the first Federal Wildlife Reserve. This was a new idea - and it was an American idea - of setting aside land just for wildlife. That didn't happen all over the world, and it was really the American psyche from our frontier mentality and from the idea that man interacting with nature was an important part of the American story. We always had a frontier, and that frontier shaped the American culture and American history. As that diminished in the 1800s, it took a man like Teddy Roosevelt who was born in the mid 1800s and sampled part of that bounty. The buffalo ran wild when he was and he saw all of that fade. Then he became President and recognized the importance of that as part of our national culture and heritage, so he started the first federal refuge. I say federal because that's quite different from the state network of refuges. A lot of states have a good network of land they set aside, but it doesn't compare the network of lands that were set aside federally.

Bear River is part of that federal network, and it started early on. The first refuge started in 1903, established by Teddy Roosevelt, and then there were a few kind of added to that system, but not too many. By 1928 when Bear River was established, it was very unique in that instead of being an area being designated by the President as a refuge, this area was designated by an act of Congress because the local people got together and didn't want that delta out there where the Refuge now is to disappear. So it was really a grass roots effort that established Bear River, and we're very proud of that. I say we because we're part of us now, of the community. We're proud of those folks back in 1928 who petitioned Congress to try and save that area for future generations. When they did, they also developed the area with a series of 50 miles of dikes and about 50 water-control structures. They set aside 100 square miles (64,500 acres) - a big area with lots of water control to make it better for wildlife, to help improve habitat conditions and then put a manager out there with a staff.

Through the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s, the area just blossomed. It was very well-known for its research, for its management - the kind of story where the hand of man sort of joined nature and helped it bloom. So it was a compelling story of a place that people just loved to go see and to experience. Things went very well for the Refuge for a number of decades.

In 1983 the Great Salt Lake rose twelve feet, over topped all the dikes, destroyed all the buildings. There was even an airstrip out there. I don't know if you know about that, but they had an airplane. They had a research laboratory. They had a brand new visitors center. They had offices, residences, shops - an entire headquarters network - completely destroyed. When that happened, the Refuge was disbanded. All the employees were scattered out to different places, and all the equipment that was left was given away, and the buildings just went to rubble.

KB: And that's how it was when you got here?

AT: We got here in August, and Kathy and I took an evening and drove out and looked at it.

KB: Were you horrified wondering what you'd gotten into?

KT: I was. I don't know what he thought, but you could see a lot of the roofs of the buildings on the ground and dilapidated. It was not a pretty site.

AT: It was all barren Do you remember that? It was just all mud flats and alkali, and then all these buildings, like Kathy said, that had become just piles of rubble with a roof on top. They had just collapsed when the ice hit and took them straight down. You'd go out and look, and it was all barren with just rubble. It was closed with a big gate across the road. It was kind of sobering.

KB: Was your job to fix that?

AT: My job involved a couple of things. First, I was told there was going to be some money coming that we could do some initial work with. Secondly, I was to assess the entire situation for the future which would have included: Just giving the area way and walking away or other alternatives up to getting it going again. I was to propose the different kinds of things that would be possible for an eventual administrative decision, and it didn't look very good there at first. Then I was told right away that the money that they thought was coming to help do some initial work was cut from the budget, and that was that. My office was at that time in the Breitenbeker Plaza in one of the back hallways, and it was a double office of about 13x13' wide without even windows or doors. It was just a back closet kind of thing, and that was my office. In fact, I didn't even have a telephone. I had to go down to Fred Meyer and buy a telephone and plug it in. So it was quite a start.

KB: So your big aspirations to come to the prestigious place were a little dashed I imagine.

AT: Things were kind of on a low ebb there for a while. Eventually what happened was that Bob Ebeling came into my office about a month later and said he wanted to volunteer. I didn't have a clerk or an assistant or anything like that. In fact, I didn't have a Refuge vehicle, and ended up bumming one off of the Medicine Lake Refuge. They turned one in that was completely dilapidated for a replacement. I said, "That's better than nothing. I'll take that one."

It was a white kind of station wagon. They called them station deliveries. They didn't have a back seat; they just had a front seat in a station wagon kind of a car. That was the only Refuge vehicle. Later on I got a used beat-up Dodge that we eventually started calling Old Yeller. Those were the two vehicles that the Refuge had for that first year.

