

Frank “Pancho” Tabberer

Interview by Jean McDowell in Moab April 24, 2003

Q: When you grew up and so forth. Where were you in the beginning?

A: Where did I start? Rossville, Texas. Rossville was my great-grandfather's town. His name was John Ross. And that's where I started was in Rossville. I was the fourth of seven kids. My father was a farmer. And I went to school in Rossville for grade school and Poteet High School, graduated in 1947 at the age of 16. I went to Business College in San Antonio; took a business course in Drawn's business college. I tried to get in the Army. Uncle Sam wouldn't have me because I was 4F. I had a finger missing. My trigger finger was missing.

Q: How did you miss it?

A: I lost that in a farm accident when I was 11 years old.

Q: Machinery?

A: It was a peanut thrasher that I was helping my dad on and got it caught on.

Q: It thought it was a peanut?

A; It sure did saw it anyway. And the old doctor, TP Ware, I remember him, was a family friend as well as a doctor and he said “Twenty years from now, we'll be able to sew that back on and save it, but now we don't know how to do that so they just took it off and sewed it up.

Q: So it saved you from the Army?

A: No it didn't. I went to work in the oil field after I left college. Well, I was going to be a bookkeeper and that didn't work out for me at all. Well, anyway, after I worked in the oil field in a seismograph company, oil exploration company, and went to work in the summer of 1948, and summer of 1949 I went to Canada working for Geophysical Associates. Spent 2 _ years in Canada.

Q: Your wife is Canadian, isn't she.

A: That's where I met my wife. That was a good thing for me to go to Canada. Then I came back out of Canada, my father got sick. I asked for a transfer back to Houston, that was in 1952, December of 1952 and worked there to be close to my father in San Antonio and then a year later, not quite a year later, my wife and I were married in 1953. I went back to Canada and she came back with me. I worked in the oil field until 1955 and early December of 1954, Uncle Sam sent me a message and said "Your friends and neighbors would like your presence.." They drafted me at age 24. So I was okay then. I couldn't join but then they drafted me and I was okay with my no trigger finger.

Q: So what did you do for the Army then?

A: I was a Military Policeman. I took my basic training in Colorado Springs (Camp Carson) and took my MP training in Fort Garden in Augusta, Georgia, for my advance training and that's when I became an MP. And then back to Fort Hood , Texas for two years. I didn't stay in the army, I just did my two years and a month and came back out and went back to my old job. Working in the oil field.

Q: And that was the seismograph. And did that lead you into the blasting business?

A: Came back to Farmington, NM, and then that would have been the first day of January 1957. A year and a half later, in July of 1958, the oil exploration slowed down and a guy offered me a job as an explosive- well, it was supposed to be salesman, but it was a lot of truck driving and hauling explosives and I finally became a salesman for him.

Q: So you were mainly a salesperson as far as an explosives person when you had your business degree?

A: I was trying to sell to the seismograph people. That's why he hired me. It worked out really good. I worked for this company, Bud Walter Incorporated, who had a location here in Moab. I worked for him in 58 and then in 59 he decided to open a location here in Moab to sell explosives to the mines. In the spring of 60, we came to Moab for the first time, to sell explosives to the mines and to the seismic people.

Q: So both the oil and the mining people. And in the 60s had the Charlie Steen...?

A: That's one of the customers that Bud Walter Inc, was an _____ distributor and we sold explosives to Charlie Steen, Bill McCormick, all the individual mines from 60 to 63. In 1963 things started slowing down. They started backing off on some of the mines and Bud Walter wanted me to move back to Farmington. And I didn't want to move back to Farmington, so another company, W H Burt Explosives, the company that we eventually bought, offered me a job. He wanted to send me to Riverton WY to run the location up there and I accepted that job. Went to Riverton for a year and then I went back to Farmington for four years, and then back to Moab in spring of 68, we bought W H Burt Explosives.

Q: So were you here at the time Rio Algom got developed?

A: When we bought Burt then Moab was the center of all Burt operations, so we set up the home office here. And Rio Algom was sinking shaft back at that time. They had their shaft just going in at the time we came back. Atlas started their mines up again. Union Carbide, Cotter, and then all the individuals that were mining at the time.

