Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an

Oral History Interview with

ELLEN BOWERS HEALEY

Staff Judge Advocate, United States Marine Corps

2018

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Bowers Healey, Ellen (1951–). Oral History Interview, 2018.
Approximate length: 7 hours 40 minutes
Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.

Summary:

In this oral history interview, Ellen Bowers Healey discusses her service with the Marine Corps from 1973 through 2005. She spent the majority of her time as a judge advocate serving all across the world.

Healey describes her early life in Marion, Wisconsin, her interest in joining the military and deciding on education and a profession during the early 1970s. After initial rejection, Healey signed the contract for the United States Marine Corps in 1973 while in law school. In 1975, she attended the Women Officer's Candidate Course in Quantico, Virginia. Healey discusses training, the physical fitness standards, issued makeup kits, wigs, girdles, and being commissioned.

Starting in 1977, Healey attended multiple schools for training, including the Basic School for Marines at Quantico, Camp Barrett, and the Naval Justice School at Newport, Rhode Island. She discusses a variety of topics, including physical fitness, having to find new uniforms, and integrated training with men and women. In 1978, Healey was assigned to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Marine Corps Base as defense counsel. She describes working at "Camp Swampy," working AWOL cases, and learning how to be a lawyer. She explains government counsel and the separate women's promotion list. In 1980, she started working legal assistance.

Healey discusses her family. Married in 1978 she gave birth to her first daughter in 1980. She discusses lack of military family support, finding babysitters through the wives club, policies for pregnant women and her command's reaction to her pregnancy.

In 1981, Healey was sent to Okinawa, Japan, attached to 3rd Force Service Support Group, and Defense Counsel at Camp Futenma. Healey describes her work as trial counsel, living conditions, typhoons, and the use of psychiatry in trials.

From 1982 to 1986, Healey was stationed at Camp Pendleton, California, and assigned to the 1st Marine Division. She discusses her work as trial counsel, her second pregnancy, and her promotion to Major. In 1986, Healey attended the Judge Advocate General's School of the Army (TJAGSA) and was then assigned to Marine Corps Logistics Bases at Albany, Georgia. She describes the idiosyncrasies of the base, her promotion to lieutenant colonel, and her role as Staff Judge Advocate (SJA).

Healey was assigned to Camp Lejeune in 1991 and worked for the Eastern Regional Defense Counsel. She discusses the deployment of forces during the Gulf War and a case involving a lieutenant colonel that brought weapons back from deployment.

In 1992, Healey was sent back to Okinawa, Japan. She describes the differences between Okinawa in the early 1980s and 1990s. She outlines her role as Deputy Officer in Charge Legal Services Support System, going to Team Spirit '93 in Korea, Navy hospital credentialing boards, and visiting Hong Kong.

From 1993 to 1996 Healey was assigned to Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina, and worked as the SJA for General McCorkel for three years and was promoted to colonel. She discusses taking MAC (Military Airlift Command) flights to Israel and Belgium.

Healey went back to Camp Pendleton in 1996 and worked as the SJA for 1st Marine Division with General Admire. She discusses the shooting of Esequiel Hernandez, Jr., on May 20, 1997, recent history of homosexual cases, and Don't Ask Don't Tell from the legal perspective. From 1998 to 2001 Healey worked as the SJA for II MEF (Marine Expeditionary Force), Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. She describes a cold-weather training exercise in Norway and increasing internet communication.

In 2001, Healey was reassigned to Base SJA Office at Camp Lejune. She outlines her duties as Staff Judge Advocate and speaks of establishing a physical training program for her staff and learning combatives training. She then attended the Judges' School at TJAGSA. From 2004 to 2005 Healey was assigned to the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC, as an appellate judge for the Navy Marines Corps Court of Military Appeals. She discusses the amount of work, traffic, and the attending the inauguration of George W. Bush. Healey retired after one year there and twenty-eight years of active duty.

After retirement, Healey moved to Madison, Wisconsin, and sat for the bar. She was employed at the Office of Lawyer Regulation and then took a job as administrative judge at the United States Department of Agriculture. She is active with the Women Marines Association, Marine Corps League, and at the time of the interview she was still active as a volunteer interviewer for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Oral History Program that she had been participating in since 2008.

Biographical Sketch:

Ellen Bowers Healey was raised in Marion, Wisconsin. In 1973, while in law school, she contracted with the United States Marine Corps. She left the military in 2005 after twenty-eight years of active duty in the USMC, mostly as a staff judge advocate. Relocating to Madison, she worked at the Office of Lawyer Regulation and as administrative judge at the United States Department of Agriculture. She is active with the Women Marines Association, Marine Corps League, and is a volunteer in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Oral History Program.

Archivist's notes:

Transcriptions are a reflection of the original oral history recording. Due to human and machine fallibility transcripts often contain small errors. It is strongly suggested that researchers directly engage with the oral history recording as well as the transcript.

Interviewed by Rachelle Halaska, 2018.
Transcribed by Audio Transcription Center, 2019.
Reviewed by Jeff Javid, 2020.
Summary written by Rachelle Halaska, 2020.

Interview Transcript:

[Beginning of OH2134.Healey_file1_access]

Halaska: All right, today is September 28, 2018. This is an interview with Ellen Bowers Healey, who served with the United States Marine Corps as a judge advocate from 1977 to 2005. This interview is being conducted at the Madison Central Library. The interviewer is Rachelle Halaska. And this interview is being recorded for the Wisconsin Veteran's Museum Oral History Program. Ellen, thank you for meeting with me today.

Bowers Healey: Sure.

Halaska: All right, let's just get started with talking about where and when you were born.

Bowers Healey: I was raised in—I actually was born in Clintonville, Wisconsin, because that's where the local hospital was. I was raised in Marion, Wisconsin, which is in Waupaca County. I spent my first eighteen to twenty-one years there. I was raised on the farm.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Where my grandfather and grandmother lived, and my father lived, and had been farming there since 1912.

Halaska: Okay. Can you just tell me a little bit of your background and your life before you joined the service?

Bowers Healey: Sure. Well, I did live in Marion, Wisconsin, and I went to Marion Grade School and Marion High School, in the same building that my dad had gone to school.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So there's a lot of permanency and continuity in that community. It was a farming community when I grew up; it probably is no longer a farming community, per se, because farming has kind of diminished all over. But probably over half the kids that I went to school with were farm kids, like myself. I grew up on a dairy farm, and we had hogs. For the first couple of years, my grandparents lived there, and then they moved to town. I grew up with one sibling, who was eleven months

older than I was. I was actually born October 31, 1951, and my dad and mother tell me that there was a terrible snowstorm that day.

So I have lots of good recollections of growing up on the farm. Possibly some of that is because I lived there for so long

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: You know, I remember things. At age eleven, I started milking cows, morning and night. That, good or bad, that dominated my life. It was school—milk cows, go to school, come back and milk cows again. And my mother worked. My mother was an elementary school teacher, and then a superintendent and elementary school teacher.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Back then, in the early fif—in the fifties, I was unusual because I did have a working mother.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But living on a farm, dad was always around when I came home from school, or left school. So I certainly wasn't an abandoned kid.

Halaska: Um-hm. Um, and then was there any history of military service in your family?

Bowers Healey: There wasn't in the immediate family. My father was not in the military, and he was a little on the old side for World War II, but he was exempted for other reasons. His first exemption was because he had a hernia.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Then they called up more people again as the war needs, and then he was exempted because he was the only son of a farmer, and he was farming. My grandfather, likewise, so World War I, he would have been eligible, but they didn't tend to call married people who were employed. The draft was primarily for single individuals, because had they drawn from the married people, they would leave a lot of dependents without support at that time, because women didn't work outside of the home. In fact, I was just reading an article this morning

in my hometown newspaper, and they made mention of that. So not in the immediate family.

I did have some uncles who served in World War II. I had three uncles, and they were all married to my mother, or dad's siblings. One was a dentist in World War II.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So he didn't leave here. One actually served in—two served in the Pacific. One was very young; he was seventeen or eighteen years old when he was out there. And the other was an officer. In fact, I've done oral history interviews on two of those three individuals.

Halaska: Oh, okay. Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: They are—that's kind of the extent of the military background that I knew of, when I was about to join. But I did have—my great grandfather served in the Civil War.

[00:05:00]

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: He was just kind of at the tail end of the Civil War for about the last year; I dug a little bit of his history from the Wisconsin Veteran's Museum.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: He was sent to Missouri and Illinois to guard ammunition barracks. He had two brothers who served. One was killed down in Louisiana, and the other survived the war. But he was very young. He was born in 1848, so he would have been a teenager. When he was probably fifteen, sixteen years of age when he went in. And I have Revolutionary War, but, you know, I just didn't know about them when I was about to join, it was things that I found out later.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So no immediate—no, I was pretty dumb when I went into the service, because I just didn't have much of a background.

Halaska: Um-hm Um, can you tell me about the time around when you started to think about joining?

Bowers Healey: I think probably when I was in high school, I started to think about it. Some of the materials, I liked to read history and biographies. Of course, in the sixties there was a lot about General Eisenhower and President Kennedy, and a lot of other individuals who had served in the military, because so many people did serve in World War II. There were brochures in the guidance office as job possibilities. There was nobody in, that I recall, no recruiters came into my high school that I knew of. But maybe if they did, maybe they were just targeting the men. There certainly wasn't any push to get females in. Also, there was a draft at the time.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: And so again, recruiters didn't need to come out and recruit, because if you were of draftable age, you had to go down and see the recruiter.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So I became interested then. Then when I went to college, I started looking at it again, and basically was given the thumbs down. I was—they were looking for nurses.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I was in college in 1970 to '73. And at that time, Vietnam was coming to a close. Just recently—I knew generally that there was a draw-down in the military. Just recently I looked online, and from the late sixties to the early seventies, the draw-down went from about three and a half million to two and a half million.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So there were a lot of people getting out, and very little need to have anyone—I shouldn't say "very little need"—they weren't looking for women, unless you were in nursing. That's what they needed. And I was not a nursing student, and just didn't have—I gave it a second thought, and I thought, no, that's really not for me.

And then I had a roommate in college who was a year older than I, and she ended up joining the Army. I was surprised when she did, but I think a lot of it had to do with the unemployment rate being fairly high in the early seventies, and not an awful lot of job opportunities for women in the professions.

Halaska: Okay. Can you—what were you studying in college? And can you tell me a little bit about how you came to decide what you wanted to study?

Bowers Healey: Sure. Again, from reading and background, I was in two lines,actually. One was pre-law. It was my dream to become a lawyer. But I realized in the late sixties, early seventies, that probably wasn't realistic. I never saw a female lawyer in my life—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: —at that time. And that's not unusual, because probably the female lawyers at that time were one or two percent of the population of lawyers. And so I took pre-law courses. But I also—my mother, being a teacher, said, "Well, get a teaching degree." And she encouraged both my brother and I, "Get a teaching degree, and you'll always have a job."

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And I thought to myself, I'll do it, just because you want me to. But that's not realistic, because they were not looking for social studies teachers. My interest was in history. So I ended up with a degree in—my degree in 1973 was Bachelor's of Science in education, eligible to teach junior high and high school in social studies. But at the same time, I did pre-law, and I did police science courses. And I had a police science certificate also—and could not get employed. And I knew I wasn't going to get employed.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: It was just the job market. People coming back from Vietnam.

[00:10:00]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: A lot of preference at that time, male mindset; males were always hired before females were. So I started looking at the service again. And while I was in law school, a friend of mine was in ROTC. And he said, "Well, just go down and ask." And I did, and they said no women need apply for this. It was an all-male unit, and the leaders there just—actually, in 1969 was the first time that ROTC/NROTC opened up to women.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But throughout the United States, they accepted eight women. [Laughter] So that's basically no opening at three or four different schools. And that was kind of the 19—early 1970s. That was part of society, which kind of drove what I did and didn't do, and what was available to me.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: So when I was in my last semester of college, I went down to the recruiting station, I checked their hours out and I went down. I was taking a full load, and I was also doing student teaching, as well as I was working part-time. So I went down during the lunch hour, because that's when I had an hour available. And turned out I went to the Army—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: —because I just didn't know much about the other branches of service. And there was an Army enlisted person there, and he asked me a few questions. And he said, "Well, you want to become an officer?" I said, "I don't know," I just didn't know anything. But I was about to get my bachelor's degree. And he said, "Well, when can you come back? Because I have to have you talk to an officer recruiting person." And I had my schedule with me, and I said, "Well, in about a month." And he said—you know, that's—I didn't realize that that's the way recruiters didn't operate like that. And he said, "Well, are you sure you can't wait until the officer comes back from their lunch?" And I said, "No, I've got to be in class." And he said, "Well, let me go look. Maybe there's a Marine here." There was a Marine there.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So the Army was out to lunch. That's why I joined the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Okay. And then can you tell me about your recruitment and induction, and then also what your parents thought about you joining the Marine Corps?

Bowers Healey: Sure. Not much of a reaction from my parents, because I was pretty much on my own. Although I went—each summer I worked on the farm. My last two semesters I was pretty much on my own and paying my own way.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So and the other thing, it was deferred. So going back a little bit, through the spring, I did meet with that officer. And I'm sure at some juncture, I took an ASVAB [Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery] test.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And then they said, "Well, we'll put your application in." And maybe a month or two later, they got back to me and they said—phone call to me, and said, "I'm sorry to tell you, but you've been"—they may not have used the words "rejected," but, "You've been rejected."

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So and I said, "Well, can you tell me why?" Either that, or they offered. And they said that they had five applicants, female applicants, and the other four were getting master's degrees, and I was just coming in with a bachelor's degree. So they chose somebody with a master' degree.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I thought, Well, okay, I understand that. And he was very apologetic. And I said, "Well, that's—that's—thank you very much. I appreciate your call. But don't worry about it, because I just got a letter of acceptance to law school." And he said, "Come on down! We need lawyers." [Laughter] So I was rejected and hired the same day.

But then, again, because I went right from graduating to getting a full-time job, I didn't go through the process of induction right away.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: It wasn't probably—and I should have. It would have made—I didn't know that it would make a difference as to your pay entry base stay[??], which I found out later. So I probably delayed that about three months, until I finally just took off a day from work and went from where I was located down to Milwaukee, which is kind of a day trip, and went through the induction sometime in August.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And then I was on deferred Reserve duty, essentially, for four years. Had very little contact with the Marine Corps, except occasionally they would send me a letter. And then in 1975, I was brought on active duty. And I made plans to do that, and then they asked me more about my education and where I was.

[00:15:01]

And I said, "Well, I've got two years of law school left," because I was doing a four-year program at night. I wasn't on the regular three. They said, "Well, you don't have to come." I said, "This is what I planned to do this summer. I've arranged for this." So they did take me. And in 1975, I went on active duty for either six or eight weeks at Quantico, Virginia, for the Women Officer Candidate course.

Halaska: Okay. And can you tell me about that course?

Bowers
Healey: Sure. Again, I can't remember if it was six or eight weeks.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: But they flew me in, and when into National Airport [Washington, D.C.], and it was a lovely day, and I got picked up there. And I think there were a couple of other gals there waiting. It seemed like a long waiting process. And then by the time we got to Quantico on the bus, it was dark. So it must have been 9:00 at night or so.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: So then it's just a changing event, which people who have had any association with dads or moms in the military probably know that, but it was, get there late at night and be kind of disoriented to where your place is. They walked me to a

room with an open door, and I'm sure there were probably five or six gals with me. And just, they took, "You three in here," because there were three bunk beds in there. And I'm looking, one's a flat, and the other is a bunk bed sort of thing. And it seemed like it was extremely high to me. And I'm looking, and I thought, here it comes. My roommates are 5'8" to 5'10". And I don't make 5'3", and they're going to put me on the top. And that's exactly what happened. And it was very high, and I was always worried about just mis-stepping and falling out. But I didn't.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So that was probably in June.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: It was an interesting experience. The other thing, so many people now are physically qualified to go in, and when I got there, talking with some of the other women, I realized that I was not well-prepped by my recruiting.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Part of that reason was, I was recruited in Milwaukee, and when I went through that process, the officer, who was the captain, said, "I hope you enjoy your time in the service, but I'm getting out next week." That was my officer candidate point of contact. And the other thing is, I transferred from the state of Wisconsin to the state of Minnesota.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And so I didn't realize until later, when I was on active duty, this whole recruiting thing—I'm just thinking, okay, this is a big, national United States Marine Corps, they will follow me and take care of me, and that sort of thing. But it's really who recruits you and where you were recruited from, and whether or not they're responsible for you getting through training. Because if you don't get through training now, as a recruiter, it's a black mark on you.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: It's like you didn't recruit—yeah, you recruited a hundred people, but only twenty-five of them made it through recruit boot camp.

Halaska: Oh, I see. Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So they really don't have a lot of interest in you, unless they were responsible for recruiting you.

Halaska: Got it.

Bowers
Healey: So that—I didn't become aware of that until I got finally on active duty. But that's essentially what—nobody was responsible for me. I would check in with Minneapolis once in a while. And once I went down there, and they said, "Well, who are you? [Laughs] We have no record of you." So I can't remember why I did that. I guess I got something in the mail, and I said, "Well, here's the letter. I'm signed up. You need to do something with me at some juncture." So that four years was very little tie with the Marine Corps at all, just because I was really—not even a name on their rosters, most of the time.

So when I signed up for the Marine Corps, they asked me if I could run 440 meters. And I just—without saying anything, I just kind of calculated in my mind, well, that's about a third of a mile. And I said to the captain, "Well, I don't know. I never have, but I suppose I could." Now, for people who are post-seventies, there's more athletics for women. But in 1960s, which is when I went to high school, the only athletic—you went to gym class. And then the only athletic program available for women was cheerleading. Well, I was not cheerleader type, by any means.

Halaska: Okay. [Laughs]

Bowers
Healey: So although I was good in gym classes, probably because I worked on the farm—you know, I had three, three and a half hours of physical labor.

[00:20:05]

And I was more muscular than most. Whatever they asked me to run or jump, or whatever, I did that. And I played basketball. I was good at gym class, but I wasn't in any group athletic type things. And then when I went to undergraduate school, I became less active, just because there wasn't a need to do it, and women just didn't go out and run. You didn't see people jogging. Then in law school, I

worked full-time during the day and I went to school at night and studied on the weekends.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Again, I didn't have this background of going out and running. And people were just starting to do that in the early seventies. You just didn't see a lot of that on the streets. So I got, in 1975, I got there, and they said, "Well, we have a new program. We're going to start doing a mile and a half." Again, I'm just silently thinking, That's not 440 meters anymore. [Laughter] So we get out to the track, and we're told we're running six times around the track, and they were going to time us. And one of the gals, I remember she's from Colorado, and she's just kind of bee-bopping around. And she comes up to me and she said, "What do you run the mile and a half in?" And I looked at her, and I said, "Why would I know?" And she said, "Well, the gunnies always have us out, and they're timing us." And I said, "Oh, okay." So that was my first time running a mile and a half.

Halaska: Okay, and this was at training?

Bowers Healey: This was at training.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: In 1975.

Halaska: How did that go?

Bowers Healey: Uh, I completed it, on time. The gal who had talked to me was far ahead of most people. And of course I was not a trained runner. The first time she went around the track, I thought, Well, I'll just keep up with her. And I did. And when I finished it, obviously I slowed down quite a bit. Other people said to me, "Wow, we were surprised at first, but then we didn't think you were going to keep up with that run." So yeah, that was just a challenge that I hadn't expect, that I hadn't been prepped for, and many others had; probably half of our group had. And then there were a lot of women, because it was a transition time, who found it very difficult. Some of the prior enlisted, who were the mustangers [now commissioned officers] going through the enlisted commissioning program, tended not to be very athletic also, because there had been no requirement that you do that, whereas some that were still in college were probably more athletic, and knew that this was going to come up, and that they would be doing that.

So there was kind of two segments, and then another thing that I observed during Women Officer Candidate course was that there was a great emphasis on changing the image of women in the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: We had classes—we were required to buy wigs.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So that we would, right after PT, be able to throw on a wig and just look wonderful. And wigs were kind of a thing in the early seventies, so that wasn't all that surprising. But if you go back and look at some of the old pictures from the early 1970s of women in the Marine Corps, you will see that they had one of five styles of wigs, because that's what they were offering, and you can kind of pick it up, because you see that wig and, oh yeah, that's style umpty-ump.[Laughter] And we also got a makeup kit issued.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: And previously, I think that women had been taught how to sit, how to wear gloves. They would have teas. We didn't have a tea, that I was told that those were things that they trained women, in probably not just the Marine Corps, but in other services also.

Halaska: Wow. Okay.

Bowers Healey: So very different orientation in the seventies.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: And we were required, also, to have all white undergarments. And in the 1970s, things were getting kind of psychedelic. {Laughter]

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers

Healey: So I remember getting that message when I was back in law school, and I thought, oh gosh. And we were required to wear girdles. Now, you're a bit younger than I—

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: —so your expression was priceless. [Laughs]

Halaska: What, exactly, is a girdle? Please describe it.

Bowers Healey: What's a girdle?

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: That is something that you wear from the waist-down. I suppose they're Huggies now, or something, or Snuggies, I don't know.

Halaska: Okay.

[00:25:00]

Bowers Healey: But it—and you fastened—you also fastened nylons onto them with garters, I guess, if you didn't—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And it was some of the old movies, there was an old Jimmy Stewart movie, there was comment that the woman was in this famous murder trial was not wearing a girdle. So it was expected that whatever your shape was, even slim women, you would be wearing a girdle to hold your tummy in, to make sure that you weren't wiggling too much. [Laughter]

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: In fact, when I went two years later, I came back on, and they changed the requirement, or were changing the requirement. And we were getting a class, and it was men and women in the class. And the instructor just said, he just said to the women, "And no unauthorized bulges." [Laughter] But it was harder and harder

in 1975 to find a girdle, so I mean, but everybody had to show up with a white girdle and white underclothing.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So we did, and they inspected us for that.

Halaska: They inspected you for your undergarments?

Bowers Healey: Yes. Um-hm.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. So, um, and the makeup kit that we got, they said it cost something like seventy-nine dollars, which was just a tremendous amount of money. It would be, like, seven hundred dollars in this day and age. And it was more makeup than I had ever seen in my life.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So and it came in a nice kit, sort of thing. So put that away, when I left the training session. But I think we had probably about seventy women start.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And we probably had about twenty people attrition. Some was on their own, some were, uh, removed for a variety of reasons, all of which we didn't always know.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Quite often they would leave during the middle of the night, or they would leave while we were in class.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So that was kind of an interesting time. And of course, we've made friends with a lot of these folks. But we probably ended up with forty-five or fifty graduating. If you were going to go right on to your next training, you had to declare that you

were taking a commission. And I was commissioned that summer. My parents came out. That's the first time they had any association with the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: My mother thought it was wonderful, because all the men had nice haircuts.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And this is kind of the Beatle era, so it was very hot and humid, as Quantico always is in the summertime.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I can't say I learned a lot.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But I learned—yeah, there wasn't anything really practical, and I can give you an example. One of the things that we learned to do one day was how to fold an Army blanket. We all had Army blankets on our bunks. And but we were sitting in the middle of a room, and the gunny [gunnery sergeant] was giving us a demonstration, blow by blow, as to how to smooth it out, make sure the corners were such-and-such. And the end objective was that the US—I think it was A, I don't think it was USMC [United States Marine Corps], was, when you finished folding, it would come out on top. She went through the whole thing for about forty minutes. And when she was done, the USA [Unites States of America] was not on top. [Laughs] So she started it again. And it's just hot and miserable.

And we used to get chits [notices], and then counseling. Good chits, bad chits, red chits, whatever. And then we would be counseled on them. If you got too many red chits, you were going to get thrown out. So anyway, I was getting a counseling session one day.

Halaska: Too many—oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: They were just little pieces of paper, and they would be write-ups. You did this bad—mostly you did this bad. You didn't shine your shoes, you didn't fold your blanket. Your rack wasn't set correctly. You passed some—or failed some sort of

an inspection. And then we would get—they were called—peer reviews, but they were really a spear [??] review, somebody was top three, bottom three, everybody was required to hand them in. So I went in for a counseling. And the captain said, "Well, you got two, three, and you're on the bottom. Two or three people put you in the pack." And I think she expected me to just turn around and leave.

[00:30:03]

And I thought, nah, I'm going to stay here. I asked her, "Well, what were they? What did I do wrong, so I can improve?" And she looked at me like, nobody ever asked that sort of a question, because you just didn't request—challenge the Marine Corps. But I thought, well, if there's something I can improve on, I want to know about it. And she read one of them. She probably read two of them, but one I can remember. And it was, somebody put me in the lower three out of thirty-five, or whatever. And she said, "Well, she's a lawyer, so she doesn't care." I thought—I wasn't a lawyer yet, but people knew I was in law school. And I thought, Well, you know, there's not much I can do to change that, or improve that. So I just kind of made it a practice probably not to say that I was going to law school. But everybody knew it.

But hindsight, as I observed other people, and some of them were not allowed to be commissioned.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: I think word got around that I was in law school, and they needed lawyers. So no matter what I did, generally I wasn't on the top of the bottom. I just was kind of in the middle, because they were going to push me through.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And that was confirmed later on. They were just really short of lawyers in the Marine Corps. Because they had gone from non-lawyer trial councils to making sure that everybody was a lawyer, up until the mid-1970s. They would just pull somebody from the infantry, or an adjutant, and say, Okay, here's the court martial case for today. You do it.

Halaska: Oh, wow. Okay.

Bowers Healey: So we had a lot of non-lawyers. And I came across a few non-lawyers when I came on active duty. So the trend was to try to get all lawyers in the courtroom.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: The other thing that I was counseled on, smoking was a big deal in the seventies.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: My guess would be that probably 50% of the population were smokers back then. And I was a non-smoker. And my parents had not been smokers, and most of my relatives were not smokers. So I found out it was kind of a costly sort of thing while I was in college. People were spending a lot of money on packs of cigarettes, so it just never really interested me. But it was obvious, one of the things in the military—and you can see it in all movies—smoking lamp is lit, and then all the smokers would take off, to wherever they were allowed to smoke. And I'm, by nature, an introvert, kind of a quiet individual. When I was getting counseled by the captain, she said, "You ought to take up smoking. You'd be more sociable." [Laughter] Hmm, I'm not sure how I replied to that, but I remember that. Because even back then, the packs of cigarettes said, you know, something like, "May cause cancer. AMA [American Medical Association] does not recommend smoking." That was already put on all the cigarette packages. She was a chain smoker.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But I realized it was a social gathering, where the smokers were allowed to gather, but I didn't take up smoking.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: I was counseled to take up smoking by a Marine officer.

So that was kind of my first introduction to the Marine Corps in 1975. And then I went back to Minneapolis-St. Paul. I lived in St. Paul, I went to school in William Mitchell College of Law, which was a night law school that that time.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And it was not affiliated with any other law school. It now is for the last five years, but it was strictly a standalone law school.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And two of the graduates were Chief Justice Burger, and also Justice Blackmun came from some of the—the school wasn't actually called Billy Mitchell or William Mitchell at the time, but they came from that same building.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So it did produce some good lawyers, and hopefully still does. And the emphasis was probably—and after that, due to Chief Justice Burger of the Supreme Court, was to produce good trial lawyers, which I think has probably kept that school alive and well. But anyway, that's where I went back to working full-time, for the most part, and going to school, what was considered to be a full-time night law school.

Halaska: Okay. Can you just tell me and the listener, who might be not familiar with what a trial lawyer is, and what it means to produce a good trial lawyer from the school?

Bowers Healey: Um, they started—I'm trying to think of the Trial Advocacy program. They actually adopted and improved upon trial lawyer training. And one of the reasons was that Chief Justice Burger said, so many lawyers cannot, when they get into a courtroom, they don't know how to put evidence in.

[00:35:09]

They don't know how to prepare for a closing argument, an opening argument. They don't know how to do cross examination, or direct examination.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And quite frankly, I think the stats right now, of all the many, many lawyers that we have in the United States, probably less than 10% go into trial and actually practice. They are appellate lawyers, they're tort lawyers; they may not get into a courtroom until they've got five, ten years of experience, or ever. Or they do legal research, or they work for insurance companies.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And never have to go into a courtroom. It does take, as I learned—I didn't know that I necessarily was going to be a courtroom lawyer, I just—the only lawyers I

really knew were small-town lawyers, who did wills, powers of attorneys. Probably some traffic tickets. But I didn't know that they did any big-time cases. They probably represented a couple of defendants, mostly bench trials before a judge without a jury.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So my experience and my opinion is that it takes practice and effort. You need to get familiar not only with the rules of evidence in general, but—and the law in general, but know how to practice before a particular trial judge.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I learned a lot of that in the Marine Corps. And the Marine Corps—there was F. Lee Bailey, I don't know that he's known anymore, but in the sixties and seventies, he wrote books, and he was considered to be one of the better, well-known attorneys in the United States. He said the best experience he got was when he was in the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Now, I don't know if he was a non-lawyer at that time, I kind of assume maybe he was. But you just do a lot of trials. And you learn. And the judges come down on you hard, there's no doubt about that, and I'll get into that in a little bit, when I get back on active duty here.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So anyway, I did go back to two years of law school and two years of working, and then I sat for the bar. I had intended to try to keep up with running, but when you sit for the bar, you're spending a couple of months—and I'm sure it's different now. I think that people realize that if you get up and run in the morning, that's good. It's good for your health, it's good for your thought process. But at that time, I'd make a cup of coffee, and I'd start studying. And I'd start studying. Or I'd go to work and then study.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I remember that summer I was wearing flip-flops or sandals and shorts. Eventually I didn't work before I sat for the—and so I was dressed very casually.

And when I came into the Marine Corps in August of 1977, again, this is a time before there's—I read the newspaper on a daily basis.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So I wasn't uninformed, but it's much different than being able to go onto an internet now.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: And again, the people in Minneapolis just had really no contact with me. They didn't inform me as to what was happening. So in August of 1977, I drove out to the Marine Corps, Quantico, for The Basic School. All Marine officers go through The Basic School, which is located in Quantico, out at Camp Barrett. And I took all of my old uniforms with me that I'd had two years before. And the night before I sat in the hotel, and I pressed them all, ready. I showed up, in uniform, and the uniform that I was wearing was being phased out.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: People were not wearing that uniform. I also, when I came on active duty in '75, they took us out to the field once, and we had tennis shoes, and little blue Navy-like type utilities. They weren't the camouflage utilities. So I show up, and I find that there are 241 people in our company, hotel company. And everybody knows someone else other than me because I had had two years before coming on active duty.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So everybody else had camis. Everybody else had combat boots. And I didn't have them. And I needed to find Cash Sales. And when I got there, it was the end of the summer.

[00:40:00]

I'm a little on the small side, I'm broad, but basically now I'm 5'2", 5'2 1/2". Short, stout, a lot of the military equipment didn't fit 5'2 1/2" people. And I also have broad feet, wide feet. And I got to Cash Sales, and there were no boots in my size.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So because I have wide feet, I got boots that were two sizes larger than what I needed, because that's what was available.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And so, well, when are you going to get some new ones in? Oh, a month or two from now.

So my first experience in Quantico was just, wow, it got all—it's hot and humid, and you're putting—I got camis that you want me to starch, and buy a belt with no buckle on it—that just blew my mind. You have to buy the buckle separately, and then cut the belt down to your needs.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And so I was in the business of scrambling to get uniforms to catch up with everyone else who had camis and boots, and wool socks, and then a new set of Charlies, and that sort of thing.

Halaska: What's a Charlie?

Bowers
Healey: Charlie is just the basic work uniform. It's different now than it was then. But it was kind of a dress uniform, but not a Class A dress uniform, it's in between.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: It's usually—for women, it was long sleeves. For men, it's short sleeves and a tie, and green trousers. Women were a little different at that time. So and then one of the first nights or two, I thought, well, okay, I've got to get back into running, because I have not run a mile and a half for a while. I tried to keep it up; it iced over in St. Paul, and I didn't have access to a gym—so no running. And I went out, they told me where their mile and a half marker was. So I headed out that way. I came back and I sat down and I said, "I didn't find the mile and a half marker." Well, it turned out I hadn't run far enough, because I was just not conditioned to do that. When we were sitting around talking, they said, well—and it was still a mile and a half requirement for the PFT, a physical fitness test. But here, we're going to run nine miles. And again, it's just, I'm thinking, nine miles? That's the nearest big town near Marion, Wisconsin, and nobody in their right mind would walk there, much less run there.

So lots of catching up to do. It turned out, as a whole, to be a good experience. The Basic School at Quantico was almost six months long.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: We were the second company to be an integrated company, and that is men and women going through the same training.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So we were doing the same optical courses. We would go out and do the same runs. Again, the women were kind of—out of the thirty-five women that we had, there were kind of two categories. There were those who had just come out of OCS [Officer Candidate School] that summer—they were very physical. We had a couple of PFT—or phys-ed majors, and we had other people. They were just capable of doing all of that. The other half had gone to a junior enlisted program. At the end of their junior year of college, they went to training. Then they would go back to college for a year and come back and be in that program. They tended to be of the group that was not very physically-oriented. They were, almost to a person, you could tell that those were the people that were wearing makeup more often. And we were encouraged to wear makeup. They were more feminine in appearance. So we had the physical group, and the feminine group.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And we were all kind of mixed in together, and all expected to do the same thing. But you could tell that the folks who were more feminine in appearance and less physical, in terms of being able to do the runs, they were really struggling to keep up on the runs, and that sort of thing. But, you know, the Marine Corps decides we're going to change things. It doesn't matter where you came in, whether they asked you if you could do 440 meters, or not. You know, it's not part of the contract. You just do it.

So that was challenging. In garrison, we were in a women's platoon. But when we went to the field, we integrated with men's platoon. And my platoon was First Platoon. And I really enjoyed most of the men in that platoon.

[00:45:01]

They were very helpful, very welcoming.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And realized some of the limitations of a 5'2 1/2" person, when it comes to doing force marches. And encouraged me and kept me in as a member. And then our platoon commander was a scout sniper. And he had been in Vietnam. And he was a person that just, in his Marine Corps experience, hadn't dealt with women officers, or women [inaudible 00:45:35]. And that is common, that somebody from infantry or combat arms may not have experience with women; they just are not in the—so he was an interesting individual, and he was driven more so than the other platoon commanders. He would keep his men there an hour or two late every night, just giving them extra instruction, whether they needed it or not. And out in the field, his objective was always that our platoon would show up before everybody else's. He marches into the ground to get—to make sure that we would do that.

So we marched harder and faster, and you just learn to be tough, I guess. Again, the men in the platoon were very accepting. They helped me learn the rifle drill, because I was the only one out of 241 who had not done rifle drill.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I'd never taken down an M16 and put it back together. So they helped me do that in the evening, in the barracks. And it was—we had guys, a few who were Vietnam vets who were mustangers, who were good folks. And it was just a good group of folks. I did have a roommate, and she's a great gal. And one day, the units out in the field got mixed up or changed, for some reason. And she ended up with my platoon commander. And I ended up with either hers, or someone else. And she came in, and she was fairly physically, and she was just in tears. And she said, "You know what he made me do?" And her hair was down, and she was dirty. And she was telling me. And I said, "That's the way he always is. That's what we do all the time when we go to the field." But her platoon commander had been—I think he was a pilot. So they had a much different approach to how things were done out in the field.

But again, I consider myself very happy. And throughout my Marine Corps service, every unit takes on its own personality.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: Some are easier, some are more jovial, some are more serious. This was a good group of guys and helped me get through that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I also got promoted while I was there. I was a second lieutenant. All the other lawyers showed up as first lieutenants; again, because Minnesota just didn't track me. They had forgot to promote me when I hit my two-year mark. So I got promoted there.

Halaska: Um-hm. Can you tell me a little bit more about what you learned during your training? So what did you do when you were out in the field?

Bowers Healey: A lot of tactics. We did have rifle training and pistol training, rifle and pistol qualification, which were challenging for me. I did not, that year, do well at it. We did a lot of field training, starting out with basically fire team tactics, squad tactics, platoon tactics, moving up to the company level tactics, and planning maneuvers out there. We also had a CO [Commanding Officer], and his name was Colonel Murphy. They had for the first-before—he had become CO just as we started. And when we went out to the objective areas, or the training areas, we would be bussed in a cattle car, or a bus.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: He came in after a couple of weeks, and he said, "No, we're not doing that anymore. It's good training to just force march out."

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So it was not atypical, that in a day we would cover five, ten miles of just marching. March a mile or two out, do your training out in the field, and back. One of the things, and again, it's because men were not used to having females around, when it come to the—we called them head calls, instead of the train, you go to the head, because that's a Naval term.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: What I did, and many other women did, was just, you reduced your liquid intake, which was certainly not a good idea.

[00:50:03]

But men just didn't know—I mean, they would give you a break. And if you couldn't find a bunch of trees—

Halaska: Yep.

