Interview with Rick and Terry Klein
Interviewer: Tim Miller
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RK = Rick Klein, TK = Terry Klein

**Q:** Well, I guess the central thing that I'm interested in, is just some of the basics of the New Buffalo story. Well, was it your idea, for openers, Rick?
**RK:** Well, a lot of it has to do with drugs. You know, started taking acid, and realizing that we wanted to live closer together or something, I always wanted, I had been coming out here for several years, in summers, and I was in Europe, and I took some acid, and I said, I'm going to New Mexico, and got here, and there were various people here. Some of them like Max, I had known from before, but there were a lot of people that were interested in the Peyote Church and stuff like that. So, it just evolved. I mean, I had a group of friends out here, but you know, they didn't all, it didn't all work out, they weren't used to, you know to live in the rough and stuff like that, and they left. But there were other people out here, so I think, Max, Finstein[?]was going to -- I think they knew I had some money. And we were going to try and start something, and that's when I said, "Well, I'll contribute this money." But there were people from California, we were originally out in [unintelligible]. That was very, I mean it was very, there were like four hippie households there, it was on the Walter Cronkite Evenings News.

**Q:** Where is it?
**RK:** El Reto

**Q:** I don't know where that is.
**RK:** It's North of Espinila [?] Northwest of Espinila.

**Q:** So, it's not far from here.
**RK:** It's a little town. Yeah, not too far from here.

**Q:** So, you were living there when all this....
**RK:** Yeah, I'd come from Europe, and I was over there. You know this is, New Mexico is as far out of the United States as you can get, well, I had been here before, I had spent months here before, and I had really liked it. I thought it was really different from the rest of the country. You know, it had these great, you know, it had the Indians, and Hispanics, and that was very good [unintelligible]... back then.

**Q:** Where were you from originally?
**RK:** Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. But I can't think of anything in my background that would predilect me to communalism. I was an only child, maybe I wanted it real bad, I don't know. So, basically, that's when it started. I think the main organizing factor at that point was that people onto living an alternate life. We'd have these great old farms everywhere, and you know we'd give $15 a month or something. When I think back, I guess the organizing factor was when I said "Well, okay I'll put some money up and we can buy a piece of land and we'll see what we can do." So that's sort of...

**Q:** So, you bought this...what...59 acres you say?
**RK:** Well, it was a hundred back then. It was a hundred at that point. We looked all over.

**Q:** How did you end up here?
**RK:** I don't know, it just seemed like, I think the different places we looked, I mean this just seemed as close to Taos [?], you know, it's farmland, it's a nice big piece.

**Q:** No buildings, right? You built everything.
**RK:** No buildings, right. There was one guy here, living in Taos at the time. Steve Hinton [?], he lives next door to me at the [unintelligible] now. He had grown up in Mexico and he knew something about building adobes, We hired some local guys to make some bricks. They made, I think they made 500 bricks for us, and then we took over, and we made bricks, and we built this building. You know one of the walls collapsed at one point.

**Q:** So, you built this and the other buildings here? And are they mainly adobe?
**RK:** Yeah. They're all adobe. And, meanwhile, it sort of, I think the first thing we did communally, I don't remember what exactly year it was, 1967, probably, in the summer solstice, we had just signed the papers on the land, and we --

**Q:** In '67?
**RK:** Yeah, and we had sort of a peyote meeting over here, on the property. Just the people who were going to be involved in it. We didn't know very much, but it was our attempt to do something. And, after that, Gus [?] and Pablo started showing up and helping us in that aspect of it, so the Peyote Church became a real focus for this place, a real spiritual focus. But it was real basic values. The thing is, nobody, there was real basic, almost Puritan values. Families that were, people with kids, they sort of became the patriarchs, but they didn't stay -- they stayed for maybe two years or so, and they'd move on, and other people would come in. So, the church was always a big continuity. Michael Duncan [?] was involved in the church. I mean, there were so many folks coming through here.

**Q:** Was he at New Buffalo at one time?
**RK:** No, he came, and it was the Boo-Hoos are here, he and this other guy were Boo-hoos.

**Q:** The Neo-American Church?
**RK:** Neo-American Church.

**Q:** Is that right, with Art Cleps[?]?
**RK:** Yeah, whatever that meant. I don't know.

**Q:** It was just supposed to be silly; I think.
**RK:** Right, right, right.

**Q:** So, he was with Cleps, huh?
**RK:** Yeah, but it was pretty weird, I mean he would just sit around and listen to the Walkman all the time, wouldn't talk to us.

**Q:** But Duncan went off pretty early and bought his own land, didn't he?
**RK:** Yeah, he came into the valley and he bought land up there. So, all about the time New Buffalo was getting together? Well, this was. Well, New Buffalo was kind of like, sort of what attracted them.

**Q:** And then he promptly opened up his land to Morningstar and Reality. How long were you here?
**RK:** I was here from June till November or so, and I moved to Santa Fe, bought a camper and went to Mexico and I came back spring, stayed here a little about it, I just built a little adobe down in the valley, and then I moved up to Llama[?]. I felt in a strange position, I still had some money, and it was very hard for me, what should I do? Give everything to the commune? I mean, I'd have a car or something, but everybody else is sharing everything there, and so I did that. And it wasn't quite what I had in mind, I mean I was much more interested in art and spirituality and stuff like that, than real back to the land stuff.