Q: So you provided for everybody?

A: We got into it, Jean, when we got into the business in 1968, things were really slow. When we moved back into Moab that fall, there was seismic work here, the mines were reopened. We couldn't have got into business at a better time.

Q: Sounds like an exciting time?

A: Oh, it was crazy.

Q: Did you know Charlie Steen?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: How did he impress you?

A: Charlie was a customer; we didn't deal much with Charlie Steen personally. He and Bud Walter, the first guy I worked for, they were good friends. They did a lot of things together and therefore, Elsie and I got to know Charlie through that. Charlie as far as Elsie and I were concerned, he treated us really good because we were here servicing his company and we'd get invited to his house when Bud Walter came to town from Farmington and Elsie and I would get invited. We felt like we were..

Q: H sounded like a flamboyant person.

A: Charlie was very good to his employees. That's the way he came across to me. When we came back in 68, we have been here ever since.

Q: Did you know Dan O'Laurie?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Had he broken up with Steen?

A: Yes, he was on his own. And Allan Darby, I knew Allan. Played golf with Allan Darby and Allan was his sort of executive secretary. That's the way I got to meet Dan O'Laurie. Dan was a fine gentleman.

Q: That's what everybody says "A fine gentleman"

A: Oh yes, very much so.

Q: Just the opposite from Charlie?

A: Easy going guy, Everybody was okay as far as Dan was concerned. Just an all around gentleman.

Q: So how did Elsie fit in to this boomtown business?

A: She was our bookkeeper. She kept books for the Burt Company. Go back to the business college. She and I both had, not a four year, but coming out of business college in one year to be a bookkeeper. And when we bought the company, that's the best thing we had, because we both knew how to keep books and we knew how to take care of a business and what it took.

Q: So essentially you were a businessman. You drove trucks, too.

A: Oh yes, I drove semi-trucks, all the trucks, did everything.

Q: So you were involved in both the oil business and the uranium business?

A: And copper, and potash,

Q: Did you help develop the potash?

A: Not as develop, but later on, as they used explosives to mine with. And before they flooded.

Q: Before the solution mining?

A: There were times when they would have some problems, we were selling Hercules Explosives to TGS. They'd get in a problem underground with blasting or breaking rock or having to start a new drift or something.

Q: So did you get into the engineering and the chemistry as far as the blasting?

A: Later on. The more I learned the more I got into the fact that you would go in and tell them the types of explosives that would do the best job. How to drill the holes, set up a pattern to break the rock the best. So it was sort of a technical service type thing for underground at Potash underground, at uranium mines. I spent a lot of time underground.

Q: so you did spend time underground?

A: Go underground with a customer not every day, but like Atlas Minerals would have trouble in the mine that they weren't breaking the rock or they were having some problems with the holes drilled.

Q: And you could set them right?

A: And help them to set things up.

Q: So did you sell the company?

A: I had a partner when we first started, Bob Arnold, and I bought the company from Burt, we both worked for Burt. And Bob and I ran the company together until he was in the Salt Lake magazine and we had the home office here. Bob had cancer of the lungs in 1987 and he died in 1988. We had a buy-sell agreement at the time, When Bob passed

away, Elsie and I ended up buying his heirs out of the company. So Elsie and I ended up with it.

Q: Do you still have it?

A: No. We sold our company in the 90s. to at the time it was IRECO INC who was a subsidiary of Dyno-Nobel. The Alfred Nobel's old company of Oslo Norway.

Q: With the TNT?

A: And that's who still owns and runs our company.

Q: I used to see a sign out by the end of Angel Rock Road that said "Burt Explosives"

A: That was our location for all. We owned 10 acres of land. We had our shop, storage area. But our dynamite storage area was farther down the valley. At about the county line, and it's still there and it has been since we moved into that location when the city moved out and encroached on our storage area on Angel Rock Road and we had to move and that was in 1974 when we moved out to the county line.

Q: Sort of near the gravel pit?

A: Back this way from the gravel pit on the south side of the valley.

