



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK  
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

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**Interview with John Parker**

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**Interviewer:** Stephanie Deutsch  
**Transcriber:** Cynthia Skelton

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

**DEUTSCH:** Hello, this is Stephanie Deutsch on February 5, 2005, recording an interview with John Parker. The interview is taking place at my house, 500 East Capitol Street NE. This is Stephanie Deutsch. I'm with John Parker. John, would you just say something?

**PARKER:** Good morning, Stephanie.

**DEUTSCH:** Okay, going to turn your mic down a teeny bit. Okay. Let's start at the beginning. Where did you grow up?

**PARKER:** I grew up in Northwest Washington in a little pocket called Petworth.

**DEUTSCH:** I know Petworth because of the library.

**PARKER:** That was right next to my mother's alma mater, Roosevelt High School. Yeah, went there many a day.

**DEUTSCH:** Mm hmm. And so did you go to DC public schools?

**PARKER:** I did for a portion of my education. I went to parochial school for ten years and finished my last two years at Calvin Coolidge High School.

**DEUTSCH:** And what did you parents do? What was your family?

**PARKER:** My father was in transportation and sightseeing. And my mother ... her first career was a housewife, and her second career was ... she retired from Providence Hospital as a ... like a ward secretary.

**DEUTSCH:** Now, when you say transportation and sightseeing, what ... tourist industry?

**PARKER:** Sightseeing, yeah, tourist, that's a better word for it. Tourist industry.

**DEUTSCH:** What did he do?

**PARKER:** Tours of Washington.

**DEUTSCH:** Uh huh, cool.

**PARKER:** He did the monuments, the White House back in the day, when you could ...

**DEUTSCH:** Back in the day, yeah?

**PARKER:** ... Back in the drive in, let you people out, you know? Yeah, he did that. He had a partner and they did that forever.

**DEUTSCH:** So you grew up knowing ... going on lots of tours? Did you go on lots of tours? (laughing)

**PARKER:** Lots. Lots. I was the in-house tour guide forever.

**DEUTSCH:** That must have been fun.

**PARKER:** It got old. (laughs) Depending on who the clients were.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah. And what was that neighborhood like? Was that ...

**PARKER:** Petworth was a middle class neighborhood. Very racially and culturally diverse. Geez, you know, old couples, young families, primarily families, you know. Lots of kids, lots of alley football and baseball, basketball, and you could always get a pick up game in a heartbeat. But everybody was pretty much in the same pot, so to speak, in terms of economics, and, you know, so on. But there was, you know, just a vast spread of different, you know, religious beliefs, etc. etc. It was a nice mix.

**DEUTSCH:** And were you big into athletics then?

**PARKER:** My introduction, I think, to athletics, was twofold. Number one, I had an uncle who was a diehard Washington Senators fan. Season tickets back in the day when the men wore the fedoras and the gabardine suits and overcoats, so forth ...

**DEUTSCH:** Wait a minute, I got to get this. Back in the day ... of fedoras?

**PARKER:** Uh, you know, the fedora hats, gabardine suits ...

**DEUTSCH:** To the games?

**PARKER:** Oh yes. Suits, ties, you know, this is what the men wore to the games back then, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** And so did you go with him?

**PARKER:** I did. He turned me on to baseball, and I used to go with him for late Saturday and Sunday afternoon games. (Long pause). Really wasn't able ... eligible to participate in organized sports until I was, I guess, 10 or 11—whatever age you are in fifth grade. And I kind of got really engulfed in sports, quite frankly, as a refuge. My father was an alcoholic, and because of that, I just buried myself in sports.

**DEUTSCH:** Is it okay for me to say that in the article?

**PARKER:** Oh yeah, oh, it's fine. It's no secret. I didn't know at the time—of course, I didn't know why I was doing it, but I really enjoyed it.

**DEUTSCH:** You just didn't want to be home.

**PARKER:** Yeah, I didn't want to be home. And I knew I really enjoyed it. I really couldn't get enough of it. So the push was twofold. You know, whatever gets you there sometimes doesn't make any sense, but at any rate, it was very enjoy—and you know, we were always doing something out in the alleys, or something, sports anyway, so. It was kind of a natural.

**DEUTSCH:** This is kind of a sideline, but I've heard people who participated in sports as kids talk about the fact that today's kids always do the organized sports but they don't have that experience that you talk about, of pick-up sports. Of the kids ... the kids making, you know, kind of making the rules themselves. That it's kind of a loss.

**PARKER:** It is a loss because what you lose there, I mean, you don't know it when you're a kid but you're really developing some leadership and organizational skills, imagination beyond belief, and you become somewhat of a young historian of various sports because you emulate people. You know who they are, you read about them or you listen on the radio, and then you transfer those imaginary things into your own pick-up game or sport or whatever you're doing in the alley, or whatever, but ... I mean, we had neighborhoods competing against neighborhoods.

**DEUTSCH:** So when you were in fifth grade what sport did you start with?

**PARKER:** Everything.

**DEUTSCH:** Everything.

**PARKER:** Yeah, in school ... in school it was always football, basketball, baseball, track and field. You could do all four. There was enough time, and ...

**DEUTSCH:** Football, basketball, baseball, and track and field.

**PARKER:** Mm hmm. The whole gamut.

**DEUTSCH:** (laughs) So you did it all?

**PARKER:** Pardon?

**DEUTSCH:** You did them all?

**PARKER:** I did. Did them all. Everybody did them all. All the guys that played sports. And the girls.

**DEUTSCH:** Okay, so you went to ... which high school?

**PARKER:** Calvin Coolidge.

**DEUTSCH:** And then college?

**PARKER:** University of Maryland.

**DEUTSCH:** Sports there?

**PARKER:** I was a non-roster fall baseball participant, which basically means I was filling in holes. Good glove, no bat. You know. When it gets to that level it's generally good glove, no bat.

