

My Meadville Interview

Interviewee: Jordan Marker

Interviewer: Merryn Spence

Merryn: Sweet. Alright, are you ready?

Jordan: Yeah

M: Okay. Are you sure?

J: Yup

M: Okay, so Jordan, what do you love about the city of Meadville?

J: I love the restaurants in the area. Because it provides work for me and places where I would usually find work and I like all these different kinds of restaurants.

M: Like what?

J: Like the variety of food at my restaurant [Cannon's Chophouse]. There's sandwich shops, there's all these little eateries and diners and stuff that are pretty cool

M: What would you say is your favorite place to eat? Or one of your favorite's?

J: Favorite place to eat would probably.. taco bell \*laughs\* that's just realistic

M: \*laughs\* awesome. What matters to you most about living here?

J: Hmmm. I don't know. It uhh.. the weather. I don't know. I like hanging around with the people. I like the community, like all the people that I see and meet everyday

M: Where do you usually hang out?

J: I hang out with a bunch of my friends down over by co-fair and down by BK and stuff. That's pretty much mostly where you can find me.

M: Sweet. I know that you have only lived here since around January, but do you have a favorite memory so far about being in Meadville?

J: Mmm I don't know. Maybe partying with all the college kids, that one night that I did.. Probably just walking down the street everyday making friends. That's what I like.

M: Cool. And so what brought you here and why are you staying?

J: My job and not much keeping me here honestly. I just like the friends I made here

M: what would make staying here easier or better for you?

J: Like, a homeless program where we didn't have to worry about shelter or like when our next meal was.. Something to help out the homeless because cops and everyone else in the area is just bullies to us

M: Bullies?! How so?

J: Like they literally come into the woods after us and tell us to pretty much drop everything we're doing and get out, with no place to go to to begin with. So we don't really have a choice, cause we can't stay and we can't go. It's hard because you can't live on your own out here especially when you don't know people in the community. It's difficult but I get by.

M: How?

J: Good looks. I don't really know how else to answer..

M: \*laughs\* okay so i'm going to steer in a different direction. What things capture the spirit of this town? What have you witnessed so far?

J: The bar flies, they capture all the spirit in town. \*laughs\* no, I don't know. I've just noticed that there's a lot of nightlife around here. Opposed to the day time where you just got your drifters everywhere, here and there. The night life is just.. If you walk down Main St at about 11 o'clock to 2 am you'll know exactly what i'm talking about

M: Can you describe it for me?

J: ehh its like all the trouble makers came out and they...

M: \*laughs\* yourself included?

J: Nahhhh, I'm not a troublemaker. I'm a good kid, I promise. Scout's honor.

M: Were you a scout??

J: No...

M: \*laughs\* I'm not sure if you can make that claim.. But it's fine, I won't judge. So you enjoy that night life?

J: It's when i'm awake most. It's hard to hang out with people when you're only on a 3rd shift basis. Everybody's asleep and like 1 of 5 people that's actually awake in town. They need more things for people to do on a 3rd shift basis.

M: Like what?

J: Like jobs, like more jobs. Because everywhere is closed in the morning. As a cook, I can't work first shift, because i'm working second shift, I can't just work all day and then..

M: What kinds of things would you like to see? What would you want to do?

J: I would like to see like, I don't know maybe like an arcade or something

M: cool! What would the arcade look like?

J: like, half a restaurant. make sure the arcade got skeeball. Kind of like a Chuck E Cheese but like a lounge.

M: kind of like a Dave and Busters?

J: Yeah but not like about that. It would be for like twenty somethings and like have an orange julius in there or something. Just bring some stuff for people to do. Cause they're just sitting in the park and wasting life away. Cause that's what I end up doing most of the time.

M: what other kinds of game would you want in the arcade?

J: uh I don't know, maybe like pool tables. Like boys and girls clubs- have you ever been to one of those? Like, back in the day that was awesome.

M: like ping pong?

J: hell yeah

M: and like a pinball machine? And you would want it for only twenty somethings or like other people too?

J: yeah other people could come too but i'm sure it would be like for twenty somethings at like 3 am. Just like have a place for people to go to escape their lives for a while. Have it be part coffee shop or something

M: yeah, how would it make money? Like would you pay to enter or pay per game? Or like how would they sustain it?

J: I mean, a restaurant.

M: like it was part cafe? Interesting, okay! Do you think any restaurants that are already in town would give up some of their space to..?

J: Nah... I don't think so.

M: Let's make one!

J: \*laughs\* sounds like fun

M: there are plenty of spaces for rent in this town!

J: yeah, that would be cool

M: would that make you want to stick around and invest in Meadville a little more?

J: Maybe. If I worked there, yeah.

M: Cool. so what would you miss in Meadville if it wasn't there?

J: This warm weather

M: But you came in January when it was pretty cold. That didn't scare you off?

