Date: 08/03/2017
Narrator: Barry Pearl
Location: Hunt Library, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
Running Time: 01:13:16
Interviewer: Kate Barbera, Assistant Archivist, Carnegie Mellon University

Abstract:
This Carnegie Mellon University oral history features Barry Pearl, who graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in 1973. He is interviewed by Kate Barbera, Assistant Archivist at Carnegie Mellon University. Pearl studied in the School of Drama at the College of Fine Arts and is known for his role as Doody in the film Grease (1978). Pearl discusses his childhood, education, and his experiences as a student at Carnegie Mellon University. He also reviews accomplishments throughout his career in the entertainment industry.
[Begin Interview]

Barbera:  [00:00:00] Today is August 3, 2017 and we are in Hunt Library at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. My name is Kate Barbera, Assistant Archivist at Carnegie Mellon University and I am interviewing Barry Pearl. Barry, can you please state your full name, age and birth date.

Pearl:  Boy, you ask awful lot of me, Katherine, but you know, I might as well comply, I'm here, we might as well make good of this time.

My name is Barry Lee Pearl though I go by Barry Pearl and the date of birth, my date of birth is March 29, 1950. I just gave away my age. I'm 67 years old and very proud of it.

Barbera:  Where were you born?

Pearl:  I was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, not too far from here, actually. Before I moved to New York literally overnight to be in the business of show at the tender age of 11 and then moved to New York from '61 to what amounted to be '76 but within that time I had spent four years here at the Carnegie Mellon.

Barbera:  Can you tell me a little bit about your family?

Pearl:  Yes. I was raised by my mother, my aunt; beg your pardon, my mother, my three aunts, and my grandmother. Five women doting upon me. I'm an only child and my first cousin to come along after myself was also a girl, my cousin Roxanne, like a sister to me. So, bring on the matriarchy is what I say. Yeah, so I was raised by all those wonderful women.

My parents were separated when I was 10 months old and divorced by the time I was a year old though my father and his new wife, my stepmother and three half-brothers did come into the picture, as I got older.

Barbera:  What was your childhood like?

Pearl:  It was great. It was very loving. Of course, you know not having the father figure I think has taken its toll it's manifested in some ways. I'm not a huge or I wasn't a huge sports fan until I met my wife who's a huge football fan and baseball. So, I kind of missed that but at the same time what I really came to know what the normal was the matriarchy, the grandmother and the three aunts, my aunt. And so, I was perfectly loved and perfectly fine but when I saw other kids with two parents, you know.

Some of that void was filled in by my uncles, my Uncle Buzz and my Uncle Roy married to my Aunt Frieda and my Aunt Mim, separately, of course, it was not kind of a Mormon household so I did have those male figures in my life.
Barbera: Tell me about your education as a child and a young person. What schools did you attend?

Pearl: [00:02:49] Grade school at Lafayette Elementary School in Lancaster. Lancaster as opposed to Lan-Caster, Lancaster if you're from there. And as I said, I was very active in community theater my mother had enrolled me in a tap dance class when I was very young. At the end of every year, they would do a review, a dance review at the Millersview State Teachers College. And there was a young girl about my age, Maxine Gillman and we were these two adorable tiny tots that they would build the review around that happened a couple years in a row and that kind of was the bug that bit me.

So from there my mom would just always was very supportive of this passion that burned at such a young age so she got me involved with the Lancaster Little Theater, community theater there. I did a couple of plays and did two shows at the Franklin and Marshall College at the Green Room Theater. I did Tall Story and a play called Richard the III, remember that one, starring Roy Shider, may he rest in peace of Jaws fame and many other films in television and stage and he played Richard III.

And from there I'd done a professional, a union production of Dark at the Top of the Stairs at the Fulton Theater, Fulton Opera House it was. And there was an aspiring playwright from New York who needed to pay the rent so he took a lighting job at the Fulton. A guy by the name of Chuck Miller, Charles E. Miller who I wish that I could find and he sort of disappeared from my life but he was responsible for getting me into New York.

He had said to my mother in 1959 when I had done this production of Dark at the Top of the Stairs he took a liking to my mom and me and he said, "One of these days I'm going to get your son on Broadway." And two years later in 1961 the role of Randolph Macafee in Bye Bye Birdie became available because Johnny Borden who was playing the role of Randolph left to do Milk and Honey with Molly Pecan.

So Chuck was friendly with Bob Fagan who was Edward Padula's secretary. Edward Padula produced Bye Bye Birdie so Chuck had the skinny on the fact that they were looking for a kid and apparently they went through 250 kids and they couldn't find anybody so Chuck told Bob who told Edward I got the guy for you. Called my mother and I remember I was on my aunt and uncle's farm it was August of '61 and my mom came down and she said we're going to New York you're going to audition for Bye Bye Birdie.

[00:05:19] An audition meant I had the job because in Lancaster the audition was you went, you read, you got it so I had this power of positive thinking that I was going to be on Broadway. And as it turns out, we took a train into New York and I never came home.
Chuck trained me to sing a song *There’s No Business Like Show Business* how amazingly and saccharinely sweet appropriate is that, down in the Lamb’s Club basement. There was a pianist there and I used that as an audition song. I auditioned for Gower and Marge Champion. Then they asked if I could sing another song, I had nothing prepared so they had my sing *Happy Birthday* and the next thing you know, I got the gig and I went to rehearsal right away right after that.

So a long answer to your question about schooling well, my mom had to enroll me in a school, professional children school, which was a school that catered to kids that were in the business or whose parents were in the business and who traveled around. Not to be mistaken with performing arts of *Fame* fame. At performing arts you couldn't perform you studied it was a conservatory high school but with PCS, you could and I did.

So I went on the road the last month of *Bye Bye Birdie* on Broadway then the national tour and then the summer stock production in Vegas. And by that point, we had committed to New York and the role of Roland Oliver came up. Initially, when it came up I auditioned for that the Broadway show pre-Broadway. I had a broken arm though falling off of my cousins Shetland at the farm in Pennsylvania.

So sometime, after the cast came off they were replacing two kids and I auditioned and got it so they flew me to Detroit I believe it was or Toronto. And then we played Detroit and then we came into Broadway January of ’63. And so did that for a year on Broadway before I left to then understudy Barry Gordon in *A Thousand Clowns*, which unfortunately, at that time, the Beatles had come to the States.

