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Jan GreenRiver interview for a Wright State University History Course

Fred Coventry
Jan GreenRiver

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Profile

Jan GreenRiver
Fred Coventry
02/16/2011

Prevent Assault and Violence Education (PAVE)
Key Words: assault, violence, sexual assault, bullying, prevention, volunteer

Concerned Citizens in Licking County, History 685, Professor Marjorie McLellan, Winter 2011

Jan GreenRiver was born in Cambridge, Ohio, and moved to the Newark/Heath area as a child, graduating from Heath High School. She then attended Bowling Green State University as a theater major, and worked as the box office manager for the local community theater, The WeatherVane Playhouse. She also worked for a theater in Pennsylvania, and as an intern for the Dayton Ballet, before moving on to work for a large insurance firm in claims and customer service. She currently works at Mental Health America as the Projects Coordinator, and she frequently travels to the various local schools in Licking County to educate children and teens about violence and violence prevention. She is married to the chief of the Kowhanee Comanche tribe in Ohio, and has one son who has started college and is engaged. He also works with PAVE, and has done so since he was a high school freshman.

The interview was conducted at the Ohio State University’s Newark campus, in an empty classroom located in the newly built library. Only she and I were present, and the library was nearly empty. The classroom was well lit, and had excellent acoustics, as well as ample power supply.

Mrs. GreenRiver has been involved in a number of community service related projects. She worked for a time at St. Francis DeSales Catholic School, as the director or their before and after school programs, called the Extended Day Program. After working there, she moved on to Mental Health America as a contract worker who traveled to various schools to teach about violence and violence prevention, particularly as it relates to sexual assault and bullying. In her time there, she advanced to become the Director of Programs for the MHA, and to coordinate the PAVE program, Prevent Assault and Violence Education. This is a more in-depth version of the program in which she was involved as a contract worker for the program, which teaches different aspects of violence to different grade levels, providing an age-appropriate and holistic approach to violence and assault prevention and education.

MHA frequently takes part in national and international conferences regarding violence against children and sexual assault. They have won several awards and interacted with programs and students from around the nation and the world.
Mrs. GreenRiver has given much to the community, and has dedicated much of her adult life to educating about and preventing violence, particularly among Licking County's youth. Her lifetime in the area gives her strong ties to the local community and access to people that others might not readily have. Her strong commitment to making the lives of children in our community better and safer made her an ideal interviewee for this project.
Oral History Interview

Name of the Project: Concerned Citizens in Licking County
Name of the Project Director: Marjorie McLellan, Department of Urban Affairs and Geography, Wright State University
Archives or Repository: Wright State University – Dunbar Library Archives

Narrator Name: Jan GreenRiver
Interviewer Name: Fred Coventry
Others Present: None
Place: The Ohio State University - Newark Campus
Date: 02/16/2011
Length of recording: 1:02:33
Original Format: MPEG

Notes: I received two pamphlets from Mrs. GreenRiver describing PAVE and its related programs. For this interview, we met at the Newark Campus of the Ohio State University. We used an empty classroom attached to the campus library, which was designed to hold about seventy students. I used a flip camera and an Acer 5610 laptop, and no other equipment.

Key Words: children, sexual assault, violence, prevention, bullying, sexual violence, community, volunteer, hospitality, service

Indexed By: Fred Coventry

Index:

0:00:00-0:24 Introduction to the recording, and brief introductory comments. [E – frustration]

0:00:25-01:38 Discussion of de-funding of the various programs in which Jan GreenRiver is involved or the director of. Includes discussion of sources of funding for the projects and the reasons they typically become unavailable or are eliminated. [E – anger, frustration]

Keywords: funding, prevention

0:01:39-02:46 A discussion of where she was born and raised, and her work and community service work before coming to PAVE.

Keywords: Ohio, insurance, school program

0:02:47-04:20 Describes her time and work with the Extended Day Program at St. Francis DeSales Catholic School. [R – happiness] [V – creativity]

Keywords: creative, children

0:04:21-06:09 Her beginning with Mental Health America (MHA) and involvement with the Child Assault Prevention Program (CAPP). Discussion of how they approached and discussed difficult topics with young children.

Keywords: children, sexual assault, bullying
Interest in volunteer work through PTA, community theaters, and her children’s activities. She also discusses her time volunteering/interning with various theatrical productions.

Keywords: intern, community theater, PTA

Reflections on her early experiences in community and volunteer work, and its effect on her life before moving on to PAVE. Includes a brief introduction to her involvement with PAVE. [R – maturity] [V – service]

Keywords: shy, growth, high school, PAVE

Discussion of Prevent Assault and Violence Education (PAVE), including her introduction to the program and the work she has done as a part of PAVE. This includes a more detailed account of how she came to get the position, her son’s involvement in PAVE, her specific function in the organization, and the activities of the organization in Licking County. [V – prevention, protection]

Keywords: PAVE, respect educator, child abuse, mental illness, conferences

This section is a more detailed account of some of PAVE’s travels and involvement in larger conferences, including an international conference in San Diego. [R – fun, fulfilling]

Keywords: travel, Victor Rivers, workshop

She discusses the individual stories of high school students who have been or are involved in PAVE, and how her interactions with them have affected her. She also discusses the impact of these students on the program itself, and their contributions. [R – fondness] [E – affection]

Keywords: anger, PAVE, drugs, sexual assault, recruits, community, volunteermatch.org

This is a discussion of the different approach for high school versus middle or elementary school children when teaching about the issues of violence, sexual abuse, and bullying. She also discusses the connections between the various types of violence, such as bullying, sexual violence, etc. She talks about the evolution of the program in order to convey more information and the division of information by grade. [V – innovation]

Keywords: peer educators, sexual violence, media, society, interpersonal violence, bullying, cyber-bullying, Comanche, talking stick, tolerance

She discusses the prevalence of abuse and violence in Licking County, and the issues in tracking such violence. There is also some discussion of the importance of education in regards to the perception of domestic/dating violence. She also discusses her encounters with students in the schools who approach her and the PAVE members after presentations to discuss their own experiences. [E – concern]

Keyword: vulnerable, prevention, influence, perception, dating violence

Here she talks about her husband’s Comanche culture, and she discusses how that has informed her work, and how it has affected her life and her children’s. This includes a description of a bullying incident involving her son and his ethnicity. [V – tradition, respect] [E – sadness]

Keywords: talking stick, Comanche, tribe, reservation, Native American, pow-wow

A discussion of the Sexual Assault Task Force, and her involvement with the now partially defunct program, both past and present. [E – frustration]

Keywords: Licking County Clothesline Project, sexual violence, prevention, education
Here she talks about the Ohio Domestic Violence Network, and her involvement and participation with that organization. This section includes an interesting discussion of birth control sabotage as a method of physical/emotional control. [R – nostalgia, fondness] [V – feminism, respect]

Keywords: domestic violence, network, Ohio Department of Health, birth control sabotage

She discusses in more detail her time as a volunteer with the Dayton Ballet as an intern, and relates some anecdotes from this time. [R – fondness] [E – happiness]

Keywords: ballet, intern

Mrs. GreenRiver discusses the overall impact on her life of all of her time in volunteer work and community service. She talks about her interpretation of her work, and the successes which matter most to her, as well as lessons learned. [R – fondness] [V – wisdom, patience]

Keywords: service, hospitality, fondness, bonds, parent, stroke, patience

Closing remarks by both the narrator and interviewer.

