

JOSHUA KELLY GREEN

Salt Lake City, UT

An Interview by

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THIS IS AN INTERVIEW WITH JOSHUA KELLY GREEN ON MARCH 13, 2015. THE INTERVIEWER IS BECKY B. LLOYD. THIS IS THE GREAT SALT LAKE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT. TAPE No. u-3288.

BBL: This is an interview with Josh Green at his home in Canyon Rim. Today's date is Friday, March 13, 2015. This is part of the Great Salt Lake Oral History Project. My name is Becky Lloyd.

Josh, let's start with when and where you were born.

JKG: Okay. I was born in 1979. I grew up in Centerville.

BBL: You were there your whole life?

JKG: Pretty much. I was there in Centerville until I left to serve an LDS mission in San Diego. Then I came back and lived in Centerville for a while before moving to Salt Lake and I've been here ever since, different parts of Salt Lake.

BBL: I should have asked "were you there your growing up years?" It's obvious you weren't there your whole life (laughs). I meant to say that.

JKG: Yeah (laughs).

BBL: Did you have a view of Great Salt Lake from where you lived?

JKG: Kind of. More often than not we knew it was there because we could smell it (laughs) every once in a while. But, yeah, we could see Antelope Island from our house.

BBL: Tell me where you went to school.

JKG: I went to Viewmont High School.

BBL: And you graduated from there?

JKG: Yes.

BBL: What were you involved in in school? What were your interests?

JKG: It was swimming. I was on the swim team. I played in a couple of bands here and there, but the big thing in high school was swimming.

BBL: How did you get involved in swimming?

JKG: Growing up, my grandma lived next door to us and she had a pool and she taught me and my siblings and all my cousins how to swim. My aunts and uncles swam in high school; my mom. It's a family thing!

BBL: Yeah. So did you get on a youth team that flows into high school?

JKG: No. I started competitive swimming in high school, my sophomore year, so I got started a little late.

BBL: Oh. How come you jumped in then and not sooner?

JKG: I think the development teams, it wasn't anything like it is now. I knew it was there, but I wasn't really interested in it. I had some friends that were on the swim team, they started as freshmen, and they kind of convinced me into trying it out, so I started late as a sophomore.

BBL: I see. What events did you swim?

JKG: Over the three years I swam everything except for the 100 fly. I started out as more of a distance swimmer, the 500 free, and then by my senior year I was doing just mostly sprints, 100 free and relays.

BBL: Did your team ever go to state or win any championships?

JKG: No. It's funny, when I was in high school the team wasn't that great. But just this year Viewmont won State for boys and girls. I have a cousin that was on the team. It was a lot different than when I was in high school. It wasn't nearly as developed. We didn't

have as good a team as they do now. So I went to State I think all three years just on relay teams. I wasn't fast enough to qualify for any individual events.

BBL: This is a long time ago, I went to Cyprus High School and at that time we had a really good swim team and we won a lot. But my kids grew up going to Skyline and they had a really powerful team for a long time—I don't know if they still are.

JKG: I don't either. When I was in school, it was Brighton was the big swim team.

BBL: That's interesting.

Do you have siblings?

JKG: Yeah, I have a younger sister and a younger brother.

BBL: Do they swim as well?

JKG: They did, yeah.

BBL: So all of you competed in high school?

JKG: Yes.

BBL: Does your dad swim?

JKG: Not really. Sometimes just for fun.

BBL: Okay. It came from your mom's side.

JKG: Yeah, my mom's side definitely.

BBL: You said that from your house you could see Antelope Island.

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: Did your family go to Great Salt Lake to recreate when you were growing up?

JKG: No, I was thinking about that, just thinking about this interview, and thinking about growing up. I can remember going out there once, just to the shoreline, and I just remember seeing all the bugs and thinking that it smelled and that was enough for me

growing up (laughs). It's funny now. Being older and being more involved with the Lake and stuff it's funny to see how that kind of, how a lot of people have that same kind of stereotype about the Lake, about it just being smelly and full of bugs. Yeah, that was my one experience growing up with the Lake.

