

SOUTH DAKOTA ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Library Cataloguing Service Data

Name of informant Robert and Nora Beaudette
Address 3808 Riverdell, Rapid City, South Dakota
Date of Interview July 9, 1972
Name of Researcher Stephen R. Ward
Others Present sons Patrick and Peter
Location of Interview Home
Added Notes

Subject Headings under which you feel this interview should be filed:

Left residence but swept one block to Franklin Street; Refuge in homes on Franklin;
Destruction of houses while inside; Saved by climbing onto roof with 30 other people.

Demographic Information on Informant

Age 48, 46, 18, 13 Sex M, F, M, M County Pennington
Socio-economic status Admissions Counselor; National College of Business
Occupation
Education
Religion
Date of Arrival of Family in South Dakota
Where?
From where?
Number of Moves in South Dakota Reasons for moves:

- Q. This is July 9, 1972. I'm Stephen Ward speaking with Robert and Nora Beaudette, B-E-A-U-D-E-T-T-E, 3808 Riverdell. Their sons, Patrick and Peter may join us; Patrick's already here. And for purposes of location of 3808 Riverdell, Beaudette's lived in the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter, Section 9, Township 1 North, Range 7 East. And let's start by...how long is it gonna take?
- A. Not very long.
- Q. Half an hour and you can come and go as you wish. Let's start by talking first of all as to what happened on the night of June 9th. Were you all in this house say, at 6 o'clock in the evening?
- A. I think...well, it's kinda hard to reconstruct, but I think we were all here because we all ate supper together and then I went over to visit a neighbor and then we came back and I don't think we drove any place, we walked over...
- A2. No, we walked down to look at the...
- A. We walked...
- A2. ...creek.
- A. ...down to look at the creek. And the bridge.
- Q. All right, so it was raining and..
- A. Oh, raining!
- Q. ...you were checking the...
- A. Yeah, we walked over to the creek...
- Q. Okay.
- A. ...to look at the bridge and uh, it didn't look too bad so we stopped at some friends' on the other side of the drive, over to Bill Everts and had some coffee, and the kids were here at home, uh, Peter and Pat and a friend of Peter's and then Jummy Johnson and then Becky was here with 'em, too, our other...Peter's

sister.

A3. I never realized it, but at the time we went up to Canyon Lake and were watching the Corps of Engineers open up the gates to relieve the pressure on it, and the...I didn't realize what was going on 'till Oscar came--our neighbor.

Q. What time'd you go up to the...

A3. Oh, I don't know, maybe about 10; oh, yeah, because we got back here at 10:30

-----.

A. I would say that we got home here at about...

A3. About 11 o'clock.

A. We got home about the same time you did, didn't we, Pat--about 10:30?

A3. So, I was, I was here...

A4. Yeah.

A3. I had enough time to get all the stuff out of the basement.

A. Yeah.

A4. Pat was here, he came in about, he was here before elec...you know, the...oh, before it really, before it started raining again. It was quit for awhile, it quit for awhile and then he came in. That's when it really started raining.

A3. That's when we all decided we'd evacuate eventually. We backed out of the driveway, and...

Q. What time?

A. Oh, between 10:30 and a quarter to 11.

Q. Now why...you decided to evacuate because you thought the creek was going over?

A3. Oh, because of our, you know, just observations, we saw the creek rising we thought it'd be a normal reenactment of the '62 flood.

- A. Which just...
- Q. You were her in '62?
- A. Yeah. Which just flooded our backyard see, we didn't get any water.
- A3. But we decided to leave, and as soon as we pulled out of the driveway, we piled into the car, and water came and it was about, it just kept eventually raising higher, and as we...
- Q. When you walked out to the car, was it...
- A3. Ankle deep.
- Q. Ankle deep. All right. And...
- A3. By the time we got to the middle of the street it was...
- A. We were water borne.
- A3. ...a foot and a half.
- A. At least, 'cause the car was floating.
- Q. The car was floating.
- A. Yeah.
- A3. We smashed into cars, trees, telephone poles and what-have-you.
- Q. Now who all were in the car?
- A. My family and Jamey Johnson.
- Q. Okay. And where were you gonna go?
- A. Well, I was gonna try and get to 38th Street which is right down here and then just go north and get across Jackson Boulevard.
- A3. I was just gonna turn north and get across the street, 'cause that's all we would have had to do as it turned out.
- Q. Did your engine...you said _____ up in the, was it in the driveway?