As the story goes, Bob Ebeling cue in and said he would like to volunteer. I told him I didn't know if I could use a volunteer. It sounds kind of funny now, because that really marked the Refuge. Its eventual establishment was volunteerism, but I had never worked with volunteers before. I eventually told him to come on over and we'd see what we could do. That was Friday, and I thought about it on Saturday I talked to Kathy about it and said, "This guy said he wanted to volunteer."

KT: Well, he was willing to volunteer for a year full-time.

AT: Kathy said, "What do you have to lose?" And I said, "Well, nothing I guess."

So I called him up and said, "Bob, why don't you meet me at the office on Monday morning?"

So he did. He met me there, and I gave him a key to the office, and I said, "This makes you my assistant. We'll find you a desk, and we'll get you a phone. You have no money. Whatever we do here, you're going to have to figure out where you'll get the funds or the materials, the supplies or manpower, and we'll talk about some goals. It's me and you, buddy."

That's how it started out. He was full of enthusiasm, and he really inspired the idea that, "Hey, this is doable."

KB: Was he retired then?

AT: He had just retired from Thiokol. In fact, he would be a good person to interview because he was in on all that from the beginning. You can tell him the little background that I gave and tell him to give his view of it. We had a great time together. He eventually gave over two years and gave us life, time, personal resources, dollars, vehicles, equipment. He raised some funds. He did everything.

We set same goals, and by the spring of 1990 we wanted to have the Refuge ready to impound water like it had before. The dikes had been heavily damaged because of flood and the ice floes. There were 50 water structures that all required rehabilitation. That didn't flinch Bob at all; he came up with ideas. He was just a man full of energy He's much shorter than I am. We looked a little like Mutt and Jeff actually, and we had a lot of fun together. Over the course of the next few months, Bob got about 50 volunteers that would show up, and he organized them into work crews and wound up getting money from various organizations - Ducks Unlimited, for example, and others, private donations. People were very generous. We went to the City Council meeting one night, and one of the City Council members opened his checkbook, wrote a check, and said, "Use this." Box Elder Wildlife Federation, under their 501C3 designation became our treasurer, so we organized as Friends of the Refuge. As they took in money, that was kept in a separate account with the Box Elder Wildlife Federation so we were able to use their organizational structure for that.

These all wound up to be key players. Bob Valentine was on the County Commission at the time, and he'd be another great one to interview about the Refuge. He's done so much. I went to meet the Commissioners, and when I met Bob, he was very friendly and said, "If you need some help sometime, let me know " That turned out to be a very long-lasting personal friendship as well as a professional friendship.

So some really good things happened that first year, and as it turned out over the course of the fall of 1989 and the winter of '90 and the early spring of '90, the volunteers were very hard at work. We ended up having a shop space donated by the people that owned the Indian School because by that time the Indian School had already been disbanded, and Lily Pond Association owned it at that time. Bob had some connections. He talked to the folks that owned it, and they said, "Yes, you can use that and this is free." He said, "Well, we need power with that" So they

did that for free.

Now you have to realize that I'm not going to my regional office asking if we could do this stuff because if you got it balled up in the federal system, it would kill it waiting to get approval, so we just did stuff. When we got done, we'd report what we got done. People would say, "How did you do that?"

We didn't tell the people in my organization all this stuff, or they wouldn't pour cold water on it. We had a shop, and Bob got people to get supplies. For example, we went into Anderson Lumber, and we needed a whole lot of 2x6s to cut to put into the slotted flumes in the water-control structure so that it could be used to dam the water back. You need just scads of those. With 50 structures, you use a lot of lumber. We didn't have any, and we didn't have any way to buy it, so Bob said, "Come on, Al, we're going to Anderson Lumber "

So we went right in the front door like we owned the place, and Bob said, "Where's the manager?"

They pointed to the back of the store, and we just went right back to the office, and Bob knocked on the door and in we went. He introduced himself as Bob Ebeling and pointed to me standing right behind him and stated that I was the new Refuge Manager. He just proceeded to say that a new organization named the Friends of the Refuge were there to rehabilitate the Refuge and they need some donated lumber. There just so happened to be a big pallet of 16' long 2x6s. We could see them out the front window. Bob said, "We need that pallet right there. That's what we need."

