



ED BEAUVAIS
1936-

Honored as 2017 Historymaker
Founder of America West Airlines



The following is an oral history interview with Ed Beauvais (**EB**) conducted by Zona Davis Lorig (**ZDL**) for Historical League, and videotaped at Sun Studios, Tempe, Arizona on August 30, 2016.

Original tapes are in the collection of the Arizona Historical Society Museum Library at Papago Park, Tempe, Arizona.

ZDL This is an oral history interview with Ed Beauvais. The date is August 30, 2016 and the interviewer is Zona Davis Lorig. First of all, Mr. Beauvais, congratulations on being honored as a 2017 Historymaker.

EB Thank you very much.

ZDL Would you, for the record, please state your full name?

EB My name is Edward Raymond Beauvais.

ZDL You pronounce it Beauvais?

EB Yes.

ZDL Thank you. When and where were you born?

EB I was born in 1936 in Pueblo, Colorado at the same time my twin brother was born.

ZDL Were you first or second?

EB I was second.

ZDL You were second. And what was his name?

EB George.

ZDL George. And how long had your parents been a resident of Colorado?

EB My mother was born in actually the same house that I grew up in in 1906. My father was born in 1906 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

ZDL And how did he come to Colorado?

EB When he was in the 8th grade, his father had a grocery store in St. Paul, and they ran out of money. Pueblo was hiring, particularly at the steel mill, CF&I, and so his whole family moved to Pueblo for their economic opportunity.

ZDL And your dad worked for that company for 40 years?

EB Yes, he did. My dad worked there for 40 years.

ZDL That's quite a record isn't it?

EB Well, at that time in that age, uh, the people who worked there worked there until retirement. The turnover was very low.

ZDL And was your mother employed outside the home? Or was she a homemaker?

EB She was employed at Colorado Field and Iron Corporation as well until my mother and father got married in 1927.

ZDL And did you have other siblings beside your twin brother?

EB Yes, I did. I had an older sister, five years older than myself.

ZDL Can you tell me a little bit about your child rearing practices of your parents?

EB They were wonderful parents. They weren't helicopter parents, but they were wonderful parents. And, they made sure that I got a good education. I went to Catholic schools all of my life.

ZDL And tell me about St. Francis Grade School that you attended.

EB St. Francis Grade School was a small school, as were many Catholic schools in Pueblo.

ZDL So small meaning how many kids were in your class?

EB There were about 20 in my class.

ZDL Okay.

EB And it was, as many schools at that time, the nuns were the teachers and we had our own football team. And we all played on the football team. It was a really trouble-free school.

ZDL Now, did you play other schools in football?

EB Yes, we did.

ZDL And were they from Pueblo or...

EB Yes, there were about eight different Catholic schools in...

ZDL Oh my goodness.

EB ...the same league in Pueblo.

ZDL What are some happy, fun, interesting experiences you had as a kid? What are some of your favorite memories?

EB Well, my fun memories really are predominantly high school.

ZDL Okay.

EB And, I enjoyed going to high school, quite frankly, particularly my senior year. And, I really met some very fine people during that period; mostly coaches because I was very active in athletics. But I had some really good teachers as well. And they really made us work hard on our studying in order to effectively graduate from high school.

ZDL What was the name of that high school?

EB Pueblo Catholic High School.

ZDL Pueblo Catholic High School. You were very active in sports. What was your favorite?

EB My - actually my favorite was baseball, but I enjoyed football and then to a lesser extent, basketball.

ZDL Do you think you were a good student or an excellent student?

EB I would say a good student. The 8th grade teacher said that I was a very good student, but I could've done better.

ZDL Well, you were elected captain of both the football team and the basketball team that senior year.

EB It was the football team- I was captain of the football team my senior year.

ZDL Not the basketball team?

EB No.

ZDL Oh, I read that somewhere, so they had it incorrect. Do you think you developed leadership skills in those positions?

EB I do, I do. It helped me a great deal because we had a football team that had a mix of all types of individuals and they needed leadership and I think I rose to that occasion.

ZDL And then you had a big decision when you graduated from high school - what you were going to do because you had two great offers. Do you want to talk about those?

EB Well, I really didn't know that I was going to college until my senior year. And I had a prospect of playing baseball professionally. However, my football scholarship included a college education. So, it wasn't close. I elected to play football in college.

ZDL And so you went off to St. Joseph's College in Collegeville, Indiana?

EB Yes, I did. It was a college of about 1500 students and it had very good football program, primarily to make room for the Chicago Bears who trained there prior to start of their season.

ZDL Interesting. So, you played there for two years?

EB Two years, yes.

ZDL And then you decided...

EB I decided that a career in football really wasn't the right thing for me to pursue and so, being the only Coloradoan at an Indiana school, I decided to change school to Regis University in Denver, after being at St. Joseph's.

ZDL That's also a Catholic school, isn't it?

EB Yes, it is. It's a Jesuit school.

ZDL Okay, that's what I thought.

EB As a matter of fact, I'm still a trustee at Regis University.

ZDL At Regis; it has a very good reputation.

EB Yes it does.

ZDL When you were still in high school, you met Mary Ellen who was the love of your life.

EB Actually, she has been ever since. We met in our senior year. We were in the same grade.

ZDL And you met at baseball, you were practicing baseball, right? And you met her?

EB Yes, I was at the city park in a batting cage...

ZDL Yes, the batting cages.

EB And, I saw her and some of her friends just outside the cage. And so that's when we met, and I discovered at that time she was the best-looking girl in Pueblo.

ZDL *(Laughs)* That's quite a compliment. So, what did she do while you were in college?

EB Mary Ellen worked at the high school that we both graduated from for about two years, in Pueblo.

ZDL Well, then before you graduated, you were holding a full-time job in accounting.

EB Yes, I majored in accounting and so when I moved to Regis University, I was able, through the help of one of my teachers, to arrange for a job at a certified public accounting firm. And I kept that job for the remainder of my college career and for a year after that.

ZDL How did you manage to find the time to do all that?

EB Being very busy was probably a reasonably good habit to form at that age. And so, while I was very busy, I found it productive.

ZDL And then your first son Mark was born during that time you were at that accounting job?

EB Yes, we - Mary Ellen and I got married between my junior and senior year in 1957. And, our first son Mark was born in 1958, the year I graduated, while I continued to work in Denver at the CPA firm.

ZDL So then, the airline industry came into being because a Regis classmate told you about an accounting job at Frontier Airlines. And that was in Denver?

EB Yes, I had moved to Pueblo in 1959 to go to work in the steel mill accounting office, but my friend and associate who I worked with in my CPA firm was able to land a job as head of the accounting department at Frontier Airlines and he called me and he said, "I need a senior accountant, a senior staff accountant." And so, I went and interviewed, and they offered me that job. At that time, we had another son in Pueblo, so the four of us moved to Denver for that job in 1960.

ZDL Was that your first flight?