A. Yeah.

Q. Was the car in the driveway before it floated away?

A. Yeah. The car was in the driveway, and as soon as we got out into the street, why, it would hit, it kind of started once and then it got so water borne that you just, the wheels weren't hitting the pavement, see, it was just floatin'.

A3. So we decided to evacuate eventually as we got down...

A. We bailed out of the car.

A3. ...to a point where we thought that was our only alternative.

Q. Did you...

A3. We were down...we floated down to, into the next block, Franklin Street.

A. We bailed out just about at the interesection.

A3. And we all jumped out and I just opened the door, 'cause I, you didn't know what to do. We were gonna stay in the car. And I grabbed my little sister's 13, and I saw Mom and Dad float on the other side of the car, they were just, the current just grabbed them and swept them along. Peter and his little friend that perished in the flood, they just took off floating, and I had to yell at them to grab stuff. So...

Q. What, now, you floated which way, I mean you floated...

A4. Well, you see.

A3. We all floated.

A4. Well, in the front seat, Dad, Mom and Pat. And in the back seat it was Becky, me-no it was Becky, Jamey, and me. And Pat opened his door, he went out this way, and Becky went out that door and Pat grabbed her and then Mom and Dad... the car completely turned when he opened that door and Mom and Dad went out

this way. And so Jamey and I got out, and water was, I suppose, knee high.

A3. Well, see, as it came up, we had Peter and Jamie and my sister and I were... our party was separated into two parts. We were in a house on this end of Franklin, that's where we ended up, Mom, Dad...

Q. What end of Franklin?

A4. At the first house.

A. The Morrow house. Fred Morrow's house, which is now gone.

Q. Yeah.

A2. The first house on Franklin.

A. First house on Franklin Drive on the right side of the street.

A2. Right at the intersection.

Q. On the right side of the street on Franklin.

A3. We were in the house and the water began to rise more and more. Swell up to the windows and recede back down and the swell up again, finally the windows just burst. And there were 15 of us in there, and I was holding the back door. Mr. Dusek, the neighbor, was kind of in charge of the operation.

Q. He took charge of the house?

A. No, he was getting the little kids in the bathroom.

A3. He was organizing us and getting everybody oriented with what they wanted to do, you know, in a near crisis and it happened.

Q. What, what were some of his suggestions?

A3. Oh, they were just precautionary measures, get high and...

A2. Well, he had the children...

A3. He had me stationed at the back door holding it, the pressure was really great,

'cause we thought we might have a chance of the house going. Then as the windows broke, I knew it was inevitable that the whole whouse was gonna go. As the water passed through the windows the pressure _____. So, we just began to reach for higher ground as the water came. And now we'll probably get into our own individual stories.

Q. What, let me ask you something else about this house. What type...were these all just neighbors down on Franklin?

A3. I only knew a quarter of the people that were there.

Q. Were they young or were they...

A4. There were two old people, two old people, one was an amputee, and there was a little boy, I think he's nine, Danny Simpson.

Q. Can I ask you about the amputee, was he a double amputee?

A. A double amputee, double amputee.

Q. You don't know his name?

A4. Yeah, Mr. Thompson.

?? _____ Thompson. (Two at once)

A3. Mr. Dusek and I went out and grabbed...

A4. That's how he got in this house. See, they live next door and he saw them helpless out there, so he went out, and...

Q. He lived next door...

A3. Yeah.

Q. ...Mr. Thompson.

A2. No, no.

A. Thompson lived over there _____ (All talking at once.)

- A4. But Mr. Dusek... (All talking at once.)
- A. Mr. Dusek, was it, Mrs. Thompson asked Dorrance to help them get him in the house.
- A3. He went out and he couldn't get back, so he was in, he came in the house we were stayin' at. And then as, we, Peter and Jamie were holding on to wires or something near a firm structure, and I was in the back in the utility room. The water came through and smashed out the front walls, and I was watching everyone float out and bob and yell and scream, and then the house started to collapse and break in two, and my...well, there was a gas line that fell off, and I jammed it up in here, and these two other people in there, Ricky Morrow and his dad, so and then the house started crashin' on me and I floated over to the refrigerator and back to where I was, and then I was coming back a beam grabbed my left foot and pulled me under. And then...
- Q. Something grabbed you?
- A3. Something floatin' in the water, some debris in the house and pulled me under, and then the roof top fell on, well, not the roof top, but the edging on the top of the door, what do you call it?
- A. Oh, your door casing.
- A3. Door casing fell on me with the weight of the attic on top. And I just got pulled under and kicked, I thought I was just gonna get squished, you know, nothin' left. So I just missed it good bye then. And next thing I knew, I got knocked out of something, I was holding on to hot water pipe lookin' at a hole in the roof and crawled out. But I did...
- Q. You have no idea how you got on top of the...
- A3. On top of the house?

