

Colin B. Eastman and Mercy Reyes (editors)

*Mentoring Santa Ana's Future:
An Interview with Police Officer Alan Bond (1973)*

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The Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History.
Project: Santa Ana Project.
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Oral Interview with Alan Bond, conducted by Jennifer King Torres,
May 8, 1973, Santa Ana, California.

Introduction

The oral history interview transcribed below belongs to a collection held in CSUF's Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History (COPH), titled "Santa Ana Project." The interview with Alan Bond was conducted by Jennifer King Torres on May 8, 1973, in Santa Ana. The interview lasted 36 minutes and 43 seconds, and it is archived as a digital recording/audio file at COPH (see "Copyright Advisory" below). The verbatim transcript edited here was prepared in 2021 by Colin B. Eastman and Mercy Reyes.

At the time of the interview (1973), Alan Bond had been a police officer in the Santa Ana Police Department for five years, and his experience encompassed a wide range of police work. Prior to serving in the arrest unit, he had taught weapons-handling for the Sheriff's Department. Bond's interview discusses the origins of the P.A.A.L. (Police Association Athletic League) program—originally an attempt of the San Jose Police Department to curtail gang wars and sponsor outreach to the community. The success of San Jose's boxing program encouraged the Santa Ana Police Department to set up its own program. Bond describes the start of Santa Ana's boxing program and other community-building activities, including a baton-and-drill team, air rifle club, and model building for the less athletically inclined. Bond then turns to his respective brainchild, a wrestling program, and the small budget it received the first year. This wrestling program quickly became immensely successful, though, and earned its participants notable championship placements. Bond describes how the community became involved and how the P.A.A.L. program was promoted. Bond characterizes P.A.A.L. as "giving them [i.e., children and youth] something to do" to prevent them from looking for trouble. The increasing number of young people joining the program, as well as the support of Santa Ana Police Chief Raymond C. Davis, made Bond feel optimistic about P.A.A.L.'s prospects. He also mentions the inclusion of girls and women in wrestling as competitors and referees. Bond expresses his hope that, once the program would be fully established, it might even be able to obtain its own facility in the future.

Officer Alan Bond's interview offers a valuable perspective on the creation and development of Santa Ana's P.A.A.L. program by one of its founding officers. It contains useful material for community history, social and cultural history, ethnic studies, as well as gender studies.

ABOUT THE EDITOR: *Colin B. Eastman of Ladera Ranch, California, is currently pursuing a B.A. in History at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).*

ABOUT THE EDITOR: *Mercy Reyes of Los Angeles, California, is currently pursuing a B.A. in History at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).*

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Verbatim Transcript (O.H. 1411)

LAWRENCE DE GRAAF CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

NARRATOR: Alan Bond [AB]

INTERVIEWER: Jennifer King Torres [JT]

DATE: May 8, 1973

LOCATION: Santa Ana, California

PROJECT: Santa Ana Project

TRANSCRIBERS: Colin B. Eastman and Mercy Reyes

JT: This is an interview with officer Alan Bond of the Santa Ana¹ Police Department by Jennifer King Torres for the Oral History and Criminology departments at California State University at Fullerton. The interview is taking place in officer Bond's office at 530 North Ross, Santa Ana, California, at 11:30 a.m. (pauses) May 8th, 1973. Would you please tell me a little about your own personal background before you begin to associate with P.A.A.L.?²

AB: Before I became associated with P.A.A.L. as far as police work or (pauses) I've been a—I've been a police officer for five years, and during that time I've worked a little of everything, uh (pauses), to do with patrol, I've been a training officer for three years—training new police officers. I've taught the sheriff's academy, weapons defense. I've won the Award for

¹ City in Orange County, California.

² Abbreviation for "Police Association Athletic League."

Outstanding Police Work in 1971 for capturing three armed robbers in progress, on different days at the same location. Uh, and then last year in 1972, I got started in the P.A.A.L. program as the head of the wrestling (pauses) part of it.

JT: Um, how did P.A.A.L. get organized, and what do the initials stand for?

AB: The initials stand for Police Association Athletic League. It was started because San Jose³ Police Department had started their program five years ago to curtail gang wars (clears throat), and they got all the gang members together and asked why the kids were fighting 'cause, why don't they go to the parks and, you know, play with the rest of the kids, and they would rather box each other and so they broke the gangs up into boxing clubs. And through that they received many donations from the city, and they built a three-million-dollar complex to house all sorts of sports activities for both boys and girls, and they have sixteen thousand youth involved in San Jose. So, using them as a guideline, we started our own program, and there are P.A.A.L. groups throughout the United States. That's how Joe Frazier⁴ got his start into boxing. It was through a P.A.A.L. group in Pennsylvania.

JT: How did this one in particular get started?