EB Yes, it was. I went for an interview in a DC3, that landed - took off from Pueblo, landed in Colorado Springs, and then went on to Denver. And, it upset my stomach quite a bit.

ZDL So you weren't totally enthralled with flying at that moment?

EB Well it was turbulent - those towns are right along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains and it's a common characteristic.

ZDL So then you worked for Frontier Airlines and you wrote that their fleet consisted of 23 DCs and 5 Convair's 340s. Can you talk about those planes?

EB Frontier was a local service carrier and at that time the industry was regulated, and carriers of that nature were designed to feed traffic to the major carriers at their hubs across the country. So, Frontier had 23 DC3s. These were planes that were built for transport in World War II and they were very reliable, but very slow. And so, Frontier started to upgrade its fleet to Conair 580s that were also twin engine, but much faster and a little bit larger.

ZDL Isn't it amazing you came along into this industry at such an exciting time. I mean, you think about historically, Wilbur and Orville Wright flew the plane in 1903 and this is 60 years later, and you're just at the beginning of this huge surge.

EB That's right. I think you can attribute the surge in commercial aviation to the equipment that the airlines operated because it transitioned to a whole new environment that began in about 1960. And that is jet aircraft, who were much, much faster, much smoother in terms of flight, therefore, very appealing to the traveling public; and the airlines were able to manage their operations at a reasonable price and so, with that improvement, it really changed the economics of transportation in the world.

ZDL And then businesses, corporations, etc., started using flight travel to encourage their business and, I mean, it was just so influential.

EB Yes it was. It became very influential because the Boeing 707 was the first aircraft, jet aircraft, that was introduced to the industry and it was a huge transition in terms of experience for the passengers. And as that started to spread, uh, aviation became a vital economic factor in the world.

ZDL So next enters Bonanza Airlines. So...

EB Yes, I applied to Bonanza as a director of budgeting in 1962, but I failed to get that job. However, the following year, they called me and offered me a job which was a promotion, a higher level than the one I had at Frontier in Denver. And so, I moved my family at that...

ZDL With how many...

EB We had three children and Mary Ellen and I, so the five of us moved to Las Vegas from Denver.

ZDL And what'd you think about that job?

EB I had a pretty good job as director of budgeting and cost control. And I - I enjoyed the job primarily because I still used my accounting education to perform that and I was the first at Bonanza Airlines to develop budgets for everyone and control costs.

ZDL Interesting. So, you were involved in regulatory issues with the Civil Aeronautics Board at that time?

EB Yes, I transferred to our economic research and development department in 1964 and started working regularly on - on regulatory issues primarily with the Civil Aeronautics Board in Washington.

ZDL Did you have a mentor when you were at Bonanza?

EB Yes, I did. His name was Don Nielson and so I went to work for Don in 1964 in the research and development department. Research meaning economic research. The economic capabilities of aircraft, various types of aircraft, as well as the pricing expertise that airlines needed in order to comply with the regulatory requirements.

ZDL So Bonanza was growing with a fleet of 11 F27 prop jet aircraft and they needed to purchase new DC9 jets for longer flights. And they were going to get eleven of those, but Nevada decided to impose what?

EB Yes, the F27s that we had were only 40 seat aircraft. But the DC9s that were committed to were 90 seat aircraft and so, um, they were more expensive. They were at that time about \$3 million dollars each, which was a lot of money. And the State of Nevada was going to impose a sales tax on us for that. We were interstate transportation and so the management of the company decided to move the entire company to Phoenix.

ZDL And...

EB Where the Arizona State would not tax our transactions.

ZDL And how did your family feel about that move?

EB Well, they enjoyed it because, quite frankly, we didn't enjoy living in Las Vegas that much. And Phoenix was a very different, very nice city to live in and, as a result, my family were much more suited for the Phoenix area than we were for the Las Vegas area.

ZDL I think there's a cute story about your actual move here.

EB *(Laughs)* Uh, to Phoenix at that time?

ZDL Yes.

EB Yes, we had five children by that time in 1966 and we drove to Phoenix, but we also had a fairly large dog and everybody loved the dog and so the dog took up the whole back seat and the children were in the little area - standing area between the front and the back seat for almost the entire trip because they didn't want to disturb our dog, which was a basset hound.

ZDL Oh my goodness. That's a cute story. Okay, you've talked about how the new jet aircraft accelerated growth dramatically.

EB Dramatically.

ZDL Would you identify the major air carriers of that time?

EB Well they were the major air carriers, until recently, but United was a big factor across the central portion of the United States. Northwest Airlines was major across the northwest portion of the United States. They all had an east/west characteristic. American Airlines was coast to coast south of United with their primary base of operations in Dallas/Ft. Worth. And then Delta Airlines was the southern transcontinental airlines through Atlanta and the major cities in the south, east and west.

ZDL And then, what about the local ones? Besides Bonanza and Frontier?

EB Uh, there were I think ten of us as far as local service carriers...

ZDL Wow.

EB ...throughout the country feeding the various major carriers at that time.

ZDL And so then elaborate on the rivalry that occurred between the local carriers and the major carriers.

EB Well, as a local service carrier and the concurrent development of aircraft, both large and small, and after acquiring the DC9s, we found that we were highly profitable on the short and medium haul markets. And so, we thought that we could move forward and continue to grow since they were poorly served and, as a result, the major carriers found this as a difficult economic problem. So, they themselves maintained competitive service and so it was a brawl in the marketplace.

ZDL So in '68, Bonanza merged with Pacific Airlines and West Coast Airlines to increase their size and compete with larger airlines. Did that have the desired effect?

EB It was a difficult merger because it was sizeable. And we more than tripled in size as a result and putting them all together was a tough challenge. And so, the new airline, called Air West, had a tough economic result for several years and Howard Hughes grew interested and so he proposed an acquisition to make it known as Hughes Air West.

ZDL And how did you feel about that?

EB I wasn't very excited about it because I felt that, um, since the industry was still regulated, that the problems only grew larger for carriers such as Air West, so I made a decision to leave the company.

ZDL In the meantime, your family had moved from Phoenix to San Francisco?

EB Yes, in 1968, we moved to San Francisco.

ZDL So you resigned how soon after Hughes took over?

EB Well, I resigned before Hughes took over.

ZDL Oh, after he purchased it.

EB Yeah, right.

ZDL Okay, so you never actually worked with him.

EB For - for Howard Hughes? No, I decided that that was - would be a big mistake.

ZDL Well, you have an amazing amount of knowledge that you had collected between '58 and '69 in the airline industry. A lot had happened in that 11 years, so then you decided to create an aviation consulting firm?

EB Yes, I did. Um, there was still a lot of work to be done in Washington with the Civil Aeronautics Board since we were still regulated. And so, quite a few airlines wanted to have some economic expertise input into their operations and that's why I developed the company with an office in San Francisco and one in Washington, D.C. And in addition to that, major cities tried to understand what was going on in the aviation industry in the 70's because it became a large industry and they had major problems of quality of service at many cities. And so, we had contracts with Boston, Baltimore, Houston, Wichita, Kansas, and Phoenix, as a matter of fact, and then also Oakland and Reno, Nevada and several other major cities.

