

Larry Wilson
Oakton Community College Supervisor of Building Maintenance
Coin-OP machine technician

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David Gonzales [DG]: So uh, hi my name is DG. I'm here to interview-

Larry Wilson [LW]: Larry Wilson.

DG: And today is the 8th of October of 2015. We're interviewing Mr. Wilson because of his extensive knowledge in coin op industry. So Mr. Wilson, where, where were you born?

LW: I was born in Chicago.

DG: And in approximately like...?

LW: 1964. [laughs] You want to know where? [laughs] Under a bridge.

[laughs]

DG: Nah, that will do. What is your profession for a living?

LW: I work in Oakton Community college. I'm the building supervisor for maintenance.

DG: So like, if you had not... what... so when you are not usually working, what's, what do you usually do on your free time?

LW: When I'm not working at work, or at home? I got a lot of stuff I do at home too, fixing stuff.

DG: Alright

LW: Free time? I... I putz around with electrical-mechanical machines. Like pinball, vending machines, various arcade machines. That's what I do for fun.

DG: Yeah.

LW: Yeah, I'm pretty boring [laughs].

[laughs]

DG: That's pretty interesting to be honest. I wish I did that for fun. 'Cause you know it works a lot with your other skills that you have.

LW: Mhmm [affirmative]. Yeah, my training was in heating ventilation and air conditioning with Triton and I went to Coin American and that's what I started with over there and when my boss retired I was able to take his job, so you know. It's always better when you're sitting in the chair instead of doing the work.

DG: So to balance your work with your hobby, you basically do this when you have any free time.

LW: Yeah, yeah it first started basically when I got a coke machine. It was the first thing I bought, and I bought it when I was like 17. And later on I got another coke machine. And where I was working, I was working at a factory at a time. And then they wanted to basically get you to go to school for whatever, they didn't really care as long as you went to school for something. So I decided to go to Coin to learn refrigeration just in case my coke machine broke so I would know how to fix it.

DG: Mhmm [affirmative].

LW: So, that's what I did. And from that I learned electrical, and with the electrical skills I was able to get these machine that were all beat up and get 'em to work so that's how I ended up being like one machine, and then you can see how many I got.

DG: Another and another.

LW: It's like an addictive hobby, but I guess it's better than heroin right.

[laughs]

DG: What happened to those first machines, are they still here?

LW: I have one I can show you but my first coke machine I actually sold a little while ago. It was funny because at first it was this part of the basement, then it came over here, then it came a little closer to the uh door, and eventually went out the door.

[laughs]

DG: Started to move slow...

LW: Started to move. And throughout the years it got a little more boring than the new stuff coming in. You have to make room for new stuff. 'Cause you are always like my wife says "you are not gonna get something else" and then like "oh look at that" and then you are buying stuff and like "where am I gonna put it" so you have to get rid of that stuff. But I got a good variety of games just because they are all different. A lot of people just buy straight pinball, or just work on just pinball, I have a huge variety of just different parts of the industry, and so, it's like I said - you start with something and you keep going and you end up with something like this. So when I die my wife will have a hell of a garage sale.

[laughs]

DG: So like, what keeps you motivated, just the curiosity of how things work?

LW: Yeah.

DG: Just fixing it?

LW: Yeah I usually just get started and you get to the point where aggravation just takes over and you just get more motivated to just figure it out and eventually when you figure it out its all awesome and it's like a natural high. It's like "this is great I got this thing working. 50 years I got it going." And then eventually it ends up in that one spot, you get something else, and it goes down the line, until it goes out the door.

[laughs]

DG: So like, with all this figuring out how the machine works, are you hoping it will take you anywhere, or is it just for the thrill of it all?

LW: It's basically for the thrill of it. It was cool when my kids were small, you know, because they would play these games no one in their generation has ever seen. That was, that was a big thrill for me. Then at parties you get people come over and it's like, you know "I want to try this, what's this do, what's that do" you know. That's always fun. But generally, they just they just sit here, you know, because, most people your age won't want to play these.

DG: Yeah.

[laughs]

DG: There's other stuff... there's other stuff out there. So when you were fixing them when your kids were younger, did you invite them, to like, "hey, this is how this stuff works, and why"?

LW: Yes, Todd was, wasn't much interested. He liked playing them, but Kyle, my older son, he, he actually knows how to work on some of these and he, he would help me out. He ended up going to school for mechanical, and he's mechanically inclined. He can get it and figure it out. I don't think he had the passion I had. See you gotta remember that this is stuff that I grew up with, where when you are my age and there is some other new cool stuff out there you will be like "wow, I remember this game, this is what I like" and your kids will be like this "psshh, this is garbage, look at this stuff". But it is cool. I remember when the kids were smaller, a friend would come over and the friend would be going nuts over all the games. And then you know, 40 minutes later he is like "let's go to Xbox or PlayStation, I don't want to play with this stuff, you know? If you can't use your thumbs it's no fun right?"

DG: If it requires to actually be standing while playing, I mean come on...

LW: Yeah, "you have to stand? Use your index finger for flippers? Nah, nah, thumbs man" I have to use the triggers to play man.

[laugh]

DG: So when you first bought your first coke machine, was there anyone who told you to buy it, or like...

LW: Nah, I want to a party when I was young, and at this party, I saw and I just thought it would look cool. It was really, it was really cool. It was round, and it was embossed, so the coke was embossed on like four sides. It had a really cool red and white design, it was from the '50s you know. I just thought it was cool, so I bought it for like, I think seventy-five bucks. Me and my buddy, he got his dad's truck and we took it to my mom's house and snuck it in the house, and it sat in my room for probably about like two years before anyone saw it. At least my dad knew I had it, and my mom probably knew I had it. He wasn't too excited when I got some more machines. That's how it started - I had two coke machines in my room. And when we moved, me and my wife bought this house. The biggest thing I had. She had a bed, a dresser,

normal stuff. I had a jukebox and two coke machines, and that was it. And a table.

[laugh]

LW: I didn't even have a knife and fork you know.

[laughs]

LW: But at least I had a jukebox.

[laugh]

DG: So how, how since you first bought that first coke machine, how did you see the whole industry change.

LW: Well as far as, as far as a hobby, it's easier now because of websites like eBay or craigslist so if you see something you can always find it where when I was a kid you had a thing called the newspaper and they had these things called ads in there and you had to look them up in the thing called trading times, and basically you had to hunt for stuff in garage sales. It was a hit or miss. There was like a dry period where I just had the 2 coke machines, I didn't have anything electro-mechanical yet, and then one day I got a job whenever I'm working now, and this guy say's "hey, you want this pinball machine", and I'm like "nah, I don't like pinball that much", or "no, it's a bowling machine" and I said "oh yeah, I like that". Growing up as a kid they didn't hall malls, so we would go to sears. My mom would want to go there, my dad would drive, and my dada and grandfather would go to a bar. At sears they had shuffle alleys, and That was the spark of it all, and when he said that he had one of those, it brought back the memory of playing all of these. So I brought it back, and it wasn't working, I couldn't fix it for half a year because I was fixing up the..... it wasn't working, so I was trying, and one day it worked. That was, that was it. That was it and I was pretty much hooked on getting machines and figuring them out. Getting them to work.

[00:10:06]

DG: That's awesome. Have you seen any of the ... Regarding pin-ball machines, has there been any change in their design from the older day or...

LW: Yeah, pinball has changed a lot. Right now there's, I think, 2 manufactures, Stern, which is still in Illinois and there's Jersey Jack or something like that. He made a Wizard of Oz pinball machines and that's all he made so far. But Stern basically, when I was a kid, they had pinball just about everywhere. The play fields were wide open and you need bumpers and stuff but you can see where the ball goes and it was more of a skill from using the flippers, trying to hit the different targets. Now it's just so much crap on there, you don't even know where the ball is. I think it's less skill now because there are just so

many things happening, multi balls and all kinds of things just going on man.

DG: You're just trying to keep the ball from going in the hole, at this moment, yeah.

LW: Basically that's what the whole point is, not to let it go past your flippers right? But yeah, it's just all electronic now whereas before it was electro-mechanical, everything is digital, everything has sound. Everything has a theme before they could have just made a pinball machine, call it the "Three Shmos" or whatever and it would just have 3 guys you don't know and there, there's a pinball machine.

Now everything has to be theme. They have Avatar, the latest one is a Hobbit coming out. Everything is either a movie or a TV show like Sopranos or something like that. There is no hokey games. Mine over there if you look at it it's called Jukebox. Now who the heck would want to play that now? It's got a bunch of people with bell bottoms on. They got to go for the masses now where before they could just make all these different games and just put them in all these different dinners and arcades, now most of the games are used for home use now where before they weren't home use games. Everything has to have a theme and everyone's buying it for that.

DG: They moved from a public sector to a private sector?

LW: They have yes. Most of the games sold, I think 60% are private sector now.

DG: That's very interesting. How do you think pinballs will eventually in the future be moving on?

LW: I was thinking that they would eventually fade away to nothing but I've seen some games and people are still into it but then again, they've got a thing called The Pinball Expo, that's in like a week from now. That's over in Wheeling, it's the biggest pinball show in the country. If you go over there, you're going to see people who look like me. You're not going to see a bunch of kids running around. I think when my generation dies out, pinball is going to die out.

DG: Do you believe that the pinball industry right now is only being sustained by the hobbies of people that have...

LW: I do. There's a few places that still have them. What's that adult game place, like a Chuck E. Cheese for adults, what's that one called?

Others: Dave and Busters.

