Jim Goodwin

Owner of The Oklahoma Eagle Newspaper, Lawyer, Healthcare Leader

Chapter 01 –
Introduction

Announcer: James Osby Goodwin was one of eight siblings who grew up next door to Tulsa's St. Monica Catholic Church. His father purchased a 150-acre farm in the community of Alsuma at East 51st Street and South Mingo Road. Nearby railroad tracks separated whites and blacks. At 9 years old, Goodwin became an amputee when he lost his right arm in a horseback riding accident that involved a train on the Katy Railroad.

Jim Goodwin is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and the University of Tulsa college of law. As a lawyer he successfully argued before the U.S. Supreme Court and Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals for the constitutionality of local statutes regarding freedom of speech and he was co-counsel in the matter of reparation for victims of the 1921 Tulsa race massacre.

Jim is the publisher of The Oklahoma Eagle, Oklahoma's longest-running Black-owned newspaper. The paper is a successor to the Tulsa Star newspaper, which was burned down in the 1921 Tulsa race massacre.

Listen to Jim tell his story on the oral history website Voices of Oklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 – 6:08
Grand Father

John Erling (JE): My name is John Erling and today's date is March 29th, 2012. Jim, state your full name, your date of birth, and your present age.

Jim Goodwin (JG): James O. Goodwin. November the 4th, 1939. I am now 72.

JE: The "O", what's the "O"?

JG: Osby. O-S-B-Y. My mother's maiden name.

JE: We're recording this here in our recording offices, The VoicesofOklahoma.com. Where were you born?

JG: I was born here in Tulsa at the Morton Hospital, which no longer exists, but now known as a Morton Health Community, not a hospital. Doctor Burt was my doctor, as I recall.

JE: Were you one of several children?

JG: One of eight. My oldest sibling died in childbirth and then my mother had five girls and three boys thereafter. Actually, so, it would be a sibling — nine. Nine. One died in childbirth.

JE: Let's go back to your remembrances of your grandfather. You do have remembrances of him?

JG: Quite well.

JE: What is his name, please?

JG: "J. H," or James Henry Goodwin. He came from Mississippi — Water Valley, particularly. Was married to Carly Goodwin and left Mississippi, I suspect, in the mid 1900s or thereabouts — after statehood, I believe.

I don't remember the year of his birth, but he left Water Valley, Mississippi because of racism that was pernicious during that period of time. He told me that when he would walk down the street — and he could do so with impunity — African Americans who were walking on the same sidewalk … if a white person was walking that same sidewalk, would be waylaid be taken to an alley and beaten.

He'd seen that happen more than once. His father was Jewish. I don't know what his father did at the time and his mother was African American. She may have been one of the servants. I don't know. But, because he had four children, he did not want that experience. So he left there, bringing them to Oklahoma.

He was en route to Waterloo, Iowa — that being the place where the underground railroad, if not originally, it was a point — he stops in Tulsa and he becomes very successful in Tulsa. Educates his four children, sending them to college, and became a landowner. And also one of the ways of making money aside from rural properties, he loaned money for which he got interest.

JE: This is all about James?

JG: James. "J.H." Yes.

JE: Alright. Did he go to school here?

JG: No, he did not. He had a third grade education. He was a grown man when he came to Oklahoma bringing his family — his wife and four children — with him.

JE: Your grandfather, J. H. Goodwin...

JG: Known as "Papa."

JE: ... tell us more about him: his personality and all.

JG: He was a no-nonsense grandpa. Some of the things I remember about, as I said, he was successful... He built a huge home when it was not really fashionable and I presume, based upon the standard of living, he was upper-middle class in days of segregation.

He was able to educate his children. After the riot burned down Mount Zion, he gave $500 to rebuild it. A copy of that check we still have in our family. So he was a rather successful entrepreneur, for lack of a better term, in which he made money by lending it to others and also by property holdings that he would acquire.

I remember as a young man, I would drive him from time to time from place to place. After a certain period of time, he lived with us at Fisher 1st and Mingo. My dad had purchased a home there and my grandpa was a

part of our family. He would always tell me: “Jim, be a good boy.”

Although, I must remember, he was something of a disciplinarian because, before we moved to the country at that time, I remember doing something at home and my father having, I guess, such a large family, was able to bring home eggs in huge cartons — wooden cartons — and I remember this crate. I'd done something that did not please my grandpa and I remember him putting my head between his legs and spanking me with this crate. Certainly, he had the free rein to discipline me. However, I do remember my grandpa telling me that my father, when he was younger, had taken money from my grandpa without his permission and went to Philadelphia. I guess at the age my father was — a young man, pre college. My grandpa said — he said, “Look: I don't care what you do with your life, just don't take my money.” (Chuckling) Yeah.

My grandpa was, I guess, a recognized individual within the community, particularly the black community, but he could also pass for white.

Don Ross, former legislator, tells this story, which I don't believe, but he swears it's a true story. during the riot, when the rioters were heading toward our home here in Tulsa. At the time, we lived on a hill and my grandpa had built two homes. He built a huge home for himself, and my father had built one right next door. We lived right across from a catholic convent — at that time St. Monica's — and the catholic school also had its school buildings right across the yard.

But at the riot, when the rioters were heading in that direction, there were probably 50 stairs that had to go down to descend to the street. My grandpa, Don Rose says, goes down those 50 stairs as the crowd is going in its direction of Haskell Street, by the way, points west and says to the rioters: “They went thataway!”. (Laughing)

However, my aunt, my father's sister, Anna Carole, who served in the military and was a social worker, says that the only thing she had left remaining was a dress during the riot and she was, I think, a young woman at the time. For some reason we did not escape the riot in terms of personal possessions being destroyed, according to my aunt. That's why I

think trust my aunt's word as opposed to Mr. Ross. Not that I'm saying that he's fibbing, but it certainly makes a good story.

JE: Right.

Chapter 03 – 10:11
Jim's Father

John Erling (JE): So both your father and your grandfather experienced the 1921 race riot.

Jim Goodwin (JG): Yes. And his three siblings. Very much so. This was in 1921. Incidentally, that was the beginning of the newspaper which my dad bought thereafter. That's when it began. It was the predecessor of The Tulsa Star that was, I'm told, burned to the ground during the riot. The Oklahoma Eagle was then initiated and my father purchased it back in the mid 30s.

JE: The houses your father and grandfather lived in — were they burned to the ground?

JG: I had no independent recollection. The reason I say that I know that a block away, the houses were stately homes, some of them were burned. There were brick who were burned severely. There is some pictures that yet remain. I have no independent recollection — my brother may — of whether our homes were burned down the ground or not.

One of the homes that may have been built after 1921 — the one that was the smaller home — I have a picture of the home that I grew up in before we moved to 51st and Mingo and I have no independent recollection except recalling of my aunt saying that she only had one garment remaining. So I can't tell you that with any certainty.

JE: When you became of age, did you hear them talk about the race riot a lot? Did they tell you stories?

JG: Only that one existed — no. I lived, at that time, on Haskell. At that time, the boundaries within the African American community were bounded on the south by Archer, were bounded on the west by Cincinnati, and bounded on the east — at that time, I think, perhaps — by Peoria, and then bounded on the north by Pine, as I recall — sort of a one mile square area, roughly.

We were aware of the riot, yes. And I have an independent recollection of having seen the newspaper that was published by The Tribune ...

JE: ... The Tribune, right.

JG: ... with inflammatory headlines. In fact, I personally saw the copy that my father had. The publishers of that particular edition assiduously sought to collect them all, at least I'm told, so that there would be no evidence that such a publication existed.

JE: Well, they had two. There was the headline "Nabbed Negro for Attacking Girl in an Elevator," and then the editorial titled "To Lynch Negro Tonight," which was said to have reported that whites assembled in that evening to lynch the teenage Roland. You remember seeing that editorial?

JG: I remember seeing a headline on the front page of the paper. I do not remember the editorial itself, but I do remember that being a headline I personally saw and I don't remember if it was The [Tulsa] World or The Tribune.

JE: It was The Tribune.

JG: Okay.

JE: That editorial that we're talking about, apparently, was removed from The Tribune's archives as well as the Oklahoma edition of The Tribune in the state archives. They say no known copies of the editorial exist today. There are those wondering, you would have thought that at least one paper would have survived all that.

JG: Well, my dad had a copy of it because I did not, at the time, know the significance of it and I was an adult when I saw it. I was fresh out of law school.

JE: We can come back to the race riot again, but let's talk a little more detail than about your father and mother. Your father's full name?

JG: Edward Lawrence Goodwin.

JE: Your father — Edward or Ed?

JG: Yes.

JE: He was born where?

JG: He was born in Mississippi.

JE: And then he came here from Water Valley, Mississippi.

JG: ...Mississippi.

JE: ... With his family.

JG: His family and his other three siblings.

JE: He went to school here, then.

JG: He went to school here. In fact, there's a yearbook I believe where he was “The most likely to succeed,” as they do in yearbooks. That was the inscription on his picture, I’m told.

JE: Where did he go to high school?

JG: At Booker T. Washington.