Keywords: prevention, awareness
Interview Transcript:

Coventry: This is Fred Coventry. I'm interviewing Jan GreenRiver, who is the Director of Programs and Prevention at Mental Health American of Licking County. Did I get all of that right?

GreenRiver: Well, technically it is now Director of Prevention, since we've lost a lot of funding for our programs, but it works.

Coventry: Ok. Um, well, actually, let's, let's talk about that. What happened, uh, what happened to your funding?

GreenRiver: It dries up very quickly. When the economy goes bad, one of the first things the government and foundations attack is the prevention end of things. Why spend money on prevention when we can just deal with treatment issues that we have right now? So, a lot of our programs are no longer.

Coventry: That's... unfortunate.

GreenRiver: Yes. (nods)

Coventry: Ok, where, uh, I don't want to seem too dense, but I really don't know; um, where does a lot of your funding, uh, for the program usually come from?

GreenRiver: Almost every program is funded specifically by an agency, or foundation, or someone who has a vested interest in that particular program. So, for example, we had a suicide prevention program that was funded through the Ohio Department of Health, and, um, intentional injury suddenly became more about preventing seniors from having falls, preventing children from having bicycle accidents without a helmet, or, um, prescription drug overdose. (pauses) So, that program disappeared.

Coventry: That's... unfortunate.

GreenRiver: Yes. (nods)
Coventry: Ok, well, um... just to get us going, tell me a little bit about where you’re from, and uh, what you’ve kind of done up to the point where you became involved in PAVE.

GreenRiver: Ok, um short version; I was born in Cambridge [Ohio]. My parents moved to Newark, then Heath, so Central Ohio has always been my home. Um, I attended Bowling Green State University as a theater major. So, I like the whole idea of acting and working with teens, and after several years in the insurance field— that was so very boring and dry— um, I lost my job. So I ended up working at St. Francis DeSales as the Extended Program Director in charge of their before and after school program. Then learned about the child abuse prevention program at MHA, and that introduced me then to the PAVE program. Coordinator left, I moved up. My supervisor retired, I moved up. And so, that’s where I’ve been since about, hmm, 2003.

Coventry: So, you’ve been there a while, then.

GreenRiver: Yeah. (nods)

Coventry: Ok, so, um... the job as the, uh, extended day program supervisor. What, what, exactly, did you do?

GreenRiver: That was working with students from Kindergarten through eighth grade, before and/or after school, at a parochial school. And creating the programs, and their activities, and using our very limited staff to supervise, helping them with homework, giving them outdoor play time. Creating all kinds of things for them to do.

Coventry: And was that, um...

GreenRiver: It was a blast!

Coventry: Yeah, I was going to say, did you have a lot of fun with that?

GreenRiver: I did! Because I love being creative, and the whole theatrical background made it a lot of fun. We, um, got some donations of very large sheets of cardboard, and created a whole town that they could play in. We painted the walls and made a diner, and made the menus for them that they could serve to each other, and plastic food, and things like that. So it was really a lot of fun. A lot of creativity with that.

Coventry: Any real stand-out stories? Besides that one, obviously.

GreenRiver: Well the fun thing is, I went from working there to working with the PAVE program, and now, I have two or three of the students that I knew from EDP that are now in high school, that are part of my program. I worked with one of them tonight. So that’s been wonderful, to see how all that’s gone full-circle and staying in touch with them.

Coventry: That is kind of nice, that it came full-circle that way. Now, you were also involved with something called— or you were the coordinator of the Child Assault Prevention Program. Is that right?

GreenRiver: That’s how I started working at Mental Health America, which was Mental Health Association at the time, and the Child Assault Prevention Program goes into elementary schools and teaches young students about bullying, stranger-danger, um, ways to stay safe, and things like that. But it was only contract. And so, when the PAVE position opened up, I applied. They turned me down. A few months later, they still had an opening there, and I got it, so it has been wonderful ever since.

Coventry: Ok, so what sort of, um— I mean, tell me a little more, if you could about, about the, the CAPP program.

GreenRiver: CAPP is using very, um, developmentally-appropriate and age-appropriate ways of talking to young children about a very serious subject. When you’re talking about sexual assault to a third grader,
how on earth do you just broach that subject and make it not scary and not threatening? Well, we do it with
videos, we do it with a puppet, we do it with a silly little song. Just things to get them to understand, if
someone touches you, and you don’t like it, and it doesn’t feel good, report it to someone. You’re not being
bad because of it, even if your body said it was ok, and you know it’s not, you need to tell someone. And
it’s such an important message. We know that Licking County has one of the largest amounts of registered
sex offenders in the state, living right here. So it’s important that our kids know what kinds of things they
should be doing.

Coventry: Ok, um, and you, you said you, you had, besides – I’m sorry, I don’t mean to stammer, I’m just
trying to sort myself out a little bit...

GreenRiver: That’s fine.

Coventry: Um, before CAPP, and before, uh, the Extended Day Program, were you involved in any other
sort of, uh, like community service work, or, or that sort of thing? Like you, like you’ve done with kids...

GreenRiver: Sort of. Um, I was unemployed at the time, but still was very active with my kids and their
school’s PTO, um, boosters, those type of things, and then while I was still in high school, I had started
working at the community theaters here in Licking County. So I continued to volunteer with them any
chance I could.

Coventry: So you stayed pretty active in the...

GreenRiver: Yeah. (nods) I loved it...

Coventry: Pretty active in the community, then?

GreenRiver: When I graduated high school, I was box office manager at Weathervane Playhouse. So at
seventeen, I had, like, the dream job. For me. And being able to work with them and stay involved in
theater and meet and actually know all the people that were performing all summer, it was just awesome!

Coventry: And how long did you do that?