Q. Yeah.

A3. Yeah, I climbed up. See, I got knocked out and got pulled under. The next thing I knew I was holding on to a hot water pipe lookin' at a hole in the roof and so I crawled out. It was just a small hole, up to the attic, so I jumped from...as soon as I got up there I was kind of, not really in a state of shock, but didn't know what to do and I looked around and there was people on Sorenson's roof yelling. You weren't on that roof.

A. Hm-hm. No, we were in the next, next roof down.

A3. So soon as they got on the next roof, the house, the house just literally exploded with all the force of the water, and I went floating down and there were quite a few people in that house, and we just jumped. They were jumpin' for trees and stuff, and I missed and grabbed the house with one hand and slipped in the way and this kid pulled me up. So we stayed there until _____.

Q. So you went actually through three houses.

A. He went through two and ended up on a third one.

A3. No, Peter went through two. He was inside the next one. Peter was in the initial shock that busted the first one into the second one.

Q. Did you see him go by?

A3. No, I saw...

A4. I was in, I was in there and Becky was in there, and when the...

Q. This is your sister Becky?

A4. Yeah, well, the roof was about head high and you're in this far up to water. And , uh...

Q. Up to your neck?

A4. Yeah. And there was a wire that was broken through the ceiling and I grabbed it and then I was floatin' around and then the refrigerator came up to me, and I, you know, I was sitting there trying to keep balance holding onto the wire and then Becky, somehow she came out, she got on top of the refrigerator, too, and we were trying to keep it balanced, you know, and then the house just completely, just squashed. It just went down and the refrigerator went and Becky went and I went under water, and something grabbed me...my leg, and the water was just about like this, you know, I was that close, and the roof was...I was...the roof had already gone off, and I was just, I don't know what my leg was caught on, but all of a sudden I was just kicking, and I thought, "Geez, this is it." Because, you know, nothing much I could do, as I was trapped. And if I would have had shoes on, mi shoes, I took them off before going because we were, you know, walkin' around in the house and weren't gonna go outside-and if I would have had those on, I probably would have really got stuck.

Q. Mm-hm. So how did you get out?

A4. Well, then I got up somehow and then I was goin' around, and then I thought...

Q. Going, going around what?

A4. Well, see, I came out, and there was Sorenson's house right next to it. And I was floating by and on their front door they have this white vine climbing fence and I grabbed that and it broke off, and then I realized there was no front to Sorenson's house, so I just ran in there, you know, something to protect me from floating all the way down. And the water, I suppose was about, oh, this deep.

Q. Two feet.

A4. In the house.

Q. Mm-hm.

A4. Yeah, about two feet, because it was blockading it, but you could just feel the house shakin' and everything, from the pressure of the other house. And then I heard a huge crash, and I knew that was the same thing of Morrow's house... sounded something like, it, and it was Morrow's house hitting theirs. And so I just let go, you know, I'll never make it, and as I was floating under the, out of Sorenson's, everybody else on Sorenson's roof was jumping and I didn't know it, nobody knew it, you know, the roar of the water was so you didn't even know anybody was around, and then I came around and I said, "I'm gonna grab a poplar tree." Well, it was a bush in front of a poplar tree and I grabbed that and that just, my hands slipped and then it root it just came right out because it was so wet, about ready to come out, and so I missed the poplar tree. And I was floating around, and there was this old black car in front of, on the corner of the third house we stayed on. And we were on there...well, I didn't know htis, but a lot of people were on there from the first two houses, you know, and on, I came around and I didn't know this, and there was this old black, about a 19..36?