JE: So he graduated from Booker T...

JG: As did my aunt.

JE: And then he went on to further schooling.

JG: At Fisk University, as did my aunt, my other uncle and aunt. I don't know much about them, but they, likewise, I'm sure, had some education.

JE: What was his degree in?

JG: Business Administration.

JE: That would have been in what years about?

JG: My father was, I think, born in either 1902 — my mom was 1903 — so it would have to be somewhere around 1916, 17, 18, maybe around the World War I.

JE: So it's remarkable, going way back then...

JE: That's correct.

JE: ...He was taught by his father that education is the key to all of this.

JG: Yes.

JE: So he went on to get his degree. What did he do after he graduated?

JG: Well, during his college years, I remember telling me he worked as a porter on a train. He also worked on the steamboat. After college, to my best recollection, he had a shoe store in St. Louis, Missouri and then he came back here to Tulsa and bought the newspaper, had rental property that he acquired.

One of the enterprises he was engaged in was not permitted by law. It's known as a policy wheel. That's like the lottery today.

JE: Yeah.

JG: At that time it was outlawed and within the black community. My father, I'm told, had this lottery system. Some say it was engaged in a numbers racket.

JE: Okay.

JG: Perhaps — I don't know this — but that may have been a reason that we were upper middle class during all my lifetime. My father had plenty of cash and he lived large, but also he bought the newspaper. I'm told, by my father, that he decided not to engage in that enterprise any longer once the federal government made a requirement to have a tax stamp if you were going to engage in gambling. So he stopped.

Along the way, though, he became fast friends with Bob Kerr who was, at that time, governor — this was in the 40s — Kerr appointed him to be the state administrator at the orphanage and mental institution of Taft. My father owned his own plane to fly back and forth from Tulsa to Taft, Oklahoma. He administered a huge budget even while he was also in the newspaper.

In fact, I remember my father telling me — and probably today is why I'm still involved in the newspaper business — is that, with this paper, you'll always be a source of influence.

At the time, I probably did not understand significance, nor was I that involved in the newspaper business, but later it fell to my lot to take it over. In fact, many times, someone who doesn't know anything about our family would know how I got in the newspaper business and my younger brother, Bob — who, by the way, his full name is Robert Kerr Goodwin — was at the helm after my father decided to retire.

Bob was in theological school in Berkeley in California and came back here to run the newspaper at a young age. Bob decided after 10 years he wanted to do something else.

I tell people if you ever seen that commercial — M.A.S.H., the popular sitcom of a few years ago, back I guess in the 70s — there was a commercial advertising it where a horse breaks loose and one of the

superior officers wants to know if there's anybody there who can ride horses. One of the privates raised his hands and says, "Well, I stepped in some manure once." He says, "You're in charge!" (Laughing)

So, although I was actually practicing law in '79, that's when I took over the newspaper but proud of that. My father had the paper and it was a source of influence. I remember meeting dignitaries when I was a kid. Bob Kerr; Raymond W. Gary; when he was a governor; President Sukarno of Indonesia; Dick Nixon when he ran for the vice presidency in the Eisenhower years.

I was living, in my high school years — last two — in Springfield, Illinois. So I, with the press pass, got in to see these dignitaries. I remember going to the Junior Chamber of Commerce Confab, their annual meeting they had in Springfield. Leon Sullivan was a very popular African American person that they celebrated because of his outstanding work in creating jobs for african americans throughout the United States.

Anyway, the newspaper did provide a platform and, as it turned out, my staying in it, not to make money but to provide a voice — sense of newspapers' origin — was dealing with the underdog. I mean that's the origin of newspapers, generally. I found it an opportune time for me to use the paper to speak out on issues of otherwise, sometimes not popular, sometimes not favorite, but always adhering to what my mother and father tried to embed in us and that is standing up for people who are not otherwise fortunate.

JE: He was known for his editorials, Ed was — your father.

JG: He was.

JE: And I believe was also known for promoting education for blacks.

JG: That's correct.

JE: I got a quote here. He once told a reporter that "...knowing how to manage money is more important than receiving a flood of federal dollars."

JG: That sounds like my dad. My dad was a sharp, shrewd businessman. He went to law school when he was in his early 50s, maybe about 54 years old. My mom, years later, said he expressly went to make a place for me. The study of law is a jealous mistress, and at that age, to even think about going to law school.

But I might say that one of the other things that he saw was that he paid a huge fee to a lawyer out of Muscogee — $150,000 fee in the mid 50s.

He said later: “If they make this kind of money, I'm going to go to law school.”

So he saw that as a revenue enhancement profession. He studied in night school. This was just on the beginning of Brown vs Board of Education when he went to law school. I remember my father studying at night.

JE: At Tulsa University?

JG: At Tulsa University.

JE: That was in 1954.

JG: Well, the Brown vs Board of Education was in ‘54.

JE: It was handed down on May 17th, 1954.

JG: And he probably went into law school — began, I'm going to say, in ‘55 or ‘56 at the latest. For four years, he went to night school.

JE: Wow. That's remarkable.

JG: And then practice about 15 plus years after that.

JE: He was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, The Tulsa Historical Society Hall of Fame...

Chapter 04 – 8:00

Jim's Mother

John Erling (JE): So we got to come to your mother. Your mother's name?

Jim Goodwin (JG): Jeannie B. Goodwin, her middle name stood for "Belle." Her maiden name was Osby, O-S-B-Y. In fact, my mother tells me that her mother and father disapproved of my father as an appropriate suitor for her.

In fact, my mother tells me that the way she got married was by eloping, but she eloped on a unilateral move on the part of my father that she was taken by surprise and he said, "I'm gonna marry you." And they, in fact, got married.

Years later, I asked my mom if she regrets it and she said "No." She never did regret the decision and he treated her like a queen, really, as a kid growing up. My mother had long flowing hair and she, too, could pass for white. Now, in fact, when he would go to Mississippi, she would have to ride in the backseat of the vehicle. People were thinking that he was her chauffeur. They didn't go to Mississippi that often, but she was, like my grandpa, was very, very fair.

JE: Was she a homemaker, then? Take care of the home?

JG: Yes. She was a homemaker. She began her work in social work, and then became a teacher. After the 8 kids were of age, she went back to teaching.

My brother Bob... When Bob was born, she was about 45 years old, so she went back to teaching somewhere in her mid 40s and early 50s and taught until she retired in her 60s.

My mother originated from Springfield, Illinois. Interestingly enough, "Bobby," was, I think, a nickname for my grandfather on her side and "Minny" was her mother.

I have in my possession a clock, reportedly, that came out of the office of Abe Lincoln when he was a lawyer, because I think my grandpa did some

janitorial. He was in the real estate business, but also part of his life he did janitorial work. And, reportedly, according to my mother, this clock came from his office when he was in partnership with another lawyer whose name is [unintelligible]. I do have in my office, also, an original paper — the Illinois paper — where Abe Lincoln and his partner are advertising their profession on the front page classified ad.

Anyway, my mom graduated from Springfield. There was a race riot in Springfield, Illinois, I believe, when she was living there. So she had experienced two race riots in her lifetime.

I guess my first principles of life came from my mom from a young age. I can always remember her telling me — not that I understood the significance — but she would always quote to me: “For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?” Now, I was taught that passage as a child, I know not why it would resonate with me. Those are one of the first principles that I received from her. Another principle was, “When you're facing adversity, when people are dead-set to cause you grief — for whatever reason — you don't get bitter, you get better.” Those are two principles of living that she always embedded in us as children growing up. By contrast, my father, one of the principles embedded in me by him was: “A man who does not take care of his family is worse than an infidel.” That was etched in my mind. Typical, I suppose, of an American family, even though you had all these other kinds of negatives going on in our society, those principals and community service, I was sort of born into.

My father raised eight children plus, he was always providing; he was a builder. He was a man who loved gardening and he loved hunting and he was always building edifices, you know, for this, that and the other.

My mom was an excellent homemaker. Loving. I can remember her and my aunt telling me stories. They’d tell me stories of Br’er Rabbit. My aunt, Anna Carole, was a great storyteller and I would crawl on her lap. Mother, on occasion, would do the same thing. Mother would always tell each of us, but privately, I learned later, “You're my favorite.” I later learned that what she meant was that we all were her favorites, right? And I inferred that what she meant by that was like they're different sized glasses, if you will,

and each one is filled to the brim. So we all had enough love. She'd pour enough love into us to fill us up, so to speak, and so to the extent that we were individuals, she would pour her love sufficient into each one of us which made us all feel special. That was my mom. My mom was a very God-fearing woman, as you can tell.

When we were young, the nuns would come over. My mother was somewhat sickly. I remember, on one of the plateaus where we lived, she had a lawn chair with the padding and she would sit out in the sun just resting because she was a weak person. This long, flowing hair I remember very much. And the nuns would come over and take my brother, Edward, who was about four years my senior, and I would follow in tow, and would take us over to the school.

So I was starting to form letters in preschool. My brother, Edward, was an altar boy later and then years later I returned to the catholic church, I was baptized. She allowed us to be baptized. Her view was: “There are many roads that lead to Rome; as long as you go to church, I don't care what church he’s in — just be there.” Never was she fixed on any particular “faith.” So, as a result from the catholic church, I was introduced to the Methodist church, to the Baptist church...

And then, years later, in my high school formative years when I began to search for that which fed me, I returned to the catholic church, but Mother was always supportive and always sort of monitor our progress by never intruding into our lives, but always dropping a hint here or there, or making a comment here or there.

JE: But as a youth, were you raised in the catholic church, so the whole family went to the catholic church?

JG: No, I was not. My sister was a Methodist, attended a Lutheran church; I had some who were Baptist. So, no. There was a hodgepodge, if you will, for lack of a better term. All Mother wanted to know was God's first and you serve him.

JE: So she hadn't chosen this particular church herself.

JG: No, no. She was Baptist. In fact, when we moved to the country, we went to a one-room church that was by the track. In fact, my dad's funeral was there when Oral Roberts and his sisters were coming to be a part of the ceremony. We had just a one-room church. Probably could seat no more than 30 people.

JE: And where was this located?

JG: In Alsuma, just a few feet away from the track that I lost my arm on — the Katy railroad — there was a church right by the railroad track Alsuma.

JE: Alsuma?

JG: Alsuma was a little community that was just outside of Tulsa. That is now at 51st and Mingo, in that area. It encompassed probably a square mile maybe, or maybe it was only about 220 acres in size. The Oklahoma Greenhouse was there at the time — The Peters.

There was a school house that I went to school at. It was a two room schoolhouse. And there was a black and white community separated by the tracks. It was called Alsuma. The Perryman's — the Indian tribe Perryman's — that branch lived right down the street from us. It was called Alsuma.

JE: So that was way out in the country, then — as far as Tulsa was concerned.

JG: Right. From my dad's office to our home place was about 15 miles, which was a long way in the 30s and 40s.

JE: You said when your father died, you had the funeral there.

JG: At that church. By that time he and Nora Roberts were very close. My dad had been a trustee at Oral Roberts's bank and my brother, Bob, finished at ORU, and was a very active student and in Oral Roberts's ministry — traveled over the world with him in his World Action Singers — and later was the president of the student body. This would be, I think, the second graduating class at ORU. My dad and Oral Roberts and Evelyn Roberts were very close. This would have been in the 70s. I remember when my

dad was in a nursing home, both those people coming to see him and speaking with him.

Chapter 05 – 9:00
Accident

John Erling (JE): The first education was in that one-room schoolhouse for you.

Jim Goodwin (JG): Well, no, because we moved from Tulsa, on the site now that's OSU, on the hillside there's an apartment complex. And on that hill was where home was and the convent. It's now changed in character. And I was there from my kindergarten years to my 3rd grade, and then my 4th, 5th and 6th grades were at this one-room school.

JE: In Alsuma.

JG: In Alsuma.

JE: Then you attended beyond that school.

JG: I left there and went to Carver. We were bused; I would take the bus on occasion or ride with my dad to Carver Junior High School. Then from there I went to Washington. I spent one year at Booker T. Washington and I went to leave there because I didn't think I was getting the same quality of education as my white counterparts.

By this time, I was associated with a summer group of kids — integrated group — and we discussed books and public affairs. Central, Webster, and Booker T. Washington were the only three schools at that time in the city. Rogers may have existed as well. And those kids from Central seemed to be much brighter than I was. And yet I was making As. I was an honor student, but there just seemed to know more. In fact, I remember I had an English teacher and one of our assignments was to commit to memory "Thanatopsis." And I was able to do that. She gave me an A. I thought that

was adequate by my own assessment.

So I asked my mother if I could go elsewhere. So my aunt, her sister, who at that time had been an administrative aide to Adlai Stevenson when he was running for the presidency, opened her door and my aunt lived with her mother.

So they let me come there and I entered into a Catholic high school — preparatory school there — in Springfield. That's when I got reconnected with the Catholic faith.

JE: That first year of Booker T. What year was that you were in school?

JG: That would have been just the year before The Supreme Court decided. That would have been ‘54, ‘55. I think ‘54, ‘55.

JE: Let's go back also to your early years because you referred to the accident which took your arm.

JG: Right.

JE: Can you tell us about that?

JG: Yeah. Generally, when people ask about it, it's a young kid, my lead-in is “I disobeyed my parents,” which of course leads to bepuzzlement.

But, as I told you, we lived on a 160 acre farm with cows and horses and geese and guineas and ducks. My dad, on that 160 acres, he’d fall 80 of it, on occasion, for wheat and corn. He had his own garden in our yard as well. We had three ponds on the place.

Anyway, one day, a playmate of mine who lived in Alsuma came up to my home around 5 o'clock in the evening with his own horse. You can't imagine how excited I was that my friend would have a horse. He came up and he had contrived this bridal out of rope and baling wire with no cupchain. Well, he steals away, of course, this is dinner time. I'm excited. So I saddle up my horse, which was a Tennessee walking horse at the time, and we steal out of the yard while everybody else is at the dinner table.

And I get just half a mile away; we went down into the village of Alsuma. Both of the horses were racing one another and I couldn't stop the horse I was riding because it didn't have the proper gear.

JE: How old are you now?

JG: Approaching 9 years old. I'm within two or three months of being 9. And the train's coming here on. Well, there was a little side-stop — maybe a couple of blocks away — and so it was not speeding, it had just stopped and was pulling off, maybe going 20MPH, possibly. I have no independent recollection. I'm surmising that.

Not knowing the laws of physics, I'm jumping off because I'm coming head on. I'm thinking I'm gonna hit the train with the horse. I jump off. Well, rather than falling backwards, I'm propelled with the speed of the horse, so my head hits the railing of the track. I'm out like a light. I do remember my descent from the horse, jumping off, and my head hit the track, but rather than being perpendicular to the track, I followed in the center of the track between the two rails and the train runs over me.

I'm told it had a hook underneath that swung back and forth. And I remember I had this t-shirt with white and red stripes that were lateral. The hook took the shirt, I guess it was loose enough, and caught hold of it and drug me 50, 60, 70, 80 feet before the train came to a stop.

Of course I was out like a light at this point in time. I'm told the engineers had given me up because blood was gushing everywhere. Two men come by — one whose dad was an insurance salesman, knocked door-to-door selling penny policies, and there had to be some other person, I had learned. They pulled me from under the track, applied a tourniquet to me.

The Sheriff's office comes and picks me up. And I remember distinctly my mother — here I'm out like a light — but my memory now serves me many years later. I remember being in her lap. With my head on her lap and I remember her praying. I don't know if she was shedding tears, but I do remember — vaguely inaccurately these days — that my head is the size of a football at the time. I later learned that I'm delivered to one of the hospitals. It was Either Hillcrest or St John's, I don't know which and I was

refused admittance.

They then took me to Mercy Hospital, which was owned by Dr. Sister — that's where I was able to be treated. I do remember that story, but my mother, they never made a big point of it, nor was there any litigation ever about me and the train because my father felt I was at fault.

My older brother's recollection of the event was: He was just about to put a piece of pie in his mouth and someone comes in and says, “Jimmy has been hit by a train,” or words to that effect. His reaction was — I don't think he'd use the “d”-word — but something like that came out of his mouth and it was not regretting the fact that I had an accent, but was regretting the fact that he could not finish his pie, he tells me. (Laughing)

But I do remember my mother running down there, a quarter of a mile, barefooted. I do remember that story being told to me.

JE: This is in the ...

JG: ...1948, ‘49.

JE: ‘49. And we point that out because it was because of your race that you were rejected at that hospital.

JG: Correct.

JE: Your life could have been lost because of that. They didn't know that, when they turned you away.

JG: Right. I know I woke up maybe two or three weeks later, I was in a coma. I say a coma. I was not aware of what was going on for many days. My classmates sent me a big box of plastic toys. There was a hamburger stand not far from my dad's office. They would bring me the hamburgers, which I loved. I just relished the idea of being treated. In fact, I told my dad if I didn't get a palomino pony, I might die of them.

At that time, Will Rogers was my idol. My father had us working. My brother and I were working. I must be six years old cleaning the presses,

the metal on the press is that the rubber rolls would rub against and the paper would go through. I had to be six years old and my grandpa was also a taskmaster. By this time my dad owned the paper and the press and all the stuff that went with it. And I remember having to sweep up these metal shavings that would be a part of the metal letters that would be printed out that then were put in for the printing of the paper and the ink around the linotype machines seems like it took forever to clean. They had to be almost swept clean and not a trace of anything. I remember that being an arduous task for me, but the most exasperating task was cleaning those metal rollers. They had to be split clean, but I would use gasoline, as I recall, or kerosene, to rub the ink off those metal rollers. The more I wipe, the more smears would come — back and forth, back and forth. I mean, even to the point of tears, and my grandpa would come by. Used to say: ”Come over here, son, and get this.”

Well, that activity would probably take two hours, two-and-a-half hours on Saturday morning, for which I earned the grand total of 30 cents. 20 cents for the movies and 10 cents for popcorn. That was an assignment at that young age.

And right down the street — this was on Black Wall Street — was the Dreamland Theater. My friend and I would go in and enjoy an afternoon on Saturday with popcorn in hand. Will Rogers. So I grew up wanting palomino ponies, you know, and today I still have that. Anyway, that was the work that I think that both my grandpa and my father instilled in me.

Chapter 06 – 9:30
Segregation

John Erling (JE): Here you were, above middle class means, you had money.

Jim Goodwin (JG): Right.

JE: But do you remember going downtown Tulsa?

JG: Yes. First of all, I really did not understand the full effects of segregation until I was about 13 years old and living out in the country. You could get everything you needed within the black community at that time. Except, and I don't know whether I know these stories as experiencing them and understanding at the time, or whether or not my mother shared them later, but my mother — who was very fair, which could pass white, as did my grandfather — I remember going into Brown Duncan's store. Or it could have been Vander's; I can't remember which.

JE: And what was Brown Duncan?

JG: It was a store where you bought clothes —

JE: — Department store?

JG: Department store. But I don't know if, like —

JE: You're not sure which store it was.

JG: Yeah, but, my mother wanted to try on a hat and when they saw these children, they would not allow her to try a hat on and my mother could have gone in without us, but she would not do that. When I applied to go to Notre Dame University at the suggestion of my aunt Leo who was the administrator to Adalai Stevenson, my mother took all my grades and certificates of recognition to the back door of Joe LaFortune's house. Joe LaFortune was a big man at Notre Dame, having received education there because he got a free education. He was very generous years later to that university.

Mother never said that she was required to come to the back door, but she apparently knew one of the servants of LaFortune. So I'm not suggesting or implying that this was required of her, to be relegated to the back door, I just remember she said that's where she went.

Then, of course, we got an audience with the LaFortune and he gave me a letter of recommendation to Notre Dame, for which I'm grateful.

JE: He's the father, of course, of Bob LaFortune, who was the mayor of our city and then wasn't that turned around again because didn't you then write a letter of recommendation?

JG: I did, interestingly enough. The former mayor...

JE: Bill LaFortune.

JG: Bill LaFortune's daughter wanted to go to Notre Dame and he asked me if I would write a letter of recommendation, which, of course, unqualifiedly would I do so and we felt privileged to be able to do so.

JE: Your experience at Notre Dame. That was a good experience for you?

JG: Wonderful experience. Because of my years of, what I thought, was not adequate in my secondary school years, I never felt as informed or educated as I saw my white counterparts at central were. One of the areas that I was weak in was English, I thought — composition writing.

But I get admitted to Notre Dame. I'm able to get the requisite entry, but I still had a thirst for writing better. So I get to Notre Dame and I do a lot of improvement there. Shortly thereafter there were probably 5000 students at Notre Dame at the time. Not much larger today even. And I thought there were about 10 African Americans there at the time, this would have been 1957. But I since have been told by Ron Gregory, the brother of Dick Gregory who was a year ahead of me then, there may have been as many as 20 of us, I don't recall. And perhaps 10, maybe 15, may have been graduate students and probably only five of us undergraduate students at the time.

JE: Did you feel accepted there?

JG: Yeah, there was the I'd come —

JE: Prejudice?

JG: Well if it was it was oblivious because, keep in mind, I was sheltered in my childhood up until 13 and I'll tell you about that story. But no, I never — and

then of course I was in an integrated situation there in Springfield, Illinois. So I never felt the stigma of being black. That never was a preoccupation of mine.

I did have it occur to me, traveling through Missouri once as a college student, and I had it happen to me in Tulsa when I was younger, when I was told to get to the back of the bus. At that time, the transportation into Tulsa from 51st and Mingo, one of the buses that would go interstate would come by and stop and pick up people to take them on into Tulsa, and I remember having to come into Tulsa at my dad's place.

I got on this bus, I sat in the center, there was an older black couple in the back and I sat sort of center. And this lady, maybe two miles down the road, I see her lean forward close enough to the driver and then the driver says something to the effect of “Get to the back of the bus.” I think I knew, at that time, what he meant. So I was aware of the custom, but I pretended I didn't hear. So he said get to the back of the bus. To this day, I regret this. I acceded to his request rather than demanding to get off. But by that time I was probably, maybe, 13 miles away from Tulsa. I didn't have the intestinal fortitude to say, “Let me off this bus,” because by that time my daddy could have bought the bus, you know?

JE: So is that the incident at 13 that you're talking about?

JG: It was. 13 years old.

And the second time that that happened was I rode my horse up to 51st and Memorial, right across from the Memorial Park cemetery, right about a half block south of Memorial. There was little sideway hamburger place. So I rode my horse up, got off of it, and went in to order a hamburger and they bagged it for me and said, “You can’t eat it here.” I think I walked out on that occasion without taking the hamburger. But those are the only two instances in Oklahoma.

Later, when I was in Missouri, in between trains to come back to Tulsa or to go to the south bend, I'm decked out in a tweed suit with one of the hats — style hats — and a vest. I mean I'm dressed to the T. My shoes are shined, you know.

I'm famished. We get into St. Louis in the wee hours of the morning, I'm famished. Everything's closed. And, at that time, the train station — everything was closed out where you could eat there with impunity. When I walked out a few blocks from the train station, I found this hamburger place called “Horseshoe.”

I went in, and only one person was in there and that was a cook. I ordered this hamburger and a drink. I'm sitting here by myself and he puts up the sack and says “You can’t eat it here.” It's about two or three o'clock in the morning. And he says, “I'm sorry, I can't. My boss won't let me.”

I said, “What do you mean? I don't see anybody here.”

“I can't.”

I'm famished. So I take the hamburger, leave the drink and eat it outside. And I then walk across the street to deposit the debris into a trash can rather than throwing it on the sidewalk, which I thought was the appropriate thing to do.

Well, I'm still thirsty. So I walk another block into a smaller establishment. When I walk in, there's a cop and a couple of patrons and the waitress. I order a drink. Well, at that point she said, “they’ll cap it.”

I said “No, that's alright, I would drink it.”

“No you can't.”

So I just leave the drink and walk on back to the station. Those are the only instances that I have experienced racism.

JE: How old were you then?

JG: I was in college. I was a sophomore.

JE: Did this anger you? Was it something that you thought, “We need to correct this.” Or were you passive about it and just decided, “I need to live my life and not worry about that.”

JG: I was certainly angry about it. But not to the extent that I harbored any kind of ill will. It's just like you're rebuffed or slighted and you just go on about your business. You don't dwell on it, that's dwelling on the negative. You don't get better, get better. So it was just like you get knocked down, you get tackled and you get up and you go and you don't preoccupy yourself with that.

JE: Yeah.

JG: The only time that I exercised racism or felt like it was on the day that Jack Kennedy was assassinated at that time. I was in law school and I was working for Raymond David Graham, a district judge, as a clerk, without knowing any facts surrounding Kennedy's assassination. I was leaving a lecture at the law school. I was in night school, but on this occasion there was some activity in the daytime during the lunch hour, some speaker. I don't have any independent recollection of who. When I got into my car to go back to the courthouse, it came across that Jack Kennedy was assassinated. That hit me like a death knell into my heart. And immediately, without knowing, I assumed somebody white did it.

And when I hit that courthouse door, I refused to look at anybody white. Keep in mind that my boss is white. And I've never felt any kind of ill will ever. But I had a disdain and a, I guess, a hatred for what I thought to be somebody white killing a good man. “Why the good die young” kind of thing. Because Jack Kennedy epitomized what I thought was good about life, in a sense: he was successful, he was handsome, he was articulate. He inspired me and many others at Notre Dame. They would have mock presidents elections and I remember how involved people were. But Jack Kennedy inspired a younger generation, my generation particularly. That lasted though that hate if you will lasted probably not more than 2.5 hours and then it dissipated, you know — particularly since I spent the weekend watching the news coverage and even witnessed, as many Americans did, the assassination of Kennedy's assassin.

Chapter 07 – 8:55
Martin Luther King

John Erling (JE): Let me just take you back, because you'll have a comment on this — on sports. I just happened to be reading a book on Willie Mays. They referred to the Brown vs. Board of Education decision. The scholar Charles Ogletree pointed out, in all deliberate speed, that Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King had very different approaches to ending segregation. Marshall believed in change through the court system. King advocated non-violent political protests or extralegal challenges. First of all, did you have any interaction with Martin Luther King at any time?

Jim Goodwin (JG): I did. I believe I may have been a sophomore at Notre Dame. Now keep in mind the backdrop here: This was the height of the civil rights movement. I think King began to make his campaign actively, maybe '50 — '59 possibly. When he saw that came to the forefront, he was invited to speak here in Tulsa at the First Baptist Church in Tulsa North. My father's office was right across the street from the church, which was about [unintelligible] where it's presently located.

When he was invited, I was asked to introduce reverend Ben Hill, who in his own right, was quite a man, and quite a preacher, and quite an inspired speaker. I was invited to introduce him. He, in turn, would introduce Dr. King. So as a result, I had the privilege of sitting on the dias in the church.

JE: And that year would have been?

JG: I'm gonna guess it had to be '50 — '59, I think.

JE: So, you got to be there on the same stage. Do you remember the words of Martin Luther King then?

JG: Well, only the same — I won't say "typical" — but was of his style, as it was when he spoke in Memphis. I mean these were speeches that were uplifting and telling us, you know that there is a way and that America has to come to grips with its own self on this issue — inspiring. And as I said,

my presence was to introduce Ben Hill, but then Hill was the editor of the Oklahoma Eagle at the time, in addition to being the minister of the Vernon AME Church. Of course, Dr. Hill, then later became a state legislator in his retirement years. At that time, accompanying Dr. King, was his right-hand man...

JE: Ralph Abernathy?

JG: Abernathy.

JE: And they both came over to my father's office. And I'm sitting in my father's desk in his main office and on the other side of the desk, Reverend Abernathy and Dr. King. I know Reverend Abernathy and I'm engaged in conversation. Now, here's a kid — a little college kid — whose claim to fame, perhaps from outside, was the fact that I was a Notre Damer, which was a rarity as I indicated to you, that there were maybe five of us at the time in undergraduate school, the others may have been graduate students; I don't have an independent recollection. I think it may have been one of us in each class to see there were two of us. Dr. Pierre was my roommate and I think we were the only two. Dick Gregory's brother, Ron, who at that time was the star of the Gregory family because he was a distance runner — track — and was on a scholarship there.

Dr. Pierre was on a scholarship. My daddy paid my way there in stark contrast. I think back then, the four years of Notre Dame was about 10 grand. Now, it's about 40 grand per year, if not more. I've had the privilege of sending my children there.

JE: Let's bring you back then to these two.

JG: Oh, yes, of course. Again, my education — Dr. King would have been about a decade ahead of me. If he was living in his eighties now, I think.

What was interesting in my reading, and I don't know whether I was aware at the time, but my education, I thought, was of the same stellar quality as was his. Many of the things that he would reference in his speeches I was acquainted with and understood, but perhaps he spoke a universal language to better appeal both to those who were lettered and those who

weren't. Dr. King was an inspiring man. No question about it.

Just on the side, on his death: I did not react to his death, as I did with John Kennedy. I did react to his death. Don Ross And I were in my office the night of his death, commiserating. And it came out of my mouth, talking to Don at that time, Kennedy was killed. King was killed. And I said to Don, "I wonder where the third K is gonna come from that will travel." The KKK. Of course, thereafter, his brother died. So to me, it symbolized, in my mind, there are three Ks. They were going to nullify the evilness of the KKK. That was just on the side. But I do remember talking to Don Ross about that.

Don was so upset that he had confided to me that he had done a dastardly thing in protest. We then flew my dad, myself, I think Amos Hall who was a jurist here who had done work with Thurgood Marshall in the early U. S. Supreme Court cases — McClaren was one of the cases, I think there were two others.

Anyway, we all go to the funeral. I mean, I felt committed to go to that funeral. And then in the later years, interestingly enough, my nephew, my brother Edward's son, was Coretta Scott King's administrative assistant. He later died in an automobile fatality, but Dr. King — I remembered and I remembered what hope he gave us, if you will.

You have to keep in mind, I'm not stigmatized by the evils of race as some of my other colleagues were and my peers were. I didn't have to suffer those kinds of things. And if I did, you know, we were taught you don't get bitter, you get better and you have to be better-than if you're gonna succeed.

JE: Did you ever join any of Martin Luther King's marches?

JG: The only march I ever joined with Dr. King was his funeral.

JE: Okay.

JG: I represented people but never involved in the demonstrations.

JE: I'm still taken with that scene when you're sitting in the office and Ralph Abernathy and Martin Luther King walk in. What do they say to you?

JG: Well, I have no independent recollection, but I assume they're talking about my own experience as a student. You know, again, I'm oblivious to the moment — the significance of that moment.

JE: That's a neat scene. This kind of helps us, here, as I continue in this from this book on Willie Mays. In Birmingham, Alabama, resistance to Brown vs Board of Education quickly surfaced. Before the decision, the city commissioners had abolished the ordinance that had prohibited blacks and whites from sharing any recreational activity.

JG: Mhmm (in agreement)

JE: We assumed that whites and blacks could play ball together and that was not the case. The commission unanimously amended the laws so blacks and whites could play spectator sports together, including baseball, which would have more easily allowed Willie Mays to play exhibitions in his hometown. But two weeks after Brown, Birmingham voters resegregated baseball among other sports by a margin of 3 to 1. That’s just hard to believe.

JG: At that time, I remember reading the Tulsa World and The Tulsa Tribune. Do you remember a journalist by the name of D.H. Lawrence?

JE: Yes.

JG: Lawrence was a rabid, I think, segregationist, but also was H.L. Mencken, whom I love. I mean, the guy was beautiful. But the line there was race mixing. There was a prohibition about that. Marriage and relationships were not permitted. But keep in mind now, I'm coming out of the background where my mother looks like she's white. My grandpa looks like he's white. We have jewish blood in us, we have Irish blood in us, we have black blood, we have Indian blood.

JE: You have wealth.

JG: We had wealth.

JE: Some wealth.

JG: Some wealth, yes. So I'm immunized from some of these kinds of things. Yet when I would play with my playmates who were not as fortunate, I begged my father to let me go work in a country club setting or a club setting that was exclusively white or Jewish as the case may be. I begged for that opportunity because my playmates would tell me their stories about how rich people lived and how this happened and that happened and their successes, and I felt I was missing out on life. So I begged —

JE: You wanted to be a servant.

JG: As a result, my father got me a job with the husband of my health teacher at Carver. Mr Carter, who was in charge of the locker room at Meadowbrook Country Club. So I went there, I cleaned off shoes, I shined off shoes, I cleaned latrines, I picked up towels, I swept the floor, I went and got food for the patrons into the locker room, and drove to work in a two-seater Thunderbird. So my peers would not have one over on me either. I'd hopefully share the same kind of experiences that they would have. So I wasn't left out. My father and my mother both would say, "Look: No one's better than you are, but you're no better than anyone else." They always kept that moderation, but always trying to excel, doing your best, but never getting beside yourself — ever. Don't take yourself that serious ever. It seemed to be the hallmark of some of my training.

Chapter 08 – 8:25
Notre Dame

John Erling (JE): You graduate from Notre Dame. What was your degree?

Jim Goodwin (JG): In liberal arts. And they have a special program there, at the time, that was initiated by a fellow out of Chicago called "The Great Books of the Western World." It's called "the general program" and after my traditional classes, my freshman year, I was accepted into this general

program that was somewhat elite. Donald Bird, at the time, headed it up.

We would not study textbooks. We dispense with textbooks and read the works of the people about whom textbooks were written for three years. Our class size was probably 15 at the most. We'd sit around tables, such as this, and talk after being given heavy assignments. Our biology class — Professor Nutting. Willis Nutting, a wonderful man. In my days, they were very rich. He would take us out in the wooded area like, such as — we look at birds and talk about them. Dr. Cronin, my English and lyrics professor, looked like the fellow on the TV sitcom “Gilligan's Island.”

There was a robust fellow with a bald head whose name escapes me — Professor Cronin looked like him. Wonderful man who taught me writing. During the vacation, when I didn't come to Tulsa, he invited me to his home for thanksgiving along with his family, and it was a wonderful opportunity. I felt very close. I walked to campus with Theodore Hesburgh, who I still love and was a wonderful man who had this presence of mind. Father Hesburgh was probably the youngest president of Notre Dame, that time in his forties, but he had a great sense about him and presence of mind, always inspiring. I remember him telling me — walking the campus — about his southern contingency being still racist and he was looking for that ideal student who's African American who was both brains and brawn because Notre Dame was a big football place, you know, which I was never that involved in sports. My college roommate, Dr. Pierre, is still a trustee there. He maybe emeritus now, now that he's my age, but for 40 years this guy was brilliant, he was brilliant. He's probably the first African American ever to have a PhD in electrical engineering, which is amazing considering our history, but he has that distinction, Dr Pierre, who served as Secretary of the Army, served as President of Universities and had an engineering chair at Michigan State — very distinguished individual. I've looked on the net to see his biography; it's amazing what he's done.

But that guy was excellent in engineering and also knew what I knew; and Lawrence used to infuriate me because I knew nothing about what he was doing and he could intelligently have conversations with me about the books I was reading, even had the gall to stop me if I misuse a word. Generally, engaged in debate, he was right.

JE: You were celebrated here in Tulsa because you were obviously the first African American to go to Notre Dame out of Tulsa.

JG: Yes.

JE: And then, I don't know; since you, others have gone several.

JG: There've been several. There've been several since I'd gone up there.

JE: When you came home, then, that's why you were able to be on stage. Here's this young, bright upcoming Notre Dame person.

JG: I'm sure that had to be a factor because — one of the first, you know? Then considering my father's and our family's status within the community...

JE: Right.

JG: That had a lot to do with it, I'm sure.

JE: Yeah.

JG: As a matter of fact, I don't want to misjudge, but I think I was something of a popular kid when I was at Carver Junior High School. I was class president, student body president. And I sometimes thought I got grades — not that I didn't work hard — but when I was given that A in English, just for memorizing Thanatopsis — I felt the fact that I was a good one may have had something to do with them giving that grade to me.

My father was kind of a no nonsense person, I think his reputation was "You don't cross that good one." kind-of attitude. And I don't know. In retrospect, I don't know if that had anything to do with it. Because I was always conscientious. My parents would never let me slack off on my assignments.

JE: I'm taken with the fact that you were upset because you believe you got an easy A. How many of us in school would have said, "Wow, I got an A! Let's move on!"

JG: But I would have felt cheated because like I had something to compare. I mean, these kids that I spent summers with — these kids seem to know so much and have an understanding of what it was that they were doing.

But by the same token, I remember I was acting out in a geometry class — Mr. Tate's geometry class — on a winter. The windows were open. At that time, these windows would open laterally. This was Washington high school, and it was shaped like a “C”, if you would, with two wings on it.

And one of the kids in my class — geometry class — early in the morning, before Professor Tate came into the room, had gone around the school building and hit me with a snowball through the window.

And of course, great laughter evoked from the classmates and of course I was somewhat embarrassed by it and upset too. So I get up to go out to do the same thing and as I get outside to throw the snowball, Professor Tate walks into the room.

Well, needless to say, I'm sent to the Dean's office. Dean Ellis, whose son, by the way, later went to MIT. Genius mentality. I go to the Dean's office and Professor Ellis tells me I shouldn't have done that: “I’m going to let that slide.”

I insisted he spanked me because I could not go back and, honestly, I could not [unintelligible] the attitude that might be engendered against me for not being paddled at that time. He could paddle with impunity So he gave me my licks and he meant what he gave me so I could, with some sort of intellectual integrity, go back and say “Yeah, he gave me a licking,” because I did not want to be able to say “I got off,” I did not want that. You know the stigma that’s attached to that. These kids I like, I loved you know?

JE: What did you do after graduation from Notre Dame? I entered law school. Tufts University night school. I was, by this time, I got married. Well, the first semester. I got married in November — thanksgiving — of the very year I graduated from Notre Dame and so in love at the time that I didn't really study much. I had gone to a journalism class in the summer — TU, where I was in college — and it was a breeze.

For some reason, I thought I would have that same breeze in law school. Not so. But I kind of got married in November — thanksgiving — that same year then I began to devote myself to my studies.

JE: During the day, you were working at the newspaper?

JG: No. During the day, my dad got me a job with Wes Fry, the district court clerk. And I was the second black appointment in the justice system ever in the Tulsa County District Court.

So I got a job as a minute clerk. And West Fry would hire law students, as minute clerks, to work for the judges. Judge Tom Krewson, who's now retired, was a clerk. Bill Means, who was a retired district judge, was a minute clerk. Peter Bradford, who served with distinction, he's now in Oklahoma City was a minute clerk. Jay Dalton, who's now deceased was a district judge was a minute clerk. Ed Rogers was a bailiff who was retired; he was down in the Sallisaw area. I was in that group. J. C. Joyce who was a firm here with Blackstock and Joyce — used to be, years ago — was a minute clerk.

So I got the benefit of watching people, both good and bad, in the practice of the law. So by the time I got out of law school, while I may not have known what to do, I sure knew what not to do when it came to procedural aspects of the practice.

JE: You said you were married — your wife's name? Vivian. Vivian Palm. Her dad — she was my next door neighbor, as a matter of fact. Her dad purchased my father's home that he had built for my mom before we moved to the home that my grandfather built for us on the hill and, with disdain, I did not like her. She was a good friend of my sister's. I remember distinctly having gone to the circus and coming back with the baton with glitter on the knob, gold glitter. I was proud of that little thing. And somehow they took possession of it and I was upset. And I remember, as we were walking, to at that time, to Charles S. Johnson Elementary School, which had been the former Booker T. Washington High School, intensely going across the street as I was so angry with him. And then, probably 20 years later, I marry her, to which we have five children.

JE: Okay, I was gonna ask you. You have five children from that marriage.

JG: Mhmm (in agreement).

Chapter 09 – 11:45
Editorial

John Erling (JE): When do you get connected to the newspaper?

Jim Goodwin (JG): Well, of course, I grew up cleaning the press. But my brother Bob had it for 10 years and decided he wanted to do something else and had had his fill. Because, in a sense, he came back from the obligation at the request of my father, and he did some significant things. Bob became very close at that time to Bourne, when he was governor; Bob did some significant things. But he did not go through with the ministry until later he left there. But he decided that he wanted to do something else.

So, again, the admonition of my father saying “Keep the paper, it will always be a source of influence,” I then stepped up. And since then, it's been running me. Because I still practice law. But 1979 is when I assumed the role of the publisher of the paper.

JE: As you look back on the paper, your role there. Any particular issues that you may have editorialized? Written about?

JG: There have been many issues. Those that come to my mind — our most recent it's been about three years ago or less. I wrote a stinging editorial after making repeated attempts to catch their attention. And, before I go further, I would say that I never wanted to use the paper as a source of personal aggrandizement. For some reason that didn't appeal to me to try to use it from that point of view. Never do I like to do that. Do I like my

name in it every now and then? There's something on the news that you had to do, you do it.

OU had decided it was going to build a diagnostic clinic within the community and it did not feel the pulse of the community. They did a survey that said such a facility was needed and it was sponsored by Kaiser and Company. But Dr. Clancy, much to his credit, had headed up this initiative. Keep in mind now: I have been, for years, on the health department Board of Health. I've been head of the Morton Health Center for about seven years. I've been involved in the Tulsa Community Action Agency as head of it for about seven years — on the board, that is. So I was intimately involved in these community affairs and citizens participation was part and parcel of these institutions.

Well, here comes a diagnostic clinic. Keeping in mind, now, the medical community in the north community was fading. It used to be somewhat tight, but as things opened up, the necessity of having it tightened seemed to dissipate that tight knit group.

But at Morton — Morton was a source not only of health care and the clinic itself, but it's also a source of jobs. The Tulsa Community Action Agency was a source of decent-paying jobs which was a great interest of mine. So at that time, in my opinion, back in the 70s, the Tulsa Community Action Agency, Morton Health Center, and the private enterprise of American Beauty Products were the major players for job creation within that community. So I jealously looked at this.

In comes OU: “We’re gonna put a diagnostic clinic.” No one understood the concept. I saw it as an attempt to come in and move out the private sector medical community to be in competition with the private sector. I saw it treading on the toes of the health department, public health department. And the administration there was pretty sensitive to it because there was no collaboration, no conversation going on.

And of course, I thought, as I said, would be injurious to the private sector. So those three entities: the private sector, Morton Health Center and the Tulsa health department. I felt this unannounced mission, not understanding its purpose, but I had, when it came into place, taken them

to task, editorially.

Not only editorially. I had gone to meetings. I pled, “Look: If you want the community to be healthy...” Once I understood you need to create jobs, these jobs are going to be created, you need to get the community to buy into it. You need to let people know that there's an opportunity to work. You're gonna be healthy? Give them a job. Not give them a job, but give them a job and give them an opportunity to have a job. Well Dr. Clancy, you know, he was all about getting health coverage for an otherwise inadequate health delivery system. He's a man of medicine, he's a man of healthcare, but there's no job creation component. There's no outreach to the schools, either to the junior colleges or the high schools to say, “Look: this industry is going to be in your midst. Get ready for it. If you want to live in your community, if you want to work in your community, here is an opportunity, this is what you need to do — learn.” No spadework like that was being done.

I'd been pleading with him for two or three years, I couldn't get their attention. And this is the importance of a paper having a social influence. So I write an editorial: “Is OU pimping the Tulsa North Community, Using it for its own Personal Goals?”

What an outcry.

George Kaiser calls me up. And, at that time, I served on his bank board for eight years. Calls me privately and says, “Jim, I really disagree with what you're saying, but I would like to write a response. Promise not to publish it.”

“Yes, sir.”

So he writes me this long, reasoned position. One of his colleagues that he consorts with, Steve McDowell, at this time, is heading the Tulsa Community Action Project, calls me up to express his dismay. Dr. Clancy's feelings are hurt because, you know? “Look: I'm just trying to do good and you're suggesting this?” Well, as it turns out, it hit a sore spot. Boren enters the picture.

JE: David Boren. President of OU.

JG: Right. He enters the picture and wants to have an audience with me. Well, by that time, I'm trying to marshal the people who can help deliver and build a facility. I'm trying to get opportunities for them to bid and to get work and to be trained.

This article makes me estranged from Senator McIntyre. Makes me estranged from Jabbar. Jabbar was sort of raised up on the board since he was a student over there.

JE: He's now a legislator. Jabbar ...

JG: Shumate. He's now seeking the senate spot that Senator McIntyre's vacating.

JE: So you're getting to feel like the lone wolf here on this thing?

JG: Well, not really, because, you know, I'm not even thinking that. But these people were associates of mine and Judy was a very close friend of my baby sister. They were very tight, of course, my baby sister was deceased, but I knew her as a child. But I knew what I was speaking of, which no one was hearing me.

"Look, you're talking about health? Let's get jobs and get an opportunity for jobs. Sign of a healthy community — people working."

Well, in comes Boren. Boren convenes. Interestingly enough, they select Jabbar to sort of head this. But around the table where people who can otherwise deliver services. Boren comes in, much to his credit, and says, "Look: No quotas here. I want optimal use of people indigenous to the area to have an opportunity. I'm not looking for quotas. The sky's the limit. I want it done."

I was not invited to that meeting, but I went anyway because Judy and Jabbar thought I'm a troublemaker, I guess, and sowing seeds of negativism. They include me, so I go.

Now what predates this, there was another meeting in which I sat on the sidelines and I was invited to be a part of the table discussion. I declined. And this time they invite me. I decline. So throughout the discussion, Jabbar, who's chairing it, really doesn't want to acknowledge me. But, boy, he's got his eye on me, I'm sorry.

And Jabbar wouldn't hear what Goodwin has to say. And of course I give my two cents but I'm pushing them to create an environment for people to earn a living because you got a $20 million dollar facility coming up. There's gonna be a need for work in that area. Plus, look at the small business development that can develop in and around it. I'm for creating a healthy community but nobody's doing anything about it.

Well, they tell me that the percentage is up around 20% — that's what they're using in terms of minority employment. That word, by the way, I don't like the use of the word "minority," for this discussion.

So they're up around 20%. I don't know what the current numbers are. But we did make some inroads. One guy told me several months ago he got a quarter million dollar bid that was accepted for doing something; I don't remember what. Which is always a sign.

Now, keep in mind now, health department's building another $10 million facility about a mile and a half away. So we're looking at maybe a health corps with Morton Health Center employing people, they have a great director over there. So you got the health corps industry in an area where there can be jobs that are created. Keeping in mind now, Morton had a substantial employment of African Americans. Tulsa Community Action Agency had a substantial number.

Now, one of the reasons I think I'm fixed on this is my college thesis was how to create a better work environment for people who lived in the Tulsa community. That's my thesis. I go through an analysis of the workforce. I grew up with most of the people — the school teachers and the doctors and the lawyers and bus drivers and the Wall Street merchants. The rest of the community were servants, you know. They're bussing dishes or they're waiting tables and that kind of thing. And so I had this great desire, that was really spirited by the Urban League, to try to create and get into the

mainstream of American life.

Now, I'm coming out of a little-income environment. This business of moving on up was a part of my training and upgrading and experience. So I'm still trying to do that with respect to the Tulsa North community now. And there's some modicum of success, not what I would like, but certainly.

So Dr. Clancy says that he's used this experience and taken the data on tour and he says he lectures on the importance of including, in the planning, the people who are going to be affected by it.

But pure health is gonna have to be with people working, if you're going to have a healthy community and that should be a part of their planning. So that's an example of where the press, that editorial, had a positive long term advantage. And there have been others.

JE: In all your years of service, probably 40 years at this point to the Tulsa health department

JG: Yes.

JE: There is the James O. Goodwin Health Center.

JG: Yes.

JE: That's named in honor of your service and work for the community in the area of health, you know how to feel good about that.

JG: I do. I remember Dr. Bernage, who was a board chair at the time, I think may have spearheaded the naming of that facility. You know, I've always tried to not be ungrateful, but never did I think that that makes me something special — other than the fact that the recognition is something that, as a kid, I probably would have relished. As a senior person now, it's not that important, and yet, I don't want to be an ingrate or ungrateful for the recognition. I remember Dr. Vernon said, “Jim, for somebody who doesn't like recognition, you seem to be enjoying it.” My mom was there, I remember, and some of my children.

Chapter 10 – 5:30
Personalities

John Erling (JE): Let me just throw out some names that I took notes on when I spoke to you a while ago, and what they mean to you. John Hope Franklin.

Jim Goodwin (JG): Dr. Franklin I knew as a kid, particularly when I was in high school. His nephew and I were very close — Waldo Jones II, whose dad was a lawyer. His mom, Moselle Jones, was a teacher.

As a kid, he and I became fast friends at Carver Junior high school. In fact, we competed against one another for the student body election. I was fortunate enough to be successful. There were two people who were my campaign managers in that adventure. One was the mother of Monday.

JE: Kenny Monday.

JG: Kenny Monday, who was renowned for his...

JE: He won silver and gold medals at the olympics.

JG: Right.

JE: For wrestling.

JG: His mother was my campaign manager, Elizabeth Monday — or Presley, at that time — and another, Pat Taylor, who later married a baseball player out of Chicago, who was married, when, I cannot remember.

But there was a very lively campaign. That's where I think politics was in my blood. As I said, I was a popular kid back then too. And Waldo raised a great campaign. I remember on the eve of the election, his dad or someone had arranged to show a movie in the assembly hall of the school, which made him immensely popular — showing a movie to the kids.

Not to be outdone, I run to my dad and tell him this development and he and Amos Hall gathered up money for me to go buy Tricklets. And so as people were going into the movie, I'm handing out Tricklets — my people are. We had the purple Tricklets in the white Tricklets.

Those were kind of memorable years. But Waldo and I were very close. And, of course, Dr. Franklin knew my mom and dad and my aunt, and as a result I then would be listening to him.

He was a man who spoke almost like an English gentleman. And of course in my later years, I would visit with him from time to time about his work. But as I said, they were personal friends of the family. So I got to know him from that perspective and the immense contributions he made history, in retrospect, were enormous.

JE: For some reason I took notes like Muhammad Ali. Did you have relations with him?

JG: Only that he visited, again, the newspaper. And so I've met him on two or three occasions. He had to come to my office on a couple of occasions. But this was after his renownedness as a boxer, in his later years. In fact he was in the stages of the disorder that he has currently. But he has immense wit, immense sense of humor. But I would visit with him, yes.

From time to time there were other people that knew the football player, Greer. A good, close friend and bodyguard for Jacqueline Kennedy. Rosie Greer. I remember him coming with other people over from time to time.

JE: Names like Joe Louis, what does that mean?

JG: Joe Louis, I had the privilege of interviewing. He was in Tulsa — not boxing. He may have been in the wrestling arena at that time, a referee. But I would say at his bedside, as I did with Satchel Paige, as a young writer, interviewing them, and writing stories about them that would appear in the paper somewhere and I may have been either in high school or college, I can't remember which when I had those opportunities.

Joe Louis, particularly, was an unassuming individual. You know, at that

time, he was not the same “Great Bomber.” But I can remember as a kid, now, I had to be 2, 3, 4 years old listening to the fights of Billy Conn and Joe Louis. Every American would have their ear by the radio. This predated TV. He was the hope. And you know, it's interesting. Not having experienced segregation at that time, I can remember the immense pride that surrounded my family about “The Great Bomber,” “The Brown Bomber.”

And I remember going to movies and there would be advertisements with a punch that Joe Louis promoted. There was a punch — there was drink, soft drink — that had Joe Louis on it. Jersey Joe Walcott; Jesse Owens; Jackie Robinson; the great opera singer, Mary McLeod Bethune, who sang in Washington D. C; Marian Anderson; these were people who lived in my lifetime that were celebrated within the black community. So I do remember, distinctly, that these people set the bar.

JE: It's interesting how we talked about Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King, but the third assault on racism turned out to be sports. And when you talk about Joe Louis — his defeat of the German, Max Schmeling in 1938 — it was just huge. And then you talked about Jesse Owens whose four gold medals in the ‘36 Olympics discredited Hitler's racist ideology that it was sports, too, that had this assault on racism.

JG: You know, it's interesting about human beings. I mean, we make all these distinctions amongst ourselves and we go through generations with these myopic beliefs about human beings because of different colors, different cultures. It just seems like it's a monumental waste of energy to have to plow through these pride and prejudices of people. To me it’s amazing. Maybe it's because of my birth and because of the difference in color around me, but I've had Indians and I got a Pakistani woman working for me now. I've had Indians and whites working for me for years. My dad, even back in the days of segregation, had whites working for him — linotype operators — back then. This is the days of segregation.

Chapter 11 – 5:55
Race Relations

John Erling (JE): So, in reflection in Tulsa, race relations today. 2012.

Jim Goodwin (JG): We're still relegated to the biases and prejudices of yesteryear. I mean, there's no question about it. My son, he's writing about the fact that McLain High School is going to be taken over by the state because of its poor performance.

Education today — I mean, Dr. King be rolling over in his grave now if he saw how the kids, I mean, there's a civil rights that has to be conducted not so much directed against the white communities' transgressions, but within the black community: The gang activity, the anti-education attitude among some people. You hear sentiments being expressed, and I'm not wanting to paint this with a broad brush, but there's a strain within the black community, it seems when you're trying to get education, you're actually white. I mean, it doesn't make sense. And you have kids whose uniforms now, whose dress, are patterned after people in prison. Those little hanging pants, that's a prison dress. So you're emulating all these negatives. Of course, generally speaking, in our society, the family unit is dysfunctional. It seems, you know, you don't have — that's a broad brush, but there's a lot of work that needs to be done within the black community.

The faith community, within the black community, hasn't stemmed the tide particularly. You do have pockets where self-improvement is preached, but not, it seems like it was when we were faced with the outer enemy of segregation, where education was the key to a better life.

Booker T. Washington was misunderstood, in stark contrast to Frederick Douglass, when he said, "Lift others as you climb." Those who did not understand what his goal was felt that he was surrendering, if you will, to the attitude of interiority. Because, when you're lifting somebody as you climb, although it's nobly expressed, the idea is that you are from an inferior position.

Frederick Douglass says, "Look: I don't want to be moving vertically. My progress is horizontal. Put me on the line and I'll give the next person — unchain me — a race for his money. I will compete."

That was Frederick Douglass' view; so that the progress of humanity is on a horizontal line and Booker T. Washington is on the vertical line. Well, the truth of the matter is our progress as human beings, is the hypotenuse, if you will, of the right triangle: we go upward and we go outward in terms of our development as human beings.

But both of those men articulated a view of progress. Today, we are as American as apple pie, I mean, black folks are. And yet, there is a disconnect within the black community. That's not wholesome. You know, when you have the gang shootings. I mean, we were decrying lynchings when I was a kid, but you have the same kind of thing going on now.

I have — personally have — in a group, a men's group that I have now. I had a kid many years ago who came to my office. He was probably 21 years old. He came, he said, under the influence, why he came, I do not know, but I was struck by him and I encouraged him to write a letter. And he did, which I published, which seemed to be instrumental in making him look at life a little differently. But in that letter he said being a member of the gang, there were only two things really: Either you end up in prison or you end up dead. Each 21. He's not thinking that he would live beyond 21 years old. He had been shot five times between ages of teenage years and 21 years old.

Today, his life has changed, and all that's behind him. But you have that mentality out there. To me it's inconceivable that a young man could think that he could not live beyond 21. I mean the aspirations of his life. He's in his forties now. You have generations out there that seem to be lost. How they're reached? Who knows how it's done.

I think back in the days when Plato decried youth, and how miscreant they were misbehaving. So I don't know whether that mentality is a human being thing that happens with each generation or what. But I do know that much work needs to be done in human development within the black community to get it where it ought to be and where King aspired for it to be, and where Douglass aspired, and Booker T. Washington aspired, and Thurgood Marshall, and all those other people have aspired for us to be.

There's a lot to be done and you cannot blame it on racism, that's for sure. You cannot blame it on that. We talk about that even in our paper from time to time. I mean, these people who start off their lives with this sense of — how to describe it — eventually, some of them get turned around and some of them reach back to help others, but still we are plagued with this senseless killing in our community.

You know, it's in stark contrast to the great outcry that's happened now with this kid that was killed.

JE: Trayvon Martin in Florida.

JG: Yeah.

JE: He was shot by a so-called community watchdog person. So the big argument in America today, and with marches too, as a matter of fact, is that he was targeted because he was black and that's why the man shot him.

JG: Right. And you have blacks killing blacks now, you know, routinely throughout America, which is a phenomenon that certainly in Dr. King's day didn't exist. If you did, it certainly was not written about. And I think it was probably rare. You wonder what's going on in our society that allows for that kind of thing to flourish. But there's much work to be done.

Chapter 12 – 7:05
Faith Community

John Erling (JE): So while we were able to come up with civil rights — that might have been an easier thing to correct than what you're just now talking about, in some respects.

Jim Goodwin (JG): In some respects, I think so. I think there's got to be leadership that has to be, you would think, just as the civil rights was turned around because of moral force, you would think that would emanate from the black church itself. Not so.

Now, there are some ministries that are built on turning around. The Muslims were noted for taking people from the dredges of society. There are some protestant faiths within the community that are taking people who have been hopeless and brought hope to them through the ministry of Christ.

But there's still a prevalent view, though, I might add, among some people that regard ministers — and I won't just say black ministers — but I remember community activists who are now deceased, referred to them as "ecclesiastical pimps" — people who trade in the name of Christ and live large lives as a result. There are those that are there that many people have a disdain for and therefore turn their backs on. And I don't know whether that is the thing that keeps people away. It just may be a generational thing when people, as they grow in experience, they recognize that those things that they saw when they were young are no longer important.

JE: Yeah.

JG: I don't know the answer to that.

JE: You know, you've done so many great things. You're still young — 72 — you have many more years to accomplish things, great things, in our community. Do you ever think about the fact that, as I look at your missing arm and that accident that you described earlier, your life could easily have been taken at that time — there was no question about that — that you were allowed to live to accomplish what you've done and you must be grateful about that.

JG: I'm certainly grateful. My mom, again, one of those principles: "God saved your life for a purpose." I must tell you, sometimes I still try to ferret out what that purpose is.

You know, purpose, very definitive in the life of King; in the life of Winston Churchill — these are men that come to my mind — the life of Christ. These people, during their lifetime, came to grips with their purpose. Churchill turned to his wife, Clemmy, on the eve of his ascendancy to the prime ministership — the backdrop of his father reportedly didn't think

he'd be worth two cents.

But he turns to Clemmy, and he says, “Clemmy, for this moment, I was born.” This portly guy rallies a nation against a terrible enemy, Nazi Germany. “For this moment, I was born.” To recognize that.

Dr. King, “I've been to the mountain. I've seen the promised land.” I mean, I've lived to get there, but I'm ready. You know, I've achieved my purpose. Christ saying, “My hour has not yet come,” recognizing the purpose of which he was born.

I must tell you that I don't have such a single revelation in my own life. I'm glad to be alive and my life has been one that I thrive on being able to be of service to other people. That, to me, is important. It doesn't yield dollars, you know, necessarily, but it gives me a satisfaction. Again, you know, these are perhaps more judgments. You have to be somewhat leery, sometimes, of trying to make moral judgments; therefore I'm very cautious about it. But somehow people can be feeling so right about things to be so wrong, you know?

One of the greatest conversations, I think, in history of man, is a conversation that Christ has with Peter. Christ says to Peter, “Who do men say that I am?” Peter, who is not likened to be wrong, says, “Well, some say that you're Isiah. Some say that you're John the Baptist. Some say you're a great prophet.” He thought he'd cover the waterfront.

Christ says, “But who do you say that I am?”

He says, “Well, you're the son of living God.”

But even in that moment, he really didn't know who Christ was, because I was there after Christ says to him, “Put it to the test. In a few days, I'm gonna die.”

And, of course, Peter said, “No, I won't let that happen.” I'm paraphrasing.

And the moment he says that, Christ says, “Get behind me, Satan.”

“Just a moment ago, you said, you know, ‘Upon this rock, I will build my church, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ Now, you're calling me Satan? Come on, give me a break here!”

Well, at that moment, Peter did not know Christ’s purpose, because Christ is saying, “Look: “ — and I'm paraphrasing all of this — “You know, you got your priorities mixed up, you're thinking that you can get me out of this dilemma, this test I'm going to go through. If I don't die, you can't live. You’re stopping my purpose. You're stopping my purpose”.

And, of course, Peter says, “Well, what am I supposed to do?”

He said, “Stop relying on yourself. Deny yourself. You pick up your cross, whatever it is, whatever adversity you have, and you follow me.”

And, in the sense, that sense of purpose, these examples I've given you, I even now, I don't know, it's age 72, you know, I don't know, I just know that I've got a tool to live with — earn a living by — the paper, and my practice, and I try to extend my talents — what I do have — in righting what I consider being wrongs — sometimes successful, sometimes unsuccessful — and always with a sense of “but by the grace of God who I,” you know?

My wife used to say “The world will little remember whether you do or die.” Dick Hughes, who passed away a few years ago, who was a young man, he and his brother, both of whom are now deceased, owned Pepsi-Cola bottling company. As a young man, he advised four presidents. He said to us in this group, “You measure a man's success by the impact he's had on his peers, on his children, and his grandchildren.” That's about the measurement you can give to anyone's life. That's, to his way of thinking, a success. And he was a man who, in the sense, had great successes and yet he also was penniless, and then came back would tell us — quote Job: “Even though you slayed me, yet I will trust in Him.”

I mean, that was kind of an attitude and that, overall, is the kind of thing — “tattered though I am,” you know? I was talking this morning with a group. You cannot earn your way to heaven. That's a gift of God. That's grace. But I made the comment, I said, “But you can sure earn your way into hell.” You know, your actions may not get you into heaven, but your actions will sure

get you to hell.

I said, “That's the kind of anomaly here. Supposedly your deeds don't give you merit to salvation, but you sure can get on his bad side by what you do.”

JE: Well, you're living your purpose and there's no question about the moral compass you were given years ago. It’s helping you in the areas of law, the newspaper, and righting wrongs, and I want to thank you so much for what you've taught us here today. Yes, taught us. And for those younger generations who will be coming on to listen to this now. They will draw many things from your words, and I appreciate it very much.

JG: Thank you for the opportunity.

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