

Interview: Neil Menard (NM)

Interviewer: Phil Legg (PL)

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Transcription: Warren Caragata

PL [00:00:05] Neil Menard. Man, it is so good to see you. It's been a long time, a long time. So, Neil, let's talk about some of your early days. Let's start in Saskatchewan. How did you get involved in the union? How did you get involved in the forest industry?

NM [00:00:23] Well, I was, born in Nipawin, Saskatchewan, 1943. August the 18th. My dad and my grandfather both worked in the forest industry.

PL [00:00:41] Oh, wow.

NM [00:00:41] For Baldwin Lumber, which became the Saskatchewan Timber Board. And my dad got promoted from Nipawin to run the operation in Hudson Bay.

PL [00:00:58] Oh, no kidding.

NM [00:00:59] So we moved to Hudson Bay in 1952. And I went to school in the Bay. And when I left school, I worked for a time at the timber board. In the winter on the green chain, piling lumber. I did that for two winters. One summer, I worked up north on the railroad. Came back and then I worked two winters in Alberta for Buchanan Planing Mills—

PL [00:01:45] Oh, yeah. I remember them.

NM [00:01:47] —in the bush. A sawmill and a bush operation. We manufactured everything in the bush. Hauled it into High Prairie. And there, in the summer, it was dry-piled and we dressed it and then went back to the bush in the winter.

NM [00:02:11] I came home and a friend of mine said, you have to join the navy. And I said, why? He said, my mom and dad won't let me unless you join. So, I said, okay. So we went to—there was a recruiter, came to town. So we went. We both did all the interview stuff. Then they sent us to Saskatoon. We went to Saskatoon. We said, how long before we'll get called? He said, oh, two weeks, three weeks. Will we get called together? It'll be close, but no. But, okay.

NM [00:03:07] So I got home, I think it was a Wednesday. On Monday morning, I had a letter to report back to Saskatoon to join and get sworn in. What do I do? So Alan said, you go. I won't tell you what I said. I did. So I went through everything, got sworn in and I went to basic training in Cornwallis. Did that, was in a special gun crew while in training. Finished that. Came back, got drafted to a ship, got drafted off the Stettler and into Naden. I was a communicator. To take my course. So I went to school for about three months to learn my trade in communications. All this hand signals, flags, radio, teletype, all that stuff. And then I went, got drafted from Naden to the Fraser as a signaller and we were sent to Japan.

PL [00:04:42] Holy shit.

NM [00:04:44] On the way to Japan, we got a message and said, we need a signalman on the St. Laurent. And they said, Menard, you're going to sea out in the middle of nowhere. I got drafted at sea to the St. Laurent and we were on our way to Australia, and that was in the '60s, with the Cuban crisis.

PL [00:05:20] Oh, God. Oh, man.

NM [00:05:23] So our ship got stopped and sent back to Cuba. I didn't get to Australia. Thanks to Cuba. Anyway, I did that, came back. I got released just over three years later, completed my tour, and I went to work as an iron worker in Victoria.

PL [00:05:57] Oh. No kidding. Victoria.

NM [00:05:59] In Victoria.

PL [00:06:00] Like in the shipyard part of Victoria or just Victoria.

NM [00:06:04] So I got off the ship. Moved into Victoria and got an apprenticeship on steel and iron. So I did that. I got sent from there to Campbell River. In Campbell River, I joined the Ironworkers.

PL [00:06:24] Yeah, yeah.

NM [00:06:24] Local 97.

PL [00:06:26] 97. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

NM [00:06:27] Yeah. And then we finished the job at the pulp mill. And there was a big renovation. I then got sent back to Victoria, then to Vancouver for a while and then to Edmonton. And I worked on steel for the summer. And then I went back to the forest industry for the winter to play hockey and work in the woods. I did that for two winters and then I joined—then after that, I then went as an iron worker to a potash mine—no to the pulp mill in P.A. [Prince Albert].