**DEUTSCH:** Good glove, no bat?

**PARKER:** So ... Yeah

**DEUTSCH:** [unclear]

**PARKER:** I wasn't on an NCAA roster, I was just kind of a fall walk-on player, and we had fall ball back then. Where the local schools participated. Just developmental practice stuff, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** So that must have been fun?

**PARKER:** It was. It was fun. I mean, you know, I would have loved to have gone further, but, yeah. Good glove, no bat.

**DEUTSCH:** (laughs) So what happened after college?

**PARKER:** I went up to live with Uncle Sam at Fort Dix for two years.

**DEUTSCH:** (laughs)

**PARKER:** I got drafted into the Army.

**DEUTSCH:** What year was this?

**PARKER:** I was drafted in 1970, and spent two years at Fort Dix. I never left, thank God. I was actually recruited by special services and ended up playing, actually, fast pitch softball for Fort Dix for two years.

**DEUTSCH:** (laughing)

**PARKER:** Different game, but ...

**DEUTSCH:** Was it, like, a league? I mean ...

**PARKER:** It was ... I mean ... inter-army. It was ... First Army encompasses the whole east coast. So it was ... it was the Fort Dix post team, and we participated throughout First Army tournaments, etc. Yeah.

**DEUTSCH:** Okay. So after Fort Dix ...

**PARKER:** After Fort Dix I came home and I taught elementary physical education in a little school out in Laurel, Maryland, St. Mary's of the Mills, and I taught there for a year, and then I got a job across the street at the high school, Pallotti Catholic High School.

**DEUTSCH:** What was it called?

**PARKER:** P-A-L-L-O-T-T-I. Pallotti.

**DEUTSCH:** High School.

**PARKER:** And taught there for two years.

**DEUTSCH:** Phys ed?

**PARKER:** Phys ed and science, and coached.

**DEUTSCH:** And what had you majored in, in college?

**PARKER:** Physical Education.

**DEUTSCH:** Okay, majored in teaching phys ed and science.

**PARKER:** And coaching.

**DEUTSCH:** Coaching, yeah.

**PARKER:** And after that, that summer I guess, yeah, I got a job at Gallaudet University and let's see, 13 years later—I was the athletic director there—and 13 years later I got a real estate license. However later it was, yeah, and that's the tale end.

**DEUTSCH:** Just ready for something different?

**PARKER:** Yeah. You know, it was the kind of thing where you really, you know, you have to have a full tank of gas and energy for the student athletes every day and when you lose that energy, it's time to go. So it was a real easy decision on one hand, to do that. And while I was at Gallaudet I also attended AU [American University] and got my master's degree in phys ed. So.

**DEUTSCH:** So then you got your real estate license, and were you living on the Hill during this time you were at Gallaudet?

**PARKER:** I was. I was. I moved to Capitol Hill in 1980 so I could reduce the commute to Gallaudet. It worked out real well. And it was 1980.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, I remember that.

**PARKER:** Yeah.

**DEUTSCH:** Where'd you live?

**PARKER:** Lincoln Park.

**DEUTSCH:** Same place you are now?

**PARKER:** No. No, I lived at 1121 Lincoln Park. We bought a big old rooming house. (laughs) Yeah. And then we later separated and divorced and then I bought my house in 1985 where I'm living now. So I've been at my house for, this will be the 20<sup>th</sup> year.

**DEUTSCH:** Wow.

**PARKER:** I know, I can't believe it! God, 20 years.

**DEUTSCH:** So, let's do the sports strand first, and then we'll go back to the real estate strand.

**PARKER:** Okay.

**DEUTSCH:** So when did—so when you made the transition to real estate was there sports in your life? I mean, I'm sure you were still a fan, watching, but ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, well, you know, I mean, after you watch 129 football games, God knows how many basketball games, and yaddi yaddi yaddi, you know, you've gotten your fill for a while. I mean, I even took a break from going to see the Bullets and the Redskins and the Orioles and all that, but I continued to participate. I played summer league softball forever, and I continued to do that.

**DEUTSCH:** So, adult league?

**PARKER:** I'm sorry?

**DEUTSCH:** That's an adult league thing?

**PARKER:** Yeah, yeah. Mm hmm. I played adult league softball for ... forever, in the summers, so continued to do that, and you know, tennis and all that good stuff, you know. Just recreational stuff but it kind of had—I needed a little bit of a break from the real highly organized stuff etc., you know, and yeah.

**DEUTSCH:** So when did the Capitol Hill baseball and softball come along?

**PARKER:** Well, I went to Dale Denton [real estate office] in 1992, yeah, 92ish, and you know, became aware of this baseball league, you know, they had on Capitol Hill, the summer league is what they had. And it seemed to be passing hands, you know, faster than a quarter at a newsstand, you know. Chuck [Burger] and Don [Denton], I guess, and Avie Pogue had started it and then Maria Strylowski, I guess, (laughing) much to her surprise, became the commissioner, and she was really a —I think Maria was really struggling. Maria was keeping it together but I think that she knew she would only do this on a very limited basis. She, I think, agreed to do it for a year. And I was kind of watching this thing, but really not paying a lot of attention to it, you know. And then through some prodding of people asking me would I be interested in getting involved in it, and I said, no, not really interested. I mean I was kind of, just getting in ... four years is just kind of getting in to real estate, you know, and the market wasn't dynamite, you know ...

**DEUTSCH:** I remember.

**PARKER:** ... so you needed to be on the street a lot, so I, you know, declined several times. And then finally I agreed to do it, and kind of didn't know what I was getting into. Didn't really know, you know. So, how did I go ... I don't know how I got a roster of coaches or whatever, but I had a meeting, I guess it was after Christmas 1993, at the office and I was able to fit everybody in at the foyer there. (laughs) So it wasn't a huge crowd, and I didn't really see a lot of enthusiasm either, you know, and I just said, 'what am I doing?' You know, I said this ... great. We got through the first summer, a little bit bumpy but we got through it, and a fellow named Brett Summers ...