AB: We just heard about, uh, San Jose's, and we wanted to try it, so a couple of officers went to San Jose to look at their program, came back, and started a boxing program, and they started with four different centers, and when I heard about it, I asked them to start wrestling, and they said wrestling would not be a popular sport, and they didn't wanna start it. And they gave me two-hundred-dollar budget, and we spent four-thousand dollars last year on a wrestling program.

JT: (laughs)

AB: And we took first in the state, and one of our boys took first in the nation, and – and wrestling has blossomed to be the best program.

JT: Now, I – I personally enjoy the wrestling programs, so I can appreciate it. Um, (pauses) what kind of other programs do – does P.A.A.L. offer?

AB: Ok, right now, they have the wrestling and the boxing, and those incorporate kids from eight years old up through college. We also have a hobby club which, uh, we have two officers on the department who are professional model builders, trains and planes, and so on and so forth. They do it professionally, and they start a club for kids who are not physically inclined as far as, you know, athletics, and there are several kids who would rather do things like this, so they start that on Saturday mornings and, in fact, it will be starting this Saturday. It will have thirty kids involved, teaching them how to build any type of model they wanna build, and it'll enter them in the competition throughout Southern California, and we also

³ City in Santa Clara County, California.

⁴ Joseph "Smokin' Joe" William Frazier (1944-2011); U.S. American professional boxer.

have a girls' baton-and-drill team. Which has the youngest – well it's not just girls: we have one boy who's four years old, and he is too young to wrestle, so they put him in baton for his coordination, but they have that, and that, last year, had over a hundred girls (pauses) involved, and we have a dispatcher who used to be the instructor for the Ramettes,⁵ the baton group that works with the Rams at half time, she instructed them, so now she is working with the girls. And we have a air rifle and air pistol team, and we have a trap shooting team for the boys and girls. We sponsor Little League,⁶ uh, Pop Warner football.⁷ They don't call it Pop Warner anymore, but it's basically the same thing. We have a girls' softball team, and we are gonna be expanding into other fields, such as swimming and track-and-field, but, uh, they're all – every program is headed by a police officer, and it's – all the time is donated. Yes. They don't get paid for it, and they put all their – their extra time at working with the kids. And they're in – districted by the police officers and anybody else that wants to help.

JT: And it's all volunteers?

AB: Right, right.

JT: Uh, do you take volunteers from the community?

AB: Yes, yes, we have. That's our boxing program starting again this year, and it's gonna be run by a – a civilian volunteer with police officers helping him. Because he – his expertise is better than the officers', so we'll do it that way. (laughs)

JT: Uh, what kind of kids are recruited for the programs? Who is it open to?

AB: It's open to anybody, we have, uh (pauses) – oh, right now, our wrestling, we have over 200 kids, we're close to 200 boys involved, and we have them from as far north as Bellflower⁸ and as far south as, uh, Mission Viejo,⁹ Laguna Hills,¹⁰ and anybody can participate, it's not just open to Sana Ana. Because we are trying to get all the youth involved in some sort of athletics to keep them out of trouble during their, after-school hours.

JT: Have you been able to, uh, divert any of your problem kids into your programs at all?

AB: Yes, we have, uh, in the wrestling, a couple of kids that have been arrested for burglar – burg – burglary. Can't talk. And, uh, they come to practice instead of going to Juvenile Hall.¹¹ They come to our practices, and instead of reporting to a probation officer, this is – it's not an official thing yet, that

⁵ Cheerleading squad for the Rams, a professional American football team.

⁶ Local youth baseball and softball league.

⁷ American football youth organization; named after Glenn Scobey "Pop" Warner (1871-1954).

⁸ City in southeast Los Angeles County, California.

⁹ City in Orange County, California.

¹⁰ City in Orange County, California.

¹¹ Youth detention center.

is being done—but however we would like to work with the probation department on this, I've talked to a probation officer who will be working with our department. And she would like to see kids, you know, first, second offenders that haven't really done anything major yet, get put in a program like this, like kids that are professional runaways. They generally run away because they have nothing to do, they, you know, they're down on their parents, and they need something to do. And they like to see this become, uh, you know, involved with probation department to help the young kids instead of: stick 'em in Juvenile Hall.

JT: Yeah, it seems they want a more constructive answer.

AB: Right.

JT: Um, how do you publicize your programs?

AB: Well, we had, uh, basically just taking posters around the different schools, and we've done a couple radio shows. We have had problems with the newspapers, uh, the one local newspaper¹² anyway, the largest one here in Orange County has, I don't know why, but they haven't really given us any publicity like we would hope to have. Like, last year, our wrestling team went to Watts¹³ to the Summer games. We were the only police agency there, and every one of our kids won a trophy, plus we got the outstanding wrestler of the tournament, and, uh, when they came down and did a big write up and never printed it. And then we won the state championship, and they never printed that. So it's basically word-of-mouth, but it's—it's working apparently 'cause, uh, the kids get involved. They tell their friend, and they bring a friend, and so on so forth.