ZDL You grew very rapidly.

EB We did, when we grew close to eight, nine and ten years of our existence, we started to get retained by airline companies who were starting to merge with other companies. And, so we had so much...

ZDL And there was a lot of that going on.

EB Yes, because of the changes, and the regulatory environment encouraged that type of development, and so at that time Texas Air, who had just acquired Continental Airlines based in Houston, asked us for a considerable amount of economic help to determine what should happen as a result of the merger. And so, they became a prominent client of ours.

ZDL I think you had a minor or a double major in economics as well as accounting?

EB Yes, I did. I majored in accounting and minored in economics.

ZDL And you took advantage of both of them.

EB Yes, I used that quite a bit as a matter of fact. And as a matter of fact, I've been thankful for studying both when I was in college.

ZDL How did you acquire these clients?

EB Mostly through my regulatory activity in Washington. I would meet their attorneys and their economists and so I knew many of them quite well. And so, as they plotted forward in their future with their problems, they needed help. And so, our firm was ideally suited to be responsive to that, at that time.

ZDL Were you the only firm doing this?

EB No, there were probably six, seven similar consulting firms across the country that specialized in that same area.

ZDL At some point, did you get a pilot's license?

EB No I didn't. I'm not a pilot and most of the pilots I worked with over the years, particularly at America West would say, "Boy, I'm glad you're not a pilot. I'm glad you're an economist."

ZDL Well, I got to thinking about that and I just wondered if you were. How did you relax in those days?

EB Uh, primarily with my family. When we were in San Francisco, I coached a Little League Baseball team for ten years. And I had four sons who went through that program. So that was a major commitment.

ZDL Yes.

EB And of interest to our entire family. And, we took quite a few trips to Vail, Colorado in the wintertime because we acquired a timeshare apartment there where we could all gather and ski. And so, we're all lovers of skiing and so that occupied a great deal of our time.

ZDL In October 1978, the airlines were able to deregulate. Can you tell us about that?

EB Airline deregulation came about primarily by a political conclusion that the industry and the traveling public would be far better off for unleashing major competition in the industry. And so, deregulation, passed in 1978 and made that possible. Now, there was a huge difference of opinion within the industry. The large carriers having operating authority unrestricted felt that this was not a healthy development. But the smaller carriers who were denied the ability to compete, all rose to the occasion and were very enthused about the fact that they could compete in many areas at a cost advantage, lower the price of transportation, and stimulate the size of air, and the passenger market with this result. And the smaller carriers were absolutely right about the impact on airline deregulation. It was probably the biggest event in the history of commercial aviation along with the aircraft technical evolution that took place starting in 1960.

ZDL So the deregulation really democratized airline industry, didn't it?

EB Yes, it did. And it's primarily for the benefit of the passengers because they found out after that, that vigorous competition in the markets effected - caused the price of air transportation to be reduced to a point where they could travel more frequently, use air transportation for business purposes, as well as personal purposes, and so the lid came off as far as the volume of passengers who took advantage of that. Now I want to emphasize that that was just in the United States. Worldwide, the world was a little bit hesitant to conclude that that was beneficial, and they needed the example of what happened in the United States for that to give them the evidence that they should do the same thing.

ZDL Interesting. So how long did it take? Let's say Europe, how long did it take Europe to catch up?

EB Uh, I would say probably at least ten years. And then some new carriers started figuring it out. They copied what happened in the United States with efficiency and airline fares in Europe were very high prior to that. And Europe has now enjoyed the same atmosphere, the same reaction and the same impact that the United States has.

ZDL But why were many airlines unable to make the changes after deregulation?

EB Well, massive competition really disciplines markets. And so, while many dreamers were able to start their airlines, the competition was ferocious and under those conditions, the unlikelihood of being able to survive became prominent.

ZDL So, here you are, a dreamer, who dissolved your consulting firm then in 1980?

EB Yes. And I had a very close relationship with the impact of airline deregulation because I was

working with various carriers on adapting to this new environment. And so, the examples that were successful were very impressive and so, in understanding the markets, particularly in Phoenix, the opportunity in my opinion, became a significant opportunity for a new startup airline to bring that efficiency to the Phoenix traveling public as well.

ZDL So, was it difficult to dissolve your consulting firm?

EB No it wasn't because I had three offices at the time. And the office in Phoenix was closed down, and the people in the firm became early employees of America West Airlines because they provided the planning and the final development of our business plan, and so they were most effective as a planning division.

ZDL So when did you start dreaming about starting an airline?

EB In late 1980, the major airline that was first out of the box after deregulation was People Express. I knew the head of People Express quite well and I saw what he was doing, and he was able to develop his initial financing through an IPO, or initial public offering. And that happened late in 1980 and so I said to myself then why can't we do that? So that started the whole thing.

ZDL So you developed a business plan and you brought along Don Neilson who had been your mentor?

EB Well, he was until about halfway through the 70's and then I assumed most of those responsibilities and Don was very disappointed in the decision that created Air West. So, he moved back to his home in Las Vegas and became inactive. And I continued knowing Don well after that. So, he was a very important part of the formation of America West Airlines.

ZDL And your son Mark?

EB Yes, he was in the consulting firm as well. And he started working for Don in that area.

ZDL And then you also brought along Evelyn Dario?

EB Evelyn Dario was the administrative assistant in our consulting firm and as many discussions took place relative to the formation of the company and hiring some important other executives, she actually came up with the name America West Airlines. And we all liked it, so it stuck.

ZDL So she has that honor?

EB That's right.

ZDL You had three main goals for your airline: low cost, low fare, high frequency.

EB That's right. One of the important elements of Phoenix is its geography. Phoenix has the best flying weather in the world; therefore, the most consistent operation relative to dealing with weather and its close proximity to California. California is a dynamic state, very dynamic. There's a population that is significant. Air transportation had been highly developed by PSA, an airline based in California, but on an east/west access to California, it was very limited because California is served with many airports. Los Angeles airport has five very important airports. Access to those airports from the Midwest and the East is very limited. So, America West played a strategic position developing Phoenix as the hub for access to and from California for all cities east of Phoenix, and no one was doing that. And that really created the opportunity for America West to base itself in Phoenix. That was a very good location and a very good economy because it's reasonable cost, and therefore we developed the original service to and from the many airports in California where most of those people are from the Midwest and the East. Therefore, there is a business reason for travel and a personal reason for travel. And the volumes just magnified enormously when America West provided that service at low fares.

ZDL Your consulting firm really gave you a tremendous background because you were working on deregulation all the time and so...

EB Yes.

ZDL ...you had such a foundation...