LW: Dave and Busters, yeah. I went to Dave and Busters one time, and it was cool, they had some cool games and they had a Stern Family Guy and that was awesome. Stern also made Shrek which was a same play field, the same thing just that they peeled the Family Guy one off and put the Shrek on one, and changed the plastic instead of having the Family Guy guys, they had had the Donkey and whoever else. That's basically it

because if you go to any bar now, you don't see pinball machines. You go to bowling alleys you hardly see anything. They don't really have arcade rooms, games, and when you do go to arcades, I remember taking my kids to arcades when they were small, like Harlem Irving it's like a mall over here. Anyway, we go in there and everything was electronic. I said, "Man there's not even a pinball machine in here." Yeah, I think it will fade away. What do you guys think? Do you guys ever play pinball? Any of you?

DG: Yeah, I've actually played pinball before where you had ... I went to a place ... I'm from Mexico so there was a place further south of Mexico where the whole purpose of that town is to keep it in the old times for what's it called, when people visit.

LW: Yeah, so that's what their sole point is.

DG: Like tourist, like tourist, tourist town. Then I would go with my family to a place to eat and they will just have a pinball there. It's pretty old style still and they're this-

LW: But there's now places you guys hang out and do you guys hang out anywhere and you just go to school or...

Others: No. My newest experience with pinball has just been the Microsoft pinball on the computer.

LW: Well it's going to change today. I'm going to have you on every one of these games.

Others: All right. I look forward to trying something new or old.

LW: New to you old to the industry huh?

DG: Do you think that eventually this hobby will bring skills to other hobbies that you currently have? Has it brought any skills to the hobbies?

LW: It depends on the hobbies. Right now, my hobby first started out with coke machines and like I said, I had to go to school so what I did was I tried to learn something in the refrigeration part of it because that's what it was, it's a coke machine, cool stuff. I lost track of that, what was the question again.

DG: To the skills from this topic will be-

LW: I was trying to figure out where I was going there. Okay, I learned that just for the sole purpose of just learn how to fix that machine but the whole point was I wanted to read that little square card that had all the lines and circles on it and I'm like, "The heck is that." It was a schematic, electrical schematic. Once I learned that, I was like, "Oh my god, this thing is so freaking easy. This is a thermostat, it's a compressor, it's 2 motors, there's nothing to it." Then I took that information and once I started working on this stuff, I was able to work in games. Except these schematics are like this big, they're massive and you've got to follow one circuit at a time.

All right, basically the whole point of that was I learn electrical for the one hobby, which led into another hobby, and now if my refrigerator breaks, I can fix that so that's a home use. If I need to rewire the house, I can do that because I know how to do electrical now. If I want to fix a car I can trace that out. Yeah, it does-

DG: Transfer the skills.

LW: -transfer over and it's great. You learn a couple of things you can use forever.

DG: Do you ever see this hobby ever becoming some sort of business [inaudible]?

LW: No. Not really because you would have to get a game basically at \$0 because they are all so old. To get one to work you have to take it all apart and there's a lot of little pieces.

DG: It takes a lot of time and money that you need to convert--

LW: You could spend 80 hours on something that you're going to sell or 100 bucks. Now you just worked ... Did all this work for what? A dollar something an hour? Financially it's not worth it for me. I did one game for one guy because ... A ball baler, they have a balling machine and I tell him, his like, "Oh yeah, can you fix?" I'm like, "Yeah, how much time? There's a lot of time in it." Most people are like, "I'll give you a hundred bucks." I'm like, "It ain't going to cover dude." This guy said, "How much?" I said, "I'll do 1500." He said, "Yeah, no problem." I got 1500 to fix his game. You could make money at it but I like a job where it's steady-

DG: Yeah, it will be like a [crosstalk].

LW: -and you have assurance and you have a 401. It's more of a hobby and I have sold things, like I said, when they get closer to the door, they go and something else takes its place. It could be lucrative but you would have to do that just for the whole thing and you would have to go around like pickers and go find crap and fix it and it's not good for me. For me no, that was a long way for the explanation for no. Wasn't it?

DG: No it's perfect. It's perfect. You get to know everything. With this hobby of yours, do you think it's the important, the essence to be passionate about? It can just be like ...

LW: Yeah, any hobby you have to be passionate about, otherwise you ain't going to do it. You collect stamps and you bought one and you're like, "Okay, I'm done." I don't think you're passionate in a hobby either.

[00:19:40]

DG: Definitely. Relating back to when Todd used to bring his friends over, do you think that pinball by itself is like a personal thing like only I play pinball or do I play pinball with friends and see the highest score or something like that?

LW: You talk about as far as him and his friends playing or me playing?

DG: Do you think pinball will be an individual basis or like a group community basis?

LW: Well, if you're downstairs, you're alone, I guarantee it's individual unless you're schizophrenic and you got some buddies you're talking to. But if you have a party, then of course it's everybody is trying to beat the other guy's score so it's very communal. Everybody gets into it then but generally to me it's like more of one player deal.

DG: One to one thing.

LW: All my games except for one are multi player and I do have one that's individual game and it's not very popular. It does seem that ... When I'm down here along, I just play by myself. I'll just play a game here and there. When I do have people here, I do notice that they do congregate over games that are multiple player because it's more fun, you're just more challenged, you're playing against someone instead of ... Would you rather throw the ball against the wall and catch it or would you rather throw it to another guy and he'll throw back to you? It's more fun always to play with someone else so ... That part of it I say yeah, people will be hanging out with it but it still could be either or. It depends on ...

DG: The situation at hand.

LW: Yeah, I don't think you're going to have people flocking over here saying man, let's go and look at that one pinball game but when you have a group of people they do flock around individual things. The pinball is popular, actually that's one game I never really had to work on too much, the baseball is one of the favorites and ball bowling machines are favorite.

DG: The one over here?

LW: Yeah, the long one there, yeah. It's like 13 foot long.

DG: That's a very pretty bowling machine. Do you ever see yourself as moving on from this hobby or do you think that ...

LW: Moving out of it?

DG: Yeah.

LW: Well, I heard arthritis would be bad on my hands and I got to the point where I wasn't going to do it anymore. But then I discovered Enbrel and I started injecting myself and now I can move my fingers but before I couldn't so I ended up buying more crap. Didn't learn from the last time. I know. That was a genetic thing so ... Yeah, continue.

DG: Yeah of course. We're thinking about also asking about yourself as a person. When you were growing older, young.

LW: When I was growing old.

DG: You were growing older.

LW: That was yesterday.

DG: Definitely. What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?

LW: My favorite toy had to be the Marx, M A R X that was company. They had a game called Electro Shot Shooting Gallery. What it was, was a game about, maybe 2 and a half feet long by a foot wide and it hit targets. It had little ducks at one of the circle and then it had a little clown head that bounced around, some things you got to knock back and forth, holes to make, they were smaller, and the cool thing was you had a machine gun. It shot BBs. They were contained in this device. That was the ultimate game. They had single shot which, yeah, who's going to do that? You got a machine guy man. You want to shoot individual pellets or do you want to shoot 10 at a time. Oh 10 at a time.

It was funny, that was an arcade game which I never really put 2 and 2 together until I was down here one day and I noticed that my Bally Shot Shooter is a large Electro Shot Shooting Gallery. Because this one actually has balls that are propelled by a vacuum system and it shoots at targets. I was like, that's freaking awesome, I got one of these. I guess something seeded way back in my brain there. That was 1971 that I had this game. Quite a while ago.

DG: When did you get this one?

LW: I got this one, I think about 4 years ago. Something like that.

DG: Is this your old machine?

LW: Yeah, yeah, that's a '60's game. Most of my games are from the 60s. The pinball is from the '76, that's the newer one and my newest game, which I consider new, was actually out when I was in high school. It was a game by Atari, I'm sure you guys heard Atari, right?

DG: Yeah.

LW: It's Pole Position, it's a race car game. It was the first game I remember being at the arcade playing this, it was the first game you actually were driving a car and you made that turn, the background actually moved. It was like, "Wow, this is so realistic." You thought it was so cool. Now you look at it, it's like, "Man, that's so lame." You're used to Call of Duty and all these other things, it's like yeah. Got a little mountain going back and forth and we were all like, "Oh, look at that."

DG: Who bought you the electro shooting gallery?

LW: Santa Clause.

DG: Santa Clause.

LW: Yeah, that's what I was told. It's staying on there and I'm sticking with it.

DG: Of course, yeah, he's always a good person. He brought me a lot of gifts as well.

LW: Yeah, I don't think he brings kids machine guns anymore but back in '71 he did.

DG: Moving on from these pin ball machines, what is a thing that you most like about them? The fact that you are ...

LW: About pin ball machines?

DG: Yeah, about the game play, about the ...

LW: I like the sounds. I like the bumpers kicking the ball around. The action of it. I like the old-fashion chimes and they got chimes and they got bells for different things. I like when you win a free game, you hear a knock, it's basically a cell, like kicking a piece of woods. Before when I was kids, "Wow, what's that sound?" Now I know what it is it takes the fun out of it but that's about it. As a kid I hated ... I didn't hate pinball but I was really bad at it and it cost a quarter. I can go to the store and I can get a couple of Charlie Ranchers and some gum for a quarter, why do I want to waste it on this thing but I used to watch people and I used to enjoy, just pretending, not pretending paying but listening to it was good enough for me. Now it's cool because when I pay it I can take my quarter back. Open the door take that thing right out of there. I think now the games are like a buck or more than a buck.

DG: Yeah.

LW: I walk around Dave and Buster with my quarter. [Crosstalk] dollar. When did these change?

DG: What other types of games did you play when you were growing up?