JT: How many, uh, kids to have in the program?

AB: Right now probably over a thousand. It's hard to tell because we got more coming all the time. And then not all of 'em join. They'll come and work out, or the girls will go, you know, with the baton girls and then not join the program until a later date. They like to see how it's going first.

JT: I think that's typical—

AB: Alright.

JT: —with anybody you want to find out what it's like before you commit yourself.

AB: Right.

JT: Uh, as the wrestling coach, um, why do you feel that wrestling, uh, is such a good sport for aggressive—boys in particular that seem to get in trouble, break the law, or—anti-social behavior?

AB: Well, I don't think it's any better a sport for an aggressive boy than it is for a passive boy. It's just a good sport, period. I wrestled in college and high school, and we always had problems with wrestling programs. We never

¹² A reference to the *Orange County Register*; a daily newspaper, published since 1905.

¹³ Neighborhood in southern Los Angeles, California.

had enough, it seemed, and wrestling is quite popular 'cause it's one of the few sports that a boy can go out for and only weigh a hundred pounds, be in high school and become a national champion. And he can go to college and weigh 118 pounds and be a national champion. You can go to the Olympics weighing, you know, less than 120 pounds and be the best in the world. And it's one of the few sports that offers that challenge to where the boy will go out with another boy, and for nine minutes on the mat, they are gonna see who's the best and it's, uh, I believe, it takes more courage to wrestle than box and any other sport. 'Cause in that time you walk out, it's just you and one other individual. It's not the type of sport where a coach can call a time-out and call you over to the side and tell you, you wanna – wanna run a in-sweep instead of, you know, an off-tackle play. You have to be out there, make your own decision. A coach, I don't care how good the coach is, they can't coach you once you're on the mat because you're not more than two or three seconds at a time. You're moving from one move to the other, and you don't have time to sit there and listen to your coach or walk over and ask him a question. And it takes a intelligent boy and a, uh, just a good boy, that's what it takes for a sport like that.

JT: It takes an awful lot of concentration and work ethic –

AB: Right.

JT: – to become good at wrestling.

AB: Right, you know, you find, too, that most, uh, of the average grade for wrestlers is 3.0 in high school and college. That's compared to some of your other sports where it's, you know, down in the C brackets going up to the Bs. Like Larry Morgan¹⁴ at Cal Poly,¹⁵ who is one of the nation's greatest wrestlers, uh, he's a Biochemistry major and has a 3.9 grade average, and he is also an outstanding wrestler. It makes you learn to, uh, you know, it's something worth working for. You do it to, hopefully, to apply to more than just sports – to your own personal life. We try to teach that to the boys.

JT: Well, do you feel that it is easier to get, uh, say, gang-type juveniles involved in the wrestling program than would be into a football program –

AB: No.

JT: – or basketball.

AB: It's easier to get them involved in a boxing program. That's why our – our boxing program is going to hopefully go pretty good this year. It's, uh, they – boxing is something they can more or less just walk out and do, where wrestling, they might walk out and, uh, first few times get beat,

[00:10:00]

¹⁴ Student athlete.

¹⁵ California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; located in eastern Los Angeles County.

AB: and get beat pretty bad, where in boxing they can go out and at least hit somebody and, if they lose, at least get their frustrations out by – they don't just want to go out and get pinned in 16 or 20 seconds like one of our boys did last week. Go out, at least you get to hit a kid for a period of time. Even if they miss, they're at least – they're throwing punches at him, and it releases their frustrations apparently. And they seem to enjoy boxing tremendously, at least the Mexican Americans, especially in Santa Ana, they really enjoy boxing.

JT: So, do you feel that your, um, P.A.A.L. program has been an effective deterrent in, uh, juvenile delinquency in the area?

AB: It's too early to tell right now, it, uh, has been for some, but, uh, not as great as we'd like, and it's gonna just take – like this is only the second year of it, and, uh, hopefully, once it gets going full-scale, when we get a facility constructed, and, uh, and when we have a place where kids can go year-round, a facility run by police officers that – we think it would be quite the deterrent. It's a lot better program, I feel, than the community relations programs that all the departments have where they send two uniformed officers out to a school, and they just talk to you, and it's the same – they tell each school the same thing. And it's the same stock answers and same stock questions and, uh, a kid up to – maybe up to junior high school will listen, at least ten percent of the time, and maybe try to enact some of what he is told, but, uh, I feel, athletics is the best way to get a kid involved, and he is actively involved, he is not just listening to somebody telling him something, he is out there with that person, either boxing against him or wrestling or whatever, but it makes him feel like he is involved in the program anyway.