We had the British invasion and had I stayed in *Oliver*, I would’ve gotten to meet them because their first because their first *Ed Sullivan Show*, on that particular show they did two numbers from *Oliver* one with Georgia Brown singing *As Long as He Needs Me* and the song *I Do Anything*. And all my friends got to meet the Beatles but I was out on the road understudying Barry Gordon.

[00:08:10] So PCS took care of me through that part of my education. And then I thought well, college may be a thing to do. And it's funny, I don't remember it being thrust upon me like it was something I had to do but I felt I had to do it. I wanted to finish my formal education.

I had wanted to study medicine but I really wasn’t very academically inclined. And after grade school at Lafayette, my grades began to fail, actually. I was an A student but became very distracted by the great white way and the profession that I felt was before me and so I didn’t do very well in school. My SATs weren’t that great. And then came this college thing and there were three schools that I was interested in.
[00:09:00] Carnegie [Car-nay-gie] was one that was when I was pronouncing it Carn-uh-gie and it was just prior to it becoming, well, it became, as well you know, it was Tech up until '68, right and then became Mellon so it was Mellon I was looking at, Julliard and Boston, BU. So I auditioned I want to say I auditioned for Carnegie first at the Manhattan Hotel, which was at the corner of 45th and 8th right down the street from where I lived.

I did two monologues one from Glass Menagerie and one from A Thousand Clowns, which I knew very well ‘cause I was very familiar with the play having understudy Barry, having then done the role of Nick Burns in A Thousand Clowns in a couple summer stock productions. And then actually doubling for him in the film so I knew it like the back of my hand, well, why not do something that you know so I did as well as I did.

Of course, it was a pass/fail system at the time I don’t know if that still exists today but I got in basically on the merits of my talent and my commitment. I mean I first thought well, why would they want to bring a quote, unquote professional to this school because they risk having a student that thinks that he or she may know it all and what are they going to teach them. But, obviously, that wasn't the mindset, thank goodness.

So I auditioned for Carnegie and then I had a Julliard audition and that didn't go real well. What I remember from that was that I can't remember the name of the head of the department, Michael, oh, it's terrible. Anyhow, it was one of those deals crawl around on the floor and pretend like you’re a goat and I’m going throw mud on you and napalm on you and molasses. Which, I understand those, in fact, we did those exercises here at Carnegie.

I didn't feel I did real well there at Julliard. So the letter from Carnegie came through and I got in and I decided not to go to the BU audition. It wound up my best friend actually wound up going there and it was good that he went there and I came here because we had done a musical version of Prince and the Pauper, a film in 1966, a year after having met on a TV set that his father was unit production manager on.

And we had met in '65 and by '66 we were playing the Prince and the Pauper in Dublin, Ireland for a month in Dublin. And being together that month and his mother was our chaperone but we shared a room and we were at each other's throats by the time that month was up. So having gone to the same college together probably wouldn’t have been a great idea, it salvaged our friendship.

So I came here and he went there and I feel based on what I’ve heard from him that I got the better end of the deal coming here to Carnegie. So I got in with some educational opportunity grants and some scholarships and work study and it cost us a whopping $2,000.00 for the first year and $4,000.00 for the remaining three.
I remember it as $4,000.00 but my dear friend Tim Monach he'd reminded me the other day at a brunch here in Pittsburgh where he's here doing a film with Kate Blanchett and I'm here working with Joey Travolta's inclusion film camp teaching film arts to special needs folks. He said, "No, our first year was $2,000.00."

Well, I graduated with a $4,100.00 tab but my grandmother, may she rest in peace, had put away a bond for me way back when I was a tyke and—tyke, does anybody use tyke anymore? Oh, my age is showing. When I was a wee one and I had $2,000.00 that it had accumulated to that so I paid half of it down so I had a $2,100.00 tab. And at three percent a year over the course of 10 years at $19.00 a month, well, I can handle that.

And in so doing, I established credit so it was a good thing. So I paid off my loan and today, you know, $65,000.00 a year. I mean you look around this campus and I can understand where a lot of those dollars are going it's a beautiful thing. When I was going to school, here there was always a threat about breaking ground for what is now the Purnell Center and everything else but it never came to pass. And the campus is just spectacular it's really gorgeous.

[00:13:33] My first time back here, actually, was in the early '90s. I had gone back east to do a couple of summer stock productions they actually all turned out to be farces, Lend Me a Tenor, Rumors, Arsenic & Old Lace and Noises Off. And I had met a gal in Arsenic & Old Lace who I fell madly in love with and she lived in Lexington, Kentucky.

And by the time, we were finished in Orlando with this product of Arsenic she moved back to Lexington and I came up to Pennsylvania to the Mount Retina Theater to do Noises Off and the plan was for us to drive cross-country together. I would go pick her up in Lexington 'cause the guy that I did Arsenic for shipped my car to me. That was me taking the job was contingent upon him doing that 'cause I'd been down earlier to Clearwater and St. Pete doing the other two shows and went up to Orlando to audition for Arsenic.

I got the gig and I said, "Well, I'll take it if you ship my car 'cause I've always wanted to take cross-country trip." So the plan was then finish up Noises Off, travel over to Lexington, pick her up, and go back to Los Angeles. Well, in the meantime, she broke my heart. But before she broke my heart we had met halfway prior to my going into production and doing Noise Off and we met here in Pittsburgh and stayed in a hotel or motel somewhere and we spent a weekend.

And I brought her onto campus and it was my first time since graduating in '73 and that was kind of cool. This was before Purnell, of course, too. So that was really neat. I don't remember very much but we went Shadyside and just tooled around. But then in 2005, fade out, fade in, I'm now living in California, I moved to California in '76. The first national tour of The Producers was out and they
needed to replace somebody and they brought me in for the last seven and a half months.

And it came back to Pittsburgh. It had been in Pittsburgh earlier, it came back to Pittsburgh and Mary Mazziotti who's another alum, class of '72 I want to say, is a very successful artist who lives here in Pittsburgh, actually. She picked me up, we went to lunch, and then she dropped me off up here by the gym and I proceeded, Katherine, to walk across the campus bawling like a baby. I mean I was so full of emotion and Purnell, of course, had been up by that point, just looking around and taking it all in and remembering things and just getting really emotional.

I walked into Purnell and I poked my head into Elizabeth Brady's office and there she was. And we had a lovely chat and I actually said, "Bring me back here to teach. I teach improvisation. I teach theater games and I have since '79." That particular process is what I also use in teaching the film with Joey Travolta's summer film camps.

So we had that little talk and then she said, "Well, you wanna just take a look around?" I went downstairs and there was a production being done at the Al Checco Memorial Theater. So I poke my head in and just before they started, I was able to see production, how perfect was that? And I guess it was a senior project or some such thing but it was just a great day.

And then left and like I said, it was 2004 or 5 and it's funny, I, as much of a schmoozer as I may be, I don't know if you've gleaned that from this interview so far, and as much as I'm able to toot my own horn when it comes to getting jobs I still want to get them on my own merits not because we share an alma mater. I remember going to an audition for Hill Street Blues Bochco wasn't there at the time I think he'd already left but Greg Hoblit and some other folks were there.

And I remember going in the room and saying and I went to Carnegie. And they kind of looked at me like so what 'cause it happens all the time. And I just don't know how to do it other than maybe they see it on a resume or well, since I'm an alum, can you throw me a bone, I want to get it because I'm right for the gig. So it's always been tough for me and in kind of the same fashion, I haven't been really diligent about letting the alumni folk know here what I'm up to.

Sometimes friends have done that. My friend Lorie Hornsfeffer who I had gone to school with here who was my sixth grade girlfriend wound up coming here to Carnegie also my first year. She eventually went to Point Park for dance. She would oft times send a note in saying hey, Barry Pearl's in this, Barry Pearl's in that and I just kind of didn't keep up with it.

And I also don't keep up very often with the celebs that have come through these hallowed halls to say oh my gosh, Billy Port, of course, Billy. Cory, who I just saw do Bandstand, brilliant. And we shared that 'cause I saw it in the
program and my buddy Jeff Packard who plays a trombone in Bandstand brought me back to meet everybody and Cory and I had a lovely moment together.

But, you know, the big thing, if you will, for the lack of a better term in my career was that I co-starred in the film Grease, I played the role of Doody, one of the T-birds. And it's been a lovely, wonderful haunting all through my years. I'm really so glad that I was leave it, I could leave tomorrow and I've left my mark and it's all good, I can rest in peace.

But I don't play that up very much. I mean on social media, of course, I'll post pictures and people probably think that I live and breathe it but when it comes to school, I never really played it up with school to say hey, one of the T-birds, one of the folks in one of the most popular movies of all time came through these halls too.

So I just would stay away from it. However, a couple of months ago, Judith Light and Al Pacino were doing a production called And God Looked Away at the Pasadena Playhouse run by another alum, Sheldon Epps who's just retiring from that position of some 20 years. And they had this fundraiser a couple of months ago out in California and I went to it and some of the heads of the alum organization were there, Lindie and others.

And I just got to talking to them, I said, you know what, I'd love to come back, I'd been here in Pittsburgh for the last three years, now it's four, teaching these classes with Joey Travolta's inclusion film company right down the street at Winchester Thurston an then staying at the Hilton Garden Inn down on the other end. So we pass the school every single day to and from work.

And I thought you know, this is just so silly, I never step on campus. So I said to the gals, I said, "You know, we got to make this different." And so we had a wonderful conversation and they said, "Please, let us know. Come back, you'll come on campus and we'll show you around." And so I just took them up on it and decided to get off my duff and come up and do that.

And then you lovely folks have honored me by having me come and speak with you. And then Pamela Wiggly did an interview on me. So it's time to break that ice and these old bones can't be bippin' and boppin' too much longer so sitting in the director's chair has become something that I've been doing. And if there's a place for me here even to come back and do a master class or something I would love that. So I'm putting a plug in right now in this archival recording that I'd like to investigate that at some point in time because I believe that that process, the improve process, which we just had a little taste of in Morty Lawner class there really wasn't a formal improve class at the time.

[00:21:26] I started studying it in '76 when I moved out to California with Howard Storm who was with one of the most definitive improve groups of the time, The Committee, and I learned this process and began to teach it three
years later. I believe it is the foundation for all of the work that you do from scene study to cold reading because it really helps one get in touch with their intuitive selves and get out of their own way. It's just a fabulous tool especially for the audition process.

So it might be a conversation that I have with whomever. So that's what brought me here, basically, today. Have I answer all your questions in one question? I have a bad habit. But anyhow, so that's what two schools, that's my education, if that was your question.

Barbera: Well, I'd love to hear a little bit more about your experience at Carnegie Mellon. What did you study specifically and what was that like?

Pearl: [00:22:24] Again, when I said I wanted to study medicine back in the day I just wasn't strong enough academically so I relied on what I knew and that was theater. I got a BFA, Bachelor of Fine Arts, so it was drama. And all that that it came with speech with Edith Skinner and Jewel Walker was our movement teacher, our technique teachers, Charine _____ was one of our acting teachers and John Pasquin, Morty Lawner, Baker Salisbury, Earle Gister was the head of the department at the time.

I would never change those four years for anything I really grew up a lot. Even though, of course, being in the theater and around in that culture one does grow up awful fast even at a young age. But being on my own and fending for myself, meeting the people that I met for no other reason the connections that you make at school and I really feel remiss because I don't think that I solidified as many connections as I would have liked to have. But I got lifelong friends as a result of having come through here for those four years.

[00:23:41] Still friends of Rubin Pfeffer, Barry _____, of course, Louie Feiffer who was a friend before, Tony Mark, Tim Monich, Nancy Hendrickson, Diana _____ and Maria ______. I mean the list goes on and on and on. And not just from my class but from classes below and above me, Teddy Danson became a friend. Our circles don't cross very much anymore.

So for that alone – the studies were great. I would have liked to have paid more attention. It was tough. It was a class of '65 and only four of us graduated and a couple of transfer students. I think one or two students had dropped out and came back. But I felt that I really went away thinking maybe academic drama isn't really where it's at for people that you really need to do that when you graduate.

Get through, get your formal education, learn technique, certainly, you can get as much as you can but outside of the college is where you're really gonna – 'cause you're spending your money. You're honing in on that and you're not having to deal with building sets and going to a morning class at 9:00 in the morning, yoga class, where you can really focus.
So where others just were sponges with theater history and such but my brain just wasn't there. I just wanted to perform. And that's on me. I didn't do real well with Edith Skinner's class. I failed speech, actually, and took it again with Lynn George. It was just very hard for me my head was not as focused as others.

On the other hand, I had the career prior to coming in so I really was here and wanted to be here and wanted to enjoy the college experience and get as much as I could. Where others coming from high school this was the stepping-stone to New York or to Chicago or to Los Angeles. So they couldn't wait to bust out but I was like cool with being here and getting all I could out of this particular experience.

[00:25:58] There was some upheaval at the time in the first year with professors leaving and coming and going and also, kids were being dropped, in the midterms they were dropped. People went on to become dentists and real estate agents and others were let go. But it was as though if they couldn't get me through this four years then they might as well close up.

Actually, the principal at PCS said that to me at one point, "If we can't get you through these halls then we might as well close up shop 'cause you're the perfect example of the quote, unquote professional kid that we cater to. So I kind of knew what was there on the outside and during the summers between my freshman and sophomore, junior, senior year I worked. So I vented my – I got my artistic chops sharpened and could come back and could just enjoy school again.

But I do look back on it thinking that I didn't take as much of an advantage of it as I could have and I urge folks to study psychology. And study English and study history, study languages and just study the mind because the characters that we play are so diverse or hope we're going to play and you want to know what makes up these characters. What's the psychology of this particular character and that's why those particular studies, I think, are important and they weren't offered.

I mean they paid lip service to an English class, you know we read Ulysses and talked about that for a semester. We took the history of painting and design and sculpture, you know, and showing up for the class, you passed just showing up. But it was a time where they needed us to focus on the craft. And they wanted to make that as easy as possible on us because, again, there was so much else that we needed to focus on between speech and movement and voice and the acting techniques that they wanted just have us get those credits as quickly and as easily as possible.

So I understood that and that was great for me 'cause again I wasn't that academically inclined. This is my story others are different. I swear by the experience about having been here for that time and I look back on it fondly.

**Barbera:** What do you remember about the classes that you took?
Pearl:

[00:28:44] Some of them were really tough. I never felt as though I succeeded with Jewel Walker in his class, in his technique class. I always felt that there was something missing and the last thing you wanted to do with Jewel is look like you wanted to please him.

It's funny because in the summer of '71, I was asked to become part of the Pittsburgh Park Players it was their inaugural year and Jewel directed one of those shows and we became much closer in that year. And Jewel was an odd duck in that it was hard to get next to him and you wanted to 'cause there was some, well, he was brilliant, first of all, in United States the way he moved and the way he spoke.

But he was a tough cookie to get next to and it wasn't till as I got older and he saw that I was dodging the shrapnel, you know, and I stayed that he started to notice me more though we never worked together in school on a project we did the Park Players. We did this mime circus and it was fabulous. So his class was one that I loved but I never felt as though I firmly succeeded.

[00:30:00] Morty's class was a Meisner class that was a lot of fun there was a little improve there. Charine's class was a technique class as well, method, it was a method class, and a lot of fun, some of the exercises were great. The scene study class was great. I told you that in Edith's class it was just very tough I never got Speak with Distinction. I never got that book, I mean I got it but I never understood it.

The phonetic alphabet I learned but I will you this that what I did get, what did sink in by osmosis—really did sink in because I do use it and I do my very best to speak with distinction when I do. And when I hear other actors not using, not speaking trippingly off the tongue I'm able to bring it up and say, it's not ask, it's ask or whatever. It's not Tuesday it's Tuesday, whatever.

And also, Jules class the entire student body would meet from 9:00 to 9:45 every morning in the gym on the hard floor of the gym, and we would do yoga exercises including the sun exercise at the very top from 9:00 to 9:30. And from 9:30 to 9:45, Bob Parks led us through some vocal exercises, great vocal exercises and that began our day.

So when I started teaching privately or I started teaching improv I would use the sun exercise and do some of the yoga, some of the relaxation exercises at the beginning of all my classes. So I started to make a living using exercises that I had learned here so I brought that with me.

I had a breakdown scene; I had never down that I had always flown by the seat of my pants with that, but learning scene study and how to break it all down and character study and such. So those things were invaluable to me at the time.
Barbera: Can you talk a little bit more about the College of Fine Arts and what it was like to be a student there?

Pearl: [00:32:12] You know, I don’t think we ever realize until—only in retrospect where oh, my gosh, you went to Carnegie. I was kind of just inside doing it and it was not something that was apart from me. I'm told that I was there during the golden age of Carnegie, when Godspell began here and we were around that first year and I'll never forget there was a studio theater right next door to the old CFA. It was called “The Studio” and it was a cement bunker. It’s no longer there, I forget what they call that design, the numbers that are in kind of a snail, circular design. And that's odd to walk back there now and see that but it was this bunker. It had no running water. It was where the seniors did their senior projects; I think some of the master’s projects were done there as well. I did a couple of projects.

But I’ll never forget one evening I came in to the theater from upstage there was an entrance and exit upstage, walking downstage and there was David Haskell, may he rest in peace, was playing Judas in Godspell. He did it in the movie as well. And he was sitting in the front row with his feet up on the stage 'cause it was that close and not that high up, looking very despondent.

And I walked over I said, "What's wrong, David?" And he said something about how awful this show is that they're doing and everybody just couldn’t, they were done with it, and it was going to be opening that night. Or maybe that was their final dress and it was going to be opening the following day. Well, then it opened and the rest is history.

I’ll never forget sitting – it became so popular when I saw it – I don’t know if I saw the opening. It might have been after it had opened because the word went out and the only seats that were available were on stage behind the cyclone fence that was the set. And I watched it from upstage left behind that cyclone fence along with other people. And it was a huge, huge hit. So it was that time that I bounced around this campus.

As soon as I got out of the car that drove me here from the airport I'll never forget, I drove past ivy-covered walls and it just screamed university. It screamed college to me. I was in college.

Funny story, there were a bunch of us that were flying over from New York on that particular day to start school in August and I sat down on the plane and next to his guy, Andy, I want to say his name was Andy Gordon. He wasn't a dramat, he was, I think, in design sculpture. And we kind of struck up a conversation and when we were getting out of the plane he goes, "You have a ride to the campus?" I said, "No." He goes, "Well, I've got a couple people picking me up would you like a ride with your luggage?" I said, "Well, yeah, my gosh, yeah."
So I remember I was getting on the escalator going up at the airport and this kind of nerdy guy is at the bottom of the escalator saying, "Yeah, you guys going to Carnegie Mellon do you want to share a ride?" And I turn around and said, "No, I got a ride. Thanks." Of course, the way he tells it it's I turned around and went, "No". Okay. So I get to campus and by the way, initially I was supposed to be living in Moorewood Gardens but the last minute we get this letter saying that no, I'm in Donner Hall. All right, I'm not sure if I like that but I'm not sure that I don't.

So drive to Donner, get out, go into my room and who is standing there but that nerdy little guy that asked me to share a cab with him. I thought oh gosh, one room in Donner. I put my things down and I ran back to I think it was either Boss or Hamershlag to where Andy was I said you never going to guess who my roommate is this nerdy little guy that I at the airport.

So I go back and of course, you'll have to understand it was the '60s and in the '60s, we imbibed upon mind-altering stuff. And I had a little pipe and I remember taking out my pipe and kind of flaunting it in front of his face saying, "Now, where can I hide this and oh, maybe I'll put it behind this mirror here." And he says, "Oh, I do that too." To let me know that he was hip 'cause he was one of me, one of us.

[00:36:42] Well, we became the best of friends, Rubin Pfeffer and we're friends to this day. And he actually wound up marrying Lurie Horns who was my sixth grade girlfriend who also had – she waited a year 'cause she graduated a year before me in high school. And he wound up marrying her and they had four children and they're divorced now. So my initial experience was oh gosh, really and then it became just fabulous.

So yeah, once again, the people that you meet. But the College of Fine Arts was very separate from the school of technology and it was like in high school—I went to school with a lot of girls that went to American Ballet Theater and Joffrey and it was a culture in and of itself. So though we saw these girls and some young guys in class we really didn't associate because they had different hours.

Well the same thing here at Carnegie we didn't associate with many of the tech folk 'cause we were an animal in and of ourselves, and most of us didn't belong to frats or sororities.

I think there were two dramats that I knew of one guy and one gal. Clyde Liggens was the guy and I forget the name of the gal who I called the "alphadappacrappa girl". And she was a member of a sorority. But we just couldn't there was just too much. They had us up really early in the morning, classes during the day, and then either rehearsing or crew, we had to work crew and the scene shop we had in here. Now walking around and seeing the facilities that you have now, my goodness, it was like the Stone Age by comparison.
Barbera: So you talked a little bit about Godspell I’m wondering if you can tell me a little bit more about some of the other productions that you maybe saw or participated in while you were a student?

Pearl: [00:38:36] Sure. That was another thing too, I never got to do a real meaty show or part on the main stage. I don’t know why that is. I never got cast in some real, maybe they didn’t take me serious. I think when students found out that I was into musical theater it was – because musical theater really wasn’t a happening thing at the time.

The first show I can remember them doing, a musical, I was actually out on the road. Well, this is a whole other story. I wasn’t at school at the time my first semester of my senior year I wasn’t here. I was being given credit for working with the Chicago Free Street Theater. I’ll tell you about that. So I heard they had done Gaslight I want to say and I think that was a musical but Don Simeone was in it I’ll never forget that.

So when I got back to school they had done She Loves Me however, I’m wanting to say that maybe She Loves Me was the year before but the only mainstage that I did was She Loves Me. I played the waiter who had to burp on cue in She Loves Me. And we had done my senior year, oh, I'd done a restoration, Way of the World where I played Whitwood and my friend, Sheldon Epps played Petulant.

So we’d done that and my senior year Larry _____ was directing and he was, I think, our acting teacher as well and there weren’t many of us, as I said. The playwriting class this guy, I forget his name, wrote a play called The Ballad of Morrissey Clutch Rider. And it was about a guy who was conceived and born in a car who spends his entire life trying to break his father’s record for miles driven in a lifetime.

And the only through line character other than Morrissey Clutch Rider was the narrator. And I remember being dressed in this turtleneck knit pantsuit with elephant bellbottoms and some kind of medallion around my neck it was just awful. And white patent leather shoes, I think. And it was just the narrator it wasn't really a whole lot of research and I felt a little cheated in that way.

[00:41:03] But some of the productions that I did do, in those four years, our freshman project, gosh, I can’t remember what the freshman project was but sophomore project was Under Milkwood, did a great production of Under Milkwood. Was in a great production of Heinrich Gogol's The Overcoat, which was a senior production by Julian Lopez ______.

I did a production of Measure for Measure that I think Julian also directed. I did that with Ted Danson and Brad O'Hare, may he rest in peace, and Rob Phelps, Randi Danson, Ted's first wife. The Restoration as I had mentioned. And did a
great production of Three Penny Opera, no, it was Beggar’s Opera that we had done in the studio stage.

And in our sophomore year I kind of forget what was going on at the time but we had to do our sophomore project on the main stage. So John Pasquin directed that. It was Camino Real and I played Kilroy, the lead. It was a fabulous production and John just did a great job putting it together. I remember there were two scaffolds that was basically the set, two large scaffolds that would roll around. And I got to jump off the scaffold into the arms of people below, my fellow castmates. And just it was a wonderful, wonderful experience as I recall but it wasn't really main stage it was our sophomore project, again, because I think the studio stage was busy with other stuff, a couple of the other projects.

And what else can I remember? Things that I've seen The Devil's was fabulous. I wasn't in that but I remember Bob ____ was in that, Bob Miller when he was in college. Well, the first thing I software here was Misanthrope. Who directed it was it Henry Beecher that directed that? I can't remember but it was very staid and one could fall asleep. Moliere in rhyme, oh, just not my cup of punch but I understood it was college and you had to just try a little bit of this, little bit of that.

[00:43:22] But again, no musical until now, of course, there's a whole musical theater department, which I think is terrific. And, of course, therefore, there was no training for that kind of theater. And also, you weren't prepared to go out and get those kinds of jobs like commercials that would sustain you until you got a really good theatrical role on television, film, or the stage. And so there wasn't any emphasis on that kind of work. A commercial workshop, for instance.

Even cold reading classes, audition technique, which they may have now, I don't know, you would know better than me. So there was no emphasis on those kinds of disciplines so we felt a little cheated, but I don't know any school at the time that offered that sort of thing.

Barbera: You talked a little bit about how CFA is different than when you attended, now that you're back at the university how has campus changed?

Pearl: [00:44:35] Well, my goodness, first of all, it's much larger. What, we went from 4,000 students to 13,000 students you got going. And it was funny, was it yesterday I was here being interviewed by Pam Wiggly and I had to go to the men's room and I walked past a class of dancers they were just being released and there were lockers and big studios. And I thought my goodness, it has really grown.

And of course, I'm this old, fuddy-duddy walking by there and thinking oh, this was my school but it's not my school. I remember Jewel Walker saying to me at one point, "This really isn't your school." Said to a bunch of us, "You think this is your school this isn't your school." And at the time, what are you talking about;
of course, this is my school. And then I came to learn what he meant by that. We just pass through here on our way to something else.

So walking here today, walking across what was the cut, which is, of course, now where that wonderful sculpture weight of the sky and where the old Skibo used to be and walking across this lawn in front of the Hunt Library where we had our graduation ceremony. I don’t know if they still do that there by those arches that’s at the old CFA, right, is that that building? Yeah. And just stopping and looking around and feeling a part of it again and yet, at the same time, not.

Living with both of those that dichotomy going on at the same time is kind of an odd feeling. Well, again, the size. Well, the campus, of course, it’s not the size of the campus so much as all the new buildings that are on campus. Beautiful. And I was given a tour, the design department, the scene shop, your costume department, the brand new stage, my goodness. We were working out of Kresge of course, at the time.

[00:46:22] And I’ll never forget, I ran sound for Pericles and having to listen to the Carmina Burana all the time and not being able to see the stage because we were sequestered in this tiny little room. Or running lights for it was Larry piece. The set was a big TV screen and there was a huge tongue I remember that came out and retracted and I had to run lights on an old Eisenhower board. So there must have been about at least 10 rows of dials that went across affecting maybe 20 instruments.

And you would preset them with your thumbs and the dials, of course, had ridges so your thumbs got really eaten up presetting all those rows. And then, of course, one row was a preset when it would it go I'd have to reset that and this old board, but that's what they had at the time. Now all I have to do is speak to it and the lights change so you know, technologies changed and those differences. I'm glad for the new students that have these conveniences and this gorgeous, amazingly gorgeous facility they’re so lucky.

Barbera: Can we talk a little bit about Pittsburgh?

Pearl: Sure.

Barbera: What was it like when you were a student?

Pearl: [00:47:47] Well, let's just say you could cut the air with a knife. It was when J&L Steel, I think, was still happening and the air was it was hardly breathable. The smell of Sulphur. So that and the winters were cold and snowy. But I do remember walking up with some lovely dramat gal from a rehearsal or some such thing we were walking up by Schenley Park behind the CFA.

And the snow had fallen and the sound was dead and it was really romantic, the moon, I think, was out and walking across this snow laden expanse on the way to where she was staying in one of the Bonavita houses. Bonavita had a bunch
of houses that were used as apartments for us. I stayed in one my senior year. So that was kind of cool but the air, like I said was hardly breathable.

We didn't travel away from campus very much. I remember when we were at the dorms we went down as far as maybe Craig Street. There was a wonderful Middle Eastern restaurant called [Ali Baba] it had great hummus and there was McDonald's there. So we would go there occasionally and then up into Shadyside, the gazebo, the deli up there. And the movie theater I remember seeing Five Easy Pieces and I also remember seeing Fantasia for the first time up in that movie theater.

[00:49:29] And I didn't tell you about the summer prior to my senior year. My girlfriend at the time, Robin Alexander, she and I got a job with the Chicago Free Street Theater in Chicago bringing live theater all up and down Illinois free of charge to those folks viewing. And bringing theater to the folks that had never even seen theater before in some real dicey areas and some very affluent areas. The program was an outgrowth of the Illinois Arts Council run by Patrick Henry III a descendental of the give me liberty or give me death Patrick Henry.

And that summer was amazing in Illinois and that fall we were scheduled to go to Europe being sponsored by the Grad International Theater Festival so we toured all of Yugoslavia. The Espace Cardin, Pierre Cardin's theater we were sponsored there in Paris. And then, we took a week in Belgium, Brussels and worked a theater there.

So the school gave me credit. I had to, well, what I wound up doing is an 8mm, documentary and a sound recording of a diary that I made and that acted as my – I got credit for a semester of my senior year. So I came back to Carnegie in January of '73 real refreshed. I couldn't wait to get back to school and everybody else by that point was oh, just a couple of months from graduation, bring May on as fast as you can.

So the interesting thing here is that while I was working with Chicago Free Street Theater I worked with a fellow by the name of John Lansing, fellow actor who eventually became a writer and producer of Walker, Texas Ranger. He has a couple books out now Blonde Cargo, Devil's Necktie he's doing very well. But he was an understudy in the first national tour of Grease stage play.

[00:51:39] And a preface to this, I had friends that I'd gone to school with here Drew Burns and a bunch of other people who were transfer students from California who kept telling me how much I reminded them of their friend Michael Lembeck. Well, John Lansing comes through Pittsburgh in this show and he calls me and says, "Why don't you come down and see the show? You'd enjoy it and there are even roles in it you can play." So yeah, fine.

I go down and I realize that Michael Lembeck is in the role Sonny in the show. Well, I can't wait to see this guy, I hear all about his guy. So the way it was staged after the opening number the character comes in backwards, ruining the
fact that he's got Miss Ol' Lady Lynch for English. And he's waving his card, his class card and he turns around with the line “son of a bitch, I got old lady Lynch for English again she hates my guts.”

Well, when this guy turns around and I look at him it was like watching myself. This was Michael Lembeck. And I thought my gosh, John Lansing was right there is a role for me in this I got to get on the horn to my agent, which I did the following day, got to get me an audition for this. They're going to be doing other companies, whatever, replacements.

[00:52:54] About a week later, I got a general audition. So I flew into New York, auditioned, came back, and about a week after that my agent calls and they said they want to see you again immediately Michael Lembeck has broken his ankle and they're interested in having you come up to replace him for the time he's out. But you got to come back into New York and audition.

Now Pat Birch was the choreographer who I'd worked with in 1967 and '68 prior to coming to school doing You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown I'd played Schroeder in the Boston Company so she familiar with my work. So I flew back in I think I might have taken a Monday off, flew back in, auditioned, and got the gig and they wanted to take me immediately to Toronto it was at the time. And I said, "I got two weeks of school my senior year to finish," so this had to be in May sometime, beginning of May.

They said, "All right, you finish school and then you can join us in Detroit." So I did that and they flew me up to Detroit and in the meantime, they had put in their understudy Tommy Girard who understudied a couple of roles. So when they brought me up all I did was concentrate on the role of Sonny in case anybody else went down, Tommy would move into that role and then I'd move into Sonny.

Now at the time, the other characters played by John Travolta, he played the role of Doody, the name of the character that I played in the movie it wasn't really the same character. Jerry Zaks, a very successful director who's now doing Bronx Tale with DiNiro on Broadway, he was playing Kenickie. Marilu Henner was playing Marty, Jeff Conoway, the late Jeff Conoway and my dear old friend, Jeff, was playing the role of Zuko. He played Kenickie, of course, in the movie and then, of course, John played Zuko in the movie, as you know.

They were all in the show and I studied real hard and I was in the wings doing the numbers very night and really worked on that role of Sonny. So towards the end of those three weeks I went to Jerry Zaks who was playing Kenickie and I said, "Hey, you might feigning illness here so that I can get a chance to go on?" And Jerry said, "Sure, if stage management says it's okay." And I thought oh, that's not going to happen but yeah, go ahead. So he comes back and he says, "Yeah, they said no." So okay, thanks anyway.
Well that Saturday, May 19 of 1973 in my hotel room I get a call from the stage manager saying you're going on the matinee Jerry Zaks is sick. Well, it might have all been put together that way but they didn't want me to be part of that ruse, who knows. I never asked Jerry whether or not and I've seen him on occasion since I actually have to ask him if he remembers that.

So I got to go on, step on stage at the Fisher Theater May 19, of '73 as Sonny. Four years to the day later, I got the film, May 19 of 1977. And by the way, we're 40 years—we're celebrating the 40-year anniversary or making the film right now. Of course, next year, 2018 will be 40-year anniversary of the release.

So had it not been for me being here at Carnegie at that time this whole Grease thing never would have happened, my involvement in the play and maybe it wouldn't have happened for the, I mean, you know, things happen for a reason, there are no mistakes in the universe. So just to wrap that up, they allowed me on the 14th of May to come back to graduate so that had actually happened prior to me going on stage in the role that particular May 19.

So I did fly back, graduated here, and again, walking over here and walking over that area I remember my mother and my Aunt Rose, may they both rest in peace, my friend, Jim Braha, and I took pictures standing there right at the corner, the corner of the building near the bottom of where you can enter CFA. And just having those memories as I'm walking across here and us throwing our caps in the air and all that wonderful stuff.

So I thank you for, again, for allowing me to go on here like this 'cause it's bringing back great memories. It was just the best time, just the best time.

Barbera:

So can you talk a little bit more about what your time at Carnegie Mellon has meant to you?

Pearl:

Well, as I just told you, this Grease thing that has followed me around all these years had its genesis here my association with the play so that's a result of me being here. And as I mentioned before, the whole culture, the meeting the friend, the family that you develop here. The teachers, the professors, I should say, I remain friendly with many of the professors after graduating. Earl Gister who was the head of the department, Morty _____ as I mentioned.

They actually had come to see me I want to say I was in Chicago doing Grease I want to say. And Jewel who with Sandy Robbins went on to Milwaukee I want to say or no, where's the Pabst? Pabst Theater is in Milwaukee. I had gone to Pabst Theater to do with a play with Gabe Kaplan for a week, Groucho we did for a week and they came to see the show. So I maintained these relationships even with the professors afterwards and that was kind of cool to have that outside of the culture that was school 'cause you felt like you grew up and now you can be their buddies.
And they took a great interest and I appreciated that. And the classes were tough. It forms you. It gets into your bones and there were a lot of folks that came away with not such a great experience those people that were either let go or decided to leave, obviously, their experience was not as mine was. But we look back fondly and we have great memories and great stories that we tell when we get together.

And those relationships are indelibly ingrained in the psyche of the world, if you will; if that makes any sense that, we're inextricably bound by having come to Carnegie Mellon University.

Barbera: So you graduated in May of 1973.

Pearl: Correct.

Barbera: And I'm curious, can you tell me a little bit more about your career since then, what challenges you've faced, if you had any favorite roles that you've taken?

Pearl: [00:59:38] Sure. As I had mentioned, I had a career before coming to school, Broadway Bye Bye Birdie, Oliver, did a play with Jackie Mason called A Teaspoon Every Four Hours in '69 just before coming to school so I had all that going on. After graduating this whole Grease thing happened right away the couple of weeks in the national tour but I was laid off after the three weeks that I came in to replace Michael Lembeck.

And I was kind of devastated 'cause I had $300.00 in my pocket and my girlfriend who had signed up again for another stint with the Chicago Free Street Theater that wasn't going well. And there wasn't a position for me there with the Street Theater 'cause I had turned them down to do this short stint with the national tour of Grease.

And so I was faced with having to go back to New York, midtown Manhattan, back to a one-bedroom apartment with my mother, a place that I had left four years prior. And I had $300.00 like I said to my name and here I am back there. And I thought to myself afterwards wow; thank God, for her she was there to cushion me. And I remember I got a job in an answering service one of the very few civilian jobs that I've ever had. I slung hamburgers here at Skibo. I drove a cab for a little while until I got robbed in New York and I had this answering service job, those are the only three civilian jobs that I ever had.

And my life that summer of '73 was the worst. My girlfriend didn't want to be with me and we were breaking up. Until the end of that summer of '73, I got a job at the Star Playhouse near my hometown in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Two gigs I did What the Butler Saw and Butterflies are Free. And while I was there, I got a phone call again from the stage manager of Grease, by this point they were now and this is the end of August I want to say, they were now in Los Angeles. They were continuing on to Chicago and then ultimately, Toronto and
Michael Lembeck was leaving the show 'cause that's where he lived would I come and replace him.

And Chicago was where I wanted to be that whole summer because my girlfriend was there. Well, son of a gun, if I wasn't being brought to Chicago right after that. And then, we had not been speaking but we did reconnect and she wound up staying with me for the eight months while I was there. And then we broke up and I went on to Toronto with the show.

[01:02:10] So the Grease think happened and then I came back to New York and continued to do a lot more theater and had always contended that the only way I'd go out to California is if I had a job that would take me out there 'cause it's very tough to go out there on spec.

Well, I was doing a show in New York at the time and making a decent salary and while I was doing that, I'd also gotten a pilot called Best Friends that was directed by the late Jerry Paris who directed every episode of Happy Days. And was Jerry the dentist on The Dick Van Dyke Show. So he directed this piece and Alan Sacks had produced it and co-wrote it with was it Lincoln Myerson, I can't remember the gentleman's name but Alan Sacks created Welcome Back, Kotter, which of course, starred John Travolta. And it was from that that Alan saw him and wanted him to play Zuko in the movie of Grease.

So I went out to do this pilot, in fact, I didn't get it at first. I was waiting for a week and somebody else a week later they call me in the middle of the afternoon and they say we're not happy with the guy we want you to get on the next plane. And I remember calling Sheldon Epps who was living in Teaneck at the time who had a car come here and take me to the airport I'm going to California to do this pilot, which I did and I made a lot of connections there. And I was told come back out, you know even if the pilot doesn't sell you'll work out here.