Q: So then you took up golf?

A: I've golfed forever, well, not forever. I started golf when I was about 20 years old, in Canada when I worked up there. So I've been golfing forever, seems like forever.

Q: Did Elsie become a citizen of the US?

A: We didn't really feel like there was any reason for her to become a citizen until they passed a regulation or we found out that there was a law that would not. We set up a family trust for estate purposes. And we found out that she could not be a trustee of that trust unless she was an American citizen. The lawyer said that the best thing to do would be for her to become a citizen. So she took the test and I don't remember what year, but it was in the 90s when she became a American citizen. We had a big celebration in Salt Lake. I still get kind of choked up when I think about her becoming a citizen. It's a great time.

Q: Could she have dual citizenship?

A: No, There's something now. Maybe if you go to Canada and you're an American citizen there maybe something now that would allow that, but that isn't something that she would ever figure she would go back to Canada. And the kids, grandkids, great-grandkids are here in the states. We go to visit (Canada) but not to stay.

Q: Lets look at some of these other questions.

A: Okay, when we first came to Moab in the 60s we rented a little one-bedroom apartment up on about 3rd East and it was a pretty small apartment; it was all that was available There wasn't anything available then because there was -----.

Q: How many kids did you have then?

A: We had two. Our daughter was born in September of 56 and our son in last day of December 57. So those were the two kids we came with. When I first came in Bud Walter was a partner with Bud and Jane Lincoln at the Prospector Motel. And that's where I stayed until we found a place to live. Then I brought the kids and Elsie up from Farmington. We got set up. _____ helped Jane and Bud Lincoln run that Prospector down there. That was kind of an exciting time. You get to meet all these people doming

in. I wouldn't want to be in the motel business. Explosives was a lot more fun, Jean. The town at the time, you know Moab was--, most of the Uranium boom was slowed down some then. There was the reason was the big business we had when we came back here in the late 60s was oil exploration, but the first time around was uranium. Charlie Steen was still going; Atlas was going. There was some seismic going on.

Q: Where was the oil business, down at Aneth?

A: Lisbon Valley, and there were also some wells that they were doing some exploration out on the Big Flat area, up Dead Horse Point area.

Q: Did you do a lot of exploring, whether you found anything?

A: The way that they explored back then was that you drill a hole, put dynamite in it and blast it. Then take the vibrations from the blast and send it to a geophone on the surface and to the recording truck that took all the stuff and the way they did it. It was a busy town off and on, like an accordion, up and down.

Q: Talking with Maxine Newell who was here during the earlier boom time, it sounded like Moab was one big party. Everybody had a good time.

A: Well, there were times at the old Town and Country Club was going on at the time. We had customers there. Go to the Town and Country Club.

Q: Is that where the Elks Club is now?

A: No. That T&C was a restaurant and club and it's on the half block from the museum on the corner where Nifty Fashions is. You go there with a customer and have supper and have a few drinks. They had what they called then a "Bottle Club" and that was the days when I took a drink or two. Go with a customer and have a drink and go into the club where there was a little drinking and dancing. Elsie never did like that part of the

explosives business where we had to go out and entertain the customers. But she was a good sport about it, she never complained. So you'd go there and sometimes you'd be there with a customer until midnight, go home, you know back then you did everything. You'd call on the customers, sold the powder, load it, and deliver it. You'd be out to the magazine to load the truck up.

Q: Sound like not much sleep?

A: Not much. 3 or 4 hours sleep and then get up. There were two of us here at the time, at the location, so we'd load up the powder, two trucks go out wherever he'd meet the crew or if the mine needed powder, you'd load up powder. A lot of the mines took full loads, like straight from the factory where they manufactured the explosive.

Q: I think of powder boxes as about apple box size.

A: 50-pound boxes. And then there was blasting agent in 50 lb bags, a lot of the companies used.

Q: So you did a lot of loading?

A: Loading, loaded the truck, hauled it out, unloaded it in the magazine. Some of the finest people I ever met were the mining people in this country.

Q: Are they still around?