BBL: Yes, interesting. And typical, like you say, of people who live here.

So you graduated from high school. Did you go immediately on your mission to San Diego?

JKG: No, I left a little bit late. I just turned twenty-two when I left. I went to school at the U for a while after high school and up to Weber State also.

BBL: What were you studying?

JKG: I started out studying computer science and IT. Then after I got back from my mission, I got into the business school at the U and ended up getting a degree in business entrepreneurship.

BBL: Really. I guess in San Diego, no swimming when you were on the mission?

JKG: No (laughs). No, it was torture, too, because we'd see the beach all the time and couldn't do anything.

BBL: So between the time you graduated from high school and after that, I guess during those three years, did you do any swimming? Were you on any university teams?

JKG: No. I was, swim team for most people in high school, it's practice every morning, practice every afternoon and after three years of that I was just completely burned out. I didn't swim at all for years after that.

BBL: That's tough. I don't think any athlete works harder than a swimmer.

JKG: It's a long time in the water.

BBL: For sure. Okay, you came back and you finished your degree in business entrepreneurship.

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: What was your goal? What were you thinking you would do once you graduated?

JKG: I didn't really have an idea of what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to work for myself doing something. I was interested in real estate and apartments also. I don't know, I didn't have a clear idea of what I wanted to do.

BBL: But this degree seemed like something that would match eventually what you wanted to go into.

JKG: Yeah.

BBL: Okay. So you started working after you graduated?

JKG: Yeah, so when I was near graduating, I started working with the company I work for now as a research assistant. At the same time I'd been taking appraisal courses and got my trainee license. So I started working for my boss, just as his assistant at the time. He's always treated me well and it's a small company, which is nice, really flexible, so I've just stayed there and kind of moved up the ranks to licensed appraiser and now I'm a certified general appraiser.

BBL: Really. That's cool. I think you told me the name of your company before. Would you mind telling us who you work for?

JKG: Yeah, Western States Multifamily.

BBL: And you were explaining to me what your company does.

JKG: Yeah, we do appraisals and consulting for apartments, basically.

BBL: When did you get back into swimming?

JKG: So I got back into swimming through triathlon. It was kind of starting to get popular and I decided I wanted to try it. So I signed up for a race in St. George at Sand Hollow Reservoir. Yeah, so got back into swimming training for that and going down there and doing the race. I just loved swimming outside and that's what really got me back into swimming again was I just loved swimming outside in the Lake.

BBL: So when you decided you wanted to do this triathlon, were you thinking I want to get some exercise, or I want to get in shape, or you're just interested in sports?

JKG: It was around when I was in high school and stuff and I always thought it would be fun to try one. It was just for the challenge, just for something new.

BBL: What year was that first one that you did?

JKG: Oh, geez, that was roughly...

BBL: Or how old were you?

JKG: I was probably twenty-four, twenty-five.

BBL: So not too long after you got back from your mission.

JKG: Yeah.

BBL: And you had to train for that, I'm guessing?

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: Where did you train for your swimming?

JKG: At the time I was living downtown in Salt Lake and I was going to school at the U, so I would go to the pool there every once in a while. I didn't do an awful lot of training for it (laughs).

BBL: So the event itself was part of your training (laughs).

JKG: Yeah (laughs).

BBL: That's a good way to get started.

JKG: I borrowed a bike from my brother and, yeah, just kind of winged it.

BBL: Were you doing this with some friends? Or was this just by yourself?

JKG: No, I just did it by myself. My family went down to watch me, but, yeah, I just did it by myself the first time.

BBL: How did that go for you?