PL [00:07:27] Oh, right.

NM [00:07:27] And I worked on the pulp mill 'til it was completed. I was working for Dominion Bridge.

PL [00:07:36] Oh, wow.

NM [00:07:38] And in the winter, I would go to the woods, and in the summer, I would go to iron. So when the job at the pulp mill finished, they asked me to go to Colonsay, to the potash mine. I went there after the winter and worked at the potash mine on the iron.

PL [00:08:07] Yeah.

NM [00:08:08] I got hurt quite bad in Colonsay. I was off work for two years. Had multiple back surgery. Because I was young and in good shape, I was— actually saved my life, but I rehabilitated in Wascana at the rehab centre. Actually, my brother's wife was my physio. Oh, tough broad.

NM [00:08:52] Anyway, after I got sent back to—I was then living in Prince Albert. Friend of mine asked me to come to work for him and run his bakery and restaurant. I said sure. So the WCB said okay. I did that. And then, a friend, a Navy guy, got a hold of me, said come to Choiceland and run my restaurant. So I did. The IWA came to eat and I knew the guys so I said, 'I read an ad in the paper. Is that you guys looking for business agent?' And they said 'no, why?' Said 'well, if you are, I'm interested.' Because I worked in the industry and I knew two of them very well.

NM [00:10:03] And Horgan. Art Christie.

PL [00:10:09] Oh, yeah.

NM [00:10:13] And Ted Becker. Anyway, they left. About a week later, the president for the Saskatchewan local phoned me, said, 'Neil, are you really interested?' His name was Alex Smith and he was the president. From M&B [MacMillan Bloedel]. I said 'yeah, for sure,' 'good.' So he took it to the board, his executive board. They said, yeah, hire him. So they hired me. That was in early '72.

PL [00:10:54] Wow.

NM [00:10:55] So we got out of the restaurant. I went, we went—Doneau was born then. And, anyway, then we—my mother passed away, and we went to the service. Eight days later, Doneau's brother was born in Nipawin—no, Prince Albert. So once that all settled, we all moved to Prince Albert, and I went to work as the business agent. And during that time, the members talked me into running against the president. I said, ooh. And so I did. And I won. And he hated me ever since. So I became the president in '73, I believe. After I'd been the business agent. And took over the local, started organizing, increased the membership quite a lot over the time that I was there.

NM [00:12:32] In '76, Munro phoned me. And I was on the executive board with Moore, and then Munro, and said, I want you to be my vice-president. I said, you gotta be nuts. He said, no, we need somebody from the Prairies. I said, okay, but I'd been a vice-president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.

PL [00:13:08] Okay.

NM [00:13:09] And so I had some experience. So I said, well, if the board agrees, I'll come. So I went to my board and said, will you give me a leave of absence.

PL [00:13:29] Oh, right.

NM [00:13:30] Because I don't know—

PL [00:13:31] —where this is going—

NM [00:13:31] —do this. And they said, sure, we'll let you go. So, Phil, I went by myself and Olga and the boys stayed in P.A. And I kind of liked it. So I talked to Olga and I said, yeah, let's do it. So, of course, we moved to Coquitlam—the boys and Olga. And we also had Darci, our daughter at the time. So we moved and I went to work for the Regional Council #1. With Wyman—

PL [00:14:24] Wyman Trineer. Right.

NM [00:14:25] Stan Parker, Bob Blanchard—oh, who was the financial secretary? Bob—

PL [00:14:37] Well, there's a bunch of them, because I remember and my recollections are, Ernie Clark. Remember him?

NM [00:14:44] Bob? Oh, he lives in Merritt. He just passed away.

PL [00:14:49] Oh, okay.

NM [00:14:50] Bob Schlosser—

PL [00:14:51] Oh, Bob Schlosser. Right.

NM [00:14:53] —treasurer at the time. And he and Munro didn't get along. You know Jack. Write a cheque for this, write a—and Bob said, you can't do that. And you know what Munro was like. So Bob said, I can't do this, so he left. And Wyman became the treasurer.

PL [00:15:17] Yeah.

NM [00:15:17] And Bob moved to Kelowna and worked with Willie Schumacher.

PL [00:15:23] Yeah, right.

NM [00:15:25] So I then became the—Stan passed away—in our local union. He was there for an annual meeting. So, anyway, I became the second vice-president. Wyman became the treasurer. Bob Blanchard became the first vice. And—

PL [00:16:01] Was there a fourth vice? Was there a fourth vice or a third vice-president?

NM [00:16:08] I was the third.

PL [00:16:09] You were the third. And then there was—there was some other guy.

NM [00:16:12] I went up to second. Bob went to first. Wyman went as the treasurer.

PL [00:16:20] And I'm pretty sure it was Ernie Clark.

NM [00:16:24] Port Alberni.

PL [00:16:24] Yeah, he was a goofy guy.

NM [00:16:28] Ernie somebody.

PL [00:16:28] Yeah.

NM [00:16:29] Yeah. Disaster.

PL [00:16:31] I know.

NM [00:16:33] So Munro phoned me one day. He said, Neil. I said, what? You fire him.

PL [00:16:40] Right.

NM [00:16:41] I said, that's your job. No, I said, you fire him. Oh, shit. So I— and Ernie, Rubik's Cube.

PL [00:16:52] I know. He was always in his office goofing around with it.

NM [00:16:57] He was in my old office.

PL [00:17:00] Yeah, yeah.

NM [00:17:01] The Paul Bunyan up on the wall.

PL [00:17:02] Yeah, right.

NM [00:17:03] And he's sitting there. I said, Ernie. He said, what? I said, you're fired. He said, what? Said, you're done. Pack up and get out. He said, you can't fire me. I said, yeah, I just did. So get out of here.

NM [00:17:21] He was also a friend.

PL [00:17:24] Yeah.

NM [00:17:24] And he saved Edsels. He collected Edsels.

NM [00:17:31] Oh yeah.

NM [00:17:32] He had one at our house, parked in my car port.

PL [00:17:36] Oh, man. Is this awkward or what?

NM [00:17:40] Oh, I don't care. Can leave it, but you're outta here. So he went, he left. Anyway, I can't remember—I think he went back to the local. I don't know what he did.

PL [00:17:57] Yeah. No, those are crazy times. Those are crazy times.

NM [00:18:01] Unreal. And Munro just laughed, said, thank you. Anyway—

PL [00:18:08] Who needs that kind of thank you? Hey, so one of the things I wanted, I was hoping you could tell us a bit about was some of the work that you did around the employee assistance program.

NM [00:18:22] Okay.

PL [00:18:23] It wasn't really there. And then you made it there, right?

NM [00:18:26] Yeah. So when I got there, we went into—and I talked to Bob Blanchard. He was very supportive.

PL [00:18:36] Yeah, he was a good guy.

NM [00:18:37] And I said, Bob, we have to do something to help our members and their families with drugs and alcohol. We lose too many people. He said okay. So the first thing that happened, we got put on the board at the Maple Ridge Treatment Centre.

PL [00:19:02] Oh, right.

NM [00:19:05] And I didn't care for the way they did stuff. So I said, Bob, I don't want to be part of this. We have to do our own. So we talked about it, and I said, let's develop a troubled employees program. Terrible name. We couldn't think of anything else. So we took the demand to negotiations in, I think, it was '77.

PL [00:19:42] Okay.

NM [00:19:43] Of course xxx went through the roof. We're not babysitters and all that.

PL [00:19:49] Yeah.

NM [00:19:50] And said bullshit. So we pushed and we got a clause in the agreement to work at developing a troubled employees program.

PL [00:20:01] Yeah.

NM [00:20:03] So Ray Smith was the chief executive officer for M&B and he liked what we were talking about. So he said, we'll work with you and Bob to develop your troubled employees program. Said, okay. So they did. And they hired Jim Stimson.

PL [00:20:31] Yeah.

NM [00:20:34] And Munro said to me, that's your baby. You caused it. You do it. Again, Munro. Yeah. Because he was a boozier.

PL [00:20:44] Right. He was more trouble than anybody else. Yeah.

NM [00:20:48] Yeah. But Bob was very supportive.

PL [00:20:53] Bob?

NM [00:20:53] Blanchard.

PL [00:20:54] Yeah.

NM [00:20:55] He said, I'm there, I'll back you all the way. Wyman was very good as well. So, I was on my way to Weyerhaeuser up in the Kamloops local to help a couple of employees and M&B sent Stimson to go as well. So I meet this character. And I said, who are you? So he told me. I said, what do you want? He said, you and I are gonna work and develop an industry employee assistance program. I said, oh, is that right? Said, well, it's up to you. So I thought, okay. So that was our first encounter with the program.

PL [00:21:57] Yeah, yeah.

NM [00:21:59] We then sat down and started to develop the program. And Jim said, your troubled employees program, it's not the right name. You need something better. So, Employee Assistance Program.

PL [00:22:25] Which, by the way, this is revolutionary stuff.

NM [00:22:29] Yeah.

PL [00:22:29] Because for the longest time that, you know—people with alcohol or drug problems at work, people would just kind of look away.

NM [00:22:39] That's right. Turned their head.

PL [00:22:41] Yeah. Turn their heads. And you guys basically flipped that one around and said, no, no, no. We're going to get right—

NM [00:22:45] Yeah. I first got into it when I was in the local. And I went to M&B and the manager and I were like this [makes a motion of conflict, hitting his fists together]. But I said to him, we're losing too many people to booze. And I said, and drugs are starting too. So, he was good. So we started with him at M&B. And Jim and I, we—with support from our board—they liked it but they all said, it's yours.

PL [00:23:30] Yeah, I know, I know.

NM [00:23:32] Come and tell us—

PL [00:23:33] —tell us how you're doing. Tell us how things are working well.

NM [00:23:36] Yeah. So we did. We had our ups and our downs. We started with Roger Stanyer.

PL [00:23:46] Oh, yeah.

NM [00:23:47] Big, burly, mean son of a bitch. And I said, Stanyer, we're doing it in your local. He said, we are? I said yeah. Okay, he said, let's do it. So we did. And Stanyer was very supportive. Hard-nosed. But we put the first program in place in Duncan. And Roger—and we set up, we hired a counselor, I can't remember who. And he worked out of the office in Duncan. And Roger got right on board. A strong advocate and also told Munro to hit the road. Leave us alone. So we did. We went from there, Phil, with one office, one counselor, to 21 offices across Canada.

PL [00:25:26] No kidding.

NM [00:25:28] From Victoria, Duncan, Courtney, Vancouver, Saskatchewan, Alberta. That was our toughest province to work in. With De Leeuw. And Manitoba. And then we went when we became one Canada, we went to Ontario, and Fred—

PL [00:26:01] Oh, right.

NM [00:26:06] Sawmill workers. And Wilf McIntyre loved it. I said, yeah. So we went right out—

PL [00:26:18] That's amazing, 21.

NM [00:26:20] —to Nova Scotia.

PL [00:26:26] Oh right, yeah. Because there were some—

NM [00:26:29] We had a local in—

PL [00:26:32] New Brunswick or something.

NM [00:26:35] New Brunswick and up north in Ontario. So then, from there, we started to work jointly with and open the doors to any union.

PL [00:27:02] They wanted people in.

NM [00:27:03] And any company in the community.

PL [00:27:08] Wanted to be part of that.

NM [00:27:10] To participate. And we went from a small local in Duncan to 21 offices with counsellors in each office, administrative staff. And we changed the name to Employee and Family—

PL [00:27:38] Oh, right. Yes. That was a big deal too.