EB Yes, I did. Uh, first of all, it - I found in being active in that area of the huge development potential for deregulation and then in helping cities such as Houston, Baltimore, Boston, and others, it became apparent that if you could concentrate the presence of a carrier that could maintain its operation in that major location, the hub and spoke service, if anchored in the right way, could be a very potentially - potential benefit to the airline and the community.

ZDL So then you've talked about why you selected Phoenix. And how did you pick Tempe as the headquarters?

EB Well, its close proximity to the airport, the limited space available at the airport at that time for major operations and so, Tempe was close. It was favorable. They were favorable and so we

grew dramatically with our administrative operations in Tempe.

ZDL And when did you actually incorporate America West?

EB We incorporated in 1981 and we started working with the Department of Transportation in order to get - to get the initial certification necessary for us to then proceed with adding a management team and obtaining the financing sufficient to start. Once we did that, we went back to the Department of Transportation and they certified our capability as an airline company, and that gave us the trigger to raise the money in order to provide the service that we had all gotten very excited about.

ZDL I can imagine. Your investment banking firm was LF Rothschild, Unterberg, Towbin?

EB Yes. They were a fairly significant Wall Street investment banking firm. And, um, their economic analysis staff reviewed our business plan and became quite enthused about it. And so that caused the momentum that we needed in order to raise our capital.

ZDL How'd you come up with the idea to sell a million shares at a dollar per share?

EB Well, that was to get started and that was with significant help from a Phoenix investment banking firm called Young, Smith & Peacock. And so they had access to local potential investors and we were allowed to then make our presentation of the potential of America West to those initial shareholders, and that was a vital component for us to be able to afford to proceed on our certification effort, as well as recruiting our balance of our management team.

ZDL Were you personally involved in quite a bit of fundraising?

EB Oh, yes. Fundraising was the vital element. And, I made over thirty round trips in one year to New York to - to cultivate that interest.

ZDL But you were successful. So, in '83 in February, you had your initial stock offering and it raised almost \$19 million dollars.

EB Yes, it was sufficient for us to plan to start service later in 1983.

ZDL Well you wanted Phoenix to become a major airport. Um, how concerned were you when Southwest moved into Phoenix?

EB Well, uh, somewhat concerned because they are a very good airline. And, they became interested after they heard about our effort in Phoenix. And therefore, tried to preempt our development with their entry. However, I was able, and we were able to convince the economic companies that we were dealing with, that Phoenix had a sizeable potential that has not yet been developed. And it takes two airlines, really, competing with each other to effectively develop service at a major air service center. Chicago is a prime example where United and American have had major operations, both in Chicago and it manifested itself in Chicago's dynamic growth in aviation, just as Chicago had in the rail industry. So, there were examples all over the country, Delta and American at Dallas/Ft. Worth, and so by citing those examples, we convinced people that we could both survive in Phoenix.

ZDL It was a great boon to Phoenix, wasn't it?

EB Enormous boon to Phoenix. It put Phoenix on the map as far as aviation is concerned. Because its ability to accommodate traffic to and from California and you translate that to all the markets east. The markets east of Phoenix also had significant growth associated with our entry into those markets and so we started service in Kansas City, Colorado Springs. We then followed with service development at Albuquerque and El Paso and Wichita, and Dallas/Ft. Worth and on and on, Omaha, and on and on. And every one of those routes were successful when we put our service in because we represented a significant fare - passenger fare reduction that became critical to the traveling public. And so, it was - it was a natural evolution coupled with the same evolution going west of Phoenix to and from California. The really significant portion of the Phoenix opportunity is the fact that you can develop airline service in all directions. And it's just not on the West Coast, or it's not on the East Coast, it's a composite of traffic going both east and west in and out of Phoenix and that magnifies the opportunity that we saw in Phoenix.

ZDL When you first went to Phoenix Sky Harbor, you operated out of Terminal 3?

EB Yes, we did because Terminal 4 was not operation oriented in that it didn't even exist.

ZDL It didn't exist.

EB But in Terminal 3, early on after deregulation, American became very busy consolidating its strength at Dallas/Ft. Worth, and so they lost a considerable amount of interest in Phoenix. And they abandoned three gates in Terminal 3 that was then offered to all the other incumbent airlines who had basically the same attitude as American. And so, we stuck up our hand and said, "We'll take 'em." And as a result, it became the foundation of our initial development for a considerable period of time.

ZDL Well in '76, Terminal 3 had 4.4 million passengers per year. By the end of '85, the traffic was 11.6 million. That's a huge increase.

EB Yes, it is. And, uh, I really think that was the impact of America West because Southwest Airlines was in Terminal 1; therefore, they weren't part of the Terminal 3 development.

ZDL Then Terminal 4 opened in November 1990 and you had some influence in how Terminal 4 developed, I think.

EB Well we, yes, I did. We - we kept talking to the Phoenix management, both city and airport management, about the need for more airport capacity because we added twelve more gates to our facility in Terminal 3 and we were still too crowded. And so, in the process of evaluation, the other airlines said no, we have no interest in Terminal 4, and we were the only one. And so, we had a large enough operation that could accommodate the demands that were seen at that time for being the lone airline in Terminal 4. Excuse me. However, Southwest Airlines in watching our development in Phoenix, put their hand up late saying they too were interested. And that became, uh, a major traffic center with both of us competing with each other out of the single Terminal 4.

ZDL America West moved into Terminal 4 in 1990 and the operating expenses far exceeded those in Terminal 3 because that was a temporary spot for you. And that had an effect on the airline, didn't it?

EB Well, it impeded our growth at Terminal 3 and so, uh, we were very pleased with the opportunity to develop at Terminal 4. It was much larger. It's far more sophisticated. And it accommodated our dreams of the future, such as the 747 service to Hawaii and beyond to Japan. And we had more plans for the Pacific, up until 1992 when I left America West Airlines.

ZDL How and where did you find the aircraft to lease? You didn't buy most of your planes, right?

EB Correct.

ZDL Did you buy any?

EB Oh yes.

ZDL Okay.

EB Yeah, we bought some. But the aircraft leasing business is a very major part of commercial aviation and as a result, some of the leasing companies saw what we were doing. They even invested in America West and their interest became compatible with our own interests, and so we leased a great number of aircraft and it was to the benefit of the aircraft leasing companies as well as the airline. Because the airline would not be required to produce a significant amount of capital in order to acquire aircraft like that, versus leasing.

ZDL So in August '83, two years into fundraising, you had secured financing and leased three Boeing 737-200 aircraft. And you had 250 employees when you began service. Can you describe your feelings at those first flights?

EB Well, it was one of the most exciting events in our lives. And I'm talking about all 250 employees. They were very excited. They were very efficient, and we started off with a quality service that we were able to maintain through the early part of our history.

ZDL You were a full-service airline when you started. For younger people who don't remember that, can you describe what full service meant?