**DEUTSCH:** Oh, I remember Brett.

**PARKER:** Yeah, that was my ...

**DEUTSCH:** Hadn't he played baseball in high—in college or something?

**PARKER:** No.

**DEUTSCH:** No. Anyway, I remember him.

**PARKER:** Yeah, Brett was my ... he was my partner in crime, so to speak. He was helping me with this whole thing, you know, and Brett said that we need to expand this league. He said, 'this is ... there's not enough balance here in this league.' It was kind of a Southeast league. You know, so, at any rate we identified two more fields where games could be played, and one was Kingsman Elementary and—well, I shouldn't say two, that's not correct—we already had Tyler ... we were already there and we were already at Providence Park with the T-ball kids. So we identified one new one in Northeast, and got a lot of flack. 'My kids aren't playing over there.' And you know, within two weeks they were bringing

lunches and umbrellas over there, you know, but we had to go through a massive volunteer group, community group, to get that field cleaned up and everything, and Brett did 99% of that spearheading and legwork and I mean, unbelievable effort, you know, that went in there. So we were growing. The league had grown. We had ...

**DEUTSCH:** How many teams did you have at this point?

**PARKER:** Well, we had, I would say, let's see, I would say 12. We had—no we didn't. We had ten. We had ten. We had four T-ball teams, four seven- and eight-year old teams, and two nine to 12 year old teams. So we had ten teams. But we were playing at three different facilities that were designed for that particular age group to play there. Yeah. So we had expanded in the second year, and you know, then, oh, it didn't take long. We started—the numbers started coming on quick. T-ball increased to like six teams in that age group, seven and eight year olds went up to like six teams in that age group, and the nine-11s, or nine to 12 year olds, went up to four teams in that age group. And then, I'd say, by 2000 we had eight T-ball teams, six seven and eight year old teams, and four nine to 12 year old teams. And we, in 2000, we adopted the Capitol Hill DC Babe Ruth teams, teams—there were two. They came under our umbrella, so to speak. We sponsored them. We embraced them.

**DEUTSCH:** Had there been Babe Ruth stuff all along?

**PARKER:** Yes. There had been Babe Ruth on the Hill, I want to say, probably around '95, '96 they started playing. I don't know. I just didn't connect or identify with what they were doing. I was—we were kind of focusing on our summer league, and we had this very brief overlap in the spring, where they were finishing and we were starting, so we really didn't know one another and they just always seemed to be in mass confusion, the games that were played on Capitol Hill. But, you know, that was the kind of deal where you had to go, 'you're playing citywide'. So you had to be on Capitol Hill at six o'clock on a Friday night, you know, so it looked kind of crazy what was going on. And it didn't really matter if you were coming from Northwest or if you lived on Capitol Hill, six o'clock was still tough to do. So I just kind of said, 'oh, boy.' And they started, I think, losing some steam. I think it was just too much for whoever was doing it at the time, or perhaps, I think it was ... I can't remember the lady who did it, but her son may have been going through attrition—he was too old. So, got to know some of the guys—Larry Kaufer, you know, he turned out to be—Larry was already involved in the Capitol Hill baseball league anyway. Children ... it was called the Children's Baseball League back then. So I knew Larry, so Larry was kind of the link between us adopting DC, the DC Babe Ruth program here on Capitol Hill. So, they became part of us.

**DEUTSCH:** So does that mean they weren't Babe Ruth anymore?

**PARKER:** Oh, yeah, they were DC Babe Ruth all the way. We just happened to be their mother and father, that's all. We got them sponsors, got them uniforms, I mean, you know. Got them insurance, you know, we did everything, you know. And I'll stay with the DC Babe Ruth and then I'll come back to 2000 and do another aspect, but we ... within three years we had four Babe Ruth teams. Actually, I take that back—five. We had ... in 2002 ... 2002, we had two nine and ten year old teams, two 11 and 12 year old teams, and one 13-15 year old team. And one of our nine and ten year old teams, the Mario Camero Expos, won the city championship, and we were like, you know, elated, because the other nine and ten year old team had just kicked their butts all year when they hooked up. And they went through the playoffs, you know, like ran through Richmond, won the ...

**DEUTSCH:** What year was this?

**PARKER:** This was 2002. Won the city championship game. It was, I think, 11-10. It was a one-run game, and they won it in the last inning. It was just ... they were like the Bad News Bears. They just kept you on the edge of your seats, and just when you'd think their ship was going to sink, they're coming back in there, you know. Fun, fun team. We just had a lot of really good, good kids in that age group, and that age group really bonded. And they stayed together for a long time. We continued to have five teams up through 2003, and for some reason we—well, let me take that back. That's not ... that's not right. We still kept the same number of nine and ten year olds. Yeah. Let me back that up. We're still at the same strength as of last year and I expect that we're going to be at the same strength this year. What I wanted to say was about going back to the Expos, that group. They continued to move up in age and last year, actually the last two years, we have, in the spring, we have sent one team, one group of 11 and 12 year olds play in DC Babe Ruth. The other group played in Arlington Babe Ruth. Reason, really good group of ballplayers. They needed to take it to the next level, and Arlington was prepared to embrace us. They wanted us out there because we had a good group of kids. And they played in the championship game out there last year, and lost by a run in the last inning. So they were very well representative of Capitol Hill and really honed their skills. It's an older league out there, it's better. You know, it just is. The great part about that team—I went to several of their games, but I was in the dugout one night, and went down the line—15 kids in uniform, 14 of the kids played T-ball. 14! So they truly came up through the ranks. And those kids right now are, you know, they're, I guess, on the verge of leaving Capitol Hill Day and some other schools, but we're going to have probably four or five really good high school players out of that group.