NM [00:27:43] —Assistance Program. And Jim and I, with the support of our board and the industry, Bennett came on board. And then the guy after Bennett—I can't remember—but they all liked the program, and got right into it.

PL [00:28:15] And it became sort of a template for lots of other unions to—

NM [00:28:21] So we ended up, I think, Phil, we had—I can't remember how many different unions, then we developed a board for each office—

PL [00:28:37] Oh yeah.

NM [00:28:38] —across the country. And they hired the counsellors and staff for each of the offices. And then they started to encompass the unions and their companies in their communities.

PL [00:29:01] I remember CUPE got involved.

NM [00:29:03] Yes. CUPE got involved. BCGEU. Pat Gibson. Remember Pat?

PL [00:29:11] Right.

NM [00:29:13] We're still close. Harvey Arcand was close, a very strong supporter. He's doing good by the way. So we had CUPE, Wholesale, some Steel, Carpenters. We even got Shewaga [Pulp, Paper, and Woodworkers Union of Canada] a little bit.

PL [00:29:42] Oh, no kidding. Really?

NM [00:29:44] And they agreed to work with us.

PL [00:29:48] I remember this.

NM [00:29:50] We developed a program at the pulp mill—

PL [00:29:52] —in Nanaimo.

NM [00:29:58] In Hammond. And their president was Jim White. Good 100 per cent. Yeah. We got along good. So then we had pulp.

PL [00:30:11] Gary Worth? Remember Gary Worth.

NM [00:30:13] Yes.

PL [00:30:14] Another good guy.

NM [00:30:15] Yes. And then the pulp workers, Brian Payne.

PL [00:30:20] Oh, yeah.

NM [00:30:20] Okay. He got on board. And they became part of the program. So we pretty well had our industry.

PL [00:30:31] Yeah.

NM [00:30:32] The woods, the mills, and pulp. Pretty well covered.

PL [00:30:39] Once you got that, you got them all.

NM [00:30:41] The program just evolved from there. And we kind of stepped back and just were the kind of troubleshooters. We went in if they needed help. We would go in, figure it out, fix it, and move on. So we had 21 offices. I can't remember how many unions and multiple industries. Industrial, municipal, even teachers were part of it.

PL [00:31:23] No kidding. Yeah. That's big.

NM [00:31:26] Yeah. They liked it too. So anyway, after we built that, in—I can't remember—we had Verna Ledger was our safety director. We didn't get along. And I told Munro, she's going the wrong way. She's spending too much time administering and globetrotting and not doing health and safety. We have to change. Again, Munro said, yeah? I said, Yeah. He said, You do it. Me and my big mouth.

PL [00:32:14] Why do I keep suggesting these things?

NM [00:32:17] I said okay. So I went to our safety council. And Verna, of course, got upset and she retired. She left. And I said to Jack, we're not having a safety director run that department. An officer has to be responsible. He said, yeah. He said, that's you. Okay. Me and my big mouth. I said, okay. So we had Tom Low, Bob Patterson, some really strong health and safety, occupational health and safety people supportive to develop our good national program. So then we said, the council said to me, we need money. I said okay. What? Said we want five cents in negotiations. Put into a special fund for safety and

health. Said okay. So we went to Munro and to the negotiating committee for all of B.C. and the majority agreed, said yeah. So we went with the demand for five cents for every hour worked.

PL [00:33:59] That's big.

NM [00:34:00] We got one cent, which was a lot of money. With 9,000 members, and most of them in B.C. So we set up the fund and said we need a board of directors. So we set up a board and a logger, a big logger, great big—can't remember his name—he was very, very supportive, a logging contractor.

PL [00:34:41] Okay, a contractor. Okay.

NM [00:34:44] A big contractor said, hey, we like what you guys are doing. I'm losing too many workers, especially fallers.

PL [00:34:54] Fallers. I know, the death rate was terrible.

NM [00:34:56] He said, we need to put something together. So he got involved on the joint board. And, oh, what was his name, Phil? Awesome, awesome guy. Anyway, he said we have to find a name. So that's when we came up with the Safer Council, Safety Advisory Foundation Association Research Company, so Safer Council was in place. So then we had to start developing and improving on health and safety. For our members, especially our members first. So we did. And we set up a joint board, which comprised of someone from every local. And we set up co-chairs. Bert Hawrysh and myself became the co-chairs to start the program. And we just we never looked back. It progressed and it grew. Our worst year, if you remember, it was eighty—oh, Phil—I think '87, we lost 52.

PL [00:36:45] Wow. I mean, this was the—

NM [00:36:53] One a week that year. Fallers mostly, bush workers. But sawmill as well. And said—the membership was just livid that year. And then we gradually started to improve, get better. The industry woke up, said hey, this has to stop. Not only here, but all over the place. And the Safer Council came into be and it's still there.

PL [00:37:40] The connection between Safer and WCB. Did WCB kind of step in and say we're going to—because employers are paying money into WCB? Did they—

NM [00:37:55] No, they never interfered. Roberta Ellis, absolutely awesome chairman for the board, the WCB. She liked what we were doing. And she became supportive, but never interfered. At all. Yeah. And she helped us with different areas. Yeah. And she liked it because our bottom line was zero. And we both wanted to achieve no fatalities and as few injuries as possible. And make everybody very aware of the importance of health and safety. I used to say that our collective agreement is good, but if you try and deal with a dead member that doesn't mean—

PL [00:39:08] Dick. Yeah, exactly.

NM [00:39:14] Absolutely. So we have to put our priority into making workers healthier and safer. And we did that with pretty good industry support—Keith Bennett, Bert Hawrysh, Council of Forest Industries, Interfor, the pipe smoker—Canfor, Peter Bentley.

PL [00:39:50] Oh, right, Peter Bentley, god.

NM [00:39:51] He was very good. And Jake Holtz, Roger Stanyer. Even [Gerry] Stoney, even Munro a little bit. Bob Blanchard and our executive said, no matter what we've done, this is probably two of the best programs—

PL [00:40:34] Without a doubt. They were, I mean, talk about stand outs—

NM [00:40:38] —we ever put together.

PL [00:40:40] Yeah, it made a huge difference. I mean, I think of the lives saved by health and safety awareness and really getting on it when people had problems and it was obviously that, you know, the drugs or drinking was becoming really a big issue for them and their family and the lives you saved by doing those two programs. I mean, I'm not going to say countless, but there were lots. There were a lot. I mean, we had—

NM [00:41:10] Numerous families very thankful that we had that, but not just for the workers, but also for the families. Now I'm considered an alcoholic. My dad was an alcoholic. Hard worker, never missed a day's work in his life. But I woke up one morning and said—after working in the bush, working on iron, working for the union—that I can't do this. And if I'm gonna grow up and have a family and get married, I don't wanna be a drunk. So I quit. I was still single. I was 28 years old and a pretty heavy drinker. Weekends. Worked hard. Never missed work. But I drank too much. And I said, I'm not going to have a family.

PL [00:43:04] Time to make a choice.

NM [00:43:10] Raised the way I was raised. I don't think my dad ever wished me happy birthday. No, my mom, strong, strong woman. Without her, we never would have survived. But anyway, aside from that, so I quit drinking and I got engaged to Doneau's mom, who was a nurse, and we got married and Doneau was our first. My children have never seen me take a drink, ever. 50—oh God—56 years since I last drank. And that was, my family was the motivater for me to help people.

PL [00:44:36] Buddy, you saved Gerry Stoney's life. You saved his life because you had the, you were the one that said, we can't look away.

NM [00:44:47] That's right.

PL [00:44:48] And not only that, but you said, you know, you talked to his daughter and to his wife. And you knew exactly how to do it. And you knew how to put him on a path.

NM [00:45:01] Yeah.