**Q:** So, you really only lived here in that initial phase for only six months or so? I pictured you being here for years. Now, some other founders stayed on, didn't they? Like Max.
**RK:** Yeah, well, he stayed for a while, a lot of things with people coming here and be living in this real tight situation, and marriages would break up, and stuff like that. I mean, I sort of thought that everyone would be just one big family, I was terribly naive. But that's what I sort of thought. Just all the energy that was released with the drugs and stuff. Max, left and would come back, and left and come back, I don't know how many. [unintelligible]... and stuff like that.

**Q:** Is he still around?
**RK:** He passed away about three years ago.

**Q:** So, you moved up to Llama at that point, which must have been pretty early. I mean that was when it was just getting going.
**RK:** Yeah, well, I bought a piece of land there. The Foundation was just getting started. I don't think there were many Durkee people living up there.

**Q:** So, Steve Durkee was still there?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** I was surprised to see his comments about the fire. It was in the Albuquerque paper, someone sent it to me. He was strangely distant from it, I thought. It's like, well, they weren't on the right spiritual path anyway. Something to that effect. I guess he's a pretty serious Sufi. Anyway, so did you live at Llama the whole time then, until you came, I guess you still do in a sense, you've got your house there. What happened here? I mean, in a nutshell, it was still communal for quite a few years.
**RK:** It was very communal, and it sort of, it's funny, there's so many, so many people have so many, there's so much more today about having group process, I mean we were going nuts when the [unintelligible] Foundation[?] was down here after the fire. They had to sit in a circle for everything. But back then, people didn't know a lot of things about getting, interpersonal skills, or that kind of stuff. So, I mean, I think that you could say for the first couple of years it was very conservative, and you know,

gender roles were very well defined, and you know, just hard work. And that was sort of what the tradition became. People did move out after a while, when they started having more kids, or maybe the kids would have health problems or something, just it was hard. Your family and your also taking care of other people and there's a flux of visitors coming through. So, I guess that's, that was sort of the original wave, and I think it went on for maybe about ten years, this way of just hard, hard work, agriculture and that. And then people started realizing some things about agriculture. There was a guy here who was probably one of these guys whose parents were communists, I don't know, I would imagine, if he were[unintelligible] taken a Chinese name. He's actually somebody you should talk to, he's got journals. But anyway -- Terry can give you his address -- he was very charismatic, and he became a leader here. There a little more of a consciousness there. And then these young guys just didn't like him, and they said "Well, we're going to beat you up, and we want you to leave." And, you know, that was sort of the beginning of the end. [unintelligible] ... and the ten year [unintelligible] ... a quote in the paper, "We don't have any room for lame hippies here now." These guys all ended up with drug problems and stuff. The thing was very anarchic and so somebody could sort of move in and take over, that's what happened. We didn't have it together.

**Q:** What's the name of the charismatic leader?
**RK:** Anshwei was his Chinese name, Arty, Arty something. Terry can give you his address. But I mean, it really had a life of its own. There would be -- I don't want to say it was real [unintelligible] ... there were all these drugs. People with problems.

**Q:** I think that's the absolutely typical story of the 60's communes, they were like magnets for people with problems. A lot of people didn't know what to do and sort of drifted to the communes. So, I think you told me before, eventually people left, and it got down to where one person was here, or something.
**RK:** Yeah, one family, and they were very, very,-- the guy was using heroin and drinking a lot, and just keeping everyone else off the property, you know. It was real negative, real dark. They were living in one of these buildings over here, this building was in shambles. And eventually just sold off a bunch of stuff. One of the guys, he was called Joke[?] Johnny, had a lot of goats and stuff, but he had a lot of substance problems.

**Q:** How was the ownership structured? How could he move in and just keep people away? Wasn't somehow, wasn't there a corporation or something?
**RK:** There was a corporation, but it was real, back when we set it up, it was like -- it never got 501C3. The state tax exemption. But it was -- we'd figure it was like papers for the White men or something. We didn't really have to abide by [unintelligible]. He had the papers, and he actually -- when he lost it, this other guy showed up, it was another bad news, really fucked up Vietnam vet, with a lot of drug and alcohol problems. They tried to put it on the market and sell it. And if they had had their shit together, they could've done it. But they didn't have their shit together. We just acted, we went through all the papers we could find, found a contradiction in a set of, in the bylaws, and just acted on it. Basically, just took it back over. Kicked him out somehow? Yeah. We had to finally evict him. [unintelligible]... get the sheriff to come up and evict him. It was really awful.

**Q:** Really? But you managed to get a legal handle so you could do that?
**RK:** Yeah, right.

**Q:** And then is that the point at which you moved back?
**RK:** Well, no, then it was -- then we had a big community meeting to see if anybody had any ideas about what to do with the place. One of the more interesting men was from a fundamentalist Christian group who wanted to turn it into a cemetery. I realized that they believed in bodily resurrection [unintelligible] ... so important to him. And different things were suggested. But what ended up was at the end of the meeting, someone said, "We need a place to stay." So, some people sort of drifted back in. At this point, it was real lame-o. I was head of the board [unintelligible] ... they'd call me up, "So-and-so's using my frying pan!" It was awful. So that went on for about 2 years, and then we had this seed project came in, [unintelligible] ... we put that together.