JKG: Ah, there were good and bad things. I'd never worn a wetsuit before and I had rented one and it ended up being too small and I wasn't used to how that felt, swimming with a wetsuit. I borrowed my brother's mountain bike instead of a road bike and that made it a little more challenging. But it was fun. I had a lot of fun and I ended up doing a whole bunch more after that. It's kind of what got me started. I was kind of hooked after that first one.

BBL: What body of water were you swimming in at that first one?

JKG: That was at Sand Hollow Reservoir.

BBL: That's right. Okay. So you come back from that, you're all excited now about open water swimming. So what happened after that?

JKG: I just started entering more races and I would go, like, to Jordanelle to swim there.

BBL: For training?

JKG: Uh-huh. I remember going up to Hyrum Reservoir, up in northern Utah. Pineview. I mean, I just started going around to swim at different places where these races were going to be that I had signed up for.

BBL: So if you knew a race was going to be at Pineview, you'd go up there and practice?

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: Did you start practicing with a wetsuit?

JKG: No. I would usually just rent one for that weekend of the race, but I did all my training without.

BBL: When you're in the race, is a wetsuit required?

JKG: It depends. Now it is if a temperature goes below a certain point, it is required. If it goes above a certain point you're not allowed to wear them. But in triathlon, there's definitely an advantage to wearing one, so almost everyone will end up wearing a wetsuit.

BBL: So you kept doing these triathlons and how were they going for you?

JKG: They were okay. I liked biking. I've never been a great runner; it's always been hard for me. I mean, eventually I just realized that the swimming is what I love doing. So I just kind of stopped doing triathlons and would just go swim around different places and ended up finding out there was a swimming-only race at Deer Creek Reservoir, so I entered that. Then I've done a whole bunch of other swimming-only events and races since them.

BBL: Really. In open water?

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: And is there an open water community?

JKG: Yes. So my friend, Gordon Gridley and I, we started a, well, we started out, we started a race at the Great Salt Lake and it kind of grew from there. We organized another

race at Bear Lake. We organized an open water swimming club. And, yeah, since...so there's a local community here, but outside of that, especially through Facebook and stuff, it seems like where a lot of people make connections now across the country and all over the world, really. I've met a lot of swimming friends through Facebook and different groups online and ended up connecting with them different parts, different swims, different swimming events.

BBL: But before that, when you were first starting out, it was pretty small?

JKG: It was really small.

BBL: So I want you to tell us more about the races that you've organized at Great Salt Lake and Bear Lake, but first I want you to talk about how you met Gordon, because I think that ties with your first time swimming at Great Salt Lake, is that right?

JKG: Yeah, definitely. So after doing a bunch of triathlons, I decided that I liked the swimming the best and I found the race at Deer Creek Reservoir. I had a blog at the time that I just started up and I found Gordon's blog by searching for that race, the Deer Creek Open Water Marathon Swim. Found out that he was registered for it too. I think maybe we started emailing each other or just commenting on each other's blogs for a while before we actually met and started swimming together.

So what got us at the Great Salt Lake is there was an article that came out in the *Deseret News* that was talking about some of the old races that used to be held at the Lake that would start at Antelope Island and finish at either Saltair or at Black Rock. I was just really fascinated by it. I never thought about swimming out there; didn't know what it was like. Then I was reading all these stories about how challenging it was and how so many of these swimmers that entered these races dropped out because it was so

difficult. I was just fascinated by it. I can't remember if I sent the article to Gordon, or anyway, we ended up talking about it and decided that we needed to go out and at least try it and see what it was like, see what it was all about. So we did. I drove up there to his house, met him at his house, we drove over the Antelope Island and just kind of went out from the marina there, just out for about a mile and back, or a half mile and back, so a mile total, and just tried it out.

BBL: How was it?

JKG: It was different than anywhere else I'd ever been. You're so buoyant because of the salt that you can just kind of stop and sit in the water without really having to tread water or anything. The taste in your mouth, it's really strong. Just smelling the salt, being that close to the water and inhaling through your nose, it kind of burned my nose a little bit the first time. But we loved it. It was just an adventure. It was something that we hadn't ever done before. It was so different than anything else that we'd done before that we just loved it.