PL [00:45:02] I mean, it was not perfect, but it saved his life. You saved his life, man.

NM [00:45:08] Harvey's too.

PL [00:45:11] This is the thing. I mean, the labour movement is this great institution, but it can also chew up people.

NM [00:45:19] They start young.

PL [00:45:21] You know, it demands so much of people, and sometimes it's bone-crushing for those people. And Gerry was that. And I just, you know, to this day, I can remember it so vividly, it just it makes me want to cry.

NM [00:45:39] I did.

PL [00:45:41] You saved his life. It was huge.

NM [00:45:43] We didn't get along—

PL [00:45:46] He was a tough—

NM [00:45:49] His life was more important than that.

PL [00:45:54] Rise above it.

NM [00:45:55] Yeah. You have to rise above it.

PL [00:45:58] Hey, let's finish this off by, tell me again how the hell you became the mayor of Merritt.

NM [00:46:06] We were sitting in Starbucks. A bunch of old fogeys telling lies to each other. And I started to complain. And I was living out in the country on an acreage. My family—I had horses, what I wanted to do. Anyway, I was bitching and a couple of them, good union guys, couple of management guys, and they said, the one guy who worked for highways or—no forestry—said, Menard, put up or shut up. Run, here's an opening. I said, me? He said, yeah, you got the background. So they said, we'll sign your paper. So I went to City Hall and I said to the woman who's still there today—I said, Becky, I want to run for council to try and fill that vacancy. Good, she said. Her husband was a management guy, but a good guy. Yeah, so I did, and I ran against the mayor and I won. And at the night that it was announced, he said to me, well, Menard, bullshit can win anything. I said, you bet. Now watch what happens. And so I became the mayor. And I got cancer, and, we were living on an acreage, my wife and I were separated. But that's okay. And the kids said to her and to me when I got cancer, you better smarten up. So did, we sold the acreage, which I so dearly missed, bought a shack in town and I became the mayor. She was looking out the window at the house one day, and they were piling stuff to use some work for the city. And she was ranting and raving. I said, Hon, phone the mayor, see what he's got to say. She said—I won't tell you she said. Anyway.

PL [00:49:11] And the rest is history.

NM [00:49:12] It was good. It was a good run. I enjoyed it. I met some really good people in the community.

PL [00:49:26] I mean, that's the bread and butter.

NM [00:49:28] Good union people. Two things happened when I got elected. The rodeo association said, finally got somebody that knows what the hell we're all about.

PL [00:49:44] —something about horses.

NM [00:49:46] And a union guy said, finally we got a union [ed: mayor] who understands working people. And everyday crisis, as our mayor and he will listen to us and the cowboys and the cowgirls said the same.

PL [00:50:10] Life is good. Hey, this has been fabulous. Thank you for coming in.

NM [00:50:15] Thank you for asking me to share. It's—

PL [00:50:21] It means a lot.

NM [00:50:27] Doneau works in the bush for Cattermole Timber. He works there and Derry, his brother, worked at Scott Paper for a while. Doneau went on to play hockey, played for New Westminster Bruins. His brother as well. And our daughter was their biggest fan. They're both very much involved in hockey today.

PL [00:51:08] Good on you.

NM [00:51:08] That's what they do. and our daughter has her own— what do you call it, Natasha, hair—?

NF [00:51:20] Salon.

NM [00:51:21] —salon. And they're all healthy. Doneau's had a bad accident, got hurt. Derry, his brother, has had a couple of bad accidents, concussions. Partly from hockey. Doneau, shoulders, knees. But they're alive and well.

PL [00:51:47] Yeah, that's what counts. They're still here.

NM [00:51:51] And my wife is doing very well, retired nurse.

PL [00:52:03] Keeping it all together.

NM [00:52:04] Very proud of my family. They've done okay, Phil. A lot of it from my wife. Thanks, Phil.

PL [00:52:17] It was so good to be with you, so good to be with you.

NM [00:52:20] And a pleasure.