A. I don't know what kind of a Ford it was. Must have been an old junker, but I'm glad it was there.

A4. And it was pinned up right against the corner of the house. So I went there and I, I grabbed one windshield wiper and I pulled my leg over, and then the windshield wiper broke. And then I grabbed the second one, down by the base of it, and I got up on the car, and I was certain you know, that everybody was

gone, and all this because we had saw Mom, seen Mom and Dad float down right away the first thing. And so I was standing on the top of the car looking at the corner of this roof, there was a drainspout there. And then the lightning flashed and the car started to float, and I saw Dad jumping from-the garage was right next to that house-and Dad was jumping from that with two other people- he'd pulled this one kid out of the water and there was another man with him-and I saw him and so I yelled "Help", and the car started floating and I was just jumping and he grabbed me and pulled me on the roof.

Q. Okay, now, that brings us up to you, the two of you.

A. When we got out of the car?

Q. When you got out of the car, yeah.

A. Just...that water just hit, in fact...it's really hard to reconstruct it, but that water hit and...

A2. And you had no control, you know...

A. You couldn't...

A2. We all swim, but, we couldn't...

A. You couldn't swim in that stuff.

A2. ...do anything in that water (besides) stand up.

A. Johnny Weissmueller couldn't swim in that current.

A2. It was just...

Q. You're dating yourself. (laughter)

A. Anyway, my wife ended up by an apple tree with a car in front of it, and I just yelled at her to hang on.

Q. Was that on Franklin?

- A. Yeah, on Franklin.
- A2. Yes, this was in front of the third house.
- A. In front of Odmell's house. But I was swept down a little bit further and into the side of the house next door which would have been the fourth house east and there were two people on the front of the house, and I think it was the Simpson's..
- A4. Yeah.
- A. ...if I'm not mistaken. But anyway, they broke the door down, and made a, got in there and made a rope out of sheets and blankets, and tossed that out, and then while they were doing that, some fellow floated by and Nora grabbed him, and he hung onto the tree, that's the fellow...
- A2. Hixson.
- A. Hixson.
- A2. Hixson or Dixson.
- A. Hixson or Dixson's.
- A2. And his wife also floated by and she grabbed onto another tree. So they rescued all of us, and got us into the house.
- A. We got, we got all, we got all into the house, 'cause I remember a bunch of us in there, and as we got in there the house was just filling up with water, so we went around and went out the back door. And climbed up the drain pipe on the...
- A2. I think it was the air conditioner on the back of the house.
- A4. Air conditioner.
- A. Drainpipe and air conditioner and got up on the roof.
- Q. Now, this Hixson, this wasn't the man at the School of Mines, was it?
- A2. Yes.

A. Mm-hm.

Q. Okay.

A. And...

Q. Now where was Mr. Dusek?

A. Well, he had, after that house blew up-that first house-he floated way down the creek and he ended up a block down in the green house.

A2. On Jackson Boulevard.

A. A retired, a retired military man lives there. Anyway, he grabbed a wire on the corner of the house and kept pounding on the house, and finally the guy opened the door, and he says...

A4. Opened the window, a window.

A. I don't know what he opened, but anyway, he said, "When I go by," he said, 'grab me.' And the guy did and pulled him in the house. But we all got up on the roof, and I, we had...

Q. But you were with him at one time...

A2. No.

Q. ...or your son was with him...

A2. No, no...

A. These kids, the kids were with him.

A2. Pete and Becky. And Jamie.

A. But then when we got up on the roof, why at the time we got up there, these kids were still on the first house, you see. And we watched that first house.

Q. Did you know that...

A2. We knew they were in this house...

- A. Yeah, we knew they were in there.
- A2. We saw them get into the first house.
- A. We watched that first house go, and then we watched the second house go. And then all of a sudden Pat appeared on the side of the house and about that time why Ricky Morrow and one of the Sorenson's, the people were coming over and I helped pull a couple of those kids out. But at that time I hadn't seen any of the other two of my kids or Jamie. And about that time was when Peter spotted me and yelled, "Help, Dad," when that car started to float away. And I got him by the arm and pulled him up on the roof. But then we hadn't seen anything of our, of his twin sister, Becky.
- Q. Now, what happened to her?
- A4. I know what happened. Well, when we were in Morrow's house and we were on that refrigerator, we were trying to keep a balance, you know, so we had something to stay on in case the current would go down and we'd _____ and that would be left standin'. So we...then the house broke and she came around and she was right behind me. And I grabbed that white thing and she grabbed the door. The door was open, and she grabbed it. And she was holding on to it, and that's while I was in the house. And then she saw the poplar tree, so she got over there, and she climbed it, up to the roof. And she was sitting up there, and this one lady was talking to her. She was, she was telling her to stay in the tree because Sorenson's house was crashing into Morrow's, and if she didn't, she might not make it. And then after awhile, she was sitting up in the tree and she didn't know what was going on, she was probably in kind of like a state of shock, and she, you know, this, wasn't thinking anybody'd be alive, you know,

like anybody in our family, and she saw Dad and said, "Hey, Dad, get me out of this tree."