BBL: That's interesting. So aside from kind of a burned nose, your nostrils, I guess, did your mouth get sore? Your ears? Eyes? I guess you had goggles on?

JKG: I had goggles on, yeah. You get a little, I don't know what to call it, really. You feel, for me, I feel on the tip of my tongue the saltiness. I didn't have any problems with it in my ears. I usually wear earplugs out there. But, yeah, what I remember most was the burning feeling in my nose and the taste of the salt.

BBL: Did your tongue swell up?

JKG: No.

BBL: It didn't.

JKG: No. We weren't in for very long.

BBL: Also, when I've been in the Lake, you become acutely aware of any cut or abrasion you have.

JKG: Yeah, it stings.

BBL: Did you have any cuts or abrasions that day?

JKG: I didn't that time. I have since. Yeah, it stings.

BBL: That was the first time you did it and you loved it. So did you decide to make a regular feature of doing that?

JKG: Well, the whole reason we went out was because we'd been reading about these old races that had been discontinued, they hadn't been done for years, for decades, and got talking with some other swimming friends one year after the Deer Creek race. When that was over we were just kind of all standing around talking, and talking about these articles we'd read, and how we'd been out there. We decided we ought to just bring it back. So there were a couple of people interested at first and it ended up just being Gordon and I that took it on and did it. So this will now be our fifth year, I think, of doing the race. So we have kind of a re-creation of the old race that starts at the southern tip of Antelope Island and finishes at Black Rock Beach, just west of the marina. Then we also have a one-mile race that goes just from the marina to Black Rock.

BBL: Do you get to swim in that every year? Or do you have to run it now?

JKG: No, we run it. Yeah, I have done it before. I have swum the long one and the shorter distance I've done a bunch of times just out training and just for fun. But, yeah, when it's race day, we're busy keeping it organized and making sure everyone's safe.

BBL: So how is that swim, from Antelope Island to Black Rock? You said you did it once, or maybe you've done it more than that.

JKG: Yeah. So the thing for me swimming in the Great Salt Lake, I've had to change a little bit the way that I breathe. It's different from the pool. So out there, I exhale from my nose when my face is in the water and just take really quick breaths to avoid getting any water in your mouth. Some people have a really hard time with it and their tongues do end up kind of swelling. We actually give out an award every race. It's a big jar of pickles for the person with the most pickled tongue at the end of the race (laughs). But it's never been a problem for me. Just changing the way that I breathe, that hasn't been a problem for me. Because there's so much salt in the water, you will get chafing where your skin rubs. For most people it's under their armpits or on the back of their neck, so you do have to, if you're doing a long swim like that, or even a short swim sometimes, you do have to put some kind of grease or something on to keep yourself from getting chafing. For people that we take out there that are new to it that don't do that, a lot of times they'll end up getting pretty bad sores on the back of their neck and sometimes they'll bleed.

BBL: Why on the back of the neck? What's rubbing there?

JKG: It depends on their stroke, but a lot of people will look forward a little bit and then the rotation of turning your head to breathe.

BBL: I see.

JKG: It doesn't seem like that would be enough to do it, but people will come out with big red marks across the back of their neck.

BBL: And they've been bleeding even?

JKG: Yeah. Not very often, but I have seen it a few times.

BBL: And you always are able to give the pickle award? Somebody always wins?

JKG: Yeah (laughs).

BBL: Can you avoid the swollen tongue by changing the breathing like you did?

JKG: That's worked for me. I mean, you'll end up getting some salt in your mouth, some water in your mouth no matter what you do, but for me that's worked, just changing the way that I breathe.

BBL: That's interesting. You say this is the fifth year you'll be doing it. That's in June, I think.