**Q:** What was that?
**RK:** It was a guy who had lived around here for a long time, who had been doing seed collections of indigenous crops that were [unintelligible] with the pueblos, in these little small [unintelligible] ... heirloom seeds, very strange, and stuff like that. And there was a lot of it, there's lots of crops that were grown here that nobody knows -- there was grapes growing here, but none of it's survived. They don't know what they were. But it's hard to find something that would make it as well as whatever it was that they grew. So, they were growing these different things, and it was a real good -- it was called The Sustainable Native Agriculture Project. They got some grants and stuff. But it ended up -- so the guy was just on a real ego-trip. He had all this money, but he used to travel around to conference. And they had people working here in gardens and stuff, but not much happened. So, we kicked in [unintelligible]. And it was at that point that I took it back over. It was able to do that.

**Q:** When was that?
**RK:** Probably around '89 or something like that.

**Q:** So, did you start the bed and breakfast about then?
**RK:** It was vacant there about two years. And then we had a school used it. They stabilized the buildings, in exchange. They were here for about a year. I thought they were going to buy. And when the school went out of business, I took over their property. Running the bed and breakfast was great -- it's just not, and I feel real good about what we've done, the way we've restored the buildings and [unintelligible]. That was the most fun part, dealing with the tourists. During the fire I was going into town, there were all these tourists. I was [unintelligible]. You know those kids have these shirts that say, "No Fear"? I have one that says, "No Tourist."

**Q:** You shouldn't live in Taos then.
**RK:** I feel, I think I was telling you how much I like that book Back to Crowtown [?]. It really inspired me. I don't know if it was the whole tradition or something, or the fact that the kind of stuff I'm doing now with the Native Americans, and sort of feeling that I'm maybe, sometimes in certain circles I'm not welcome, but then reading that stuff about tri-racial isolate communities -- I love that stuff! It really

makes a lot of sense. [unintelligible] ... this thing that we're going through, it's such an unusual thing. It's totally unique. It's white sundancers on the reservation. It's real impeccable. It's really done right. It's really very interesting to me. But I'd like to plug into that -- have you heard of this place, Green Time Village? In Wisconsin? They publish stuff about [unintelligible] ... I just, it's been [unintelligible] ...

**Q:** Did you ever had any other communal connections other than New Buffalo and Llama?
**RK:** [unintelligible]

**Q:** Did you live up there?
**RK:** At one point I did. At one point I stayed at Willoughby's [?] Farm. [unintelligible] ... a few months. But they were real hard-core.

**Q:** They were political radicals, weren't they?
**RK:** Yeah. I always like to be in the woods and take lots of LSD and stuff like that. I ended up; we were playing music a few years after I left here. I played music all the time when I was a kid, and it was very interesting [unintelligible] ... they went out with [unintelligible] ... when I was in college, and I haven't discovered -- I was in Pittsburg, I could see all this incredible music, and I'd do these incredible -- I mean, I'd go, one night I'd be seeing John Coltrane at [unintelligible], the next night I'd be in some blue grass club. It was all great stuff, it was all like this great American music, but it was sort of cut apart from itself, with these ethnic, or economic lines and stuff. I remember going to -- I went to Europe probably summer of, spring of 1966, I think. And I came back, in the spring of 1967. But when I came back, I mean all this stuff had happened, and I came back and my friends said, "Oh, you've got to listen to this music." And there was all these bands that had come out, and it was my music too, because it was the music of someone who had grew up in America and had been exposed to all this different stuff. Here it was all coming together, and so [unintelligible] the Jefferson Airplane and stuff like that. Had all these new songs and stuff. It was really neat. So, I started playing, I played music around here, and we had a really great band, and we used to play, like there was sa [unintelligible] down by there, in Ranchester's [?] place, Old Martinez Hall. It's an incredible room to play in. It's a huge, like a community dance hall. I mean, it's got a 20-foot ceiling, and the degas [?] are like that. It was huge. But it's old. We used to play there. It was very, we had a very, everybody would take acid. The gigs were communal events. I imagine that what's it was like in places in San Francisco and stuff. And we'd play here, occasionally. But it was really a lot of fun. And I'd play, I mean I'd played around here for years, but back then, at that particular time, it was really special. It was like there wasn't much of a distance between the audience and the band. It was all, we're all here to just have a good time. Chris and I played, Chris plays the violin and I play the fiddle, and I played the guitar with him. We did 2 shows with the Blue Vibes [?] and the Purple [unintelligible] ... one of them was at this place. It was really fun. It was a gas for me. There were people everywhere. When we actually, when we had the band for a while, [unintelligible] ... the Dodge House for Dennis Hopper [?]. You know that place?

**Q:** I've heard of it. It's a bed and breakfast or something now?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** Dennis Hopper under the [unintelligible]?
**RK:** When he had come here, he was, after he made such a big hit with the [unintelligible] ... he bought this place, and then all these people would come. There was a period where just all the women and the drugs.

**Q:** At the Dodge House?
**RK:** Yeah. He was always getting in trouble. He was really bad. Just bad. I have this friend who still works for him. He took [unintelligible] ... at that period [unintelligible] ... Australia. And he said they just barely escaped. They were not going to let Dennis ride in the car. [unintelligible] ... getting in trouble. They weren't even going to let him ride in the car. He still has a place down here in [unintelligible] ... I mean, I think of it as this enormous outburst of energy, and I think people didn't know a whole lot. There was this enormous energy. I mean, I've met people who say, "There's this new guru! All you have to do is chant, 'Hari Krishna,'" [unintelligible] ... this was all new. All the new stuff was coming from India and, you know. And so, I think all the gurus were coming. Our friend Paba [?], she was with, she knew this guy, Father, a guy from San Francisco, some kind of Tantric [unintelligible]. Smoked hashish all the time.