Q. Now, how far was shw from the...

A. House that we were on?

A4. Right next...

A2. (Our) house.

A. Right next to...

A2. ...ended up in the poplar tree.

A. Right next to the house.

A2. Right next to the house that we were in.

A. But she had climbed up...and I had to stand on the peak of the house and reach up and get her, that's how high she had climbed, I mean, she'd just kept climbing.

A4. And she wouldn't come down...

A. It's pretty tough to climb a poplar tree, but she got it done.

Q. Oh, yeah.

A. But she, really, her hands were all, inside and inside of her heels and legs from (scuffin' up)...

Q. Now Becky and Patrick are what, 13?

A. Becky and Peter are 13.

Q. Peter.

A2. Becky and Peter.

Q. And Patrick is how old?

A. 18.

A2. 18.

Q. 18, okay. Now, was anybody lost in all of this...

A. Oh, yeah, out of that first house, little Jamie Johnson was lost and Mr. M...

Q. This is the boy that was your friend.

A2. Yes, he was going to spend the night with us.

Q. Now, was he 13?

A. Yeah.

A2. Mm-hm.

A. And Mr. Morrow was lost, and Terry Morrow's friend...

A4. And Mrs...

A. And then, and then there was...

A4. ...and Mrs. Simpson, and her little boy...

A. Mr. & Mrs...

A4. ...and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson...and Dorrance Dusek...

A2. He was, he didn't perish, though.

A. He, he got out of the house, but survived down the way in another house, you see. That's the one that _____...

A4. Well, Terry (Powell's) friend...

A. She didn't make it, no.

A4. Yes, she did. They found her, didn't they?

A2. No.

A. No, she was dead. But anyway, there were 23 of us ended up on the roof of that third house.

Q. Now, whose house again is that?

A4. Lodmell's.

A. Lodmell's. Lodmell's. And they were killed in the flood. They evacuated, and their car got rolled.

A2. They, they were gone when we ended up in their house, 'cause we had to break the door down, so I don't know when they had left, but they were both found in their car, dead.

Q. And their house held.

A2. Mm-hm. Well, what helped their house...

A. Yeah, you see, what held their house was these, well, there's about...

A4. ...poplar trees...

A. ...seven or eight big poplar trees about the size that I have out here. And this is another thing that helped Dorrance's house, was the fact that...

Q. That's Dusek's house?

A. Yeah, Dusek's is the fact that I've got those poplar trees, and what helped our house was this big maple tree that Cable's had in their yard, a bunch of debris formed a dam between their house, that maple tree and the street, see, and kind of channeled the water around us.

Q. Now, it's interesting that houses along this block were not terrifically damaged...

A4. They aren't, they weren't facing into the water, their sides were...

A. See, there wasn't enough so that it could get a straight shot at it, it was, what it was, see now, we had water, oh, this is the water line where we cut the curtains...

A4. Here's the water line right here, you can see it.

A. Well, that's the outside water line.

- A4. That's how high it was outside, that's not as high as _____.
- A. In the inside it was just about, just a little bit below the window moulding.
- Q. So that's about two feet?
- A. Well, it's about 25 inches of water in here. And down in the lower level, of course, the water was just within inches of the ceiling.
- Q. Mm-hm. Now did that, the water, did it follow the street line, or did it come at an angle...
- A. Came from behind and in front both. See, it came down...
- A4. Because we have a, the park is right, the park...
- A. There's kind of a depression as you got out the back of the house.
- A4. Yeah, there's a ditch, a big ditch. And then the back yard's filled up, you know.
- Q. Mm-hm. Now how far away from the creek here?
- A. Oh, about a hundred and fifty yards, I would say.
- Q. That's to your north?
- A. No, it'd be south of here.
- Q. South, okay. I've got my...
- A. I'd say about a hundred and fifty yards south.
- Q. Okay. Now, what about the, what about the people on 38th Street here? There were some people who survived on roofs and so on on 38th Street, didn't they?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. But, but you couldn't actually get to there.
- A2. Huh-uh. We had no control of the car.
- A. We had, we had no control at all. When that car started to float, that was it.

- A2. It was just like in a rowboat. Couldn't steer it or anything.
- A. Yeah, just like being out in the swift current with a shear pin down on the motor. You just didn't have any control.
- Q. And at what point did you decide to evacuate?
- A. The what, the house here?
- Q. No, the car...
- A. The car? Soon as it started floatin'. 'Cause we couldn't get any traction, and I said, "We'd just better bail out of this."
- A2. But we were bouncing across...
- A. Yeah, after we bailed out we were bouncing around...
- A2. ...the intersection before we bailed out of the car.
- Q. So that's only what, about a hundred yards?
- A. Well, it isn't even that, well, it might be 50 yards to the corner.
- Q. Okay. Then in all of this, now, you said you saw your son and so on...what was aiding you and helpin you see?
- A4. Well...
- A. The lightning.
- Q. Just the lightning.
- A. Just the lightning, 'cause it was pitch black and...
- A4. Well, and there was a light on in Morrow's house, the electricity hadn't gone off yet...
- A. When we first got in there.
- A4. The porch light was on.
- A. But at...when we saw them, though, later on, it was just like when Peter yelled

at me, why, it was hard to see him in the water, but I saw him. I don't know, there was lightning.

A4. No, it was dark.

A2. It was dark and the rain was just pouring...

A. Well, it was dark and raining, and that water'd make so much noise you can't even hear...

A4. That water sounded like about five freight trains right next to you. No kidding! It was that loud, and then crashing, and...

A2. We saw houses floating by and cars floating by, and...

A. Saw people floatin' by, too, really.

A2. ...everything.

Q. How many, how many hours were you up on the roof before (the rescue)?

A. We got off there about 2:00.

A4. 30.

A. Oh, it was 2:30 when we got to Mountain's.

A2. I think so.

A. So we were on there approximately three hours.

A4. We were on longer...

A. From 11...

A2. From 11:00 to 2:30.

A. Well, probably from 11:00 until 2:30, about three and a half hours, maybe.

Q. You said then that you heard...did you hear people over the roar, could you... you did hear some...

A2. I saw people.

- A. We saw people.
- Q. You saw people.
- A2. Over here on Jackson Boulevard on the corner there was a emergency vehicle tipped over...
- A. Tipped over. Yeah, the current was...
- A2. And there were lights from that truck and you could see people milling around, and we kept hollering for help, but they couldn't hear us...
- A. Over the roar of the water.
- A2. ...over the roar of the water.
- Q. Could you see, and you said you saw people floating by.
- A4. See, the street lights was...on.
- A. We saw stuff, well, yeah, you could see...
- A2. Debris.
- A. ...debris and everything but...
- A2. Houses.
- A. ...but it's so confusing, you know, man, you just, it's hard to really reconstruct it accurately, because things happen so fast you just don't know, and I mean it's...I don't even remember half the people getting up on the roof that were there.
- A2. No. Everyday we find out that somebody else was on the roof with us...
- A. We thought we had, we thought we had 15 on the roof and it ended up there were 23 on that roof, when we (started down).
- Q. Was it difficult footing on that roof?
- A4. No. Good shingles.

- A. No, everybody had wet feet and the shingles were wet.
- A2. Well, about 15 of us hung onto the chimney in a circle all that time. Somebody said to me, "Why didn't you sit down on the roof?" I said I never even thought about it. We were all trying to keep warm we were huddled together, and...
- Q. Yeah, so you really weren't out looking and observing and this sort of thing, you were just trying to...
- A. To survive it.
- Q. Yeah. It's a good point.
- A2. But we did see people once in a while and some National Guard trucks, and we thought they were on their way to rescue us, but they couldn't get to us evidently, because of the water.
- A4. Or their truck would have gone, too.
- A. Well, then we waited about 2:30. Why, about 2:00 I finally got their attention, and then the fellow said, "Well, we'll need a boat," and I said, "No, I don't think we need a boat to get down here, the water's down far enough if you'll take your time and wade out. But you know, hand in hand so you don't step in a hole." I said, "I'd jump off the roof now but I'm afraid I might be washed out by the house here." So they started out and they didn't have any trouble getting us, the water was about waist high.
- Q. Now, how could you talk to him when earlier you said you...
- A. Well, this was later on when it subsided, see.
- Q. When the roar stopped, and...
- A2. Water started receding.
- A. Receding.

Q. And how far were these National Guard people from you?

A. Well, they were standing on Jackson Boulevard...

A4. No, just on the intersection of Jackson and 38th.

A. Well, they were pretty close to that Hatzenbuhler's house.

A4. No, don't you remember when they pulled in, they were shining their lights on Dusek's.

A. Yeah, well...

A4. That's when the water was way...

A. Anyway, it was down enough, we had caught one fella's attention in the house who had a flashlight. And I don't know whose house it was, one of those houses over...

A2. Hatzenbuhler's.

A. Hatzenbuhler's, and then he got their attention, then by hollering, I mean really bellerling, why, they could hear us. But it was still fairly noisy. The current wasn't really that bad I mean, you could walk in it all right, you had to brace yourself when we got off of that roof. You had to, you know how you crab into a wind, why, you're walking this way and going like that.

Q. So you got off at about 2:30.

A. Mm-hm.

Q. And then were there any people injured on the roof at all?

A. Nora sprained her ankle.

A4. Cuts and bruises.

A. You know, cuts and lacerations.

A4. Boy, did they sting.

Q. Mm-hm. And it was cold.

- A. Yeah, _____ cold. (All talking at once.)
- A4. I only had, I had one little t-shirt on and no shoes.
- A. Well, everybody, just like I had on just a shirt just like I've got now and a pair of trousers, and that was it. And then my shoes.
- A4. Becky had on one of those jumpers, a towel jumper, that blue and white one.
- A2. Blue and white stripe, is that what she had on?
- A4. Yeah.
- A. Like a swimming suit, almost.
- Q. So 23 people ended up and finally by 2:30 you were all in...you went where.
- A. Oh, we went to a couple houses over here and then some friends from over on...
- A2. Minnekata.
- A. Minnekata, Manogles, and...
- A2. She kept coming over 'cause she knew we were here someplace in the vicinity-at least she thought we were-and the first time she came over to check on people on Riverdell, they told her that everybody had been evacuated. And then she went back home and she thought about it and she came back again. And probably if it hadn't been for her, we would have been there for a long, you know, a longer period of time, because she said, "You just got to get to those people." They finally found us on the roof then. And so she had the scout come out, and...
- A. That's how we, you know, when he walked out and we walked back. But there was, we all split up then, we went to, they had a couple, three cars, 'cause we went over to Nagel's and Amick's and Kinsella's house all on Elmhurst.
- A2. Minnekata.
- A. Minnekata.

Q. In all of this, do you think, what was your general observations of people? Were they panicky, were they fairly calm?

A. Some were panicky and some were calm. Some kept their cool and some didn't.

A4. Most did pretty good.

Q. For example what, people that were panicky, what were they, do you think they were in shock, or were they just, were they concerned about another house going out from-especially speaking on the roof now.

A. Oh, on the roof, well, some were a little bit panicky and, of course, this thought was in everybody's mind, after watching two go, is this one gonna hold, you know. And that is why we were trying to get at these people, and then another thought that was in their mind was if Pactola goes, why, we sure want to be off of this roof. You know, because that would have just wiped out everything here.

A2. We spent a lot of time saying prayers on top of that roof. Adults and children and everybody.

Q. Did you feel panicky in any time while you were in the water?

A4. If we _____.

A2. Well, I think I was.

A. Well, I don't know.

A4. Well, you wouldn't have been able to grab the apple tree, if you're panicky you don't, you don't have any control of yourself. If you're really panicky...

A. You've got to stay halfway cool, I mean it's...it's just like I yelled at you to hang onto that tree and yelled at those guys on that house to get something out to us. And hung on, you know.

- A2. I was scared to death when I was floating down that water.
- A. Well, everybody was, I was scared, too...
- A2. Before I got to that tree.
- A. ...but I, and everybody was scared...
- A2. 'Cause you just couldn't do anything.
- A. ...but if you just kind of pulled yourself together and figured out how the hell you were going to survive this mess, why...that was it. And we're fortunate that you didn't get hit by debris or something like that, you see, that's...probably a lot of people that might have made it but, so they're in the creek and all of a sudden a big timber comes by, and hits you or something like that, why, you don't have a chance. Even if you're not panicky.
- Q. That's right. Well, does that about sum it up.
- A. That's about it. We're just very happy that we were all around to count noses, come 2:30 in the morning.
- Q. Yes, you were an extremely lucky family. Well, that's also end of the tape.

(END OF INTERVIEW)