LW: Shuffle alleys, I liked the bowling shuffle alleys, that's the one that I saw that was at that bar that my grandfather would go to and at the time I remember going to my dad, it was a dime. At that time it was a dime. He's like, "No, I'm not going to give you a dime to play that." We'd actually literally take the buck and slide it back and forth and go on to the pins and that's how we would do because he was too cheap to give us dime. Some stranger at the bar was like, "Give the kid a dime." He gives us a dime and we get to play it. It was cool, but I always liked those games. Those are my favorites. That's one right over there the second one over. Yeah, that's a cool game.

DG: What were your favorite things to do when you were growing up, playing these games or going to watch a movie?

LW: No. I didn't like paying these games because these games weren't ... There wasn't that many arcades around and there wasn't really dinners that had games so they were far and few between. They were not in my neighborhood, I didn't see them. We had an arcade that was there for like a half year but then you started getting too much gangs and stuff

hanging out there and robbing people and they closed it down. That's about it. I forget what we're talking about again so many questions now.

DG: Your favorite thing to do for fun.

LW: Okay, yeah, it wasn't pinball. I lived by a river and I would go by the river and we would make spears, bows and arrows and climb trees. It was right by the girls' dorm of North Park College so we'd climb up higher and look in the window, hey yeah. Good girls.

DG: We've got a bow and arrow girl.

LW: No. We used to play at ... North Park College, we used to play football over there and my favorite sport would probably be like, we used to play baseball. I used to play baseball. The games that we always played where we would play hide and seek but we would use flashlights at night so that was cool and made like, you'd go around the whole block in different people's yards or whatever. I'm sure people could see walking around flashlights in their yards and probably weren't excited by that but no one ever complained because we'd hide in trees, you could hide anywhere. That was it. We always wait until sundown and then start playing these games or football. In '70s Chicago went from having a real dim light for street lights to that bright orange one that they're trying to get rid of now. When that first came out, it was like daylight out because we were so used to being so dim. The whole street opened and you would play with a ball so that's what we did.

[00:30:03]

DG: When you were growing old ... up-

LW: Yeah, sorry, old is fine.

DG: -did the nationwide pinball ban affect you in any way? Did you care about it even?

LW: I never heard of that because like I said, that didn't affect anything with me. From what I read before they had pinball bans in New York until the '70s until they prove that the game was a game of skill ...

DG: And not gambling.

LW: The guy was basically ... He was playing this one game, this one machine and then they're like, "No. Play this one." They had a spare one just in case it failed and he wasn't familiar with that. They took a pot luck shot saying "I'm going to shoot this ball over to this hole." He did I and then the board and whoever in New York said, "Okay, it's skill." But that was the only ban I heard, that was recently I read that but I know back in the '30s they were considered gambling devices because they weren't skill and there was a lot of buns o them. Actually if you look behind you, that machine there is from 1940. Yeah, that was made in Chicago, actually just about every game was made in Chicago. Chicago had so many manufactures back then. That's by a company called Bally and I think you guys should have heard of Bally right?

Others: They did your sharp shooter?

LW: Yeah, Bally high hand, that's a poker machine. That machine actually pays out. If it's illegal wherever they sold it, you flip a couple of switches then it just gives you credits, then they get away with that. Then what they used to do, even though they said it's legal because it's only credits, say it's at a bar, the bar tender, you say I got 37 credits, he would pay out whatever 37 credits is worth and there's a button in the back that you push and it clears your credits. There's ways around their gambling laws that they had back then. Trust me, these guys they're not going to go under, going broke. They're going to find a way to get around it. That's a pretty good example for that though.

DG: Yeah, that's nice. Has anybody talked to you in any negative way about fixing pinball machines?

LW: Yeah, these 3 guys came over to my house today, they're badgering the hell out of me.

DG: Oh I don't know.

LW: No. But you do get that title. I remember going to that party and I didn't care for this because it was my cousin or whatever, instead of saying, "Here's my cousin Larry, they said, "Oh here's the pinball repair man." I'm like, "I don't do that for a living. I'm, I'm Larry. I'm not the pinball repair man." But that's about it. But I do the same thing. If you painted my car I say, "Yeah, he's a painter, he's a painter. He's ... Whatever."

DG: An interviewer.

LW: Yeah, he's the guy that won't leave me alone. No, there's nothing ... What can they? You got an example or something negative? Because I can't think of anything? What would you say negative about someone?

DG: I don't know. Some people, if you repair a car, oh, he's just-

LW: He's just a mechanic, that type? Yeah. I'm not in a rich neighborhood so that don't happen here. That's only when you go to north of the Highland Park right?

DG: Yeah. Do you believe that the pin ball's influence on the culture goes beyond that of just the gaming and arcade world?

LW: Actually I do because pinball basically was associated with ... for a time like a bad ass. Like a TV show, you had came out the Happy Days and you had a bunch of lame guys in there so they had to film one guy who's supposed to be cool [inaudible] and what does he do? He plays pinball.

You look at these James Dean flicks and there's James Dean what's he doing? Playing pin ball. It was associated in the '50s as a rebellion. Also you've got to remember at that time, it was illegal in some areas and they thought of it more so of, it's like a brainwashing mechanism, they're stealing my kids money. You go there and play and that's all. It

had, had its ... Not just a game. I think it had a lot with society, the way society was and ... Now I don't think so because back then, now it's like oh pinball, you know. You're going to just-

DG: It's just a pair of flippers.

LW: Yeah, but then it was like ... It's like we're saying it was illegal and this and that so, that's always more of a notorious thing than ...

DG: It was more of like what they made it to be than what it actually was.

LW: Yeah, it's just a game but they made it into basically the media and whoever else, law makers at the time made it into a mob thing. It's bad because it's gambling or this and that or it must be mob run or it came out of Chicago, come on, it has to be the mob. I think it just got a bad rap.

DG: What do you think makes a good pinball game?

LW: One than I can actually score on? I like the basic ones like these where it's a wide open field, you have targets if you hit A and B and then you drop into the hole, you get a free ball or it goes down this thing after you hit these you get an extra ball, stuff like that. I like that. The new games, I don't like. They're too busy.

DG: You've got to hit those things to get that extra ball.

LW: You guys ever played? You ever played the new games, some of the games?

DG: Yeah.

LW: It's just all lights flashing and then balls flipping everywhere. I'm like, it's paying itself? I don't have to do nothing. To me like I said, it's not as skilled.

DG: Do you notice the difference between companies and how they style a pinball machine?

LW: No. They all pretty much follow suit if one came out with an idea that was working, I guarantee you the other companies are going to come out with the same idea or something similar. No if you look back, I got this whole pin ball machine here. One guy, I think Bally invented the bumpers. After they invented the bumpers, guess what? Genco did the bumpers, then you had Chicago Coin did the bumpers and you had, who else was ... United did the bumpers, Williams did ... Everybody just said, "Oh hey bumpers yeah, it's working for them, let's do it."

Then some guys said, "Hey let's put flippers in." They had them backwards actually, you know how they work this way, they actually worked this way originally. Yeah, and they don't work too well, it's really hard to control it. The first game with flippers actually they had flippers on the sides and nothing in the middle. I think it was Genco actually put them down at the bottom. Then people were like, "Wow you can get that ball back up there and you can save it from falling into

the out hole.” Guess what? Next year everybody had flippers on the bottom, and that’s where it stayed forever. They’re still there. They’re still there and that was in the ‘50s, ‘40s, no ‘30s ‘40s. Well it’s somewhere in that era. A long time ago, before I was even born.

DG: Who are your favorite pinball manufacturer is there one?

LW: Gottlieb actually is supposed to be really good. I never had a Gottlieb so I don’t know but you always hear people talking about Gottlieb is the wedge head, they call them because they were long here and they come down to a wedge. That’s how all the back glass, the back section of the back box. They were all like that. For some reason, Gottlieb was supposed to be king of the pinballs. I never had one and for me, I’m happy with my Chicago Coiner and my old Bally.

Everybody had their favorites. If you want to buy a baseball game, you bought a Williams and so I got a Williams baseball game because it’s better than United or anybody else’s baseball game. If you want to buy a shuffle alley, you bought a United because they were the Cadillac of shuffle alleys. Every manufacturer has something that they are well known for and Gottlieb was the one for pinball. I just don’t have them to show you.

DG: Moving on to arcade games, do you know what makes a good or a bad arcade game?

LW: From just watching people, a good arcade game is one where you don’t blow someone out on the water, you know what I’m saying? And you can come back at the end and win. You always got a chance. That’s where it’s fun. Say you’re playing someone darts and they got everything but one and you got all the ... Well that’s not fun. You’ve got to have something where you could come back and have a challenge. My favorite games were always shuffles and shooting galleries. I just thought they were fun.

[00:39:35]

DG: Yeah, they are mostly skill games as well.

LW: The old shooting galleries weren’t really skilled as much because they had targets that were actually upside down. You would hit a contact when you turned your rifle, this fingers would actually line up with other contacts, you just had to be in the general area and when you hit it, it would send power to a solenoid which would drop the target down but its shining up through a mirror so it looks like it’s, you know, this way. Looks like it’s actually straight up and down, but actually it was really lying down. And it, because of the illusion of the target being here, and the mirror being over here, it looked like -

Mrs. Wilson [MW]: Hey dear?

LW: Yeah?

MW: The pizza’s here

LW: Alright. It looks like it's in an area here, but it looks like its 5 foot long, but it was a great effect and it was fun, but as far as skill in that, that one is the only gun game, that sharpshooter. There was three of them in the day that actually you would have to shoot a projectile, and there's no, you know, if you miss, you miss. Hit or miss, so.