JKG: Uh-huh.

BBL: Have you got a number of people coming?

JKG: So far, it's still early in the year, but we do have...so it's limited on how many people can do the long swim just because it's really difficult to get to that part of the island with that many people and that many kayaks and it's a protected part of the island. So we limit that to sixteen people. It's still early in the year for registrations, but we have more than half of those spots already taken. Most of those swimmers are actually, that come out to do that race, are not from Utah. We get people from New York, Boston, California, Texas, Oregon, Arizona, Colorado. Most of the people that come out to swim that longer race are not from Utah.

BBL: Isn't that interesting. What's the draw for them? The cool t-shirt you get at the end that says, "I swam Great Salt Lake"?

JKG: No, for most, for open water swimmers in general, it's a different group than people that are really into pool swimming. For a lot of us it's more about adventure and trying something new and different, pushing yourself to see if you can go longer, further. So I think that's what it is for a lot of people out of state is that just the idea of trying something new, swimming somewhere that's totally different than anywhere else they've ever been. It's many times saltier than the ocean. It's just the challenge, the adventure.

BBL: The uniqueness, I'm sure. That's got to be considered hard core to do an open water swim in Great Salt Lake?

JKG: Yeah. It's difficult. And we've had pretty seasoned open water swimmers come out and, yeah, it's difficult. They're not used to it. They can swim that distance easily or longer, but it's the salt that really gets them.

BBL: All the complications that come with swimming in a real salty environment. That's interesting. So you started that race. Is that about the most you swim out in Great Salt Lake, or your involvement with it now? Or do you still swim out there on your own?

JKG: Oh, yeah. We have, so our club, we go out there when it warms up, at least once a week just for training. In the winter, we still go out there. Not so much this year, but we go out there in the winter because it never freezes, that part of the Lake, and we just get in for a minute or whatever it is when it gets really cold. But, yeah, we're out there quite a bit. We do a service project out there every year where we kind of help clean up around the marina. We're out there quite a bit.

BBL: Really. That's nice. What's the name of your club?

JKG: It's Salt Lake Open Water; SLOW for short.

BBL: About how many people are members of that group?

JKG: Membership is kind of loose. Like official members, we probably have, I don't know, maybe twenty or so. But we open it up to anyone that wants to come out and swim with us.

BBL: Do you guys go swimming every week? How often does your club get together, wherever you're going?

JKG: Yeah, at least once a week we're somewhere. A lot of times more than that. So we'll just kind of pick one afternoon during the week as our designated day and whoever can make it that day will go out and we'll all just swim. We've got other groups that go different places. Jordanelle is a big place where we go, in the mornings usually. We've got people at Pineview. Just all over the place.

BBL: Are you competing quite a bit still?

JKG: I wouldn't really call it competing; not competing against others anyway. I compete more with myself. I enter organized races and stuff, but I've never been fast enough to win or to place in any of these races. But I compete with myself for the challenge to see if I can swim it in a certain time or less, or beat my past times, or see if I can swim further than I have before.

BBL: About how many times a week do you swim?

JKG: This time of year in the winter and the spring, I swim at least three times a week with a master's team at Fairmont in Sugarhouse. Then once it starts warming up then I'll start adding open water swimming days to that. So at least three times a week; when it gets into the summer, maybe four or five times a week.

BBL: Tell me about your Bear Lake race.

JKG: So Gordon and I, we were both serving on the board for Utah Master's and we heard that someone was organizing a race at Bear Lake. It's something that he and I had thought about doing before, but this other guy was going ahead with it. Actually, neither one of us were able to make it that year that he did it, but we had some friends that went up and swam. The guy that did it was a student at Utah State at the time. After that first year, he was going to be moving on to somewhere else and asked us if we wanted to take it over and we did. We've kept, I mean, it's pretty much the same race. Basically you swim across the width of the Lake, so it's about seven miles, or just under seven miles where we swim across.