**DEUTSCH:** I'm going to stop the tape and turn over. [ed: apparently, it wasn't yet time to turn over the tape, because it continues.] Okay, so four or five really good high school players who came up through ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, through our system. And, you know, they're just nice kids. They're good ballplayers but they're nice kids. And, you know, you send those kids anywhere and it just makes us look so good on Capitol Hill. All of our kids are, you know, behave themselves when they're on the road and things. So, you know, the boys' DC Babe Ruth. It's a program that really works. We can feed that program through our summer league development, and that's what summer league is all about. It's intramurals. These are kids that aren't the greatest ballplayers in the world, but they get their chance. Some of those kids develop and we see it. I mean I see kids in T-ball, and think, you know, this kid is going to be good, you know. So, we bring kids up through the system as best we can. Going back to 2000 now, when we were starting to "add on", we also got girls' fast pitch softball started.

**DEUTSCH:** So this was the first time you'd have had girls?

**PARKER:** You know, segregated. Girls' fast pitch. The girls, this is their game. This is not boys' baseball, although girls play on our DC Babe Ruth teams, too. They're more than welcome. And some say, you know, 'I want to play baseball. I'm not playing softball; I'm going to play baseball.'

**DEUTSCH:** Do you have many girls?

**PARKER:** We have several. We have a couple like that, yeah. They have all filtered out by age, but there were a few like that. Angela, I'm trying to look at one girl ... at any rate. So we got started with girls' fast pitch softball. And we failed miserably, only because—I don't know. We didn't know what we were doing wrong, we just, we couldn't get the girls out. They weren't coming out. We were looking for nine and ten year olds, and it—the interest just wasn't there. So we kind of flunked.

**DEUTSCH:** So that doesn't happen anymore?

**PARKER:** Well, that's kind of the Abe Lincoln story here. How many times did he try? Three or four times before he got elected? Something like that. So we came back and tried it again the following year. We ended up fielding two teams. Got a sponsor for each team, found a little league that we kind of put together by calling people in Takoma Park and Anacostia and yaddi yaddi, and played this very limited rocky road schedule. But we got five to six games in. And the good news was the volunteers that were showing up, were like all former college players, these women. Through ads in the Voice of the Hill, the Hill Rag, and your phone would ring and, you know, 'hi, I played at Holy Cross. I'd love to help out on the staff here.' Like 'hello!' So they had forgotten more about fast pitch softball than we ever knew. So we started getting endowed with great coaches, and then, this was 2002 or thereabouts, we went over to Virginia to play in the Arlington league, and we sent a group of nine and ten year olds over there, and Stan Kolbe was coaching that team, and his daughter played, and, I don't know. We pretty much got hammered for the first, you know, five or six games. They started to win a few games, and one of the

rules, or laws, or isms, or beliefs in physical education is, all things equal, a kid can catch up to another kid in six weeks. I don't care how long the kid's been doing what you're doing. Six weeks. This is motor skill type stuff, not piano or something like that, you know, but ... so, that rule coming into play, we started winning games, and oh, I don't know, we did pretty well, and then at the end of the season tournament they had out there, we played in the championship game—and lost—but we played in the final game. And all of a sudden Arlington was like, we're not so sure we want you guys here! (laughter) So we played another year or two and our talent was kind of wearing out our welcome, because we were really just annihilating people, you know. That's how good ... that's how good our coaching staff was. That's how—what a good job Stan Colby did, and he had some great assistance, and it was just totally organized, well-oiled machine, and they have gone on to huge heights, you know, the Senators. These are Senators fast pitch softball program, you know. Ranked nationally ...

**DEUTSCH:** Wow!

**PARKER:** ... these 15 and unders, they were ranked—they had the number one ranking in the country for about a month and a half, went to Orlando last year to play in the national tournament, and they're leaving for Orlando in two weeks to play in their winter nationals in Orlando, on Presidents' weekend.

**DEUTSCH:** Oh my gosh! I'll have to call you up and find out how they do, for the ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, I mean, outrageous program! (laughs) Outrageous, I mean, you know. His team is now 16 and under and we have also a junior team as well, and those girls are just coming right up the ranks. So it's a great program with a farm system that's really good. And, truth be known, they are without a doubt, you know, my flagship in the Capitol baseball and softball league.

**DEUTSCH:** The girls?

**PARKER:** Absolutely. It's just, you know, their work ethic is just so incredible. And some people say it's overboard, but you know what, though? If you want to find that [unclear] it's because you want to be there. And this is a want to be there type thing, you know. They travel a lot, and, but they put us on the map.

**DEUTSCH:** So your summers must be pretty busy?

**PARKER:** This is—we play three seasons a year. We have the girls and DC Babe Ruth in the spring, we have the summer league, and we're also involved, four teams are involved in fall baseball as well. So it's ...

**DEUTSCH:** So it's almost ...

**PARKER:** It's almost 24/7. Not quite. Not quite 24/7, but it is busy, but, you know, I've got tons of super volunteers and not just coaches. I mean, there are people who give their time in a—

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

**DEUTSCH:** Talking with John Parker about all the volunteers in the baseball and softball league. So how many games do you go to?

**PARKER:** Oh, I tell you what, I mean, you know, the organized baseball's dynamite because that's, you know, more my forte, but I got to tell you I thoroughly enjoy the summer league. It's the kind of thing, we don't keep score, there's no officials. This is developmental all the way, instructional ball. I definitely attend more summer league games than I do competitive games. It's just ... it's pure, you know. You know, I just enjoy it more. It's a lot easier, too, quite frankly. I mean, I can go to three fields in one night and, you know, say hi to folks and talk to a few kids, and just make sure everything's going smoothly. And I can do that in an hour, in an hour and fifteen minutes, you know. I can be at three different fields, so that's fun. It's fun. I get a big kick out of that and I definitely attend the summer league games more than I do the others, yeah.