[00:40:46]

DG: So around what time did you exactly start the with the pinball repair business?

LW: 17 years ago, when I fixed my first machine.

DG: And approximately per machine how much time do you spend like, repairing it?

DG: They all vary, but generally at least 40, 40 hours easy usually about 80 or more. One time I was working on this one guy's machine; that guy charged money. He had a gearbox that was jammed, I had to take all the cams off. You got to keep these all in the same order 'cause if you flipped them or dropped them, it's the brain of the outfit. You gotta put all the cams, mark them, put them over here, then you gotta take the gearbox, gotta drill it out, take it apart, then you gotta free it up, and then the gears are shot and it's not like you can go to the store and buy gears for these things you know, like where do you get parts from for a 50 year old game. No, you need to get another game and gut it, or you fix it. So then I finagled some gears and bent them and filed them and got them to work. So that alone took me probably 10 hours, 10 or more just for a stinkin' gearbox. Where most people are like gearbox is fun, you know, so it all varies. The longest thing I ever worked was my Popread popcorn machine. Worked on for months, actually that stoner coffee machine, I took that apart 6 years ago and I haven't put it together before, but I still remember how it goes and I got like a lot of pictures to look at. So if in a hobby like this it varies, it depends on what you said earlier, how much passion you have for it; I don't have much passion for that anymore, I'm like tired of it. So I just do it.

LW: So you just fix it to get it out of the way

DG: Yeah. It's aimed at the door and I'm just gonna finish it up and out it goes.

[Laughs]

DG: But yeah, no, it takes at least a good 40 hours and you need to take these things apart. I really wish I could take one apart and show you the back, but if you'd like I could send you a picture of one I took apart, and I could show you all the parts, I have a little pan of parts of just score reels; you know what a bread pan is? You used to put bread in them years ago? So a pan like this about that high, like that? Well the score reels will fit in there, not the real self all the parts, big mound of parts there's a lot of parts you know, so it varies. K do you guys want to eat now or do you guys want to.

LW: Yeah we could eat now, we can definitely pause it and get something.

[Pause]

DG: Alright, so Mr. Wilson, we're talking about pinball machines and how you repair them, but how do you actually find these machines?

LW: Word of mouth is the best way. It's usually the cheapest way 'cause it's someone who wants to get rid of it. Then you have an opportunity to give or fix it. If it's too bad, you can gut it. Nowadays Craigslist is a really good site. EBay or Greedbay, it's getting worse, but eBay was a good site but it's not too good now. Then the last one is, there's a show I like to go to it's called the Chicago's Antique Slot Machines and Jukebox in Feezet Run in St. Charles, wherever fez and run is. Convention center, there we go. Anyways, it's twice a year, and on Friday, it's Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, you know I'm going off the track a little bit but it used to be on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, you would go into these places before eBay. And they would have all kinds of stuff you know, it was like a kid in a candy store, like oh my god look at all this stuff you know. And it was cheap. You could buy things and fix them up. Now because of eBay, it was the largest show of it's kind in the states, actually in the world. You get people from the Netherlands, England, always there's someone in there. Anyway, before eBay, that's where dealers from all over the place would pack up their goods and come here and sell. After eBay they're like "well why would we like to drive to Chicago when I can have someone buy it and they can send a shipper to me?" So you know, that was a lot better, and of course we went on a tangent, what were we talking about again?

DG: Yeah it was perfect, like how do we find machines.

LW: Oh how to find machines. So anyways, nowadays, if you go to that show now it's like Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, if you go inside it's all big time dealers and everything, it's highly polished and highly expensive. What the public don't realize is that if you go in the back, where everybody parks their cars and trailers, that's where the wheeling and dealing is going on. You could pick up a game for 100 bucks, you could find some guy leaving and he wants to get rid of something so you can buy it for next to nothing. And that's where all the action is for someone like me. I don't even go in the show because there's no point yeah you know. That's the show, that's for people going in you know, rich people basically going in to buy the stuff. Your average joe wants to fix something, get something that's wheel and deal in the back. But that's where I would go. Cause it's huge. Actually it's coming up in November you guys should check it out. I see your excitement already in your faces [laughs in background].

DG: What specific day in November?

LW: It's November, I'm not sure, it's around November 11th or something like that. It's in November and in April. And like I said it's called Chicagoland,

and you can just go to Google and hit Chicagoland Jukebox Show and it'll pop up. It's been going on for like 30 something years.

DG: Definitely good news. So once you get these machines, what's your first process to actually start fixing them?

LW: Well before you even buy the machine first you gotta analyze it. You're not just gonna go "oh I'll buy this" unless it's something really rare, or something you want, or something you need a part off of. First thing you do, is I look at the back glass. Is the back glass cracked? Is the back glass broken? Well if it is, you're not gonna find another one unless you buy another machine. You can't just buy these at the store. Next thing you do you open it up and you look for mouse and rat damage, cockroaches, stuff like that, 'cause some of these things laying around in people's basements or wherever, and critters like getting in there and eating the wires. So then you look at your stuffing units and you look for any broken wires. So if you look at all this stuff and it's like a mess inside, you don't want it 'cause it's just about ear impossible to fix it unless you're really passionate about that machine. Going off a tangent again here.

DG: No it's fine. So checking the wires,

LW: Yeah for buying the machine. So if you're gonna buy the machine you need to check it out first. So you just basically check for make sure nothing missing, nothing broke, and that's it. And that's your first process. Then after you get the machine, what you have to do is go through it, and I mean you don't just go see if the fuse is blown, or get a can of WD-40 and start spraying the crap out of it 'cause it makes it worse. What you gotta do is take the piece apart; anything that's mechanical and will move has to be taken apart because you have old grease on it, and the grease is well known to turn into a solid. It solidifies and becomes glue. So your moving parts don't move or they don't move well. So you literally have to take it apart; I take it apart, then I use acetone and q-tips and I clean it that way. Then when I'm done, I use a dry lube like Teflon, PTFV, Teflon lube. Superlube is a product that I use. Then you spray the parts and you put them back together. And then once you're done with all the parts, this is like could take a good week, once you done with all that, then you fire it up. Well first you check for shorts in the motor, shorts in the coil, you just look for shorts to ground. Then you fire it up to see everything's good. And it's still not working. Now you have to go troubleshoot it. You already know that the problem isn't because of the cleaning, 'cause most people would say "yeah I got this machine but it stops scoring, could you fix it? It should only take a minute right?" And I'm like no you gotta take it all apart you know, they just don't understand the mechanics of it. So after everything's done and like you're going through the schematics, you gotta figure out, 'cause sometimes you have a switch. You might have a bent loop too much where it's too close and too fast, or opening too late, and you gotta understand these things when they open and close, there's also contact fingers that are motorized and go around and they

hit these rivets. Each one of these rivets have a wire, so it's timed, and these things have to close on the exact time that it's supposed to in these positions. And if it doesn't do that, you're in trouble. Now you gotta figure it out. So there's a big process of getting one of these things to work, if you get it fine-tuned and it's working good. Some of them you never have to work on it and that baseball machine I got that baseball machine when Todd was probably around 5. I never had to touch that one. It works great. But yeah, that's what you gotta do.

[00:50:33]

DG: And what do you do if the grease solidified already?

LW: No, because the I already took it apart and used Teflon on it. Teflon does not solidify too much. I do find that on the bowling machines they do start solidifying, so I do periodically take the score reels apart again or something like that. But that's only because I put too much grease on when I first did it. When I was first starting out, I figured that a little grease is good, a lot got to be better, but it's actually worse. But the Teflon does not solidify like the old grease. The old grease, honest to god, you grab the part you can't even turn it with your hand, it's like glue. So sometimes what I do is I take a torch, and I hit it with a torch, but you gotta watch out 'cause all the wires back then were cloth, and the whole thing will flare up. Yeah so you hit it with a torch, a blowtorch, and then you get it to move, and then you have to soak it in the acetone after it cools, 'cause that's highly flammable too [laughs]. But yeah, it's a big process.

DG: So in this process, have you ever had a machine that's like came into a problem that you just couldn't repair?

LW: Yeah, actually I bought a pinball machine. The pinball machine, they actually came in two versions, They would come in that's a four player version, and that one was called Jukebox Chicago Coin, they made a single player one, it was either single or two player, it's called sound stage. Same exact play field, same exact part, just different black glass and different amount of players. I bought it cheap and I was gonna use it for parts, 'cause I needed the photo sensor, there's a photo eye in there, when something spins around, a light bulbs under there and that's how you get your points. Well the photo eye went bad, it was 25 years old. So I bought this other machine and I was just gonna gut it, take that out and I was like I hate doing this, let's see if I could get it to work. I went through everything in that thing, took apart all that. There's something in there that my mind just couldn't figure out. It was the only one that got me. Yup the only one.

DG: It's always the one.

LW: It's always the one. So I had the pleasure of destroying it, [laughter in background] I gutted it and I took all the parts out and I know the coils are good 'cause anything electronic I just threw out 'cause I figured that's where the problem was, 'cause it was the first year that they

used electronics. It's like half electromechanical, and half electronic. '76 was a turning point for jukebox - for pinball machines, going from electromechanical, which just means electrical would be the solenoids and relays pullin' in, and the mechanical to actual boards. 'Cause like I said those stepper units I was talking about for the timing that was your first form of electronics. But yeah, so anyways I sold the back glass and I actually got like \$200 bucks for it and I probably paid \$100 bucks for it, I made \$100 bucks on it and I had the pleasure of destroying it.

DG: [laughs] That's what she gets for not being repairable-

LW: That's right, I'll show you!