EB Well, we had the passenger service, of course, but we had an extensive training program for our employees. And we developed a theory that the people who deal with passengers are the critical part of being able to sell yourself as an airline company, so we developed a customer service representative program where the people in that division were trained in all of the areas that the passenger came in contact with. They were not only flight attendants, they were reservations agents, airport ticket agents, airport ground operations, peoples who - so they developed a superior skill and knowledge of how an airline works and as a result, they were far more effective in dealing with the passenger. We did the same thing with the pilots. And the pilots required less training as far as flight operations because we didn't hire inexperienced pilots, but they staffed our flight dispatch area as well, and that created a far more compatible environment in the flight operations area.

ZDL Did employees like this?

EB They loved it. They loved it. Many of our pilots complained because all they want to do is fly and so, um, and the feedback there was a little tenuous; but the customer service representatives did a great job and they really loved their jobs.

ZDL Okay. Let's talk about the America West stock program.

EB Well, we had a program that, we became convinced that if the employee has a stake in the company, they have an added interest in the results. And so, we required an investment from all new employees to commit to buying stock in America West. And while it was a limited number of shares, it became a condition whereby they were all committed owners as well as employees of the company.

ZDL So how much undercurrent was there because America West was not a union. Was there undercurrent about a union coming in?

EB Well you always have that as a company. However, there was sufficient interest among the customer service representatives to unionize, but the vote of the personnel was largely against having a union formed at that time. So, nothing really changed in that area for us in our early years.

ZDL By 1984, America West fleet had 21 aircraft servicing 23 cities. From 1981 to 1989, America West added 100 aircraft to the fleet and serviced 60 cities. That was an amazing feat.

EB Well it was, but the environment at that time, as far as deregulation is concerned, particularly related to airlines that started up after deregulation, was size was might. And so, we needed to develop - we needed to develop a sizeable system with anchors on both sides so that we could compete with anybody in the industry in and out of, for example, Phoenix. Which we were because during that period, we maintained a healthy competitive confrontation with Southwest and so we both grew dramatically in Phoenix. But it was vital to the survival of America West Airlines.

ZDL Interesting. Tell about the America West flight of the Freedom Bird with the...

EB That, uh, the Freedom Bird for America West was a dramatic development suggested by our - one of our pilots who had been in Vietnam. And knowing the impact that those in Vietnam had when they came back, it was very evident that they needed an ability to get to Washington and to see the Vietnam Memorial which was a huge recollection and a recall for many of the veterans. And it was a very healthy condition for them to help them get their feet back on the ground and feel at home in the United States. And so, uh, we started these non-stop round trips for their benefit on Veteran's Day or around Veteran's Day in November and, uh, they became extremely appreciative of that kind of service, at no cost to them, and we were very proud to do that because a large group of our employees had been in Vietnam, and so it was certainly compatible with the intellectual part of our company.

ZDL And the culture.

EB Yes, and our culture as well.

ZDL So it was a three-day trip?

EB Most of those took three days, um, traveling the distance from Phoenix to Washington, DC, spending a day at the memorial and then returning the following day.

ZDL And did you fund all of that?

EB Yes. Yes, we did.

ZDL Wow. That's impressive.

EB We were proud to do that.

ZDL In 1989, America West began flights to Honolulu. Do...

EB Probably the most, uh, the Honolulu service was probably the most popular service for the traveling public in addition to our employees who also loved it. But, uh, Hawaii is a great airline market. But it needs to be treated right. You need to promote it and you need to organize it to a point where, uh, people really enjoy their trip as well. And so we guided, uh, our route system to Phoenix in order to support that kind of service. And it became very successful for us. And at that time, the aircraft capabilities in the industry pointed primarily to the 747, the other airplanes at that time did not have the range. Today, a lot of aircraft have the range and so it's less complicated. But for us, we needed to put together the service on a very large aircraft. Which we did. And this is my opinion, but this was the best airline service in the world when we developed it.

ZDL So how many passengers were on that plane?

EB About three hundred and fifty passengers per flight.

ZDL And explain the Japan - the Nagoya, Japan from Honolulu ...

EB Well, in those years, Japan was a very economically dynamic country around the world. And their demand for service to Hawaii was very significant. And there were already successful US

carriers carrying that demand, but they carried it out of Nagoya, which was in Tokyo, and the demand in Japan spread all over. And Japan's just one huge population center and so the opportunity, um, presented itself to provide the service out of Nagoya to Honolulu and so that was the primary reason for our decision.

ZDL I think I recall hearing that people in Japan - it was less expensive for them to fly to Hawaii and play golf than it was to stay home in Japan and play golf.

EB Right. Japan is a country where the people love that sport, but it is very limited on golf courses that could be used because it's - it's a tight land condition over there. And so, for many frequent golfers, the trip right non-stop to Hawaii with their abundant number of golf courses just made sense.

ZDL So in 1989, America West started a flight to Honolulu and then you also offered flights from Honolulu to Nagoya, Japan.

EB Yes.

ZDL And can you talk about that?

EB Well the, um, Japanese market at that time was extremely strong. Japan had huge interests in the world and in the United States in particular. And so, the travel back and forth was insufficient for the market and we felt that Nagoya was a prime opportunity since there was no service from Nagoya to Honolulu and beyond to the United States. And so, we made the decision to seek the regulatory approval for international routes, which was still regulated, in order to provide the service and we were successful in obtaining that authority. And so, we found that the Japanese market was strong for the sport of golf, was very strong for the honeymoons of newly married, and as a result, there was a need for that kind of service.

ZDL In order to do that, you required some Boeing 747s, which you didn't possess and so I guess the - the arrangement was you were going to purchase used Boeings from KLM, the Dutch airlines?

EB Yes, however the decision to acquire the 747 was tied to our Honolulu service from the U.S. So, we were ready for a market such as Japan from Honolulu with that equipment and so it expanded our need for the 747.

ZDL And then you added 14 additional aircraft and four new Boeings. In hindsight, do you think that adding all those planes at that time was a good idea?

EB Oh yes. The size of the service into and out of Phoenix has never really met its true demand. There's more demand today than gets service. However, the change in the industry and in America West has impeded some of that service. And so, um, quite frankly, I believe that Phoenix could be at least 50% larger than its present service and volume of passengers because that demand for effective service is still there. So, acquiring those aircraft and providing the service, was very effective.

Now, there was an overreaction to the market when, um, Iraq invaded Kuwait on October or, uh, August 1st. I believe it was 1991. And many of the markets shrunk because the price of oil and aircraft fuel skyrocketed - feeling that there was a heavy blow - economic blow to the U.S. airline industry because of what went on in Iraq and Kuwait. Now, I got to emphasize that since that happened and looking at the years past, that was not a significant problem for the airline industry, except an abrupt increase in the price of fuel. If you look at it today, it's gone the opposite way. So, from that standpoint, well, it was a tough problem to deal with at the time. The increase in service that we developed prior to that time was very well economically sound decision.

ZDL Well, America West Airline created 12,000 jobs with 9,000 in Arizona. That has to be something you're very proud of.