**Q:** When was that? In the late '60's?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** Was that Lou Gotley's guy? Lou went to India and brought back this guy who was a hash smoking Shiva guru priest. I bet that's who that was.
**RK:** I mean, I was staying in a house where he was, and I just couldn't -- "What's this guy saying? 'You're going to be in charge of Africa when I take over the world'?" [unintelligible] ... Then there were people down south. I mean, there was connections between -- I remember we up to Drop City, they had a big "drop test" as they called it up there.

**Q:** In '67?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** Yeah, that was Peter's deal, I think.
**RK:** So, did you get along with him?

**Q:** Yeah, I had a very nice time. So, were you in touch with what was going on here all the years, you were somewhat in the neighborhood?
**RK:** Yeah, somewhat, I was. I hung out; I would come down here to go to peyote meetings. Or summer, I'd come down here for different things. But I really had, I had to make sort of a decision that I would just let it go down. I mean, then I said, "Okay, I'm giving this away," and ended up that I really meant that. I remember when this guy, Anshwei, was being beaten up and stuff, and he came to me, and I said, "I can't [unintelligible] ... " He sort of gave me this, the role, and I sort of backed away from it. It wasn't until years later that I realized that I really had be responsible for it. Because it was -- you know, whatever it was, I mean, a piece of land, of monetary value, it's a big chunk of energy out there, people just fighting over it, this or that. I felt I should take responsibility for the [unintelligible]. It was really a,

quite a journey of realization of self. I mean it was a good [unintelligible] ... I mean -- I was never wealthy. Michael Duncan's really wealthy. My father was a small-time doctor. There was this horrible tragedy, my mom died, and I got all this insurance money, but it was not a -- I turned it all into, I mean I even, look at it now, I cashed in some insurance policies I had on myself [unintelligible] ... which I wish I had now, with kids and all this kind of stuff. But whatever, you know. I was really trying to live real honest that way [unintelligible] ... but it was quite a journey to come around to. Anyway, I was saying, people would either treat me like I was a fool to do it, or I was a saint. Or this or that. I never -- after a while I sort of started to avoid the issue, the issue of New Buffalo. Later, I didn't.

**Q:** During all those ten years or so of serious communal activity, was it really structured? Did they have entrance requirements, say? Did they have any kind of government? Did they have organized economy of business, anything like that? Or was it just kind of loose, whatever happened, happened?
**RK:** Someone in between those two. There would be projects that would bring in some money or something, and -- I mean, big projects, like there was a dairy, they delivered milk. Which is probably the best use of this land. I mean, when they first came to [unintelligible] ... grow all their own food, [unintelligible] ... but it's kind of hard to do. They found out that they were growing alfalfa and feeding it to their cows were more efficient. And there was a barn built here, with a grant from the DLE [?]. That was when they kicked this guy Anshwei out, they were going to come back with another grant. They were going to give him another grant to finish the barn, and the [unintelligible] dealer came out, and somebody lit up a joint right in front of him. They were just fucking up.

**Q:** Were there children around?
**RK:** Yeah. [unintelligible] ... there some come over here, [unintelligible] ... most of the kids that I know that spent any length of time here, they're good kids.

**Q:** Some of them still around the area?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** What about the adults? Are there still some of them around?
**RK:** Oh, yeah. I mean, there's people who lived here for a couple of weeks, there's an awful lot of people around here that [unintelligible] ... some of them are real successful businessmen. You should talk to Jim Cakes [?], that's who you should talk to. He's in Santa Fe. He's got a Mercedes shop there.

**Q:** And he lived here?
**RK:** Yeah.

**Q:** Well, I don't know. Any other great things to say?
**RK:** I think we were real lucky here, in our contact with the [unintelligible] ... lasted a long time. When the fire happened, the first night of the fire, I was up there, Terry was here, and these guys came over from the pueblo, and they were [unintelligible] ... Terry off, and Chris and [unintelligible]. To me, the whole '60's is powered by those guys. I really, even playing rock and roll and all that, it was like, I remember one time we were going to make this album called "Everybody's Saturday Night." One side

was going to be rock and roll, the other side was going to be peyote songs. And we were going to have all the old guys like rock and roll players on the picture on one side, and all hippies dressed up like Indians on the other side. Those were real special times. Those guys just meant so much to me.

**Q:** So, you're saying you had good relations with them all along, basically?
**RK:** Yeah. And they were teachers. They were spiritual teachers.

**Q:** Well, what I've heard from practically everyone in the Taos area, was it was nothing but cultural conflict. Like, I talked to this guy who lived as a kid up at Morningstar, and he said it was so bad, he just got routinely insulted, he said even shot at occasionally. He said there was tremendous conflict between the hippies and the longtime residents here. I think Hispanics more than Indians, maybe.
**RK:** Hispanics, right.

**Q:** He made it sound like it was really grim.
**RK:** Well, I don't know. I never -- I mean, I remember thinking that somebody might fire a gun at [unintelligible] ... or somebody. It never happened ...