GreenRiver: Um, I was box office manager for two summers out there, and then, Pennsylvania, um,
someone I’d worked with here was doing a show out there – or doing a summer out there – and had me
come over. And by the time I left college at Bowling Green, I had gotten a wonderful position as the – um,
gosh, I can’t even remember what they called it – it was an internship with Dayton Ballet. So I, I was just a
company manager and did whatever they needed me to.

Coventry: Ok... so, just, ah, you know, before we move on to, to, uh, PAVE and some of your other work,
um, how do you think your involvement in these, these other organizations before you really became part
of PAVE, um, how did they... how have they affected your life? Um, uh, you know, I mean, how have they
changed you or the way that you view the world?

GreenRiver: (pauses) Wow. Um, all throughout high school and even part of college I was very shy, and
very reserved, which is a little odd for a theater major, but I wasn’t interested in the performing end, I
wanted to be the director or the box office manager, and be able to be in charge and present this stuff to
people. And... then I found out, well, that doesn’t really pay well, or you have to be incredibly connected to
find the job that will pay well. So, I spent a lot of time in insurance, processing claims, customer service,
and all of that, by accident, led me into the job that I’m doing now, which turns out to be the ultimate job
for me. I get to work with high school students, which is so much fun. They can be loud, they can be
annoying, but they also can be very passionate and they can accomplish a lot. A lot! So much more than
little kids can. I mean, they do wonderful things, and they’re lots of fun, but they don’t understand things as
well as the high school students. So, all of my other work kind of led me into being more organized, and
being able to focus more on what I have wanted to do, and that was the theater end of things. So now I get
to work with the high school students, to do improv, to do acting in the classroom, but it’s just, it’s – it’s
not just entertainment. It’s social work. Not ‘social work,’ but they have a purpose. They’re trying to prevent sexual assault, they’re trying to prevent bullying, they’re trying to change things, change the norms. And so, in creating the programs that we do and in working with the kids, it’s been very fulfilling and - I just kind of fell into it. I had no idea something like this existed, that brought together all those things that really matter to me.

Coventry: Sounds like that worked out really well. (chuckles)

GreenRiver: I think so! It doesn’t pay a lot, but I love what I do.

Coventry: Okay, so... PAVE is actually the - is an acronym for Prevent Assault and Violence Education, right?

GreenRiver: Right.

Coventry: Um, so... uh, if you don’t mind recapping, um, how you became involved with PAVE, you know, uh, maybe if you have some fun stories about, you know, how things came together? We’d love to hear it.

GreenRiver: Well, stories yes, some of it not so fun. Uh, like I said, the position came open and I applied for it, but they turned me down, and they hired some other guy, who quit two weeks later. And then, they hired some other guy, who was actually in a car accident a couple of months later, and was killed in that car accident along with his wife, which was very, very sad, but I happened to run into the supervisor of the program at LaPaloma one day, and she said, “Hey, are you still interested? This is what has happened.” I’m like, “Oh, I’m so sorry, but yes, I would love to.” And that’s when I got the chance to do it. And it was very nice because it was in the middle of my son’s freshman year in high school. I said, “Come, come see what this is all about. I always thought it sounded like a good program; I really want to find out what it’s like, and to see how we can increase the peace. So try it out.” And, we had an orientation for the students in the program, and it was just wonderful the way that he said, not even half-way through the day, “Gosh, Mom, this is great. I’m staying.” So, my son got involved with the program as a freshman, went all the way through high school; now he does the same work, for us, as a respect educator. We pay him to do the same type of thing he volunteered to do in high school. Hopefully we’re going to be able to get Caitlin [Bentley, who introduced Mrs. GreenRiver and myself] to do that. We’ve got Amber, who is another PAVE graduate, and she just moved back from New Mexico, so I think we can get her back on board. It’s really nice to see how the program, along with the students who have gone through it, have grown.

Coventry: Alright, and... let’s start with, specifically what, what you do, before we talk about what PAVE does sort of more generally.

GreenRiver: Okay. (nods)

Coventry: So what, specifically, is, is your role in the organization?

GreenRiver: Okay, at MHA I’m the Director of Prevention, and, like I said before about the budget cuts, I am also PAVE Coordinator, so I oversee that program, contact the schools, get the teens rehearsed, get them in place to go to the schools with me to teach. But we still have the child abuse prevention program, and I’m in charge of that. We have a PAVE Assistant Coordinator, and I’ve got to oversee what she does. We’ve got the COMPEER Program, which is a program that is aimed at social integration and mental wellness for people who experience mental illness, so I kind of help with that. And just a variety of things in the office; some of it is applying for grants, some of it is reporting to those grants about what we’ve been doing - keeping track of the numbers - and then the actual program itself. Does that help?

Coventry: Yes, it absolutely does.

GreenRiver: Okay.
Coventry: Um... so, I know that PAVE has a number of separate programs that it's involved with...

GreenRiver: We do now. (nods)

Coventry: Um, so let's – first, I, uh, you mentioned that you go to schools around here. Is that just Licking County, or do you – are you part of a wider network, or...

GreenRiver: Well, it's free in Licking County, and we can go outside that, but then we have to charge because of all the financial dynamics of things. Um, for example, in the Fall, I went to Knox County, and talked about bullying to six different schools that got all of their fifth graders together. Um, we have just submitted an application to the National Sexual Assault Conference, to be held in Baltimore in September, to see if we can actually go there to present our program. So it's, it's a variety of things. We've presented at regional and all kinds of state conferences. We've been national at D.C., we've been international in San Diego. So, we're willing to go anywhere the people will listen and, um, help us get there.

Coventry: So what was, what was the San Diego – the international thing – how was that?

GreenRiver: San Diego was... phenomenal. Uh, it was a week-long conference, and we took two teams out to present the whole program to people from all over the world that came in to learn about preventing assault, violence, um, child abuse, sexual violence – just, everything. And so we had a workshop where they came in and it was very hands-on. They could participate, and we also were able to work with the organizers of the conference to save money on our registration, and that turned out to be such a blessing, because we met Victor Rivers, um, who is a pretty well-known actor. He is very close with Antonio Banderas, and played his brother in, uh, The Mask of Zorro. So, he was there speaking about all the abuse he had endured as a child. So we met him, we got his book, we got our pictures taken with him, he signed the book, and now we kind of keep in touch every so often about, "This is where we've progressed to. Hope you're doing well." So that was just a phenomenal opportunity, and to see the beach, and to have Robert's – or Roberto's – Burritos while walking down the beach barefoot at sunset, you know, it just paid off in lots of ways. And I also got to meet someone from Cincinnati, who came to our workshop. We both had to travel clear out to California to meet each other.

Coventry: You just never know. (laughs)

GreenRiver: Exactly.