DG: [laughs] So like, what are the basic parts of the pinball machine? You know like you mentioned the back glass -

LW: Yeah, well you know it depends, like I got a 1930's pinball machine and the only thing that's common from the very beginning till now is you have a play field, you have a plunger to shoot the ball up, and you have pins. The older ones were all pins 'cause pinball came from basically you had a board with pins, nails, and you had a ball. And that was pinball, okay? And I think it came from the French game of *Bagatelle* or *Bagutelle* I don't know how it's pronounced. I'm not French. But yeah, if you look at my '30 machine, it's all nails. If you look at that one [points to nails near hole at bottom of playfield], there's just a couple still left just the ball don't sneak through or something. But that's the only thing on every machine. And legs. You know body legs, 'cause the '30 ones don't have back glass, so they had back boxes. They had no electricity, and what they did have was batteries to ring a bell or like that. So they would use dry cell batteries. But nowadays the common theme on every pinball machine would be of course flippers, every game you see has flippers all up- at least on the bottom. You might have them on top or whatever, but there's always a pair on the bottom. Course you had your flipper buttons and you still got the same things I mentioned, but you would have bumpers, that would pop the ball back and forth, all of them are gonna have some sort of like rubber band and switch that will kick the ball around. So you got movement. And generally, most of them will have some sort of drop hole or target, somewhere where you would drop the ball for points or lose a ball you know.

DG: mmhmm [affirmative]

LW: Basically, like I said there are like 3 things that I can think of and the glass. There's another one [chuckles]. They have the glass so you can't cheat. Yeah 'cause they even had tilts then. Tilts came a little later so the first pinballs. And the first tilts that they had was basically a round cup with a golf tee in the middle. And when you reset it, the golf tee would fall down and the cup was like domed at the bottom, so the ball would naturally go to the center, and when you- would be pushed the plunger - the coin back in, they didn't have the drop coins like we had now, they had that slide lever coin. So you push it in, that piece would drop down, the ball would reset in the middle. When you pull it out you

would get a stem in the middle, come up, so the ball would sit on there, and it was your first tilt. It didn't end your game, it was just like if you hit it, it would fall off the little pedestal, and you were supposed to say "Op Gop the game's over, I guess I'm not going to play anymore." but you know that's stupid, of course you're gonna play. And then eventually they made an electric one fail your game and then you would lose the ball or something like that. But yeah so, that's all I could think on of those. And of course now there's lights, lights, and more lights. [laughs].

DG: So like do you think the complexity between the high end and low end pinball machines would be a lot different like, electronic components like lights and all that?

LW: Yes. The higher end games, like - nowadays they would have movies basically. They'll cutaway to a clip or they'll have animated - trying to think what they would call those - basically an animated screen where you see something going by and spell something or you like - you know - kinda like a marquee like-

DG: Like a chaser?

LW: Yeah, kinda like a scene in the old baseballs games, things like the vroom, and say like nuts or something like that, they would have something like that. That matrix. So they spell things and that. And like I said, I don't like the newer games, 'cause they're too, too busy. I like, just the laid back games. But it's too much now. But yeah the complexity, the change basically is, is your boards, your things, electronics of course, and you got a lot more sound, a lot more visual, and a lot more action. A lot of things going on. [Ringtone goes off (Victory Fanfare)]. Did I get it right? [everyone laughs]. It's like the phone confirms it.

DG: You happen to have any tricks for starting? or -

LW: Just like I told ya, the very first thing you have to do, is take it all apart, clean it, lube it, put it back together, then figure it out. Yeah, and then the only tool that I would suggest buying - there's a place called pinball warehouse in New York, and they sell all kinds of stuff: pneumatics, tools, this and that. There's just - it looks like an L, and it's just a - it's just a context of which tools you use to bend the switches. Lot of times they get out of alignment so normally close it would go like this to close, but it would still open, so it's not gonna work. So you take the switch, you bend this part up, so now when it closes it makes, so it's just a way to get in there and you got a long stem to stick through things and twist it, and then you got the short one for leverage. It's a nice- it's a good tool.

DG: And what is the, what is the part that you usually like more stocked, what's the hardest part of repairing? Where it's like -

LW: Score reels for me, 'cause it's the biggest pain because there's so many of the damn things on the old games you know, like that bowling one over there, see score reels frame, you got how many bowlers, you got 4,

8, 12, 24, 25, 26 of those, with probably about, like around 15-25 parts in each one. They have to come apart and be cleaned tediously with a, with a you know, q-tip. And then greased and then put back together, yeah that's a date with work right there, you know. And when you're about halfway done you're like I'm done man, I'm outta here. It's a pain, but if you don't do it, it's not gonna work. And the sad thing is that I got a problem with that one particular game that I have to get back there again and that's gonna be interesting. [laughs]

[1:00:19]

DG: And then- So like once you fixed it, what do you do with them? Do you just keep them here?

LW: I just buy games that I want 'cause I don't do it for a living, I don't do it to make any money out of it, so anything I want, I buy it, I fix it, I use it, I enjoy it, when I don't like it no more out the door it goes, and something else will take its place.

DG: So when you mean out the door you mean the trashcan or?

LW: No no, I sell it. Yeah, I'll sell it. And I haven't lost money on any of them yet. But, again, your labor ends up being about a dollar an hour if you figure it out, but like actually that pinball machine I paid \$100 for, and that thing was in mint shape you know, that thing was from '76 in April, with a button you push that red button on the side, that should be just top, totally silver now from people hitting it. There wasn't a lot of plays on that game. And that baseball one cost me \$250 but I could sell it easily for 2 grand.

DG: [whispers] Wow. [laughs].

LW: That's a good profit you know. Cause like -

DG: You didn't work on that one right?

LW: I, I didn't do much to it. But no, it was actually, it was a little stiff, I just played it, and that was it. I didn't oil the motors, there's a lot of motors in that one, the cool thing is that it's mechanical men in the back, it has a mechanical back box, so when you hit a single, a mini man jumps up and runs to first. And when you hit a triple, he goes to third and the guy goes to home and then just, ducks out. He just goes back underneath. And so that's a cool game, that's a cool game. You can play 2 player where one guy pitches one guy bats you know, and the neat thing is they have like a magnet and when you throw a metal ball against something that's magnetized like that and if it's tangent to the circle of the magnet, then it curves. So it has a curve ball. So you watch the ball and all of a sudden it's like "verp" [Indicates curve motion]. It's like "whoa man, how the hell he do that?" You know? In the 1960's. But it doesn't register strikes or balls, so that's the only bad thing. So you could sit there if you really wanted to and have the guy pitch to you like 50 times till he's tired. [everyone laughs] Just tell me you lost and I'll hit

the ball, you know. But it's a fun game. It's a fun game, it's one of the most popular ones down here.

DG: What is the oldest machine you got?

LW: The oldest machine I got is on the floor it's a 1934- a 1936 valley called *Streamline*. It's a pinball machine that has a rare old theme, train theme. At the time they had trains they called streamlines, where, instead of looking like the old locomotives, you know like in the cowboy movies, they actually came down and had - the art deco era. So it's - it looks like little trains down there the little metal bars. When you get down and actually look at it you're like "oh, it's little trains". So it's train theme machine. And all this was when I had 33, 34, another valley, and that's the oldest one I got.

DG: So have you gotten any machine that just reached the end of their life? Like they just flat -

LW: Nah. No because the nice thing is with these old machines is they never die, they just get out of alignment or they get gunked up, but -

DG: So they're always fixable.

LW: Yeah they're fixable 'cause man they made stuff really good in the 40's, 30's, 50's, 60's. If I bought a machine now, give it 30 years I guarantee you won't be able to fix it, you know. But these things are - for example, let me give you a quick example, my *Belly High Hand*, that's a poker machine, the payout - the nickels back then had a different material. So I tried to get old nickels, but the only thing is I am not gonna buy really nice nickels, so I buy nickels that are kinda flat, they're not really worth anything but it's the same material. But when it's in the coin tube, when a payout comes, you got this motor just basically like a power, driving it BAM, pushing these coins out okay? Well because they're thin, it jammed. And as I said, at a party, at Christmas I think it was and, all of a sudden, me and Kyle, my one son who helps me work on the thing is like, "the hell's that smell? Smell like something burning you know?" And I'm like walking around and I thought it was this one machine and I like, "nah it's not over here". So we're walking somewhere else and like oh crap it's this thing. So I pull it out and reach in the back and that motor was almost red hot, I mean it burnt my hand when I was touching it, 'cause it was just - it was energized for like hour and a half, two hours. And it's supposed to be a momentary motor where it goes [four rapid booms] like that, this thing would go [long URRRRR], draw in high amps all this time. So I'm like wow this thing's toast man, I unplugged it and put a fan back there, I tried it the next day, it worked great. The windings are fine, I ohm-ed it, the windings are fine, like these things are indestructible so, the only way you got a machine that isn't gonna work is when you get someone who doesn't know how to fix it. Or -

DG: Like if you break it basically.

LW: Yeah, or, or basically a piano fell on it you know [DG laughs]. Then you know you're in trouble. But they're pretty much indestructible.

DG: So is there a particular piece of the machine that you just love to fix like "Oh I just -

LW: No they're all the same I just love to get them finished and I like- I like when they are all done. But I do like- I do like polished machines, like- like the playfields and then when the lights are on, you know, you see the reflection off all the stuff, that's pretty cool, you know. I like to make them look as nice as they can.

DG: So have you ever like tried to implement new things into old machines?

LW: I had a candy machine once that you couldn't see the product, you know, it was a little darker. So I put a light in there and that's about all I would do. It's not like I'm an engineer where I can sit there and say "well I bet this would be awesome if I could make this thing do this, this, or this". But no, I- I really haven't tried to put anything new and well, I take it back. There is something I have to do. I haven't done it yet because I don't know how but I found it on the internet and I'm gonna keep bugging someone until they explain it to me. The Genco machines, Genco is a company in Illinois, that went all over the corners in skeeball and, that is a DC voltage machine whereas everything is AC. So it has a little more kick in the coils for everything. But back in the day they used a Selenium rectifier, which is a giant chunk of Selenium which is toxic if it burns, and it creates a poisonous gas. So it would be advisable to get rid of that piece and just put in your regular rectifier of the day and a resistor. But I just haven't done it and well when I see the thing smoking I'm like go outside, like plug it in outside for a while [everyone snickers], but that I have to do and the only example I can think of is to go to a new piece from an old piece. Another good one, which I do do, is, they used to have light bulbs, I forgot exactly what- it was a '44 or a '47. One's like a half amp lower or a whole amp lower, you go with the lower bulbs by the back glass because heat is a destroyer of your paint, and if you- normally your back glass is made of glass, and because it's glass, you have different changes in temperature from the bulb, the glass basically moves, you know. And smoke screening on there moves at a different rate, so it peels. So that's what causes the peeling. Now United, I think it was their trying to be cheaper, it wasn't like they're being smarter, they used plexi glass. And because the plastic had the same characteristics as that dye or whatever they used,-

DG: It doesn't-

LW: It doesn't move at all. I never had one peel on me. But every glass peels. So a tip- about the tip before, when the glass is peeling a lot, the best thing to do is to go to Michael's or whatever store with the product called Triple Thick, it's a glaze, it's a spray can, and Walmart actually has it. And you put your back glass down, you cover up what you don't want, like where your numbers are, you don't want film on that. Cover that with a piece of cardboard, and I put a little dotted glue, you know the stick glue, cover that up and then you spray it, real far away. Cause if you go close, you gonna [pew] and you blew the whole pitch away, and it's really bad you know. So you go far away, you give it coating. It

rains on it, let it dry, put another coating on, and then the back glass is good forever. So that's a good tip.

DG: Alright. So have you ever gotten like outside help to fix specific parts? Like what part could you not figure out by yourself and you like went around to check if -

LW: Well I'm going to get outside help on the selenium rectifier, because I don't know electronics at all. So I- there's a great site, I sent you a couple sites in Marvin's site, and the guys are awesome. They got a glaze and Michigan and yeah, and Marvin was - it's a different website but if you typed in Marvin you're gonna find- But anyways this guy, he has an incredible ability to fix a pinball machine on a webpage. And in it, he shows how to do a Selenium rectifier and if I had a problem I could just write to the guy 'cause he's really, really cool, he'll write you back. Yeah I'll just take a picture, with that one, okay, thanks. [DG snickers] And that's all he needs to know.

[1:10:39]

DG: And how much do you usually spend on repair efficiently getting parts and you know.

LW: It varies, and it varies on things like if I bought a bowling machine and gonna buy it new pins because all the old pins are broken or whatever, I think they're like- you know like say \$5 bucks a pin. So that's \$50 bucks right there just on the pins. And that's not even part of the machine, that's more of a decorative thing. It does move, but it doesn't really do anything functional. It's just so you get the illusion of the pins are going up. And basically, pinball machines, you gotta buy new rubbers. They got little rubber bumpers around everything, they rot out and they dry rotting and they lose elasticity, so it doesn't bounce good. I like to seal the glasses if they're bad. You gotta buy wax. You gotta buy chemicals when needed, you gotta buy lubricant. You know flashlight, scouring pads, you can't use steel wool for arguable reasons of it will short out everything. So I get Scotched Right, it's a good product to use. Some people like to redo the cabinets, I like it when they look like they're beat up a little bit, I rather have it look like a game from 40 years ago instead of one I just store bought. But some people paint them, so you gotta get stencils made, you know - there's a lot that can go into one of these.

DG: So how much is the most you've ever -

LW: The most I've ever spent I don't- I don't- I- let's see. Okay let's see that coffee machine, vending machines are more costly than the games. The vending machine I had to get painted. I got paint from this one guy, costs a couple hundred bucks, he did a bad job so I had to give to another guy. Before I got him I said well it would be nice if I got this all sand blasted and paid a sand blaster. Then I had to get it sealed right away or otherwise it would rust, so I had to run over to an auto shop and had it climated, so that cost me money. Then I had them paint it so

it was more money. And then after that, I got the chrome and I just talked to the guy to do the chrome and I asked how much for the chrome he's like \$600 bucks. And I paid \$900 for the machine so by the time this thing's done, it's gonna cost me \$2500 + a boiler- to explain that earlier the boiler is old and a bit nasty inside. Had to get a new boiler you know, they don't make them but I had to rip it from this instantaneous water heater. It's gotta be up to 180 degrees though, so that's gonna cost me \$150 bucks. And then you gotta buy your product and everything else, you know, if you wanna remodel anything. And then you gotta buy cups. And so by the time you're done, say you spent 3 grand on this thing. If I was going to sell it I'd be lucky to get 2 you know. So- So it depends on what you wanted to put in to it. Like right now I'm not going to do the chrome till I get it to work. If I get it to work, then I might think about it, you know [DG chuckles]. But it's like a lot of these things you need to do little chunks at a time because it just gets so costly.

DG: So it seems this coffee machine has given you a lot of trouble.

LW: Yeah, that's one of the ones that I wish I could have taken a hammer to but I got too much invested to it now so [DG chuckles], I'm trying to get the investment to work inside like maybe one day-like I said it will go out the door.

DG: So you mentioned that you repaired once a machine before for a friend of yours. Or a guy you said you wanted to do.

LW: Yeah.

DG: Do you do that often? Or was it just that one -

LW: Nah. I- I did it 'cause my uncle had a *Shuffle Alley*, I think the *Shuffle Alleys* were very popular in the day, they were at every single bar so anybody growing up in that era seen one. So when they come over "Oh, a *Shuffle Alley*" you can tell how old someone is by basically what game they go to, you know. And the people my age or a little older they jump on that *Shuffle Alley*. So anyways my uncle has one and I told him you know, he gots like one of those "Hey I'll give you a \$100 bucks" and I said I'll just do it for nothing, don't worry about it. He's like "It's gonna take a few hours?" and I said a few hours to a day. So I told him - I said you know what, why don't you do it with me? He said alright, so I said I'll do it for nothing if you'll do it with me. And he said alright. I wasn't gonna charge him anyways but if he's gonna help. So anyways we're working on this thing, and we worked on it after work and we go to his house and work on it for about 4-5 hours a day and we did it for like a week. And when we're done he said "Oh my god I never realized how much time and effort goes into doing one of these machines, and like all the ones in your basement I don't know how you go those things going". It's a lot of work you know, it really is. But I did it for him, and I- I've fixed two games I sold and I did it for that one guy, the one that I talked for \$1500, but generally I don't like doing it because it's just too time consuming and I don't enjoy that part of it, I enjoy fixing it for myself

and getting my game to work. You know, I don't wanna be out there and- just 'cause I like to work. That's not it, I like to get my things to work for me, but I do offer assistance where somewhere will write me, 'cause I got some stuff on YouTube, so people write in and say "Hey I got this, what's it worth?" And that's all they ever care about and I'm like I don't know. It's worth whatever someone's gonna pay you. That's the best answer I can give you. And he's like, "Well I got this problem ", and I said well you know you gotta take it all apart. "Can you do that?" No. I said but, I could show you pictures of how I did them before, and you can do it. If you get in a jam, send me a picture I'll tell you what you're doing wrong. And no one ever took me up on it. [DG snickers] They want you to do it for them.

DG: No one wants to work for it.

LW: Oh I got you, but you gotta do it. "Nah it's okay". Yeah.

DG: So have you ever been injured while working one of the machines?

LW: I got zapped before, 'cause-

DG: 'Cause they got really high voltage don't they?

LW: Some have high voltage, like I said the Genco has DC and the DC will kill you. AC would tingle. But that whole position I have, I would do is some reading up on that 'cause I have a TV tube in there and I always knew TV tubes were high voltage, but I didn't know like thousands of volts. So if I plugged this sucker in, and you go back and you put your hand on that copper tube and you hit that one wire where all the capacitors and all that are, you'll be on the floor. You'd be dead or you'll be like why did I do that, you know. So that's very dangerous. I never got- I never got anything like that- I never really hurt myself, I might have you know, banged my hand or something. But you know- no I never really hurt myself.

DG: Not really injured just an inconvenience at that time.

LW: Yeah like I got zinged one time, the most I tried to do so I was like that's stupid, and turned the power off you know. But nothing nothing - nothing like one of them fall off and crushed my ribs or something like that.

DG: Do you know any other people that repair pinball machines? Like a community you're involved in?

LW: There - There is- like I said if you go to the hobby of it, the websites you go to and you start meeting people, I don't really belong to any websites except for one, which is sodamachines.com, is a website, and it's basically people collecting soda machines. But in there, there's a lot of people collecting other things. And that's how I found some of my machines was through there, you know guys like "Hey, I know you're looking for this" and I'm like oh yeah great, and the other guys like "Here I found this, you know what this is?" and I say I'm looking for that, if you

don't want it I'll take it. He says "Yeah." So he goes through an auction for me and everything and he actually drove it in all the way from Cincinnati, so it's like a good little network of- you get some really good friends. And then there's a lot of people trying to use this source as to trying to get information on selling stuff you know. Like "What's that for?", "how much is this?", they're just trying to fish out some information. But I'm sure there is a lot of communities out there, you could just go to Google anywhere, it's just there's a lot of places I would like to talk to these people, but since I'm so computer illiterate, I can't even know how to get on some of these sites, it's like oh I gotta join then crap, alright where do I gotta go? Okay no password on, oh what's this, you know. So there's a lot of sites out there, I just don't really talk to a lot of people out there on it. But I'm sure you could find some if you really wanted to.

DG: And have you ever really given any thought to or tried to make your own machine out of other parts of the machine?

LW: No but I did- I did- I did make my electricity, my lights, games came on in the basement coin operated. So I took parts from a light box they were tossing at this one place, I took that and I took contactors that I had, and I basically made a little frankenstein box and I took a pinball part, I mean, I didn't know what it is I was just looking for a relay that would- would- when energized, it would close the switch. Usually they're like close open, or open close you know. This will actually hold it until you give it another command or energize the coil one more time, then it will release it. And that's the thing I was looking for and then I bought a box, it sits on that pole behind there. You might not be able to see that red box. That actually is a box that when, just say they had a coke machine, and it was 5 cents, and the economy, you know was, was- prices were going up and wow we should make that a 6 cent machine. But if I do that, I have to change that whole handle the part, the coin mech, I gotta get a different rejecter, I got all these internal parts I gotta change, so like why don't we just put this box outside, you put a penny in it, and then you put your nickel in, so you still get the six cents, and this box would close a relay and say okay you know, take the nickel or whatever. So anyways, I took one of those boxes, I gutted it, and I just kept the coin switch. So now, when you put a penny in that box, it's gonna make a switch, which is gonna go to another box I have hidden, and it's gonna make that stepping relay, which is gonna close that switch, which is gonna let the - I got a transform in there feeding to all of this. Got 24 V going through these lines. And that's gonna close the switch which is gonna send that 24 volts into the coil of my contactor and I got a 3 pole contactor so when that closes, I got this half of the room on one circuit, the beers line on the other circuit, and the other half on another circuit. I have three breakers that I utilized, gotta rewire everything, and I made it so, 'cause I got games on this side originally, I didn't just made it a seating area. Originally used to have games here, games there, and the beer lights. So when you put

the penny in, everything comes on. So that I did make from various parts of different things just because I thought it was kinda cool.

[1:21:34]

DG: It is. [Everyone laughs]

LW: Yeah, and my son if you see him, just tell him it was a cool idea huh. He'll show you how it works 'cause he just said "Dad, that's the lamest thing I've ever seen you do" [DG snickers] and I'm like c'mon man, this is cool! It's a coin-op room, everything is coin-operated, you put a fricken penny in it and you get electricity. That is cool. And he's like "No dad that's lame.", so. And my other son and my wife thinks the same, but everyone else thinks man it's cool. So, I just feel good when you guys tell me that, yes I am fishing for that [Everyone laughs]. But yeah that's the only thing I actually ever did anything with-

DG: Frankenstein.

LW: Yeah, frankenstein-ed it, exactly. Feeling McGuyver.

DG: So besides the coffee machine, has there been any other machine that the effort and time put in was not worth?

LW: Yeah the coke machine out in the garage, and I took the wires off that 3 years ago. And they still are off it and I tagged it just hoping I would remember. But I actually found an actual manual that has the schematics in there so I could just trace it back it just be time consuming because I ain't gonna remember what I did 3 years ago, let alone 5 years on that thing. [Everyone snickers] Yeah but generally no. I do have other machines, I have just bought one, I got one that might be a machine that will be one of those fall into the category of cannot be fixed. But it was just, it was just so cool I had to get it, and you know my wife is always like "you're not gonna get anymore machines are ya?" No, I got no room, where am I gonna put it. Then she say "okay you promise right?" and I'm like yeah yeah I promise. Then it's like guess what I bought. [DG snickers] So anyways, it was actually last week I bought this. There was a, it was a 1938 pinball machine okay, from Genco, so probably got a Selenium rectifier too in there, but what it is instead of back in the 30's they didn't have two player games you know, 'cause they had no score reels either. A ball would fall in a hole and then like 100 points, you had to add all that up. You had to actually work to play. But this one is actually a duel pinball machine so it's two pinball machines same machine but two different playfields. It's like these guys and gals from the 30's all decked out with their hat and suits on, and they're standing by basically a horse race, a place where you go to see a horse race, [Background says track] a track thank you. Standing by the front of like a track, and this playfield has a guy and girl on it, this one has another one, so it's the same scene, but it's on two playfields. So it's like one giant scene of this track. And then it had buffers on there, so that's your electrical action of it. And then the background is this one giant piece that's not separated by the two

machines now, it's just one giant piece and there's two horses on it. So anytime your ball hits one of those bumpers, the horses move. So it's a horse race game. And they got 5 balls, so the flippers will bring the game back up, but the ball falls down by gravity, hits the bumpers and your horse moves, and whoever gets to the finish line wins or halfway if you run out of balls or something. But that's like the last thing I bought and it's really cool, but I looked in there it's just broken wires, and there's a lot of things wrong and they don't have the schematics for those, so, as like, it was a hit or miss thing and I decide I'm taking the gamble. If I get it working, then it would be worth some serious coin for one. But it would just be so cool because it's very very narrow you know.

DG: I never heard of a machine like that.

LW: Yeah it's neat. It's neat. It's weird looking, you know [Everyone snickers] but it's pretty neat.

DG: So what do you say, or what do you think are the skills that you need to be in to repair the pinball machine?

LW: Electrical, and mechanical, and common sense [snickers].

DG: And a lot of patience?

LW: A lot of patience, a lot of patience. But basically it's all electrical and mechanical. The stuff I work on I don't work on new electronics I don't work on no new games I, they don't, I don't understand that. So I just do the old stuff.

DG: And like, are there any, is there any stuff like specific tools for pinball or like regular tools?

LW: Regular tools, I find 1130 second wrenches are very popular, your screws are always 632's, you know a lot of them. Basically I have crest wrench, regular wrenches, nut drivers, needlenose, you're gonna need needlenose, screwdriver of course, of various kinds, various lengths, you know. That contact bending tool, and scotch bright, scotch bright cleans everything, gets all the gunk off and it polishes without destroying it. I think I got it stashed up here somewhere. [Rummages through things] So anyways, it's a relishment material, but yeah, here we go, scotch bright. And it polishes the contacts without destroying-

DG: Without scratches.

LW: Them 'cause you can really take them apart. So this stuff is great for cleaning, you know. But that's all the tools you really need. Oh and meters, sorry. Electrical meter, that's a big one [Everyone snickers].

DG: So like, do you, are there any specialist tools or do you like?

LW: The only specialist tool I have is that one crooked wrench that, like I said that contact bending tool. They make tools for light bulbs, this and that, but I don't use them, they're just a waste of money but that's the only tool that I actually, that you really do need. That L shaped contact

bending tool. Cause, I can show you a contact bank they're about this long, with all these switches in there. You have to get to the back, see here's a switch [points inside the machine], yeah you can't just push here and fix it, I gotta go all the way back here, and bend this thing down. Well there's like ten of them here, how the hell are you gonna get to that? You can take all these apart, but now they're all out of alignment and you gotta go through each one, or you got this long tool, sticks through there and you could just bend it, you know. It's really something. Whoever came up with this so simple like there you go. Glad you thought of it I know I didn't.

DG: And so with these pinball machines do you often get the manual or like try to figure out how to -

LW: They don't, usually they don't have manuals. The United Games only have schematics there was no manuals. The 60's, a lot of things weren't-in manuals, 30's there were no manuals. Yeah there's 0 manuals in the 30's. You're lucky to even find a schematic. 70's you have a lot of manuals in that. But my games are mainly 60's.

DG: And like how much time did it take you to become this efficient?

LW: I'd say you know, probably like, I dunno, maybe 3, 3 years, 4 years. It depends on how many machines you have. When I first got into it I had a lot of machines so, the more practice basically it's more practice. Couple years you'll be good but yeah, you have to understand the electrical and you have to understand the mechanical. Actually the mechanical wise, I was really stupid on that, and my wife was like a fricken genius, mechanically you know. I'd be looking for some hours I'd be like man I can't understand this crap. "Right here, don't you see it?" No I don't see it you know, I've been looking for an hour! "Like [teet noises] here." Oh thanks. Then she walks away, you know. [Everyone laughs]. But when it came to electrical, that's where I was a smoker on that. You know this, I do [Everyone laughs]. But yes, you have to have that - Now I'm a lot better and can see things a lot better but I just didn't think that way, where she would think that way. You know my dad was the same way he'd look at something [teet noises] like yeah okay, I have to work on that a while [everyone snickers]. Translate [teet noises] [everyone laughs].

DG: So what are some strengths that you have, that you think would help you with repair?

[1:30:01]

LW: Like I said, all mechanical skills, that's really what you need. And being strong is nice because these things can weigh like 3, 4, 5-hundred pounds. So you have to get them to the house or whatever. Or have young children, that always helps [everyone snickers].

DG: So how many machines do you actually have?

LW: I don't know. Feel free to walk around and count them. There's a lot.

DG: Do you know how many though?

LW: I don't know. I think there's like, if you count the small vending machines like that, over 15-20 vending machines. Probably about 15 or so arcade games I guess. I got 2 juke boxes, and a couple more of those. I got like 25 beer signs, they're all mechanical too by the way. Every one of these signs move; I like all the signs to move, so everything has motion. Except for one, and I don't know where; oh that's over at the other side. But everything moves. Yeah, I like motion signs, it's very nice, it's nice. And once I put that penny in, you'll see it all [snickers].

DG: Gonna look forward to it. So which one, which machine right now is the one you're like, super proud of?

LW: I say my Pop Red Popcorn machine is one I'm super proud of as far as vending machine goes, and that's because I got this thing, and when I got it, it was so nasty, the globe, it would have popcorn kernels. You know kinda like a gumball machine globe had gumballs? It had popcorn kernels in there. But mine was half full of maggots, [ugh noises] because it was in a basement in Nebraska and this guy found it and I saw it on eBay and I bought this and it was one of my great investments and you know, maybe I can do something with that. But, it was so nasty, and the grease was solidified, it was the consistency of like, caramel like taffy apple. And, that's like oil like. Like vegetable oil turning the car on. It's full of maggots too, switches were full of maggots. I had to open up for the switches and found a maggot crawled in there, grew up, and couldn't get out, so a contact wouldn't make. It was just really disgusting. And when I got this thing, it was one of these things I wanted forever. And it had a stand; I love stands. Like this jukebox, it has a stand. Normally they don't, this one had a stand. This one had -I like stands okay. So this was a popcorn machine and it had a stand and it was the only time I ever seen one of these with a stand, so I'm like I need to get it. So this was a perfect "I told you so" type moment from my wife, but she was cool about it. When it arrived, it came in, I opened up the garage 'cause you never know if there's any roaches, mice, or anything like that. You don't want to open it up in your house. So I opened up the garage. The guy was nice enough to get rid of all the maggots at least, in the globe. And it was in such bad shape, it was so disgusting that my wife's like "there's no way I'm eating anything out of this, I don't even wanna touch it" you know. But it was so bad it that Kyle, my one son came up he said "Dad, did you find that in the garbage?" I said no, no I bought this, I think I spent like 1500 bills for this thing it was expensive. He's like oh. But that one, I actually tore it apart, basically boiled everything, got it hospital cleaned as I called it, got it to the point where it was clean enough to put together. Then the wiring was missing, so there was nothing on the internet forum. So I found a guy who had a picture of one from a brochure I said can I see the picture? Cause it was like this [lifts up book of pictures] look here, where you would see something, you know like this. it would have a part break down, and try to find a decent one. Like that [points to a inside picture of a machine], and I'd like to see where the wires go out

at least. So the guy sent me a picture reluctantly, you know, like catch one to know one, it's like don't worry, I just wanna fix the machine. They send it to me, I looked at it, and I figured out the wiring off a picture. And then I rewired it, I fired it up, and I got it to work. Once I got it to work, I took it to a painter to have it painted, had stuff chromed, had the decal made, went to the decal shop and had the decal made, and this thing came out fantastic. And it's like the centerpiece, one of the centerpiece where everyone's like "Ooh that's cool" you know and that's what I'm most proud of. I did that from top to bottom. And on the electromechanical side, I say is my ACNE Roulette machine, 'cause it was a prototype, they made a hundred of them, they sent them off to Vegas, they paid out too well, so they took a sledgehammer, and they busted up 50 of them. And the other 50 ended up in a warehouse in Chicago, in a time that slots were illegal. So people were buying them like underground, and basically those people are dying off, they're older, they're people that are older than me. So they're dying off, and sell their collection, and I ended up with one of them. So it's a natural roulette functioning machine that pays out on a 3-1, 2-1, 6-1, 32-1 odds, and it's like 1 of 40. So I can say that's probably the machine as far as [clears throat], so as far as electromechanical ones go.

DG: So like is there a specific genre of machines that you like?

LW: 1960's arcade machines.

DG: And within that is there like, baseball -

LW: Baseball 1960's, Sharpshooters 1960's, if it was made in 50's I guess, 'cause I got 50's and 60's arcade.

DG: And is there a specific theme of that, or just whatever? Or just 1960's-

LW: No like I said earlier, I said the thing I like about my collection is that everyone's looks different. I don't have, like all one pinball, or all pinball, or all jukebox, because a lot of people collect, they got like here's 20 coke machines, like I see one, I see the other 19. I like to have a little variety so everything is different. And pretty soon I might have a Jenga Horse game out here [everyone snickers].

DG: And do you know which machine is the one that like collectors of pinball machines look out for the most?

LW: For my stuff, I have a few that they would like to get, that I'm using my jukeboxes, maybe 52' they didn't made too many of them in awesome shape, that's highly collectible. That popcorn machine now that I put stuff out on the web, and people have been discovering them, they have been coming out of the woodwork now and they are highly collectable now. The baseball machine is highly collectable. Course my roulette machine, isn't as highly collectable as you would think, you know, 1 of 40? And that's because that's a slot machine, and that's a different animal of collectors. Slot machine people, like totally mechanical machines just to pull the arm, like 30's, 40's and they're

about this big, they don't like anything that's a console, like a console, that's a wood cabinet, they don't like console slots. But, so if they ever decide that they do, that would be worth a lot of money.

DG: So like how much do they offer you for these specific machines?

LW: Most of them I sold them for, I bought another one of the popcorn ones and I sold it for \$4500 bucks.

DG: \$4500 bucks?

LW: Yeah. And I bought them for a grand, I paid like \$300 bucks for the paint, so I did good on that one.

DG: So you said your greatest pinball repair was the one with the.

LW: Oh that one was a popcorn machine, as far as repair, that one I, the one that had the most joy - the one that was the most satisfying popcorn it's called Pop Red Popcorn machine. It's cool because, you put a coin in, it got a can system, and it drops kernels down into a pan, and then the pan goes down, into a vat of oil, and the oil starts boiling, and then the kernels pop, so you actually look through a window and see 'em pop. And then it kicks it out at you, and you take put it in a bag or a container and you put salt on it, and it's really good popcorn. It uses coconut oil, that's what they use in the movie theater, so it tastes like movie theater popcorn. That's why they get away with not using butter, 'cause you know, butter would spoil. Coconut doesn't spoil because it hardens, so air can't get in there and spoil it. So it turns into like wax. And at 70, I think 76 degrees it melts, you know.

DG: And so, what issues or problems did you see like the, that the pinball industry is facing today?

LW: Lack of interest from kids your age, I don't think it's gonna survive, 'cause nobody plays it, you know. I'm sure you guys don't go around looking for vending machines to play, you guys got your games that you play in the bedroom, your fun rooms. So everything's conveniently right there. There's no need to go searching for things, so I think lack of interest is it.

[1:40:11]

DG: And so like, there's always this interesting trend in like humanities that things often come back with different styles -

LW: Right, sure.

DG: Do you think that something like that -

LW: I think it already passed.

DG: It already passed?

LW: Cause I don't know when you guys weren't born yet, but they had a big revolution in the 80's, of nostalgia, where they started to bring back all

the 50's music, okay, you know like Magic 104 came around and they're playing all these 50's song and you're hearing them like "Wow that's really good, well what is this crap?" you know, it's good music. They brought back, you know, cars, you know, muscle cars, stuff like that. Then you had games, coke machines, stuff- like I said when I got my first one, people looked at me like I was weird, because they were like "where the hell did you get that? What is it? Why do you have it in your room?" But then it became kinda cool and collectable then people started, it's trendy. So that phase faded away, but there's still people collecting. The only things that came back was muscle cars. You see like the iPad and the other cool Dodge products, you know, that's awesome. I'm glad that they did return that. I just wish that my kid wasn't at IIT so I could afford one [everyone snickers].

DG: So what would be a perfect day for you nowadays?

LW: You know when you three get up and leave, that would be awesome [everyone laughs]. Perfect day as far as what. Anytime I wake up, I'm happy you know. Just like I made another day, it's - honestly you know the perfect thing since we're talking machines, the perfect day would be for me to have a party, either my kid's graduation party or someone's birthday, you know, Christmas or whatever. We got a lot of people together, everyone's playing the games, everybody's enjoying it, and not one fails. Cause you always get "Hey this ain't working!" or "Hey this isn't." like c'mon man, this thing's 60 years old. Course it's gonna fail here and there you know. "Well this one went out!" well unplug it, you know. So the perfect thing would be everything works, and then I wake up, oh it's only a dream [everyone laughs]. Yeah 'cause there's always something failing, like I said, that one cooked [points to a machine], you know. Cause they could'a told me "Hey there's a problem here." like most people would run away. One time a ball was jammed on a bowling machine, it had a turret that actually moves, and it has a catapult system. So you hit the lever and it flings a ball at the pins, but one time the ball got jammed. And they just left it. I'm like [whurrrr sounds] what the hell is that noise? Oh shit! Turn this thing off, and you know, it gets destroyed. I just wish - Another perfect day would be something happens and someone lets me know, instead of spilling a drink and putting a rug over it. "Like he'll never see that" [everyone laughs] you know.

DG: So if you could pass down one piece of information or knowledge about pinboo- pinball repair, what would you say?

LW: It's addictive don't get, you don't get involved in it. You'll be a pinball repair junkie. One thing of knowledge to pass down -

DG: Pinball repair, not even once.

LW: Yeah [everyone laughs] it's just like I said, if you get a game, check it out. Make sure everything's there, nothing's broken, 'cause you're not gonna find parts. And number 2, if you go to fix it, take your time on it,

and do a good job, and you know, you should be fine. You know get the right tools.

DG: Well, Mr. Larry Wilson, thank you so much for the interview.

LW: Oh you're welcome. You're welcome. It's my pleasure. Nice meeting you guys.

DG: It was very enlightening.

LW: Good good, you want to play some games now?

DG: Yeah let's go.

DG: Sure, no problem. Just like I said, make sure you