A: Some. A lot of them aren't here anymore; a lot of the old miners are gone. When our kids started school here in Moab, Luanne started first and second grade and Ross was in kindergarten. We left and went to Wyoming for a year and then Farmington for four years and when we came back here in 68, Ross was in 5th grade and Luanne was in 7th grade, in the old middle school. It was the Junior High then because it was 7th, 8th, and 9th grade. The High School was 10-11-12.

When we came back it was like we were coming back home.

Q: Did the kids think so?

A: No. Oh no, no. They had been in Farmington; were involved in the schools there. I can remember Luanne; it was on her birthday, in Sept 68 that we moved back to Moab. She had just turned 12 years in 7th grade. It was a lot harder on her than on Ross you know was a year and a half younger, He was----- and Junior High.

Q: Did you get involved in politics or community service?

A: We were members of the CBC I was involved with the church. Never did get involved in politics. I was involved in that I became part of the Republican Party Convention Group here, and was part of the precinct an officer in the precinct and then became state delegate and went to the... really involved. And then for at least 2 presidential election times I was state delegate too

Q: Not involved in any local things.

A: No, I was too busy. Traveling around the country. When we got back here and after 1974 when pres Nixon took the price freeze off the products we got involved to where we had location in Farmington, in Moab, Nucla, Co, a blasting agent mix plant, and we had a blasting agent mix plant at Magna. We set up a location in Idaho. We were servicing the mines in Idaho, the mines in WY, the mines in Nevada, the oil exploration in WY. We serviced about 10 of the western states CO NM AZ UT NV ID. It was pretty big.

Q: How many employees?

A: We had 30. At our peak, counting Elsie and I. Moab has been really good to us. Both of our kids grew up here, once we moved back here in 68. Then we saw all six of our grand kids grow up right here in Moab.

Q: Your son?

A: He still works for Dyno. He's western regional salesman for Dyno out of Moab.

Q: Lives out where Dabney used to live?

A: Yes, where Walt and Carrie Dabney lived. Ross bought that house out in the valley. Our daughter married David Adkison who's a CPA here.

Q: Haven't gone far from the tree?

A: No stayed pretty darn close. I keep kidding the kids about the fact that when they come back we say "Sorry. We broke your plate when you moved out of the house."

Q: What about you and the agencies? Did you have any dealings with the Park or the BLM?

A: We did blasting for the BLM on some of their trails. We had a license and we were certified to be able to blast and we did some blasting for them on trails, Canyonlands the same way, and the Park Service. We've done some things out at Dead Horse Point when they were putting in the new restrooms out there. We were involved with the contractor out there that was blasting the new restroom facilities. Same way with down at the Canyonlands where they were putting in new housing down there, we were involved in that park. It seemed that everything that went on that required explosives, we were involved with.

Q: So you not only sold them the explosives, you provided someone to show how to use them.

A: Go out and help them to do a good quality, safe job. I was very involved with the potash when they went to the solution mining to blast all the pits and the ponds and the

roads out to there, because Neilson's of Cortez was the contractor and they were one of our really good customers and so we got lucky there, when they gave Neilson's the contract, a ready made customer for us. We would be involved with the FS. There were some big well locations that were put on the La Sal Mountains and we'd have to go with the FS and make sure that when they blasted, they did it to where they didn't end up devastating part of the country. When they were redoing the Loop Road up at Mill Creek on the big cut where they wanted to widen that road. Strong Construction out of Springville came down here and had that contract. The guy that was project manager on the Strong job wanted us to be involved in drilling. They had their own drills but they wanted us to set up the patterns and do the thing. Our son, Ross, had been to blasting school and was just getting involved. I did a bad thing to Ross up there, because I told them that I wanted to have Ross do this for them because he's just come out of blasting school and he knows what's going on here. And, Jean, this was a great big bluff up there. And if you looked at it now, when they shot that off, it was going to fall off into the canyon, into Mill Creek. And I knew it was going to do that. The guy with the FS said there is no way we are going to let any rock fall over the edge – we're going to be in big trouble. I told that contractor that there is no way when it breaks that it's going to fall off the cliff. So Ross went up the day that they loaded it and sure enough when they shot it, it went over that cliff. I shouldn't have done that to him. Set him up. The FS guy told Ross when it went off "I'm dead, they are going to kill me. My boss in SLC is going to kill me" But anyway, it's grown back and you can't see where because the trees have come back. It's come back. But the road's good. We cut the hill off so you didn't have all that undercut. It's a lot safer road.