Coventry: So, you know, and I mean, I don't want you to, um, use any names or anything, you know, if that's not ok, but uh, what are the stories of some of the people that you've worked with?

GreenRiver: Oh, some of the students who've been in our programs?

Coventry: Yes.

GreenRiver: Wow. Um...

Coventry: Yeah, the ones that really, you know – that have really stuck with you because of, of...

GreenRiver: There've been so many. (pauses) So, for example, um, the student who was president of PAVE when I inherited it mid-year had come to visit me at my old job, after I'd interviewed and given my notice, but before I'd left, just to meet me and talk about, you know, what some of the plans were, what the program was like. And I was able to talk to him about one of the things that I really liked, in video games and character of, um, Anime and cartoons, something really personal. Because I looked at all his paperwork, trying to prepare myself and that immediately cemented our friendship. Because I had cared enough to look into what he said when he joined the program, and that always stuck with him. And he came from a bit of an abusive background. He had a lot of problems with anger. He had talked about throwing his video game system down the sidewalk. Not just the game, not just the controller; the whole system, down the sidewalk. And that's one of the stories we use when we're talking about anger to the
middle school students, because they understand the cost that that may have. Not just the money they’re throwing away, but the other things that can come from that. One of the girls in the program was in PAVE when she went to a party, was abusing drugs, and was sexually assaulted by a friend, and she did not know how to deal with it and what to do. But, she knew she could trust me, she knew she could trust the program, and so we were there for her. And that is totally amazing. Um, this year we’ve got over sixty high school students from all over the county that have signed up to do the program. To be involved, and teach the middle school kids about it. That is an amazing number. We’ve never had that number, ever before, but a lot of that has been word of mouth. And the one student I had in EDP, who’s now in the program, helped bring some of these numbers because she’s a very popular, sweet person at her school, and being able to talk about it helps. During the interim, when I was Director of Prevention, but not PAVE Coordinator—well, we’d actually gone through three people during that time—but one of them is now a teacher at Newark High School. She’s the one that invited us into the class, because she herself had been sexually harassed by a relative. So, her job with us did not last, but the impact the program had on her is really life-changing. So much so that she invited us to talk to her kids, and that’s where we got a ton of recruits this year, so it’s really making that personal connection and letting people know it’s not their fault about things. Um, we had another girl recently that was sexually assaulted at a friend’s house over Labor Day weekend, and the first thing she did was call and say, “I know this shouldn’t have happened, but it did, and now what?” And we got her connected with the police and the Children’s—What is it called?—I’m blanking out—the kid’s place that does sexual assault and child abuse investigations. So, it was just nice to know we could be there for her. We knew where to direct her and how to direct her.

Coventry: And, uh, are a lot of the people, um, who, who volunteer their time—are they often people who have, have suffered some form of abuse? Or would you say the mix is...

GreenRiver: I would say it’s a pretty good mix. We have some students who really don’t talk about a lot of abuse or abusive situations, or things that they’ve endured, but they want to do positive things for their community. We’ve got some students who are absolutely in the program because they don’t know what else to do. They want some support, and at PAVE this is the one place they don’t get judged, because so many other kids have been through a lot of things. And, we’ve got volunteermatch.org. Are you familiar with that?

Coventry: I’m not, uh...

GreenRiver: It’s the opportunity to get online, and list all of your volunteer opportunities, or for people in the community to get on there and look for volunteer opportunities. So, we have a lot of teens who meet up with us that way. “Oh, this sounds like fun! It sounds good.” They get out of school, we try to feed them, you know, so those things are popular, but we have a lot of students—I would say probably the biggest compliment that we’ve had, since I’ve been doing this, “I didn’t know it was so much fun.” So, they can still do the educational stuff, they can still feel they’re part of a group—to them it’s family—but, they’re having fun while they’re doing it. It’s not all, you know, the dark, weird music, weird guy in the trench coat in the corner, different things like that. We’ve really changed the way it looks to people.

Coventry: Now I know you—we talked a little bit about how you, um, how you reach out to the very young kids, which I think would probably be the most difficult. Um, how do you deal differently with, um, middle school and high school kids? I mean, obviously it’s different, but...

GreenRiver: In the classroom?

Coventry: Um... sure. We’ll start there.

GreenRiver: Um, one of the really important pieces about the PAVE program, and that I agree with, is that we need peer educators. I may love going into the middle schools and talking to them about all kinds of things, and I try to make it fun—I take candy and bribe them to answer me—but, what they really care about is when the high school students come in to talk. Here are their peers, someone who’s just a little bit older, that really can get the message through to them instead of some old, white woman like me. The same thing with the high school students. That’s why we hire the college students as contract staff; so we can
work around their schedules, but again, the high school students much would rather hear this stuff from someone closer to their own age. So, it’s really, really effective, and that’s what we need, is to be able to get their attention so they listen.

**Coventry:** And I guess, I, I mean, you handle other kinds of violence, obviously, besides sexual violence? Uh, bullying you said uh...

**GreenRiver:** Absolutely. It’s all connected.

**Coventry:** Well, um, let’s talk about that. The uh, the cycle of violence or, uh....

**GreenRiver:** The, um, the primary money that we get for this program comes from the Ohio Department of Health, through the Violence Against Women Act funding. The program was created back in ‘92, ‘94 (waves hand) to be able to change what people think and believe about sexual violence. That it is never the victim’s fault. That the victim does not have to be a woman. That the victim can be a child, a boy, a man, a grandparent. All of those things, and to get people talking about it. So, when I took over the program, what I noticed after a couple of years was, yes, I was able to make it my own program, but I would go into the sixth grade, and the seventh grade, and the eighth grade with the same information, and they would start remembering it. I, I’m not certain if it was because I was able to make it more real, or they enjoyed it, but for whatever reason, they just knew a lot of the answers to the questions because they’d had it before. So, we finally have been able to switch everything up, and still give them the same messages, but in different formats. So, sixth graders learn about bullying. The seventh grade learns about media literacy, and the way the media influences the way they think. The eighth grade is now what had been the traditional PAVE program that talks about everything, from tolerance and diversity and conflict and harassment, and all the types of abuse. And then, in high school they talk more about healthy relationships, so, “Yes, you may have this, but keep in mind, this is what’s healthy. This is what you want to aim at.” So we change the perspective, and so, by introducing those different pieces that are all so interrelated, intertwined, they can learn how society may make them believe something, but that’s not necessarily the way it is. So all of that, all kinds of interpersonal violence; can be sexual assault, dating violence, bullying, all of that happens between people of any age.

**Coventry:** Um, can – I don’t want to, you know, delve too deeply, or anything, but can you share maybe a little bit of, of each program. I mean, I know you said you talk about bullying with the sixth graders, um, what, what sort of goes into that program? And did you help design that, or...