J: No, I stayed outside of Meadville, I worked in Meadville but stayed outside until like March and then moved into town

M: But then if it wasn't really nice in the summer would you have moved somewhere else?

J: I don't know, just kinda.. Luck that I ended up here in the first place

M: So what, if it were gone, would make Meadville not seem like Meadville anymore

J: \*long pause\* I'm not sure.. The leaves.

M: The leaves? What about the leaves?

J: I don't like the winter time because the trees look like death and are creepy. It's weird.

M: Well they don't die, right? They just like.. hibernate, I guess? I don't know.. but I mean like other places have leaves outside of Meadville

J: \*laughs\* I don't know. I guess, maybe.. I don't know how to answer that one.

M: Okay. Maybe i'll ask you at the end and see if you have an answer then. So what about Meadville is important to continue into the future?

J: Investing in the youth

M: Investing in the youth! How?

J: In a town like this, the kids are gonna end up with everything eventually anyway, so probably like better schools and programs for people to get.. out and away from the whole criminal element

M: So how can you envision making school better for students here?

J: Just have lots of programs and counselors that actually like counsel

M: What kinds of programs?

J: one of the problems are the people that just do their jobs for the money to collect a paycheck but these kids barely get by. Kinda like how.. (inaudible..darn!)

M: Why is that important? Why does it matter to you that we invest in the youth?

J: It matters to everybody. I mean, one day i'm not going to be around and my kids will have everything. and they're going to have to deal with their own problems eventually

M: So you want to be able to prepare them well?

J: Yeah, they shouldn't have to worry about like, kids fighting and.. kids getting hooked on fucking coke, and all of this nowadays. I've seen a lot of that lately.

M: Really? Like what age group?

J: Anywhere from 15 to like 40

M: Wow. How are 15 year olds getting access to it?

J: I don't know, it's just so available, it's ridiculous, it's easier to find than most people find cigarettes. Hell, you go to the bathroom on Chestnut and there's people peddling it in the bathrooms

M: Damn, which bathroom are you going into??

J: Doesn't matter, there are enough of them.

M: yeah, dang. So, are there any other specific examples of things you have in mind for students?

J: I would like to see some kind of community center at the mall. Like, just a place where you can go sit and watch tv, get out of school, do some homework, just being in your own bubble for awhile and meet up with other people that are doing the same thing

M: do you think you'd be interested in helping to make that happen?

J: It would be nice

M: I think that would be really fun to talk about more and what that might entail! Do you think that there's interest from other students?

J: oh yeah! Have like computers where you can go study or learn about all your programs

M: So like a library

J: But you don't, you wouldn't need that because technology..

~interlude of saying hi to people~

M: Umm. So you were talking about you children and how they are going to inherit all of this in the future.. So what do you want your children or grandchildren to experience here while being here?

J: Safety. And walking down the street without having to look over your shoulder, honestly. I don't want my kids to have to be scared every time they go out because people are whiling out and acting a fool or fighting in the park because they are twenty somethings that don't know how to grow up

M: How could you create a more safe space for your kids?

J: I would.. I don't know. GPS on their phones, I guess.

M: And what would that do?

J: I don't know, get a red alert button they could press if they're in trouble

M: oh like an emergency button on their phone? Okay. And then that would call the fire department or police or you.. ?

J: any of the above? I mean if somebody was attacking my little girl the fire department could show up with their axes and spray them down with the water hose

M: So, safety.. anything else?

J: Job opportunities

M: Anything in particular?

J: Not exactly, just more stuff for people to do, ways to earn money without having to do so much at the same time.

M: What do you mean?

J: I want cheaper apartments so that people can have one job and be able to stay in them

M: Okay. That would be nice, yeah. Okay, so I have one last question for you. If you could have one wish for Meadville what would it be?

J: A waterpark!

M: A waterpark!! I've heard that one a few times. Why?

J: Because who wouldn't want to go out and go on a bunch of waterslides and have all these little kiosks where you would like earn all of these trinkets. Like have a little flea market and stuff. I just think that would be cool

M: Where do you think it could be?

J: No idea. I just imagine a water park around here

M: well there are waterslides at the MARC, at their pool. and also Conneaut Lake Park has water rides and stuff but it's kind of far so you'd have to have a car to get there or take a bus there- I don't know if a bus goes there.

J: Better sidewalks

M: What do you mean?

J: To get around, because i'm almost constantly falling into traffic

M: Ohhhh, I bet. So like better sidewalks or more sidewalks?

J: Better, smoother sidewalks

M: So waterpark, better sidewalks, anything else?

J: Mmm.. that's about it, community outreach programs I mentioned.

M: Cool! Thanks so much for doing that. I know you probably felt kinda weird about it.. Your opinion is greatly valued, and your perspective!