**Q:** Well, I suppose this is the kind of place John Birch [?] Society wouldn't have liked too much.
**RK:** I mean, there was stuff like that, but it never affected me too much. I mean, these guys, there was always a kind of great independence among the Hispanic people too. I mean, when I first moved here, was in the spring, but before we moved over here, when I was living in El Rito, that was where the [unintelligible] Rebellion was. I came into town one day; I mean it was just at the crossroads. I was tagged there by people searching for guns. There's stuff like that. And at that time, Espanolla [?] was very radical, politically. I mean, it's strange. There was unrest in those areas too. I mean, there's all kind of weird stuff that happened. There were these guys that came into Reality, who were real bad-ass Hispanics from LA or something. From prison and stuff like that. They really tried to make [unintelligible] and everything. They'd sit down and talk to these guys. It was really very difficult. I don't know, Max's daughter married one of these guys, and eventually it broke up. They were so angry and so violent and stuff. Well, years later, somebody told me, a guy that had been with the Brown Berets, the real heavy-duty Chicano revolutionaries in Denver, that these guys were most likely taken out of prison and sent there by the government.

**Q:** Really?
**RK:** Yeah. Either as provocateurs, or just to make trouble. And I can really see it in a way, because their trust could never get -- they kind of always had something hidden. They were pretty scary. They had a big shoot-out in Santa Fe with the police, nobody ever went to jail. There were lots of different things going on back then.

**Q:** What were the typical populations at the communes here? How many people were at New Buffalo at its heyday?
**RK:** It would depend. It could be anywhere from 20-30, to 8, varied by the winter, in the winter there was usually a lot less. Especially after the first couple of years. I had no idea what they were at Morningstar and Reality.

**Q:** Not a whole lot, I think. But I don't have the reading on that either.
**RK:** Then there were others, there was one called Five Star, a group called The Family. I could never figure that out, that was a strange group. That was one where you had to sleep with a different person every night. They always had VD going around. I couldn't ever figure it out -- they were very regimented, but I couldn't understand where it came from, who their leader was, or anything. But -- New Buffalo was not like, there would be these groups where people would in all these young converts, so to speak. Power trip, that you know all the answers. But New Buffalo was never like that. There was a lot of -- it was pretty pragmatic here.

**Q:** Did New Buffalo have any -- I guess they never had a practice where they had you sleep with a different person every night?
**RK:** No.

**Q:** Was it typically couples?
**RK:** Yeah. Couples, I mean, there would be single people. But pretty much it was the couples who lent the stability to the place. And like, the big thing that had happened then, Max, when we started, Max was sort of the elder. He was probably 38 or something. And then after a couple months, his wife went off with another guy. That sort of just devastated him. So, it was pretty conservative. [unintelligible] ...

**Q:** Of course, all this was during Vietnam War days -- was that ever an issue? Like, a number of the communes, I found out, I didn't really realize this until pretty recently, but a number of them had draft resisters, AWOL guys from the army, stuff like that, would seek the communes out to harbor them. Did that ever happen here?
**RK:** Yeah, it did. But I don't know to what degree. It's very funny, like we'd have a big tie-dye in the kitchen, we'd have some others in some other rooms. This woman came through who was here -- she does these tie-dyes, she's very successful at it, and she met her husband, who was a draft dodger, here. Now he's retired from the army. He's a colonel. And she still does tie-dye, takes it to the Grateful Dead shows. I don't know. There was some of that. But I don't know to what degree.

**Q:** You've described what brought you here, basically, but can you speculate in a larger sense, why did this become one of the main communal meccas in the country? This was a notable area for it. Any obvious reason for that?
**RK:** Well, it's always had the reputation of being a spiritual center, an art[?] center. And it's such a beautiful place [unintelligible]... I mean, it was romantic. Somehow, New Mexico is more romantic than Meadville[?] -- a place in one of these books, Oz? I grew up around there. It was sort of a romanticism

about it. And then, you know, Easy Rider, definitely stoked the flame. Although it was well on its way before then.

**Q:** It's had a certain kind of counter-culture appeal for decades. And Aldus Huxley, I think came out here some. Of course, Lawrence was something of a Bohemian radical. But it just seems like suddenly, people came pouring in here -- really, there are very few other places in the country that had this focused a communal presence, I think.
**RK:** Well, I don't know. I would say -- New Buffalo has definitely started the whole thing. I don't know, here in Taos, I think it was early-on, and it just got the publicity. I don't know what would've happened if New Buffalo hadn't started. New Buffalo was the -- what were the communes at the time New Buffalo started, Morningstar, Wheeler Ranch?

**Q:** Let's see, you started in the summer of '67?
**RK:** Drop City.

**Q:** Yeah, there weren't very many. That was early still.
**RK:** I mean, like I said, earlier that year I was living over in El Rito. They were on national news. It was like maybe 8 people there. It was weird.

**Q:** Did they hassled you? I asked about relations with the culture. Did you have trouble with zoning or fish holes, or sanitation?
**RK:** They sort of made noises about it. But nothing ever happened. I think there's laws for farm buildings or something. And even, there were a couple busts in the first couple years, and they would just come out and confiscate all the marijuana. It was just a lot different out here. There was one incident here where it was some, locals, where these guys set up sort of a roadblock down by the bar. These cars came back, if they had hippies in them, they would drag them out and beat them out. So later that night, the guys with the [unintelligible] ... that were in the bar, these two hippies come into the bar, and they started hassling the hippies, go out in the parking lot, and the guys [unintelligible] in the parking lot, [unintelligible] ... cars [unintelligible] ... he said he was [unintelligible]. He beat the shit out of them.