**GreenRiver:** The nice thing is, the bullying program was designed after I left PAVE to become Director of Prevention, so I had input, but I had a teacher, someone who had gone to school to be a teacher, to work with high school students, who knew how to create a curriculum, so all I had to do was make sure she had the information. She put it together and, and now that she’s gone, I’ve been able to expand it and do some fine-tuning. We add an entire day on, uh, cyber-bullying, because that is huge with today’s youth. They’re always online, or cell phones, or something, and they need to know once they send those messages or pictures, they’re out there, and the damage has been done. So, we talk about bystanders, because bystanders have seven seconds in a bullying situation to either make it stop or make it worse. Like that fight circle that happens – they can walk away, they can go get help, or they can join in and cheer somebody on. So, it’s important for people, kids especially, to know the kind of power they have. So that’s why we like to talk to them about that in sixth grade. The seventh grade, media literacy, they’re really starting to notice things. They’re getting their own tastes, their own likes, their own preferences, but they can also understand how the media really can be overwhelming. Um, we start off on the first day showing them fifty logos in two teams. There are logos for Camel, and Marlborough, and Bud Light, and Captain Morgan. So here are products that are not available to seventh grade students, but those are usually for of the ones that they immediately get. They don’t get so much the Girls Scouts, the United Way, the Big Brothers/Big Sisters – which is too bad, because those logos are very popular in our community. We have tremendous support of different agencies here, but not the money to sell things the way the media does.

**Coventry:** Yeah, I was, I was going to ask; you think that’s part of it? Just that those companies have so much more money?
GreenRiver: Absolutely. (nods) I mean three million dollars for thirty seconds at the Super Bowl? Yeah. That kind of stuff speaks to the youth. They are always watching, they’re always paying attention. Um, we show a Bugs Bunny cartoon that’s maybe five minutes long, and I ask them, “Well, how many acts of violence do you think were in there?” “Three. Eight. Mmm, maybe ten. That’s about it.” There’re thirty-three. Thirty-three that I can count. Now there’s a blur where Elmer and Bugs get into a fight, so you kind of have to guesstimate, but when you talk to them about what is violence, and see the influence it has on you, they understand the, um, desensitization, the stereotypes, what critical thinking is. So it’s really nice to see all the light bulbs going off over seventh graders’ heads. And that happens a lot.

Coventry: And then with the eight graders it was...

GreenRiver: Oh, we start with diversity and tolerance. I talk to them about Mathew Sheppard and James Byrd, who were people who were killed because people were intolerant. I start the class by speaking to them in Comanche and waving around a ‘talking stick’ that is just a big deer foot with a big turtle shell on the end and deer toes, because it’s something different they wouldn’t expect, especially from a white woman. So I’m like, “Yeah, it’s my husband’s culture, but it’s my culture. My children are growing up with this culture. They’re growing up in your county, so no, we don’t live in a teepee, but we’re Native American.” You know, and sharing how all that leads to all these other things, so it kind of builds on itself. If you’re not being tolerant, then you can have some conflict-issues which may lead to anger if you don’t know how to deal with that, and then physical assault or sexual assault. So, those are all the things the eighth graders talk about.

Coventry: And then, when you go on to the high school, their programs, you said, are a little different?

GreenRiver: It’s a little different in the formatting. It’s just one presenter. They don’t have people that go with them, but they’re still talking about those same type of issues. About tolerance, about, um — I mean, one person in particular that comes to mind is Heidi Montag, who had ten surgical procedures done last year, just to alter her appearance. And, who would someone get to that point in their life, where they felt the need to jeopardize their own health and safety by having that done. Uh, you know, does dressing a certain way, or texting someone, or your boyfriend or girlfriend always saying, “Where are you?” And wanting control over you and tracking you, is that healthy? Um, it doesn’t just have to be a dating relationship, but think about your family. Do you use “I” messages? Everything that we’ve talked about before, but with a, kind of a different spin. “This is healthy,” versus, “Don’t do that.” (wags finger)

Coventry: Um, so, uh, you... you work with this a lot in the county, so, ah, I guess I’m not as familiar with how prevalent, um, the different types of abuse are in the county. I mean I have some connection to that, uh, but I’m not, uh, obviously as close to it as you are. Um, so maybe you could talk a little bit about how prevalent that is here – just here in Licking County and, and, the types of abuse and how common those are here?

GreenRiver: I think there are just a lot of variables, because... verbally, and mentally, and emotionally abusing someone is very hard to report, to document, to take to court. But verbal — or, I mean, physical or sexually — that usually is going to leave a mark that someone can see, or some kind of evidence that you can report, and trace, and document. So, um, we’ve got about a quarter of people who are living in this county who are under the age of eighteen, so that leaves a pretty vulnerable population. So the idea that we have is really trying to prevent a lot of that from happening, and getting people to understand how their words can influence others. And especially if we talk about bullying, the whole name calling, the exclusion, those kinds of things, you don’t see them, but you know they happen. If it’s ever happened to you, do you remember how it made you feel? How long it took it took you to get over it? If you’ve gotten over it. Well, if that kind of treatment is coming from someone that you love, that you respect, like a family member, or, you know, a good friend at school, does it have that much more impact? So it’s hard to say, exactly, how much documentation is going on, and then people don’t report. Um, we had someone come by the office in the past week who just realized that she was in a domestic violence situation, because her sister would say or do certain things to her, but her idea of domestic violence had been, “Oh yeah, that fifty year old, drunk, bald guy beating up his wife. That’s domestic violence.” Now she has a whole different opinion of it.
Coventry: Do you find that that, that’s common? That you have to, sort of, uh, shake up people’s perceptions of, of what domestic violence is?

GreenRiver: Absolutely, and last week in PAVE we watched the Lifetime movie called *Reviving Ophelia*, that’s about teen dating violence, and so many of the kids in the program were getting really mad, and yelling at the TV, because of the way this boy treated this girl in the movie. But I’m thinking, “And you’re really mad at that, and you’re yelling at that, but what happens in your own life? Do you allow anything like that *at all* to happen to you or your friends?” You have to talk about it. It’s the only way to make a difference, is to let people know that’s not acceptable, so, it’s kind of an interesting dynamic, when you’ve got kids who will yell at the TV, but if it’s someone they care about, “Well, maybe they’re only doing it because they love me.” And making sure they understand that difference.

Coventry: So how often, I mean - you, yourself, do go to the schools, um, frequently?

GreenRiver: Yep! Oh, yes!

Coventry: Um, how often are you or, or your people approached, after you’ve been there, by students who, who have experienced these kinds of things?