JT: Uh, usually a prevention program implies a underlying, uh, causation theory. What is your own personal theory concerning crime and delinquency causation?

AB: There's (pauses) – that would take a – an eternity to answer. (laughs) There are so many, uh, there's such a variance of reasons. Kids, uh, like most of our burglaries occur in the daytime. Kids aren't in school, they cut school, and they found an easy way go out and, uh, you know, make some money, go out and steal something. You can always blame narcotics, that's, uh, prevalent now with our minority populace and also, uh, in the White sections of town, but there is no one reason you can, you know, pin-point as: this is the reason we have crime, 'cause crime's been in existence as long as, uh, you know, two people have had different opinions: somebody is gonna do something wrong and, uh, you just can't – that's a hard question to just flat out say –

JT: I know.

AB: – this is the reason we have, you know, robberies, and this is the reason we have rapes or whatever. The easiest way to cure is to just make everything legal.

JT: I know. (chuckles)

AB: If you legalized all your robberies, rapes, and burglaries you wouldn't have crime.

JT: Right. Well, what do you think is the most important variables in general delinquency?

AB: Uh, it's getting the kids, uh, giving them something to do. You hear this a lot. The kids who would, "Gee, I don't have anything to do." And most time they're right, they don't. And you ever go into one of these parks: now a kid can go there, and he can play dominos or chess and checkers, and half these kids, their—the best book they've read in their life is *Popular Mechanics*¹⁶ or, you know, *Hot Rod* magazines¹⁷—they're not gonna want to sit down and play chess and checkers. You gotta give the kids something to do to, you know, to deter 'em. If he is just going to go out every day, day after day, and he, you know, walks home from school and, on the way home, he, you know, sees a house he can break in, he might break in just from the lack of anything better to do. We (pauses)—I arrested a boy a few years ago that, uh, was a 4.0 grade average in high school and extremely intelligent, and he was, uh, about fourteen. He'd stolen eight cars and several thousand dollars in electronics equipment throughout all of Orange County—mainly because he was quite intrigued with electronics, and he didn't, uh, have a place to go where he could work on building things, so he would go out and steal the parts he would need, and his room was like walking into a laboratory: it was just fantastic. And, uh, we didn't do anything to him. We returned all the property, but now if he had had some place where he could go like, uh, hopefully, this hobby club will turn out to be, more of a science club—anything—if someone had just offered him something. Now here was a boy who was, uh, a great student, potentially, you know, he might even be president someday, but he is out pulling burglaries to get the things he needs, and, uh, so, I think it's just basically giving kids something that's showing you actually mean it, not just like tell a kid, "Here, we will give you this," and then say—say, we had a wrestler who came out and took first in state championship, and then after that we wouldn't send to the nationals. Say, now you go and pay your own way. Now that would completely shock the kid but we, uh, if he places first we pay their way to the nationals or to whatever they qualify to go to. And the kids really appreciate this 'cause most of 'em don't have the money to, you know, do that sort of thing. A police officer can give it to them, fine, and I

¹⁶ A magazine of popular science and technology; published since 1902.

¹⁷ An automobile magazine focusing on muscle cars; published since 1948.

am sure there is federal funds that'll help with this sort of thing. I know with our building we're trying build, uh, we're trying to get the federal government to go fifty-fifty on it, 'cause I'm sure they see the need for something like this, too, and it'll hopefully be a complete center where—where kids from any school can go to, and if they wanna play any type of sport, hobby, or whatever, they got the facility, and everything is given to 'em. (pauses) But then, where it's not everything, it's not—will be given to them just as a hand-out, they'll have to, if they want to progress, naturally have to win at whatever they're gonna do or at least show some knack for improvement.

JT: What kind of support have you gotten from the community?

AB: Well, right now, we—we're starting a campaign now to—we're sending out cards to all—there's eight-thousand businesses in Santa Ana, and we're sending out cards to all, but a few, like, we don't wanna send them to the pornography shops and this sort of thing. Trying to get the community there financially, or whatever way possible, to help with the program, 'cause it's their kids we're helping, and it's getting so big now that the officers just can't really afford to be, you know, putting out that much money into the programming alone, because it has all been funded strictly by the police officers themselves, and money coming out of their pockets. And then this year, we won the Disneyland¹⁸ Award for Best Community Service, which was \$10,000, which is almost gone. And, uh, so we're waiting now to see how the community will back it. The—I've talked to several businessmen who are really behind it, but it's not the big businessmen we need so much, it's just the parents of the kids, to get involved, and last year, uh, the parents got quite involved with the wrestling, especially the mothers. They went crazy over it—they loved it. So, you know, they've been wanting to have banquets all the time and bring food in and, uh, make things—anything that, you know, they really wanted to get involved with their kids. And that's great, 'cause, uh, that's—nothing shows the kids that their parents do care about them. And, uh, nothing better for a parent to go and watch his kid box or wrestle, but then the parent has something to either brag about or put him down and—but at least they are getting involved with it.