EB Uh, we are very proud of the employment stimulation, uh, particularly here in Phoenix. At that time, uh, in 1990, I believe that if you talk to anyone in Phoenix, they either had a member of their family or a member - a relative living here that worked at America West Airlines. And so, in hindsight it probably created more jobs in Phoenix and Arizona than any other single business activity. And it was beneficial to the economy. And, quite frankly, that number still hangs at that area as far as people who are employed in the aviation industry here in Phoenix. And so, it creates a lasting impact on the size and economic power that Phoenix enjoys today, and it did definitely put Phoenix on the map.

ZDL Your family, including Mary Ellen, your wife, and your five children were in some way, shape or form, involved with America West.

EB Yes, they were. Mary Ellen is a very talented interior design person and she loved the company the way I do and did. And so, she was instrumental in decorating the reservation centers, creating the Chairman's Clubs at the airports, and other divisions of America West. And she did a remarkable job for quite a few years. And at no cost to America West.

ZDL And what about your children?

EB Well, my son Mark, uh, was one of the first employees...

ZDL Right.

EB ...as we mentioned earlier. And he and I actually paralleled entry and exit on the same date. But I have a daughter, Katherine, who became an office person for a while and then went through customer service representative training and flew for America West for, I think it was eight years, eight or nine years. And, as a matter of fact, she's a flight attendant today for Net Jets and she's - loves her job. My son, John, worked in the office and then in the planning division and he has become a travel professional in his career and he's quite successful. My son Paul and Matt - my sons Paul and Matt, did spend a limited amount of time at America West and then they pursued their own careers.

ZDL I'm interested in the fact that you provided 24-hour child-care and an on-site medical facility and that - at that time, that was very innovative.

EB Well, uh, made sense. We added 100 new employees a month for ten years. And, uh, many of those were young, dynamic individuals who were getting married and having their families. And you need - you need a group of people that are instrumental in your well-being when you're in those early phases of your life. And care for children was critical and since we had a community of our own, it became a natural thing for us to provide. And it was badly needed by our employees. And so, that was a thing for us to do.

ZDL Well, I mean, that's amazing, 24 hours, because...

EB Yes.

ZDL ...of course, if you're a pilot or a flight attendant...

EB Right.

ZDL ...you come and go at odd times of the day and night.

EB Right, and that's the reason we did that.

ZDL Was - was that right in the terminal or did you...

EB Oh no. These were at homes around Phoenix that, uh, where people provided the service for us. And as a result, there was that ability to accommodate the people who needed it.

ZDL So it was close to their home and they dropped the child off...

EB Right, right.

ZDL ...or children and...

EB Yes.

ZDL That's - it really is amazing. Did Mary Ellen have influence in that decision?

EB No, she wasn't. That was the other - the parts of management of the company who conceived that need and so we all worked together to make it work.

ZDL In 1990, America West was named the official airline for the Phoenix Suns.

EB Yes, um, as a matter of fact, I remember the occasion where Jerry Colangelo and myself dug the first dirt to develop the America West Arena. And so, we've been closely affiliated with the Suns for quite some time, up to my departure, and that continued beyond that. And it's a natural. It's just a natural. They travel frequently and we were there to provide the service.

ZDL Absolutely. In 1991 Braniff Airlines was shuttered. And America West purchased their Airbus A320 aircraft at a steep discount. What made that such a popular plane for your employees?

EB Well, the A320 is built by Airbus in Europe and it's become a very effective aircraft in the industry because it's a twin engine and the aircraft can provide a great deal of service at a cost much lower than aircraft that have three and four engines. And the A320 was developed primarily as a competitor to Boeing 737 which we operated as well. Now, as you look back until today, that's still a very successful aircraft for Airbus in providing to the industry because they developed the A321, the A319, which are larger and smaller aircraft, plus the engine performance has been broadly improved and it affected the ability for the performance of both the Boeing 737 and the A320 series to fly further, at a lower fuel consumption to a point where it's now efficient worldwide and it still provides that same efficiency.

ZDL Post deregulation in 1978, 100 airlines formed in the 1980's, but in the 1990's, numerous

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airlines declared bankruptcy, either Chapter 7 or Chapter 11. It seems like the industry over built and then collapsed. Would - in your words, from your perspective, what do you think were the causes of such a major loss of airlines?

EB Well, uh, I think that's normal when you transition to a whole new set of economic rules. And when you pass from regulation to deregulation, it was such a profound change, that that's not an unusual condition. And the new companies that are able to survive are just better planned and better managed. The birth of the automobile industry in the United States was the same thing. When the automobile was first developed, there were a hundred automobile manufacturers in Detroit alone at the turn of the century in 1900 and that weeded itself down to three or four U.S. companies as the years went by. And you see a parallel in the aviation industry today where the nature of the economy of the industry has transitioned from openly competitive to almost an oligopoly situation and that's not unusual. It's just not unusual.

ZDL Interesting. Okay, so you had these flights to - from Honolulu to Japan and then all of a sudden, the Japanese Prime Minister told the Japanese not to fly American airlines.

EB Well, America West Airlines, uh...provided the service.

ZDL Oh it was specific to you?

EB Oh yeah. And, it - it affected a lot of people and that was the war in the Middle East when we declared war to a point where we went into Kuwait and put the Iraqis back in their own country and the industry was experiencing a high fuel cost. There was a worldwide deep concern about these actions. And so, the travel of - of Japanese around the world had a similar decline as what we experienced in our Nagoya/Honolulu system service.

ZDL Hmm. So, talk about the relationship between the 1991 economic recession and the spike in jet fuel prices because of Operation Desert Storm.

EB Well, that - that was a profound effect because the, uh, the economic condition at that time was that the oil industry kept preaching to everybody that there's only a limited amount of this natural resource and therefore, if we have these irregular developments around the world, it's going to affect oil prices and so they raised their prices. And when they raised their prices, it created a difficult situation worldwide for companies that had as one of their final factors fuel consumption. And it created an impact that caused this kind of condition.

It's interesting to see recently where the price of oil went the other way and it's created a

tremendous positive economic impact for just about the rest of the people except for the oil industry. And so, you can see it going both ways, but at that time, that was a new major economic development in terms of the increase in oil and the impact that it had, uh, increase in oil prices and the impact that it had on the rest of the world.

ZDL During the 1991 recession, America West raised \$125 million dollars when four other airlines declared bankruptcy.

EB Uh, we did because we had a softening of traffic demand and so we decided to make a major promotion to strengthen our cash flow. So, we developed a - a day of sales at Phoenix Sky Harbor airport where people, if they came to the airport to our ticket counters and our facilities and bought tickets for the future, they could get those tickets at half price. And much to our surprise, 100,000 people showed up at Phoenix Sky Harbor on one day in order to take advantage of this. And so, we were able to raise a significant amount of money in excess of a hundred million dollars with that. Now, that was my idea and as a result, there were many judgments that - that, uh, waffled all over the place as far as is that good business practice or not? And I felt that under the condition that's how to survive something like that. Now, the company went on, went into bankruptcy, but it came out...