GreenRiver: I would say it would be an easy number if I said, “Every single day.” At least one student in any number of classes would come up afterwards to say, “Well, I went through…” or, “My brother…,” or, you know, they always have some kind of story that they’ll share with us, that they won’t say in front of the class. At least one.

Coventry: Are there any of those stories that really, you know, really just stand out for you?

GreenRiver: I can remember the first time I taught alone, in a middle school, and I had a girl come up to me after class who said, “There’s this boy on the bus who touches me, and I don’t feel safe going home.” I’m like, “Oh my gosh!” (makes hand gestures) “What do I do?” I was so terrified, I gave her my phone number, my cell phone, “Here, call me if you need to, let’s go talk to the principal.” It just freaked me out, but I wanted her to feel safe; to know someone cared. And the principal was very good at listening, and documenting, and taking care of everything (shakes head), but... it never gets easy to hear those kinds of stories.

Coventry: Now, I know, uh, you mentioned that uh – sorry, I keep saying, “You know.” Of course you do, it’s your story. Um, but you mentioned, uh, using the, um, the, uh, the tortoise shell...

GreenRiver: Oh, the ‘talking stick’?

Coventry: The talking stick. Um, it, it – your husband, you said, that, that’s part of his culture?

GreenRiver: Yes, he is Kowhanee Comanche.

Coventry: And have, have you or he ever, uh, encountered intolerance because of, of, you know, that, that sense of ‘different-ness’?

GreenRiver: Absolutely. (nods) And, I know when I first met him, I was like, “Hmm, is he American Indian? Is he East Indian? I don’t know, because I think we killed off all the Indians here in this country a long time ago.” Because I wasn’t taught differently in school. When my mom met him, she was like, uh, “Kinda’ dark for an Indian, isn’t he?” I didn’t know. And it’s not that she was prejudiced, but that reaction stunned me. And then I go into the classrooms, so I’m like, “I’ve got to, you know, get this across to these students. They need to understand that this is just his race. It is the color of his skin, his ethnicity, but it’s my choice to live as part of that. Not just married to the man, but it also gets interesting when I say then, “Well, he’s Chief GreenRiver of the Kowhanee Comanche tribe, and if I brought in an Indian taco, you would be oh-so-happy I came.” So there are a lot of different things that we talk about. We’ve gone into
our kids’ classes and taught Native American culture and language, and I do cook for them a lot. So it’s just nice to be able to share that with people, but also to kind of wake them up a little. (makes a shaking motion with her hands)

**Coventry:** How, uh – I was unaware that there, there was really a community, even here in Licking County. How, um, how big is that? How active, are – you said he’s the chief, but how active are you?

**GreenRiver:** Well, uh, of Kowhanee Comanche. Of the GreenRiver tribe. Well, as far as I know... less than ten actually would fall into that category. But there are about one percent of the population in Licking County that are some type of Native American. Um, Shawn Riley is a friend of ours who hosts a pow-wow every summer. It’s usually the end of August, right before school starts, and people come from all over to join in, in that. We’ve got so many wonderful historic places in Licking County that are Native American. But, that tribe – completely different than the Comanche tribe. My husband grew up, um, a lot of the time on reservation land in New Mexico. So things just vary; it depends. And you almost – I would say there’s been at least one student in every class where I do that, “Oh, my grandpa’s Native American, Oh, I’m part whatever.” And, you know, that’s where you get very fair skin, blonde hair, blue eyes, and you’re like, “Ok, cool.” But then it also makes you think, “Native Americans were not all killed off.” And it’s important that someone says that to them.

**Coventry:** Now, not to, not to sound harsh to Ohio, but why did he choose to, to move to Ohio? Do – has he...

**GreenRiver:** Well, he was born in Detroit, but his family at the time were really in Springfield. So, his mom and dad lived in Springfield, then when they divorced, he had his dad in Kenton, his mom in Springfield, and they kind of went back and forth. And then his mom, when they were getting the divorce, took the boys out to New Mexico, where they lived with their grandparents on the reservation land and learned a lot more about their heritage and the traditional ways.

**Coventry:** And do you – uh, you know, at home do you observe a lot of that, or, or...

**GreenRiver:** No. I, I wish we would. I wish my husband did, but he’s a bit of a procrastinator, and that baby that I was planning for, that I said, “You’ve got to teach them the language and, uh, you know – he’s almost twenty-two, next week he’ll be twenty-two, and is engaged. It’s lost.” He just hasn’t shared it the way I would’ve liked him to do, but we have shared a lot in terms of going to the pow-wows, this is traditional Native American culture, all of our kids have Native American names that are Comanche but have definitions that, you know, I can understand. Different things like that, plus their little, white middle names.

**Coventry:** Now as part of that culture, have you been at all active – I know there’s been some conservation work here locally with, uh, you know, the, uh, mounds and earthworks. Have you guys been at all involved in that?

**GreenRiver:** Um, I keep up with it, but we haven’t been involved with it. My husband’s disabled, and has been for, oh, ten years now. So, physically it’s hard for him to get around and do those things, but I do make sure that we keep up with it in the papers, and know what’s going on, and help out in any way that we can.

**Coventry:** And does he – I’m sorry, you may have said this and I, and I missed it – does he come with you sometimes to the schools to - for the diversity teaching?

**GreenRiver:** Not so much when I’m teaching, but sometimes after I’ve taught that, the teachers may say, “Well do you think your husband would come in?” “Sure.” So, uh, he does go into the schools. We’ve done it kindergarten through... I would say probably sixth grade for our kids, and shared different things, but our kids aren’t in those classes anymore and we’re still getting requests. So, that’s fine.

**Coventry:** And you’ve got a son, you said, who’s twenty – almost twenty-two?
GreenRiver: Almost twenty-two!

Coventry: Um was he – did he ever have any trouble when he was in school?

GreenRiver: Oh, yeah! (nods)

Coventry: Was it – did he run into...

GreenRiver: One time that he really shared with me about the bullying type of situation he went through, because of his race, was when one of the kids on the bus made some slanderous, painful remarks about, um, “he should get all his other buddies together and run the bus into the building just like all those other towel-heads, or something did.” So, ethnically, he was completely on the wrong continent, but just assuming, because he had darker skin, and very dark hair, that he would automatically do some terrorist activity. It was pretty horrible.

Coventry: Yeah, um, it sounds – now how did, I mean, ultimately, how did he resolve that? I mean...