Q: Any other things.

A: Later on, I became. In the later years, as I began to slow down after I sold the company. I ran it for Dyno for 3 years and then consulted for 3 years.

Q: So you got out gradually.

A: Yes, sort of worked my way out. I was still working. I was asked if I would serve on the hospital board. I served on the hospital board for.....

Q: Is that where Sam Cunningham knew you?

A: Yes, that's true. Well I knew Merv Lawton really well from Rio Algom, and knew Sam through Merv and the hospital board. I served on that board from 96 to 2001 and I've been on the community church board forever. Now I'm on the Museum board and the golf board. I've been on the golf board for about 10 years, 8 or 10, President for about 6.

Q: Retirement doesn't slow you down much?

A: No much.

Q: Played golf?

A: I play golf when I can, Elsie is a fair weather golfer. She likes the weather to be nice.

Q: but you play rain or shine.

A: Yes I do. I play rain or shine.

Q: Bill Meador?

A: Bill and I play. I consider it an honor and a privilege to have been a friend of Bill Meador all these years. When he was still school superintendent, I knew Bill, and we go back. I was always involved with the school in some way, not necessarily as a board member, but when our kids were involved. We tried to be very involved with them.

Q: Sounds that you have been very involved with the community, whether you ran for office or not.

A: We've always. Whenever they were trying to set up a tennis program here and our kids were interested and said that they would really like to have a restringing racket machine. The tennis instructor was also drivers ed.... Talked to him and asked him what it would take to get one of those machines. He said it would just take some money. So anyway we donated enough money so they could buy a restringing machine. Our son played golf on the golf team whenever he was in school and when our grandson came along, I tried to be involved with the team to furnish them...

Q: Do you play tennis?

A: No, Never have, I'm not a tennis player.

Q: So how does Moab seem to you now compared to then?

A: I don't know. I know that when being involved with kids in school and when Moab decided to go to a 4-day school week. I never did like that, through our daughter and through our son-in-law and son.

Q: But that was when the uranium boom was on and there wasn't enough room?

A: No it was afterwards after they moved out when they decided to go to the 4day school week.

Q: And that why the museum has these funny hours of Monday to Thurs and so the kids who don't go to school would go to the museum.

A: That's how it got started. Through a group of people here working through the superintendent and board, they got the school back to a 5day week. That was a good thing when they did that, cause I don't think you can teach those kids those extra long hours in four days as well as you can shorten up the hours and do it in five days. I just think its better.

Q: So you were instrumental in that:

A: I certainly hope so. Certainly talked to people that I knew that were on the school board and people that were involved with the school.

Q: So does it bother you that the characteristic of Moab has changed – newcomers, t-shirt shops?

A: I worked in the oilfields and mines and construction those were the people that I knew and loved. And then whenever it changed to not having that to go to a tourist oriented different type of thing, it gets some getting used to. But the town has to survive and if that's what it takes, I can live with the jeeps coming in and the car shows and the bicycles and whatnot. We still have some things that go on that are some of the old things.

Q: You still have your old friends?

A: Oh yes, the old some of the guys that work out at the golf course are older than I am some of the guys that I know in town that have retired here are people we worked with in the explosives business and you run into a guy that you haven't seen for a while.

Q: Bill McDougald is another golfer?

A: Yes, Bill's a golfer and Bill's an old geologist from way back and Dick Nunn and Bob Norman, the old guys my age and older. I guess Moab has had to change and you have to roll with the punches. I've never been one to gripe about where I live. I've always liked the place that I lived and If I didn't like it, I tried to make it better so it would be likeable.

Q: Usually a mutual admiration society. You like them and they like you?

A: You get along with people and they'll get along with you.