ZDL Chapter 11?

EB Yeah, Chapter 11 bankruptcy, came through it, came out and prospered effectively which means the nucleus of that company at that time held itself together.

ZDL So you - still in your opinion, that was still a good decision to make?

EB Yes it was.

ZDL In March 1991, America West began flying troops home on the 747s and they also flew military personnel and family dependents at a deep discount on tickets.

EB Yes.

ZDL And so you were very supportive of...

EB Oh, it was a natural thing. We're cheerleaders for America when that happens and so it was our pleasure to bring the troops. We actually brought them over to Kuwait and then we brought them home after a very short encounter with the military in Iraq, and so it was a very short war at that

point, contrary to our experience after that.

But, many, many troops came home after that war and so the means of transportation was primarily provided by all commercial carriers and we were proud of the fact that we had an aircraft that could do that, which we did. And, so that's kind of like an act of patriotism.

ZDL What was your favorite aircraft that AW flew?

EB Well, I loved the twin engine, the Boeing. We started with some Boeing 737-200s, but the 737-300, which had a new General Electric powered engine, was most effective in terms of length of flight and performance. So that was the best airplane by far for us to operate and its costs were much lower than other aircraft that were being operated by other airlines. And then when Airbus came out with a match, with its A320 to the Boeing 737, that too, presented us with a similar advantage.

ZDL Can you talk about the aircraft model you brought today?

EB Oh yes. Well, that's a Boeing 737-300. That's what I was just talking about. And it's a beautiful airplane. Its performance is magnificent. Let me give you an example. The aircraft that was predominant in the industry before the 737, was the Boeing 727. And it had three engines on it. It was heavier, therefore less efficient. An aircraft is far more efficient the lighter it gets and more fuel it can maintain, and the engines on the 727 were only 8,000 pounds of thrust each. That's the power that they operate at. Whereas on the 737, each engine has 22,000 pounds of thrust, and so it had far more power and far more efficiency than that aircraft that was dominant at the time of aircraft, or airline deregulation.

ZDL In June of 1991, America West filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and it was the 7th major U.S. carrier to file. And you were out as CEO. That must've been a very painful time for you.

EB Yes it was. Because first of all, the experience of starting America West and developing America West was a very emotional tie-in for myself to the company. And so, to see the possible end of my career there was pretty difficult after spending so much time and effort to develop such a terrific company.

ZDL There were pay freezes across the board and 10% pay reduction for all employees; 13 cities were closed; and leased aircraft were returned. Were you involved in those decisions?

EB No, I wasn't. Those decisions were made just prior to my departure from the company and they

probably would've been different had I stayed.

ZDL In the last six months in '91, America West added new service to three cities - St. Louis, Atlanta and Columbus, Ohio. How did they file for bankruptcy and expand the service?

EB Well, that's when - at that time, in 1991, we had committed to the delivery of the brand new A320 aircraft. And so, we took delivery and there was still a need. The need didn't disappear as the demand was diminished. And so that decision proved effective over the long term and remains today.

ZDL So in September '91, Mike Conway was named CEO and you continued as Chairman of the Board?

EB Yes.

ZDL How did that go?

EB Well, it was not a good experience for me. I was chairman since we began. And the chairman really has no specific operational responsibility on behalf of the company. So, I took that as the significant sign that I was no longer needed at the company.

ZDL That had to be a tough, tough time for you.

EB Oh yes, it was. Yes, it was. For me and my family.

ZDL And your family. And I'm sure a lot of the employees.

EB Yes, also.

ZDL From 1991 through 1994, America West was in bankruptcy. According to Don Gilbertson of the *Arizona Republic* in a 2013 article, there was a great deal of local business support who loaned the airline eight million dollars as part of a financing plan. It included Dial, Phelps Dodge, banks, and the Phoenix Suns. Were you involved in any of that?

EB No, I wasn't. The need for the company was at least 50 million, so eight million helped and, of course, I don't deny that for the benefit of America West, but I was not involved in that.

ZDL So in July of '92, you resigned your position as Chairman of the Board and Bill Franke replaced you. I get the definite impression that the resignation was not your choice.

EB Correct. Yes, it was, and it was not my choice; however, the evolving economic conditions became favorable for Bill Franke to get involved.

[Technical problem occurs with something dropping.]

EB I knew that was gonna happen when I mentioned Bill Franke's name! You wanna re-ask that question?

ZDL Painfully re-ask that question? Um, okay in July 1992, you resigned your position as Chairman of the Board of America West and Bill Franke replaced you. I get the very definite impression that that resignation was not your choice.

EB Uh, that's correct. I think the expression that I use is that who let the wolf in the door.

ZDL So, today how do you feel about this departure?

EB Oh, I still am sad about it. I believe the handling of the bankruptcy at America West could've been much, much better and, uh, as a result, the recovery since then would've taken place and it would not have been such a serious, serious problem for all of the America West employees.

ZDL Well, America West came out of bankruptcy in 1994 because they formed a partnership with Mesa Airlines and Continental Airlines. Were you involved still at that point in time?

EB No I wasn't. I was gone at that time.

ZDL Okay. Doug Parker became the CEO in 1995, replacing Bill Franke. He was named Chairman and CEO in September 2001, ten days before September 11th. What did you think about his selection?

EB Oh, I thought it was a good move. I think Mr. Parker is an airline person. And he's knowledgeable and capable and as a result I - I look back at his tenure as a positive development for America West Airlines, as has been for his conduct since then.

ZDL So America West merged with U.S. Airways in 2005.

EB Yes.

ZDL And then, of course, eventually merged with American Airlines in 2013. But life after America West in 1992 - you were only 56 years old when you left America West. You're indefatigable. You started two more airlines.

EB Oh, I think the opportunity in the industry in 1992 to 1995 was still very dramatically needed and so, uh, I did not want my aviation career to end at that time because I just loved it. And so, there became an opportunity to develop an airline in Colorado Springs, Colorado. And so, I committed myself to that. My wife and I moved to Colorado Springs. We were there for ten years. Uh, the development of Pacific Western Airlines at Colorado Springs was total pleasure to be able to do that again and affect a whole new marketplace. And so, it was well worth it for the recovery of my experience in leaving America West Airlines.

ZDL Interesting. So that was Western Pacific, or was that Mountain Air?

EB Oh yes, I'm sorry. Western Pacific and Mountain Air Express, which was an airline capable of feeding our Colorado Springs hub with service to the magnificent ski resorts throughout Colorado.

ZDL Um, what did you think about that merger with America West and American Airlines?

EB Well, I thought because of the trend in the industry, that it was a good business move on behalf of U.S. Air by Doug Parker. And I believe that has proven to be the case. I think that if you see the oligopoly forming, you better become one of the players, because if you're not then your life becomes very tough. And so, American now is the largest airline in the world and as a result, their future looks very good under Doug Parker's leadership.

ZDL You believe that the free market environment led to the creation of numerous airlines which then led to the creation of up to 50,000 jobs in the Phoenix area?