GreenRiver: Well, what we told him was, “Invite him over. Bring him into our house and let him see that we’re, you know, ok people. We can talk to him. We don’t want you to threaten. We don’t want you to hit or fight back. I know it’s hard ignore it, or walk away from it, so just turn it around where” – unusually enough, I suppose, is what some people would think – we’re very Christian-focused, in our family. So the idea was, you know, turn the other cheek. Invite him in. Let’s be friends with him, and let him get to know the truth. And, he actually became friends with that boy, and the boy was... killed a few years ago, out on the road. And my son was actually sad about that, from someone who had started off threatening him, now just endured such a horrible end to his young life.

Coventry: So, I also see that you were involved – I don’t mean to sort of jump subjects...

GreenRiver: That’s fine! (smiles)

Coventry: That was kind of a downer. (laughs) This might be, too. It says, uh, that you were the facilitator for the Sexual Assault Task Force. Uh, what can you tell me about, about that program and, and your own involvement and experience with that?

GreenRiver: (covers face with hands) Really? Ah... Because, uh... it, it’s... not so much in effect right now. It has been something we have wanted to get back to a really active status, and be able to do a lot, but with the budget cuts and all of the turnover in our office because of it, I don’t have time. And our PAVE Assistant Coordinator – it’s only fifteen hours a week – she doesn’t have time. So we really need to be able to devote more time and energy to it, and we haven’t been able to, which is a sad, horrible thing, but we still keep hoping and trying, and want to get that together. We do the Licking County Clothesline Project. Are you familiar with the Clothesline Project?

Coventry: I’ve heard of it, but I’m not really familiar with it.

GreenRiver: What it is, is an opportunity for survivors, or the families of survivors, um, anybody who has lost someone to gender violence or sexual assault, or they have experienced it themselves. They can come create a t-shirt, we have the blank shirts. They can draw, write, whatever, and then you hang up this huge, immense clothesline, and we hang them all on there. And it just keeps growing every year. And that had been part of the Sexual Assault Task Force’s project, was to keep that going. So we have that little bit that still goes on and on.

Coventry: Uh, what else did the program do? I mean, I understand that you’ve had to cut a lot of it – the program, but...

GreenRiver: It’s been a long time! Since we’ve had to cut that.
Coventry: What did they do? What service did they provide before...

GreenRiver: It was really an opportunity for a lot of different venues to get together and talk about sexual violence, and people from, ah, police departments, law enforcement, parole could be involved along with the prevention people, the rape crisis hotline staff, and anyone within the community who really wanted to talk about it as an issue and try and answer some of the questions, like, “Well, what can we do? Um, can we host a conference?”  And that is something that they had done in the past, was to sponsor a conference where anyone could attend and learn more about sexual violence. It’s really education-focused.

Coventry: And was it, was it more .. adult-oriented? Or was that something...

GreenRiver: (nods) It was. It was kind of an overseeing group that could also monitor the work of the teens in the PAVE Program. So, they kind of played off of each other, that maybe the task force could submit to PAVE, “Well, here’s some ideas, or here are some things we’re seeing. What’s your take on it? Maybe it’s what you’re living, or living with.”

Coventry: I also see that you work with the Ohio Domestic Violence Network.

GreenRiver: Absolutely.

Coventry: And what, uh, what did you do with them, and did you have any, you know – that’s a pretty touchy subject, but did you have any, uh, any stories that really stuck with you from your time working with them?

GreenRiver: I loved working with them. Some of the women who really were my mentors as I started this are now my friends and associates, um – I came at this whole thing from a theater background, and a bit of a feminist, you know, standing up for equality and all that, but I’ve learned so much over the years in working with them, and Joe Simonson, Rebecca Kline – I have been to their trainings and their conferences, and they also have been involved with ones that we have now hosted. And so it’s really a, a wonderful network with the Ohio Department of Health and ODVN, to get this information out. We’ve got kind of a, uh, sister program in Knox County that learns a little bit from PAVE in how to reach teens and what to do. So it’s, it’s all about networking, and youth, and drug and alcohol abuse, and violence, and sexual assault. All of it is, again, intertwined. It’s so interconnected. Because, you’re not going to have a lot of domestic violence occurring without some kind of alcohol or drug abuse problem in the home. Or, it’s impossible to assume that, uh, there’s not going to be any type of sexual assault in this relationship. So, it’s just being able to create these networks and to share everything that’s going on. Um, ODVN recently got funding to do Project Connect, which is talking about birth control sabotage in the state of Ohio, and different affiliations with clinics and schools, with doctor’s offices. And I’m part of that network, which first had, um, focus groups with teens throughout Ohio. “So, what are some of the things you’re going through? What kind of posters would attract your attention? What do you call it if you’re ‘talking,’ ‘dating,’ ‘hanging out,’ ‘hooking up?’ You know, really trying to make it very informal, but very educational, as the youth teaching them. So, there have just been wonderful ways that we’ve connected and shared all of our work, together.

Coventry: You mentioned birth control sabotage? How common is that?

GreenRiver: It’s a lot more common than what you would think, but I think it’s also hard for women to understand that. Because if you’re in a domestic violence situation, you don’t think so much about what’s happening to you, you’ve been trained to think, “Well, it’s my fault.” But the idea of, um, the man or the boy really wants to have a child and you don’t, and you’re using birth control. What is he doing to make it not effective? If it’s using a condom, is he poking a hole in it? If it’s oral medication, is he hiding it or taking it from you? Or the same thing could be, as a girl, saying to the guy, “Well, I don’t want to get pregnant,” but she does think having a baby is going to cement the relationship. Is she the one who’s sabotaging it? So there are lots of different ways to look at it that really come down to, where’s the respect
in the relationship? You both have to say, “Who’s making the decision,” what the decision is, and stay with

_Coventry_: Is that, I mean, is that most common among younger couples, or is that sort of...

_GreenRiver_: (shakes head) It’s a very wide range, not just teens, not just the twenties, but I mean, all the way through child-bearing years. That can easily be a part of domestic violence.

_Coventry_: Is it, um, I mean, what do you think the, the motivations are – I, I – you said cementing the relationships but, I mean...

_GreenRiver_: Well, it’s really come – it comes down to the same thing as physical assault, and rape, and any type of abuse. It’s power and control. So, if a guy wants power over a girl, maybe it’s going to be, “Ok, you’re pregnant now, so you’re mine. No guy is going to want to touch you, because you’re already knocked up.” And that can be power and control. Or, “You don’t need to do this; you don’t need to do that. I’m going to take care of you. If you really love me, you need to have our baby.” And using that point of view to manipulate and control the situation.

_Coventry_: And that’s, that’s pretty common?

_GreenRiver_: Yeah. (nods) Kind of sad.

_Coventry_: And I know you mentioned earlier... that you were involved... uh, this is sort of, I guess, a little tangential to what we’ve been talking about – you were involved with the, the Dayton – with the ballet?

_GreenRiver_: The ballet. (nods) I was company manager.

_Coventry_: You were the company manager? And what did you do in that capacity?

_GreenRiver_: I did everything. Um, anything they asked me. Stuart said, “Do this,” that’s what I did. Um, Miss Joe would want something done, I would do it. But it was working with, um, both their tech director and their booking director. So, I would help out with, um, getting information together about, “We’re going on tour. Here’s where we’re going. What can you find for housing? Or the tech director, I remember once, when we were in Worthington, fortunately it was close by, but Vivian was so sick. She lost her voice; she could hardly breathe; she couldn’t stand. I had to call the show, which meant I had to give the cues to lights, or to any of the scenery changes, based on the music that was used. (chuckles) And I couldn’t read music. So I really had to crash-course learn how to look for these different things in the score, so I could make sure that that all went off without anyone getting hurt. So it’s just a variety of things. There was one time when we were in New York. Stuart asked me to bring a boom-box to rehearsal because they needed to practice. Um, he didn’t exactly ask me that. He said, “Do you have? Ok. Be at this practice.” “Ok.” And he didn’t say, “We need to use it,” and I was young and naive and right out of high school, and walked all the way from our hotel to the practice hall, and immediately had to get in a taxi and go back and get my boom-box and take it to him. Which I did, and then I crawled away.

_Coventry_: So... kind of, looking back on – I, I mean, I know there are lots of other groups here that you’ve been, uh, involved with – um, looking back over your involvement with, uh, the community and community service and all these different experiences you’ve had, um, what are, what are the big lessons for you? Uh, what, what... what has it taught you?

_GreenRiver_: I love what I do. I – in some ways, I’m a very people-oriented person, but that doesn’t mean I can walk into a crowded room and suddenly start shaking hands and talking and feel comfortable. But I like to be able to serve people. Um, not carrying a tray around and saying, “Here you go,” but being able to take service to another level. To help people in some way. It may be identifying the problem, or it may be resolving the problem, or just simply helping them feel better about where they are. Um, I had a good friend once who said that God had blessed me with the gift of hospitality, and I think that was very intuitive of her, because now that I’ve been doing this so long, and seeing all the different ways I network with
people, I think that very much describes my personal and my professional successes. Not that I’m making a ton of money, but I love what I do and I’m making a difference for people. So to me, that’s success. So that’s probably the, the biggest part of it is, is being able to take the financial distress and still find – define – success from that.

Coventry: And, and again, you’ve been involved in, in so much, um… what do you feel were the most, ah, the most interesting or compelling – the most important, um, groups you’ve been involved with, and, and why?

GreenRiver: I would say Weathervane Playhouse, because of my love for theater, and because I was able to learn then about seriously hard work, and making those connections that stay with you. Dex Kohler was one of my dearest friends when I worked there, and now I can see him in the stores and almost break into tears because I’m so happy to see him again. And those bonds that are created are the things that are important to me now as an educator, and making them with the kids in the classroom, with the teens in the program, with my own children that have benefited in several ways from the work that I do. Both in me calming down as a parent, and learning more about trying to make “I” messages normal. (makes frustrated face) It takes practice. Um, but also being able to say to my own children and all the other kids, “Get involved with this. Just try it out. You really want to see what this is like and it may take you great places.”

Coventry: Is there, uh – I know I’ve covered a lot of ground. (laughs) Um, but is there anything that I, that I haven’t brought up that you would really like to share? Um… any stories that really stick out in your mind from your time doing all these things? Or…

GreenRiver: There are way too many stories, and I know you don’t have enough room or space for all of them. (motions to the camera) But, one thing that comes to mind when you ask me that is the fact that I had four mini-strokes a year ago. Um, didn’t know what was going on, was watching the countdown with my little ones on the couch and felt this numbness in my arm. (motions up and down her left arm) Four days later I was like, “Oh, I’m going to get ready for work.” Went to take a shower, was looking and I only had one slipper on, but I could have sworn I had them both on. Went to the ER, my blood pressure was up, all this stuff happens, a couple of days in the hospital there, a couple there. And it’s really slowed me down, and it frustrated me to no end, because I’ve lost strength and power. And almost everything that I used to do so easily – and I started to think about it, and I said how funny that was, because I’d also spent about the last year praying for patience. So God has this tremendous sense of humor, that, “You want to slow down? Here you go.” And as I was talking to a group a year ago, uh, for work, it was a church-oriented group, and we were talking about stress and sharing that. The strokes were stressful, the time in the hospital was stressful, the loss of ability is still incredibly stressful, but I could say, “Thank you, God. I asked for you to slow me down. Not exactly what I meant, but it works.” And so the ability to take, really, a horrible situation – and good news, I didn’t die, I’m not bed-ridden – but, to take that information and use it to still do what I want to do, and help other people, and now it’s become a tool as well. Again, it’s just another slap in the face of, “Yeah, you’ve got the gift of hospitality. Use it.”

Coventry: Um, is there, is there anything else you’d like to tell us, or…

GreenRiver: Do I send you a bill for this? (laughs)

Coventry: (laughs) I hope not!

GreenRiver: Oh, darn! Um, no, just please, get the word out that prevention is important. If you are one to call, write, or email your congress-people, let them know, prevention is important. And encourage anyone you come across to share the same message. That people don’t have to suffer, they don’t have to be abused or assaulted or bullied, or all those horrible things. Prevention works. We need to really use that education and benefit the children so they don’t go through a lot of the horrible things we read in the papers.

Coventry: Sounds good!

GreenRiver: Ok?
Coventry: Thank you very much for your time. I can’t thank you enough.

GreenRiver: You’re very welcome! (laughs) You and Caitlin are so funny.

Glossary:

CAPP – Child Assault Prevention Program. A program that taught elementary school students about bullying, abuse, and dangers they needed to be aware of.

EDP – The extended day program at St. Francis DeSales Catholic school in Newark, Ohio. The program provides before and after school supervision and activities for students at the school.

Licking County Clothesline Project – A huge clothesline used to display t-shirts designed by survivors of sexual violence and the families of those affected by it, or who have lost a loved one to such violence.

Mental Health America – MHA is an organization that sponsors several programs dealing with mental health issues, and education about violence and sexual violence.

PAVE – Prevent Assault and Violence Education, a program which visits local schools to talk to K-12 students about violence, bullying, sexual assault, and other such issues through a variety of grade-appropriate methods.

Weathervane Playhouse – A community theater that performs plays in the summer months, as it is partially an outdoor venue. Performances generally begin in late Spring and end in early Fall.