JT: So, you do try and get the families actively involved also.

AB: Oh, yes. Yeah. We try to have like—anytime we go somewhere, we always take, uh, police units and the paddy wagon,¹⁹ we load it up with the kids and drive 'em to local matches. But we also like to have the parents, like, drive one of the cars or something. And that way, you know, each week

¹⁸ Entertainment park in Anaheim, California; opened 1955.

¹⁹ Motortruck; normally used to transport prisoners.

- will have a different parent, and the kids can meet 'em. And it's been pretty good with parents.
- JT: Have you had to, uh, call parents and ask them to come to matches? Or do they pretty well respond when their kid gets involved?
- AB: No, we've never called a parent asked them anything. They've all called us and, uh, asked how they get, you know, whatever we need. And, uh, it's worked out great.
- JT: Well, what about, uh, families that are not too involved with their kids? Do you have any kind of family counseling or any kind of program for the future, for this certain area?
- AB: Well, we don't at this time, uh, we've had like, we have one black boy on our team who—he was very quiet and hardly ever talks, so, I sit down and talk to him one night, and I asked him what his problem was. He said he's working and working and working, but his parents never come and see him. And, uh, he felt kind of put down because he'd go to the matches, and everybody else would have somebody there watching, and he just he felt like he was by himself. And so I went and talked to his mom, and, uh, she never realized this. She always thought her son liked to be left alone. And, uh, now, every match we've gone to this year, she's been there with—there's nine kids in the family—she has all eight. They're cheering him on, and he's—he's improved almost, I'd say, a hundred percent. This year, he's really become a better wrestler. And he's more of an extrovert now than he is an introvert. He's really, uh, become just that—you can see the difference like day and night by getting his parents out there watching him, and made him feel a lot better.
- JT: That's a case of ignorance where, you know, if you probably hadn't gotten in contact with them, it would have gone on for a long time.
- AB: Right.
- JT: So, you are dealing with them on an individual basis then if there's a problem.
- AB: Right, Right. And, like the kid—oh, I've had to buy kids their breakfasts and this thing. They don't have money, and they're afraid to say anything about it, and you'll see 'em—not, oh—"I don't wanna eat this type thing." And you ask them why, and, well, "I don't have any money." So, if kids have any financial problems, we try to help them out with it also, anything we know within reason. We're not gonna buy 'em a new car because they couldn't come and practice.
- JT: Or steak and eggs? (laughs)
- AB: Right, right.
- JT: How do you feel about your own work in—in the P.A.A.L.? Do you feel it's worthwhile? Are you getting a lot of satisfaction out of it?
- AB: Yes, uh, I am. I've—I have my own duties at work. They last till 5:30 at night, and every night until about 9 o'clock, I'm involved with some

P.A.A.L. activity and then on the weekends, all day Saturdays, and then on Sundays, I get to see my wife and make phone calls to get other org – things arranged but it's, uh, it's been great, so – I've really gotten a lot out of it. Before I became a police officer, I was a swimming instructor. And, uh, for four years, I managed swimming pools and taught and so on so forth. And I've always worked with kids. And this, I think, I just personally feel

[00:20:00]

AB: that this program is necessary. And I'd hate to see it, you know, stopped for lack of interest on any police officer's part. So, you know, sometimes I've had to work in two and three programs at one time to get it all working. But in the end, it's been well worth it.

JT: Are you getting good support from the police officers themselves?

AB: Well, police officers, like anybody else, there's jealousy and this sort of thing. And, uh, we don't have as many officers involved as we'd like to have. They wanna say where the money should be spent and all this, and yet, they're not involved. But I – we have this new Chief of Police, Chief Davis,²⁰ who is extremely behind the program. He just – he really thinks it's great. And, uh, as long as we have the support of the man upstairs, that's, you know, the program will go, and the city manager is behind it. And so, it looks like an up-and-coming thing. Let's see all other police agencies get involved. There's no reason they shouldn't.

JT: Uh, is it – most of the police officers that are working within the program, are – are they young like you?

AB: Yes. We have, uh, well, like some of 'em – this Saturday, we're going to San Diego²¹ for a wrestling tournament. And, uh, I've had a couple officers just come up and ask if they can drive the kids down there. They don't know anything about wrestling, and they've never been to a wrestling match. But they wanna get involved in some way, and that's all they can do, and they're older officers. Well, that's fine. You know, as long as they wanna get involved doing something with the kids.

JT: I noticed a variety of, uh, officers at the tournament, at the state championships. There seemed to be, what, three or four?

AB: Right.

JT: And they're in uniforms (inaudible).