**DEUTSCH:** Now I suppose one factor in all this huge success of the league is the fact that we have so many more kids on the Hill now than we did 20 years ago.

**PARKER:** Yeah, absolutely, I mean, I mean, yeah, you just—and the scary part is that, and now I'm looking at, every time I go out I see a half dozen to a dozen babies being pushed around, so our numbers are going to get bigger! Which is fine. There's a finite number of fields, though, and that's our biggest concern that we always have enough space for the kids to practice and play. And I don't think we're going to run out of space in my tenure as commissioner, but we have certainly been challenged to adopt new fields in the last three years. Payne Elementary has come on board as a great facility. Ludlow-Taylor, there in Northeast, so adding two fields is certainly indicative of the numbers that we're getting. And I expect that to keep going. I think these kids are much better lobbyists than we give them credit for being. I think that soccer on the hill, baseball on the Hill, basketball has kept a lot of families on the Hill, in part. It's had influence on it, you know. Kids really enjoy this experience they're having and, it's cool. I mean, I don't know ... I'm sure there's other places in this city, over in Northwest, that get the same turnout that we do—I know Takoma Park has a great deal of success over there—but I think we do it in a much smaller, on a much smaller footprint than they do, which makes it even more fun, you know, because there's sisters going to see their brothers play, and vice versa. They can do that, they can flip around and get to see each other.

**DEUTSCH:** It's more intimate.

**PARKER:** Way more intimate. Absolutely. That's a great word. It's very intimate, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** And I suppose your work in real estate and your work in baseball sort of intersect, because you're talking to families as they're thinking about moving to the Hill, and ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, I mean, you know, it's an easy sale. I mean, you know, I don't have to say, well I think it's a good place because I've been here 20 years in a ... been doing the baseball thing, and we had a family last summer—I'm glad you asked that question. He had gotten an appointment, I want to say the governor of Utah got an appointment in Washington, or ...

**DEUTSCH:** Maybe a former governor ?

**PARKER:** Maybe the Attorney General of Utah, something like that, I forget who. But a family came here, and they were living at Lansburgh's and they didn't know where they were going to be. They now live on Capitol Hill. I didn't take them there, but the kids really played a huge part in that decision, I'm sure. Because they came here and they were looking for something to do for the summer—this is just last summer—and they both played summer league ball. Their boy played fall league baseball as well, and, you know, what a great family to land on the Hill, you know. So, yeah, and you get interaction. People know what you do, and, you know. Some days it works better, real well, never a negative thing about it, nothing negative about it, that's ... some days it comes back to you, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** So you going to keep doing this for a while?

**PARKER:** Yeah. I still have ... I'm getting smarter about it, let me put it that way. I'm getting a better instrument panel because my gas tank's not as full as it used to be with this thing, so I'm tuning up the instrument panel here. Yeah, I'm not stepping down in the foreseeable future. I can't do it forever, and I think I have an heir apparent.

**DEUTSCH:** Do you?

**PARKER:** Yeah, we have a young guy that's a dynamite coach, dynamite leader. He's the one that basically renovated Payne Elementary School. He let ...

**DEUTSCH:** Who is it?

**PARKER:** John Crittenden. He is a young guy that moved to the Hill a couple of years ago.

**DEUTSCH:** How do you spell his last name?

**PARKER:** C-R-I-T-T-E-N-D-E-N. And he had just gotten out of the Navy, married, had a little baby. I mean, total support from his wife and family, and he's got a whole cadre of friends he brought with him when he came into the league, you know. He is a guy that could do this. I don't think that, you know ... I'd be careful if I were him, and if they were to ask him to do it, it would be, you need to do it with ...

**DEUTSCH:** With someone.

**PARKER:** With someone. You're too young, you've got a young child.

**DEUTSCH:** It's absorbing.

**PARKER:** Yeah, and it will absorb your time, for sure, you know. And I've had a lot of understanding and support from my significant other, Donna. I mean, she's been extremely supportive and you know, accepting and patient, and she goes to games with me periodically, you know. Loves to watch the girls play, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** What's Donna's name?

**PARKER:** Sackett. S-A-C-K-E-T-T.

**DEUTSCH:** Does she play at all, or ...

**PARKER:** She used to play, and you know, rec leagues, things like that, and, you know, she's amazed by, I mean, she was watching these Senators when they were nine and ten. Now she's watching them and they're 14, 15, 16, and she's going 'whoa'.

**DEUTSCH:** Let's talk about real estate a little bit.

**PARKER:** One thing I want to say about—I don't, if we're going to get to it later we can wait, but a large part of the success of this whole league has a lot to do with the business community as well. Now if we could touch on that, even ...

**DEUTSCH:** No, let's talk about that.

**PARKER:** Yeah. That's real, real important, you know, because, you know, I can drive this bus but I need tires and I need fuel, you know. And I kind of see the coaches being the tires and the business community being the fuel. They have been so incredibly consistently generous to this league. Every team has a corporate sponsor. Every team.

**DEUTSCH:** And they're all local?

**PARKER:** They're all—well, if their office isn't local, their business is local. Follow me? Like a mortgage lender who's in Rockville but 90 percent of his loans come here on Capitol Hill. I cannot remember anyone ever saying no. Now, and I think that has everything to do with the personality of Capitol Hill, you know. I didn't say, you know, I'm not leaving until you say 'yeah', or anything like that at all, it was always a simple, 'sure, how much do you need?'

**DEUTSCH:** What do you think that quality is? The personality of Capitol Hill? What is that?

**PARKER:** I just think everybody has such a—I think they feel that they, regardless of whether they are married, single, with kids, without kids, whatever, they kind of feel, they show me by doing that that they have a vested interest in Capitol Hill. They, for not a lot of money, you know, they can invest in the quality and the future of Capitol Hill. Some of these kids are going to be going to National Capital Bank one day, depositing money.