**Q:** Did they really?
**RK:** Yes. Sort of established a status quo there.
**TK:** You guys having fun?

**Q:** You want to talk about the [unintelligible] for a few minutes?
**TK:** If you want me to. I'm getting ready to go to bed. I can --

**Q:** Why don't you give me 5 or 10 minutes of the basics on that. That would be great.
**TK:** Okay. Is it taping now?

**Q:** Yeah, the tape's on now.
**RK:** She has a real hard time dragging it out of me.

**Q:** Just tell me when you got involved. Meadows is Tacilma [?], Oregon, when?
**TK:** I guess about maybe 1968, or '69.

**Q:** How did you get there? Were you a founder?
**TK:** No. Let's see. I might've just passed through or something. I can't really remember. When I was still a senior in high school, my boyfriend and I used to hitch hike through there on our way to San Francisco. I think there was some guy who gave me a ride or something.

**Q:** Where did you live?
**TK:** Near Portland. I think there was this guy named Jack, he gave me a ride. He didn't actually live on the commune; it was kind of like a little town. I guess people had bought houses or were renting houses or something like that. There was like this whole scene. There was the Meadows, and then there was this other place called Sunny Valley, which was another commune. And then there was -- I don't know. Those people that were at Sunny Valley, I think, were the ones that started the Rainbow Gatherings. There was this guy Barry [unintelligible last name]. I went to, I think, the first Rainbow Gathering, in Colorado. The one where they saw the white buffalo?

**Q:** Yeah. That's '72 or something?
**TK:** Yeah, that was really cool. They didn't let them have it where they wanted to have it, so they ended up, we had to like park or something, and then they took us all on these buses. We had to hike up, and I remember it was a really long, steep hike, and I had a heavy backpack on, and somebody had to help me carry it. And then you got up there, and it was just this giant meadow, [unintelligible] ... it was really cool. But I think that was started by those people in Sunny Valley. I often think, nowadays, why do we seek so much to have so much free time? Why is it such this commodity? Because we had all this free time. We didn't do anything, basically. The only thing that we did, really, that I remember, was like made brownies, smoked dope, and went swimming. I got a great tan.

**Q:** Doesn't sound too bad.
**TK:** There were people there that had been there before me. I don't know how I ended up kind of living there.

**Q:** How many people lived there?
**TK:** Maybe about 10 or 12, something like that. There were several houses, and there was this one guy, Alan, and his wife. They had some kids. And then the rest of the houses were just sort of this mishmash. I stayed in a couple different houses. One was a kind of a party house, and it was a little bit more spiritual, get up and do yoga in the morning. [unintelligible]. Yeah, we would get up and do yoga, walk around in the nude all the time. It's a beautiful meadow. This is summer. I was kind of a fair-weather type. I tried to live in a tepee there in the winter, that was really stupid. I lived with these two guys, one was my boyfriend, and the other was just this guy. We were all in this tepee, and I lasted until November. It had a stove pipe -- we had cut out a hole in the tepee and the stove pipe just went out. And we had created this sort of like giant umbrella that went over the top of the poles. It was really miserable. And I just moved out from that guy, and in with another guy. I sort of felt bad.

**Q:** The other guy had a house, maybe?
**TK:** Yes. "Goodbye, I'm in love with someone else." But I got hepatitis there. I was actually really sick there. I got bronchitis, the worst bronchitis I ever had there. As I remember, there was this one girl who, -- I can't, I don't remember things very well, like I don't remember anyone's name, hardly, and I don't remember dates or anything like that. But this one gal, I remember I was up in this attic, I got so I was so weak, I could hardly walk. She took care of me and she fed me. I was really sick. That was with bronchitis. And then I got hepatitis from drinking the water there. I went back and forth a lot of times. Like I would go to Tacilma, and then I'd go to Portland. And then I'd go to Tacilma, and then I'd go to San Francisco, back and forth. Marin County. I hitch hiked all over. One time, when I got the hepatitis, I just went straight to San Francisco, and stayed with guy's parents. They were not too thrilled, but they did take me in, took care of me. I went to see the Grateful Dead on New Year's Eve, and I was really sick. I had these two guys holding me up, because I couldn't even stand up. The thing about Tacilma was I was with this guy, Mark, and we would go away, and we'd come back. I remember this one time I had sworn off smoking pot, because I thought I was smoking too much weed. [unintelligible] I would smoke it all the time. I was maybe gone for a couple of weeks for something. I came back, and they were having this giant circle, everyone was [unintelligible] ... and it was like, everyone was like your brother and sister, and [unintelligible]. So, I had this joint, and it was just like this great partaking. Everything was always so cosmic. I remember, we used to get food stamps. That's how we got by, pretty much. I don't remember ever working. I don't remember ever having any money. And I don't remember worrying about it either. That's the amazing part. But I'd get my food stamps, and you're always just really stoned out, and go to town. Town was only Cave Junction, it was just this little funky town, on the way to somewhere. It would be like major culture shock just to go to town. I think it was, I think that sort of got to me, that I was so sheltered, or so -- I'm not even sure what. Caused that to be just so in my own little world. I remember we used to go this fruit stand, [unintelligible] ... our food stamps. There was this river, see. There was two ways to get there. One was to drive around this really, really long way. And then you'd have to hike in. It was five or seven miles or something. Do you remember?