Q: Is there anything we left out?

A: When I first came through Moab, just traveling through, living in Farmington, I thought “My goodness, how in the world would anybody want to live in that hole?” And then, wouldn’t you know, we got to move here. You don’t get to see sunsets or sunrises. They come over the mountain or go behind the rocks

Q: The clouds light up.

A: That’s right. I guess the best thing about living in Moab is the small town where you get to know everybody. The hardest thing when we were in business was transportation: to get products in and out for the business. For ourselves, it wouldn’t be a problem. At one time we had Frontier Airlines fly in here. You could fly right out of Moab and that got away. Now if you want to fly you have to drive somewhere. I guess we’ll get air service back again.

I guess the people that you get to know. Helen Taylor was and is a good friend of ours we’ve known being a member of the CBC and therefore D L Taylor and his family. You get to know the old-time ranchers here. That makes Moab a real enjoyable place.

Q: Did the religion make any difference?

A: Not. Some of the finest people I know don’t belong to the CBC so as far as we’re concerned.

Q: You don’t feel left out of any Mormon?

A: Not in Moab. There may be other towns that it does.

Q: Didn’t influence your business?

A: Never did. Not the fact that we weren’t of the LDS faith or even in SLC all the states that we operated in. We felt like once they got to know us we did a good job and we

were accepted as good business people not a factor as far as religion. I know that Elsie coming from the prairies of Alberta where you can see flat country. It took her some getting used to in this valley. She'd say once in a while, we've just got to get out of here and go somewhere so I can see a long way.

Q: Kansas?

A: Right. We used to travel to Canada one summer for our vacation and to Texas the next summer. Visit my family one summer and visit her family the next. Both of the about the same – flat. After we had been married for 2 years and I was drafted into the army.

Luanne was born when I was in service. When I went into the service we didn't have any kids. I was in Colorado.

Moab has certainly changed.

Q: In what respect?

A: In the business. When we first came, oil was dominant, mining was dominant. There was construction. They were in the process at Potash, the road, the tunnel, all that was done the first few years we were here.

Q: Does your son still have plenty of things to blast?

A: Not in Grand County, but Moab was the location of where they started and he travels to Colorado, Nevada. He's on the road almost every week. The only reason they left the headquarters here is probably because they have an office here, storage magazine here and get out to all these places.

Q: They have a business in Moab that's involved in outer lands, the blasting business.

A: When we were in business here, we would have been better served to have packed up and moved to Nevada where the activity was, but I liked Moab and didn't want to leave so we kept our office here and did whatever it took to do to deliver the stuff. And it worked out good for us.

Q: Satisfied with business, family? What do you worry about?

A: I worry about our grandkids getting a good education. We're hopefully involved with them.

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I worry about water for the golf course, water for the valley, it's a big thing in the desert country where we have enough water to take care of things. We have a river that's close by and all remember Lester Taylor saying, "You know, even an old dumb cow knows to go to the river to go get water. We don't get any of our water out of the river.

Q They're talking about pumping water up to Ken's Lake and exchanging it.

A: I don't think that will ever happen, That's too....

Q: At one time they talked about the golf course fertilizer getting into the culinary water.

A: The way we fertilize the golf course, that will never happen. It's just a fact that they use a method there that the fertilizer is consumed; it gets used by the grass. The quantity that they put on for the grass is never going to go deep enough to get into the culinary water. And they test it on a regular basis.

Q: Does the golf course waste water – having a golf course.

A: Waste water? Yes. We waste water.

Q: Are you concerned about this?

A: Yes. What we try to do is to try not to water during the day because that's when you lose water by evaporation. Pumps start at 7 at night and are off by 6 the next morning so there is never any during the day watering. It's a concern. Water is a concern in the desert valley and you get more people and you need more water.

Q: The local paper has an article about the water and the overlapping agencies. Do you have thoughts on that?

A: I do, but I'm going to try to keep those quiet. Because if you get me started on there, you don't want to tape that. I've noticed in the two articles that Lisa Church has written. Bless her heart, she does a good job. The only people she has quoted in those two articles that she has written has been Barbara Morra.