**DEUTSCH:** That's true.

**PARKER:** Some of these kids are certainly already probably shopping at Frager's. So you know, they're everywhere. Some of them are going to be going to my office, looking to buy a house, you know. They're going to be going to John Foreman to rent an apartment. You know, so, they all see the value of investing in a league, so to speak, you know. And they've never said no. So, that's what's really kept this thing going. The kids really get good stuff in this league. They get really quality uniforms, quality equipment, and quality coaching. Now, I can't buy the coaching. I can teach them and train them and take them to clinics and things like that, but money will certainly pay for good equipment and uniforms. And I have heard stories, you know, about the ... especially the T-ball kids, the five and six year olds, the first time they play, you know. 'I went back into his room that night, and he had put that shirt back on.' Teachers telling me that they see them under their school clothes, you know. So it's huge for the kids, you know. And the sponsors provide that lift, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah. Do the sponsors come to the games?

**PARKER:** Periodically, and a lot of teams have sponsor appreciation night, where they invite the sponsor to come out and they have a little barbeque and watch the game ...

**DEUTSCH:** That's nice.

**PARKER:** But they do come out. They do.

**DEUTSCH:** Well, it makes it much more of a whole community thing.

**PARKER:** Yeah, right. And, you know, they fully understand that this is probably not the best advertising dollar they're ever going to spend. They spend between 400 and 500 to sponsor a team. 400 for summer league, 500 for competitive—Babe Ruth and girls' softball, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** You're right. That's not very much.

**PARKER:** But if that name ... if you see that name long enough, you know, some of these sponsors have been around since I came into the league, you know. That was the first thing I did was go ahead and get sponsors, because this league had like no money, you know. And you see it long enough, you probably going to get you ...

**DEUTSCH:** So how many sponsors do you have?

**PARKER:** Well, let's see. Bear with me here for a second. One, two, three, four, five six ... 24.

**DEUTSCH:** Wow!

**PARKER:** 24.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, that's a lot.

**PARKER:** Yeah. So. And they just keep on ticking. (laughs)

**DEUTSCH:** What does Donna do when she's not watching baseball games?

**PARKER:** She is retired. She was in the insurance industry forever. And got like a really sweet buyout, so ... (laughs)

**DEUTSCH:** Sort of amazing that we're old enough to talk about being retired!

**PARKER:** She's so young, too. It's just no fair, you know, but ... she enjoys summer. We have a place down in Rehobeth, and she enjoys going down there, and she does work periodically. She was, oh, general manager for a couple of restaurants when she retired, and she stopped doing that like a year or so ago, but periodically she'll help some people out, you know, but it's recreation. It's not for the money. Yeah, but she's local. Grew up in Bowie. And she has a very sporting family. Both of her brothers were high school and college athletes. And even today one very active—he's a triathlete, and the other one is a high school lacrosse coach.

**DEUTSCH:** Oh. Locally?

**PARKER:** At Our Lady of Good Counsel in Silver Spring.

**DEUTSCH:** That's neat.

**PARKER:** It is neat, and it's good for me too, because ...

**DEUTSCH:** She understands?

**PARKER:** She understands. Exactly. She gets it. And we go to games periodically, you know, Maryland, or Wizards.

**DEUTSCH:** Are you excited about the Nationals?

**PARKER:** Yes. Totally. You know, that is just going to, just put so much glue into everything we've done here with baseball. You know, these kids are going to have people to emulate now. Just watching those guys play, thinking, 'that's what the coach meant when he said stay down on the ball.'

**DEUTSCH:** So you got your season tickets?

**PARKER:** Yeah.

**DEUTSCH:** It's going to be fun.

**PARKER:** Yeah, I'm really looking forward to it. So wanted to get that in about the sponsors, you know. Felt like I had to do that.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, that's important. Talk a little about real estate and the changes in the time you've been here and what ...

**PARKER:** Oh, boy. Well, from the get-go, my hobby when I was at Gallaudet—the only day off I really had was Sunday. When you're an athletic director you look back and you say, 'God, did I work that many Saturdays?' You know? There's always something going on on the weekends at college. My hobby was going to open houses. And I would go to open houses. And this was after I had bought my house, but I still liked going, you know. I could see [unclear] [doorbell rings, dog barking]. And we had a, this is before I met Donna, and I had a friend and we would go to church, go running, and go to open houses. I remember Rooney, Dick Rooney, (laughing) Dick got to the point where he would never even get up when I came in. Because he knew I was only looking around.

**DEUTSCH:** He knew you weren't going to buy anything.

**PARKER:** He knew I wasn't going to buy anything, but we just ... it was just fun. Something to do. And you know, I started thinking, you know, I could do this. I could do this. So I made a decision, you know. I got my license and went out the front gate of Gallaudet and the front door of Barbara Held—no, it wasn't Barbara Held yet, it was City Sites, they merged later when I was there. So I went from the front gate to the front door of City Sites and never looked back.

**DEUTSCH:** And of course this has been just a huge period of forward movement.

**PARKER:** Yeah, well, you know, it's interesting. I actively started real estate in the fall of '87, and in 1988 I was the top agent in my office, and I didn't even know it. It was a great year. '88 was a terrific year for real estate. And, you know, then poop hit the fan, and things really started going downhill, and I hightailed it over to Northwest to sell condos. Because that's really the only thing people would consider paying money for in DC, and then came back over to the Hill with Don [Denton] in '92. Things got better—not way better—so I guess, what, around '95, '96, things started turning, I would say, maybe a little before that.