Bowers Healey: —that was the way of life. And then one day, maybe four months in, one of the captains out there said something that was so simple, so easy. He said, "Men's head that way, women's head that way." And it was, like, wow! This is an easy solution. Why isn't somebody else doing this? [Laughter]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So sometimes a little bit of common sense goes a long, long way.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: What else did we learn out there? Tactics. They were mainly tactics. We also did a land navigation. And I had never done land navigation. Again, everybody else has experience with a compass, and I'm thinking, gosh, I can't get this back azimuth sort of thing. And you could get—but we did some practices, and I would actually go out on the weekends and practice myself, just trying to count out and figure out where I was, and that sort of thing. Then we had a land navigation test. It was—it had snowed that day, and it snowed before it was raining, so it was a miserable—Quantico has intermittent streams all over the place.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And you're out there with a map that just has basically hills and valleys. And some streams, you come up to them and there's nothing there, others are just, like, wow, I'm not sure I can cross this to get to the other side.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So we were dropped off at about 7:00 in the morning, and given your points to find, and come back. And hopefully, you've got enough points.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So I did okay. I did well on that test, and came back in. But when I came back—I don't know if we lost anybody or not. It's not atypical, which somebody just gets utterly lost. And you're told never to cross a hardtop road, because then you're outside of where they could find you. Inevitably, some of these folks would cross that hardtop road. We didn't have anybody like that. But I know at dark, they were still looking for one or two folks out there. And I got back.

I also met my future husband there.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And when I got back, there were a few from each platoon that had failed. My husband had failed. [Laughter] But it was due to his own approach to that particular activity. The penalty is that you'd have to go out every weekend thereafter, until you pass.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: That was what your weekend activity was, you were not at liberty. So, yeah. And I stood duty Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. I remember we were actually on the nine-mile run, and the commander told me, he goes—they had not announced—I guess we did our nine-mile run in formation, maybe early November. And he said, "You didn't take leave. You got the duty Christmas Day." [Laughter] They also—I'm never a fast runner. That week that we did the nine-mile run, they made me one of the platoon officers. I was the first sergeant, and basically responsible for counting heads, and not much more than that. But the first sergeant also ran in front of the platoon. At least that's what it was set up. And then I realized when I was out there—I don't know if somebody said it, or just why—I didn't run fast, and they wanted somebody to set the pace that would run fast, but would finish. And so that's why they put me out as the first sergeant, basically.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: She's not going to give up. It might be hard, but she's not going to give up. And that was kind of my attitude through The Basic—The Basic School was challenging for me, because I came in with such poor physical condition, not knowing that I needed to have better physical condition.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: And we went to the Birthday Ball and tried to run the nine—I actually ran the nine-mile run a couple of times; I did it once in practice. And throughout my first month or so, because of the boots, and I hadn't worn boots and they weren't broken in, the back of my ankles were just bloody.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: You know, that probably happens to people in boot camp, and that sort of thing.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I would wake up every morning and scrape off the blood and put some more blood and crust and stuff and put some more socks on that were uncomfortable. And my ankles began to hurt.

[00:55:00]

So I knew I had to do this nine-mile thing, and there was a gal who had a master's degree in physical education. And I mentioned it to her once. And she said, "Well, I'll tape you up." And so she wrapped me as tight as she could in ace bandages, and it was wonderful.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I ran my first nine miles. I did it on my own. But I came back, and yeah, this is great. So they were very helpful people. There was also a guy who was a mustanger, that is, enlisted to officer. And people would—he was not in my platoon, but people would come in, and they would say, wow, this guy is just great. He's the best thing out there when you're doing tactics. And I thought, well, who is this guy? I can say his first name, it was Joey. And I kept on hearing about him. And then two things; eventually, after months, I did get mixed into my platoon. And he was just—he's one of those guys that's a natural out in the field. He can survey the terrain, he can know what's going on, understand what needs to be done, what the weapons can do. And most of us are out there just, okay, where's the next rock that I'm supposed to be looking at, or something. Or, where's the enemy coming from? But he had that knowledge, because he had been an enlisted Marine, not in wartime.

And then we also had classroom training, and one of them was in admin. And for whatever reason, I and a lot of other people could not get the gist of admin from the instructor. So Joey got together, it was this one night, and spent an hour with

about ten or fifteen of us. And they had taken him from infantry and put him into admin, when he was an enlisted person, in an hour. He just cleared up things like crystal. He was just a great Marine, in many respects. So very helpful to his—and one of the things that made him a great Marine was not just because of his knowledge and his ability, but the fact that he trained other people, and was willing to help other people, which was really impressive.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: So those are some of the things that I remember from The Basic School.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right, what happened after Basic?

Bowers Healey: After Basic School, we got leave. And I was also joined—it was going to be two months before we started our training at the Naval Justice School in Newport, Rhode Island. So I was attached for probably four to six weeks at Quantico Legal Office. And I started getting the opportunity to observe trials. We also, as a continuing legal education, we went up to see the Supreme Court one day.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: And that was kind of impressive to be in the Supreme Court. I remember Justice Marshall was there, and I believe Burger. And very impressive to go listen to a case or two. And I remember that they cited, just as the attorney making the argument, cited a military case. And Chief Justice Thurgood Marshall poo-pooed it. Okay. [Laughs]

But it was valuable to be present when other people were doing interviews. I went to the break in Quantico with one of the individuals, and observed some of the trial experience, just for four weeks, I think. And then went to Newport.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And during that time, my husband and I became engaged.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: We had known—we reported the first day of Basic School together and met the very first day. He also was a judge advocate.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: He had had summertime experience, for two summers, and had actually been on a non-lawyer trial counsel, so he was much more experienced than I. He had actually tried cases, and he had reviewed cases at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

While we—as we went to the Naval Justice School, one of the conditions of getting stationed together, because I had orders first to Okinawa and then to Yuma, Arizona. And he was bound for California, Twentynine Palms. And the monitor, who was kind of a scheduler, said, "We'll station you together if you're married by the time you finish Naval Justice School." So we got married while we were at Naval Justice School. Went back to Marion, Wisconsin, to get married.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And my mother arranged most of—I wrote home and said, "I'm getting married." And I told them the name of my husband to be because they'd never heard his name before.

[01:00:00]

And we were primarily letter writing. And my mom set up the wedding, just a few phone conversations. And two weeks before, we had to go back to Waupaca County to get a marriage license, because it was required that you do that in person. So we took off on a Friday, flew back, got there. And my mother had called the Clerk of Court and asked her to stay an extra half hour so that we could get there, get our marriage license. And that's when my mom and dad met my husband to be.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Two weeks later I flew in, just for Saturday-Sunday, got married, went back. And they changed our duty stations to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Naval Justice School was Navy and Marine officers, both for instructors—beautiful place. Newport, Rhode Island is where Jackie and John Kennedy got married. And there are sailboats galore. We were there in springtime, and it's nice, crisp weather, lots of things to do on the weekends. I was writing thank-yous

for marriage gifts and trying to study to catch up with all these others guys that had spent time on active duty. I remember a particular evidence instructor being—a lot of people wanted to—really were excited about all of the evidence and the intricacies, and the fine points, differences about evidence.

And I was working on that, but on day he came in, and at the beginning of his lecture, he said, "Remember, you may learn all these evidence things and make motions galore. But the best thing you can do for your client is to keep them out of court, because good things don't happen in court." Usually end up in convictions. And you may have a wonderful motion, but it's not going to get ruled on for a year or two, through the review process.

Meanwhile, your individual is either in the brig serving time, or out of the brig with a Bad Conduct Discharge, waiting for that to be finalized, and maybe can't get a job because the Bad Conduct Discharge isn't finalized until you actually get a discharge paper. And that can be years after the trial. So his message was, Keep that in mind, and the best thing you can do is keep your Marine or sailor out of court. Get it down to a Discharge in Lieu of Trial, or a non-judicial punishment [NJP]. Don't be eager to get into court.

And that advice just served me tremendously well when I got onto active duty. So graduated from Naval Justice School probably at the end of May, and reported in to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for our first duty station.

Halaska: Okay. Can you tell me about—what was the name of the base that you were at?

Bowers Healey: At the Base Camp? Lejeune, North Carolina.

Halaska: Yes, there. Okay.

Bowers Healey: It is one of the largest, one of the two large military Marine Corps bases; one is Pendleton [California] and the other is Camp Lejeune. So if you're in the Marine Corps for very long, you're going to end up being at one or both of those places, that's just where somewhere between twenty and forty thousand Marines are located. And nicknamed as "Camp Swampy," because it's on East Coast, and it's a swamp. And during this recent hurricane, and when I was there during a hurricane, it is inundated with water.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And in fact, it was cut off. The water comes—when the flooding occurs, you can't get in or out of the Jacksonville, North Carolina, Camp Lejeune area. That

became our home for two years—for three years. And during that three years, my husband was assigned to the First Marine Division—Second Marine Division. And I was assigned to Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune. And we were both assigned as defense counsels. They needed to assign us to big bases, so we wouldn't be working against each other, because that would have caused an ethical conflict—

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: —with our bar. Our state bars would not have permitted us to be in the same court case on opposite sides. And the Marine Corps also didn't approve of that. So our first assignments were all to large bases, so that we could be in separate legal offices—at least that was the goal. And I started learning how to be a trial lawyer, as the defense counsel.

[01:05:00]

Most of my cases were not high-quality cases. They were unauthorized absent cases, AWOL cases.

Halaska: Okay, um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Because Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune took people who went UA from all up and down the East Coast. If they were at a barracks at a guard's duty place, if they were gone for more than three months or so, or six months, they would all end up—when they got caught, they would end up being brought back to Camp Lejeune, not knowing a soul, and I would be defending them along with my fellow officers.

So I did that for fifteen months. It has pros and cons, but I'm glad that that was my first assignment. We had a lot of people who should never have been recruited and brought on into the Marine Corps, but at that time we were dealing with the volunteer forces. And recruiters, I think, were not well-trained, were not well-supported. They had to make quotas, and quotas mean everything. But I had people with—it was not hard for me to find criminal background in their history.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I would talk to them, and if they had—it turned out at the base—we also didn't have a lot of money at that time. It was a draw-down, it was the Carter years, not a lot of money was being put into the military. And we had to buy our own manual for court martials, which was something new. Usually that was issued, but

we bought those. And we had to buy binders and paper, and that stuff just wasn't available. And some of the manuals that we were shown at the Naval Justice School, usually they gave those out, but they were so short on money up at the Naval Justice School, we ended up without Basic—and some of the things are kind of Basic. It's how do you get a hearsay in the court. How do you get a documentary piece of evidence into court? How do you get—how do you set up somebody, ask the preliminary questions to qualify an expert? You can figure that out by yourself, or if they gave you a work manual, a guide, it would be all there. Five or six, ten nice questions, and you just go through it.

So we kind of scrambled through that. After I was in my office for a couple of months, I went into the file cabinet that was there, and somebody had left his. And I didn't know! I thought, wow, this is great.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So that was interesting. Some of my first clients that I remember were interesting. There was an individual who—one of the first three, he had tattooed on his arm, USMC. I don't know if it was up here, or whatever. But he'd gone AWOL [Absent Without Leave]. UA [Unexcused Absence]. And so I asked people what they do when they're gone. Some of them get jobs. Some of them just hope never to get caught, they get jobs. Some of them, you know, are unemployable, or not looking for employment. This guy was working with a recruiter, and he was recruiting Marines.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I said, well, that's interesting. So you're recruiting [inaudible] Marines, and you've got a USMC tattoo. You sure you don't want to stay in the Marine Corps? He said, "No, it's for some, but it's not for me." [Laughs]

We also dealt with a series of people who are called "BCD Strikers." They would go into court and they would ask for a Bad Conduct Discharge.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And it was our duty to counsel them against that because it would be something that would follow them for the rest of their life. But they were people that you just could not—they wanted to go back home, the Marine Corps was not for them, and get on with their life. And a lot of them said, "Well, I've got a construction job with my dad," or, "I've already gone back to work," or whatever the case may be.

And the judge also would try in court to discourage them. But inevitably, they would probably get a Bad Conduct Discharge awarded, have to do another month or two in the brig, and then be packing and on their way. Lots of interesting folks.

I had somebody who came back, and he asked for a Bad Conduct Discharge, and he got his Bad Conduct Discharge. And then they put him on something called Appellate Leave, he went back to California. I get a call a couple months down the line from his dad, and his dad says, "Private So-and-So is coming back." I said, "What do you mean, he's coming back? He's on Appellate Leave. He's got orders to be on leave, not to be here." And so he was already on a bus coming back, and he just wanted to let me know that he would be checking in.

[01:10:02]

And I said, "Hmm, okay." So I went down and I talked to folks in my office, as well as the company office. They said, "We can't take him. He can't stay here, we can't put him—he's not on orders." And lo and behold, they would not let him come on base for a couple of days. And he was out in town. I was in contact with him, and he did not have enough money to stay in a hotel, and the best I could do for him at that time was, I aligned—I took him down to the USO [United Services Organization]. And the USO man said he could sleep on the couch there during the daytime, and they stayed open until midnight. And he did that for a few nights. And then from midnight until he could find someplace to go, he was just kind of on the streets of Jacksonville [North Carolina]. Then eventually, they got him back on orders. But that was a Marine who just decided he wanted to finish his—I don't know if he—I kept up with him for probably another six months or so, but I don't know if he finished his enlistment or not.

So again, I didn't have any really big, tremendous cases. I had some assaults, a lot of marijuana cases at that time. And this was marijuana being charged without urinalysis. We didn't have urinalysis at the time, so you had to catch people with actually smoking marijuana.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Or marijuana in their possession or dealing drugs. Those type of cases. And I made it my business to try to keep people out of court. I think well over 20% of the Marines that I represented got Separations in Lieu of Trial, which were hard to get.

Halaska: What was that?

Bowers Healey: Separations in Lieu of Trial, or OTHs, Other Than Honorable discharges.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I worked very hard at trying to—if they had criminal history in their past, I would bring that up. I'd find that, get that documentation. I'd present it to the command. And because we were so short on money, if they knew you were going to bring a motion that would require a recruiter to come back and testify, that they didn't know about this criminal activity, they said, okay—what else would you like? Would you like a Separation in Lieu of Trial? And they were happy to get that, and not have to do any more confinement time.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Other Than Honorable discharges are not good discharges. But it's better than a Bad Conduct Discharge, and it's much better than doing more time in the brig.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So some of my cases went back to non-judicial punishments. I did have—you get assigned cases, just five came in. And if there were five defense counsels, you each got one, or whoever was low. I mean, it was just kind of a rotating thing. And but they could—if they met with you and wanted somebody else, they could get somebody else.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: They could get an alternate counsel. So there were people who came in to me, and the said, "Well, I want So-and-So." I said, "Okay, fine, I'll put in the request for the second counsel." They were entitled to a second counsel. "Meanwhile, is it okay if I stay on your case?" Because usually there's a week or two lag time before the next person gets on. That was interesting because that would go in spurts. Sometimes your name would get around the brig, and all of a sudden people who knew that I happened to get a lot of Separations in Lieu of Trial, all of a sudden, people would be requesting Lieutenant Healey. Then other times maybe I got three or four Bad Conduct Discharges, or my clients did, in a row, and then I wouldn't get requested for a while.

But I remember somebody peeking in my office door, looking at me. And I thought, hmm, you know, I'm talking to somebody, doing an interview. And then about ten minutes later, the guy peeks in again. And pretty soon I get a request for being an alternate counsel on a case, and it turns out to be this guy. And what this

guy wanted, he was shopping for somebody. He wanted to have a female, Navy, African American. And I fit the bill with one of those. [Laughs] I was his third counsel. He was not an easy individual. But it's just kind of—and then I had another woman Marine come in, and met with her, and she said at the end of our interview that she wanted someone else. And she said, "No offense, ma'am, but this is a male Marine Corps, and you're a female. I want to be represented by a male."

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But she was one of those individuals who said I could stay on the case for a week or two. And during that week or two while we were waiting for the new counsel, she was taking—I managed to convince the command to take her to a non-judicial punishment, as opposed to a court martial.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I ended up seeing her later in Okinawa, and she was doing just fine.

[01:15:00]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Yeah, they're honest. And that was the nature. After I spent a little over a year as the defense counsel, I went to the trial, or government counsel, so I was prosecuting people.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: That also was interesting. It's a much different role. You have a much closer relationship with the convening authorities. In the military, the convening authorities are the people who decide what cases go to court; they're usually the colonels and the lieutenant colonels. They have the authority to convene a court. And each court is convened. There isn't just a standing court, there's a standing courtroom, there's judges. But each court is independently convened by the signature of the convening authority.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So worked with them more. And it turned out I was working with an interesting group of trial and defense counsels. Everybody seemed to get along well. But again, it's the 1970s, we're right after the Vietnam War. So we had two—at least two individuals who had actually served in Vietnam, and they were majors. Then we had an interesting group, and they were basically—you asked them why they came into the Marine Corps and how they came in—they were draft dodgers.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: Basically, draft dodgers through deferment. They deferred college, got deferments, when there was a—it was the lottery system in the late sixties and seventies. And they had gotten high lottery numbers, high draft numbers. So they took college deferment, and then they took a law school deferment, and probably came on active duty maybe in '74, '75, after the war was done. But they ended up getting out of law school at that time. They were pretty proud to say they were draft dodgers—

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: —in the Marine Corps. So we had that mix of folks there. And when I got to be a trial lawyer, I was still a first lieutenant for a while, and there's a story about that, too. All my contemporaries got promoted, male contemporaries got promoted a year before I did. I guess I might as well mention that right now.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: Male officers and female officers in the Marine Corps, and probably in the other services, were on two separate lineal lists. And you don't get promoted as an officer until they have enough openings above you, and you keep going up the lineal list. And it's put out in what they call a "Blue Book," I don't know if the book is even blue anymore. But it's the Blue Book, tells you where you fall from the generals to the colonels, and on down to the very bottom, second lieutenant is on that list. And there was a—I was asked my first year to make sure I had my photo put in, and make sure my record book was, because I was up for promotion along with all the other first lieutenants. And I did that. Then the major, who was a limited duty officer, said, "Well, call Washington, D.C., here's the number, and make sure that they got your picture for promotion." So I did that. And I know I was talking to a gunny or a staff NCO, and I said, "I want to know if you got my picture. Can you confirm that?" And he came back and he said, "Well, yes, your picture is here, but I don't know why you're asking, because you're not on the

promotion list." And that was the first notion that I had that there were these two separate lists. And the women's list had fallen behind.

So that year, when the promotions came out, my husband got promoted, and all the other first lieutenants in my office got selected, and were going to get promoted. Other folks—I remember there was a colonel who was the judge, said, "Well, what happened?" I said, "Well, there's a separate list." And he said to me, "Hmm, I think I've heard that somewhere, separate but equal." Coming out of one of the Supreme Court cases.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: The year after I didn't get promoted, something came out called DOPMA, and it was a Defense Officer's Personnel Management Act. And that tried to make all of the services more uniform as to how they promoted, and put women on the men's list. So that was a good thing.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: What was bad is that my number wasn't adjusted.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: That year, a thousand men got promoted, who were junior to me.

[01:20:02]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And when the lists got merged, I stayed behind a thousand people.

Halaska: Okay.

Bower Healey: So I thought, hmm. Do I want to stay in this organization? I mean, that was really a bitter pill to take. I know that happens with enlisted personnel in MOS [military occupational specialty] variances, you don't always get into the zone where you can even get promoted, or differences in cutting the scores. During that three years, I came to know it was impacting on the enlisted women, too, because one of the things that you needed for a cutting score was a rifle score. And women

didn't go out, were not allowed to go out to shoot the rifle and get those extra points. So they typically were being held behind on promotion that way.

But it really caused me to wonder if I wanted to stay in the Marine Corps. And I was USMC Reserve, also. Anyway, I got into the trial field, and I was doing trial cases. And we had a captain for a while. But then there came a big case, and it was called the *United States v. Garwood* [March 1980-February 1981], there was a deserter who came back from Vietnam more than ten year after he had gone—or about ten years after he had gone into an unauthorized absence status. And apparently, there was a lot of information which indicated that he had collaborated with the enemy.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And he was brought back to Camp Lejeune to be tried. And about that time, in November of that year, I was pregnant at the end of summer. And—which goes to a different story. I waited to get pregnant until they had maternity uniforms, because I didn't want to be on active duty in civilian clothes, because that's what women had done prior to that.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Started seeing some of the enlisted women in maternity uniforms, and then I became pregnant. And I wanted to get the maternity uniform to wear. And broke out the Marine Corps orders, and they said, "You need to get the permission of the"—you got it at Cash Sales, which is a place to buy military uniforms. You couldn't just order it online or through the Sears Roebuck, or through eBay or whatever, you had to go to Cash Sales. So I broke out the—I went over, and they said, "Well, you need to have such-and-such a form." I said, "Well, why do I need such-and-such a form?" Because the first sergeant has to sign. I said, "The first sergeant has to sign for an officer to get a uniform?" "Yes. Can't do this."

So I checked the Marine Corps order. And a lot of the Marine Corps orders at that time were written—the supplies to male officers, the supplies to enlisted officers, and then the supplies to all women, whether you were officer or enlisted. And I needed this form from the first sergeant. So I walked in, got the form from the first sergeant. And I didn't want really anyone to know that I was pregnant at that time, because I thought it would impact on my job assignment.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I had every reason to believe it would impact on my job assignment, and that they would take me out of the trial role, which I wanted to learn and experience. So I got that signed. I take the form back to Cash Sales, and they say, "Well, nice that you brought this form in, but you have to pay for it anyway, because you're an officer. Enlisted people get it paid for." That was the whole purpose of that form. And I knew that. But so I got myself a maternity uniform. And then coming back from Thanksgiving, I wore the maternity uniform. And that was the first time anyone in my office knew that I was pregnant. It was about halfway through my pregnancy.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Next day I get called down to the staff judge advocate's office, he's a colonel from World War II, with quite a reputation in history. And he said, "You want to go to Legal Assistance? Go to Legal Assistance, it'll be easier for you there than being in trial." And I said, "Well no, if I can stay in trial, I want to stay in trial." And he said, "Well, it will be easier for you there." And I said, "Well, I feel just fine now," and that was the truth. Early months of pregnancy, quite often you feel a little different. I said, "I'm doing just fine." So they left me in trial.

Then the Garwood case came. And I found out later on, they decided not to put me on that case, even though I was, by that time, a fairly experienced trial lawyer.

[01:25:00]

Because they didn't want my pregnancy impacting or slowing down the case. Well, it turned out my daughter was a year old when the case ended. [Laughter] That was a long case. But I got to stay in trial. And because some of the other attorneys were taken out of the regular trial, they were working on the trial case, on the Garwood case, as the first lieutenant, I was the senior person in the trial shop. So I was assigning cases and so forth, and I did all the general court martials also, because the other folks were not GCM [General Court Martial]-qualified, and I was.

So turned out to be a good experience. I'm glad I was not on the Garwood case, because there was a lot of motion work. But it wasn't standing up in trial, learning how to do trial work, making the closing argument and the opening arguments, and getting jury trials. A friend of mine was on the Garwood case. When she came off of that, bless her heart, she knew how to write motions, but she didn't know much about trial practice.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: She just hadn't much experience. So that turned out to be good fortune for me.

Then I had my child, came back, finished up the trial cases that were left that nobody did, after a month. And was assigned to Legal Assistance, although there was some discussion about that; I know that the senior trial guy wanted me to stay in trial. But they needed somebody to go to—so I was head of Legal Assistance for the entire Camp Lejeune area. It was a major's billet, so I was captain at that time, so it was a good billet. It's the first time I was really in a strong leadership position, because I had enlisted, and civilians who worked in that office for me.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Again, all the attorneys were senior to me by lineal list, because of what happened to me on the lineal list.

Halfway through—I was in that for almost a year. Remember I told you that there's an ethical problem with spouses working on the same case?

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: I get a call from someone over at the Second Marine Division, a major. I called him about an enlisted personnel issue that I was having, and enlisted replacement. And he said, "Oh, by the way, has anybody told you your husband's going to come to work for you at Legal Assistance?" Because the Division always supplied one person. Okay. I'm going to lose my job, so I see, of Legal Assistance. I said, "Are you sure, major? Are you sure he's coming?" "Well, let me go check." He checked with his staff judge advocate, and he says, "Yep, Ed's coming. He's going to be assigned there next week." I said, "Does my staff judge advocate know?" He said, "I don't know." So I marched down to the staff judge advocate's job, and I told him what I had heard. He turns around to his phone, and he said, "Well, let me check." And he checked. And he said—he confirmed that my husband was being reassigned to—from Division to base.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And in the realm of things, for anybody else, that would not be that terribly unusual, it wasn't necessarily a punishment, or anything. And as he turned around, I'm thinking he's going to say, Okay, and you are reassigned to—whatever. You know, some other job. And he turns around, and I remember to his day what Lieutenant Colonel Cassidy said. He turned around and he said, "Give him hell, Ellen!" Okay. And then he said, "You aren't going to write his fitness

report," which, because I was writing everybody else's fitness reports. He said, "I'll do that. But you're going to stay in the OIC [Officer in Command] position.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So my husband and I worked for six months together in the same office.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And that was an experience. It didn't turn out to be that much of a challenge, most of the time. I was actually worried more about how the rest of the staff would take it, having to work for a husband and wife team, or work with a husband and wife team.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: But generally, we got through it.

Then I had augmented. And the that I augmented—that is, became a regular from a reserved status—my husband had a four-year commitment, I had a three-year commitment. He was going to finish his four years right there in Camp Lejeune. Again, 1970s, military community. Much like Fort Bragg is, or was. And that is, it's a military community, and there's not much for military spouses to do, other than to be there as a military spouse.

[01:30:06]

There weren't a lot of jobs available. And I knew that probably I would end up not working for a year while he finished his commitment, because law offices just weren't hiring, and there wasn't too much else to do. Teaching jobs—although I had a teaching certificate, those were hard to come by, also. So I augmented for that reason.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Which was, my mother had been a teacher, and she talked about tenure. And that just—it's a job guarantee, it's job stability. But it wasn't really, because I was firmly committed to the Marine Corps; it was just I wanted to be working for that last year.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Then at the end of the year, my husband, who know the monitor, had called him and said, "You want to go to Okinawa? We'll go to Okinawa." He had not augmented, but they had agreed to allow him to stay on for another year. So we went to Okinawa. And that was our next duty assignment.

Halaska: Okay. Just going back a little bit, after the birth of your daughter, so you have two working parents. What was the Marine Corps' family policy at the time? Did they have programs set up? And what were—

Bowers
Healey: Probably non-existent.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: Non-existent. One thing, that didn't come in until later—later, the Marine Corps, as well as all of the others had more of a family policy. But it was basically, you make your own arrangements, you made this decision, you make your own arrangements. Babysitting, back in that community, was fairly inexpensive, if you could find it. So the big rush was, you can't line up a babysitter until you know when the baby is born. You never know when the baby is born until the baby comes. Mine happened to come eight days late. And I was looking at newspaper ads and contacting other dependent wives. I did know the Wives' Club. Most of them were stay-at-home moms, yet. I think I found this lady through an ad in the paper. And she, bless her heart, took a four-week-old, because at that time, what she had was four weeks for maternity leave.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And I think I met her once. I think what really sold me on her is that she also was a nurse, she was a registered nurse.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I thought, well, can't go wrong. I worried the day that I left her, because she did sit for a lot of kids. But she was my daughter's primary babysitter for almost a year. She also was pregnant. She said, Don't worry about that, because I have C-sections. I've got it arranged, and I have somebody arranged to come in. You will not have to worry about—and that was wonderful. So that was great.

I found out later, I think when Grenada, my brother-in-law got called to go to that conflict. And I had talked—he was in the Army. I had talked to him, and they had readiness drills. I was never aware of readiness drills, probably because I wasn't part of the deploying force at that time. And he said they had started a policy to take family programs—not just family leave but making sure that there was preparation. You probably know what those are called, [inaudible 01:33:36] Family Preparation, or whatever. And he said they had a drill one night. And when you have the drill and you're called in, you don't know if it's for real, or if it's just for practice. He said that night they went out at Fort Bragg with flashlights and looked in the cars, to find out how many kids were in the cars.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. So this was—was that the early eighties, I think? Very early eighties, the Fort Bragg deployed on short notice to go down to Grenada. My brother-in-law was one of them.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So I think all services realized that they needed to start having family plans, and what are you going to do with the kids when you get called up? Even if you're married to a service member, what are you going to do?

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: And Marine Corps never did anything like that in the seventies, early eighties. I think they probably have that in place now, don't know. I guess I was probably asked to do that—I think I was. By mid-eighties, I was probably asked to put down what my plans were. Because I know I thought through it, so I must have had to put that down.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: But there were no arrangements. I realized later on that I had it fairly easy, because I lived in a house.

[01:35:02]

I did have a husband. Some of the enlisted women who were pregnant, and not married, there was a big push to get them out, even though you weren't supposed to push them out. But they were required to stay in the barracks and didn't—

weren't going to get extra money to live out in town, or to set up—stay in the barracks until the day they delivered.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Then of course you're out of the hospital in three or four days and expected to—you have some arrangements made for what you're going to do with your child. Then once you have the child, you can start getting the allowances for housing to live off the base. But some of the units were not very accommodating. And that went on for a few years before I think that got adjusted.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: They realized that that just couldn't continue to happen.

Halaska: Um-hm. What were the policies for pregnant women in general, at the time? Because I know that one time—

Bowers Healey: Sure.

Halaska: —basically as soon as women got pregnant, they were kicked out. So what was the policy at the time?

Bowers Healey: That continued until 1975.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I didn't come on active duty until '77, to stay full-time. Up until then, if you were pregnant, or if you married somebody who had children, whether they were yours or not, you had to get out.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And one of the ladies that I came to know, her name was League, her last name. It was Major League. [Laughter] And she had a child before 1975. And apparently, they had you sign a statement as you were leaving, as you were being forced out, that basically said you were not being forced out. She didn't sign it.

Halaska: Ah, okay.

Bowers
Healey: So when she came back on active duty—and she may have had to go through a court case to have this done—she got all of her back pay and rank back. So I knew her. She probably had to get out when she was a lieutenant or something. I knew her as a major, Major Mary League. Major League. She was a hard lady when I first met her. And you could see, she was just tough, and wasn't going to go with what the Marine Corps thought the program was back then.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: So that was up until '75. And then late '77, early '78 is when I saw the first maternity uniforms come out.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: Up until then, you could stay. There was a judge advocate who was a year or two senior to me who had had a child, and she just came to work in civilian attire. And put her in Legal Assistance, I knew she had been put in Legal Assistance, which is why I kept my pregnancy under wrap for four or five months.

So policies were beginning to change in the late seventies. But still, there was—occasionally I would get a gunnery sergeant or a first sergeant come to me and say, you know, we've got this pregnant female, and we want to get her out. And I said, "Well, find me a Marine Corps order that says you can do that. I'm not aware of that." And a lot of women chose to get out, though. That was still an option. They gave you no trouble at all if you were pregnant and wanted to get out, or had delivered and wanted to get out. That could happen real fast. Um-hm.

Halaska: Okay. Did you want to go on to talk about Okinawa right now? Or do you want to take a break?

Bowers
Healey: Well, I could go, but maybe—we probably ought to take a break. Yes.

[End of OH2134.Healey_file1_access]

[Beginning of OH2134.Healey_file2_access]

Halaska: And we are continuing recording. All right, and so we are going back and we are talking a little bit more about the *US v. Garwood* case.

Bowers
Healey: Yes. Okay. That was a Marine who had deserted, who was listed as a deserter in Vietnam, who was thought to, or believed to have collaborated with the Vietnamese. You're asking me about a spelling, it's G-a-r-w-o-o-d. There's a book or two written about him. He was brought back to Camp Lejeune. It's kind of interesting why you're brought back to Camp Lejeune, but one of the reasons is—they knew he was coming back. They had him in—the US had him in custody. And they decided to put him at Camp Lejeune rather than Washington D.C., because of the lack of media, and the lack of accessibility in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Jacksonville [North Carolina] is still kind of a hard place to get to. There isn't a main highway that goes there. And it turned out to be true. Initially when the trial started, there were media from New York and Washington, D.C. I couldn't get a place in the courtroom to watch part of it; I was going to watch part of it. I opened the door, and there was just no seating. It was standing room only.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Later on, as the case dragged on for more than a year, you could get in to watch it if you wanted to, because it was so hard for the media to get there. And it also gave me my first real introduction to the media, and how aggressive they can be.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I had nothing to do with this case, didn't really know much about it. I was doing all the other cases.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: I was there on a weekend. I happened to pick up the phone, and was just browbeat by somebody wanting me to provide a reporter, from Washington, or somewhere, wanting me to provide information, and go see who was available, and how they could get in contact. I kept on saying, "You need to contact Public Affairs."

But anyway, [Robert R.] Garwood was an interesting individual. He had been kind of lost in Vietnam. He was a truck driver, he was on a truck run. And whether he was initially captured, or was captured and then turned, whether he really turned, or whether he didn't have any other options, the truth is somewhere in between all of those things, probably. But it made for a difficult case. And he was not convicted of very much at all, and he had bunches of charges. He didn't even go back—he didn't go to jail. But he was around, and he was interesting,

because that many years in Vietnam, he had developed oriental customs, such as when he was at rest, he would squat down and sit in that position.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Initially he was very thin, and then he put on weight while he was there. He would avoid eye contact. Eventually he ended up living in the Jacksonville area for a couple of years, before he went to Virginia, or West Virginia, or someplace like that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: One of the interesting, just, sidelights came—a friend of mine was one of the prosecutors on the case. And she said, "Well, I have to arrange to get translators today." And I said, "Oh, where are you going to find Vietnamese translator?" Garwood learned to speak the language, and apparently was very good at it. He also—there was—I'm digressing again—back in the '60s, when I grew up, you didn't eat raw meat, you just didn't.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: No such things as sushi. I mean, people, you need to cook meat, and overcook it, and overcook it, and overcook it. So the idea of eating raw fish was really foreign to most Americans. One of the stories about Garwood is that when he was in captivity, one of the first people that he met was a captain, and a captain that had gone to survival school. Later they got separated, or put in different camps, or the captain died, or something. But the captain told Garwood, Eat whatever you get. Eat. Eat it. You need to stay alive, and you need to learn, if you're going to be here, you need to start picking up the language.

So I think those things helped him survive, but maybe also perhaps turned him so that he was no longer—maybe he did turn into a actual deserter, as opposed to a captured person.

[00:05:03]

But that's hard to say, because it's—but he had learned to grow the tubers and things that they did there. But it was just sort of interesting, having him around. Then he would also talk in the chow hall, because he lived on base for a while—one of the guys that I was representing said, Oh yeah, they talk quite often with Garwood in the chow hall. Digressing some more, the individual that I happened

to be representing at that time, he said, it's so different being—he also was a deserter, and he deserted during the Vietnam era, but not from Vietnam. And he was older, late twenties. He said it's interesting going to the chow hall here now, because people talk to you. When he was there in—I think he'd gone UA in 1970 or '71, he said there was no such thing as blacks and white talking to each other.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: It was just very divided. And a friend of mine who I went through The Basic School said also—he had been—after Vietnam, he was assigned to Camp Lejeune. And after he was there for a couple of months, he said, This is a combat zone just being there, because of the friction between the African Americans and the whites, if you were in the Division area.

Halaska: Where?

Bowers Healey: At Camp Lejeune. He said it was dangerous to live there.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Because he told me he'd gotten—he was stationed in Iceland. I said, "Well, how did you get to Iceland?" He said, "I called up the monitor one day," and he said, "Send me anywhere. Get me out of here." That's for a guy who served in Vietnam as an artillery man. He just saw that Camp Lejeune in the early 1970s was so dangerous to live. It was just incredible.

So that's a little bit of *Garwood*, a little bit of Vietnam deserters. It was an interesting time to be around there, but I was glad—again, I was glad I was not on that case, because it took so much time, one to two years, before it was resolved.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right. So we're moving on to Okinawa. Can you tell me a little bit about being assigned there, and kind of getting there, and moving your family there?

Bowers Healey: Sure. Anytime you go to that part of the world, it's a long trip over. My husband and I, we were unaccompanied, but we went the same day, and we took our daughter with us. So unaccompanied tour, one-year tour for each of us. We both had people who were supposed to be our sponsors there, and they greeted us at the plane.

Halaska: Locals?

Bowers
Healey: No, they were Marines.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: That was customary then, when you went overseas, you'd be assigned a sponsor, and they'd help you get situated in terms of housing and checking your first day, because most officers and senior enlisted people would get a car once I got there, because the bases were so far apart. So they helped us arrange to buy a car. And cars were a couple of hundred dollars. They were junkers, but they got us around. I remember when I got my car eventually, I carried a jug of water because the radiator would indicate to me by steam that I needed to plug in some more water. So I carried it, and if that happened, I just added more.

Unfortunately, our two sponsors were both single, and they didn't realize that when you have a baby with you, and we had a twelve-month-old with us, you need to get her situated first. She cannot be checking in with—they thought we could check in me holding the baby in uniform—no, didn't work. So we got through that. I was assigned to—as a defense counsel at Camp Kinser. My husband was assigned to Legal Assistance, and he worked both at Camp Kinser and another place south of there. The camps were really kind of far apart; you did need a car to get in between, or wait for military transportation, which just wasn't feasible.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So I worked at the air station for about my first six months as the defense counsel. One of the things, I mention that a lot of my first cases at Camp Lejeune were unauthorized absence, UA cases, Article 86. Those get to be very routine after a while, and not very challenging. Each case is challenging, that you need to do your best to present. But it's the same charge over and over again.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: I was talking with the guys, and I said, "Well, what's your caseload like?" And we were talking. And he said, Well, and I said, "How about UAs? Because over 50% of my cases were UAs." He said, "Well, you're not going to see any UAs here."

[00:10:00]

There's just nowhere to go. You're on an island. He said, Once in a while you'll see somebody who's got drunk over the weekend and decided to take a weekend and shack up with somebody, or something like that, and then come back when we ran out of money, because we were all getting paychecks at the time. It wasn't check the bank, you got an actual hard check. So when you needed a check, needed some money, you came back.

So I thought, Okay, that sounds great. There will be good cases here. I get my first case. Unauthorized Absence. I'm looking at it, and it's not three or four or five days. Guy is gone for three and a half months, or something. So I met him in the brig. I said, "Okay, where were you? Where did you stay on the island?" He said, "Oh, I went back to the United States." "How did you do that?" I mean, he was a lance corporal. And he said, "Well, I was the admin clerk, and I typed up leave orders for everybody else, so I just typed my own leave orders." [Laughs] He went back to the States. I can't remember if they caught him or not, but I just thought it's unique, that here I thought I was out of the UA cases. There were interesting cases, probably more assault cases at that time. And a good group of people to work with. It was a good military community, too, again, because you're on the island, you're pretty much all stuck together.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Whether it was the Staff NCO Club, or the Officer's Club, there was a good, tight-knit community there.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: We did a lot of—babysitting services were inexpensive, available right on base.

Halaska: Nice.

Bowers Healey: So we did a lot of things with other individuals, other couples. And being a defense counsel, I was—half of my clients were always locked up it seemed.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So I spent a lot of time at the brig. I got to know the brig man very well, the person—the captain in charge of that. It got to the point where I would come, and he would take out his coffee and offer me coffee, and nice fine china that you can buy very inexpensively. And the dollar ratio was very good to the yen, so we

could go out and eat. I had a mama-san, somebody to—it was cheaper to have them do your laundry and cleaning than to do it yourself.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: If you went to a laundromat, it would cost you more in quarters, or whatever. The other thing is that we were on water rationing that year, because the typhoons had not brought a lot of water. Because it's a volcanic island, they have built reservoirs, but they count on the hurricanes or the typhoons to come and drop a lot of water. And if they get a dry—once in a while you get kind of a dry hurricane, and that will put you on water rationing.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So we could only access water every other day there. Then it just—but the mama-sans always had water.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Somehow it worked that way. So all my laundry, and we lived off-base in a one-bedroom, two-room apartment, which was kind of a shack-ey place, but it was—it served. It was close to base, and that sort of thing.

So we generally had a good time while we were in Okinawa. And I continue to learn more about trial. I spent about half of the time as the defense counsel, and then half as trial counsel in OIC. And again, my husband worked in the same office that I did. The second part, I was the officer in charge. But he was legal assistant, so I just kind of let him be. And later on, the enlisted personnel told me, We didn't know how this was going to be, working with a husband and wife team. One of the sergeants was—we had an old phone system, and when they got a call, they couldn't buzz us. They had to come to our office or yell out, "You've got a call online"—whatever. You had to actually switch over to line one or switch it back to line two—very archaic. But anyway, she would holler out. She would say, "Captain Healey, sir!" "Captain Healey, ma'am," in this loud, screechy voice. [Laughter]

But a lot of good interesting cases. Probably mostly assaults and drunken disorderly.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I did have an assault with the intent to commit murder.

Halaska: Oh!

Bowers
Healey: That was a knifing.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I don't know if I want to say much more about that case. It did go to court.

[00:15:00]

But, yeah. Dealt with some of the psychiatrists over there. I had a few Marines with some significant problems. I did have one that turned out to be an acquittal at the court. Again, I was up at the brig, and you never know what's going to come out of these Marines' mouths, or what the case—I mean, you just get a case with a charge, and you call for the person's name, and the person comes out and you don't know anything more about that individual.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: An individual came out, and he had kind of a unique accent. We started talking, and of course I always say, "Well, where are you from?" He said, "Well, I'm Canadian." "How did you get into the Marine Corps? Got to be a story here." And he said, "Well, I was on a road trip." He was from a large family, about ten kids. And he said, "We were on holiday." I'd never had a Marine say to me, we were on "holiday." "My mother and father were on holiday, and I came unexpectedly, so I was born in Maine." He had dual citizenship. Then when he was eighteen or nineteen, he was with a group of friends down in Texas, got intoxicated, and joined the Marine Corps while he was on the road trip. Just a unique case.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: He was an interesting individual, but did have a alcohol problem, there was no doubt about that. While he was in the brig, he was fine, because he couldn't get hold of alcohol, at least not very easily, anyway. Managed to get an acquittal for an odd—well, it wasn't an acquittal, it was a dismissal, because I brought a speedy trial motion. I got up there. He was one of my first clients. And I went to the brig, and in addition to him telling me he was "on holiday" when he was born, which Marines just don't say, I said, "Well, how long have you been in the brig?"

And it had been—I don't know if it was a month or more. Usually when somebody gets put in the brig, they're required to have a defense counsel within a few days, at most a week you're supposed to appoint them. And I said, "Well, didn't you ask for a defense counsel after you were here?" He said, "Well, yeah, I did." I said, "Who did you ask?" And he gave me the name, and he was one of the brig counselors. I thought, well, this isn't going to go anywhere. How am I going to prove this? The brig counselor showed me all these chits. I said, "Oh, can I have a copy of those chits," he's asking. And the reason he didn't get assigned a counsel, because usually somebody will assign the day after they're in, they get brought in at night, or whatever, the day next, there'll be a notification going out to the defense counsel, senior defense counsel, and then they'll be assigned.

There had been an alleged murder with three individuals. It wasn't an alleged murder—it was a murder, and three individuals were suspected. Those three suspects were put in the brig the same night as my client was.

Halaska: Okay. Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Of course, there's such a hubbub about, we've got a capital murder case here, and we've got to get counsel assigned, that somehow they just missed my client.

Halaska: Okay.

Bower Healey: So my client, when we went to court, and I brought a motion for a speedy trial because he had not been treated correctly, in getting a defense counsel. And the judge granted it.

So that was that, until a little later—I guess he had come in, I had forgotten. But he was being brought up for an Other Than Honorable Discharge. Obviously the command did not like the fact that he didn't go to court martial, and he did have kind of a bad history, there's no doubt about that, and he had an alcohol problem. So he came in to me, and I provided him standard counseling for when you're going to get discharged, and didn't think anything more about it. A couple of months later, I got a call saying, you've been requested to go to Camp Pendleton to represent this individual. I said, well, they don't usually allow you to choose the defense counsel if—in fact, there was a Marine Corps order saying you can no longer choose someone from out of state, I guess, to be your defense counsel. The exception would be is,if you had provided him counseling and had an attorney-client relationship.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: So I said—well, I had just barely remembered that.

[00:20:03]

But they sent me back to Camp Pendleton, California, to do that.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: Which was interesting because that was going to be my next duty station. So I thought, well, nice, I get to see that, and I can represent him. I got back, again, there's no email, there's no Twitter, and that sort of stuff. I got there. He was UA. He wasn't there. [Laughter] So they spent a lot of money to get me back there, and I ended up having—we had to go through, represent the client, without the client saying—I mean, there was an empty chair, so it was pretty hard to say that he really wants to stay in the Unites States Marine Corps.

But that would have been a very interesting case at the trial level; he was also charged with breaking and entry, and assault, and taking a weapon, and that sort of thing. I was looking forward to trying it because he had—it was all a prank. They had taken the firing pin out of the weapon, so the weapon really wasn't a weapon, or was it? And that was going to be the issue because everybody knew the firing pin—they were in a disbursing office, and there was money in the disbursing office. And a shot—back then, they were all—had shotguns issued to the person who was supposed to be guarding the money. And they all got drunk, and removed the firing pin, and then tied up the guy that was supposed to be watching the money. Then my intoxicated client wrote a message and signed it, saying, "This is a prank," so it wasn't hard to catch him.

Halaska: Yeah. Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: But I never got to try that case, because it was dismissed on a speedy trial motion.

Halaska: That was in California?

Bowers
Healey: That was in Okinawa. That was in Okinawa.

Halaska: Oh, that was in Okinawa. Oh, that's what he did in Okinawa? Okay.

Bowers
Healey: That was in Okinawa, yes.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah, lots of good, interesting cases there. Hot and humid most of the time. My sitter service for my daughter was two dependent wives, and again, just wonderful people, both of them. And we got to do a little travel, got to Korea, got to Hong Kong.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Continued getting trial experience. Counted slots—that was—they had slot machines over there, and the officers had to take turns counting the money from the slot machines.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Just one of those crummy little duties that you get assigned. And dealt with that old, jumbled up car, sold it when I left.

Then my husband got separated from the service, because he had not augmented. They actually sent him back to Camp Pendleton to be separated there. He was going three weeks ahead of me, and he actually took my daughter back, because for monetary reasons, I think you had to pay full price if you were over two, and maybe 50%, or 10% if you were under, and she was just about to turn age.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So he dealt with a two-year-old child for a couple of weeks, which we has some interesting stories to tell about. But I joined them about three weeks later.

One of the last things in Okinawa, an interesting side story, in any job that you do, but in particular if you have speaking jobs, it is nice to be gifted with a good speaking voice, which is usually a low, mellow voice, which I don't have. I always think of myself as having a rather quiet, high-pitched voice. But for some reason, my voice records well. And as I was leaving Okinawa, the last day, just about ready to drop off my car and go to the station, I had done all my checkout at the main legal office, and wanted to make sure I got to the airport in time. I'm walking out over the parking lot, and it is hot, like, 95, and 100% humidity.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Somebody comes from the back of me, hollering out my name, "Captain Healey! Captain Healey!" And I'm going, oh gosh, what didn't I sign? What didn't I do? Why—and that sort of thing.

Halaska: Yeah.

[00:25:00]

Bowers
Healey: I'm thinking, it's not good. I turned around for a second—yeah, I turned around. And I looked at the individual. And he said, "I just want to say, 'thank you.'" And I looked at him again, and I said, "I'm sorry, I don't recognize you. Who are you?" And I didn't recognize him. He was a court reporter and a note reader. Well, he was a note reader, he was not a court reporter.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So his job, he was a lance corporal, his only job was to sit with the phones on, the headsets on, and record what he heard. He said, "I just want to thank you. I'm going to miss you so much!" Because he liked the sound—I was easy to transcribe.

Halaska: Oh, okay. Fantastic!

Bowers
Healey: Just one of those kind of unique stories. And I had, a couple of years earlier, one of the court reporters had said, "Hey, we can't figure out what this other attorney is saying. Would you listen to it?" I said, Well, I think her voice is—I loved her voice. She had a Texas accent, and it was just kind of—melt, and she always had a group of guys following her. [Laughter] Because she was just so lovely and had this lovely Texas accent. But I put it on, and I said, "I don't know what she's saying. I have no clue what she's saying." For some reason, she just did not record well. So I could appreciate the lance corporal who liked the sound of my voice. And I don't speak fast, and I don't speak slow, it's somewhere in between, and whatever. It's your accent, it's your tone that makes you understandable.

So that was my last person in Okinawa. And then I got on a plane, flew back to California.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And my husband and daughter were there. And my husband was—"Three weeks. Three weeks! Let me tell you about all the bad things that have happened." They were nothing terrible, it was just a two-year-old.

Halaska: Um-hm. Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Then we got—so we took vacation, and we—I was assigned to trial work at Camp Pendleton.

Halaska: Okay. I just want to go back to some things in Okinawa. You said that there was a really good community there.

Bowers
Healey: Um-hm.

Halaska: Can you tell me about some memorable people who were there that you were friends with, and what you guys would go do for recreation?

Bowers
Healey: Yeah. A lot of what we did, I'm trying to think of the names, and I've lost the names of a lot of these folks. I can picture them. The Clancys, then Major Clancy and his wife happened to live in the same apartment house, and they happen to have a one-year-old also. So during hurricanes, we would get together with them, as well as just go out to eat, because it was so easy to eat. The Canones [??] were there. They also had young children. Then Captain Werner, I worked with him. He was great to work with. He was the trial counsel when I was defense counsel. And their kids were a little older. A lot of what we would do is go out to eat.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: There was also Jim Mary—Maryellen, Marylou Shockley[?]. They were funny people, and they lived out at—they actually lived in a very primitive place. They actually just had a hot pot, that they didn't have a stove or a kitchen. They just got a little hot pot and lived off that—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: —and lived off that. And he was a major—he was a Vietnam guy. Wally Werner was great. I remember him coming to me, and he wanted to do a deal on a case.

And I said—to do a pre-trial agreement. I said, Well, I can't. I can't plead the individual guilty. So he went away and the next day he came back again. And I know he knew he didn't have a strong case, but I couldn't plead my individual guilty. He just wasn't going to plead. And he said, "How about a non-judicial punishment?" And he said, "Because the victim of the assault, he's a dirt bag!" I said, you know, "I appreciate you sharing that with me, but my guy just isn't going to plead guilty." So he was—and I'd meet him later on in my career, also.

Then I had a guy that I didn't get along with. Well, I shouldn't say I didn't get along with him well, he just had an abrasive personality. And we had a case that was—they were co-accused. And you don't do cases together, but sometimes it's a matter of who can get the pre-trial agreement first, and who is going to testify against another person. And I knew that my client had some information that would hurt his client.

[00:30:01]

And so it was a matter, again, who's going to go to trial first? And there was another aspect of the case, bringing somebody back. I said, well—I was trying not to give away anything, but I was trying also to get his—some cooperation from him, because I knew if I had a witness come back from the United States, it would absolutely bury his client. And he started asking me about my trial strategy, and he was just—and I gave him the theory of my case, part of the theory of my case. And he said, "Well, that's not going to work. That's the wrong one. Wrong theory of the case." And that was that. I mean, I just couldn't deal with him.

Turned out I went into court and got mixed findings, but got some not guilties also, based on my theory of the case. I remember him approaching me, and he said, "Well, how did you do that?" I said, "Well, that was the theory of the case." So anyway, he was an abrasive individual. But later on, he and I became good friends at another duty station.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I guess we started seeing eye to eye. But I would say there were four or five couples that went out quite often together. Then there were some singles also, that joined us. It was just so easy going to the Officer Club, it was inexpensive for brunch, for meals at night. Going out in town was inexpensive. The Shockleys [??], he was an adventurous guy, and he'd bike all over the place. He also had some—I knew he was wounded in Vietnam. And sometimes he'd get up from the counsel table, and he would just—it was just hard and painful for him to get up, and he'd walk around a little. Then the stiffness would go out. And I said to him, "Major, is that from your Vietnam?" He said, "Oh, heck, no. That's from a volleyball game." Or, "That's because I rode my bike into a benjo ditch," these

ditches for fish and everything, and sewer went out. [Halaska laughs] Sometimes they were covered, and sometimes they weren't in Okinawa.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: But he was humorous in that way, and they were good folks. And he'd take us to some places. There was—once we went up to have fried catfish. And he said, "Well, you've got to be a little adventurous, kind of off the trail."

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: I said, "Well, how do you get fried catfish? Southern fried catfish in Okinawa, where everything is Japanese or Okinawan, or Korean. He said, "Well, there is a place that is kind of a black community, American black." Some of the Americans that served in the sixties and seventies married Okinawans and stayed there. And lived in a sort of a community. So we went out once or twice and had fried catfish, at a place where, you know, most of the patrons were American blacks. So interesting insights there.

I did see some underground tunnels that were built during the—they were open now to the public, and we took a tour down there. There were small shrines and things that would be interesting to go to, or waterfalls that you could find, little shopping areas. There was a book in Okinawa, put out by one of the churches there, and it was called, *Where is It?* It would give you directions. The street signs were close to non-existent, or they would be written in the Kanji, they wouldn't be written in English. So the book, put together by this church group of ladies, it was a—you know, you go down to the bowling pin and then you take a right, you go up a windy, snaky road, and when you get to a pink building, take a left. That's how we got around Okinawa. I bought one of those books right away.

I mentioned that I went to the brig, which was up in the north, at Camp McTureous. And I would do that on Saturdays. It was starting to get very congested, so even though it was maybe just an hour up there, it was—during the week time, it might take you two hours to get there. So sometimes I would go up to see all the guys that I knew, that were up there, that were confined, and I'd go Saturday morning. My husband didn't like sitting with the two-year-old, or the one-year-old. So I said, "Well, come on along. They have a canteen there, and you can she can go play outside and have breakfast." And anytime you tell my husband he can have breakfast, he goes for that. [Laughter] So they would go to breakfast, they would play pinball machines, and they'd play outside until I spent my three, four or five hours seeing all my clients up there.

[00:35:07]

So and then we would go with our book, *Where Is It,* and we'd find someplace up north that we hadn't seen, some little shrine, or something that was significant in the war. Okinawa was pretty poor back then.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I went back ten years later, and the Japanese had—the Japanese and the Okinawans don't get along well together.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: The Japanese always let you know that the Okinawans are at least a step below them. But it turns out Okinawa is four hundred miles south of mainland Japan, so it's warmer. So when I went back there the second time, there were huge high rises all over the island, that the Japanese would come to, to get into warmer weather. And even though they still—maybe it's changed now. But I know I met some Japanese dependent wives, and I would talk about Okinawa, and I remember one or two of them saying, "Well, I'm not Okinawan."

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: They just—there was that—I think there was always that feeling. Then in World War II, the Japanese invaded Okinawa and killed a lot of the Okinawans, so there is friction there, and a history.

So those are some—I did not—the Coral Islands—it looks beautiful, but they're not sandy islands, or not sandy beaches. Some people got into scuba diving, but I didn't. I didn't do—we'd go to the beach once in a while, but you really couldn't go into the water. And some people would, and they'd come back the next Monday morning, the bottom of their foot was stung with something, or cut on the coral.

Halaska: Yeah. Um-hm?

Bowers Healey: Bad enough so that they were kind of laid up and had to go to the infirmary for a while. It just made you think, well, I'm not going to do that. It's not worth it.

So we did not fly home that year. We spent an entire year in Japan. We had a phone, but very expensive, so we wrote letters a lot to our parents. And they were good, my father-in-law was a good writer, and my mother was a good writer, so

constant communication that way, and the *Stars and Stripes*. And all the TV shows and stars on the FSN—is that it? I'll think about it a little later. The channel, lots of old reruns for several months. Some people would—VCR tapes just came out, and people would be sending those back from the States to show the most recent soap operas. I'm trying to think of the name of the very popular nighttime soap opera that was on, there was a lady named Fallon ["Dynasty" and "The Colby's"], and I think John-somebody, I can't think of the name of it. But it was very popular. And they'd have their in-laws send them the tape so they could—and VCRs [Videocassette Recorders] were big at that time, almost everybody bought a VCR. Microwaves came out.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: Microwaves had been around for a little while, but most people didn't own them until 1980s.

Halaska: Yeah. Okay.

Bowers Healey: They were kind of big monstrosities, and they cost a lot of money. They're not the $59 types, they were several hundred dollars.

Halaska: Oh, okay. Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So that was something new that was something. And we had minor earthquakes, but they were not anywhere near as destructive as the typhoons. We had four typhoons while we were there. And those became—you got used to them, and you made parties out of them.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Everybody was—basically, you were not to be outside. The day or two before a typhoon was coming, all the troops would run around, taking down all the signs and trash cans come in. You'd get the C-rats [C-Ration], or MREs [Meals Ready to Eat] would be brought into the barracks. And you were just—you'd get non-judicial punishment, or Article 15, if you went out and you weren't supposed to be out. So it was taken seriously. They just stoked up on water, food, and beer if you lived in a place where you could have beer and make a party out of it.

Halaska: Um-hm. When you say, lived in a place where you could have beer—

Bowers
Healey: Back then, the drinking age was eighteen.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: I don't know if they remember—if they allowed the troops to have beer in the barracks or not.

[00:40:00]

So that might have been an issue, I just can't remember.

Halaska: Okay. Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: I think that they were not supposed to have beer in the barracks, and that after the typhoon outside of the barracks, you would find an awful lot of beer cans. They were taken out the morning before inspection.

Halaska: Um-hm. That's about right.

Bowers
Healey: Yeah. That's about right. Happens at all time. But it was interesting, that eighteen-year-old thing went on for a long time, probably for my first ten years or so. And the age in the civilian world had gotten up to twenty, but they kept it at eighteen on base.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: For—there were a few years that were different there. And later on, I know we changed. But we were still having going away parties with beer being for the whole office, in which beer was the primary beverage. And there would only be a few seventeen-year-olds that could not drink. Yeah.

Halaska: Um-hm. Previously you had mentioned psychiatrists.

Bowers
Healey: Oh, yeah. I had a few clients that—one in particular, but a few. If you thought there might be an issue as to the competency of the individual going to court martial, and the ability to understand, it behooved you to make sure that they got to a psychiatrist. I had one individual that I don't know what his problem is—

was—is—was—but I didn't feel comfortable taking him to court at all. Actually, I had maybe two or three new requests to psych report. And this individual was in the brig, and he was—I don't know how—obviously paranoid to me. And there were things that he wasn't doing. And he ended up not getting a Bad Conduct Discharge, so he did get a—just didn't go to court and get a transcript but sent him to the psychiatrist. And I actually expected the psychiatrist to come up with something.

And I didn't have a lot of concrete things, but I wrote down that the psychiatrist wants you to know what you're observing that would lead you to believe that the individual is not competent to stand trial, or was having some significant psychiatric problems. And I remember getting the report back from the psychiatrist, and thinking, gee, this is just absolutely ludicrous. And I went back to the brig because he was in the brig. And I talked to his counselors—counselors agreed with me. Something terribly wrong with this individual.

And I had another client. I just didn't want to dig too much, because this—I said, "Hey, do you know"—actually, the individual would go away, I'd call for four or five, six people to come and wait for me, because I wanted to see them.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And they would need to stand in line or sit outside until I got to them. And this guy would take off. So I was talking to—well, maybe he just doesn't like women, or whatever. Or maybe he doesn't like captains. But I had already seen him once.

And I saw the guys in line, and then I went in to the counseling where I could talk to him. I talked to the first guy in line, and I went back out, and this guy was no longer in line. So I brought the second guy in. I said, "Hey, do you know where So-and-So went?" And he kind of said, "He left. He just left." And they weren't supposed to leave, because they were on orders to go see me. And then I said, "Well, do you know him?" He said, "Yeah, I went to boot camp with him." I said, "Yes?" He goes—makes a hand motion by his ear, and I don't know if you've ever seen that or not, but when we were kids, if you went circular around your ear, it's goofy. Crazy.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: I said, "Hmm." Then without me saying any more, he said, "But he wasn't like that in boot camp. Something's changed."

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: But I couldn't get a psychiatrist to say that. So I went through court, and it was a strange court. Because I didn't have the psychiatrist's report, I knew I couldn't bring a motion for insanity or incompetency. So I wasn't sure how to do this court.

[00:45:00]

And he was going to plead guilty. No he wasn't going to—I couldn't get him to plead guilty to whatever it was. And it's his choice, it's always the accused's choice. I mean, you lay out the case, you tell him, this is the evidence. How would you like to plead? And if they say plead not guilty, we go not guilty.

So he was so paranoid, I thought, that—and not very communicative. But I let him know how I was going to do the trial. Also, when they say, if you have an individual who's guilty, you really need to plead them guilty. It's faster if you go to court and say guilty, as opposed to saying not guilty. If the client pleads not guilty, then they have to go to an allocution. And they have to talk about each offense in detail, and each element of the offense. And prior to my starting in the Marine Corps, the folks would tell me, and they said at the Justice School also, it's faster if you plead guilty and just let the government put on the evidence real quick, usually it's a [inaudible] case. You'll get out of trial about a half an hour earlier or something; you can go through a lot of cases. But that's unethical to do that if your client wants to plead guilty.

So my client was non-committable—committal—as to how he wanted to plead. So this is the first and only time that I plead someone guilty—

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: —who probably was guilty of most of the charges. But I just couldn't get him to communicate a guilty plea, or a not guilty plea.

So plead guilty. I told the trial counsel ahead of time so that he'd have all of his evidence ready. And you're supposed to tell the judges as well as the trial counsel what your pleads are, so you can prep accordingly. And trial counsel put on his evidence. Judge found him guilty and closed the court. And the court reporter, who I knew, who had been there a long time said, you know, whispering over like this to the judge, and he said, "You've got to let her make a closing statement." [Laughs] It was just such a strange court, that the judge had never seen that. I mean, he knew that I was going to plead guilty, because I have to put in my pleas ahead of time.

But—and then the judge, after trial, said—didn't give him a Bad Conduct Discharge. And he had the impression everything was just hunky dory, that my client was just too quiet and shy to talk in court. It didn't happen. And there were a lot of other things that were going on, there were charges that were not charged that I knew about, that had the trial counsel—and again, he was a good friend of mine. He said, hey, you got these charges now, but depending upon what happens with this, next week you can expect all these other charges to come in.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Okay. And he ended up getting an administrative discharge, probably for misconduct. But it was just—it was hard to deal with a case in which you had an individual who was—clearly had mental problems. And I talked to the first sergeant, the first sergeant said the same thing. And he'd done some things that were really—could have sent him away for years.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I'm not sure that—sometimes you wonder about how you handle the cases. But I think the end outcome was better than had I pled him not guilty, because then the judge would have given him a Bad Conduct Discharge, no doubt in my mind. And that's kind of an ongoing thing with psychiatrists.

But I had had an earlier case, I mentioned I didn't have many exciting cases when I was defense counsel in Camp Lejeune. I did have somebody who was found incompetent in court.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: That probably only happens one every ten years or so.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: It was just a most unusual case. It wasn't a ser—it was a UA. It wasn't a serious crime. But during court, the judge asked him—and I had asked him many times why he went UA. And the judge kept pushing him on, Why did you go UA? Just going through this allocution. And he finally just kind of says quietly, "Because the little people told me to." And I'd never heard that from him. I'd never heard that from him.

[00:50:00]

It wasn't—and the judge called me up after a while, and I knew as soon as he said that, all right, we're going to be seeing a psychiatrist here, and this is going to go down to—and the judge called me up, and he was angry with me. And he said, "Did he"—and I said he didn't say anything inconsistent with that, but he never said that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And the judge is just rolling his eyes. So that psychiatrist came in and said—and the individual, again, probably because he hadn't been overly prepped, and I didn't see that coming, he went in and he saw—I let him know, you're going to go see a psychiatrist. He was just a very meek, quiet individual. And immature, I thought. But he told the same thing to the psychiatrist, and she came in next week and said, "I don't know. I don't know. But he told me this, and he said it with sincerity." So there you go. Out of court.

Halaska: Yeah. Were the—just to get things straight, were the psychiatrists, were they—

Bowers Healey: They're Navy.

Halaska: They're Navy?

Bowers Healey: Um-hm.

Halaska: Okay. Okay. Then, let me see—okay. Oh, the trips that you took while you were in Okinawa, you said you went to a few places. Can you just tell me a little bit about your trips?

Bowers Healey: Well, my husband and I took a MWR, Morale and Welfare. We paid for a trip to Hong Kong and Taipei. And that was about a weeklong.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I think—I can't remember if we did that before or after we went to Korea. Of course, you always talk about military hops—well, the thing about military hops is, you never know if they're going to go, or if they're going to come back.

Halaska: Hops?

Bowers Healey: Hop. You get on a military flight, and if they've got extra seats, they'll take you to wherever you're going to go.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But when you want to come back, you have to hope that there's a flight coming back, and that there's seats for you. So we got to Korea, and we went to, I think, three air bases there. It seemed to me we were at Osan Air Base. And then we got to Seoul also. I can't even remember how we got from base to base necessarily, if we took a bus, or—actually, we were just at Osan and we were at Seoul, Korea. We did a lot of walking, but we must have bussed in between the difference. And I bought souvenirs, and a lot of people were doing that because you could get these big, big blankets, cheap. And a lot of stuff was cheap, if you could carry it back.

But when we went to the military airport to get back, there was no flight available, with seats available. So we waited and waited. I guess it had been cancelled. I'm thinking, gosh, I've got a trial scheduled for tomorrow, I've got to get back to Okinawa. I'm going to have to pay the money to get back, and then try to figure out how to get to the civilian air base to do that. Then finally, I think we were there for about twelve hours, playing cards and talking with everybody else. And finally, a group of Marines that we had met there had said, Hey, there was an unscheduled Marine flight going back. Stand over here, maybe we can get you on it. And we got back on a nice little plane, in time.

Halaska: Oh, nice.

Bowers Healey: That makes you a little edgy about taking those free military hops. And it was years before I took another hop, because it is pretty tenuous as to whether you're going to get back.

So that was the extent of our travel. And I wanted to go to mainland Japan, but the defense counselor said, Oh, don't pay to go to Japan, because they use us as defense counsels, and you'll get an assignment there as a defense—and it never happened, or they stopped sending people over to mainland to do defense work. So didn't really get to mainland Japan, either.

Halaska: Um-hm. Is there anything—any other stories, or anything else that you would like to talk about, about your time in Okinawa?

Bowers Healey: You know, in the flight back—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: —we stopped in Alaska, and again, long flights. Pretty tired when you get there.

Halaska: Is it civilian, or—

Bower Healey: It was early in the morning when we got to Alaska. Hard to keep track of time because you're changing so many time zones. And there were two other Marines returning on that same—two other Marine judge advocates, returning on that same flight. And I happened to walk by a newsstand and saw the headlines in the paper. And the headlines of the paper said, "John Hinckley not guilty."

[00:55:00]

If you remember, John Hinckley is the person who shot President Reagan.

Halaska: Oh. Okay.

Bowers Healey: And we hadn't heard that, but it was all over the paper, because we obviously were in flight for about ten hours. Not guilty by reason of insanity.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: And I went back to the two other—I know one was Lieutenant Colonel Verducci, or Major Verducci. And I said, "Hey, did you see the lines?" And I said, "Did you see the headlines?" They said no. And so I told them what they were, and they were shocked. Just absolutely shocked, because it is so difficult to get a not guilty by reason for insanity, or dismissal by reason of insanity.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So I remember those headlines coming out the day that I was flying back from Okinawa. So that pretty much winds up my first Okinawa experience.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right. So the next was Camp Pendleton.

Bowers
Healey: Camp Pendleton. And I was assigned to the First Marine Division.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: They were going to assign me to El Toro [Orange County, California]. I had asked to go to the West Coast, and then my orders, for some reason, got shifted to Pendleton. So that was fine.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I wasn't—Pendleton has three legal offices at the time, they did base, and FSSG and Division.

Halaska: What was the second one?

Bowers
Healey: FSSG, Force Service Support Group.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And my first two assignments had been to a base organization, and then to an FSSG in Okinawa. Then they assigned me to Division. And I was a little surprised, because I had come from Camp Lejeune, where no women officer judge advocates were assigned to Division, they were all assigned to either an air station or a non-deploying unit, or something. However, there's probably a story—there is a story behind that, too. The reason I wasn't assigned to the Second Marine Division in Camp Lejeune and my husband was had nothing to do with my qualifications, or how I graduated at The Basic School, or the Naval Justice School. It had to do with the fact that the staff judge advocate at the Division did not want female officers there.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And the reason he didn't is because he had two summertime judge advocates there, and they were both overweight. And when it came time to take the PFT, they would, at the Division, transfer them to the FSSG. And then when the FSSG had to take their PFT, they would transfer them back because of their weight and their inability to pass the PFT.

Halaska: Were these males or females?

Bowers Healey: Females.

Halaska: Females, okay.

Bowers Healey: Females. Two female officers. And in fact, when I met my husband the first day, the reason he met me, we were all checking into the barracks in individual rooms, and I was—an hour after I checked into the room, the next female checked in. And she was put with me. And her name is Sandy, and she's a good friend of mine now. Sandy has a kind of a high, loud—high-pitched, loud voice, booming voice.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And as we were introducing each other, I mentioned that I had just finished law school. And she said, "So *you're* a *lawyer*?" And my future husband happened to be walking by. And he's a judge advocate. So he turned around and he came back and introduced himself, and we talked. The three of us talked. And he again asked a little bit about my background, the things that you do when you first meet somebody new. And a little while on into the conversation, he said to me, "Well, you're not too fat for a woman Marine lawyer." And I thought, hmm, where did that come from? And I think he told me at the time that he had been at the Division when the two summertime female judge advocates were there, and told me about the difficulty that they had with the PFT, and being overweight, and that sort of thing.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So that—I just kind of dismissed that. It's a good story to tell when we get together after we've been married forty years, and that sort of thing. But that was our first meeting.

Then when we were at Naval Justice School, my husband knew a lot of people because he'd had two summertimes. And he arranged a lunch with a colonel, who was the senior judge advocate. And we were having lunch for a half an hour, or forty-five minutes, or something. And he turned to me, and he asked how things were going, and that sort of thing.

[01:00:02]

And he turned to me and he said, "Ellen, the most important thing you will ever do is pass a PFT." And [laughs] I just—yeah, I'm taken back by that, because I've just been through The Basic School and integrated company. Passing the PFT, the mile and a half PFT, was de minimis, compared to the other things that we did; the forced marches, the obstacle courses, the nine miles, and all of that. But he also had been part of the Division FSSG in Camp Lejeune when there were two female judge advocates who couldn't pass the PFT, who didn't make weight standards. And that stuck in the minds of so many people, for so long.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And the Marine Corps has very few women, compared to the other services. It was—I think we were trying to reach 10%, and maybe the other services at around 16% women. And when I started, it was maybe 4%, 5%. So the impressions that a woman Marine left would impact all other women Marines for quite some time, it turned out to be.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: In fact, I mentioned that when I was on maternity leave at Camp Lejeune, I think I was down to four cases. I mean, I knew generally when I was going to deliver, so I was winding myself—being wound out of cases. And in addition, I would take other people's easy cases, walk-in—I just didn't get involved in a lot of major cases. I had four cases left. And one of the cases, the reason I had it left over and didn't finish before I went on maternity leave, I came in the day that I was due, and of course babies come when they come.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: I was scheduled to do a court the next day, and it was Monday morning, I show up. And I meet the defense counsel, and he said, "What are you doing here? You're supposed to have a baby." And I said, "Well, babies come when they come." And he immediately turned around, went to the judge's offices and got a continuance on a case that I was to do, a general court martial case, for some poppycock reason. In fact, I went to the judge, and I said, "I'm ready to try this case." I got the members all lined up. I got the evidence lined up. I'm ready to do this case, and it's scheduled for tomorrow, and I want to do that. The judge goes, "Eh," and he let the defense counsel take a continuance. And the reason was, the defense counsel did not want me to try that case.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And I was familiar with the case. That was the primary reason. I didn't think I was going to end up with a good sentence in the case for a variety of reasons. He had a very popular client who had done some horrible things, a very popular client.

So anyway, I had my baby and I'm on maternity leave. The defense counsel is immediately into court with a different trial counsel who doesn't know the case very well.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And it happens to be a female trial counsel. I come back from maternity leave, and I'm going through the line at a hail and farewell that we're having that summer. And a senior full colonel turns around—we're all in civilian attire—and he hears my husband and I and some other people talking about the law. And he turns around to me and he just sticks his finger at me. And he said, "You! You lost that case! You did a bad job in that case." And I'm thinking—first thing I'm thinking is, I haven't done a case for months, you know?

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: Finally, I guess, I'm still a captain. I hadn't seen that colonel before, and he's just a tough guy. I had also heard he'd been a member on that case and gave an answer that he was challenged off the case. So he didn't actually see the case go through. But he knew that the person, that the gunny, the accused got a light sentence. And he was blaming me for it. Finally, I found out which case we're talking about. And to kind of bring this around to, what one female does is attributed to other females, whether it's merited or not.

Halaska: Yeah. Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And some of that has to do with the fact that there are so few of us. And I finally realized which case he was talking about. And I think I said, "Sir, I didn't try that case." And he's still thinking that I am. What puzzled me so much is that I'm short, 5'2 1/2", short, dark hair, brunette, stout, Midwesterner, with a Midwestern accent.

[01:05:03]

The person who got stuck with that case was a tall, thin, willowy, long red hair, with a lovely Southern Texas accent. And he was—he'd been in that courtroom.

And he's confusing me with that person. You know, she couldn't have gotten a better—I don't think she could have gotten a better sentence than I could have. She was put in a difficult position because she didn't work up the case like I had. But I just thought, wow. You know, sometimes you don't know what you've got to overcome, because you don't know what people are thinking, or where they're coming from. But, yeah.

So I'm off on that now. What was I talking to you about before that? We've already gone to Pendleton, I guess.

Halaska: Yeah. Well, I was going to ask, do you think—because the impression that you would leave as a woman Marine would kind of impact other women, and people's impressions of women Marines in general, how do you think that impacted how you operated?

Bowers Healey: That's a good question. And I'm not sure anyone else ever asked me that before. It did impact. Although maybe it's not a lot different from my personality, was just, we're getting down to business, here. I've got something to do. Whether it's a trial, or standing duty, or dealing with other personnel—I think my approach is very business-like.

Halaska: Um-hm

Bowers Healey: Maybe more so than it had to be. But I certainly didn't intend to—I always was aware of fraternization, maybe because I was married early on, it made a little difference. But even in the civilian world, and I worked there for about four years between undergraduate school and law—while I was in law school. I, and other people—when you saw women in the workforce that took advantage of a situation, or schmoozed up to the boss, and used—

Halaska: Okay. All right.

Bowers Healey: —their charms, I guess, it would cause a rift among the women. And I worked primarily with women. I worked in a bank for two years, and I worked in a title insurance company. And those were heavily women clerical positions, and I was in a clerical position. But there were individuals who would take advantage of their situation, and the boss. And I know when I worked in the bank, the boss had just divorced his wife, and married his secretary.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And the secretary to the deputy boss was also pretty schmoozy. Other ladies just said, be careful what you say around those folks, because it's not going to be kept in confidence. And I thought, err. But it did not make for a good culture. And the second place that I worked, there was also one of the bosses had a relationship with most of the women in the office.

Halaska: Okay. Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: So those experiences, I think, followed me into the Marine Corps. I realized that there were some females in my first duty station that got away with things, because the male officers weren't willing to deal with them in the same way that they dealt with the male enlisted. There were other—when I get to the point where I'm talking about my being an 06, there was something that really took me back, and it had to do with females and how they conducted themselves. Which wasn't the majority, by any means.

Halaska: Um-hm. Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: I think the majority of all Marines, and women Marines, get down to business, do their business. And many of them are probably resentful of people who take advantage of their sex and sexual positions, one way or the other. And there are all sorts of combinations that can go on.

So I think that people who knew me just knew me as kind of a straight-forward, no-nonsense person, for the most part. And later on, and a month ago, I met several enlisted and a warrant officer who knew me, and made some of the same comments.

[01:10:07]

They probably saw me pretty much as a business-like person.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: So, now?

Halaska: All right. Oh, we were talking about, you were attached to the First Marine Division, and why you were not attached to the Division previously.

Bowers
Healey: Yeah, that was—

Halaska: Yes. Okay.

Bowers Healey: Good. Thank you reminding me where I was. And that was because of the experience at the Second Marine Division. But the First Marine Division, and California was a lot different.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: They talk about East Cost and West Coast Marines. And there really is a difference.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And part of it's the culture of the two coasts, also. North Carolina, some people liked being stationed at Camp Lejeune. At one time, the *Navy Times* would do an article, the best-liked and the worst-liked duty stations. Camp Lejeune made both lists, number one best-liked, number one worst-liked. So if you like a slower pace, if you like hunting and fishing and going, that's a great place. And if you're from the South, you're going to like that, because it's closer to all locations in the South. Then Camp Pendleton—I talked about the close Okinawa community among the Marines, as well as—and I think Camp Lejeune was like that, too. Camp Lejeune didn't have many restaurants that you could go to. I mean, it was, you go to the club, and that was it. And you do things with other Marines, and that was it. In fact, they used to have the brown bags. A lot of places that you went out to eat in town, you couldn't order alcohol.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So you brought your own alcohol in a brown bag. And they would do the setups, or give you ice, or something. Get out to Camp Pendleton, and there was not much of a tight-knit Marine Corps-Navy community there, because at the end of the day, everybody left. Some would go down to San Diego, some would go up to—I mean, they had long distances to drive. And they didn't come back for evening activities, for get-togethers, whether it be a hail and farewell, or birthday parties, or whatever, because they lived a long way away.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: And so that was a big difference there. But I got to the First Marine Division. There were at least two other female judge advocates. And by that time, I'd been in the Marine Corps long enough, so that wherever I went, there would be people that I knew before at some other duty station. And it really is kind of a small corps, there's no doubt about that. So I began to recognize people. My husband was off active duty.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: But he worked for a while as a reservist. And then he took the bar exam, and then he got a job out there. And we had our second child. And shouldn't be that big a deal, having children while you're working. But I decided to take the same tact again, and that is report into duty station—I was pregnant when I reported in, and not tell anyone, because I thought it would impact on where they would assign me, and that sort of thing. So—and typically, it did.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So I got a courtroom job, trial counsel. And then, I can't remember—I guess I was—didn't say anything to anyone, and didn't intend to, until I had to wear a maternity uniform. Again, I was just starting to feel good again, because my first month or two were a little bit rough. And I met the staff judge advocate, who was an interesting individual. Nice. I would say he was nice. He had some eccentric things about him. One of the things, and everybody in the Marine Corps knew that he wore two watches, one on each side. And I never asked him why, but other people said, well, I think he had been in Vietnam in combat, and the reason why, that I was told, is because if he lost one watch, or if one arm was shot off, he'd have the other watch.

So, all right. So first meeting with him, I was just taken in to meet him, as a meet and greet sort of thing. And he happened to ask, "When do you plan to take the leave?" It was in August. And I said, "Well, I don't plan to take any immediate leave, but I'll take some leave in February." And he said, "We'll see if we can work that in.

[01:15:01]

And I'm thinking, it's six months away, or more. Besides getting that impression what came out of my mouth, without much thought is, "Well, I think you're going to have to work it in, because I'm going to have a baby." You could see the reaction was just—and he still—can we work this in, this sort of mentality, six or eight months away. So but he was a nice man. He was very considerate. And I

started trial work, which was interesting work, out there. But it was at the end of the summer, in August. So when I got there, I thought, well, it's going to take me a while to work up my caseload. Usually two or three come in a week or so. In the first week, I had fifteen, twenty cases.

Halaska: Oh, my goodness.

Bowers Healey: What was happening is, people were detaching, taking orders for somewhere—we had a bunch of what we call "summer funners," those were the law students who were there just for eight weeks. And they're non-lawyers doing trial. And I remember one of the non-lawyers came up to me. I think I had met him briefly, and he had been in court, and he handed me the folder. Sometimes they were dumped on my desk, but this guy, I thought, well, he's nice enough to hand it to me in person, rather than just dump it on my desk.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And he said, "I want to tell you about this case." He said, "On the left hand side is the evidence that you will need. On the right hand side is the evidence that will do you no good. And the judge has ruled stuff on the left hand side inadmissible. Good luck, ma'am." I said, "You got to be kidding." And first of all, I'm thinking, he's a non-lawyer, what's he doing in court doing motion work? Because usually you give the non-lawyers pretty easy cases. But he was a smart guy. He was right. All that evidence had been ruled inadmissible. But I had it as a case to do.

More of a story, I ended up, a couple of weeks later, going into court on that case, after I had interviewed all the people. And I said, oh, gosh, this is not good. It wasn't—in some respects, it wasn't a serious, serious case; somebody rolled a truck—they were out in the desert. All of Camp Pendleton's desert around. They were what they call "boonie hopping," they were just running these vehicles like crazy, and rolled it. I don't think anybody was injured, as I can recall. So—

Halaska: Was it a military vehicle?

Bowers Healey: It was a military vehicle, yeah.

Halaska: Okay. [Laughs]

Bowers Healey: It was a military vehicle. And there were a couple of military guys involved. So I can't remember if one had already been court-martialed, or just what it was. I ended up winning the case, but it was just a quirk of a thing. All the evidence that

had been ruled inadmissible, I didn't put it in. I knew I couldn't put it in. But the defense counsel put it in. And I thought—I guess he didn't realize what he was doing, I don't know. And I remember we broke at noon, and my senior trial counsel said, "How are you doing?" I said, "I'm going to win this case." And he said, "What?" So yeah, that was one of the first cases handed off to me. But everybody else was leaving, and I got—it was a very, very busy trial work. I did that, and the SJA [staff judge advocate] left me, and even after I started wearing the maternity uniform, he left me in until my last two months. And I got the word. Somebody called me and said, "Colonel wants you out of trial." I said, "Oh, why?" Okay. "Because he sees you walking up the steps every day." Because the trial shop was on the second deck. And I said, oh, gosh. Yeah, all right.

So he's very paternalistic. Nice, but paternalistic. And I was assigned to the review office, which is fine, because I hadn't done that before.

Halaska: What's that?

Bowers Healey: You review other people's court martials, and you read their transcripts, and then do a legal review on it before it goes up to the more senior court.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And you do the review for the staff judge advocate, and he or she signs off on it. So but they let me finish my cases.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So I continued to do cases, really, up until the time I delivered, for the most part. And meanwhile, I started learning review.

And then I was out for four weeks, came back, and they put me right back in the trial shop, because it was a bit—very busy.

[01:20:00]

But within two months or so, because I had had two months' experience, the review officer, senior review officer, got a assignment as executive officer out at the recon. That's something in the Marine Corps that Marines can do. Even if you're a judge advocate, you can go take a position as a line officer.

Halaska: Oh, okay. Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: If they want you. And he had been a former line officer, I think probably Infantry or Tank. So he took that opportunity. And since I had two whole months of experience in review, they sent me back to review. And I was the review chief for a while.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: Very capable staff [inaudible 01:20:40]. In fact, I got there and I found that—very, very capable. I looked at some of the cases and I recognized the names because they had been there before I went out on maternity leave. I said to the gunny, I said, "Who's reviewing these cases?" Basically, the gunny was reviewing them. They require a—there's a lot that—but he was writing—some cases are very, very—the guilty plea cases, the guilty plea UA cases without motions, they're just pretty standard to put together. Not much to them. But I looked at one of them, and it was citing cases and legal arguments, and that sort of thing. I said, "Gunny, who did this?" And he said, "Oh, I did." Okay.

Halaska: Wait, was gunny a lawyer?

Bowers
Healey: Oh, no.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: Oh, no. Only commissioned officers are lawyers.

Halaska: Okay. Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: But for the month that I was gone, and then for a little while before I—yeah, he was doing them. He was very capable.

Halaska: Oh, nice.

Bowers
Healey: He was extremely capable. And I ran into a number of people. I spent off and on probably a year and a half, two years, in review. And I kept on getting switched in and out of billets for a while. I was the deputy staff judge advocate for a while, military justice officer for a while, then a senior person came in. He was a review officer, and I worked for him, and then he left, and I was the senior review officer. So, good experience. Defense counsel, trial counsel, legal assistance, and then review. That's a good, rounded view of the basic jobs that a judge advocate does.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: What else can I tell you about the First Marine Division? Just a very different ethic and lifestyle, I would say, with Marines out there. At one time there was an order put on that Marines and sailors were not supposed to go down to Tijuana at certain times of the day, because Tijuana's got problems. So—

Halaska: [Laughs] What kind of problems?

Bowers Healey: What kind of problems in Tijuana? You can get into all sorts of—

Halaska: What were the issues?

Bowers Healey: —issues. One of the main worries that we have is that Marines will get either mugged, or they will end up in the Mexican prisons, whether rightfully or wrongfully, or being held for money, or whatever. And they're not going to come back. As soon as that order was put out, more so for San Diego, but a little bit for Pendleton, we found that we had active duty Marines and sailors who lived down there permanently.

Halaska: Oh!

Bowers Healey: You know, they were married to someone, or their family lived there. So I know there was this scramble to try to rewrite the orders to accommodate them. Then one morning, I came into work, probably after I had been at Pendleton for two years, and the gunny approaches me and said, "Ma'am, Corporal So-and-So is not here this morning. Corporal So-and-So got caught on the curfew time. He didn't get back." I'm saying, that corporal, that is one of our nicest corporals.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Gunny told me a story here. I'm thinking, gee, there's something about this corporal that I don't know. And he said, he was on a church bus [laughs] and the bus came across the border late, and they found out he was a Marine, so he got held up. So you never know what's going to happen in the morning, when they tell you what's on the blotter, and who hit the blotter, and that sort of thing. So great, great, Marine.

Then when I was in that job also, we used to take line Marines, infantry Marines and other Marines, they would come and be the chasers and the bailiffs for our courts. Then we were short. We were just running down the—the basic thing they do is get the Marines out of the brig and they bring them to court and get them there on time.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Which is not easy, because it's hard to get a Marine—get the paperwork right and get them out of the brig on time to get over to their court on time. And they really do have to work earlier hours and later hours than the rest of us.

[01:25:03]

A lot of slack time during the day. But one day we had been running short, and I had had the gunny calling over, and we got even shorter after the gunny, and tried three times. The gunny gave me the number, just give me the number, I need to call. And I called over to the Intake Center, whatever it's called, where everybody reports to in Camp Pendleton. And I talked to a staff NCO [Non-commissioned Officer] there, and I said, "This is Major Healey, and I need to—we need chasers. They can come from any MOS [Military Occupational Specialties], we just need chasers. If you could get somebody to me in the next week or two, I'd really appreciate it." Next morning, 7:00 a.m., two Marines are standing there to check in at midnight. I think the key is, you have to check in one minute before midnight before your lead elapses [??], they check in.

Halaska: Oh, yeah.

Bowers Healey: They were the last ones to check in. And they were standing there wondering, what on earth—they're infantry Marines, and all of a sudden, they're assigned to something other than infantry. And they turned out to be two of the best chasers and bailiffs that I'd ever had. And one of them was the guy that got caught in the church bus.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: The other one was, he was just like Radar O'Reilly ["M*A*S*H"]. [Laughter] He—before you needed something in court, he was on his feet and going for it.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: I switched over to being a defense counsel after he had worked there for a while, and I had a court. And one of the jobs of the bailiffs is to sit outside where the members of the jury are. And if the members opened the door and need to take a restroom break, or need a break for whatever, the bailiff's sitting right there. And he was doing that, and doing it very dutifully, had his chair right outside of the room. And it was a contested case, after a couple of hours he came up to me. I had known him for a year. And he said, "Ma'am, you know what they're talking about?" And he starts—and I said, "I can't—you can tell me what they're talking about. That's confidential."

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: But he was just so alert to everything that was going on.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And I said, "Okay, lance corporal, move your chair six feet down. You cannot listen to that."

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So—ah, yeah. I also once in my early stages had a bailiff who was a big guy. He was about 6'2", we probably got him because he was overweight, and I'm not sure he could pass his PFT. But sometimes units did that, they would send somebody that they didn't want to have to worry about PFT, or rifle range. They would farm him out to somewhere else. And you've heard of these—or you've probably seen in pictures these big black glasses that were issued, and they were called "birth control glasses."

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers
Healey: Nobody who could afford something different—actually, Drew Carey wore them for a long time, that was his gig, because Drew Carey is a Marine.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: So his shtick was just the kind of short hair—he doesn't look like that anymore. But he had the big, black glasses, and those were the birth control glasses. So that

describe this bailiff. And I wasn't—he was in the room one day when I was—the Marine that I was representing made a conditional threat. It wasn't a threat. But it was a condition. If such-and-such happens, then I'm going to do such-and-such. And I realized—and I didn't think he was kidding, but it was conditioned. So we took a break in court, and I thought, I've got to tell somebody about this, because if something happens in the courtroom and I knew about it—and so I said to this big Marine who's overweight, 6'2", blonde hair, birth control glasses, I said, "My client just said—and I don't want you to tell anybody what I just said, because that would be breaking the confidence, to some extent, of my client. And if it wasn't conditioned, then I would have to tell, but it was conditioned. But I want you to be aware that he may do such-and-such." And I said, "Do you understand?" And that Marine took off his birth control glasses, put them in his pocket and said, "Ma'am, I'm ready!" [Laughter]

[01:30:00]

The Marine had indicated he was going to assault someone in the courtroom. So—okay, Marines can handle things that I'd never expected that they could handle. And so it didn't happen, the condition didn't happen. But he was ready. So these are bailiffs.

I also had a bailiff fall asleep in court.

Halaska: Oh.

Bowers Healey: But again, they are being drawn upon—if you need a bailiff real quickly, you call over to the unit and say, "Send a bailiff." And the bailiff that they sent had been on duty all night long.

Halaska: Oh, yeah.

Bowers Healey: I took a little pity on the individual. But funny things happen in court that have nothing to do with the severity of the crime at all.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: I had another case in which—some of the clients are just—a lot of them are just average people. And they will go out into society, and they will do okay, most likely.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Some are going to have difficulties. Some are hardened criminals. And some are hardened criminals and benefit from being in the service, they straighten out their life, they get somebody who's a good NCO or a staff NCO that can put them on the right track. Some of them are just criminals. And it had nothing to do with the severity of the crime. And a lot of them were just unauthorized absence. But in talking to them, and looking at their history, they were probably going to end up in jail for a good part of their life. Others would be very contributing people in society.

So I did have a client from my first tour of duty, and a year later I got a call, and it was from the Missouri Penitentiary. And he was locked up, and he was looking to get back into the Marine Corps, and so—wasn't going to happen. Actually, it was from his attorney, who was wondering if there was some way to get him back in the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And with what he told me and what I knew—"I don't know of any way. I don't know of any rule or regulation that will allow you to do that." So, yeah.

So Camp Pendleton, I had that interesting judge advocate. Very paternalistic. After I was there for about a year or two, I asked for two days' leave, because a requirement that I have as a lawyer is to maintain my bar. In the military, if you're practicing law, you need to be in good standing with your bar.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I was part of the Minnesota bar, and I needed to take continuing legal education courses. I think it was forty-five every three years. So you could spread it across, or you could do all forty-five in a couple of days, however—just in that three-year period. Well, I had been in Okinawa, and then I went to Camp Pendleton. And when I was in Naval Justice School, I got all my credits there, so I didn't have to worry for three years. But then for my next three-year period, I got close to the end of my three-year period. So I hadn't been sent any military courses.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: And so I went to the training officer, and I said, "I need to take Thursday, Friday and then Saturday off, so I can do continuing legal education." A lot of the states hadn't started that, but I said, "My state requires that. So I need leave." I explained to him that I just hadn't picked up any other credits. And he said,

"Well, okay, you can do that." Then he came back to me a day later and he said, "The reason why you haven't been sent to any military legal training is because the staff judge advocate didn't want you, as a mother of two, to have to leave your children and go to that training." So he was trying to help me, he thought.

Meanwhile, I was having to pay for my own continuing legal education intake leave. And when the training officer found out about that, he said, "You don't have to take leave. We're going to give you Leave in Lieu Of," or whatever, because I was doing training. But I still had to pay for my course.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: [Laughs] So and then later on, I talked about the two watches.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: I don't want to talk too much about this individual. I mean, he did very well in the Marine Corps, but he was a little eccentric. We were doing some non-lawyer training, we had a training day. And during the training, you've probably seen in the military, and a lot of other places, these big, black clocks, they're all black, and they have white and black. They're just standard institutionalized sort of thing. But the electricity went out. But we continued on with the training.

[01:35:00]

And then after the hour segment, or whatever, we went on—we took a break. And the colonel stands up and says—he looks at the clock and he says, "Be back at"—and he uses the clock that has stopped. You know, "Be back in five minutes," and he cites whatever the time is on the clock, plus ten minutes. So we all go out, I happened to walk back in, and it's just the colonel and I. And I'm kind of uncomfortable with this colonel, but I'm a captain. I thought, well, I'd better say something, or chat. And again, just glibly, I said, "Colonel, you told everybody to be back at thirteen minutes after, and that clock stopped." [Laughs] And I had heard about his thing with time, but it's, like, ooh, gosh. And he runs out, and he yells to everybody else, "Be back!" But yeah, so one of the more interesting people that I ran across in the Marine Corps.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: But I had a great review staff, and then my last year at Pendleton, I was assigned—which was my fourth year—I was assigned out at the north end. And it

took me a half an hour to drive there. I lived on base at the time, in the south end. And good duty out there. I was the senior defense counsel. And we were in not a Quonset hut, but a Butler building. It looks like a Quonset hut, it's just a little bit bigger, and it's just a steel thing that you see on Gomer Pyle.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And that was our legal office. And but it was a nice little office, just a few of us out there. It's always kind of—sometimes very nice to work in a small situation. And this is one of those, lots of good support there. I walked in early one morning, and I don't know why I got there so early, but I did, and realized that the sergeant was sleeping in the law office every night. He was just waking up. And kind of apologized, but it turned out that that's where he was—I don't know why he wasn't getting along in the barracks, but he was a nice guy. So he did that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Another interesting case in that—I was defense counsel, and as soon as somebody walks in, if they come and ask you a question, you have to determine whether they're from the government or from—because you don't want to take information from the other side and not divulge it.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So two people came in, and a lance corporal said, "There's a first sergeant and a captain who want to see you." I said, "I doubt that," because first sergeants and company commanders hardly ever come to see me, since I'm a defense counsel. He said, "Yeah, they want to talk to you." So I immediately say, "I'm a defense counsel, I'm not a trial counsel." And they said, "We know. We want you." And I thought, this is a command asking—because the accused can ask for his own counsel and pick and choose. But for a command to come and ask a defense counsel? And they did. And I had gotten an acquittal, or a dismissal—I think it was a dismissal of all charges a couple of weeks before that. So they had a Marine that they really liked but who had been a deserter, and they wanted me to be their—the representative. I said, "Sure, he can request me when he comes in." When he came in, I looked at his book, and I think, this is not a great Marine. I mean, I'm not going to do anything terrific with this case, because—just because.

And as it turned out, the Marine had been on deployment overseas in the Pacific, and they had stopped at the Philippines. And the Philippines had just had a hurricane. Somebody came up to the fence as he was getting on—about ready to get on the plane, and said, "Hi. I'm one of your relatives. Can you help me rebuild

my hut?" So out of sense of loyalty to family, he missed movement. He missed either the ship or the plane, whatever he was supposed to get on, stayed there and helped them rebuild his hut, and then he paid for his way back.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. So they liked that Marine, and they wanted him to stay, even though he had a couple of other offenses.

And then we had something in the Marine Corps that started probably in the late seventies called "Booker warnings." For all non-judicial punishments, or Article 15, if you were to get those admitted as prior misconduct, you had to show that the Marine was provided legal counsel, and got legal advice, and there needed to be an entry into his book.

[01:40:02]

So this Marine had several non-judicial punishments, which generally would mean he would get a Bad Conduct Discharge. And I looked, and the paperwork in his book didn't show that he had had counseling. So typically, those would not be admissible. And so I bring the captain and the gunny—or the first sergeant back in, and I said, "You know, he's got some non-judicial punishments here. And I know you want to talk on his behalf, but when you speak, I am not going to ask you about his prior punishments, and you're not going to—and I don't want you to mention them. Because if you don't mention them, they don't come in." And they looked at me. And I repeated again. "If you don't mention them, they don't come in. Do you understand that?" And then they just smiled. So they testified on behalf of this Marine, they did not mention the NJPs. And we got lucky, and he got retained. So but strange, to have—you don't expect to be picked as a defense counsel like that. Again, a good duty station, lots to learn. And by that time I was promoted to major.

Halaska: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about that promotion? And kind of how the promotions were going at the time for officers?

Bowers Healey: Yeah. At that time, and that was the early eighties, the promotion rate from caption to major, from 03 to 04, was about a third pass over, and two thirds pickup.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And again, that brings back kind of memories. It so happened that in the legal office that I was working in, there were three captains that were in line for selection at the same time.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And I knew them well. One was a funded leave, meaning that the Marine Corps paid for his entire law school and paid him his pay for the three years he was in law school. That's a very selective program.

Halaska: Wow.

Bowers Healey: Yeah, and he had gone to Notre Dame. So I'm thinking, he's probably a shoo-in, and I shouldn't be doing this; it's just on your mind that those are the statistics, one third pass over, and there's three of us in the office. The other guy was the individual who I had met in Okinawa with a rather raspy personality, who I had gotten to like and appreciate, and we worked well together at Pendleton. And I thought, he's a smart guy. He's a good reader, a good writer. And he really was a good writer. And he could write motions, and when he was in review, he did exceptionally well. And he was aggressive type personality. And I thought, well, he's got a good chance, too. Then I had learned that, I think in Okinawa, that he had been passed over for captain, which is unusual, because the pickup rate from lieutenant to captain is very high.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And I'm not sure what caused that, if it was his personality, or if it was—ah, he didn't have a weight problem when he was a lieutenant. And he was a good runner. So I don't know. And then there was me. And I always thought that one of the problems with my record is that I didn't get promoted to captain right away. So when other people had fitness reports written as a captain, I had a year of—more than a year of lieutenant reports. And I thought if somebody really looked at that, they would say, hmm, what's wrong with her? Why didn't she get promoted to captain with her contemporaries?

And sometimes—and this goes back to the mentality of folks who grew up in the fifties and the sixties, and a little bit in the seventies, that is, they really thought that women didn't need the job.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So if push came to shove, all things equal, they weren't—and I heard it from some senior people. I heard it from a lot of women Marines that sometimes they were told they were not rated as high as their male contemporaries, because they didn't need the job. They were female, they were going to get out.

So I didn't always know how I was stacking up. And when the word came out, there was another captain who was not in contention—he would say, "Did the results come out?" I said, "No, not yet, not that I know of." And so one day I came back from, I think, lunch. And my boss, who was a lieutenant colonel, came in, and I had a back door right behind where I was sitting. And he opened the door, instead of coming through the front like most people did, he opened my back door. And he put his hand on my shoulder. And that kind of gives me the willies. And he said, "Come on outside."

[01:45:00]

And he said, "The results were back." And I go, "Okay, it's nice of you to take me aside and not announce it in front of everybody." And he said, "You were selected for promotion, but one of the others wasn't." And he didn't want the other guy to find out, you know, in a public sort of setting, either. So that was nice. And it turned out that I got promoted, and the guy who had gotten previously passed over for captain got promoted. And the guy who was a funded lawyer, full ride through law school, got passed over.

Halaska: Oh. Okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. Later on we found that there was a reason for that, which was really a mistake. And he got promoted later on.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: But they didn't know how to—the people sitting on the board did not realize that FLEP stood for Funded Law Education Program, full ride, any college you want to go to—and he went to Notre Dame—they read it as, you're out of your Infantry MOS. And, yeah. And he had been a recruiter for about a year before that. So they said, you're out of your Infantry 03 MOS. You will be no good as a future major, because you just haven't been in the field. Just a mistake.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: Yeah.

Halaska: Hmm. Who are usually on the promotion boards?

Bowers Healey: In the Marine Corps, the promotion boards are done by someone senior to you, but they're of all MOSs. So I know in the Army, I believe, when I went to the Army School, they indicated the judge advocates are all on the same promotion board. I cannot remember if all of the people sitting on the board are judge advocates, because the Army has Corps, various Corps. They have the Medical Corps, they have the Legal Corps, maybe a Line Corps, maybe the artillery. I think they're promoted, at least back in the eighties, they were promoted within their Corps.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Marines don't do it that way. And you're kind of at the mercy, to some extent, if that promotion board did not happen to have a lawyer sitting on it—and there's no requirement to have a lawyer sitting on it—someone would not have picked up what the acronym F-L-E-P stood for, or the magnitude of what that meant. That didn't necessarily mean that that person was a better lawyer, but he certainly had been selected as someone who was doing very well in the Marine Corps, prior to that selection.

So later on in my career, once I got selected for colonel, I sat on promotion boards on a yearly basis, because they were filling—they did always have a flyer, someone from the air wing, someone from the infantry, someone from artillery, and they always had one female on the board. So I was the duty female colonel. Not on every board, but they would rotate us all around. And I think there were only ten of us at the time, ten female colonels.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: So if they needed a colonel female—I know once, when I was a colonel, the quota came in, on the blotter in the morning, or the message traffic, you'd see it. And you could see where they were picking the boards from. I saw it one morning, and they said, "One female colonel, MEF [Marine Expeditionary Force]. Two MEF. That was me—

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: —because I was it. And then they gave the date of the board. And the date of the board was after I was checking out of the MEF. So I don't know if I called my 01 or my G1, or if I called up Headquarters, Marine Corps. I think I just went into the G1, and I said, "Colonel, you might want to look at this, because you're going to have to fill this quota. It's not going to be me. I'm not going to be here." And he said, "Oh, good to know." He contacted Headquarters Marine Corps, within a day or two, it was one female 06, Marine Corps Base, because that's where I was going.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: So they just tracked where I was.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: With the other—with the guys, it's just that there's so many of them, that they give every unit a quota, and they won't shift the quotas around. It's just you got a 03—you need an infantry 06, that's coming from UMEF [??], and that's your obligation.

Halaska: Um-hm. Do you know when they made it a requirement to have a female on the board?

[01:50:00]

Bowers
Healey: I don't, know. I don't.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I can't think of—and I don't know if it's a hard requirement, or just a good-to-have thing. But for as long as I can remember—the other thing they draw a lot of the people from the promotion boards, if they can, from the Washington, D.C. Quantico area. If you're at one of those duty stations, you're going to sit on more than your fair share of boards, because it's a financial thing. If they can get half the people from there and still get the MOSs, they don't have to pay the money and the housing.

Halaska: Um-hm. Okay. It makes sense. Would you like to tell me any more about cases that you had while you were there? Or about any other events that happened during that 1982 and '86—yeah.

Bowers
Healey: Eighty-two to eighty-six timeframe in Pendleton?

Halaska: Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

Bowers
Healey: A couple of events that I remember, after—it was after February of 1983, I can't remember exactly when [October 23, 1983], but there was the bombing in Lebanon, in which a lot of Marines, and it turned out somebody from each service was killed in that barracks bombing.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: To me, that was a kind of a turning page in my Marine Corps career. It didn't directly affect me. I think maybe I had met one or two of the people that were killed, one for sure when I was in Pendleton—Lejeune. Most of those Marines came, I think, from Eighth Marines out of Camp Lejeune. And I hadn't been there for two years. But my first years in the service were all at peace time. And work, not just for me—I know people deployed, and they worked up for deployments, they got ready for the what-ifs. But for me it was peace time, it was going to work. Yeah, you'd stand some duty and you'd do some things that you wouldn't necessarily do, and you'd get shifted around a little more than you would in civilian work. But it was really, you just went in to work every day.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: I think that that was just a real reality check for me, that Marines are in harm's way. And it comes maybe when you least expect it. I remember seeing Dan Rather that morning, I think it was either a Saturday or Sunday morning, probably a Sunday morning. And I was home and I saw the news. And he said something like four or five Marines expected killed. At the same time he showed a picture of that four-story building, collapsed. And he mentioned what time of the day it was there. And I knew those Marines were in the barracks at the time. They hadn't gone to chow yet, it was 6:00-something in the morning.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And either 6:00 or 5:00. And I just knew the tragedy and the statistics were going to be much higher.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: That was a world event that impacted me. And I think it impacted the way the Marine Corps did business. When I stood duty, at first I didn't have a weapon at all assigned at base. Then when I went to Okinawa, when I stood duty, they assigned me a .45, then immediately told me, "Give it to the staff NCO, and he will lock it up. And if you need it, contact him. But you are going to be in a barracks sleeping about a block away. And I said to the staff NCO, "Tell me this isn't the procedure," [laughter] not that I thought I needed a weapon, but if I did need a weapon for some reason, it was locked up with somebody else's key, and not where I was.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: Then when I got to Camp Pendleton, started standing duty at the First Marine Division. And they gave me the .45, and went over to the armory, picked it up. And the armor showed me, it was wired. The trigger was wired with a thin, little wire. And he said, "If this wire is broken tomorrow morning when you turn it in, you will have to write so many reports that—you don't want to do that. And the reason that they did that—I can't remember if they gave us ammunition. I must have had ammunition. Probably the first time I had ammunition. Apparently, some lieutenants before that were goofing around and doing the quick-fire sort of thing that young twenty-one, twenty-two-year-olds do. And the weapon had discharged in a barracks, or something.

[01:55:02]

So they wired ours, with this little thin wire, and, don't touch that. [Laughter] And after Lebanon, the gates, they started to arm the military people at the gates, the MPs [Military Police]. Prior to that, the MPs stood duty and didn't have weapons, or didn't have easy access to weapons—that changed. So it was not just a change for me, it was a change of how the Marine Corps, and other bases, I'm sure, how we did business. It was—and I was amazed when I was at The Basic School—they gave us weapons, but they always had to be locked up. And most of the time, they were in the armory, if you had an armory around. You didn't just keep weapons. Coming from Wisconsin, where twelve-year-old kids have weapons, at least where I was from, because they get their .22 and their .12, they're allowed to have one, and they go shoot squirrels and deer. At deer hunting season, there are weapons in the back of the truck, and you know it's there. It's not hidden or anything, there are just—weapons are all over. And get into the Marine Corps, and weapons are always locked up. Hmm. Or you're given a weapon, and no ammunition.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So things changed drastically with the Lebanon bombing.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Then another thing that happened that didn't impact the military was the *Challenger* explosion.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: It was my last year in Pendleton, and I came, and doing an interview. The lance corporal, who was usually kind of a cheery person, came directly up to me, and he said, "Have you heard the news?" And I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "The *Challenger* exploded." I thought he was—you know, he had a somber face, but I know I said to him, "You're kidding!" He said, "No." Then I think there was a TV somewhere in the office, and they were showing that over and over again.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: So those were some of the events going on during that tour of duty. And that pretty much ends Pendleton. Yeah.

Halaska: All right. I think we should take a break.

Bowers Healey: Okay.

[End of OH2134.Healey_file2_access]

[Beginning of OH2134.Healey_file3_access]

Halaska: All right, now we are continuing the interview with Ellen Bowers Healey. And I just wanted to ask some follow-up questions about Lebanon and your experience with that bombing, and how it was one of the first terrorist bombings that you remember hearing about.

Bowers Healey: Okay. Yes, in my Marine Corps career. And I think maybe that's the first time we sort of started attaching that word "terrorist" to attacks. As I recall, it was a truck

bombing, driven in the early morning hour as well, the Marines and other people were still sleeping in the barracks. And they had moved into the barracks, as I recall, because it was a more secure area than not being in a cement building.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Didn't turn out well. It was not the first group of Marines that the Marine Corps had sent over to Lebanon, this was second, third or maybe even fourth. No one had such a tragic ending as did this particular group of Marines that came out of Camp Lejeune. Lots of Marines, and also Army, Navy that were there, also. Not many Army, Navy, but there were a few there, lost their lives. I think the only people who survived were those on the top floor, and the second to the top floor, just because they didn't get crushed by the cement falling, and anyone happened to have been out of the barracks early in the morning. But otherwise, the death toll was very high.

Halaska: Um-hm. Okay. Then we were just ending talking about your time at Camp Pendleton. Then can—so that was around 1985, 1986 when you left there. Can you tell us about where you went next?

Bowers Healey: Right. While I was at Pendleton, I got selected for intermediate level school, which, for me, was the Army Judge Advocate General school, located in Charlottesville, Virginia, that's a nine-month course. And I was very happy to be selected. I did want to say that I was not the first selected, in fact it just turned out that five Marines—at that time, five Marines went, and one Navy, and the rest are Army people, to have a class of about seventy or seventy-five. For the Marines, they were sending majors, Army sent majors, and half the class was captains. It does prepare you for being a staff judge advocate, as well as being a judge, or anything else that you're going into in the military field. I was an alternate, and then four of the five primaries bowed out; they either got out of the service, or whatever the case may be. So I was delighted to be selected for that. My husband, and at that time two daughters, moved across country, and we took about a month off. It was the first really long vacation we had. We went up into Yosemite. I had a tent, and went a lot of other places across the country. And our homes are—my husband's from Chicago, I'm from Wisconsin. And I remember a young nephew of mine in Chicago while we were visiting there said, "Well, where do you live now?" I said, "We live in a tent." And his eyes got big. But we just didn't have a permanent house anywhere.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And then we stayed in an apartment with other military families. It was a civilian apartment, but mostly it rented to Army, we had a lot of Army neighbors. And it was a good community. My oldest daughter was in first grade at the time. And just a very good education. And my class was the first to get a Master's of Law as a result of taking that class.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: It's a Master's of Law, in military law. And the instructors are almost all Army and Marines, some Navy. And then they get—because it's located within an hour or two of Washington, D.C., I saw more dignitaries that year than ever before, generals and admirals and civilians, because the school tries to get them, and because it's so close. It's much easier than sending somebody up to Newport, Rhode Island, which is hard to get to from Washington, D.C.

So it was just a good—it was study. It was hard study. You couldn't just goof off, because the classes, they weren't going to pass everyone neces—give you an easy pass.

[00:05:03]

But it was a good growth year. And while I was there, about midway through, the staff judge advocate in the Marine Corps came by, interviewed all the Marines, the five of us, and asked what we wanted to do. And there was one slot for staying there and teaching at the school. He asked me if I wanted to do that. I said, "No sir, I have no desire to do that." And he checked that off, and he said, "Well, that's easy."

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So then my only request, really, was to ask for the East Coast. I had been on the West Coast, and my husband kind of wanted to stay back on the East Coast. So I requested that. Then probably around December, or sometime around then, they said, "Okay, you're going to go to Albany, Georgia, at the Marine Corps Logistics Base." I said, East Coast, huh? I was thinking Lejeune or Cherry Point, or maybe even Washington, D.C. I just—the Logistics Base is so small. And I can't say it's in the middle of nowhere, but a lot of people think it's in the middle of nowhere. It's a base that is only there because there were powerful senators and congressmen from the South in the 1950s and 1940s. So they got a lot of the bases, if you think about it. There are a lot of bases down in the South, for no good reason, other than the Congress was full of Southern democrats, who could lobby that way and get them down there. Albany, Georgia, is not on a navigable

river. It is logistics, so you kind of wonder, why do you put all your supplies there, when everything has to be sent out by rail or plane, or something else, from nowhere near another major base. But it was there because they had a powerful congressman from the South.

I was assigned initially to be the deputy staff judge advocate. So I asked, "Well, who is the SJA [Staff Judge Advocate] there? They told me who the SJA was there. Then New Year's Day I was home, because there was no classes on New Year's Day. And I got a call from the detailer, or monitor in Washington, D.C. And I thought, well, this is strange to get a call at home on a holiday. And he said something that's one of those calls that starts out, you wonder where it's going. "There's going to be a change of an assignment." Oh gosh, now what? [Laughs] And he said, "Well, how would you like to be the staff judge advocate instead of the deputy staff judge advocate?" And I was just shocked, because it's a lieutenant colonel's billet, and I was a major, fairly new major.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I said, "Well, what happened to the other people there?" Because they had a colonel, a lieutenant colonel. And he said, "Well, he retired." "What happened to the senior major there?" "Well, we're going to move him out." I was just amazed. Turned out later on, I found that my prior staff judge advocate from Pendleton had basically put in a good word for me.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So by that time, I knew a lot of people in the Marine Corps judge advocate community, and they knew me. So I was there. And I may have been the first female judge staff judge advocate. There were other Marine Corps women that were being put in other good billets. We had judges, a number of judges.

So I went there, and it was a good three years. From many respects, again, it was a good community, very small community of military people.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: My children were able to go to school and get bussed off-base, which was kind of an iffy situation, but they were using military bussing to take kids to private schools. A lot of the kids there went to private schools, although, quite frankly, I think for the grade school, the education there was probably good, if not better, than the private schools. But Albany, Georgia, bless its heart, is a city that was just kind of left behind in history. The interstate highway goes from Atlanta down

to Georgia, and bypasses Albany by an hour, hour and a half. The river is not navigable. It goes through there, but it is no longer navigable. I read later that Martin Luther King in the sixties, when the Civil Rights movement was going on, indicated that Albany, Georgia is the most segregated large city in the South, and he couldn't break through that.

[00:10:00]

And that was evident in many ways.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: We had some dealings with the civilian community, although because I lived on base, worked on base, I didn't have a lot of interaction. But it was fairly obvious, as soon as I opened my mouth and it didn't have a Southern twang, that I was an outsider to the community. And looking at the community, it was certainly very obvious that there was an African American community and a non-African American community. And they just didn't blend and weren't going to blend. On base, we didn't have those issues, at least I didn't think we had those issues. They were African Americans, and many other Marines and sailors, and we all got along and respected each other for what we did. There's a small medical clinic there, small PX. My husband and I were involved in bowling. The first commanding general I worked for, for just a year, was very, very well-liked by the community, he and his wife. And I learned how to be a staff judge advocate, and dealt with more—they didn't have much in the way of criminal law. It was a very minor aspect of what we did. It was a lot of environmental issues, and installation issues. I do recall that everyone who did get a Bad Conduct Discharge, or an Other Than Honorable Discharge ended up getting barred from base, banned from base, and a persona non grata letter. And as I was looking through some of the old files, I found the name of a judge advocate.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: He had—just kind of a humorous story, I knew him from Camp Pendleton, and I liked him. He was a little bit out there. And he had lived on the base as a military brat.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And as a military brat had gotten a persona non grata letter, barring him from the base.

Halaska: Ah.

Bowers Healey: For just some of the sort of antics that a teenager would do; nothing real serious. But they did that. The civilians there outnumbered the military by two to one or three to one, so it was really a civilian-run base.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I worked a lot with the Human Resources, and instead of reading military justice reports, I started reading Merit System Promotion Board, MSPB, journals, so I became familiar with Equal Opportunity law and the MSPB, which is the hiring and firing of civilians, which is a much different process than—and doing the fitness reports for them, like, is Performance Evaluation Boards, much different than for the military. And it really is so unique, and it's so hard to get used to. In the military, if someone really gives you problems, well, they're just history. They're gone, one way or the other. Administrative, discharge, or court. In the civilian world, it doesn't work that way. Disciplinary things move much slower, and they're much more graduated. For infractions, it's difficult to handle civilian matters. No end of frustration for the committee in general, as well as for the civilians.

Then it turned out that right after the SJA, staff judge advocate, who was there when I was there, he retired in the community. And he immediately turned around, opened up his own law office, and started taking cases against the base.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. So that was an interesting time, because he had been working with the people who were on base and knew all the ins and outs, and the personalities involved. And the general told me one day, when he was just chit-chatting, around a lot of military installations, you'll see large fences. And at the top there is a barbed wire.

Halaska: Yep.

Bowers Healey: And usually, the barbed wire is pointed outbounds, to keep people from coming in. Around the Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, which is entirely fenced, the barbed wire is inbound.

Halaska: Oh.

Bowers Healey: And he said, "That's to keep the thieves from taking things out." He considered the civilian population the thieves.

Halaska: Mmm.

Bowers Healey: And I thought, well, that's interesting.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: But as I worked there, the civilian population was really a challenge. We were taking a disciplinary action against a civilian, or the general did.

[00:15:01]

And it's a very progressive step sort of thing. There needs to be a board and a panel, and it has to go through this, that, and the other thing—I don't remember all the steps now. But I got the case for review at the level that it was. The general was upset, because before he had the paperwork drawn up, and before he had actually signed the paperwork, the people in the civilian committee, the head of the Labor Relations there, the head of the union, had a copy of what he was about to sign before he had made it. Because somebody who, in the clerical staff, made a copy of it and send it out to the union before the general got to sign it. The general was not happy. And this was a very easy-going general.

So I got the case and went in and did a little investigation on some other aspects of it. He was talking about something, and I said, "Well, General, that isn't what happened. That's not the way this was"—and he said, "Well, the signature's not there." And I said, "I talked to the people who signed, and the people who signed these things did not participate in the board, did not particulate in the hearing."

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: They told me they were handed a piece of paper and asked to sign it. So they signed it. Not because they had done anything. But they were just told by a superior to sign it.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So that just gives you an indication of how much the civilian community, or the civilian employees controlled. And the base opened in the early 1950s. And I would come across people—this was in 1986, '87, people who has worked there before the base had opened. So they knew everything.

Halaska: Wow.

Bowers
Healey: They knew where the wrenches were. They knew where the tires were. And this is a place that's just kind of aglow with what looks like it's got miles and miles of equipment that's just ready to be shipped out. They're sent down there for repair, whether it's tanks or small trucks, or just what it is, that was all shipped down there, repaired or stored, and then shipped out when needed.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: It was a very different kind of base. My mom and dad came down to visit me there. And they had visited some of the other military bases. And they stayed at my house, and in the morning, they got up then, and my mother said, "Where are the Marines?" It's just—if you're at Pendleton or Lejeune in the morning, you hear at 5:30, the Marines are going by in formation, running. Or trucks are going, or something. You just didn't see that at the Logistics Base.

But my husband got a job working at the local community college, and my kids were both in parochial school there. We had a good neighborhood and good neighbors. And I had a great, supportive small staff of enlisted and officers, as well as civilian personnel. So that was really a good experience.

Then the year before I left, or the year that I was leaving, I got word that I had been selected for lieutenant colonel.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that I did get to go to intermediate level school. I had also done some correspondence courses on my own, that

maybe some of the other officers weren't doing. I did amphibious warfare school by correspondence, and I had taken part and completed part of the Naval War College Course by correspondence. That's a big deal now to do those courses, but it wasn't necessarily back in the seventies and eighties.

And I want to kind of skip back to, when I got into the military, I didn't plan on making it a career. I didn't know much about it. And when I was at The Basic School, training, the platoon leader that we had, she was captain. And she encouraged us to read about military things. And she assigned us one book, it was Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*, which would not be my choice, but I read it. And I tried to get myself out of that mode, but I'm not much into that type of fiction.

Halaska: Science fiction?

Bowers Healey: Science fiction. But it had some good messages. And it just—one of the things that was until—so long as there is a Marine on active duty, you take care of that Marine, even if the Marine is about to be discharged, for Honorable or Less Than Honorable.

[00:20:03]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And that theme, or that message of that book, has stuck with me. In fact, I remember one of the first times I was on active duty, the MPs dropped off somebody who was supposed to be discharged that day, and he managed to get himself terribly, terribly drunk. And the MPs weren't going to keep him, and he was giving myself and the staff NCO some difficulty. But I think having read that book, and with the assistance of the staff NCO, we kept that Marine. We didn't take him over to the brig. We managed to get him calmed down after a couple of hours, and we kept him in our hooch, so to speak, there. And the next morning, he was with it, and said, "Ma'am, why did you do that?" I said, "You're a Marine until today. You're a Marine. We'll get you off-base." So and I've seen other Marines have that same attitude, that stick by your Marines, so long as they're on active duty, no matter what the situation is. And the strong leaders do that.

So anyway, I, as a result of her assigning those, that I took out and entered this warfare course, just to try to learn more about the Marine Corps and the military, because I just didn't know much about it. And being assigned to a base, I didn't have much access to what infantry and artillery Marines were doing. I think that served me well in terms of getting selected for promotion.

And then the way I found out about that promotion was not somebody tapping me on the shoulder and saying, hey, you got promoted. I got a call from Washington, D.C.—

Halaska: Oh! Why?

Bowers Healey: —from a buddy there who I had known in Okinawa. Because you asked me earlier, did you meet any good friends there? And it was a call from somebody that I hadn't heard from for four, five years. And he said, "I just wanted to let you know, I'm working up here in the Pentagon, and I saw your name." And of course, he's not supposed to be telling me, because they try to release it all at the same time. And I'm a bit shocked, because the percentage, I think, was—I don't know if it was 42%, people going from major to—no, it couldn't have been that low. But it wasn't very high, either.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So it wasn't 50%, but it was—well, maybe it was around 50, 60%—no, it couldn't have been that high. And it's gone higher now. But at that time, major was considered career level. You could retire as a major. Most people could, anyway. You didn't have to keep making grade. You could stop at major.

So to make it to lieutenant colonel—and I'm thinking that the percentage pickup was about 40, 45%, or something. So again, I was a bit surprised. But I was having a good tour at Albany, Georgia.

Well, one thing, I mentioned that I was surprised that I got stationed there as the staff judge advocate, because it was a lieutenant colonel billet, and I was a very junior major. After the staff judge advocate left, and he was there for about four weeks, and I took over as the staff judge advocate, I worked on a couple of things with the chief of staff and the head of the MPs, the provost marshal, and just some other matters, too. And I called back to Washington, D.C. to get some advice from somebody who is expert in the environmental area. And he had previously been inbound to Albany, Georgia, to be the staff judge advocate, which is another reason why I wondered why they offered it to me. And the lieutenant colonel said to me, "Well, who's the staff judge advocate down there now?" I said, "Well, I am." And within the next week, he had gotten himself orders to come to Albany, Georgia.

Halaska: Oh.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. [Laughter] So the—I don't know if I saw it on the message traffic, or the G1 came down to me and said, "Hey, what do you know about So-and-So? He's got orders and he's inbound." I said, "Well, I know he had been inbound and then he had refused his orders, because he didn't want to work for the other staff judge advocate that was still there, and didn't realize that guy was retiring." So I marched down to the chief of staff, and I said, "There's a judge advocate inbound, and he's inbound to be the staff judge advocate. He's senior to me. As far as I know, he's not taking any other billet here." So I left it at that. I figured that that's just what's going to happen, I'm junior, I understand how that works.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And a day or two later, I got a call from Headquarters Marine Corps, and they told me they were cancelling those orders for the inbound lieutenant colonel.

[00:25:10]

And I said, "Oh, why? Didn't he want to come?" And he said, "No. Your chief of staff called us and said we don't need another staff judge advocate."

Halaska: Oh.

Bowers Healey: So I have people all over to thank for positions that I was put in. And this was a chief of staff who happened to be an infantry guy, very nice. I had only known him for a couple of weeks. But then after that, I would get calls from other judge advocates in the field, saying wow, you know? You got a chief of staff that's making calls to Headquarters Marine Corps. And I hadn't asked him to do that, and didn't expect it.

So that was a good tour. And plus I got promoted out of that tour of duty.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: That's about all I want to say about Albany in Georgia. Oh, and then after three years, I thought I would stay there for a fourth year, because my husband had a job that he liked down there, and that kind of was the deal. Then I got a call from the man who wanted my job three years before, and he said—we were about to go up to do a staff judge advocates conference in Lejeune. And either he called me or I called—I must have called him. And I was asking questions about

accommodations there, and when to make them. He said, "When are you leaving?" I said, "Well, I guess I'll leave on Monday," or whatever the case was. He said, "No, I mean, when are you leaving the staff judge advocate's position?" And I didn't know I was leaving. But he knew. Because he was coming. And then he took the billet.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: And for many in the military, you need to have—if you want to continue to get promoted, it's probably a good idea to have a staff judge advocate's billet which, again, was why I was surprised and blessed to get it so early on.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So and then when I went up to—at the end of my three years, toward the end of my three years, they gave me a new assignment, which was—well, I guess I was initially assigned to go out to Camp Pendleton again, to be head of Legal Assistance, because I had done that once. And then my orders got changed when the promotion list came out, because they wanted to put me into a lieutenant colonel's billet on the East Coast.

So duty stations, for anybody who stays for a while, sometimes you have some control, sometimes you have no control. Sometimes they ask you for a wish list, and you end up on something that was really not on your wish list. So that a surprise to me to go to Camp Lejeune again. So that was my next duty assignment.

Halaska: Okay. So while you were at Albany, and this was your first staff judge advocate position, and just after you had gone to the intermediate schooling, what was the difference, and what did you—between that position that you had and the previous positions that you'd had, and what did you learn in that position?

Bowers Healey: A lot more about installa—what we call "installation law." But the Judge Advocate School prepared me well for that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And if nothing else, if I didn't remember, or I hadn't experienced it, the Judge Advocate's General School of the Army, Charlottesville, Virginia, you ended up with manuals on everything, on every topic. And I remember somebody else called me after he had gone to that school, and he said, "Yeah, I'm paging through

the manual to figure out what the answer is." So it was a lot of learning civilian labor law. And I guess once we expected—or there were protests at the base.

One of the other things, I was talking about the eighteen-year-old beer drinking.

Halaska: Oh, yeah.

Bowers Healey: And that was typical on base.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Probably through the eighties, into the nineties, even after the law had changed, in most states. I guess it was up to the states to make the law, but they were pressured, because of, I believe, highway funding from the federal government. So those things are tied in there. So most of the states were changing to the lower—or to the higher alcohol consumption level, or age level, at twenty-one.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Bases continued, because they're federal, continued to maintain the eighteen-year-old for a long time.

[00:30:03]

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: At Albany, Georgia, we had kind of an open-base policy when it came to the clubs. And the staff NCO and the Officer's Club—and the policy was changing. MWR [Morale, Welfare and Recreation] used to fund those things, and enlisted support would go into those. So the cooks—and one of the reasons why it was always so cheap to eat on base is because they weren't having to pay the cooks and the waiters and the waitresses. They did some, but a lot of them were staff NCOs that were—had—yeah. And they were in the clubs. And they didn't get paid anything extra, it just came out of a different pot of money. In the late eighties, that changed.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So all the club systems had to become self-supporting, self-sustaining. And you couldn't use that. And that made it a lot harder for a staff NCO and NCO clubs to

make money. And one of the things Albany, Georgia, explored doing is, they had—they kind of opened up the base. If you had a Marine escort to bring you on, you could come in. Then of course the college eighteen, nineteen and twenty-year-olds could drink, because they were on a federal installation. Good money maker.

Halaska: Oh, okay, yeah.

Bowers Healey: Some troubles that you get, when you've got an inebriated population, plus your own. I can't remember if that continued. Another thing that the clubs used to do in the seventies, and then a little bit into the eighties, is the NCO Clubs and the Officer's Clubs would have strippers.

Halaska: Oh. Okay.

Bowers Healey: Yeah. If you talk to any of the older Marines, you probably—Marines or Army—and again, big draw.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I remember being at New River Air Station [Jacksonville, North Carolina] for Friday night, was happy hour. Somebody said to me, "Well, you don't want to go into a particular room." I said, "Oh, why not?" "Strippers." So the air stations did that well into the eighties.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: They were pretty well-known for doing that. I can't speak for all the other services, but I don't expect it was an awful lot different.

Halaska: Probably not.

Bowers Healey: Kibosh kind of got put on in the eighties. So just interesting little side stories of what was going on.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: So anyway, Albany, Georgia was, all in all, a good experience. Yeah.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Then I went up to be the regional defense counsel in Camp Lejeune. And that was in 1990.

Halaska: Okay, and what is that position? What is that job?

Bowers Healey: When I came into the Marine Corps as the defense counsel, when I was the defense counsel, my first assignment, my second assignment, and during that first and second assignment, my fitness reports were written not directly by the staff judge advocate, there was usually a senior defense counsel who did the first writing, and then the senior report was signed off by the staff judge advocates. And a lot of the other services went to a separate defense organization. So when you were in defense, your fitness reports would be written only by other defense counsels.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Marine Corps didn't go—and still, I think, has not gone completely to that. We don't have enough people to have an independent defense. So my fitness report was actually written by the staff judge advocate. And I don't believe that my staff judge advocates, my first two tours necessarily dinged me for being a defense counsel. But I know one staff judge advocate, it was just as plain and clear as could be. If you were a defense counsel, you got rated much lower than the trial counsels did.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So if you stayed in defense for any length of time, your likelihood of getting promoted and continuing on was not good. And that may have trickled in in some other ways; not just taking adverse actions against you for making motions, lots of motions, or delaying cases, whatever the case may be, or just for being a defense counsel.

So they changed—the Marine Corps changed that system in the mid-eighties, while I was in Camp Pendleton. And I had my first senior defense counsel, and regional defense counsel there. And my fitness reports were written by a senior defense counsel, and then by the regional defense counsel. And the SJA was taken out of that completely.

[00:35:00]

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So the idea is to make it a fairer system. So I was the Eastern Regional defense counsel, so I had eight law offices to supervise and write fitness reports on, up and down the East Coast. So that was my first really traveling job, because I would go to observe from Quantico, Virginia, down to Albany, Georgia, Parris Island, Newport—ah, Cherry Point, Lejeune—there were eight of them. And there were twenty-five defense counsels, usually. And it was a challenge to get to see them. Some people you wrote fitness reports on and you hardly have seen them all, because just trying to get to all of those places. And then also trying to get there while they're doing a court martial.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So they were feeding me their schedules. But it was very interesting. It gave you an overview of how eight different SJAs ran their offices. And there were—everybody runs it differently. And sometimes for the good, and sometimes for the bad, I guess. And I did that for a little over a year. Again, I was very surprised to be put in that job because it had just started in the mid-eighties. I got the job in the nineties, and it always had been held by a lieutenant colonel, and I was a major.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Which came with some problems and issues. My senior—something in most of the services, usually your fitness reports are written by somebody senior to you.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And we had reservists who were senior to me because I was a major, and they were lieutenant colonels. So I brought them to my colonel, and I said, "Here they are. What do you want me to do?" And I expected him to say, Well, you do the narrative write-up, and I'll do the—he said, "No, you do it." So there are a couple of folks out there that have their fitness report is written by somebody junior to them. And so, that was a challenge.

I got to know a lot of the judges in the circuit, as well as the SJAs. So it was, anytime I was on their installation, in their office, I would check in with them, or let them know that I was there. And as well as a lot of the younger, new defense counsels, lieutenants and captains. And also, they started with me, first time. They

decided that they were going to have the regional defense counsels do trials and do some defense work. And I hadn't done defense work for four years, I guess. So I felt I was a little rusty. But generally speaking, they would put regional defense counsels on some of the senior officer cases.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So I represented two lieutenant colonels while I was in that billet.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: One was the training accident. And he was the CO, and quite honestly, the only reason he and some others were being put up on charges for negligence was because a Marine died.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: But it was a parachuting accident. And I'm not sure if they knew—it was just a bad training accident, and a Marine, I think, drowned. I believe that that was the cause of death. And I learned a lot about parachuting. I didn't know much about it, and I had never done it. But they were out in a training area, and it was a nighttime jump, which makes it a little bit more challenging. I should say that 1990 also, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. So they were prepping for war. In the Marine Corps, the first to go over were the Marines on the West Coast. The East Coast was getting ready to do that. So this particular CO, one of the training exercises was to parachute. Whether they would need to parachute in or not—don't know. But if they did, he wanted his men trained to do that. And they were doing a nighttime insertion in the training area. The training area happened to be surrounded by large oaks and other trees, pines, and probably—it was kind of a square-ish looking area, two sides were covered by a creek. And so, well, where is the landing zone?

[00:40:01]

And the colonel said to me, "All the world is a landing zone. Just, where you're going to land." So you have a target zone, and it was supposed to be in the middle of the zone, obviously not in the water. And they checked the wind—they repeatedly checked the wind. But apparently a gust of wind came. And one of the—they call them sticks, of four—groups of four, a stick, getting off the helicopter, jumping out. Helicopter? Maybe it was a plane. You could parachute from a helicopter, I guess, they were in a plane. And one stick in particular, the wind must have just really picked up. But because they go out on sticks, they're

on a rope, or tethered. And they go out in order, when they're given the order to go. So he knew, when they went out on the search, he knew where a number one, two, I think. And they were looking for three and four. He knew early on that the Marine had probably landed in the water and gotten tangled and died. One ended up in a tree, dangling. Interesting Marine, lance corporal. He's up there, he's a go-getter, energetic guy. And he's all ready to go out on these exercises, and just get overseas. And he ended up being in one of these tall Carolina pines. And it's pitch dark out. And I'm talking to him, and he's just as calm, calm as can be. He's not at all worried about the fact that his unit is under investigation. And then he's talking to the lieutenant colonel. And he just said, "Well, tell me about it." And he said, Well, he got caught up in the tree. I said, "How did you know you were high up in a tree?" Because I thought, you know, some might have just tried to jump down and gotten out of the situation. He said, No, I pulled out my flashlight, and I could tell by the illumination how high up he was.

Halaska: Um-hm

Bowers Healey: So he said, "I just started yelling."

Halaska: Yeah. [Laughs]

Bowers Healey: And he was just upset that he was out of the exercise because he was hung up on a tree.

Another lieutenant was on the stick that jumped. And his parachute went through wire lines.

Halaska: Oh. Okay.

Bowers Healey: And he got just a shock enough to certainly catch his attention, but not to kill him. I think he had just some minor burns from it. And I can't remember about the fourth. But the third, whether he got hit in the head as he was coming down, or just didn't have enough swim capabilities to get out of the entangled—he was caught down into the creek that was going through there. So that lieutenant colonel was—went to an Article 32 investigation, but the charges did not go beyond that. He wasn't even on site.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers
Healey: There was an Article 32 investigation, which is like a grand jury investigation, which is authorized under the manual for a court martial.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: So I did mention that when I got to this unit in 1990, actually, I checked in, I was there for about a month, and then I took leave, which was a little unusual to do. But there were reasons, with people coming and going, and reservists covering the position that I took leave. And my husband and kids and I, we were up in Canada, and we were on a camping trip.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: It rained, we're not very good campers, so we went into a hotel. The next morning I'm there, and I opened up the newspaper at breakfast, and I read that Saddam Hussein has invaded Kuwait. And I'm just absolutely shocked about that, because Kuwait's not a third world country. But at the time, the regional defense counsel, I was in an office of two people, and I was in a base organization. And my office, actually my unit, and they give—each unit gets a RUC [Reporting Unit Code]. And I don't know what R-U-C stands for, but it's a designation of a unit. And there was myself and a corporal, and that was it. So I didn't even think—at first I'm thinking, maybe I ought to call back. Then I thought, no, nobody cares where I am. You know, I'm not even with the Marine Corps Base. They gave me an office there, but I'm not even attached to Lejeune. I'm attached to—well, I work for people out of Headquarters Marine Corps.

So we just came back. And then the mobilization started.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: The training started. The troops started coming in. This is the first time reservists really came into a war.

[00:45:04]

In Vietnam, they were not used. In 1990, the decision was made is that we call up "reservists." And I saw, coming through the office, where I had my office, the building, a lot of Reserves were coming on board. And they couldn't find Reserves, because Reserves are in various different statuses; they're on active Reserves, they're on IRR [Individual Ready Reserve]—which I don't know what it stands for, right offhand. But some of them didn't have good addresses. Some

of them got the orders, refused to come. And then we started a lot of court martials for unauthorized absence.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: I also saw, going back to kind of women's issues, women prior to 1990 have not deployed. Marine women did not go to Vietnam, with very, very few exceptions. I knew of one who did, and I think there were others. There were some, but not many. During World War II, women Marines did not go overseas. Some other services did. But because we don't have nurses and dental techs, and that sort of thing, women were just not sent overseas. They served here in the United States. And I've got a lot of World War II women Marine friends, their husbands went over, but they didn't. They stayed here.

So 1990 was going to be something different. And women were not necessarily trained to deploy. They weren't getting all the same training. Some of them were just barely starting with the pistol training, because that didn't really take hold somewhere until the—I know I saw staff NCO women who were out on the pistol training, doing their first training. And so they had been in, maybe, for ten years, and they'd never been trained with a pistol. And they certainly didn't have a lot of the infantry training.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: We talked about family plans, and the planning that it really takes if you are subject to deploying orders. And certainly women were going over to Okinawa on accompanied tours, but to deploy with—oh, up until in the seventies, I couldn't get aboard a ship, because that's the way Marines got transported—

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: —with a Navy ship. But the Navy wouldn't allow a women on a ship in the seventies.

Halaska: Oh, yeah.

Bowers Healey: In fact, when we were training at The Basic School, we had one exercise that all basic schools go through, and it is training to take a beach from the ocean. And all the guys were loaded up on a bus and taken up to—maybe they weren't on a bus, and maybe they got on in Morehead City, and then they went up to Little Creek, and then back down again on a ship. Then they were to—we were to invade and

take the beach down at Camp Lejeune. Well, they loaded us up, the women, in our platoon, which was thirty-five of us. They loaded us up, because we couldn't get on the ship. And this was '77, '78—and they took us out on a Marine amphibious vehicle.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And then we were instructed, you know, tactics how to take the beach and storm the beach. So we went out, floated around for a little while. Then we went into the beach. And we took the beach. And we're peeling off left and right, and that sort of thing. And when we got up to the sand berm, we took cover there. And the aggressors were on the other side, just Marines from the Second Marine Division. And after we were there for a couple of minutes, somebody peeps over. It was a young lieutenant platoon commander. And he starts talking to us, just because it's dull out there, and there's nothing else to do.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So we're talking to where the aggressors were talking to the enemy over there. And after a few more minutes of me talking to this lieutenant—and I couldn't really see him, because there was the berm in between us. I knew he was there, and I knew there were some other folks there. But we were laying on the sand, we've got our weapons out, and that sort of thing. And after a few minutes, one of the enlisted Marines said, "She's a woman!" He had no idea he had just been taken over by a platoon of women. I mean, he could see us running up the beach, and that sort of thing. But it was just unusual for infantry Marines to see women out in that sort of environment.

[00:50:01]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So going—fast-forwarding, twelve years later in 1990, we started seeing Reserve women coming through, and the active duty side too, also. We're going to deploy. Do we take these women in the unit with us? Or do we substitute them out? Of course, there were some women that were pregnant because pregnant women could stay in. And lots of issues for commanders to deal with. And I didn't go. I was asked a little later on to go by somebody in one of the deploying units. And I said, Sure, I'll go, but I don't think my boss is going to let me go, because the word had been put in. You stay in the unit that you are in and you don't just

transfer around because you want to go or you don't want to go overseas to Kuwait and Iran—Iraq.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: So units dealt with it in different ways. Some units took the women they had, some units did everything they could do to get their women out of the units, the admin clerks, the MPs that come. Folks, a lot of things like that. There just wasn't a uniform way of dealing with it. I got this third-hand, mostly because I was there at Lejeune, but I wasn't in one of those deploying units. Then I also got—actually sent out a message or orders for me to go to the FSSG, because they wanted me to be the OIC there. But my boss wouldn't shake—allow me to go. There I was, during the war. And then he did send one of the regional defense counsels over, but he didn't send me, because he sent the male so the male could get promoted. He just out and out said, "I want him to be able to get promoted. Going into a war zone will help that out."

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So, did that. Then I was transferred over to—well, I did resent one more lieutenant colonel. And he was commander over in Iraq. And he had a fascination with weapons, and the word had been put out that nobody brings weapons back. Weapons were all over the place in Iraq, because during the quick war, we—the US overran—the US and its allies overran. Many of the Iraqi units just surrendered. They used to have burn piles, you know, they'd bring bulldozers, make a pit, and throw weapons in, left and right. And the word was put out, general orders, do not bring weapons back, because they were automatic weapons. And they didn't want those out on the streets back in the 1990s.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: I also heard that on the way back, in talking to the Naval Investigative Service and CID [Criminal Investigation Division], when they checked the ships coming back from Iraq—just full of weapons, primarily the tankers, because the tankers would take them and put them in the tanks, or the amphibious vehicles. And I asked NCIS, I said, "What did you do with them?" He said, "We just threw them overboard." There were too many. I mean, you couldn't dispose of them any other way.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So found them, didn't bother trying to trace who had taken them. Of course, you've got a tank, and there are probably ten, fifteen people who have authorization to be on that tank, to figure out who took a weapon, and stashed it away. Almost an impossible job in the transit back. So a lot of them are down in Davy Jones' locker in the sea somewhere, hundreds, I'm sure.

So anyway, I represented the lieutenant colonel who tried to bring a few back. I don't know if it was two or three. And he did get convicted.

Halaska: What was—what was the punishment?

Bowers
Healey: He did not get a Dishonorable Discharge.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: I know he got a forfeiture. We probably had a pre-trial agreement so that he wouldn't serve confinement, because I'm sure confinement wasn't part of what we ended up doing. So it was just basically the forfeiture.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: Very tough experience for him. I mean, he was someone with twenty years in, and this is threatening his retired pay. And all senior off—because he's a lieutenant colonel, everybody has to be senior to the person who is the accused.

[00:55:02]

That's the requirement of the manual for court martial. So you can't have majors. That was kind of an interesting seating of the members, because for whatever reason, somebody had put—well they were lieutenant colonels. And you can have lieutenant colonels senior to him. So they put colonels and lieutenant colonels on the board. And then we got their sheets, and I'm going through them, and I'm realizing, Some of these people are actually junior to you, lieutenant colonel. And you can challenge that if you want to.

And we got into court, and the trial counsel saw this, and he said, "Oh, these two or three lieutenant colonels who are junior need to go." And I said, "No, they don't need to go." That's a rule of court martial, in the court martial. But the defense can waive it. And we waive it. So by that time we'd seen their whole

sheets in question, and that sort of thing. And my client was happy with who was there. So we continued on with the board that we had.

And it turned out that one of the colonels on the board would become my future commanding general a few years—a year later. And he's one of those—I just admire him dearly, but he's one of those people that other people would describe as eccentric. But he was fun to work for, yeah. I had met him once before. And another rule of the court martials is that if somebody sitting on the panel knows is. Like, you don't want your brother-in-law, or somebody that you write a fitness report on probably shouldn't be sitting there, and what other relationship, if there's anything that would be bias for the accused, or even for the government.

So I had met this commanding officer, this colonel before. So when we were going through the voir dire, the questioning of the members, I mentioned that I did know him. And he's got a very deep voice. I asked him if prior knowledge of me—or maybe the judge asked him if the prior knowledge of Lieutenant Colonel Healey would—maybe I was major then, Major Healey, would affect you. And he looks at me, and he said, "Ma'am, I've never met you before in my life." So we go from people who categorize all female Marines as they're one and the same, to this person. And I had had a two-hour conversation with him, it wasn't just a casual meeting. It was prep for another court martial. But he had—he did not recall me at all. So, okay.

Halaska: All right.

Bowers Healey: That's fine. All right, you're going to have to bring me back to where I wandered off from. Oh, the next assignment that I went to.

Halaska: Yes.

Bowers Healey: That was the regional defense counsel assignment. I went to be the deputy staff judge advocate at Marine Corps Base, which was just a move across the street. And I did that for about a year. Nice office, that's the office that I started out when I was a lieutenant.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: So it was kind of nice to be back home.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: Good civilians and military people working there. I liked the staff judge advocate that I worked for. And I expected that I was going to stay there for two, maybe three years, because I had called Headquarters Marine Corps, and I asked him if I was due for rotation overseas again. And they said no, there's nine people ahead of you on the list that need to go over before you do, and I made that call probably January or February. Just forgot about that, figured I'd be the deputy staff judge advocate for a little bit longer, another year or two. And in June, I got a call. It was from Headquarters Marine Corps, which I didn't get many calls from Headquarters Marine Corps. I just didn't contact them very much. And they said, "You're going overseas to Okinawa, and we're going to attach you to the First Marine Division. We need you to be there in a month." I said, "Thanks for calling me. When did you know about this? How long have you known about this?" The lieutenant colonel on the other end of the line said, "Didn't somebody tell you?"

[01:00:02]

I said, "Nope." So I finished that call, and I said, okay, I understand what you just said. And he kind of accounted for the nine other people ahead of me; retired, taken out of their jobs, one or two a little questionable. So I said, "I'll call you tomorrow and I'll let you know about time." This was into the summer already, and my husband had taken a teaching job at a college. And he had two kids, we had two kids. And my boss had leave time planned, I had leave time planned. My in-laws were coming—all of those sorts of things that were kind of minutia. But you're counted on to do those things.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers
Healey: So after I finished that call, I went into my boss, the staff judge advocate. And I said, "Did you know I was getting orders?" And no, he didn't. He was as shocked as I would be. So I said, "That's what that call was about." So we scrambled that summer and did what we could, and put aside some other things. As a mom, one of the things that I do, as many moms do with young children who are going to school, every year they need a new set of clothes because they've grown out of their other ones.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: So we needed to get that shopping down. And I had my in-laws in, and I covered as the staff judge advocate for a couple of week. And my family had to go to dental—they were not going over with me, but the requirement was that they get dental and healthcare checkups, which my husband was not happy about. And my youngest daughter needed extensive dental work, and the dentist came out and

said, “You can’t go overseas, do you know about her teeth?” I said, “Yeah, I know about her teeth. She’s not going. She’s staying here.” Just, yeah, it was busy. And I got over to Okinawa in early August, I guess. It all worked out. But we had planned to go over for a three-year tour as an accompanied tour a year or two later, and we just couldn’t make that work with short notice like that.

Halaska: Yeah.

Bowers Healey: And I went to Okinawa and did a whole variety of things. I think because Southwest Asia, more people were stationed there, fewer were in Okinawa. And Okinawa had changed in the nine years that I hadn’t been there, the Okinawans were not as hospitable as they had been.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Used to be you could go anywhere, and just park anywhere. But now as soon as you went out in town, there’d be somebody there wanting to ticket you; just those little things. The prices of things had changed. It had become much more congested because more Okinawans were now, rather than riding bikes or mopeds, they had cars also. So that made a change. Again, a good community of Marines over there are, a pretty tight-knit group of folks. And I did a variety of jobs, from being the review officer, and sometimes the deputy OIC. I went to Korea on Team Spirit as the SJA for the First Marine Division. And I was doing trial work again. I was in the courtroom as a lieutenant colonel, which is a bit unusual. You don’t see many of those, but they were short on trial lawyers. So I did that for the bulk of my time over there.

And by that time, I knew an awful lot of Marines. We still weren’t doing email.

Halaska: Oh, okay.

Bowers Healey: That was in 1992. And email was just not there, which made communications—a year later, email was around. It was overseas. We had started doing email in the United States, but it was usually a local area network.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: I know that when I was in Albany, Georgia, the general said, “Oh, we’ve got connectivity now. We can do this.” And we had two major buildings. I was at the Protestant chapel and talking to one of the data-dinks there [computer expert], and

I said, “Well, the general said we had conn between this building and this building.” He said, “Yeah, it’s Nike.” I said, “What do you mean, “nikey?” He said, “In the morning, I put on my shoes and I take this disk, and I take it from my building over to their building, plug it in, and that way they can get our emails from yesterday.” So that was kind of the start. And some of my staff in Albany was—but it was dial-up, which I don’t know if you’ve ever experienced.

Halaska: I have.

Bowers Healey: But you have to dial—they would wait until usually 4:30 so that it would be less busy.

[01:05:01]

And then if they were patient enough, an hour later they would have a connection to somewhere, but you really had to be patient. I thought, you know, I can pick up the phone and do this faster, and that gunny and warrant officer. But they were bound and determined, and they tried. Persistence like that got us where we needed to be.

And then for the two years that I was in Lejeune, in ’90, ’91, ’92, it was usually just a local area on that. You couldn’t get it any further than that. So communication between my daughters and my husband and I were, well, letter writing, once in a while a phone call. But not a lot of contact for nine months. So, yeah.

Halaska: Um-hm. I think we’re going to stop right now. I think we’re—

[End of OH2134.Healey_file3_access]

[Beginning of OH2134.Healey_file4_access]

Bowers Healey: Okay.

Halaska: This is file four of the interview with Ellen Bowers Healey on October 5, 2018. And we are going to be starting this interview going back to 1992, when she was sent back to Okinawa on short notice.

Bowers Healey: All right. I think I talked a little bit about the change in Okinawa. I had been there in the early eighties, and now it was 1992, about nine, ten years’ difference. And there was a change with the, I’d say, the Okinawans and their attitude towards

Americans. Of course, America after World War II kept bases, and quite a few bases; there were Army bases, Marine bases. And then it was primarily, not totally, Marine bases by the time I got there. There were some Navy installations also. In the early eighties, the Okinawans were very accepting to us. That changed. Traffic changed. There was more traffic, more cars. Roads had not increased really, although they'd built one superhighway. But there was definitely an attitude that they would like the—not just the Marines, but all Americans, to just leave their island. And more mainland Japanese were there. So that made a difference in just how much not only I, but other Marines, frequented off-base places. I think we stayed on base more, just because it was harder to go off-base, find a parking place, find a place that was accepting.

But I went over there, and I was assigned to the Third Marine Division on paper. But I was immediately reassigned for working purposes to the third Fourth Service Support Group, the FSSG. And I worked primarily as the deputy SJ—deputy director for—deputy OIC for the Legal Services Support section. And I was really, because I was kind of the last moment fill-in, I filled in whatever they wanted me to do. I was review officer. When they didn't have a review officer, I was the deputy OIC, and then I started doing trial work as a lieutenant colonel; very unusual to have a lieutenant colonel doing trial work.

But I did, and I got back into that, and I had a good military justice section that was very supportive. I want to mention one person who was just unique; he was very smart, very good at what he did. But he had an incredible stutter problem, which I think probably not just the Marine Corps, but all services probably have some difficulty in figuring out what you're going to do with someone who has a severe stutter problem at times. And I'd come across one other person who, ten years before that, who had a stutter problem. Some of—but sometimes the stuttering is because of uncomfortable situations. I remember one person talking to them on the phone, and the person had a slight stutter. Then I didn't interview him in person, but he came into the courtroom. And that's a whole different scenario. And it just—I'm going, oh my gosh, I should have prepped not only him, but probably the members, to understand that they were going to—because it was just an awkward situation for a while, until he started to express himself well.

Well, my senior staff NCO had a stutter problem, but uniquely. And I find it's a story worth talking about. There were times when he didn't stutter. When was talking to a junior enlisted person, he didn't stutter. And then when he saw me come around the corner, there was a different situation. And I thought, well, I can't be that intimidating, but perhaps I was. Then also, I could hear him, he would be out running with the troops and calling cadence—no problem whatsoever. And I never heard him sing, but I understood he belonged to a church, and he was a wonderful singer, which I have heard before is true about stutterers. But it was definitely a communication problem. So he continued on in

the Marine Corps, and was fairly successful. But I would think that there are just situations when you're in combat that that is going to be a difficult situation.

I also occasionally, because I worked at the FSSG, I would be part of the FSSG general officer's staff. And this was the first time that I had a female general officer. And it was General Carol Mutter, who I still have some contact with. I think she was one, maybe two stars at the time, I can't remember. Later on she became a three-star, our first three-star female general in the Marine Corps. And she was disburser by trade, a comptroller, a controller, and so she was very detailed.

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And I knew some of her other staff. And it just turned out that she happened to have a lot of females on her staff, not because she chose them, but we showed up. The G1 was a female, the G2 was a female, I think the 06 was a female. And then when I was there as the staff judge advocate, I was a female. So just kind of a unique circumstance.

And recently I saw a picture of her staff and me in it, and it is heavily female. But I had also worked with her chief of staff before, at Albany, Georgia, so that was a good staff. I did also go to Team Spirit '93, and I was part of the Division staff at that time. Really, they didn't intend me to do anything with the Division staff, except for the staff judge advocate was getting discharged from the Marine—or, retiring from the Marine Corps. And he was going through a lot of dental work right before that. So I ended up going to Korea on two occasions for three weeks. And Korea is brown and cold and muddy in January and March. And we were on the ROK Marine, ROK being Republic of Korea Marine Base, near Pohang. And again, muddy. Just mud up to your knees, and although I didn't like it when it froze at night, because they didn't have a heater going, and I was just in my sleeping bag. It was nice to get up in the morning and be able to walk on top of all that mud. Other than that, I can't say that that exercise was particularly interesting. They were good Marines, sergeants, to work with, both on my staff and on the colonel's staff. So it was an experience.

And we were allowed to buy things. It was—the Koreans came in, they had a PX there, you could buy things and ship them back at no expense to Okinawa, all sorts of bags and goodies like that, that were very, very inexpensive, made in Korea, and there was no tax, and that sort of thing on them. So that was of interest.

During my days of prosecution, I also did one or two hospital credentialing boards. After long effort, there was—well, let me back up on that. I learned that the Navy could have doctors who were not credentialed or certified in the United States, so long as they worked overseas. And that was just an interesting thing that

I didn't know, and hadn't ever questioned or thought about, until a fellow prosecutor had a case for a credentialing board. And the doctor had inadvertently inserted the wrong type of rod into someone's leg. And I shouldn't say—maybe the rod was okay. I actually back up—the rod that was inserted—and they do that sometimes, when somebody breaks their leg, just insert a rod until it heals, with the idea that you're going to remove the rod at the end of the healing process. To remove the rod, because the body builds up mucous, and that sort of thing. What they do is, the rod has screws—grooves on the end. Then when you want to pull it out, you take the appropriate sized screw, go in there, and pull it out. And I saw an operation with that being done. And I mean, it's really not a delicate thing. I mean, you are pulling and tugging. He inserted the wrong size screw and stripped the threads, so the rod was permanently going to be in this Marine's leg, which did not necessarily impair his ability to walk, and that sort of thing. But he was—he parachuted, and you can't parachute with a rod in your leg.

So long story, but that's how I found that we had non-certified doctors in the Navy. And then subsequently, I also unsuccessfully prosecuted someone, but then they put him up for a credentialing board to take away his credentials to practice. And that's quite a process. One of the challenges is, is that the people who are sitting on the board are Navy doctors themselves, who work in the same depart—not necessarily department, but they work in the same hospital, so they are somewhat hesitant to go forward and strip someone else of their credentials, and essentially of their livelihood.

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But we ended up with a successful—partially successful—the board did not vote to remove his credentials. But the record was sufficient enough so that the senior member of the hospital revoked his credentials.

Then I learned also that if credentials are revoked from one hospital, you just go to another hospital. Go to another state and hang out your shingle. So that was just a real learning experience for me about the medical profession.

I also had the opportunity—I had been reviewing a lot of JAG manual investigations—JAG is Judge Advocate General. And there's a manual that has all sorts of rules and regulations. And this was the first time—I think I did one or two JAG manual investigations, rather than just reviewing them, while I was there.

So those are some of the things that—I also got to go to Hong Kong a couple of times. I knew some friends, and there was a MAC [Military Airlift Command] flight that left from Kadena Air Base, probably every other month or so. And there was a Marine lieutenant colonel, or major, and she had been a commissary officer, a PX officer. In other words, her job was to shop. Just shop. [Laughs] And

she was good at it. She actually would go to Hong Kong to buy antiques, Chinese antiques, and other things. Sometimes she would actually go back and exchange things that she had bought in Hong Kong. She'd catch this flight and then take it back, and just like you were going to go to a regular Walmart or a Macy's or something, and take something back after Christmas, which I found absolutely phenomenal. So I went on, I think, two of those flights. I had been to Hong Kong before, but it was just kind of interesting to go there again, walk around for a day and get on the plane and come back. I didn't even stay overnight. Just seems odd to fly to Hong Kong for the day and come back, for a shopping trip. But those were available if you could find them.

Then I returned to the States. I was going to go to mainland Japan, because I really hadn't been there, and climb the mountain there. But they offered me an option to leave a month early, and I said, okay. I'll get on that plane, and I left a month early. So all in all, a good tour.

Maybe one of the offshoots of that was, because I got short notice, and there were some things going on in Headquarters Marine Corps in terms of personnel, and while I was needed in Okinawa, there really wasn't a set job for me. I was very busy while I was there, but I did a whole bunch of different things. I got—when I came back, they basically said, "Where do you want to go? What would you like to do next?" And they gave me a choice of three or four things, and I got to select. And it was the first time in my Marine Corps life that that was done. And so I ended up going to Cherry Point as the staff judge advocate at the air station.

A couple of months later, I saw somebody just casually—I lived in Jacksonville, and I was meeting with a group of officers, and someone introduced me to him and mentioned my name. And he said, "Oh, you're that person." And I'm thinking, Gee, what did I do? Then he told me more about why the short notice of going overseas. And it was a push and a shove, and all sorts of machinations that go on in Headquarters Marine Corps with assignments that I'm forever grateful that I was never assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps. Yeah. And much—all of that had nothing to do with me, it's just I was the next person on the lineal list to go over.

So anyway, the next duty station was at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina. And I worked there for Brigadier General McCorkle. And he was there for the three years that I was there. And it was a good growth experience. I didn't move to Havelock, North Carolina, I commuted every day. And at first I commuted up the normal highway, past Emerald Isle. And then I found a shortcut through the Croatan National Forest. And people probably have heard the word "Croatan;" it was a name that was etched onto a tree with a lost colony there [Lost Colony of Roanoke].

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And there's a national forest named the Croatan National Forest. What was interesting about it is that, it was a twelve mile drive every day, twelve miles in addition to anything else that I drove, it was probably about thirty miles total, on gravel road. And there were no speed signs out there. And I ruined at least one car doing that but cut off at least forty-five minutes of my commute every day, so I did it. And one day, the car that I was driving, the lights went off. You know, just—there was so much rattling around that the lights went off. And I'm thinking, oh my gosh. Usually I only met three or four people back there, but they were going lickety-split, like seventy, eighty, ninety miles an hour. And sometimes when I was driving—not quite that fast, but I was driving, because of the gravel my car would—the back of the car would sort of sway. Well, without lights, I was worried that nobody would be able to see me, whether they were coming or going. And generally speaking when you were driving that road, that gravel road, you went down the middle of the road rather than—until you saw somebody coming. So that was kind of a harrowing drive.

The other thing that happened is, Marines doing what Marines do sometimes is, there were some Marines going on deployment. And one of them decided that he couldn't afford the payments on his truck anymore. And he didn't sell it, so he decided the way to do it was to have it burned, to burn it, and then collect the insurance on it. So probably about a year into my three years, that happened. And there was a big investigation, and that sort of thing. But the other offshoot of that was, is the Croatan National Forest was on fire. And because he took his vehicle into the Croatan, set it on fire there, and then got on ship. And he was on the ship before the forest starts burning. And not only did the forest burn, but the forest is essentially a peat moss. So it burned for months and months and months. It was like chimneys all over the place. And sometimes I would head that way, and the forest would be blocked off because of fog and smog, and all of that. And then I'd have to turn around, go the back way. Sometimes I'd get through, there would be no barriers. But I'd go through. But it was still just eerie sort of burning, with all these little spouts burning out of the ground because of the peat moss. So that's the Croatan National Forest, which is part of North Carolina. And—

Halaska: Can I just ask you one or two questions about Okinawa, before we get further into this?

Bowers Healey: Sure. Oh, go, sure.

Halaska: So you said while you were there that you had your first chain of command that had many females in it. Can you tell me if there was any difference that you noticed between having a female chain of command, and than a male-dominated one?

Bowers
Healey: Probably not really. I think General Mutter is a very even-keeled sort of person, so she sets the tone and the personality there. She's also very detailed-oriented, and expected and asked detailed questions during the meeting. But other than that, no. With respect to General Mutter in particular, something that she did while she was at Okinawa, she decided that she would get together with women Marines and have just meetings for women Marines. And that caused some concern and bluster for both the women and the men.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: And I decided to attend, and a did attend a couple which I was available for. And I found that I met Marine women that I'd never met before. And the background of that is, because most women Marines generally did tours at Headquarters Marine Corps and at Parris Island, Parris Island is the recruiting and trainings—is the training station for all women enlisted. So usually the second tour of duty that most women officers got was, go down there, and you're a series commander. Or you're part of that women's unit. And I just was never in that mix because they didn't take judge advocates out to do that sort of job. I also didn't go to Headquarters Marine Corps for a variety of reasons, but almost all admin people, Supply people, if you're—would end up going there. And so I found it interesting just to meet with other women Marines that were actually pretty close, because they had been stationed together, which was not my experience.

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It was nice to get to meet them. There was also some blowback from men across the Okinawa Island, because they thought, well, we shouldn't—there shouldn't be a meeting of just one sex and not the other sex. But she did it anyway. And she confronted it straight on. She said, I know that there's blowback about this, but we're going to do it.

She also, I was told, made it well-known that when you go to the Marine Corps Birthday Ball, which is on November tenth every year, it's a big deal. It is a big Marine thing. We all know when the Marine Corps was organized, November tenth. And in Okinawa, a lot of people were unaccompanied. I was unaccompanied. And she made it known that if you are married and unaccompanied, you are not showing up with a date, and because that was, apparently, fairly common practice there. So she took that step, and she was bold about doing that. Very bold. So she's a bold, innovative type individual.

But otherwise—I did know her chief of staff, and her chief of staff had a different personality, outgoing, jovial. Certainly not somebody who is that detail-oriented. And he had been facilities director. Liked him, worked with him in Albany,

Georgia. But so he added a different flavor to the meetings. But other than that, I'm not sure that I saw anything different with General Mutter's leadership and all of the female staff. And I would have had a base staff.

Now, while I was in Okinawa, I did, for a temporary period of time, join the Division staff, and that's all male. There are no females. So when I showed up just to do the Team Spirit exercise, I went up to the northern part of the island where the Division is. I'm not just sure why they had the meeting where they did, but I went to a staff meeting, and it was dark. And there weren't any—I don't think there were any windows in it. And I'm sure they have some better facilities up there.

So I'm going in, and I'm looking around. I know not a soul. Everybody—never met them. I'm the only female walking into this group in a dark—it was just, I thought, very awkward. I do take that back. There was one person that I did meet, that I recognized right away. And I had met him my first time in Okinawa. And he was—what was his nickname? Bad Jack. I know his first name was Jack. It wasn't Crazy Jack—Mad Jack. Mad Jack somebody-or-other. And I remember when I spotted him walking into this meeting, that when I was a captain, and he was, I think, a major or lieutenant colonel, he had brought me into his office and chewed me out, because I ended up—I was trying one of his cases, and I had asked—suggested that maybe they wanted to delay this until the company commander came back, and could make a decision. I had three cases that were all related, but they were from different units. And the three cases were being handled differently; one was going to a special court martial, one was going to a non-judicial punishment, and one was—nothing was happening. And I thought, well, it's the commander's decision. I just want the commanders to know that these are being handled in much different ways. And it has nothing to do with the guilt or innocence of the accused, it's just, in fact, probably the person that I was taking to a special court martial was probably the least culpable, from what I could tell.

So I had called and said, "You may want to wait. I'm trying to get hold of the commander, but I think he's in Korea. You may want to wait and let him weigh in on it." So the battalion commander called me into his office, and just chewed me out, starting with, "So you don't want to try this case? You're not ready for this case." And when he stopped his rant, I said, "I'm ready. I'm prepared." And he took kind of back, and then he went, "Well, you are going to try this case. And it's going to go"—I don't know if it was tomorrow or two days from now, or whatever.

So I'm prepping for the case, I leave. The next morning, or the next afternoon, he was in my office, which was at a different camp. And I come back and I walk in, and one of the sergeants says, "There's somebody in your office." And we had an

electrical outage for some reason, so I walked in, and it's dark, and he says to me, "So you don't pay your electrical bills here."

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But he had completely changed, and said, "Delay the case." And more of the story there, I go up to Scheduling—we have a military justice scheduling the next week. And again, I've got a colonel who has just said, "Too many people are delaying their cases. You trial counsels have to get busy. If you put it on the docket, it's going to go. I want to hear from every one of you whether the case is ready and it's going to go." And he pretty much was going to jump on the first person who said your case is going to be delayed.

So he gets—and I'm looking at my case schedule, and I'm about eight down, and thought, eh, these cases are going to fall out before he gets to me. Everybody said, "Case is ready. Case is going to go." And he got to me, and I said, "No, the case isn't going to go." And he just seethed, absolutely seethed at me. This is a full colonel who was a judge advocate but had been an infantry officer. He was also a minister. But he was just seething at me. And I said, Well, you know, I'm not sure that all the people ahead of me told the true story, because cases fall out all the time. But I'm not going to—this case is not going to go. And he asked me why. I said, "Because the battalion commander doesn't want it to go." It was just—it was very unusual that a battalion commander would draw back a case.

But anyway, so I'm back ten years later, and I see this same individual. And he's being his normal, obstreperous, assertive type of—and he's the G3. So he's the person in charge of making sure that all the people get on, and all the people get off the ship, and arrive on time, and there's—he's roll on, roll off. Everybody there, everybody out, on time, on his schedule. So that was a very unusual staff meeting. All males, very gruff, not very personable. I can't remember who the commanding general was, because that was my first meeting. And the deployment went okay.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So there's a difference, I think, between most Division staffs, as opposed to an air wing or a base, or an FSSG staff. But I don't think that all women on that F—many women on that FSSG staff really changed a great deal, because all of those women were lieutenant colonels or colonels, and they had worked with primarily 90% plus of Marine Corps is males. So you get used to working in that environment, typically.

So any other questions you had about Okinawa?

Halaska: Well, you had deployed before with your family there. And this time you were unaccompanied. How did you communicate home? And what was that experience like?

Bowers Healey: Communication home, very, very occasional phone call. I can't even remember if we used calling cards, or how we did that. But I must have made a few calls home. Primarily letter writing. I also had a tape ability, and a VCR ability. And I did a few of those. But for—and my husband communicated by letter. My kids were not very good about writing letters. They were probably eight and eleven, or nine and twelve. And so they got along quite well, I would say. I had pretty much stocked their clothing for a year, and everything else that they needed. They're pretty independent kids. I don't think that there was any—I've heard about other people that when you're deployed, the kids have problems. But I don't think mine did. I did happen to go back for a staff judge advocate's conference in November, which was for three or four months. And they were doing fine. I met with—I arranged to meet with their teachers, one had a very good teacher, and one had kind of a questionable teacher. But because I hadn't been able to do parent-teacher conferences, I had them set up for the week that I went back. And the kids were pretty good.

When I got back at the end, before I got assigned, there had been some interesting changes. My husband is not very domestic. He does very little cooking. I hired a cleaner before I left, because I knew the dust would be an inch thick when I got back. He didn't maintain the yard much, you know, the bushes were all over the place.

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And I kind of expected that. Hoped for better, but that was the reality. And the kids and he were living off of macaroni and cheese, pizzas. And when I got back, they decided to make a meal for me the day I got back. They picked me up at the airport, and so they put it together. I can't remember what it all was, but there were baked potatoes in the microwave. And my husband asked me to take the baked potatoes out of the microwave. And I went over to the microwave to take them out and there was dirt on the bottom, and I said to my husband, "Don't you wash the potatoes before you put them in?" And he said, "Are you supposed to?" [Laughter] So they survived.

And the other thing—I think I had been told about it, but my youngest daughter has very, very thick hair. And I had been doing her hair when I left, usually putting it into a ponytail, or something. But thick and curly. And it just—it had—she didn't keep up with it, that just wasn't a priority for an eight-year-old. And so my older daughter tried to do something with it, but it just got—so when I got to the airport, I found that my daughter with lovely long, blonde hair, all of a sudden

had very short cut, that my oldest daughter had just decided—and rightly so-she cut it off. Because you couldn't comb through it or brush through it anymore. So those were—if there were any—the kids just survived quite well, as far as I know. They never even, out of all the experiences that we had while they were growing up, my being gone that year doesn't even trigger much in the way of thoughts.

I do remember that when I was packing out for Okinawa, it was a small pack-out, but you still have to get things together. And not military gear so much. Military uniforms to some extent, but just other civilian things. And at that time, my kids were about the same size as I was, they tended to grow earlier. And we shared socks, I think.

So I had staged in the middle of the living room the things that were going to get packed up. And I'd put things in there every day for about a week or so, before the pack-out. And they would come in and they'd circle around my pile, and say, "Mom, you can't take that. You can't take that. What do you mean, you're taking this?" And they'd pick things off the pile. So, yeah.

That was—it turned out to be no big deal. I tried to do more corresponding with them than they did with me.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right, excellent. And now, let's see, going back to Cherry Point.

Bowers Healey: Yes.

Halaska: Can you tell me about any interesting cases that you had while you were there, and what kind of work you were doing while you were assigned to that base?

Bowers Healey: Well, there I didn't do—I wasn't in the courtroom myself. I was supervising and working on the general's staff. I worked closely with the Inspector's Office on a number of things; everything from civilian personnel issues to confinement issues. There were some military justice matters, but I'm trying to think if there's anything that I want to talk about that I did. Hmm.

One of the things that we were assigned to do there, and it was more of my staff doing it than I, we would get beneficial suggestions. The base could make beneficial suggestions, I suspect most bases have a beneficial suggestion box, and the program had been formalized a little bit more. And while I was there, they would staff all the beneficial suggestions up to my office. And I'd look at them. And our job was very limited, we were to research and we were to do a determination whether it was legally objectionable. And most of ours would be not legally objectionable. And we couldn't find a regulation or a law that said you can't do that.

One of the first times I did that, the inspector immediately appeared in my office and said, "You think this is okay?" "Well, no, it sounds like a silly idea to me, but I'm not asked to decide whether it's silly or economical. I'm just legally unobjectionable."

Halaska: What was the idea?

Bowers Healey: It had something to do with runway lights. And I can't remember just what it was.

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I read through the individual's detailed description, and I thought, sounds pretty redundant to me, sounds like it's going to be pretty costly, but I don't know a whole lot about runways. It just sounds dumb to me. I would say it sounds dumb to me, not just silly. Dumb. But again, we looked, is it legally objectionable? And this is not legally objectionable. So I just found that that was an interesting task, to have lawyers look at something that we really didn't know anything about. It wasn't just me, but my staff was also looking at it, too.

So let's see. I had not been—this was just really a goofy thing, and it has nothing to do with legal. But I think I had always worked for staff judge advocates, or commanding general's commands, that didn't put me into parades. So the last—and Marines always do parades. They're always marching around. And there's changes of command, and the Birthday Ball, and all sorts of things in which you're in a dress uniform, and you got a weapon, and it's ceremonial. And the last time I had done that is when I graduated in 1975 and was commissioned. And here I am in the 1990s, and the general, who is General McCorkle, decides I'm in his staff, and I'm going to do this. And so—I take that back. Well, no, that was my first time. So I had gone nineteen years without being in a parade. And he handed me a pistol and said, "You're going to do this." And it went off. I had nice folks to work with.

I did get the opportunity to take a lot of MAC flights, because it was an air station. You just get to—the other folks on the staff will let you know when there's a flight going somewhere. And one of the missions that Cherry Point had was to fly the command and staff group, and there's always a command and staff yearly group, it's a nine-month course up in Quantico. And they would fly them on a yearly basis, overseas. And one of the places that they went was Israel, to climb up Masada, and to see some other things in Israel. So I found out about that flight. And I and one of my daughters and a friend of mine went. And it's basically a free flight, and you pretty much know you're going to get back on the flight, also.

So I took one of my daughters out of high—I think she was fifteen at the time. And a major, who was a friend of mine, wanted to go to Israel. So we spent forty-eight hours in Israel. Long flight over, and we got to see the old City of Jerusalem, and we took a tour one day to the Dead Sea, and also to Masada. We didn't have enough time so that I could climb either up or down Masada, the command and staff group that was part of climbing up Masada, it's just a traditional thing to do, a big cliff with a lot of history concerning the Israelis, and just making a last stand at Masada before, I believe , it was the Romans killed them all. And it overlooks the Dead Sea. I did get to the Dead Sea. It was kind of a cold day, but I wanted to go into the Dead Sea. So out of the group of three of us, I was the only one who went into the Dead Sea and floated just to see if it really worked, that you could float there. And then we returned.

The other thing about that was, is the Israelis. Since we were on that flight, but not part of the flight crew, we were subject to interrogation when we got there. So I just found that the Israelis very aggressive interrogation, just right on the spot. This was well before 9-11. And it really made you think, gee, did I do something criminal today? They're really very aggressive. And it was a female who did it. Yeah. It just stood out to me.

Also, while we were on the streets of Jerusalem, I did not realize—I knew that there—almost everyone in Israel, when you're eighteen and nineteen and twenty years old, you are in the service. It's mandatory. And we were on a kind of a yuppie sort of street, where there were a lot of outside of lunch places. And it's just unusual, something you don't see in the United States, that the soldiers, young soldiers, are walking with their rifles slung-arm, right while they're having their latte, or whatever.

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And fairly—just an eye-opener. And when we walked into the old city—if you're just not aware of what's going on around you and don't look up, and I think I'd been there for a while, and I looked up onto the top of the wall of the old city. And there are armed guards there, looking down on you. So you just think, the United States was not like that in the 1990s. It's changed now, but very military type of society, compared to what most civilians in the United States experience.

Also got to go to Belgium, because they had a trip to Belgium. I did nothing in Belgium other than I looked around, and I bought a Belgian waffle, and—[laughter] that was my day, or maybe a day or two, in Belgium. Did a lot of walking around. But the only thing I bought was a Belgian waffle. We also—I took my other daughter to London while I was in Cherry Point. And we just spent a couple of days there. It happened to snow that day, which was very unusual. But interesting to see the Brits deal with a lot of snow.

While at Cherry Point, there were just a lot of great officers to work with. I got promoted to—selected for promotion to colonel while I was there. And one of the things the commanding general asked me to do, or he sent around a message, email was quite prevalent by the time I got to Cherry Point. And we started communicating a great deal by email. This is the first command where we actually could do a lot of email communication. And one day, he sent something around and said that there would be a general officer's and a sergeant major's meeting composium in Washington, D.C., and he wondered if any of us had any ideas that we wanted to forward up. And I'd never been given that opportunity before. And a new paternity policy had just came out, giving male Marines thirty days paternity, if they were not deployed—paternity leave, if they were not deployed right after the mother gave birth. And going back, when I had my two children, I had thirty days off each time, for recovery purposes. And for me, it was thirty days of kind of recovery. I was not a person who could easily get up and go the day after I delivered, for a variety of reasons. So thirty days was fine. And then now, I think it's six weeks, and a lot of people take additional. But all of a sudden, I had a male Marine take thirty days' paternity leave. And I read the order once he brought it out. And then the other thing was, was that the other Marines told me that he was on the golf course every day, which really annoyed me. Really annoyed me.

So this opportunity to have input came up a little later on. And I thought—just a couple of months after that. And I thought, well, this is just unusual for the Marine Corps to just give somebody thirty days, and then not give it to Division Marines who are deployed. And I'd worked with the Division Marines enough so that I have a good bit of empathy and appreciation for what they do, and how hard they work, and how much they're deployed.

So I took the time to look at what the Navy was doing, what the Army was doing. Marine Corps I don't think I looked at. I may have looked at the Air Force. And that type of information was now available on the internet. So I compared all of them, and by and large, the Marine Corps was just way out of line with what the rest was doing. Most were about ten days. And so I worked on that for a couple of days, and I sent over a proposal to change the Marine Corps order on that. And just sent it over, probably in an email.

And a couple of weeks later, I got notice that the Marine Corps order had changed. I thought, hmm, somebody else must have had the same idea that I did, that maybe we ought to bring ours in line a little bit. So I looked at the new Marine Corps order. And I thought, hmm, somebody must have had the same idea, but they borrowed about three quarters of my language, because it was as I had written. So in the least expected way—it had nothing really to do with Legal, other than I could pull up the orders and rewrite things—that may have been one of the more significant things that I did through all my Marine Corps history, is just to rewrite a policy that would have a tremendous impact.

[00:45:09]

They always talk in the Marine Corps about P2-T2, which is—P2 is Personnel—Person's—Prisoners Training and Transit. Those are the things that are going to cut against your manpower. Anytime you have somebody take thirty days' leave, you have somebody in your unit gone for thirty days, that's Transit. Usually that's the transit time between duty stations prisoners take away from your manpower, anytime somebody's in schooling for nine months. So the P2-T2 is something that I had always heard about. And then when you give somebody thirty days of paternity leave--and it really did impact the legal office, because the person who took the thirty days was in a kind of a onesie position; he just did one thing that nobody else was really covering for.

So anyway, that was my motivation for writing. And I think that's kind of the way it stands, although it's been modified to allow Division Marines the opportunity when they get back from deployment, to take ten days, even though it's not right, in conjunction with the birth. But you just think of the dollar savings, and that's a significant thing.

Getting back to one other significant thing that happened, I worked with several chiefs of staff while I was at Cherry Point, and different personalities. One I had some knowledge of before I got there, a tremendous individual. One day, he was, I think the acting—he was the commander, the general was gone. So I went in to brief him on something, and I had always—when I briefed the commanding general, I would go into his office, and because the information that we deal with is confidential, or information that you don't want necessarily out, because you're doing an investigation, and until the investigation is complete, it's not unusual that I would walk into his office, and I would shut the door. It turned out the general had a little peephole, and I knew that his secretary and also his aide could look in anytime, to just see what the progress was of what we were doing, and that sort of thing.

But I walked into the chief's office, and I was going to advise him on something that was very confidential, it had to do, I think, with an officer investigation. And as I walked into his office, I pulled the door shut. And he said to me, "Keep the door open." And I thought, Hmm, this is unusual, but I did. And I just pulled my chair close to his desk, people could see in. But I didn't want anyone to overhear what I was briefing him on. And then he explained to me is that, he was close to retirement, and he couldn't risk having anyone make a sexual harassment complaint against him, which I appreciated what he said; I knew him well. I knew him, and I think he's a very thoughtful individual, so I didn't hold it against him. But I thought to myself, Gee, if every male in the Marine Corps that I had dealt with required that, either a door open or the backing up, a lot of the trialing defense counsels, when they interview women, which is very infrequently

because we have only eight or nine percent, they would get someone in to stand by, to protect them against any sexual harassment complaints. In fact, I knew that there were regional defense counsels who were requiring that, that if you were going to interview a female, and you weren't female, you would have somebody stand by. Which means that whether you're doing a one or two-hour interview with someone, that you pull a legal clerk, bring them in, and they are non-functioning as a legal clerk. If I had done that, I'm not sure that I could function when I was a defense counsel, because almost all of my clients and witnesses were male.

So this was kind of toward—not toward the complete end of my career. But then after I retired from the Marine Corps, I read a book that someone was pretty brazen to write, I think, a female Marine. And she had unabashedly threatened a senior officer with making a sexual harassment complaint that she knew, everybody else kn—well, she knew, was not valid.

[00:50:00]

And that person was an air wing person, and maybe that's where the chief came from, I don't know. I don't know. But I don't know how other female judge advocates are handling that. I have never heard of that as being a problem before. So we march on.

So those are some of the things that happened at Cherry Point. There's no big particular case that stands out to me. We had just a variety of cases, drug cases. We did have—there were flight investigations that went on. That was something unique to Cherry Point.

Halaska: What is a flight investigation?

Bowers Healey: Well, when it gets to me, usually there's been a death involved. There's a crash. The run of the mill investigations I don't get that involved in, but that's something that I know everyone in the air wing takes very care—safety is paramount to them, because it has—not that safety isn't important to people in other MOSs, but if you do something, you're not several thousand feet in the air, and it's not going to have the same repercussions. Going back to my first time in Okinawa, there was a Marine who had been in an unauthorized absence status for a long time, and I was defending him, and typically looking at his charges and his history. And he seemed like a pretty good Marine, but for whatever reason, he had taken off for maybe nine months or something. Usually that's going to get you a Bad Conduct Discharge. I was a little bit surprised that he ended up in Okinawa, because typically, if you're facing charges, they're not going to bring you over. But he rotated in with a six-month rotation with a wing unit.

So I'm talking to him, and he said he had a few witnesses that would come and testify for him. We call them Extenuation and Mitigationary, E and M witnesses. And he gave me, I think, two captains, I had. This is unusual for a lance corporal or a corporal to have two captains who are going to come in and testify for you. Usually you're happy if you can get a sergeant or a staff sergeant to come in. But he did. I called them in, they said, Yeah, we want to testify. And we went to court, and I'm expecting a Bad Conduct Discharge, but the two witnesses were there in the back of the courtroom for the entire court that testified. And as it turned out, the judge that we pulled that day was a former flyer before he had gone to law school and became a judge advocate. And the sentence was sixty days' restriction, no Bad Conduct Discharge, and a very minor fine. And the reason was is that he was the tool room NCO. And just before the helicopter took off, he was counting his tools, and he realized that he didn't have all of his tools, which meant that there were some—a tool still in the plane, floating around, in the helicopter floating around. And he runs out to the—you know, does this dramatic running out, and stops the plane as it's about to take off. And so that's why the two captains were there. They were very appreciative of the fact that he was very diligent about counting his tools and realizing there could be a significant problem. And it was a tool that was found in a place that could very likely have caused a crash. So, very light sentence.

And I remember the prosecutor, who I knew very well. He said, there was a rea—usually, when somebody awards restriction, there need to be parameters to the restriction. And when the judge just said restriction, and the restriction is usually just to the barracks—you can go to the barracks and you can go to the chow, and that's it, which is very limited and hard, actually harder for some Marines to do that getting confinement. Because if you get into confinement, you don't have any choices about maybe sneaking out to the PX, and that sort of thing. It's just taken away from you.

So the prosecutor asked, so what are the parameters of the confinement? And the judge, with kind of a smile on his face, says, "I mean he can go to the movie theater." And it just kind of bowled me over, as well as the prosecutor. So he could go anywhere on the installation that he wanted to go. So very light sentence, safety, paramount in the wing. So those were some of the things that we looked at and were concerned about at Cherry Point, at the air station. So that's—

Halaska: Okay. And then how long were you at Cherry Point?

Bowers Healey: Three years.

Halaska: Three years, okay. So until—from 1993 to 1996.

Bowers
Healey: Um-hm.

[00:55:00]

Halaska: Then where did you go after that?

Bowers
Healey: After that, I went to Camp Pendleton, to the First Marine Division. And as I mentioned, I just got selected for 06 colonel, a couple of months before that. I had kind of wanted to stay in the Camp Lejeune-Cherry Point area, but I think the selection board results came out in March or April—April. And by that time, a lot of the assignments for the summer are already done. And when I finally called and said, "Well, where are you going to put me? What are the options," and they needed to find an 06 billet for me, most of the 06 billets were already taken or filled. And as it turned out, it probably wasn't advantageous for me to stay in Cherry Point, or Camp Lejeune, which is where my family was living, in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

So I got sent out to across country, to Camp Pendleton. And when they said Division, I thought, Division? Why are they sending me to Division? There's never been a female staff judge advocate at a Division. Don't some of the guys want this billet? And the monitor said, no, none of the guys want to go humping around the hills of Camp Pendleton and do the deployment. So that was the last billet open, and that's where I went. And I was there for a couple of years. Again, a very good staff. And I liked working with the Division, I've worked with Divisions before. The staff is usually—probably because of their mission, less jovial, less easy-going. But this was led by General Admire, and it was his last tour of duty. And he was a Marine's Marine, I think; he always was looking out for his Marines. And there are a couple of examples that I'm going to give you about that, and also the chief of staff was a tanker, and Schezenker [??] was his name, he was very nice. And also, I enjoyed working with a lot of the regimental and battalion commanders.

I will say that after I got out there—Cherry Point is flat, and no matter how much you try to run—and I'm not a great PT or runner, but I would get out and I'd do my first class, and kind of—I'd get through, but I wasn't a great runner. I got out to Camp Pendleton, of course, everything is on hills. And it's hard to find any flat place to run there, so it's more of a challenge. And the first week I got there, the sergeant said, "We're going to go on a battalion march next week." And at Cherry Point, they didn't issue Marines who were with the air station, we didn't have helmets or flak jackets, any of that sort of gear. We wore camis, just because Marine Corps was getting into everyone wearing camis. But I didn't have the load-bearing equipment. And you'd get out there in a helmet, and I hadn't worn a

helmet for probably twenty years or so. And the equipment has changed a great deal over that time period.

So I go into Supply, I get all my equipment, and I don't know what to do with half of this stuff. So the sergeant and the gunny helped get me set up for this march that we're going to go on. And so then I knew why all the other full colonel males had not decided to do this job. And we had just had a change of command, too, so this general was more into hiking. Some generals don't care about that, but this one had us out doing that. Maybe it was a battalion march; I don't know if it was battalion or a general's, but we did both over the course of the years and survived. But it is different.

And I started doing—I was unaccompanied. I started doing a lot more running than I had done when I was younger. Also, we were just changing—the Marine Corps was changing the standards for women from running a mile and a half to three miles. And I will say that I hardly ever ran three miles; I'd do my mile and a half that was required, able to pass the PFT twice a year. I just was not a regular PT-er. So I started pushing the standards a little bit, and managed to do it.

While I was there, we deployed—

Halaska: Oh, can I just—

Bowers Healey: —go ahead.

Halaska: So you said that you were unaccompanied for this?

Bowers Healey: Yes.

Halaska: So your family was back in—in—

Bowers Healey: My family stayed in Jacksonville.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: One of my daughters had just started high school at the Math and Science School in Raleigh-Durham, in Durham area.

[01:00:04]

She just got an accepted for that. The other was just starting her freshman year where we lived. And my husband had a teaching job at the local community college. He taught in the paralegal program. So they were pretty well-established there. So yes, I went out, unaccompanied.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Let's see. While I was there—and I'm not sure that I have all of these things in order—Marines—there were no big conflicts in the world at that time. This was before—it was after SWA, but SWA was in 1990, 1991—that was very short. Relatively speaking, that was less than a year.

Halaska: What—

Bowers Healey: Southwest Asia.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And that was 1990, when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. And we had—all of the services had a big deployment. It was a logistical move there. If you read about it, it is primarily how we got all of that machinery, equipment and military personnel over there in just a few months and were ready to execute a very short-term war. And then pretty much people were out of there by February of the next year. So compared to what's going on in Afghanistan and Iraq, and other places in Southwest Asia now, that was very short-termed. Went from August to February, in and out. And so when I was out at the First Marine Division, the Marine Corps, as well as the other services, had gone for a long time without any significant real-world deployments. We were deploying all of the time, but they were exercises. It wasn't to go into a combat area or a war zone.

So the Marines were looking for things to do, and out in California, a couple of things that are happening—fires and some marines were being given equipment and set out to help the firefighters. And that provides some amount of training, I'm not sure that that's the best use for Marines, but people will, other than me, decide that. And another thing that Marines were doing, as well as Army, to some extent, I think, being put on the border to help the Border Patrol agents. And we had a team, a fire team of four Marines out on the border in Texas, at a place called Marfa, Texas, and they would be given training, scenario training, to know how to look for people who were crossing the border illegally. And one of them had to do with—the Rio Grande goes through there, but the Rio Grande is really not very deep, in most places, so you can—people don't walk—can walk, they probably don't walk through. It is not uncommon for people to take a horse and

go through, and back, and cross at something other than an allowed border crossing.

The four Marines out there had been out there for a couple of days. They were just living out there, they were dressed in not just camouflage, but ghillie suits, so they had brush sticking out all over them, and that sort of thing, and other type of camouflage. And they were armed. And they saw somebody cross, I think, with a horse, and then lost sight of that person. But then someone fired at them. And one of the Marines fired back, at quite a distance. But the Marine who fired back hit the man and killed him. And that was a big deal. It was about 1997, I think, May 20, 1997. So for the next year, while I was at the Division, that took that investigation, big investigation. Not just Marine Corps investigation, but also the federal government, I believe, was investigating, as well as Texas, and charges were being brought up. All the Marines were brought—those four Marines were brought back immediately and told not to go back to Texas, because there would be a warrant out for them there. They all had military counsel, and the Reserves, some of the attorneys from the Reserve establishment Marine Corps came in and represented them, also.

And in the end, I guess it all turned out well. But the commanding general had his heart in the right place.

[01:05:02]

And he told me one day that he was going to meet with all four of those Marines, which is something that a commanding general just doesn't do, talk with defendants who were represented by counsel. But he had the counsel in too, and he just said he was going to do it. And he let them know that he was going to lend his support, because he didn't believe—he believed that the Marines had done, under the circumstances, the right thing. The press played it up somewhat differently. This was an eighteen-year-old sophomore in high school, United States citizen, and they described him as being a "shepherd boy." I'm not sure he was out there shepherding anything, maybe he was. Probably just shooting at—I don't know what he was shooting at rabbits, but he had a gun, and he did fire at the Marines. A couple of months before that, he had fired at the Border Patrol. And all of that got lost in the press, that was not reported.

So that went on for almost a year, and the Marines ended up not being brought up on charges. But that was just one example of General Admire really sticking by his Marines. There was another situation in which—we do drug urinalysis, that's common probably in all services. The Marine Corps is fairly aggressive. One of the things that many of the units do is, they'll do drug urinalysis right before they go on deployment. Sometimes the results don't get back before you go on deployment, so whether that's a good timing decision, I don't know. So we had a battalion commander, or a MEU [Marine Expeditionary Unit] commander, who

took Marines out for six months, they continued to perform well. Of course, about a week after they get aboard ship, they are told you and you pop [??] positive for—on your urinalysis, but continue to work. We can't discharge you here while we're on ship, and that sort of thing. And you're not going to get promoted while you're out here, because you've got this charge, all of that sort of thing. And they can do non-judicial punishment, Article 15, because when you're aboard ship, you don't have the right to refuse. When you're not aboard ship, you can refuse and request state court mar—you can refuse, and they can take you to a court martial. The same is not true on a ship, you have no right to refuse. So some of them probably got non-judicial punishment, which affected their promotion and their pay, and may have restricted them, and all of that sort of thing. But they continued to work, this whole group of about four to six people.

Immediately after the commander gets back, he pushes all this paperwork through the legal system, has now discharged them. And it's commander's choice to do that, so when those cases came up, and it wasn't immediately obvious that they had all come from that same unit. So when it went up, I explained to the commanding general what was occurring there. And he took into consideration the fact that they had performed well for six months, and done a deployment for their country, as well as the Marine Corps. So he gave them all the opportunity to stay if they wanted to stay. And I'm not sure all commanding generals would do that, but he did.

And there were a couple of other things, that we had someone who was accused of sexual harassment, a staff NCO. And I think it was just sexual harassment, I don't believe it was sexual assault, I could be wrong. And there was some issue about changing from one command—he was about to get transferred. So I got a call from the unit who was about to get this Marine. And I said, "Well, you can take him if you want to, but you never have to take a Marine who's under charges. You can send him back, or just not accept him, and the other unit has to process him." He said, "Process him?" I said, "Anytime—the Marine Corps order says if you've got a sexual harassment that's verified, you don't have to discharge the person, but you must process him for a discharge, and then go from there."

So I explained that to both of the commanders, and they set it up to the general for processing. And I thought the general was probably going to retain the individual, and he decided not to. So, you know, it was somebody who otherwise had a pretty good record. Also somebody who was in the Division.

And another thing about the Division is, there are not many units that have women in them, at least back then. So if the sexual harassment is male on female, it's going to be pretty hard to find a female out of most of those units.

[01:10:02]

So I just advised the commanders of their choices, and that's the way the commanding general made his decision, not to discharge. So things were changing there.

Something that I haven't talked about, and I know it's of interest to you and to the Veterans Museum is homosexuals, and how the Marine Corps and other services have dealt with homosexuals throughout recent history. When I started in the seventies, the policy was, no homosexual stayed on active duty. And that's the way the regulations and the JAG manual was written, so I did a fair number of—most of them were administrative discharges, or administrative proceedings, in my first years. I'm not sure of the date when it's changed to Don't Ask, Don't Tell, but that came about, and that presented, from the legal standpoint, another type of issue in terms of, part of it was—part of the Don't Ask was that you had to handle the investigation, if there was an investigation, differently. You could still process homosexuals and were required to process homosexuals for administrative discharge.

Typically, the way Marines handle things, when they find that there is misconduct of some sort, or something that needs to be investigated, the staff NCOs, the first sergeant, the gunnies will get immediately involved. They'll bring in people, they'll say, "Write a statement." And we need that to a large part, because CID, the Criminal Investigative Division, and the Naval Investigative Service, NCIS, doesn't have the manpower to do all that. And it starts from the simplest thing, like a failure to appear at formation in the morning. That's an unauthorized absence. Well, that's just somebody in the platoon or the gunny writing you up, or maybe the sergeant writing you up. And we expect to get those statements when we're going to prosecute. If someone steals something from the barracks, we expect, quite often, for the first sergeants or gunnies to bring the statements forward. Or drunk on duty, we expect that somebody who was standing duty is going to write a statement. But the thing about the Don't Ask, Don't Tell, I can't remember exactly how the regulations were written. But we didn't want the investigations to be done by the staff NCOs, or by anyone in the command, a lieutenant, or—and that was just the procedure with everything else. So what I was explaining to them is, when you've got something, just report it up, but don't investigate anymore, because if you do, it's kind of like trying to put toothpaste back into the tube, you just can't get it back in.

So that was the advice that I was giving while I was at Cherry Point, and then at the beginning, in the Division. And the other thing that we needed to be concerned about, and we were trained to be concerned about, is that sometime when a homosexual made it known that he or she was homosexual in the unit, you just wanted to make sure that the unit was taking precautions, so that the person would not be threatened, physically or otherwise. So I would get calls from commanders, and I'm glad that they called, and gave them the advice that I knew at the time, concerning the Don't Ask, Don't Tell. And one day a lieutenant

commander from a battalion called, and as he—and he said, "I'm reporting, as I'm required to report, that we have someone who has made it known that he's homosexual." I said, "Okay, fine." And got some information from him and made sure that somebody wasn't doing the investigation without reading rights, and the other things that weren't supposed to be done. And then I said, "Have you made sure that he is—that there is no harm that's going to come to this person?" He said—I was surprised at the response, because the response is, "Oh, everybody knows, and nobody cares. They all like him." And this was in 1997. Such a big change from ten or twenty years before that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Because you—and I—particularly in a Division unit.

[01:15:01]

So things have changed, tremendously. The attitude not just of society, but of Marines, that are part of the society.

So that was—it was a change. It was a difference in attitude, and the way people dealt with things. I do want to also say that at various commands, we would be getting what was called a—Headquarters Marine Corps would task all the units with coming up with information, a data call. And you had to get data for how many discharges of this sort, and how many trials, and whatever. And late nineties and early two thousands, we'd get calls for—usually because of privacy, Freedom of Information Act request. And then the units—the headquarters would respond, and the units would respond. They were asking for data. Well, how many homosexual discharges? And we'd give them the numbers.

But I think what was not telling about the numbers that were—and I mentioned this to the staff that I worked with, and the commanding general, is that more than half of the—because I would read all of the packages—more than half of the people wanting to get discharged—or discharged for homosexuality during the Don't Ask, Don't Tell wanted to be discharged. They just found that their lifestyle was—well, I remember one saying, I thought I could do this. You know, I thought that the Don't Ask, Don't Tell and I would fit into the military society, but I didn't. So I want out. And I don't think that that ever got relayed to the public or the press, and maybe there wasn't a good way of relaying that, because people aren't reading the investigations like a staff judge advocate is required to read all of the investigations.

So that's just kind of what was happening at that time.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers
Healey: We also did a deployment to El Paso [Texas] area, to Fort Bliss, for about three weeks. And that was a joint exercise. Right along the border, told we can't go across to Mexico, which didn't impact me that much; we didn't have much free time anyway. I think I had one day in which I drove around and saw some old chapels and that sort of thing and went on board Fort Bliss. Mainly we were pretty busy doing the exercise with different groups of folks. And it was classified, so we were dealing in the SCIF [Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility], and that sort of thing.

But for some people, they had gone there, and they wanted—not being able to go to Mexico, and being told, "You can't go to Mexico," was tough on them, because they had planned to do that. They had cousins living across, and they planned to go buy their boots for the year, and that sort of thing. And that just didn't happen. So there was a lot of feedback on that. But interesting exercise. Prep work for that was interesting. I don't know what they do right now, but I know all the computers that we took, we were told—you needed to take computers, but you didn't want to take too many, because you were told that the hard drives were going to be completely wiped before you got back. And that's the way they dealt with getting rid of classified—here's the hard drive, swipe it. Then when you get back, for a couple of days until they can load your computer again with the hard drive, you have no computer to work with. And I got used to that being the norm with exercises that I went on.

Halaska: Um-hm. What was your role in that exercise? What were you doing? What was the unit doing in that exercise, and what was your role in it?

Bowers
Healey: I can't tell you what the unit was doing, because that's classified. I was the staff judge advocate for the—

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers
Healey: —for the joint task force there. Yeah.

Halaska: Okay. And you have here written something about the Khobar Towers bombing? Can you tell me about that?

Bowers
Healey: That occurred at that time. And that, again—I talked about Lebanon and terrorism there. And, of course, we had Southwest Asia in the early 1990s. And then the Khobar Tower bombing occurred. I just remember being out there, and having the investigation on Khobar Towers, and reading it. And because I had a copy, I

shared it with the other deputy staff judge advocates from the various services, because they hadn't looked at it. It just—kind of a real eye-opener as to terrorism overseas and the impact that it had on service members.

[01:20:09]

And I think I came into the service and operated for fifteen years or more, peacetime, for the most part, with the exception of Grenada and the Lebanon bombing. And you just get kind of lulled into this, yeah, you go on exercises and you get prepared for all of this. But the actual events that are happening—and I can't remember how many people lost their lives in Khobar Towers, I think it was probably eight or nine. And its where the service members were located. And the locals knew that the service members were there, so a bomb was set off. And we started talking more about cybercrimes and being aware that those existed. And that was prior to 1993, the cyber world just really wasn't there, for the most part. And by the end of the decade, it was really—we went into preparation for Y2K, which really didn't happen. And that really wasn't a cybercrime, it was considered to be what might be a glitch. But more and more of the general staff's time was devoted to talking about, learning about cybercrime and terrorism. Being with the First Marine Division was probably a part and parcel of that.

Another thing that happened—oh, I see one of the things I've got down here is the sword and blood stripes. Right after I got to the Division, I went there as a lieutenant colonel, but knowing I was going to be—I was selected already. So the chief of staff, kind of with a smile on his face, said, "You're going to be in the parade." And he gave me the dates to go out and practice, and that sort of thing. So I said, "Well, what do I need?" He said, "The uniform is blood stripes trousers, and a sword." Well, I didn't own a sword. When I went through The Basic School in '77, '78, I learned some sword drill. But the Marine Corps order prohibited women from buying a sword So it's one of those things where the regulations haven't caught up to the policy, or to what's happening. We had to learn sword drills. So we bought yardsticks, and I learned sword drill with a yardstick. And went through the exer—not only learned but had to pass it.

And then a few years later, at The Basic School, you could get swords that were made to size. So it wasn't just small, medium and large, they actually measured you so that when you're holding your sword, I think it's supposed to come up to the tip of your nose, or something. And that's a good idea, especially since I'm pretty short. And then a couple of years later, five or six years later, women could buy swords. And but they didn't come measured to order. They came small, medium and large, and I'm not small. I'm short, shorter than that. So I thought, okay, that might change, so I'll just wait. I just won't buy a sword until somebody presses the issue, or they get back to measuring to size. So I let it go for probably eighteen years, or something.

So I ended up, right before the Marine Corps birthday, on the tenth of November, buying a sword. And also, I had never been on duty—usually it's recruiting duty, but there had been—when I came in, women did not wear slacks, either. Then we got green slacks. But I was not in a position where I'd ever need blood stripes. All the men had the dress uniform, is black top, blue trousers with red blood stripes, once you make corporal and above. So I didn't have any of those.

So I ended up going to Cash Sales, and there was no tailor around—I mean, this was in a week or something. And a couple of just humorous things out of that and my new equipment, I get out on the parade deck, and I'm practicing with my sword. And again, I think a sergeant helped me with sword drill, because I hadn't done it for so long. So he took me through the basics, and I still wasn't very good. But be that as it may, I take mine out, and I'm out there with another colonel; there's two colonels, two lieutenant colonels, and on down.

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And he looks at my sword and he said, "Wow, how do you keep your sword so shiny? And I let him know that I took it out of the bag a couple of days ago. You know, his, it was well over twenty years old, because he got his at The Basic School. And he's a funny guy. We were out there, and it's just dull, while you're waiting for whatever you're supposed to do to happen. So he's taking his sword, his dirty sword—or, not-so-shiny sword, I shouldn't say it's a dirty sword. And he's killing ants with it. Of course, I'm not going to do that with my bright, shiny sword. And the day that I went out, I put on my blood stripes in the office. And the sergeant there was from North Carolina. Her name is Sergeant Diaz, but she's not Hispanic. She's from kind of the hills of North Carolina, and she's got a deep accent. And she said something like, "Wow, those are great *breeches*," because she saw me in the blood stripes. And they do look nice. But, "britches," britches, I think, is what she said. I hadn't heard that term applied to blood stripes. So that was part of the fun at the Division.

Oh, the other thing that I knew when I was at the Division, big change from going from an air station to a Division, and I expected that. The first week or two that I was there, I hadn't met most of the battalion and regimental commanders yet, because I'm just busy checking in and meeting my own staff there. And I get a call from either the chief or the general, or was told by the chief or general to contact a lieutenant colonel, who was a battalion commander and tell him he needs to do an investigation out of his unit, concerning a fire that they started. And they were in the process, still in the process, of putting out the fire. And fires are big things at Camp Pendleton, because just big things in all of California. And you don't take them lightly.

So I knew that this battalion commander had been—I hadn't met him yet, but I knew that he had been out for a couple of hours, out with his troops, all trying to

get the fire out, out there stamping in the heat and the dirt, and all the dust and soot, and that sort of thing. I'm told to contact him and tell him he needs to do an investigation on his unit. And I thought, well, this isn't going to be real pleasant. But I picked up the phone, I got hold of him, and he swore at me. But I conveyed the message that I needed to convey, told him if he needed any assistance, to contact my office, I'd be happy to assist him, or my staff NCO would be. And it ended, pretty short. He came up the next day. And I put down the phone, and I just said to myself, hmm, I'm back in the Division again. I know I'm back in the Division, because usually the air wing people don't swear at you. He came up the next day and he apologized, and I was surprised. I said, "I understand what you were doing yesterday, and I understand what was going on. So no big deal." But that's when I knew I was back at the Division.

I think the Division probably just had thousands of people in it, and I think there were only three or four female officers. So that's a bit of a different scenario, but they were all good people on the general's staff, as well as many of the battalion and regimental commanders. So it was a good tour. And things went well.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right—

Bowers Healey: Trying to think of anything else about the Division. I did go back occasionally to see my family, not every Christmas, but got back, and—oh, the last thing they did, the general—General Krulak was the commandant at the time. And equipment is always an issue. Typically, combat equipment is issued to you whenever you get there. And the commandant decided that the thing to do was—and it gets lost. Sometimes it gets lost because people are careless with monitoring their equipment. It gets lost out in the field, it gets lost on appointment. It doesn't get taken well care of, because if it's not yours, you just take it back, check it in, you don't care whether it's dirty or whatever, dirty or damaged or destroyed. In fact, the very first flak jacket ever issued to me had a safety in in it. And that's how it was held together. And I took it back, and I said, gee, is this usable, serviceable?

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And he said, "That's all we have." So for the rest of my training there, I had a flak jacket with a big safety pin keeping it together. And it worked for that purpose. It certainly wouldn't have worked during combat, I'm sure. But that was not the purpose.

But anyway, the commandant, General Krulak, who had a lot of good ideas, and very involved commandant—saw more of him than I saw of any other commandant. He decided that equipment was going to be issued to each Marine, and that way they would take better care of their equipment. And it became

known as the Bag and Drag policy, because each time you went on deployment, rather than getting to Okinawa and picking up your equipment, or going somewhere else and picking up your equipment, you bagged it. You dragged it along with you. And the impact on the G3, the people who are the logistics, G3, G4, was that they had to have more airplanes or more ship room, actually twice as much, because you actually Bag and Drag probably twice your weight. So from a—it just became a problem.

Anyway, I'm out at the Division. My last day of check-in out of the Division, I have loaded my car—I did have a ship-out, they picked up some of my stuff. I didn't have a lot, because I was a geographic bachelor. But I'd loaded up my car, which is a small, compact car. It was pretty much loaded to the gills with everything that I hadn't packed out a week before, like manuals for court martials, and other manuals, and just a few of my personal items. And I was going to take my military gear back and check it in. And they said, "No, you can't check it. You're Bagging and Dragging." [Laughter]

So I stuffed all that stuff into my car. And it was really useful things like, I think they gave me a half shelter tent. And that was—that's usually you buddy up in the field, and one person's got half the shelter tent, the other's got the other half, and you put it together, and you've got yourself a little tent. But it has no value in and of itself. And stakes, I had tent stakes. And eventually when I got back to—I kept it for a while. And then they quite the Bag and Drag policy, so I decided, I'm getting rid of this, I'm going over to Supply. And I dragged all that stuff in there, and I said, "Here, this is yours." And they said, "Well, we don't have any line items for this." I said, "It's not mine. I'm not keeping it."

So I turned in gear. And I told other people that I had done that. They said, "Why did you turn in military gear that you didn't have to?" Yeah, I didn't want all that gear. I guess a lot of people would have sold it for whatever they could have gotten from it. But no line—and that might have happened, because they had no way to check it back in. They no longer had the line items for a lot of—it was only a year or two old. But once it's not in the system, there's no category to put it in. And who knows what happened to it, but I didn't have it anymore. So—okay.

Halaska: All right. So you were moving—you were driving back in your compact car from Camp Pendleton back to where, Camp Lejeune?

Bowers Healey: Yes. I ended up being stationed at Lejeune.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: That was kind of interesting. I wanted to get back to the East Coast, and the Marine Corps agreed to do that. And the first set of orders was to be the staff secretary point. That would be my first time out of the military occupational specialty. But I had worked with staff secs for a long time, I figured I could probably—

Halaska: What's that?

Bowers Healey: Staff secretary to the commanding general. And that quite often is a person who is a doorkeeper, I would say. You usually have to go through—regardless of what your rank is, it is expected that you're going to go through the staff secretary and/or the chief of staff before you go in to see the commanding general. Staff judge advocates do have a direct line into the commanding general. But it's a good idea that you get scheduled—it's kind of likely the president and what General Kelly does right now, you really not ought to be walking directly in to see the president. You ought—or the commanding general. You can, but if there's something that can be taken care of at a lower level, if there's a scheduling issue, you want to do that through the staff secretary. They usually—they vary from place to place, but they usually see all the paperwork. And they're the first ones to look at paperwork that's coming from other staff. They'll look at it, and if there's something blatantly glaring that's out of order, you haven't put the right cover sheet on, or whatever, it's going to get sent back until you fix it.

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So that's—they were going to have me be a staff secretary. And then they decided no, they had somebody leaving. The next week I had orders into the Marine Corps Base at Camp Lejeune to be the staff judge advocate there. That was fine with me, that put me back at home where my family was located. And then the next week, I had a third set of orders, and those were in to be the staff judge advocate of the second MEF, of II MEF. And that just had to do with other people in Washington, D.C., that never consulted with me necessarily about other people wanting those jobs or pulling in and out of them. Again, I think that there was, with one of the staff judge advocates who is senior to me, he wanted the base because he didn't want to have to deal with deployments, that you would with a MEF. And a MEF is a Marine Expeditionary Force. And really, the MEF usually doesn't go as a whole; they sent out the lower unit, the MEU, the Marine Expeditionary Unit.

So that's what I did for the next three years, located right on Camp Lejeune. It was, the headquarters were in the old hospital, so it was in the same building where I gave birth to my first daughter, which was interesting. But the place had been transitioned so much that it was hardly—I mean, there were some places that you could tell that it had been a hospital previously. But not so much. And while I

was there, I had three different commanding generals, all very different style of leadership, but all went well.

One of the first things that I do recall, I was the MEF staff judge advocate. And within the first week or two, we had an officer misconduct case, and it was coming up through the Division. And I had seen the Division CG before at a conference, and I knew what his personality was from that situation. And I knew he could be rather forceful, and sometimes overbearing on his own staff. I wasn't part of his own staff, but I thought, hmm, officer misconduct case—I'd better make sure my commanding general is well-briefed on this before I make any recommendation and find out what he wants to do with this case, because he could get some blowback from the Division, based on the recommendations that were coming up. So I briefed my commanding general, and he was on board with how the case was going to be handled.

And so the case continues to go through the process. And one day—and this was in my first few weeks of being at this new command, before I knew everyone. The commanding general of the Division walked into my office, and he said, "Can I talk with you?" And he shut the door. And I thought, well, this is going to be an interesting conversation.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And he just starts out from a hard-charging, like, What on earth are you doing? How could you possibly do this to one of my Marines? How could you make this recommendation, that sort of thing. And my recommendation wasn't out of line, it was kind of the norm for other officer misconducted that I'd handled. So he just went—he said his piece, for five or ten minutes. And then I let him know that I had briefed my commanding general, which was his senior, and that he was on board with the recommendation. And—okay. And we finished the conversation.

And that was fine, because I was prepared for it, and he opened the door and walked out. And one of the other officers from down the hall came in. He was a major, and he said, "All you all right, ma'am?" He said, "The general never comes into our office suites, and he never closes the door." I just thought it was almost cute that this scenario had caused a major to be concerned about my welfare. So, but by that time, I had been a staff judge advocate for quite a while, and had learned really just staff things. And the word "staff" before "judge advocate" really means that you have to learn to staff with other sections, with the G4, the G1, with the staff secretary, before you take an action, because you have to remember that when I'm taking an action, I'm just looking—my knowledge is in the legal field.

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But I don't necessarily know how that's going to impact on logistics, or on readiness, or on a comptroller. So when you've got a case, or an issue, you have to think, hmm, does somebody else in the general's staff need to know about this? Or would they have some input that might change what our recommendation is? So as I stayed in the Corps longer, you just became very good at, hopefully I became very good at staffing with other people.

And there was another issue that came up in the MEF, while I was there. And it had to do with—well, it involved the medical staff and the G4, the Logistics. And I happened to be down in the SCIF reading messages. At that time, I had to go down to the secured facility to read all classified messages. And I'm reading something from another unit, and it said—it was legal. I mean, on the top it says Legal, or SJA, or something like that. So I'm looking harder at those. And I'm reading it, and it says, "If someone does this and goes here, they will be subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice for a violation." And I had just, fortunately, been briefed that the ifs could not be carried out, because the Logistics people and the surgeon didn't have the requisite ability to do a certain task. So I get back on, and I actually called the—on a secure line, I called the folks in Tampa at the—I'm trying to think of what's down there—not a Special Operations Command, but—hmm, it's just losing me. But the Tampa folks down there. Just said, you know, you need to check with your G4 and with your surgeon, and you need to find—well, I suggest that you find out what the situation is, because we have about two thousand Marines that are in this category of being subject to being—that you want to punish them under the UCMJ. Hmm, okay.

But that's just an example, that you need to find out what the capabilities of the other staff are, and what their concerns, and some limitations, and some things that they may have done or not done. And I can't give you any more specifics than that.

Halaska: Okay. Is there a—just so I and the listeners have a better understanding of staffing, can you give me, I guess, a more concrete example? Or one where you can give me a little bit more information?

Bowers Healey: Hmm. Well, whenever I get—had an investigation, you wanted to make sure that your subject matter expertise people came in, if it was a flight investigation, or an accident. You want to make sure that besides just taking a legal look at it, before you determine whether or not there's criminal culpability, and the level of negligence. You may have to go back to the people who know about the particular vehicle that turned over, or the plane that dropped out of the sky, whether it was mechanical failure, or somebody didn't service it well. And those are things I'm not going to be able to know, because I don't have that legal—because I don't have that expertise.

So when I get an investigation, I may have to say, you know, the findings of fact don't let me know sufficiently what went on before that, or what the level of competency was, or should have been. So that's probably one example of staffing. And it would not be uncommon that I would push it back down to the unit. Or even if it had come up from the unit, it was a fairly good investigation. If it involved manpower issues, I would go to the one. If it involved disbursing issues, I would go to the controller. If I would go to communications, somebody might be blamed for not doing communications well or correctly.

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But you need to find out what their communications assets were before you can make a determination, if the communication assets just didn't exist. I remember coming out of the Garwood case that I talked about before and reading more about it historically. There were some prisoners of war, American prisoners of war, and one was a doctor. Something that happened in the camp was that people died of infections, or of their wounds. Somebody said, Well, doctor, couldn't you do something for them? And they had no medical equipment, no antibiotics. You kind of need to know more about the underlying situation before you take a legal action on it. So for me, it's almost always staffing.

Also something that I staffed on, sometimes I would get things from a command or a commander recommending such-and-such an action be taken. Rather than just sen it up to the commanding general if I disagreed with it, or there were legal reasons to disagree with it—I wouldn't just send it right up to the commanding general and let them know that this is illegal, or this is out of line, or whatever, I would staff it back down to the command and say, Gee, have you considered this? Similar to the court martial case that I was doing when I was in Okinawa as a captain—if you see something that the commands can't see, because there's three different commands, and they don't know that they're all taking three different actions, it's a good idea to go back down to them, get them all together and just say, Did you consider this? Do you know that the other person is doing this? They don't have to change, but you want to make them aware of that. And that is probably what I consider part of staffing, also.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Again, if there was something that was just purely—you know, the manual for court martials says you can't take this action, or you can't discharge this person for this reason, you might as well go back to the command and let them fix it before you send it forward, if they want—they don't always want to fix it. Some just say, Eh, I understand what you're saying there, Captain Healey, or Major

Healey, but this is what I want to do. Okay. Just so you know, I'm not going to recommend this.

And actually there have been occasions in which I knew that the action that was being advised was not going to—I would bring in other parties. If there was a significant action against an enlisted person, I didn't always bring in the sergeant major. But if I thought that—particularly if I was going to make a recommendation that the command didn't create, I would bring in a sergeant major, and get somebody else's discipline and idea, not just a legal opinion as to what's going on.

Halaska: Um-hm. Okay. So let me see, here it says, also while you were in this position, you had a deployment to Norway? Would you like to tell me a little bit about that?

Bowers Healey: Yeah. That was—again, I will say, as I probably have said, I did not deploy to any combat areas. But when I was with the Division and the MEF, I had opportunities, and did deploy with the unit on exercises. And one of the deployment that they routinely did—I think they kind of put it on hold now, since—in the last ten or fifteen years—that they would deploy to Norway, maybe not on a yearly basis. Norway is important because it's a NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] ally of ours. And it's not a secret that we store things there, so that we're ready for a deployment there. People question—some people—question why we are as heavily involved in NATO as we probably should have been during World War II. And it's a lot of folks would argue that what we have, and training in Norway, is kind of a World War II mentality.

But we still do train with NATO allies, and that's what we were doing in Norway. And just so—it wasn't a bad exercise. The general wanted to keep us out in the tents so that we would get the full experience while we were there for three weeks or so. But the controller mentioned it would cost more to get the tents and to rent the tents from the Norwegians than just to use the buildings that were there, because the buildings were sitting open, and they weren't going to charge us, and they were warm [laughs], which he preferred that we didn't do.

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But so I found that Norway, when I was there, was not as cold as Wisconsin. It's pretty close to the Arctic Circle. And we saw the aurora borealis. So that was kind of neat.

What else do I remember about that? Some of the troops were actually out. They were moving forward. And they were out in the terrain, and they did—but the general's staff was all back in a warm area, except for one night we went out, and

we were in an old World War II tent that housed forty people; it was a round thing with a stove pipe in between. And it didn't keep us warm, but we were out there. We did our cold weather training. And we did some snowshoeing, it was my first time snowshoeing. And if you haven't snowshoed, it's like any ski equipment—it takes a little trick and try to get used to it. I can't remember if we had much of a backpack on us. We must have had something, a little extra weight. By this time, I was getting a little "long in the tooth," as they say, but I was out there, and probably the oldest one out there tramping around with snowshoes on. And I was worried about falling, because I thought, oh, we're marching, and we're marching in file. And if I fall, it's going to take me a while—well, I did fall. And about the time that I'm thinking, gee, I've got to think about how I'm going to get up with the snowshoes and all of this equipment and stuff—whoever was behind me, just picked me up, and I was on my way. Hmm, okay. I think it was a young lieutenant who was back there, a big guy. So he just, under my arms, and I was up so fast, I hardly knew what happened. A lot of other people fell, too, so I just worried about being embarrassed about not getting up.

And we did get to meet Norwegians, and work with Norwegians, most of them very bilingual. And I did have someone on my staff who was a reservist who could trans—he had done his year in college over there, so he spoke the Norwegian language and could translate, if I needed. But really didn't need that.

One of the other things, I had taken an enlisted person with me, a lance corporal. And he had volunteered, and he was from the Division, and I was MEF. But we didn't have somebody—for some reason, there wasn't somebody ready to go at the MEF side for this, that, and the other reason. So he went with us. I get over there, and we have a lot of downtime. Anytime you're over in a deployed situation, you spend an awful lot of time just talking and waiting for the next meal, plus doing whatever you're supposed to do.

So we were—I don't know what we were talking about, but he mentioned when his birthday was. And we got into a conversation about—and he said, Well, this is my birthday, but it's not my real birthday. But I'm from—he was from a Latin American country, I think El Salvador. And he said there, unless—your birth date is the date you get your birth certificate, and you can't get your birth certificate unless your father is there. And so his father wasn't around for eight days or something, so he celebrated a different birthday. And some of the folks made him out of MREs, cold weather CWRs, I think, cold weather rations, CWRs. Cold weather rations. Took all the syrup and peanuts and junk and made him something in the shape of a birthday cake. It was really kind of inventive, but that was the birthday cake that he got.

And we were also starting to get pretty well linked up on the internet. So at night when the exercise finished, we were allowed to—or people were allowed to get on the internet. And it was amazing to me how many of the very young people

were on the internet every night, at 11:00 until 11:00, 12:00, 1:00. And I remember one of the young Marines said that she had never been out of communication with her husband for even a day since they've been married. And I thought, whoa, this is going to be quite an experience in a real-world situation, because—especially in a combat area that's not well built-up, you just aren't going to have it. Not just she, but other people were kind of stressed out about not being able to be in constant communication, because for the last three or four years, that was their life.

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So they would be on the internet. And I relayed all this back. One day I got—we were working with classified information, and our computer guru was the Marine from El Salvador. And I never asked him whether he was a citizen or not, didn't know I had to ask him. He was not a citizen of the United States, and I found that out during the exercise. And words passed that no non-nationals are supposed to be on a classified information, so I'm—oh, great, this is my guy. And we had to pretty much take him off that. But he was our tech guy. I remember back in the office at Camp Lejeune, I was with the MEF, he was with Division. And if something went wrong with the computer, they would say, "Well, just go ask Sal." His name was Salazar. And Sal seemed to be able to fix everything. But I had to take him off the classified information and get somebody from one of the other staffs to make our computers work there for the rest of the duration. And he became a citizen later on, he was working on his citizenship; that's back when it took quite a while to become a citizen. And now in the service, as soon as you get out of boot camp, I think it's automatic, you can pretty well become a citizen without the long year or two wait.

So that was an interesting thing. And then also internet, and the problems with internet. I was at a staff meeting, and it was passed that people were using too much of the internet at night, and they were using too much of the bandwidth. And the bandwidth comes when you're looking at pictures. And the com guy just said, very gently, "Tell your people, no pornography." So I went back to my little staff section, which was shared with another—the Public Affairs staff section. So when I was debriefing my people and going through the list of things, passing the word, if you will, and I mentioned, no pornography. And I'm looking over, you know, just ten, fifteen feet away in the same little office space, but on the other end of it, first lieutenant gets—you could tell. [Laughs] He's going to have to—and you make some inquiries, but he was going to have to change his ways. So that's young people. And not just young people, I mean, old people too, I guess, doing that.

I worked for—the general that took us over there was General Rollings. And very nice Southern gentleman. His background—he was one of the few generals, one of two generals on active duty in the Marine Corps who actually had been a drill

instructor. And I knew he was s drill instructor because he had the campaign hat in the back of his office. Other than that, he didn't say much about it. He also was unique in that he was missing two fingers on his right hand. Somebody had told me that before I met him, and I thought, well, that's interesting that they let him come into the Marine Corps, and when I shoot a rifle or a pistol, I need all my fingers. I'm not sure I could get beyond that. And it was his right hand. But I had forgotten about it, but then I met him. And we shake hands. And all of a sudden, I realize—you know, I hadn't looked at his hand, I hadn't thought about it, but when you grasp somebody's hand that they're missing fingers, you realize it. And so I'm trying to keep a straight face, I did, I think, okay. So that's General Rollings.

But when we were over in Norway, and we were doing this exercise, the exercise was coming to a conclusion. He had also been a scout sniper in Vietnam and didn't—only once did he mention that. He was—you could tell, he had been deep into the thick of battle. And there were a couple of incidents during the training that he got really upset about, and I would—he's probably the most war fighter general I have ever worked for. And I didn't work for him in a combat situation, but just his reaction to a couple of scenarios that were going on, and the intensity of what he wanted his Marines to do, led me to believe that if this man was in combat, you would definitely want him there as your commander, because he was going to fight the war full out.

[02:00:07]

And it's interesting to get that perspective when you're in a non-combat situation. I do want to add something about General Admire also, he's the Division general that I worked for for two years. He had been in a situation in Vietnam that other people talked about, he didn't talk about, but I always tried to impress on Marines that worked for me that it's important to be on time, be prepared, be there, and tell the truth. If you make a mistake, and you're dealing with me, you don't want to lie to me, and you don't want to make the mistake the second time. I can deal with the mistake the first time. But the second time, that's probably going to be a problem. What happened to General Admire when he was a lieutenant in Vietnam, there were two platoons out on a hill overnight. And they received radio message to be off that hill and on their way somewhere else, whether it was back or forward, I don't know. And he was in the second follow-on platoon. And the First [sc??] Platoon apparently radioed back and let them know that they had left on time, whether it be 6:00 a.m. in the morning, or whatever, and they actually—they got up late. They hadn't moved out, so 6:30, they're still there. And those times are just fictitious, I don't know—but they were late on moving out. But they radioed in the wrong—they told a lie.

Then General—Lieutenant Admire followed on, and he couldn't move out until the other unit moved out, so he moved out. But by that time, his platoon took

friendly fire, because the people who were—the artillery that was doing—I don't know if it was artillery or air, had been told that the Marines were out of there, that they weren't there. So and that's why they were told to get out of there at a certain time.

So he lost a lot of his men, and it took him a while to get out of there. And people who tell the story indicate that when he and his unit walked out there, he walked out with everyone, dead and wounded and living, and he looked like an absolute emaciated stick of a man, because it was such a grueling effort to get everybody back.

So I'd never heard that story until I was at the First Marine Division. But that just really impressed upon me how important it is to tell the truth, no matter what the consequences are, because the consequences certainly can be worse. And I'm sure they're magnified in war time, but the same as—and I had been told that, too, by a staff judge advocate. When I took my first staff judge advocate position, somebody told me, he said, Well, this is going to be a challenge for you, but whatever you do, if you make a mistake, if you give legal advice, don't cover—that's wrong. Don't cover it. Get back, research it, correct it, and get back to your person, and that is that you gave the wrong advice to. And that's always served me very well. Sometimes it's hard pill to go back and say, Well, I gave you the wrong legal advice. But it's going to happen. So that's good advice. It's important advice for combat people.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Okay, so—

Halaska: Let's take a break for a moment.

Bowers Healey: Okay.

[End of OH2134.Healey_file4_access]

[Beginning of OH2134.Healey_file5_access]

Halaska: All right, and now we're recording. This is file five of the interview with Ellen Bowers Healey. The date is October 5, 2018. All right, and we are just going to finish up talking about your time at Camp Lejeune from 1998 to 2001.

Bowers Healey: Okay. I was at the MEF during that period of time for three years, and that was all pre-9-11. Did do those exercises to Norway. We also did an exercise up in the Norfolk area.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And that was just an in-building exercise for a couple of weeks, and I remember driving up there a couple of times through the [Great] Dismal Swamp. You might hear about the "dismal swamp" that's part of North Carolina; it's not a very interesting part of the terrain to go through. And I'm not just sure—I think we went up there two three-week periods at a time. And also, there was a reason that I had to go back one of the weekends, and it had to do with an investigation. While we were doing the exercise, there was a MV-22 [Boeing MV-22 Osprey], and that's the plane that is both a helicopter and can go forward. They started using it about twenty years ago; it had been under development for quite a while. They're still using it. They've had some accidents. Well, there was an accident in Camp Lejeune before we started the exercise. Actually it was out at Cherry Point, but they were flying in a part of a forest. I don't know if it was the Croatan National Forest, or a state forest. Everyone aboard the plane crash, the MV-22 crashed, and everyone aboard was killed, so there was a big investigation about that. And part of the investigation had to do with people providing statistics that maybe were not accurate or true.

So I'm aware that in addition to the death investigations, the general officers and many of the commanding officers involved, they swooped in and took their computers and their hard drives. I'm not sure what happened with that, but I do remember during that exercise, one of the reasons I went back through the Dismal Swamp is, I had to go pick up the big boxes of the investigation, and just do an edit on it, because my commanding general at the MEF was senior to the person at the air wing. So we did an endorsement on it, and I was working on that endorsement, as well as the exercise.

So anyway, another thing that—just a small thing when I was at the MEF, in preparing for an exercise, I'm not just sure what exercise we were prepping for, but we were going out into the field at one of the landing zones, LZs, at Camp Lejeune. And stayed in a tent, and also working out in the field in tents, and with classified information, and working with the communications, just a couple of days out there. And I was to live in a tent. I remember a staff NCO and a couple of others took me out there, and somebody had erected the tents. And I had a tent by myself because I was the only female out there. All the guys were together in tents. Pretty big tent, but there just happened to be no females, so they didn't put

me in. It was in February, which is a little cold in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, but not terribly cold.

And I dragged my gear out there, and the staff sergeant would take me out in a jeep, also dragged some of my gear. And he went—I went into the working tents, and he took my stuff over to where I would be quartered. And he came back and he said, "I need some duct tape. Do you want me to tape up the holes in the tent?" I said, "Well, you can if you want to." He said, "I'd better, because you can see right through to the sky." I just thought, well—I just thought he was going to drop me off and take me back and get back to work, back on the main site. And he came back for a second roll of tape, and he was taping it up. And I'm thinking, gee, he's going through an awful lot of work. I'm just going to be out here for a couple of days, no big deal. There was no heat in the tent, it was not supposed to be secured for that reason.

The first night, February, thunder, rain, wind.

[00:05:00]

Just miserable. And I could see the water going through, I was on my cot, and the water was going through the tent. [Laughs] But I didn't think that much of it. I got into work in the morning at about—or maybe chow. I don't know if it was at chow or at the staff meeting at about 6:30, or whatever, out in the field. Everybody else is wet, miserable, drenched. Their uniforms are wet. Mine is just as tight as could be because I had a staff sergeant taking care of me, and he had duct taped everything he could.

So great on him. That's just an example of what Marines think about and do for you to get you ready and get out there. So I think that's pretty much my experience at MEF.

I did go on a yearly basis to selection boards, all while I was a colonel, with the exception of the very last year. I was just on a rotation. There were only maybe ten women colonels in the Marine Corps, and there's a requirement for all the selection boards, whether they be promotion boards or selection for schools, for female representation on them. So I found myself doing that. Interesting at first, interesting probably always, but a lot of work. You're given a number of cases that need to be worked up and briefed, and then you brief to the rest of the session. And to some extent, you're the advocate for the person whose file you're looking at. You work with their file for an hour or two and expect to brief it in two to three minutes. Also with a recommendation, they expect you to recommend promotion or non-promotion. You know, people can challenge you, and we started working from microfiche so they could see everything that I had seen. It's just that I had distilled—each of the briefers distilled the information.

I found that those boards, I would work from the time the board room opened in the morning until the time it closed at night, which quite often could be from 6:00 in the morning until 9:00 at night, with—and some of the boards, they would bring food in to you so that you wouldn't leave. [Laughs]

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So, grueling. And I spent several of my birthdays up there. My birthday is at the end of October, and that seems to be when boards meet. I think my daughters were living in Chapel Hill, living and going to school in Chapel Hill in Durham. They came twice to see me during my birthday on weekends, they would come up to my barracks.

And the second time that they came was after 9-11. And although we didn't live on military bases an awful lot, they had been in and out of military bases, particularly they started lifeguarding on Camp Lejeune. So they had been in and out of the gates, and the security had picked up a little. They came into—but I think that mainly it picked up after they weren't coming on base very much. They came into Quantico, and there's a back gate at Quantico which, for whatever reason, it's got these Jerry [Jersey?] barriers, the big barriers. Instead of going straight into the base now, you have to weave around the barriers, to slow you down. And the back gate has lights all over the place. So driving in, it's a little hard to see.

Anyway, the kids were coming, and they're teenagers. The lights are in their eyes, they're going through this weaving pattern. And the driver, I think my oldest daughter, thinks that she's been waved in. So she just goes. And pretty soon, there are people yelling at her, and she turns around, and they've got their weapons drawn. Apparently it wasn't a wave through, it was a stop. [Laughs] So when they got to see me at my barracks that night, or quarters, they had quite a story to tell. Things have changed after 9-11.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: And so that's one of their military experiences.

Another experience that I'll tell you about, they were lifeguarding on base. And they had cars—the first year they had to carpool, because my youngest was fifteen, so the older one drove in and did okay. And then they continued to do this for three or four years. My youngest daughter is very fair-skinned. And she was guarding outside in a pool. And I was, you know, Put on t-shirts, put on suntan oil, send them, so that they don't get burned.

[00:10:00]

And at fifteen, she said, "I'm going to get a tan." She's never got a tan in her life. But anyway, after the first—second year, she decides that she's going to take lifeguarding on base in the indoor pool, which is a good move from the standpoint of her skin. But it is not populated with dependent kids and dependent wives, and that sort. It's more Marines. Civilians can go there, but it's also the Marine training pool.

And long before that, I had told my kids, probably even when I was a captain or a major, I had heard from one of the other dependent wives, she said, when you have kids, the instructions she gave her kids is never to use your parents' rank when you're dealing with other kids or dependents. And I thought, well, that's good advice. Because when I went through The Basic School, I was in The Basic School with someone whose dad was a general. And she did not follow that advice. And there were some times when it was just, like, oh, come on, we're all supposed to be here until 4:30, why should this person get a privilege and leave early because her dad happens to be a general? And there were other little incidents like that that I would hear about. So I had told my kids—not with a lot of force, but I just mentioned, because they went to school with dependent kids, and most of them were probably the sons and daughters of enlisted personnel, because the enlisted ranks are 90%. So I just said, Don't ever use my rank for whatever you're doing. Don't make that a big deal in your life, because you're their equals.

So she's guarding at this pool, and she has a sticker on her car, because I had become a colonel, so they put a little eagle on your car. And it's really to help the gate guards to know who's coming in, as opposed to giving me a privilege for being a colonel, so they know who to salute, and the fact that they're dealing with a colonel, and that sort of thing. So she's at the pool, and she comes back, and she said—she'd parked in the wrong place, or something. And one of the Marines came in and said, "The old man's car is out here." They referred to a colonel as an "old man." And it was her car that was parked kind of where it wasn't supposed to be.

So a couple of weeks later, she asked me if I could drop off a pizza, and I thought, well, okay, I'll do that. I worked not too far from there. So I just picked—she had ordered the pizza, and I picked it up and dropped it off. She had not told—I guess sort of per my instructions, she had not told the corporals and sergeants that she had a mom and dad who were in the military. They just thought she was civilian. And Erica was coming home with all sorts of stories, that these enlisted sergeants were telling her. And they were infantry grunts. So the stories, they're a little bit on the raunchy side, I suspect. [Laughter] and perhaps lack of appreciation for women in the Marine Corps.

So Erica just takes all this in, and she doesn't say a word about her mom being a Marine, or her dad being a Marine, until I brought in a pizza. And I didn't realize—you know, I was in uniform, dropped it off, left, and probably there for about sixty seconds. And apparently they went through the roof to find out that her mom was a Marine colonel, and that they had said some stuff that they probably shouldn't have said.

And then another incident came in. Erica is just funny, she talks a lot. But a couple of weeks later, there was an incident with a Marine—I don't know if the Marine was a lieutenant or a gunny and had done something wrong. And the NCOs are trying to say, well, this is the pool rules. You need to follow the pool rules. And the sergeant said, "You need to follow this rule. This is the pool rule." And her mom is a colonel. And [laughs] so Erica's getting a kick out of—she's not supposed to use my rank, but a sergeant who doesn't even know me is using my rank.

So Erica came across a number of things like that, for whatever reason. Some Marines like to spit, I guess there are other people who like to spit, and a lieutenant came in with his group of a platoon of Marines.

[00:15:03]

And he spit on the side of the pool, which you're not supposed to do, apparently—all of these sorts of rules. So she takes over a bucket to this lieutenant. And Erica doesn't really care too much about—or appreciate rank one way or the other. And so she takes over a bucket, and she says, "Here. Clean it up." And the lieutenant did it, and she didn't do anything more than that. But the lieutenant did it, you know, swabbed the deck, because he'd spit on the deck there.

So she had fun. Just kids' experience of—again, we didn't live on base but once or twice, and very limited. So they didn't have a full in-depth experience about being a Marine brat, or a military brat. But they started picking that up as they were working on bases as lifeguards.

Let's see. That's while I was at MEF. Then I moved over to base. I remember that I had to sit on a board. And my replacement wasn't coming in right away, he was delaying coming in for whatever reason, but I went over to base, and within two to three weeks—and I also—for that reason, I hadn't taken leave. Usually you take leave in between duty stations, as you accumulate more leave. So I actually checked into base, briefly met all of the staff there. And there was a staff of about thirty. And then there were tax people, another thirty people over there, running the tax center. So a lot of people to meet within a week, and then I took leave. And then 9-11 happened while I was on leave.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I was up in the New England states, camping.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: And I did not know that there was a bombing—that the World Trade Tower[s] had been bombed for six hours, because I had turned off the radio. We actually had a TV in the tent, and I pulled it at about quarter to nine, and that's when the bombing occurred, the first bombing. But we were mapping and seeing places in those two states. I was actually at a national park, and there were four of us getting a tour, and the park ranger didn't say a word. Whether he knew or didn't know, he had a little radio on, but it may not have been on a channel.

So we took that park tour. And then we went to the capital of Vermont, Montpelier. We took a capitol tour. When we went in, things looked pretty normal. When we went out, I noticed that there were a lot of police. And I thought, well, they were just standing there. And I thought, well, there must be a police convention or something, or a meeting. Still, nobody on that tour said anything. Whether they knew it or not—they had to have known it. Why nobody brought it up, I don't know. And then we went to a Dunkin' Donuts to have coffee. And somebody sitting at the table next to us said, "Isn't that terrible, what just happened?" And I said, "Well, what happened?" She says, "Well, look at the TV." It was the World Trade Towers coming back, coming down, as they were hit by the planes.

So even though I had moved to base, I didn't have my cell phone with me. I'd left it in the car, so I immediately went back to my car and called back. I wanted to make sure that we had started getting together our resources to do wills and powers of attorney for Marines that would have to deploy. And the deputy that I had was a very competent deputy, but he had not been with the deploying forces. And I don't think he'd worked Legal Assistance. So he didn't realize that all of a sudden, he would get a lot of units asking for that sort of legal service, as well as anything else that Marines and Navy folks need to take care of before they deploy, or go on training for deployment.

So and then I called back about an hour later, and I talked to—the civilian secretary was there. And she also related some information. And she said that one of the other civilian employees, her son was lost—her son was missing. And he was in the Pentagon. And she told me the name of the civilian employee, and I remember having met her. And I thought, she's got—she looked very young to me, and I said, she's got a son in the Navy? And she did. That person was killed in the Pentagon bombing.

Halaska: Mmm. Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: So really a significant impact. Again, I never deployed during combat, but that attack—it couldn't help but not get your attention that the enemy had come in and hit what we call our "centers of gravity," the important—some of the very important things, the Pentagon and the World Trade Towers.

[00:20:10]

And I am forever grateful of the folks that were in the Flight 93 that crashed, because the target was somewhere else in D.C. area. So they did a great thing that day.

So that was kind of the start of my tour at base. And I was there for three years.

Halaska: And by "base" you mean, so you went from MEF to base?

Bowers Healey: I went from MEF to the Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Halaska: Okay.

Bowers Healey: Staff judge advocate's office. And it was about thirty civilians. And we did installation law, we ran Legal Assistance. Military Justice was there, but kind of a minor part. A lot of admin discharges. The SJA's office also ran the tax center, which would—it was open all the time, but during tax season, we would augment people from the MEF and the FSSG would come over, and they would be trained in taxes or computers, or whatever they were capable of doing. We didn't have—the units were supposed to provide somebody. Sometimes they provided good people, sometimes they provided people that were good in their own respects, but they had difficulty adding two and two, which is, you know, there's just some people that don't have a math proclivity.

So the folks that—we had a retired warrant officer running the tax center, and he did a good job working with everybody's capabilities. Some had computer capabilities, some had people skills capabilities, some had math capabilities. And unfortunately, there were a few people that we just couldn't find a spot for and needed a replacement. It was obvious that a lot of the units were sending people who were having difficulties maintaining weight standards or passing the PFT. And with the tax long hours, that became a challenge. And I know that initially, my entire staff, much less the enlisted people, were up in arms when I said we're having weigh-ins every month, and they start next month. And that goes for

officers as well. We are doing—we're running. You can set a time, I'm not setting the time because—but your staff NCOs will be out there, and you'll be running. And people lost weight. [Laughs] They may not have been happy about it, and most of them became people who could pass their PFT. Yeah, it was interesting.

But I had one young corporal, or sergeant, and she said she had never—she lost a lot of weight. She said she'd never had that encouragement before, I'm not sure what unit she was from. I remember having one Marine that couldn't pass the pull-up portion. And it turned out he was just using one arm, because his other arm was—there was something wrong with it. So it was hard for him to get even three pull-ups with—I mean, both of his hands would be there. But one arm was doing nothing, essentially. So sent him to Medical, I'm not sure that they fixed him up, but at least they diagnosed that it wasn't just his lack of effort, that there was something wrong there. And then of all the people, myself included, always being challenged to be in weight standards, we had one Marine that was underweight. And I'd come across one Marine early in my career that was—I'd see his entries in his record book, it was underweight—weight control for being underweight. Such a problem to have. He was of Vietnamese heritage, so he was very slim. And the guy that I had in the 2000s, he just said—when I mentioned that and asked his staff NCO to approach him, he said, "I've been to weight control many times, and I just can't put on weight." So most of us are trying to lose weight, keeping within standards.

So I became unpopular initially about that. But it went. And I knew basically if I didn't do that, my battalion commander was going to ding me for having a bunch of people in my section that weren't passing the PFT or making weight standards.

Hurricanes started, and that impacted—actually, they started in the 1990s, coming through Camp Lejeune.

[00:25:00]

Those are—you know, every time a hurricane hits the coast now, I have just a tremendous appreciation, because it's just miserable. The wet, the heat, usually you lose the electricity. Base SJAs would get—we'd get claims for people living on base who, because the electricity was off and we were responsible for getting the electricity on, would lose all the meat in the freezer. And they had a tremendous amount of meat in the freezer, just a tremendous amount. The claims people really got a kick out of that, that people would have hundreds of pounds of meat just when the hurricane is coming.

So those are claims that we worked and shifted through. It was, all in all, a good tour, but I can't say that there were a lot of memorable things from that. I did take—the commandant of the Marine Corps wanted us all to take Marine Corps combat—what was it—fighting—I can't remember the acronym for it And when I

was at MEF, they said, well, just don't do it while you're at MEF, wait until you get over to Marine Corps Base, because they have training areas that have rubber on the bottom, so it'll be much easier. Well, I got to base, and we needed to take this training. You got a tan belt, black belt, green belt, whatever. I got my first level, and that was it. But turned out, no, we didn't have rubber. We just had the Camp Lejeune ground.

And what did we do, for two weeks, three weeks, every noon hour I would go out there for two hours, and we would fall. And we would learn training. I'd never used pugil sticks before, so pugil stick training. And a lot of this training, and carrying other Marines, fireman's carry. I was in my fifties by the time I did this. And I remember the instructor, there were a couple of us that were probably a little older. I don't tend to have a lot of gray hair, but there were others in their forties who had a lot of gray hair. And I remember the staff sergeant who was training us said, "Some of you are kind of long in the tooth," I thought, okay. [Laughs] And he wondered—we did have people not complete it, but I thought, heck, I'm going to hang in here and do whatever.

And I was so stiff and so sore, because of all of the—we did boxing. I'd never done boxing before. They usually try to match us up with somebody who is about our height and our weight. The day that we did pugil sticks, I don't know what happened, but here I am, 5' 2 1/2", and I get a Navy guy who's 6'2" and overweight. And it was just quick. It happened real fast, yeah. He took a swing, and I was down. [Laughter] He was just—lovely. But in fact, the Marine Corps, for a long time, had done away with doing pugil stick training, because it could injure people so badly. But we did that. And I was out there with a few folks from my section, and a lot of people that I didn't know.

And then we did the firemen carry. And I remember that the gal that I was paired up with was from my section. She was about my height and weight. She couldn't possibly carry me. So I just thought—I just said to her, "Okay, I got this." You know, I'm about twenty years older than her, but she just wasn't the upper body strength at all. So that's how we got through the fireman's carry to make it look like we were doing what we were supposed to do.

And it turned out, our supervisor—other people would go through this training, and it was kind of—they shrugged their shoulders like, no big deal. And I thought, not what we did. We had—the sergeant major at that time was a sergeant major who had been in Quantico and developed the program. So he was making sure we got our good dose of it, there were no shortcuts on our training. And I was sore and stiff. But it went away after a couple of weeks.

And then my last assignment was to—I was attached to Headquarters Marine Corps, but actually I was assigned to the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Military Appeals, and I was an appellate judge there. So I was sent to Judge's School.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: Which is three weeks' training at the Judge Advocate General School of the Army. Good training, I did that in April of my last year in the Corps. Then I went up to Washington, D.C. Before I did that, I called a friend of mine who was on the court, and I said, "Hey, what do you do about the travel? I mean. Or the traffic?"

[00:30:00]

And he said, "Well, you just set your own time. You either come in before the traffic, or you come in after most of the traffic." So that's what I did for the year that I was there. It was supposed to be a three-year tour. I lived in Alexandria, I had about a seven-mile trip in. And they had reserved parking for 06s. So I made sure I got there—it was reserved parking only, if you got there while there was still parking available. So I typically was on the road by or before 5:00, and got to work at 5:20, and then departed probably about 2:30.

It was a good year. A lot of work, stacks all the time. When I walked into the office, there was no window, but there were stacks and stacks of case files to look at that had been left from the other person or added, knowing that I was coming in. And you never, ever got ahead of your work. I mean, you just kept on doing cases and cases and cases. Again, I was a geographic bachelorette. So we had cell phones at the time. I was keeping contact with cell phones. It was the first time my kids and my husband, we all had cell phones, so we kept in contact with each other. The kids, I think, were still in school. My husband had started school again. The two of them—two of the kids—my husband and oldest daughter were in nursing school together, which was interesting for them. And my oldest was back in Wisconsin doing her first year of law school. My youngest was. I enjoyed the work but didn't enjoy the traffic. Wherever you go, whenever you moved, you had to think about what the traffic was and whether you could find a parking place when you got there. I think I went over—

Halaska: This is in D.C.?

Bowers Healey: That's Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area. Got caught in a snowstorm one day, and I should have left—everybody left earlier than I did, but it was right before the inauguration. And a friend of mine from Sheboygan, Wisconsin, had gotten tickets to go to the inauguration.

Halaska: Which inauguration?

Bowers Healey: It was the inauguration—the second inauguration of President George W. Bush. And it was cold that day, but it had snowed the day before, so the ground was covered with snow. And the tickets were not available for pickup until about 2:00 in the afternoon, which is a miserable time to be going there when you've got to face traffic. So I went there and I picked up the tickets. She was flying in at the time, and the traffic was so bad. I don't know if I called—I think I called her, and she was in Indianapolis, and she said her flight was on time, it should be in on time. And I said, "I'm not sure I'm going to be on time." I had seven miles to go, and we were going about three or four miles per hour on the interstate. People were reading their newspapers it was that slow. And I did manage over—I could have walked faster than it took me to drive. I think walking would have been, like, two hours or something, less than two hours. It took me close to three hours to get home that day, it was so bad. So that's what's going to happen in D.C. when we have bad weather.

Next day we parked and took the subway in, and we went to the inauguration. Getting the ticket to go to the inauguration means you just get to stand in a certain place. It doesn't give you a seat, or anything. And people had come—they told you on your ticket and in the information about it that you could not bring in chairs, you couldn't bring in backpacks. And as you walked into the perimeter, there was a dump station where you made the choice; you're going to dump your brand new chair or your brand new backpack—there were wonderful things in that dump station that probably just got lost. [Laughter] And a lot of people, we talked to them, and they had spent a thousand dollars or so to get a flight, and tickets—and if you're staying in a hotel at that time in D.C., they triple or quadruple the prices of hotels, so they'd spent thousands of dollars to come and see the inauguration. So they just ditched all this nice equipment. Fortunately, we'd read our tickets, and we didn't bring in any of that stuff.

So we saw—that was our one and only inauguration, I think, that I'll ever see. And I had a lot of visitors when I was in Washington, D.C. I had a place to stay, so I saw some of my high school friends came in, and we saw the sights. The friend from Sheboygan was in two or three times, my family came up. It was a six-hour drive from Camp Lejeune area, and I drove back every other weekend, because I had Fridays off. But you always took work with you. I didn't take a briefcase with me, I took a suitcase full of cases with me, every weekend, every night.

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And we worked through—I'd work through those at home, just to try to make a dent in the piles. So, but I learned a lot. I learned a lot about the court. We did a few en banc cases in which we actually had live—most of it's a paperwork drill.

But if somebody requests to come up and make oral argument, we did that. So I did that maybe four or five times.

Then I think it was—I had planned to stay until thirty or thirty-one years if they had let me, but I—and it I think I might have, had I been at Lejeune or Pendleton. I really missed being at a base, seeing a lot of Marines around. There were some Marines at the [Washington] Navy Yard, but not a lot. And the work was different than I had ever done before. So I asked to retire, and they granted my request to retire. So I just spent a year in that job, which was the first time I had ever short-toured like that.

Halaska: Um-hm.

Bowers Healey: They were great folks to work with, both Navy and Marine. And my checkout was at Headquarters Marine Corps, which is up at Henderson Hall. And it's right adjacent to Arlington [National] Cemetery, so that was my last site before I departed from the Marine Corps. And that ends twenty-eight years of active duty and four years of inactive Reserve before that, while I was in law school.

Halaska: Um-hm. Excellent. Can you give me just a little bit more detail about what you learned in the Judge's School, and where that was located?

Bowers Healey: The Judge's School [Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School] is located in Charlottesville, Virginia. It's called the Judge Advocate General School of the Army. They may have tweaked that name a little bit since then. I had actually spent nine months there, going into an intermediate level school. And occasionally, during the course of the Marine Corps, I would go to one-week courses for various things, whether it was a military justice update, or a legal assistance—my first time was a legal assistance course before I was the officer in charge of Legal Assistance when I was a captain. Intensive military justice—it's training you and retraining you, and bringing you up to date on the latest military justice cases, as well as various evidence issues and case law that you are likely to confront when you're on the bench. Most people were going to be trial judges at that time; in fact, I think I was the only one going to an appellate court. But it was good training. I had never been a trial judge in the military. That's one of the billets that a lot of people aspire to. It was offered to me once, but it was offered in Hawaii. And if they had pushed the issue, I would have gone, but my experience in observing trial judges, for their first year, they learn an awful lot from talking to each other. And usually the judiciary has four, five, six, seven, eight judges, and if you've got a problem, that you just, hmm, you can take a recess and talk to some other judges about how they might handle the issue or the

motion, or whatever. Hawaii was a one-person Marine out there, and I just thought that would not be the best of situations. So I didn't snap that up. Other than that, I seemed always to get staff judge advocate positions. In fact, for my twenty-eight years of active duty, I spent fourteen as a staff judge advocate, which makes me kind of a dinosaur, because people don't usually have that sort of a career pattern. So that's about all I can say.

The courses are always very good and very up to date at Charlottesville, Virginia, at the Army School.

Halaska: Um-hm. Well, good. Then can you tell me what you did after you retired, or after you got out?

Bowers Healey: Yeah, we had been thinking about it for several years not knowing exactly when it was going to occur. And we thought about staying in North Carolina, because we'd lived there for a long time, because it has military installations which are handy to be next door to. Some of our friends were there, and acquaintances, and we established ourselves in a church there for quite a few years. I was somewhat concerned that our two daughters would not come back to Wisconsin or Illinois; we talked about Wisconsin or Illinois—my husband's from Illinois, I'm from Wisconsin. Initially we thought we were going to go to Illinois, in fact, we bought some property in Illinois. And off and on, I had been a res—my husband had been a resident of Illinois.

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They didn't have taxes for military people, which made it advantageous. And we gave it a long, hard thought, but then we were talking to my in-laws, who were from the Chicago area. And they, even fifteen years ago, started talking about the heavy property taxes, particularly if you were in the Cook County or Lake County area near Chicago. And since then, I think one of the big things that swayed us to Wisconsin was that Wisconsin, a couple of years before I retired, just two or three years, changed the law. And so they weren't going to tax military retired pay. Illinois had been doing that for a long time, which since both my—my husband is also retired. He's retired military from the Reserves. And he did five years active, and the rest was inactive time—or Reserve time. So we had two military pensions to be considered. I wasn't sure I was going to work anymore, so that was a fairly big consideration. But when Wisconsin changed their law, I think we swayed quite quickly to Wisconsin. We chose Madison. I thought about the Fox Valley area because I'm from closer to that area. It's an up and going area, but Madison would be closer to where my husband's parents were living at the time. So we ended up in Madison, a place where I've never lived. I had been here a couple of times. One of our daughters was in school here at UW [University of Wisconsin] Madison. And we were fortunate in that both daughters came back here and

decided to stay here. One had just finished nursing school, and she had a nursing job lined up in North Carolina. So she was kind of the last to finally make the move. But she spent a summer here before that, and I think she liked the Wisconsin weather and atmosphere.

Interesting coming back here. It's just Packer gear and Brewers gear all over, as well as Badgers stuff, and it's just a really enthusiastic sports area. I really had come to dislike the traffic in the D.C. area. So came back here, and I had planned to maybe look for a job, probably become a member of the bar, because I was not a member of the Wisconsin bar, I was a member of the Minnesota bar, where I went to law school. And after five years, usually you can just get reciprocity and come in. And I realized as I was filling out my bar request to be admitted, I think I realized just a week or two before I got off active duty that I would have to take a portion of the bar exam, the ethics. So I wasn't sure if I was going to do that. I guess I did it, because my daughter had just graduated from law school, and she had the bar review courses. So rather than having to buy them, I just took hers and studied from there. And I sat for the bar and passed, not the whole bar, just the Ethics. And I passed. Was the oldest person sitting in the room taking that exam, everybody was decades younger than I, with the exception of maybe one person. And then my daughter was already a member of the Wisconsin bar, so when I was sworn in, you have to have somebody move for you to be sworn into the bar. She moved for me to be sworn into the bar. She got a kick out of that. The judge got a kick out of that, also. She wasn't a great public speaker that day.

So we came back here. And for about a year, I didn't get a job, although I started looking for a job. I actually came back in part because my parents were starting to show the effects of aging, and so I was up at their house taking care of them some of the time. Actually they had been snowbirds in Florida, and my husband and I brought them back their last time, because they couldn't drive back anymore. And so it was a good move to be halfway between my parents and my husband's parents. Eventually I applied for a job, got a job at the Office of Lawyer Regulation, OLR, on the Capitol Square here, it's part of the Supreme Court, and worked there for three and a half years. I did investigations on lawyer misconduct. That was a good office to work in, very congenial group of people.

My daughter, my youngest daughter, was still looking for a job, so I would go on the internet occasionally and look for jobs for her.

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And I came across a job that I ended up applying for. I didn't dislike the job that I was in, but they started putting us on furlough, and that is take a day off and don't get paid for it. And I'm thinking, this shouldn't affect me, but I just don't like it. I'm not worried—since I'm on retired pay, I'm not worried that much about money. It did affect other people, certainly. And then somebody got let off who

was a temp, and he got let off. I thought, well, hmm. I didn't know that they wouldn't really go into the permanent—because I was a permanent employee.

But when this other job—I applied and got the job, working for the United States Department of Agriculture. And I only applied for the position that was here in Madison because I wasn't interested in moving. So I've been doing that for close to nine years now, which is administrative judge holding hearings, and then writing determinations based on the evidence before me.

My husband worked here for a while as a nurse, and I've got a daughter who's worked probably nine years as a nurse, and the other daughter lives up in Portage. I'm involved in some military organizations. I've been active with the Women Marines Association, and a few other things, but not fully engaged, probably because I'm still working. Last night I was at the Marine Corps League Organization and joined that group.

And we have spent time with our parents. Over the last ten years, they have all passed away. So for one year, a little over a year, my mom and dad actually lived with me most of the time. And I was working, but it still took a good bit of time. My mom actually had—she's had knee replacements, and she had her knee joint completely removed for quite a few months, so her mobility was decreased a great deal, and that was to try to get rid of the infection that was persistent. And my dad had Alzheimer's.

And we bought a cottage out at Lake Wisconsin, which we spent time on the weekends, which is just kind of fun to do. I think that was something—we didn't do a lot of vacationing when I was on the farm as a kid, but we did have a relative who had a cottage on a lake up there, and I always thought that was kind of fun. So I'm glad I've been able to do that. And I've volunteered here for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Oral History program. I've been doing that for ten years or so, probably more than that. And that's been very interesting.

Halaska: Um-hm. How did you get involved with that? And why did you want to do interviews for the program?

Bowers Healey: I had done an oral history when I was on active duty and I was at the Judge Advocate General's School, when I was a major. And it was interesting. We did it on an admiral, a Navy guy and myself. That was just one of the projects that we are allowed to do, we did it. I think it went pretty well. We got a good grade on it [laughs], better than the other folks, so I thought, well, maybe I can do this. And I'm interested. I think I found it, just on the website, the first year that I wasn't working.

What I was doing at that time, we bought a house and I was doing projects around the house actually. I painted almost the entire house and cleaned up the yard, and took care of the other people, and the family, and that sort of thing, and visited a lot of relatives. I volunteered, and it took about a year before they really got back to me and picked me up in the program. And it has been just tremendously interesting.

Other things that I do, I belong to a theater group, we just go out to see plays. I belong to a book club. Initially when I wasn't working, I belonged to two book clubs, so I like to read in my spare time. And that's about it. I don't have a lot of connection with military people. Did go back to Women Marine's Association bi-annual conference in August and September. And that was great because I saw people that I hadn't seen for years. In fact, some of the people I hadn't seen for forty years, which certainly dates me. But because it was in the Washington, D.C. area, a lot of them retired there or got off active duty there.

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So I saw about five to ten gals that I hadn't seen before that many years. And that was great to see them. I should be better at keeping up with people, but it seems like I'm just short on time from now and then.

Halaska: Um-hm. Can you tell me what your experience in the Marine Corps has meant to you, and to your life?

Bowers Healey: Well, it took up a big block of my life. It's where I learned to be an attorney. It's probably where I learned a lot of teamwork. I think I had always been pretty independent, just working on my own at whatever job or whatever task I was doing. I grew up in a very small family, so it wasn't like we all got together and worked on a project, you just showed up and you did your work. So working as a team, as a unit, is something I hadn't done. And I've learned to appreciate that. The lower ranks, we called it "teamwork," and then we called it "staffing." I guess it's all about the same thing. And it is a tremendous place to—if you get into the courtroom, as I was thrown into the courtroom my first two years, you learn to stand up and do courts, and to represent people.

When I was in the Naval Justice School, in my first part of the training, in my first year, I remember one of the instructors saying that if you're assigned as his defense counsel, the only thing that stands between the accused and the entire government, the vast government, is you. You're that person's representative. And I guess I just hadn't thought of it that way, but that served me well. Then about halfway through my first year as the defense counsel—I'm not a terrific

speaker, I'm not a terrific extemporaneous speaker, but you do learn to stand up in court and not let you or your client get rolled over. And you try to do the best that you can for them. And one of the accused that I was representing was kind of—not pulling on my arm, but trying to get my attention while I was talking with the judge, and worrying about the next documents that I had to get in. And I just made a closing argument on sentencing. So I tried to put him off. Then he tried to get my attention again. I think after the third time, I just leaned down and listened to what he had to say. And he said to me, he said, "You made me sound good." And I said, "You are good!" [Laughs] But small things like that remind you what you're there to do, you're there to represent, to the best of your ability, within the bounds of the law. And those are not my words, they come from an oath that we take, the accused. So that was important, that he said that to me. And then when I moved on to being a staff judge advocate, tried to represent the command and the Marine Corps mission to the extent that you can. The positions aren't always popular, but the focus is to make sure that you have Marines that are ready and capable of deploying, whether you do that through providing what the power of attorney tried to get them out from under a legal contract that is causing a lot of money. Back in the early days, people would buy books that they didn't need, like encyclopedias or a lot of magazines—if you can get them out from under those contracts, or out from under a bad used car—that's just a lot of relief to them, and allows them to go on deployment, or to get their mission done.

So the Marine Corps taught me to be focused on something more than myself and my family. It taught me to be focused on mission accomplishment, albeit from behind a desk as an attorney.

Halaska: Um-hm. All right, excellent. Is there anything else that you would like to add that we haven't addressed yet?

Bowers Healey: Boy, I can't think of anything at this time. It's—you've allowed me to tell a lot of stories, more stories than anything, I guess, here. So no, I don't think so.

Halaska: Okay, excellent.

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