AB: Well, there's – there was only one Santa Ana officer there in uniform. Uh, that was a sergeant. He wore the uniform just to see what people would think. And I bet he had fifty people come and ask them about our association and how to start programs like this. And then they, of course,

²⁰ Raymond C. Davis (1932-2018), Santa Ana Chief of Police (1973-1987).

²¹ City in southern California just north of the U.S.-Mexico border.

- they also asked him if he would quiet down the crowd and close the doors and get the kids back from the mat. They –
- JT: (laughs).
- AB: – one police officer is the same in every city.
- JT: I know, I was surprised when I saw the – the – the wagon in the center place. I thought, what are they doing here in Fullerton, you know?
- AB: Yeah, we’ve had, uh, last year our – you’ve seen our warm-ups: they have big “P.A.A.L.” across the back, or the white – we have white ones and blue ones, and the blue ones have “Santa Ana Police” and the white ones don’t. And last year when I went to the tournaments, people would ask our kids what the P.A.A.L. stood for. And they told them well, they’re – they’re all under arrest for heinous [*sic*] crimes and stands for “Prisoners All At Large” –
- JT: (laughs)
- AB: – we come after their, you know, their youth camps and bring them on the weekend just to wrestle, and they have the choice to either do that or stay in prison.
- JT: (laughs)
- AB: It was really embarrassing sometimes to have these parents come up and ask, you know, “Gee, is that kid a robber or rapist or what?” No, he’s, you know, a student in Los Amigos High School,²² or whatever. Kids enjoy it.
- JT: Um, let’s see (pauses). If we could go back for just a moment to when you said you won the 1971 Police Award for – what was it?
- AB: Outstanding Police Work.
- JT: Why don’t you tell me about that. What was that all about (inaudible)?
- AB: Oh, okay. We had a store in Santa Ana that constantly got robbed. At the same time, we had a sergeant that wasn’t getting along real well with me, so he stuck me in the worst area of town, which is where the store was. It’s – it’s the most boring part of town to work. And they put me down there. My second night down there I drove, uh – well, I was across the street from the store actually, catching up on my log, and I saw a car parked behind the store that’s – parking lights on. And then, in the store, a man is pulling an armed robbery at that time. And he ran out and got in the car and drove off. And I followed him and called for some help and eventually arrested him. And it was funny ‘cause by the time I was going to call in that I had seen the robbery, the station was putting out a broadcast. So I had to wait almost thirty seconds till our dispatcher, you know, stopped, so I could tell them that, yes, I have the guy, and I’m following him. And then, about four weeks later, I drove up there again. And there was a – two guys sitting by the store, looking suspicious. When they saw me, they took off. And so I chased them, and one – got out of the car – had a rifle, and the other one

²² High school in Fountain Valley, Orange County, California; established 1968.

didn't have a gun, at least obvious, and they ran in opposite directions. So I ran after the one without the rifle, naturally, and caught him, and they were just getting ready to rob the store. Plus he was a – wanted by Federal Parole for, uh, escape from some prison somewheres [*sic*]. And then a couple of months later, as a joke, I asked the lieutenant if I could take a plain unit to drive to down there and catch another robbery and he says, "Oh sure." So I went down, and ten minutes later, after I'd gotten there, a car drives up. A guy starts putting a stocking mask over his face and putting gloves on. I'm just sitting there going, "Yeah, this can't be happening," and –

JT: (laughs)

AB: – at the same time he saw me and figured I was a police officer. So he took off. And as I'm following, on the stolen car broadcast comes out which – the car he's driving, they'd just stolen. So, I ended up arresting him. And, uh, I got the award for that.

JT: (laughs)

AB: It was weird.

JT: That was crazy, like a TV show, you know.

AB: Yeah. It does.

JT: (laughs). Alright. Okay, um, you said that right now you're not working with the probation department?

AB: Not officially, no.

JT: But you are trying to develop a program.

AB: Yes.

JT: Uh, what exactly would be the kind of limitations – qualifications of having, uh, delinquents released to you in your programs?

AB: Well, I don't – we don't, we really don't know. That's going to be up to the judges and the people out at, uh, Juvenile Hall. But we have a probation officer assigned to work with our department now, which is something new. And she'll just handle the cases here. And, she's already asked me about this program and thinks it's good. So, we're gonna have to get together and go out to probation, juvenile courts, and talk with them. I really can't see any reason why they wouldn't wanna do it, you know. But they – they can always say no, but we hope they won't.

JT: Do you – do they ever refer anybody to you?

AB: No, they can't do that yet. I mean, officially, they can't, they – unofficially, kids have been told about it, and, uh, they have come to our program, and we realize why they're there. And they ended up generally doing, uh, fairly well. They don't become the outstanding athlete, but they're there every night, and they work hard and practice. That's the main thing.