EB Oh yes. The airport itself has grown dramatically with a high level or high number of employees, but the FAA here has also grown dramatically. The economy that is affected by that kind of development created jobs at all the areas related to the airport development and so it's been a huge impact on the Phoenix and Arizona economy. The biggest in the history of this area. Maybe except for when Carl Hayden created a logical water system that benefitted Arizona, which got its beginning.

ZDL Well, I guess Arizona started on the airline industry during World War II when Luke Air Force Base, Williams Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan and all the pilots were trained here...

EB Oh, that was very helpful. However, the big factor about America West that was not present in that, was that we also carried millions of new passengers through the Phoenix area to the economic benefit of Arizona. We grew, we banked here. The banks prospered. The money stayed here. We didn't export it. Then the passengers flew through Phoenix, many of them to and from Phoenix. Their money that they spent benefited the economy of Arizona. So, what we did is, as a company, we imported cash into the economy here. Now that's - and that cash is not the cash that the company got, it's the cash that spread throughout the economy of Arizona and so it was a positive cash flow. Most big corporations when they expand into a community export cash. Well they import jobs and create a benefit to the economy there. Their overall money flows to their headquarters and flows to their banking system that they manage and their borrowing and their spending. So, we became the critical factor of reversing the economic conditions associated with our development. Now I don't criticize the military for what they did in World War II. After all, we were in a dynamic war and I really do suspect and agree that that development for Phoenix was very positive, but I don't think it came close to what America West did for this economy.

ZDL No, I was just stating that kind of started the airline industry during World War II and...

EB Oh, oh, no denying the fact that the economics, the military strategy, the, uh, commitment to victory, was aviation, partly aviation and that aviation industry grew and developed after World War II, so you can attribute that to the World War II events in Phoenix, of course.

ZDL Let's talk about America West reunions. Um, tell me a little bit about them. They're very popular with your employees.

EB Uh, yes. That's primarily because of the action of former employees that allows that to live on. And so, an occasional collection for reunion has become a highly emotional experience for people who make the effort to attend. And they do fly into Phoenix from all over where our airline system operated, to attend the event. And so just hundreds and hundreds of people come for those events. And it's a wonderful experience for me because it's a revival of a period in my life that was one of the best periods for my business experience in my lifetime.

ZDL Here's a quote from a former flight attendant, William Leman, "Ed Beauvais' dream of making air travel affordable for everyone has been realized and his contribution to Phoenix and Arizona is without a doubt the reason for a thriving economy today." That's a pretty...

EB Amen.

ZDL Well you're very loved by this group of employees and they're proud of belonging to that group.

EB Well let me add to that. Uh, the reason for that is that my feeling toward them is the same. And that reflects the quality of their life experience themselves when they joined the company.

ZDL In 2015, you wrote, and your son Mark edited a book, *Up, Up and Away, America West Airlines From The Beginning To My Journey's End, 1981 to 1992*. Did you enjoy writing that book?

EB Well, it was a strain on my ability to become an editor and an author. However, I loved it. I loved it and the book reflects that kind of experience because it's not designed to give you the personal relationships that grew out of that experience. It's more designed to characterize the kind of growth that we experienced and why we did it and why we are so very proud of that period in my life, as well as the people who worked at the company. And so, I thought that it would save a part of a history that is very important to not only the people that worked at America West, but the impact that America West had on the economy.

ZDL Yes. You've received several honorary degrees and awards. One was an honorary doctorate in aviation from the Embry-Riddle University. Was that the one in Prescott?

EB Yes. Yes, Embry-Riddle is one of the leading aviation schools in the country. And they have a campus that is quite large in Florida as well. But the Prescott operation is very impressive, and it produces an awful lot of airline employees.

ZDL Then you received an honorary doctorate in management from Colorado Technical University. Where's that university?

EB In Colorado Springs. And so, they were very interested in what we were doing there because it was a revolution - economic revolution there as well and they were a major part of the Colorado Springs community along with the United States Air Force Academy there.

ZDL The Public Relation Society of America gave you its Phoenix Award in 1994 - supporting and elevating public relations' best practice.

EB Oh, that was a thrill. And, uh, I appreciated that, but I had limited knowledge of the organization.

ZDL Now I want to talk about just kind of your personal feelings about what makes Arizona a special place for you.

EB Uh, several things. Number one, the quality of people who live here; most of them are from somewhere else and it's a lot like California in that regard. But people really, really appreciate the opportunity to live here. Number one, the cost of living is favorable. Number two, the weather is awesome. Now, gets a little warm in the summer, but we're desert rats and so we don't mind that that much. The opportunities here are quite good because of the growth that is experienced. And the proximity to California is incredibly important because California continues to grow at a dynamic rate in all areas and, as a result, a lot of that economic benefit will rub off on to the Phoenix area. You take the difference in the cost of housing, the cost of living, and the cost of local transportation, and there's a sizeable difference. And so, to a certain extent, you can conclude that much of the growth in California will be economically beneficial to Phoenix, and beneficial to California in the other way such as Intel being here which is an obvious example. And so, I think the future of Phoenix, in particular, is going to be very, very strong.

ZDL And this is kind of just an off the wall question. I was listening to a report on the radio this morning, what's your opinion about drones?

EB Uh, they're an effective development of aviation in a different area. It shows that the dynamics of what can happen in the air impresses everybody in all areas and is useful to everybody. It is an early development. Our country has its hands full dealing with its growth, but it is very positive, and will it have side effects? Of course, it will. But the overall benefit will be dramatic.

ZDL I guess you've talked about Arizona's future as kind of why it's special to you and so...

EB Yes.

ZDL ...you see it as very positive.

EB I do, I do.

ZDL If you're talking to young people today, what would you like to share with them?

EB Well, um, I think graduating from college with a bachelor's degree is wonderful, but don't stop there. Make a decision as to what you want to do in life generally and pursue, prepare yourself for that change because you cannot control change. And that goes for the cost of living, for the professional requirements, for all parts of life. And so, if you're available and capable, you can turn that condition into a benefit. And why not in Phoenix, when Phoenix is a dynamic example of change itself? And so, from that standpoint, you're - you're able to see what's happening

around the world and you're able to mobilize effectively to take advantage of it. And so, the benefits of living in Phoenix rises to the top when those decisions are made. And so, I think that's the important part.

ZDL How would you like to be remembered?

EB Uh, probably as a - a good father first and foremost, a great family first and foremost, um, making decisions that eventually were beneficial to my associates, and also the pleasure of, uh, working in an industry that is very positive in every way that you look at it. And that's the aviation industry.

ZDL Are there any areas of your life or any subjects that you would like to include in this interview?

EB Uh, I think it was a pretty complete interview. Um, you know, the - the issue is - as far as I'm concerned is, devote your life into something you love to do and everything else will take care of itself.

ZDL Well, thank you very much.

EB You're most welcome.

End of Interview

/gmc