The guy kind of looked at us strangely, and Bob said, "And we need it delivered right away because the Friends of the Refuge are going to cut those, we're going to scab them together, and we're going to get the Refuge going again."

The manager just kind of looked dumbfounded for a minute, and then he said okay. So I'm discovering a couple of things that came through loud and clear, and that was that the community was behind the Refuge, and that there was power in partnership - the Refuge working with local volunteers and local people. It became a very fun thing. Bob organized a whole bunch of retired people during the day, and they were sawing and bolting boards together and getting ready to take them out to each of the structures. By the way, they were a long ways out there. For those that had jobs, he had an evening shift. It looked like Santa's workshop out there. They were just going like crazy, and sure enough, they completed their task.

They got all those built, and then they had to go out and work on the water-control structure. We put catwalks on them so they could access each of the bays and put these flash boards in. They did all that; they did a bunch of stuff. I'd have to look at the notes to list all of it, but it was just a huge amount of work getting the Refuge water system ready to hold water in early spring.

KB: Did you have any paid staff by then or was it still completely done by volunteers.

AT: It was still just volunteers at that time. It was incredible! That's kind of what got the eye of Representative Jim Hansen. He had always loved the refuge, and he has a long history with the Refuge. He was a natural supporter of the Refuge, but when he saw how much the community was behind it. That really just brought the community, the Refuge, and our Congressional people

together. That was a powerful combination and was really what did the job.

It was a lot of fun. My youngest son Ryan was in 7th grade, and he just went out all summer of 1990 and worked with those volunteers. By that time we were able to get some radios so they could communicate, and everybody had a call number. Ryan's was co (double ought), so when we'd hear on the radio "double ought this" or "double ought", that was Ryan's cue. But he spent his summer working out there, which was a good experience for him and being around those men.

The highlight was on July 4, 1990, when we had an opening ceremony for the Refuge, and totally by volunteer work the 12-mile auto tour route had been redone, opened to the public, and we were holding water in refuge impoundments. That was quite a milestone for the Refuge. It was quite an experience for me just to be there. We invited Congressman Jim Hansen in to sort of be our master of ceremonies and to speak for a little bit. Congressman Hansen and I hit it off right away. I can't say enough about what he did to make the ensuing years of my career very fun and exciting. He made some promises to me that he always kept. He'd say, "I'll go back to Washington soon. I'll get some money for you. I'll help you out"

And he did. Every time we went to him, he just did everything he could do help us, which was a lot.

That was the reason why when we culminated all of our Refuge restoration efforts into that Education Center some 16 years later, we put his name on it because he had been through the entire process with us, got us special federal funding later on to finish all the rehabilitation and to build an expanded network of dikes to further improve the Refuge. He helped us with expanding and purchasing acreage to add on another 10,000 acres, and for funding \$11 million for the Education Center. We surprised him by insisting that we put his name on it.

KB: I'm sure he was touched by that.

AT: He was, and it was really neat to do that for him, and he fought it, and Bob Valentine and I said, "We're going to do it."

And he said, "Your names should be on it, not mine."

Anyway that's sort of fast forwarding to where things are now with restoration first, then expansion with purchasing more land, and then we did the improvements with the dike system. . We had done the wildlife kinds of things first, and then the last increment was to make it a better place for the visiting public. That's why we went after a top-rate world-class education center Eventually it was all put together because we had Congressional support, community support and also my immediate supervisor, Lany Shanks in the Regional Office caught the vision. Between all those elements we were able to put that together.

KB: You have a fairly sizable staff now, don't you?

AT: There about a dozen people in there now, yes -- compared to one to start with.

KB: I have visited that center and I was very impressed. It is really state of the art.

AT: Oh, great. I'm glad you liked it. One part of the function of that is the Refuge will be connecting with the public school system with a formalized agreement and formalized curriculum. So it's not just a happenstance thing, or the Refuge isn't looked upon as a field trip day. We didn't want that to happen. We want people to have fun, and we hope they'll come back again and again, but the real part that was so important was to get the message of conservation into the schools and to reach kids during their elementary, junior high and high school years. We wanted to make a real difference in the way they think and the way they put their value system together, understanding the importance of nature in the quality of life. That's why you can't do that happenstance. You can't do that just with a nice program for the day that's disjointed from the rest of their curriculum. We think of the Refuge as an outdoor classroom, and outdoor laboratory and a place to experience the wholeness of nature. The Refuge will be and is already connecting informally with the school system with a curriculum that includes visits to the Refuge, that includes use of the Refuge classrooms, the research lab, the Refuge lands. So the kids can actually go out and get into nature, do some collecting, analysis and understand that it's fun. That's part of what nature is. By definition it's a fun, rewarding place to be that really affects you for a lifetime, and it serves as a way to get recharged and reverberated from the day-to-day lives that we've created for ourselves in civilization, which quite frankly a lot of times ain't all that good. We need both.

KB: You must feel so good to have restored that from the ruins. And I know you didn't do it alone, but you were in charge of it.

AT: Well, I feel very fortunate because my wife Kathy was a staunch supporter and was at my side all the time, and I wouldn't have lasted a day without having her there as my helpmate and encourager. With that I had strength to go on, and of course the City, the County and all of our volunteers and partners provided the other kinds of energy that we needed. Then the staff that eventually showed up down here I was able to hire and hand-pick, so they were exceptional. We had really a great amount of teamwork. All of that served to be an energetic whole. So for me it was a lot of fun. Everybody else did most of the work; I got to ride the wave, but it was a great place to be.

KB: Well, Kathy, now let's talk about you and how you got into your career

KT: Okay. One thing I did forget to mention was that prior to moving here, I did work for Head Start during the time my children were in school.

KB: Where was that?

KT: That was in Kearney, Nebraska. I worked there part-time for six years prior to moving here. It was wonderful because I had the same vacations as the kids. I went to work the same time as they did, so I'd drop them off, go to work, and pick them up. I don't think our middle son ever raged that I worked because he was always wondering if I had his favorite jeans washed while he was in school and things like that. At any rate, that kind of helped me get some social work background, which was the area that I always wanted to go into anyway. Sort of by mistake I ended up being a business major.

When we moved here, I stayed home for about a year. I finished my degree. I had been going to

school, and I had two classes left to finish my degree when we found out we were moving here because Al had told me we wouldn't be moving here, so I wasn't concerned at all.

AT: I lied!

KT: I talked to my adviser there, and he moving that I take a couple of class at Weber State and transfer them back there, and he would graduate me from Kearney State, which is now University of Nebraska at Kearney. So when we got here, I stayed home for a while through that adjustment period. I finished those two classes, and then I was very fortunate to go to work at the Division of Child and Family Services under Grant Bartholomew. Do you know Grant?

KB: Yes, I do and his wife Paula.

KT: They're fabulous people, and he was wonderful to work for. I remember in the interview with him, I said, "I have to tell you that if one my kids is sick or if my kids need me, I won't be here." And I went home and told Al, "I don't think I'll get that job."

But he called me the next day and offered me the job. He said, their own families, we don't want them coming to work here and being concerned about other people's families more than their own."

I worked there for about 12 years of and on for Grant. I worked also for what is now called the Division of Workforce Services for a few years as an employment counselor. It's a job service. You can also get financial assistance, Medicaid and those kinds of things through that office. I worked for it when it was called Office of Family Support. Then I went back to the Division of Child and Family Services when Grant was able to secure a supervisory position for the support staff, so it was kind of related position there.

KB: So your business training came in well too.

KT: Right. So I worked there. During the end of the time that worked, there was a fairly huge struggle with the Box Elder Family Support Center. They were providing shelter care for the children that were removed by the Division of Child and Family Services, and also they were doing prevention services for child abuse. There were some problem between DCFS and the Center at that time. The director there had a good heart for children, and she was working very hard to make it work, and the Division was working very hard to make it work. But it just didn't seem to be working for a while.

To back up, the way the Box Elder Family Support Center came into existence was once again a corps of individuals from the community. There was a person who worked for ISAT, which was at that time Intermountain Sexual Abuse Treatment Center. She just felt a huge need that our community has something that would help prevent what she was seeing in her practice of sexual abuse. Grant Bartholomew was working at that time, and I got most of this history from him. He told me that there were about five people that came together and asked, "What can we do to prevent child abuse?"

Every year it was just inching up in Box Elder County. So that group of people had a booth at Peach Days, and they raise \$5,000 seed money to begin doing something. They began

investigating what they wanted to do. Well, Utah is kind of unique. Some other states have done things, but not in the same way. They had been developing family support centers across the state, so there was a good Family Support Center developed here in Ogden and also Salt Lake. Some of them were developed in Davis County, so they started looking at that model and decided that was the model they wanted for Box Elder County. The Ogden Family Support Center agreed to help them make that possible.

Actually prior to that, Grant wrote a grant to the State asking for funds to begin this Family Support Center He was denied that grant to begin with. They said "We don't have any money. We can't do that."

Then a few months later to his amazement he got a letter in the mail saying, "You know, we've decided that Box Elder does need a Family Support Center, but so does St. George, so would you revise your grant application and double it, and we'll fund St. George and Box Elder at the same time."

AT: A silver lining!

KT: So he did that, and that was in 1994 when that committee of five grass-roots people was working together, and they hired a director. Her name was Kay Keller, and she started at the Family Support Center in 1994. They opened their doors in February 1995 to begin services to the community. At that time they had a crisis respite nursery, which still exists today. That's for parents who find themselves in a crisis, a place where they can drop their kids off free of charge. It was in a house behind Dixie Grill, a little three-bedroom home, where they started that. They also provided kind of limited parenting educating classes. That was the beginning of the Family Support Center. Kay Keller was there until 1997 and she resigned. She really got it up and going, got the bylaws and things done, and it became a 501C3 She did a lot of the groundwork to make that happen.

In 1997 Mary Bissenett came on and continued that work. Mary was a big advocate at the state level so she spent a lot of time down at the State Legislature advocating for kids. She was there five years, and during that time, they were able to add therapy to the mix as well and also a parent advocate which is a person who goes into the home to do parenting education. When I came, I felt like the whole program was in place. It just needed to be pulled together, strengthened, enhanced and marketed to the community because it wasn't real well-known in the community at that time.

So I came in 2002. I left DCFS and went over to the Family Support Center as Executive Director. During that time our parent education classes grew immensely. One time I was figuring it out, and it was over 80% growth in parent education in five years. That was due to Brigham City. Our Mayor Christensen is a real advocate in helping youth in our community. I'd worked with her on some projects earlier when she was trying to get the Youth Commission up and going. The Youth Commission was in place at that time, but she and a group citizens once again went after some monies to make the Youth Commission stronger and to get some programs into our community. They developed what is now called the TAG Team or Taking Action for Generations Team, which is a coalition of agencies and business within Brigham City, and out of that came some monies for parent education.

Because we were the main parent education facility in town, the monies came to Box Elder Family Support Center, which helped us to truly increase the amount of parent education we were able to do there. Last year we had over 600 people take our parent education classes. I don't know what this coming year will be, but I think it will just continue to expand. They just received another grant from Utah State University to do parenting classes for step families. So that's a pretty exciting thing! That just came through a couple of weeks ago.

That's where it's at now. We still have therapy; we still have a crisis respite nursery; we still have a person that goes into the homes and give parenting education classes on exactly what they need or where transportation is a hindrance for them to get in to the center.

KB: How many paid people did you have on your staff when you left?

KT: There were four full-time employees when I left and probably about a dozen care givers for the nursery. They're all part-time people - many of them retired. What we found was that it fits the college-age student population well and the retired population really well because this is part-time employment. They can kind of pick the hours that they work. College students that are interested in child and family development can work there evenings and some of the days. Then the retired folks are really generous to fill in on the other days.

KB: And those in between would be home taking care of their families.

KT: Right. We do get a few in between, but the majority of the care givers are college age or senior citizens.

KB: Do you have any volunteers?

KT: We do. We have quite a few volunteers that come and help. Al was a major volunteer on the building. He kept our building in ' ' shape - him and Jim Cady. He was a delightful gentleman. He comes and helps keep the building in shape. And then probably the one volunteer who was always there was Ev McKinstry. Ev mowed the lawn and took care of the yard every summer until last summer when he was unable to do that because of health concerns. But then he took over the fund raising as the captain of our fund raising. In 2003, we did move to a new building at 276 N. 200 E. and were able to get out of that small, little house.

AT: It's in a wonderful location and a wonderful facility.

KT: We received the funds for the building, and it was really quite a miracle. We were told we needed to get out of the building in January because they had sold the house that we were in. She gave us notice in January and said that we needed to be out by March 1st, and I was having knee-replacement surgery in February. So I negotiated with her, and she decided that we could stay in the building until April 1st. We had no money at that time to move out. However some grants were in the process, and one of the grants came through just shortly after she told us we needed to move through Bear River Association of Governments for housing for homeless people. The way we qualified for that is that we shelter children that had been abused. If they didn't have a shelter to go to, they would be homeless I guess is how they determined that that would work. We received \$130,000 from them.

Then the Division of Child and Family Service was so excited about what was happening at the Center. They had a little extra money, and they said, "If you'll send us a proposal, we think we can come up with \$25,000." So they did. They came up with \$25,000.

Actually La-Z-Boy came up with some monies to provide our new phone system for us. We still needed a little more money, so I applied for a 1% interest loan from Oleen Walker and received that to finish paying for the building. In the meantime, before I even got the money for that, we had applied to the George and Deloris Eccles Foundation and received a check for \$50,000, which finished up what we needed to purchase the building outright. So we moved into the building with no debt owed on it.

AT: A \$200,000 facility paid for like that.

KB: It's amazing! Those things don't really happen by chance.

KT: They don't. Throughout all of that, I was going to City Council meetings fairly medicated because of my knee surgery.

AT: Right out of surgery, and I'm wondering, When is she going to collapse? She's doing battle.

KT: I couldn't even remember what I'd said after I left. There were a couple of neighbors who did not want us to move into that neighborhood.

AT: They were organizing opposition, and she was doing battle along with having this knee up in the air from total knee replacement.

KT: But the City was very supportive of what we were doing, and they passed all the ordinances and everything we needed.

KB: Did the neighbors come around after they saw what you were accomplishing there?

KT: They have come around. The first year we were there, just one neighbor was still very unhappy about us being there and called the City on us a few times about different things, but it was nothing that was against the law. I finally asked that they not unless we were doing something against the law. We haven't had anything from her since and I know all the rest of them are fine. I've talked to all the rest of them, and they're very glad we're in the neighborhood. Actually the Brigham City Police Department is wonderful. They send a patrol car around there a lot at night, so I think it's made ~ a

safer neighborhood for all of the neighbors, including us. We have a police officer on our board, and they're very aware of what's going at the center at all times and very willing to come at the drop of a hat. So I think neighbors are seeing that as a real positive for the neighborhood.

KB: So when did you retire?

KT: I retired September 30, 2006.

KB: Just last month! How are you adjusting to that?

KT: Well so far, we've only been home just this week. This is the first time we've been home.

AT: Four days in a row I've been home, and that's the first time since I retired May 3

KT: So we've been really too busy

KB: After all you did in Brigham City, you both became a big part of the community. Was it hard for you to leave there?

KT: It was. It probably was good for me to make that distance a little bit because I worked so many hours at the Family Support Center that it became my life, Al's life, our kids' lives. I had them all there doing things, and so it helped me to separate a little bit, to get away. It was a good little transition, but we do love Brigham City and we really wanted to settle there but it just didn't work out.

KB: Well, it's not that far. Tell me about your family. Are they all grown and gone?

KT: Our children are all grown and gone. Our oldest Chad is 33. He is in North Glen, Colorado, and he works for Washington Mutual Bank as a financial advisor. Our second son, Ryan, lives in Meeker, Colorado, and he's a hunting/fishing guide, and our daughter, Amy, lives here in Ogden with her husband Ryan, and she is a registered dietitian for the WIC program in Davis County.

KB: Do you have grandchildren?

KT: We don't. Our two boys are not married. Our daughter has been married for two years.

AT: And we're lobbying for such a little critter

KB: Do you plan to go back to your respective agencies on a volunteer basis?

AT: Right now I'm on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Bear River Refuge, and I've been back for a couple of different things. In fact, I'm lined up to help give some tours on November 1st, and I think the big thing we're working on right now is a big documentary for the Refuge. It was be shown in the theatre there. They have a 200-seat theater in the building, and so the Friends of the Refuge have come up with funding. We have a guy that's done some National Geographic specials, and he's going to be doing the filming and the producing, so we're going to have a top-rate film about the Refuge. Hopefully that will be out on PBS as well as here locally. That's an exciting project! We'll have an end product, and my kind of personality needs that. I'm not much for just administrative kind of stuff that just goes on and on. I really have to have sort of instant gratification on work I do.

KB: Kathy, do you have any comments about what you plan to do.

KT The one thing I am planning to do in Brigham City that will help the Support Center as well as other agencies in the community is that I will stay connected to the Youth Commission TAG Team. I've offered my services to the director of that to assist with grant writing. I'm on the funding group right now, and I hope that will help funding for all the non-profit groups in the immunity, not just the Family Support Center. Most agencies that are funding social-service

types of work are now requiring that a city or county have a coalition that they work through, and I think that's very wise because it's a way to not duplicate services and actually give some data-driven decisions on where the gaps are in the community for families. That's what the TAG team has been doing. They've been working very hard to gather that data and have discovered where our gaps are and now we are dying to implement proven programs to address those gaps in Brigham City. I think that's a way I'll stay connected as well with the Family Support Center, but it will be broader to help all of the agencies in our community.

KB: That sounds like a great way to stay involved. What about for fun? Do you plan to travel a bit?

KT: We have!

AT: Yes, we have already, and we intend to keep doing that. We have, of course, friends and relatives in different places. Just last night I was talking to Kathy's dad, and he mentioned possibly going fishing in Alaska this coming summer, so I grabbed up on that right away.

KT: We've been to visit our families just since I've been retired, and we went to Albuquerque to the Fish and Wildlife Services retirement reunion. We plan to do more two-week, three-week type trips. We don't plan to take off for the whole winter.

AT: My dad is still living and he's 90 years old and in a veteran's home in California. He just got a hip replacement a few days ago, so there will be trips to see him that will shoot down four or five days.

I think one common thread that has kind of weaved through our experience, here, and that's that the Lord has really gone before us in these things. You and Kathy were talking a little bit ago about how the Center came to be and how it was a miraculous thing to pay for that building in one year. This isn't coming together just by luck, and we've seen the Lord's hands in so much of the work that we feel like we've joined Him in working with families and children like Kathy did. That really is the Lord's work here on earth. He really took care of her and her endeavors at the Center, and you could feel his hand in it. When you help little folks along and help families along, that's truly a ministry. It was the same with the Refuge.

KB: That's His creation.

AT: That's nature, that's creation, and it just struck me each day that God of the Universe put this together, and we were doing His work out there, too, so that was kind of the common thread that helped us through day in and day out and really kept the energy going just to see His hand in the work.

KB: I could feel that as you were talking, and I can't think of anything much better than that.

KT: Well, this is just an example of the many things at the Family Support Center while I was there, but one day the nursery coordinator said, "we are totally out of size 5 diapers." And diapers are really price. Kimberly Clark is generous and share's diapers. Oftentimes they're the smaller ones so I said, "Well, I think we're just going to have to go buy some. I don't know of any other alternative."

That very afternoon, a lady walked in and donated size 5 diapers. Things like that just happened day after day, and that's not coincidence. The God of Heaven is just taking care of us.

Another example was the water. Our parent education specialist said, "It would be so nice to have bottled water rather than just carrying these pitchers and the ice and all that stuff." And the Pantry got truckloads of bottled water just the next week and offered us as much as we wanted which took care of a whole year of parent education classes. It just happened every single day. We went to work and His grace just fell in our laps. It was a joy!

KB: Well it's a legacy you've left to Brigham City. I appreciate it, and I'm sure the whole community does. Thank you.