**Q:** To get into the Meadows?
**TK:** Yeah. You went there, didn't you?
**RK:** But I went through the river.
**TK:** Yeah. Or, you could just cross the river. That would be fine in the summertime. Because it would be lower, and it wouldn't be cold. But in the wintertime, the log that you crossed could be icy. Or the river could be very high. People used to do things like -- everybody would have their own style. Sometimes people would cross on their hands and knees. This river is like raging underneath like this. And I remember one time, this guy, we were like, I think we might've been low on food or something, but we really needed this guy to get across, and get a vehicle, and come up and get us the other way. Because we weren't going to be able to go across. It was too cold and deep. We ended up roping him in. We ran a rope across, and he took off all his clothes and put them in this leather hat, and he was walking, and it was about this deep.

**Q:** In the winter?
**TK:** Yeah. It was hairy. And then one time, Alan had, he was riding a horse, and he had Reeva [?] pregnant, real pregnant, on the front, and then all the stuff, the groceries and everything on the back.

And the horse is going like this in the water, and you're going, "Oh God, oh no, I hope they make it!" The horse is swimming across the river with this pregnant woman. That was a trip. And then a gal saved my life one time. I don't even remember her name. It was one of those deals where the river was kind of high, you know. It was like, there was a certain place where you were kind of supposed to cross it. I thought it wouldn't be too bad. I had borrowed somebody's hip boots. And I'm going along, and there's kind of a sandbar and everything, and there was kind of a pool, and then there was another kind of a bar. She was ahead of me, and I stepped into this pocket, and my boots started to fill up with water, and the water's coming raging by. I just panicked. I couldn't go forward; I couldn't go back. I was stuck there, and my boots were filling up with water. The cold gray sky and everything. She just reached out like this. I was going to go down. She just reached out. We couldn't even actually touch. But just it was like kind of an energy, where your hands alive almost. I just made this lunge, and I made it across. But it was full of all this hardship, you know, and it was like, cold in the winter. I really only liked it in the summer. It's true. In the summer, it was really nice.

**Q:** So how long did you live there altogether?
**TK:** I don't know. A few months here, and a few months there. I probably lived like a month or two or three, several times. And then the one gal, Debbie, that I ended up living in a cabin with, where we did yoga in the morning, we ended up travelling to South America together. But then I lost track of her after that. But that was really a while back. And people still knew where Gary Krinskey [?] was. Some people were still around. Tom [unintelligible] ... there was a lot of music in the evenings. I can remember eating together, outside. Or maybe in somebody's house. Mostly I remember there'd be like these outrageous guitar players. Lots of guitars. I think that's when I started playing my guitar. That was [unintelligible] ... that's pretty much what I remember. I don't think I ever did any cooking.

**Q:** How did you get out of that?
**TK:** I don't know. Maybe that's when I started playing the guitar. Might've done a little gardening. I didn't do any building. Really, I don't think I did hardly anything.

**Q:** Well, that was the goal, wasn't it?
**TK:** Yeah! It does seem like it.

**Q:** Get stoned and enjoy life.
**TK:** Right. Lot of butterflies' kind of [unintelligible] ...

**Q:** Did you go to any other communes up and down the coast as you travelled?
**TK:** I used to go to the [unintelligible] ... I mean, just around Tacilma. I went to that one in Sunny Valley. The only thing I really remember about that was that it had really nice architecture. The main building was sort of like a wheel, the ceiling was like a wheel, and there was a light and a skylight or something. And they were very together with the food [?] scene. More like, the distribution of labor, with the men and the women, it was a little more organized.

**Q:** Who owned the Meadows?
**TK:** It was for sale. I guess somebody let us live there, and then I remember that they were going to try and buy it. It was about that point where they were going to have to work to get the money to buy it that a lot of people bailed. I think they earned the money to buy -- it was 40 acres -- by firefighting or something. It was very foresty. We had quite a reputation around the area. I didn't go to -- there was some stuff in Marin County, you know. But it was like practically everybody I knew lived in a communal household. It was like smaller. People shared houses. The whole Marin County scene was like that. Go from this party in that house, and there would always be like a group of six or seven people, or more, that were sharing a house. [unintelligible] ...together. We would just stumble on these scenes. Somebody would pick you up hitch hiking, [unintelligible] ... spend the night or whatever. I was very loose. Sometimes I had a car. But mostly I didn't. So, I would meet a lot of people. People that were like [unintelligible] ... Jaguars, and all kinds of --

**Q:** That's kind of amazing.
**TK:** In Marin County, you know, rock and roll people. You almost never knew who they were. But what happened to me was I met some people -- it turned out that they were cocaine dealers, but I didn't know it at the time, they were from South America, they were from Chile. And I just, they showed me these photographs of [unintelligible]... So, I ended up going to South America. And then when I came back to Marin County, it was like [unintelligible] ... I just had this terrible culture shock. I had never seen poverty before in the third world. I came back, and it was like so disgusting. And so, I went back down to Guatemala, and then from Guatemala, I came here, and I didn't have any culture shock when I came here, at all. It was like, an awful lot like Mexico. Especially then. Funky. I mean, I came here, Rick wasn't here, but I came here to New Buffalo to parties, people [unintelligible] ... I wasn't attracted to [unintelligible]. Maybe it was already so decadent or something. There was an awful lot of like cheap wine and roll your own cigarettes. [unintelligible] ... got awful early here. That was really the only commune that I ever spent any time living at, was at the Meadows in Tacilma.

**Q:** Sounds like fun.
**TK:** I feel like I've been about 14 different people. I have all these letters and stuff; I've been trying to throw stuff away. I have these great letters, and they're all cosmic, they've got flowers and hearts and all this stuff. I read them, and I can't even remember who they're from. I'll go, "Who's that?" But at the time, it was like, "Oh, this is my best friend!"