BBL: That is a race? Somebody wins that?

JKG: Yeah, well, Great Salt Lake is, too. Yeah, it's a race. We give out awards for the fastest...well, we give out awards for the fastest male, fastest female, and then we give out separate awards for people that wear wetsuits, for the fastest male and female with a wetsuit.

BBL: So you don't have your requirements about that depending on the temperature?

JKG: No, it's kind of a...as far as the race goes we don't have any. We don't require it; we don't discourage it, either. Wetsuits are kind of a sore spot with a lot of marathon swimmers. It is an aid. It can help you swim faster. It can help you swim in water that's cooler than you would be able to without wearing one. So that's why we give out separate awards for people that swim with and without a wetsuit.

BBL: Tell me what other water things you're involved in.

JKG: Water things? I also help out, I ended up becoming good friends with Jim Hubbard that started the race at Deer Creek. Gordon and I help him out with his race. We do a lot of clinics for triathletes that are new to swimming and to open water swimming.

BBL: When you say we, who's the we?

JKG: Salt Lake Open Water, the club.

BBL: Where do you do those?

JKG: We do them kind of all over. We do one every year at the Great Salt Lake. We try to do one every year at Deer Creek before that race. Then we help out a lot of triathlon race directors that do clinics before their events. We'll kind of team up with them and help them with the swim portion of their clinics. We're going to be helping with one tomorrow, actually.

BBL: That's great.

JKG: Yeah, it's a lot of fun, especially when we're out at the Great Salt Lake because most people around here who grew up here, like I did, have that idea of it being smelly and gross and lots of bugs and when we can finally convince them to come out and try it, a lot of people really change their minds about it and will end up coming back to swim with us.

BBL: Do you go to the Great Salt Lake for other reasons besides swimming? Do you ever do boating or hiking around there?

JKG: I have four young boys and we go out to Black Rock sometimes to climb up there. We have a bunch of kayaks and paddleboards. We go out to do that. We go out to watch the cardboard boat races.

BBL: That's right. Are your boys swimmers, too, now?

JKG: Not really. They like to play in the water, but not really interested in swimming.

BBL: How old is your oldest?

JKG: He's seven.

BBL: Oh, okay, so there's still time to develop an interest in that if they want to. But they must come and watch you race sometimes.

JKG: Yeah.

BBL: Do they find that exciting or is it like, "Do we have to go to another race?"

JKG: More often than not it's do we have to (laughs). No, they do like it, though, because they get to play around on the beach and they get to play in the water. I think they do like it. They're young boys, they like adventure as much as anyone and finding rocks, so it's fun for them to run around while I'm out in the water.

BBL: What changes have you noticed in the Great Salt Lake, or have you, in the time you've been swimming? Have you seen any changes?

JKG: Yeah, the water level has changed a lot. I've been out there when it's been really high and right now where it's really low. That's the biggest change that I've noticed, just as the water level fluctuates and with it being so shallow, it really changes pretty dramatically where you can swim or how far out you have to be and not be scraping the bottom with your hands.

BBL: I think Gordon was telling me this year you're going to have to go out quite a ways from the tip.

JKG: Yeah. It's always been kind of a trek from Antelope Island to get to the water, first of all, then to get to where it's deep enough that you can start swimming. But this year, yeah, it's going to be really tough. We're anticipating at least a mile walk from

where we get out, from where we park the cars to get to the water, and then it will probably be as much as maybe a quarter mile past that to where it's deep enough to where we can start swimming.

BBL: When the water level changes that dramatically, aside from the shallowness and hitting your hands on the bottom, does that change how you have to swim because it would, in theory, change the salinity of the water, too, somewhat.

JKG: I haven't noticed that as much. Yeah, it's more just the depth of the water. I haven't really noticed much fluctuation in how salty it is.

BBL: What other swimming activities do you do?