So Jerry had actually offered me his home with his family in the Palisades because the pilot didn't sell. And I just packed up lock, stock, and barrel felt it was the right thing. I get out there and move in with him and a week and a half later my first audition I landed a television series CPO Sharkey with Don Rickles. So again, it was the right thing to do. The universe was providing.

[01:03:59] However, a year later, I was written out of the show of CPO Sharkey and I was devastated. They let me know my birthday. We hadn't been given a pickup date so we didn't know if we were being picked up or not. But I knew because they called my agent to say I wasn't being picked up. They were dropping my character and I was just I ran crying to Jerry Paris down at the Paramount Studios. He was doing a pilot too called Blanskey's Beauties and Karen Kay was in that. I don't think she graduated from here but she went to Carnegie also the first year I want to say.
And he said, "Look, you being written out of this it could be the blessing in disguise." But you know at the time, the light at the end of the tunnel looks like a truck coming at you. And he told me, he said, "Look, Barry, back in the day I did *The Untouchables* with Robert Stack the first season and they wrote me out and I was devastated. However, had that not happened I wouldn't have been asked to play Jerry the dentist in *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, which let to my directing career. Sheldon Leonard, the producer allowed me to direct and the rest is history there." I mean he's directing *Happy Days* the most successful at the time.

I said, "Yeah, well that's well and good." Well, Katherine, had that not happened, had I not been written out of *CPO Sharkey* I wouldn't have been available to do *Grease*. So again, something happens for a reason.

[01:05:20] So then, you know did that series, did the movie, a lot of other theater, a bunch of other films and television. And then, I started directing. I've been directing the last couple of years and not only that, but my improv, my teaching improv has led me to what I'm doing now, a particular path that has become very clear to me. One of John's older brothers, Joey Travolta, who also had a career at one time he was a singer, and dancer and actor, a recording artist—his passion was special needs.

And so he went to school. He got his doctorate, actually, and he opened up this company years ago called Inclusion Films, where he shepherds folks on the spectrum of autism, Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy, Asperger's. And he has found that their ability to express through the arts is really a thing and how they come out of themselves. It's amazing to watch the growth of these folks because they're able to use the art to communicate.

So he's got four or five brick and mortar year round schools. Sacramento, Livermore, Bakersfield, San Diego, and there's one other I'm forgetting. But in the summers, he has been going out to four or five different cities in the course of the summer, doing these two week programs where three of us teachers go into a city for two weeks at a time and we develop three seven-minute films with the students, the campers, plus a one and a half minute PSA.

And each year there's a different theme. This year the theme is simple acts of kindness, so our films and our PSA, the public service announcements deal with just that. And we've aligned with the Bentonville Arkansas Film Festival where these PSAs will be screened next year. And Walmart is behind us, the Only Good News Network is behind us.

[01:07:33] So now it's the fourth year, the work is so rewarding, and I realize that maybe this is the culmination, this is where all of this stuff has led me to this particular path. And each of the teachers direct the films. The kids write them, they star in them, the produce them, they design them. And we have a full camera, three camera operators cameras, and an editor who's just a brilliant talent, Chris ______. So he's with us editing the films as we go.
And we do this two-week camp, at the end of the two weeks there's a documentary that has been made from a lot of the film that's been taken, B roll that's been taken through the course of the two weeks plus clips from each of our films and our PSAs. And we come back time and time again and these campers just go nuts for us.

So that's what I've been spending a lot of my time doing along, of course, then every once in a while I'll do a little project like *Grease Live* that we did last year. I was at the Paramount Fox in which I was able to sort of go back home with my dear Didi Conn who played Frenchie in the original film. She played Vi the Joan Blondell role with whom she had the scene before beauty school dropout. And then they created a character called Mr. Weaver who was a producer. Mario Lopez's character he played Vince Fontaine so I'm Vince Fontaine's producer and I'm traveling the country to find the best high school in order for the national Bandstand contest to take place and of course, that become Rydell High.

So Didi and I got to do this with Tommy Kale directing who, of course, directed *Hamilton*. And we got to rub elbows with the brilliant Tommy Kale and Tom Kitten and David ____ and the set designer, and just some wonderful people.

And then, of course, Aaron _____ and Hutchens and Jordan Fisher and Huff and those wonderful kids. And it was so great because they just had such a great feeling for Didi and me. When we got on set, we were treated like royalty. I had a tiny role. Didi had a little larger role. But they just loved us and we loved them.

What else could you do at this point? Okay, so we had the 40th year anniversary coming up next year. I don't know if could even top what we did with *Grease Live* it was such a wonderful coming home.

[01:10:05] And so I've had these wonderful – I've been part of these wonderful phenomena. Barney the Dinosaur, I played Professor Tinkerputt in the first, it was a PBS show, of course, and it was the first time you saw Barney with these production values. We did an NBC primetime special *Bedtime with Barney Imagination Island* in the early '90s and that became a live show that we toured nationally and internationally for two and half years with me playing this role of Professor Tinkerputt.

And so the kids, of course, you're performing to 6,000 kids twice a day in these huge arenas the Tacoma Dome, the Radio City Music Hall, Anaheim Convention Center. We may have played Pittsburgh too and I can't remember what venue we might have played here. But to reach out and touch those kids and then, of course, with the *Grease* thing to be part of both of those things they're gifts from the forces that are greater than ourselves.

**Barbera:** Unfortunately, we are almost out of time but are there any additional stories or memories you would like to share?
Pearl: Oh, gosh, there probably are and I maybe myself tapped out and that is something for me to say that I probably could go on. Just, once again, to thank you guys for doing this it's very important that we are all remembered. I think that our missions or our mission, our grand mission is to leave our mark in this life.

And I am often reminded of a quote that if you get an e-mail from me you will see a quote at the bottom of the e-mail from a man by the name of Frederick Buechner. And what it basically states and I'm pulling it up on my phone right now and I'm vamping have you noticed until my phone boots up that best describes I think, certainly, why I feel I'm here that I live by and I want to leave as a legacy.

Again, to work with these kids on the spectrum, kids and adults on the spectrum makes you feel like getting up every day is well worth your while when you can bring such joy and love into the hearts and the minds of all kinds of folks.

The quote that I'm referring to goes like this and I leave you with this "The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life and that in turn another until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt." Frederick Buechner

Barbera: That's beautiful. I want to thank you for coming in today it's been a real pleasure. Thank you.

Pearl: Thank you, back at you.

[End Interview]