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I: What do you love about Meadville?

R: um the Small town atmosphere - um easy to get around - I don't know

I: Its funny that you say small town atmosphere because you're from Cochranton.

R: yeah (laughing) - ok the big town atmosphere compared to where I live, but it's more small town than big - comparatively

I: so easy to get around

R: Yeah, like you can go in anywhere and most times I'm gonna run into someone I know

I: how long have you worked in Meadville?

R: Oh, jeez since I was 18, so like 35 years

I: What matters most to you about the city of Meadville?

R: It's close to where I live - It's um - would I rather work in Cochranton if the agency was there, yeah, but its still close its only a 13 mile drive and its easy to get to and fro - so

I: What are some of your favorite memories about Meadville?

R: Going on a hunt around town for work for someone who left the school - um (laughing) - garage saleing together, and I love getting together for our retreats and the holiday dinners we had and um yeah and social wise, you know my dart night with my friends and my bowling night with my friends

I: What did you like about those?

R: um, it was very social - and after working it provided a good way to release and vent (laughing) - and there was alcohol involved

I; so what brought you to work here in Meadville -

R: There was no jobs in Cochranton (laughing), so I mean my first job was at the Meadville mall, I worked at the card shop there and I sort of made my way around at the local shops there, and went to a babysitting job and then that led to the ARC, which led to here (Supports, inc) so one thing just led to another

I; I remember that little card shop...Um, What would make working in Meadville easier?

R: well as far as our work here - more activities for the staff and individuals to have access to during the week - like there's some access to tubing and golfing, but that's more weekends when they have the specials - but like there's not a whole lot around for them to access - like maybe ceramic classes or photography classes or it's usually happening on nights or weekends, which doesn't really accommodate a lot of our individuals

I: what do you mean by individuals?

R: The people that we support out in the community - we have staff that work with individuals with disabilities who live in like family living or a group home.

I: What do you think captures the spirit of Meadville?

R: When I think about Meadville, I think about the hockey team - and its the school - and how great they do - and excitement when the bus comes in and the parade - I guess town spirit when it comes to the High School anyhow - and the Halloween parade I think we're big on that.

I: Why do you appreciate that?

R: Um, because it just reminds me of my school days - I mean you always want to be an adult in high school and then when your an adult you wanna be back in high school --so it just brings back those days when you thought it was so hard but it was really so easy. (laughing)

I: Ain't that the truth

R: And I think it brings the community together when they do really well at states and they come back and everybody is out there cheering, and it shows a great community. you know.

I: What would you miss in Meadville if it wasn't here?

R: oh boy, Well, the Movies - the bowling alley, the restaurants. There are some restaurants that I like, like Compadres, and Applebees I really love and Cracker Barrell too. So I guess I would miss food (laughing) and places to go do things.

I: Its a simple list

R: yeah (laughing)

I: What about Meadville Meadville is important to continue into the future?

R: I think uh, the community involvement - more involvement and the small town atmosphere of getting people together, I think um, it just makes a town naturally grow and it stops a lot of the bad things from maybe getting bigger.

I: What do you want your children to experience here as they grow up?

R: Yeah, same thing - going to the parades, knowing your neighbors, and not being afraid to know your neighbors, you know, riding home on the bus with your friends and having a slumber party without fear of any - you know - heroine being on the bus, or the neighborhoods going downhill - I don't want us to become a Detroit, with no one being able to afford their homes and neighborhoods going downhill and drugs everywhere - cuz that's a huge issue it seems.

I: What would you change to make Meadville even better?

R: Well, I would get something for high school students to do outside of school on nights and weekends - like, we had Razzy's and we had Top Hat and we had Playland - and there is nothing for them to do and it just creates this whole other problem, where it's vandalism and it's drugs and drinking and you know - so I think that is a big one - getting the high school kids to love their town as much as we love the town - and shutting down Chestnut street and making it a walkable shopping area - and cafes - where its a street you just love to go.

I: Tell me more about that.

R: Well I always thought from the downtown mall up to the Diamond - that could be a walkable - cafes - little shops - like an old town brick street - you know kind of place to go. There's one in Winchester Virginia that I love and its the city, and all of a sudden you find this little street that has these little food areas that you can sit outside int he summer time and eat and watch everybody doing their shopping - and I just always thought Chestnut would be a good shutting it down kind of street to do. If you remember the sidewalk sale days - that street was just filled with people back in the day - and so just shut it down all the time and have it be sidewalk sales every day (laughing).

I: If you could have one wish for Meadville, what would it be?

R: mmm, well - I would still go with - let's give the teenagers something to do so that we can have a generation growing up loving the town and putting their time into the town, so it doesn't turn into - you know - a desolate - no one wants to live here - drug infected town kind of thing.

I: Thank you for your time