JKG: I'm on the board for Utah Masters. I used to be the open water chair, and now I'm just a club rep for Salt Lake Open Water. But I help with clinics and just kind of promoting swimming, promoting Masters swimming.

BBL: A lot of Masters swimmers around.

JKG: There's a lot, yeah. We have a pretty good group that I swim with at Fairmont. Steiner is the big hub for Masters swimming; they've got a lot of people up there. Yeah, most pools have some version of a Masters program.

BBL: Did you participate with Gordon when he swam the English Channel?

JKG: I was there with him; I was part of his support team.

BBL: Did you swim in the water with him?

JKG: I did, yeah.

BBL: You were his...

JKG: Pace swimmer.

BBL: What did you think about that?

JKG: It's awesome. It's fun. Yeah, I love helping other people with their swims. I was on his crew, too, for when he did the Catalina Channel swim. It's awesome to see someone take on a challenge that big and to be there and see them doing it and helping them, even in a small way, swimming with them for a while or handing them their food. It's just awesome to be a part of it.

BBL: When Gordon said he was going to do that, what did you think?

JKG: I knew he could do it. I knew he would do it. He's just a really determined, really motivated guy and once he sets his mind to doing something, once he sets a goal, he does it, he does the work he needs to and he does it.

BBL: He told me he did a lot of his training at Great Salt Lake.

JKG: Yeah.

BBL: Did you train with him during that time when he was doing that?

JKG: Yeah, at the time I wasn't swimming anywhere near the distance that he was, but, yeah, we did go out. I did swim with him quite a bit during his training.

BBL: While you were there, were you thinking, *I'd like to swim the English Channel*. Is that something that appeals to you at all?

JKG: No. Everyone asks me that and it's not, at this point in my life, it's not something I'm interested in doing. It just takes so much time training and my kids are really young still. Yeah, it's mostly the time and then the cost on top of that. It's really expensive to go over and do it. Yeah, at this point, I don't really have an interest in doing it.

BBL: That's really something. We've had a few Utahns who've gone over there.

JKG: Yeah, two recently and there have been two others, so I think four total Utahns. Then another friend of mine and Gordon's is going over this year to do it.

BBL: Will you be going on that trip?

JKG: No. I would love to. It's just so expensive to go out there and be out there for a week. Just the logistics with the young kids and stuff, I'm not going to be able to go this time.

BBL: Sure. Do you have any ambitions about things that you'd like to do in swimming?

JKG: Yeah, there are a couple of things I'd like to do. For me it's more just about the adventure. I mean swimming in as many places as I can. I'm always interested in swimming somewhere new. There are a couple things I'd like to do. The Anacapa Island swim in California that goes from Anacapa Island back to the mainland is one that I'd like to do. Yeah, for me it's mostly about the adventure now.

BBL: So maybe when the kids are older or even gone, as you get older, you'd go around the world if you could.

JKG: I'd love to, yeah.

BBL: Any kind of adventure and swim in all kinds of different bodies of waters would be fun.

JKG: Yeah, I would love that.

BBL: I'm wondering if you've been out to the Lake and you had one of those moments where you go, "wow, this is just..."

JKG: Oh, it's one of the most beautiful places to see either a sunrise or a sunset. A lot of times we're out there early enough in the morning swimming that, yeah, just to see the sunrise out in the Lake, out in the water, is just beautiful. Same thing, sunsets. If we're

out there late in the evening, I love to see new people go out and try it for the first time and see how they react to it and hearing about their experiences. It's kind of, I don't know, it's amazing to me that the people that come to do our swim and swim with us from out of state, and we've even had people from out of the country come and swim with us, they all leave thinking it's the greatest thing and they just love it. But yet we try to get people from Utah to come out and swim, just the one-mile swim, and it's a real challenge to convince people to come out and do that. Just like I say because of the stereotype about the Lake, about it being smelly and being lots of bugs. It's really difficult to get native Utahns to come out and try it. But yet anyone else that comes from out of state that tries it, they leave just with an amazing experience and they tell their friends about it and we get their friends to come swim with us the next year. There have been a lot of times we've been out there finishing a swim as the tour busses are letting people out. There are a lot of people interested in seeing it. It's such a unique lake and an important part of the state and the city, but I just feel like it kind of gets neglected or overlooked a lot by people that are from here.