**Q:** That's kind of how it was then. Everything was wonderful.
**TK:** I guess it's a beauty in the eye of the beholder thing. I guess the hitch hiking was a huge part of it for me. Because it was so footloose and fancy-free, so "here today and gone tomorrow," you know, just this kind of -- like all these people are homeless nowadays -- I went for years where I didn't have a permanent residence, and I never thought of myself as homeless. I always thought of myself as travelling. When I arrived in Llama, all I had was [unintelligible] ... I tried to move, and it was three carloads of stuff. [unintelligible] ... You just meet all these people [unintelligible] ... doing so many different kinds of things. So, I feel like I got exposed to a lot more than you would, if you were in your own car, tootling along the freeway. It also had its dangers. [unintelligible] ... some pretty strange escapades. [unintelligible] ... some bad drugs, bad people. I don't know at what point, I just got scared to

death. It's like we were talking earlier about how much to fly, is this going to be your Valujet, you know. I figure that I have 22,000 miles [unintelligible] ... I was in almost every state. What might be really nice [unintelligible] ... other way. Not all hippies, either, by any means, just people. But it's like, I don't even pick up hitch hikers anymore. The last one that I picked up; I swore I never was going to pick up anybody again that I didn't know. This guy was nuts. Talking to himself, and he was talking about sodomy, and I'm going, "Geez, let me get this guy to Royal [unintelligible], and he's out of here!" It was awful. So, it's like part of the world has changed, or I've changed.

**Q:** Times are different, things are different. I hitch hiked a lot, and I'm not at all interested in having my kids do it.
**TK:** Maybe in a different country.

**Q:** Maybe. Things are different here.
**TK:** That's too bad. But it was fun. And you could always count of those folks in buses to pick you up. I remember one time we were travelling on the bus; we were trying to catch up with the Caravan. And our bus was outrageous. It was a 1947 Aerocoach. It was built like an airplane.

**Q:** A big bus, you mean?
**TK:** Yeah, it was like a Greyhound. It had a metal frame like an airplane, and then sheet metal over it. We had painted it all white, with these two big purple waves and the mandala on the back. I think a mandala on the front too. And then the inside, we had carpeting, little squares of carpet, all different colors, total patchwork, and the whole thing was glued on the ceiling, the walls, the floor, everywhere. It was all built in, and we had maybe 12 of us living on it. It was a trip. I remember, one time we picked up this girl hitch hiking in New York City, and we were just like tootling along -- maybe she was in New Jersey, and we were taking her to New York City or something. But she just could not believe this bus. It was so funny. That was kind of a commune, I guess, living on the bus. We used to go to Mt. Tam [?] and we'd take acid, and we'd all be in the bus, and then pretty soon we'd start to realize that we really couldn't stand each other. And one by one we'd sort of like leave the bus. And everybody would go off in these different directions, and they'd be gone all day, and then they'd come back, and then it's like, "Oh, my long-lost friend!" again. The bus was a trip. And you'd sleep with a lot of different guys. That was part of the thing in the Gaskin culture. It's like, "Oh, you're with this one now, then you're with this one next week." It was always this little bit of a transition, you know, between the guy of last week and, sometimes it would get a little tricky.

**Q:** But you never made it to Tennessee and you never hooked up with Gaskin?
**TK:** Never made it to Tennessee. I got a few letters from this one gal, Judith, and I know some of the people that were on my bus, the last I heard, they were still there. I had this one scene go down that was really pretty funny. One of the things that Steven always said was, "If you tell the truth, it'll get you high." [unintelligible] ... And so, we were in Salina, KS, just the midway point between the East and the West, and we were going south [unintelligible]. And we really kind of stood out. One of the people on the bus had an old girlfriend who lived in this little suburb. So, we pulled the bus, and we all come piling out. I don't know if you remember, but Steven was really into guys should have more Eros[?]. So, a lot of them were wearing these red, corduroy bell-bottom pants and stuff, all this stuff about colors, a lot of

different dogma [?] stuff. So, we're all piling out of the bus with long hair. And we're visiting, and we're sitting in this totally straight house. She's got the couch and the whole suburban scene. We're all there visiting, and pretty soon there's a knock at the door, and it's the police. And they said, "Please follow us down to the station."

**Q:** This was Salina?
**TK:** Yeah. So, we said, "Okay." So, we all piled into the bus, and they escorted us down to the police station, where they promptly separated the men from the women, like this, and they put us in this glass interrogation booth or something. One at a time, they took the guys in. So, one guy goes in. He had real long hair, Brian. He came out, and we asked, "How was it?" "It was okay." They took these different guys in, and finally they took this guy, John, in, who was like really young. He was like the youngest one of us. And he came back out, and he was like really red in the face, and he was like, "I told them the truth. Steven always said to tell the truth and it would get you high, and they asked me if we had marijuana, and I said yes, and I'm going out to the bus, and I'm going to give it to them." We're going, "Oh God, oh no." So, sure enough, we all go out to the bus, and they didn't go into the bus. The police did not go in the bus. They let John go into the bus. He got out the pot -- he didn't get it all. He got most of it. And he took it out of the stash and everything and gave it to the police. And they said something like, "That's fine. Now get out of town." And they escorted us to the county line. That was the end of that. We didn't go to jail or anything. We were all driving down the road, you know, "Yahoo!" And all this stuff.