**DEUTSCH:** What do you think—what happened?

**PARKER:** Well, I know that—it was either '93 or '94, I had a call on New Year's Eve from my former football coach at Gallaudet. He was in Montana. He lived in Great Falls; he had moved to Great Falls by then. He'd left. And he said, 'I need you to keep an eye on something for me.' I said, 'What? Where are you calling from?' It was some bar on New Year's Eve. He says, 'well there's a pool out here about who gets closest to the number of murders in DC.' (laughs) And I'm going, Oh my God, you know, I mean, think about this. They're having a pool in Great Falls, Montana, in a bar somewhere about how many people are going to die in DC this year, you know. So, hello, yeah. But, you know, we got over, I think the next year, the year after New Orleans took that dubious honor or distinction away from us and you know, Tony Williams, I guess was, he was with us by then. Control Board made a big difference. And you know, I think those are things that you can somewhat measure because you can tell what they've done. So you know, objectives obtained, etc. But then you start putting ... try to put a measuring stick on some other things that just doesn't work like they're doing dynamite things. Like MCI Center. That was huge.

**DEUTSCH:** And what year was that? That was about this time.

**PARKER:** Let's see. MCI—latter part of the 1990s. They were still the Bullets. I know that—they hadn't changed their name yet. But now you have hockey and pro basketball downtown, and you're like a little microcosm of New York, because you can get on the train and go to the game and be in your seat, you know, 30 minutes, 40 minutes from your Metro stop, and no more production going to Landover. So, you know. And then, that mushroomed, I guess, with the nightlife and the restaurants and all that stuff downtown. And it's still growing. It's still growing. All that development on Mass Avenue with the condos, which people are in line for—20 to 30 deep evidently. And now baseball coming back to DC which, God, was just a lot more painful than it needed to be, I think. But that's a money story, I guess.

And, you know, little bits and pieces of Washington. We're one of those little bits and pieces. Capitol Hill, you know. What we can offer people, you know, I mean. But I think there were just a lot of people for a long time looking for a reason to come to DC, and they finally got it. They finally got a green light in their life and said it's okay to come here. You're not going to get murdered, you know. There are things to do. You don't have to go to Virginia to have your life. You can have a life right here in DC. And you know, they're not numbers in hordes, but there are certainly people who are coming back to the city that grew up here. Which I think just enriches the whole mix in Washington, you know, because these are people coming back with stories, and I remember when. And it's just so much fun to talk to those people. That's one of my favorite parts of real estate. I do a lot of work with seniors, and I just, you know, I can relate to those people, because we're talking the same language. And it's really fun some days when they start talking about the old days and taking a streetcar to see the Senators and, you know. And now, today's market, you know, it's pretty pricey to live on the Hill these days. But I mean I think that's just a sign, an indication, of how competitive it's becoming to live in Washington in terms of—and people want to be here, and they're willing to pay for it. And the more people are willing to pay for it, the more they better be willing to pay for it. (laughs) Prices just going up and up and up. I mean, I have a house I'm going to open Sunday, and there was a time in my tenure in real estate when you probably could have bought that house and the house on either side of it for the same money. Easily. You know? And it wasn't that long ago.

**DEUTSCH:** When's it going to ... I mean, if you knew that I guess you'd be the ...

**PARKER:** Hopefully the day after I retire! (laughs) I, you know, I don't know. Interest rates have been our ally for so long now, and they don't appear to be going anywhere anytime soon. I don't see the inventory swelling anytime soon, the number of available properties, so as long as those two factors are working, it's going to continue to ...

**DEUTSCH:** Although there's a couple of new developments on the Hill, but I guess they're pretty much sold. I mean, there's the new Bryan ... what is it?

**PARKER:** Done.

**DEUTSCH:** Done, all done.

**PARKER:** Yeah, Bryan School. Done. I would think by now Jenkins Row is probably done.

**DEUTSCH:** Now where is Jenkins Row?

**PARKER:** 13<sup>th</sup> and Penn, over by La Lomita's where the big parking lot was over there, you know. That's like, I want to—I think it's like 400 units, something, going in there. But, done. They're done.

There's another one that was announced yesterday that I got wind of. Across the river, a condo project going up over there, something Point, I can't remember it. But clearly the market is there if they're willing to start building things like that. Lovejoy Lofts, my God. What a success!

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah. Now what ... is that the ...

**PARKER:** 12<sup>th</sup> and E, 12<sup>th</sup> and D NE, the old Lovejoy School. I never, in my wildest dreams, thought that that was going to take off. I just didn't think it was going to work, until I sold one there. And then I knew, this place is so for real and so cool, and such a great anchor over there. We just needed a big anchor over there and it was a grand slam. You know? Just a grand slam. I mean, you just never know. You don't know. It just keeps coming, and at least twice a week I'm going, you know, pinching myself or scratching my head saying, 'I don't believe that just happened!' You know?

And we've come back with a vengeance. The election and the holidays seemed to have put a little bit of a damper on the market for a while. And there's a little concern, and I guess right about the time the W2s and 1099s showed up in the mail, what do you know? It just took off like a rocket. So there was a little bit of a lull there but the high end stuff is all back and rocking, and that was taking a little bit of a pause. A little bit. Some of those things have been out there for two months. That's a long time right now. Two months is a long time to be on the market. But they didn't reduce anything and they still sold.

**DEUTSCH:** Is there anything for the first time homebuyer? I mean, are there ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, you know. The personality and the nature and the stature, the physical stature of the first time buyer have certainly changed. But let's say you're a middle school teacher, third or fourth year, forget about being first year, it's going to be real hard.