BBL: I have this picture of these tourists coming off this bus and saying, "Can I take your picture."

JKG: Oh, yeah. There are probably thousands of pictures of me in a Speedo (laughs).

BBL: That's funny. All encrusted in salt.

JKG: It is funny. We'll be walking up the boat ramp and just, yeah, masses of people coming off the busses and taking pictures.

BBL: Talking to you and all.

JKG: Yeah, asking about it, if it's cold.

BBL: What are the most common questions you get asked?

JKG: A lot of people ask how salty it is, how cold it is, how warm it is.

BBL: Just the typical questions.

I think Gordon kind of mentioned to me that the colder the better for him. Are you that way too, where you really like the cold?

JKG: Not so much. It's fun for me when it's cold just for a short time, just kind of the rush of getting in water that cold and getting back out. But Gordon and some other friends, they'll try to swim a mile when it's under forty-one degrees and just having seen them recover afterwards and having felt the effects of hypothermia myself, I just am not interested in pushing that boundary of swimming in the cold.

BBL: I'm amazed that you guys swim out there. But I think that's really cool. What a fun interest and a fun sport to do open water swimming. I imagine some people say, "What are you nuts?"

JKG: Yeah, get that a lot.

BBL: What do you get out of the swimming?

JKG: The thing that I like most about open water swimming especially is just being outside, the adventure, trying something new. Swimming is kind of a solitary sport, I'm kind of an introverted person, so you get your face in the water, you can't hear anything, the repetitive motion of just moving your arms and breathing, I love that. It puts me in a place where I can just kind of clear my mind and think about things. I've solved a lot of problems that way, just by going out to swim and just kind of clearing my mind and thinking about things. Just the repetitiveness of the movements and not being able to hear much around you and being able to think and being able to enjoy being outside. Then

sharing that same kind of experience with your friends and with other people when you're out there, being out there with friends in the water, seeing the sun come up. Yeah.

BBL: Sounds cool, it really does.

Do you have any concerns about the Great Salt Lake's future?

JKG: Yeah, the big one's that come up recently was whether or not they would dredge the marina to let boats in and out with the water being as low as it is. There's a lot of development and stuff going on, or places wanting to expand along the shorelines that makes me think if that's the best thing for the Lake and for the ecosystem, all the birds, the brine shrimp industry, for the people like us that swim there.

BBL: So you have concerns come up once in a while about what's going to happen to the Lake?

JKG: Yeah, it goes back to the same thing I just...it's a massive industry out there. It generates a lot of income, a lot of jobs, but it still feels like it is neglected by a lot of people that don't have some experience or some tie to it. It's easy for them to just think about it as a big salty lake that isn't good for anything. Unless you have some kind of tie to it through swimming or sailing or boating or if you work there, if you harvest brine shrimp, if you extract minerals from the Lake, if you're not involved in it somehow, I think it's hard for people to see its value.

BBL: Right. Well, this has been interesting to talk to you. Do you have anything that I haven't asked you, or something you want to say about your swimming experience or the Great Salt Lake or anything at all?

JKG: No, I would just, especially if you are a Utahn and have never been out there, you've got to go out, at least once, even if you hate it afterwards. You've got to go out

and try it once. Just get in the water, get away from the shore, away from where the bugs are and just float there. I think everyone's got to experience that at some point, if they're visiting Utah, or if they are from here.

BBL: Okay. Good. We'll end at that point. Thank you so much for your time. I appreciate it.

JKG: Yeah, you're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW