

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ORAL HISTORIES

1. I am Sue LaSalle, I am conducting an interview with Frank F. Weisberg for the JFVS archives.

2. Can you tell me how and why your family originally came to this country and when?

My paternal grandfather, Sam Weisburd, was born in Russia in 1893. Having defected from the Russian Cavalry, he came to this country in 1915; during the immigration process they misunderstood his pronunciation and changed his name to Weisberg. His brother came here with him, but somehow they became separated and were never reunited. He died in 1969. He was a tailor early in his career and later opened a grocery store on the corner of Campbell and Jefferson Streets. His wife, my grandmother, Mildred Hyman Weisberg, was born in Louisville in 1893 and died in 1981.

My maternal grandmother, Rebecca Bass Bierman, was born in Russia in 1902 and died in 1973. It is not known when she came to this country. My maternal grandfather, Alex Bierman, was born in 1893 in Evansville, Indiana and died in 1984. He worked for Western Union and rode a bicycle to deliver telegrams. Later he also opened a grocery store called Bass Super Market at 13th and Walnut (now Muhammad Ali).

3. What were your parents' names and where were they born?

My father, Charles Louis Weisberg, was born May 9, 1919, in Louisville Kentucky. My mother, Marian Bierman Weisberg, was born July 16, 1921. She died March 1, 1990.

4. What is your birth date? What language(s) were spoken in your home? Where did you live then? Who lived in the same house with you – Grandparents? - Uncles? - Aunts? - Brothers? - Sisters?

I was born July 21, 1942. Because my dad was overseas in the service when I was born, my mother and I were living with her parents on Maryland Avenue in the Highlands. When dad came home from the service, we moved from my grandparents' home to a one bedroom shotgun apartment on Barrett Avenue. About the time I started school (Hikes Graded Elementary School) we had moved to 2015 Gardiner Lane. Except for occasional Yiddish phrases, English was the only language spoken in our home.

I have two brothers. Ronald J. Weisberg who is my partner in our real estate business, Prudential Parks & Weisberg Realtors, was born January 1, 1946. My other brother Alan Scott Weisberg, who is a lawyer in Miami was born June 20, 1948.

5. What was your neighborhood like? Were there other Jews living in the neighborhood? Did you walk to school? Sunday School? Temple? Was there a neighborhood grocery? Drug store?

When we moved to Gardiner Lane, it was a dirt road with ten-foot high cornfields on either side of the road. It was considered "out in the country". I can still remember as a small

child looking out the back window of our car as we drove down Gardiner Lane and I watched the dust bellow 12 feet in the air on both sides of the road. We had to drive everywhere – to the grocery, school, Sunday school, Hebrew school – we took the bus to the YMHA and every Saturday morning to schul which was downtown on Brook Street. After that we would walk to the bowling alley, just a block away. Then we would walk to 4th street where we'd buy an Orange Julius and then go to a movie.

There were only a few other Jewish families living in our neighborhood. Because of the way the city/county line was drawn, our home was on the county side, so I was assigned to the county schools, while most of my friends were going to the city schools. My parents paid tuition so I could go to Highland Jr. High (a city school) with the rest of my friends, but after Jr. High, I went to Fern Creek High School (county) while my friends not too far away went to Atherton (city).

6. If you wished to travel what kind of transportation did you use? Did you travel when you were young? If so, where?

My parents never took vacations without my brothers and I. We always went to Florida, and we always drove the car. As a kid I'd ride my bike to the Douglass Loop area where many of my friends lived. I also remember occasionally walking all the way from 4th Street to Gardiner Lane. Walking was much more commonplace then.

7. Was your family involved in a synagogue / temple?

We were members of Adath Jeshurun located on Brook Street and Jacob. We were probably average members of the Synagogue.

8. What holidays and rituals were observed?

We observed all the holidays. We would fast on Yom Kippur, ate only matzoh on Passover and lit candles on Chanukah.

9. Did you attend religious school? Were you confirmed? Bar Mitzvah?

I went to Adath Jeshurun Religious School on Sundays. I was confirmed, went to Hebrew School and was Bar Mitzvah.

10. What is your educational background? What was your career?

I graduated from Fern Creek High School in 1960 and from Indiana University in 1964 with a BS in Business, majoring in Real Estate Administration. (The following information was drawn from his resume) He joined the family real estate business, Bass & Weisberg Realtors, which later became Prudential Parks & Weisberg Realtors, of which he is now Chairman of the Board. Over the past 38 years he has received many awards and much recognition for leadership and accomplishments in the real estate profession on every level – local, state and national. He was the first Realtor in Kentucky to receive the coveted CCIM Designation (1970) and in 1979 he was elected the first president of the Kentucky CCIM Chapter; in 1976 the Louisville Board of Realtors elected him "Realtor of the Year"; in

1980, Jefferson Community College selected him as "Teacher of the Year". In 1981 he was elected President of the nearly 5,000 member Louisville Board of Realtors. For 23 years he was a senior instructor in Commercial Real Estate Investments for the National CCIM Designation Program. He has taught investment real estate courses in 35 states including Hawaii and Alaska. He also taught in various provinces in Canada. In 1993, the Commercial Investment Real Estate Institute awarded him the prestigious "Senior Emeritus" status; he was awarded the "Millennium Maker Award" for 2000 by the Jefferson County Judge Executive, Rebecca Jackson, for outstanding civic involvement.

11. What brought you to Louisville and when did you come?

I was born in Louisville in 1942 at the old Jewish Hospital and have been a lifelong resident.

12. How did you meet your husband/wife? Where and when were you married? Did you have children?

My wife, the former Barbara Frank, was born April 7, 1949, in Charlotte, North Carolina. Barbara had come to Louisville in late 1973 to work for the University of Louisville. She was an X-ray Technician, doing research on breast cancer. A friend of mine, Chuck O'Koon, was married to Barbara's cousin, Sarah Cohen. They suggested that I call Barbara. I did and six months later we were married. It took place on November 23, 1974, at the new Galt House Hotel.

Barbara and I have three children. Nicole was born August 23, 1979. She graduated from the University of Michigan and is now living in Seattle, Washington. Bradley was born August 29, 1980. He is presently attending Indiana University. Danielle was born April 10, 1984. She is a senior at Ballard High School. She plans to attend Indiana University next year.

13. Tell about your involvement in the Jewish Community. Was your whole family involved?

My earliest involvement was at the YMHA, downtown, and then the new Jewish Community Center on Dutchman's Lane. My friends and I were very active in clubs at The Center. I was in Resnick AZA – my dad was its adviser; my mother was the adviser to the girl's club, Amitie. They were wonderful years that had a very positive influence on my life. I credit those years at The Center with the development of many of the organizational and leadership skills that I have today.

I presently serve on three boards of directors: Jewish Hospital Health Care Services, Inc., the Jewish Family and Vocational Service and The Louisville Visual Art Association. For seven years I served as Chairman of the Art Committee at the Jewish Community Center. Previously I have served on the Boards of The Four Courts, Louisville Jewish Federation Board, and The Jewish Social Services Agency, which was run by Al Ehrlen.

14. How was your family affected by the World Wars? Wars in Israel?

I certainly was affected by World War II because my father was at war overseas for the first two years of my life. I did not see him until he returned and I was two years old. During that time my mother and I lived with her parents on Maryland Avenue off Bardstown Road.

I was in my early 20's during the war in Israel. I remember working hard for The Federation to raise money to send to Israel.

15. What are your favorite spiritual memories? How did religion affect your life?

My growing up years; having such loving, supportive parents, who devoted so much of their time and efforts to me and my brothers are, truly, my most valued memories.

I have always been very proud of my Jewish heritage. I am always especially moved by the Kol Nidre service. As I grow older, I have much more interest in learning more about Judaism. I've graduated from the "Melton School of Jewish Studies" and attend a discussion group twice a month on Torah and Judaism.

16. What interests did you have?

Twenty years ago, when I turned forty, I decided to start doing some of the things that I had always wanted to do; things for which I had never made time to do before. I had always liked to "doodle", so I enrolled in an oil painting class. Since that day, painting has been my passion, consuming every moment of my spare time. Several of my pieces are exhibited at various places throughout the city. Two of my canvasses are on loan to the Louisville Fund for the Arts and hang in their headquarters. Also, two of my paintings are on loan to Jewish Hospital; one is hung outside the Executive Offices and the other hangs in the Rudd Heart and Lung Conference Center.

I served as President of the Louisville Visual Art Association for five years and continue to serve on their Board of Directors, working for the betterment of the arts community in Louisville.

17. What are your favorite family memories?

Some of my fondest memories are of the weekends that my grandparents would spend with us. Since they lived in the Highlands, which was considered quite a distance from Gardiner Lane, they would just spend whole weekends in our home. They were very special times that I always looked forward to. The adults sometime played cards; and, we would all watch wrestling matches on TV- we loved these matches! I also remember the entire family watching Sid Caesar & Imogene Coca and The Howdy Doody Show. I also fondly remember being driven to my cousins' house on Napoleon Blvd. in the Highlands. Murray, Freddie and Barbara Morguelan. I spent many weekends playing with them. Those were some of my childhood memories.

More recently, about 15 years ago, my dad, my brothers and I started taking annual fishing trips together – just the four of us. We would go to really nice places and fish. We'd spend many hours just talking and we always had a "Hearts" tournament. I will always cherish those special times together.

Today, I also enjoy visiting with Barbara's parents, sisters and their husbands. Having all our children together for the holidays will always be special memories.

18. What is your legacy? How would you like to be remembered? What values would you like to pass on to those you leave behind?

I'd like to be remembered as a thoughtful, caring person who loved his family, his work, his teaching and his painting; for being a loving husband and father; as an individual who appreciated life and was blessed with a happy life; one who gave back to the community.

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I do hereby give my permission to record my life history through the Jewish Family and Vocational Service, 3587 Dutchmans Lane, Louisville, Kentucky 40205. My story will be kept in the JFVS Library and can be accessed by interested people. It will be preserved archivally for future generations.


Participant


Witness

2-22-02
Date Signed

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