Q: She objects to the setup now?

A: I wish she would talk to some of the other people on those boards. There are some good sharp people on those boards. Gray Wilson is a water user but he is also a good sharp hand and knows what he's talking about.

Q: A third article today, haven't read it

A: I haven't seen the paper today but that will be the last of three articles. I cut the first article out and saved the second one and I'll save the third and then I'll go through and read all three of them. Then I want to go to Sam Taylor and see if Sam will listen or maybe Sam will write an article about some of these things.

Q: A civic concern?

A: Exactly, because the golf course is a major user of Kens Lake, we own a lot of shares of water from Kens Lake.

Q; You use the irrigation water and not the culinary water?

A: We try to use 100% of the water from Ken's Lake. But the City and the golf course has an agreement that goes back 20, 30 years whereby the golf course had wells on the course and the city took over those wells to pump into the city system and the city said that as long as we lease the golf course from the city and we will give you backup water when you need extra water. So we pump some water and pay the city for it. We have one of the old well out there that they let us pump out of.

Q: Near the George White wells?

A: Yes it's across both Pack Creek and Mill Creek on the far side. And two of the city's big wells are right there by the golf course and we have one of the old wells that the city doesn't use anymore. When we need additional water then we pump out of that well into a pond.

Q: I suppose all of the water supply is dependent upon the population and population increases

?

A: Well, sure. We have an aquifer here that will take care of the water needs of the valley as long as we can keep Ken's Lake full so that the irrigators can use it. Last year we had a real problem because Ken's Lake ran out of water and we had to pump some water into our lakes. We're hurting this year to get it back green again because we lost a lot of grass out there last year. We lease the city from the city and run it for the city. They have a 7-member board that is non-profit – nobody gets paid. They just give of their time and their energy. We have some really good people on the golf board as well as they have really good people on those water boards. Lots of good fine people in this valley that give of

their time and their energy to do that stuff. Same as right here on the Hospital and the museum boards. Takes an awful lot of time.

Q: You say just an hour a month, that isn't much. But if you really get involved, you do more.

A: I seem to always have plenty to do.

Q: Do you have a yard and things like that?

A: A yard and a garden. We would like to – Elsie would like to travel. I'm not much of a traveler myself. She would like to see a lot of things around the country. She says "You want to play the same golf course all the time, you never want to go anywhere".

Q: I haven't seen everything in San Juan County.

A: That's about right too. Never been abroad. Puerto Rico, Hawaii and to Mexico, but I've never been to Europe. Never been to Asia. I don't know that we'll go, but we might. I wouldn't go to Asia right now. Even traveling in Eastern Canada with the World Health Organization recommending no travel to Toronto. We would never travel to Toronto anyway. Elsie's folks come from the western part – Alberta.

Q: Where did you get the name "Pancho?"

A: When I grew up in south Texas, in the Mexican community you might say, a lot of Spanish speaking people, my great-grandmother was full-blood Spanish. She was of Spanish descent and the nearest they could come to Frank for a Mexican name was "Pancho".

Q: Why is that near Frank?

A: Well, Franciso and Pancho are like Juan and John and Pablo and Paul. Pancho is what the Mexican came up with. Frank is Pancho so that's what they tagged me with when I was a kid at home.

Q: Tabberer sounds more German.

A: No it's English. My mother's maiden name was Woods and her grandmother, which would be my great-grandmother, was named Navarro and that's where the Spanish came from and Tabberer, my dad's people came from England. My grandfather and grandmother both came from England on the Tabberer side. Settled in Rossville.

Q: Where is Rossville?

A: It's 30 miles south of San Antonio. And it's just a farm community. Don't even have a post office there anymore. Everything moves into the city. The nearest town is Poteet.

Q: I remember Poteet in the Steve Canyon comic.

A: That's where they got that. That's where the gal in the comic strip got her name from Poteet, Texas.

Q: In Idaho Springs, Colorado, west of Denver, they have a statue of Steve Canyon.

A: I didn't know that.

Q: Just as you go into town

End of tape



TABBERER, Frank (Poncho) & Elsie