JT: Well, it is not so much is becoming a – an outstanding athlete is that thing you're in there, I think, it's not getting into trouble.

AB: Right.

JT: Can you mention any example of cases of, uh, kids that have been able to, uh, adjust better –

AB: Yes.

JT: – because of your program?

AB: We have a boy that was a – uh, he ran away from home and stole several weapons out of his dad's house. And his brothers are in our wrestling club. And the day he ran away from home was the day we sent, uh, take the team to San Francisco. And it was the same day I saw his picture on our roll-call boards being "wanted." I thought, "Oops," and so I called his brother, and his brother got a hold of him somehow. And, uh, so the kid really wanted to go out for wrestling, especially if you happen to go to San Francisco because they've never been there. So he called his wrestling coach in high school and said that, you know, "If I give myself in," uh, excuse me, "If I turn myself in, can I return all the – everything I took and, uh, you know, go out for wrestling?" And they did send him out into our wrestling program. He's been there every night. And he is wrestling in all the matches. He's not winning a whole lot. But at least he's, uh, involved in it, and he enjoys it. He probably works harder than the rest of the kids that are there.

JT: Has he been in – into any more trouble?

AB: No. Uh-uh. He's too tired when he goes home. That's what his parents have told me. He doesn't feel like running away. Just goes home and goes to bed. And also his grades have come up. He had almost, uh, nearly straight Fs in all classes because he wouldn't go to class, and he has been going to class. And, you know, as you know, by – in college, in high school, you just go to class, you're gonna get at least get C out of the class. He was there every day. And so he's been there. His, uh, his grades come up, and he started to pay attention.

JT: How many volunteers do you have for each kid?

AB: How many volunteers for each kid?

JT: Uh-huh.

AB: That hasn't been broken down yet 'cause, uh, well, like with the wrestling program this year, we had four or five officers, you know, and they told me "Yeah, we want to get involved, and we can't wait," and all this. And they lasted, I think, two times. And I've had – I've been the only officer there ever since, as far as being actually involved in the practices and instructing the kids. And it's – it works out this way with all the different programs. But, uh, we do have, uh, civilians that do come in and, like the boxing and stuff. And at least, as long as one police officer is there at night, the kids, the kids – a lot of times will go over and just talk to him more or less like counseling instead of actually boxing, as they go sit down and talk with you about problems they've been having or they know somebody that's involved in a problem, and they'd like an answer for it. So there's really not

- a ratio like say ten to one or one hundred to one. Some nights, it will be one to one, depends on what the sport is and what the activity is.
- JT: So, the officers that are volunteers are available for informal counseling?
- AB: Sure, yes, yes.
- JT: Do you feel that's an important part – part of your program also?
- AB: Yes, it has to be 'cause, you know, they're always screaming about why don't the police do this and why don't they do that. And with our program, we can show that the police are actively involved with the kids, and no officer is going around, made any big deal out about how, "Hey, I talked to this kid about this." They, you know,

[00:30:00]

- AB: we'd rather not be telling the people who are there. They're actually trying to help these kids.
- JT: It's too bad, though, that it all has to be volunteers. It seems that some of your work time could be, you know, (inaudible) to these type of activities (inaudible) (loud mechanical screech) –
- AB: Well.
- JT: – get more officers involved (inaudible).
- AB: Yes, no doubt about it. But, uh, this year, uh, Chief Davis is – he's allowed me several, uh, leeway on several things as far as time off, and that's why I'm working this detail on why now, most of my work, on-duty time is actually involved in this P.A.A.L. program. And he allowed me the time off to go to San Francisco to take the kids there. And I'm going back to New York and Vermont for a convention there. And, uh, but to do that, we have to first meet our maximum manpower at the department. We're down almost eighty positions, as far as field personnel, and before you can start making new positions, you gotta catch up on what you have. Because we're expanding in Santa Ana, we need more officers.
- JT: It seems to me actually, you – you know, put a lot of effort into this program and that you prevent future problems, a lot of it, it seems.
- AB: Well, we hope so, uh, you know, maybe if we can get some parents and some people writing in letters stating that to our Chief, he could show 'em to the city manager and convince him that's, you know, who you have to answer to, in the end, is the city manager.
- JT: If nothing else, it seems that this is a program with a – with a lot of community support in place –
- AB: Right.
- JT: – and the kids and their parents in other aspects, just being, uh, witnesses when there's problems, like arrests and things, where a lot of people just will not come forth –
- AB: Right.

JT: – where they might if their kid is involved in a program or a kid has been involved. And he realizes that, uh, he has that responsibility. (machinery in the background)

AB: That's right. That's – that's – the way I feel. This way, I hope, we get more people to feel, and I feel that's the way our – our Chief is just looking at the program now also. So, eventually, I would say in the next couple of years, you will see several officers working in this, either on a full-time or paid-overtime-type job for them.

JT: I think it should be, uh, paid jobs.

AB: Right, well, because to work on it, you have to give up going to school, and, uh, you've gotta make a choice. Do you wanna work with kids, or do you wanna further your education? And you know, they should really compensate you for it. Hopefully, they will do that soon.

JT: Only, this is the, uh, just the second year –

AB: Right.

JT: – may be able to fix it for the better as it – as it proves it self.

AB: Right, you've gotta be able to show them the program is working first of all, and I think ours is. You've seen our wrestling program. Those kids get along with each other quite well, and there's about eighteen different schools represented there, I think it's going to – plus some kids don't go to school. You know, but, uh, it's working out pretty good.

JT: I noticed, uh, I noticed my, uh, husband's wrestling team with the kids that, when they first started out being here do not know each other, do not care less about each other.

AB: Right.

JT: But, as time goes on, they – they really change. They become very outgoing, very friendly toward each other. Even though wrestling is a very personal sport, there is, you know, some comradeship among those – for the team members.

AB: We've got kids from Santa Ana High School²³ now hanging around with kids from El Modena²⁴ High School they never even knew before. And the only way they had known them before was they competed against them. And now they're on the same team. It's been – it's really neat, they have really kind of formed their own little alliance. It's like a club. It's a personal-type thing. And they go out together on the weekends, and they get, you know, five to ten of them together, and they go around doing things, getting in trouble, really – really enjoying themselves.

JT: (laughs) I know in some high schools, there tends to be kind of a rivalry of schools.

AB: Right.

²³ High school in Orange County, California; established in 1889.

²⁴ High School in Orange County, California; established in 1968.

- JT: And you – when you don't know anybody from the other school, it's easy to think of them as all rich snobs or, you know, definitely underhanded type of sneaky people. I think any kind of problem with – with drinking at school or (inaudible) with somebody or at school, you can't go – stick a stereotype and perform a little fight at the football game (inaudible).
- AB: Right, yeah, you hear, uh – that's like people in Fullerton.²⁵ You mention Santa Ana Police and, they're, "Oh my God," you know, or you mention Anaheim,²⁶ they think – or you mention the Highway Patrol,²⁷ and they have their opinions of the Highway Patrol, and everybody's, you know, basically alike. And just, uh – they have different connotations because of the things they hear, and surprising, though, once you get 'em together, and they really become good friends.
- JT: Sounds like we have a very, very big program going.
- AB: Oh, we hope so. Uh, we'll know more about after this year, and then we'll know more next year after we get our, uh, new programs. We're trying to get more girls involved. In fact, we don't wanna get them too involved. I don't know whether you're aware or not, but now girls are eligible to go out for, like, football and wrestling in high school. They can, you know, go out for varsity sports with the guys, and I had three girls call last week that wanna wrestle in our wrestling club. You know, that was a shock.
- JT: (laughs)
- AB: The weigh-ins might be embarrassing. I don't know they're – they, "Do you wanna wrestle," they will come out – so.
- JT: It could be a problem.
- AB: Yeah, it could be. Especially if they beat some of the boys –
- JT: (laughs)
- AB: – then it'll definitely be a problem.
- JT: Well, that's something, uh, boys are going to have to get used to. Women are competing more and more in, uh, male-dominated fields.
- AB: That's true.
- JT: And winning. (laughs)
- AB: Yeah, I know. That's bad.
- JT: I know, I've been having enough trouble getting certified as a referee for wrestling. 'Cause, they really just backed off, you know. How could you possibly go?
- AB: Well, one the best – one of the best referees in Alabama is a woman.
- JT: A woman?

²⁵ City in northern Orange County, California.

²⁶ City in Orange County, California.

²⁷ California state agency; founded 1929.

AB: Yeah. Her, uh, husband's the head of the A.A.U.²⁸ back there, and she's become a referee, and her daughter is also becoming a referee, and they refereed the national championships in Alabama, as they're both pretty good – they're a lot more conscientious, they didn't wanna make a mistake, so they – their concentration level was extremely high. And, uh, they did a really fantastic job. In fact, I would have rather had one of those women referee in matches than any of the men that were there. So, who knows, maybe we'll have a lot of women referees.

JT: (laughs) I still can't picture, uh, wrestling, though, boys against girls, because I know I always lose (inaudible).

AB: Yeah, maybe you're out of your weight class.

JT: That's true. Oh well. Well, it's been nice talking to you –

AB: Enjoyed it.

JT: – and thank you very much for the interview. I thank you, the Criminology department thanks you, and the Oral History department thanks you.

AB: Okay, you're welcome. Thank you.

[00:36:43]

END OF INTERVIEW

²⁸ Amateur Athletic Union; a U.S. sports organization, founded in 1888.