**DEUTSCH:** It's tough.

**PARKER:** It's going to be tough. You'll be able to maybe do a condo, but it's going to be tough. And, you know, just settled one—a young teacher over at Gallaudet, at the high school. Priced out of the Hill entirely. Totally priced out of the Hill. Even at Fifth and L NE, totally priced out. That's four, five hundred thousand over there now, you know? And not that it's a new frontier, but an available frontier, east of the river is, and has been for a long time in my opinion, been a great place to reside. Hillcrest is the best, you know. I've been doing business out there for 12 years, 13 years, and I've always thought it was the poor man's Bethesda. Beautiful homes. I knew about Hillcrest when I was in high school, so it was not new to me, and I knew Hillcrest when they really had money, but those people over there are certainly upper-middle class. Great, great neighborhood. They're priced out of Hillcrest, too. That's four and five hundred thousand now. But Fort Dupont is the next—next door to it. Affordable. Two hundred,

Two fifty. And young people are heading over there now. I've sent several over there and settled a couple over there. Can't go to Brookland, that's four and five hundred thousand now, you have your first time buyer.

**DEUTSCH:** I can't wait to tell this to my son, who grew up playing hockey at Fort Dupont.

**PARKER:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But those are affordable houses and you know, it's ... that market is going to be gangbusters for a long time. And, you know, it won't be in the way far distant future when that's a three and four hundred thousand neighborhood over there as well. So.

**DEUTSCH:** Buy now.

**PARKER:** Yeah. So, you know. It's fun. I mean, it's busy. It's really busy, but making hay while the sun's shining. It's been good. There were some lean years. There were some really lean years, and ... but if you stuck it out, and, shaved your face every day and brushed your teeth and combed your hair, and kept your chin up, it all worked out. There was a lot of attrition in this business back in the '90s, you know. I liked that because I was in it for the long haul. I knew it. I wasn't going anywhere. And I, you know, if you're with a losing team, if you're coaching a losing team, and you're losing for a year or two years, you know, you're even more determined that you're going to turn this thing around. That was one of my favorite things as an athletic director was to take a team—and not as a coach—but providing the development. Development is just so crucial to, I think, all aspects of life, but, and sports, you know, and turning that team around. And that was my same kind of philosophy going into this, you know. I'm in this thing for the long haul. I'm not bailing out. I can do this. I knew I could do it my first year. I knew I could do it.

**DEUTSCH:** What do you think it was that made you able to do it? I mean, what ...

**PARKER:** I think there are so many skill transfers from sports to life and real estate in general—sales. You know, I mean, you can have your game plan so meticulous, so highlighted, so down to the play, and I guarantee you the whole thing is going to change at half time or at some point in that game. You're going to have to make an adjustment and shoot from the hip. I'm not saying real estate is shooting from the hip, but, you know, it's not always A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Very seldom is it like that. It's back to the drawing board, you're going to be disappointed. You're going to be disappointed. And, you know, you can dwell on that disappointment, like a fumble in a football game or something, or you can put it in back of you and go on. It's not always easy to do, either, I mean, especially when the market was lean. It was hard to take failure, you know. And if you bat, I don't know, .050 in real estate, you're going to the hall of fame. (laughter) So you don't have to bat .350 or .400 to be a superstar in this league, you know. And I'm glad,

clearly glad that I stuck with it, you know. My brother and I laughed so hard that two little twerps from Petworth would own two houses, you know, in their lifetime. At the same time, no less! (laughs)

**DEUTSCH:** Now where's your brother?

**PARKER:** He's in Takoma Park, and he has a vacation home in Nova Scotia.

**DEUTSCH:** That's nice.

**PARKER:** He's a winter kind of guy. Loves the Canadian air and the whales and all that stuff, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** So two little kids from Takoma Park have two houses each? Two little kids from Petworth.

**PARKER:** From Petworth, yeah. Yeah, exactly, yeah. We just get a big kick out of that, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** I like that. The sports ... sports transfers to life.

**PARKER:** Absolutely does. You know, you're not ... to life ... a lot of stuff to do in life, and I know it's a cliché, but I think that, thank God, thinking back as a kid, that I had that outlet, that the structure that I needed so desperately. It was there. And I think that it just prepares you for a lot of stuff. You know, you weren't afraid to stick your nose into something that might be a little bit intimidating. And, you know, the opportunity to be a leader. To, I don't know, to make something happen. To, you know, have an effect on something. And that was kind of cool. I mean, you remember so many specific situations in real estate. A lot of situations where, you know, damn, got that one right over the plate. That was sweet, you know. And you remember little situations and when you're playing sports, that you made a difference, or you didn't make a difference, you know. I remember a couple of both, but, you know, it's ... I don't know ...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

**DEUTSCH:** This is tape number two of the interview with John Parker, February 2, 2005. I mean, February 4, 2005. Tell me a little bit about recruiting coaches for the baseball.

**PARKER:** Yeah. I guess there's a couple different avenues that I use. Number one is just opportunity. I see someone or start talking to someone, whether I know them or not, and I think that they might be a candidate, I ask them. You know, would you be interested in helping out? And I probably go 50-50 on that. I do pretty well doing it that way. We often advertise in our narrative in Voice of the Hill that, you know, we're always looking for volunteers for the league. And those are the calls that I get from—these are not parents, they're like, you know, the girl that played softball at Holy Cross, or the John Crittenden who just moved to the Hill and that caught his eye. So we get a lot of young volunteers that are not

parents that help out. And then, finally, we have a lot of parental volunteerism as well. On the applications that we do, they can choose one of five ways that they can help the team, and coaching is one. So that's our third avenue and our most successful avenue as well, because, you know, they have the availability and the motive and all that good stuff, and it works out pretty well. And it—the coaches recruit their own coaches too. I think John Crittenden came in with, you know, like three guys to do that. And we've had some people who have actually coached in other parts of town, that are no longer parents, and they're coaching at my league now.

**DEUTSCH:** That's nice.

**PARKER:** So, you may have a coach showing up for a practice with Maryland tags, and he's coaching a Capitol Hill team. Now you know they want to be there.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, that's nice.

**PARKER:** And they're good, too. Really good. Yeah. We actually—I don't rate anyone, I would never do that, but we had a guy come over last year from—he was coaching in Southeast, in Anacostia, lived in Maryland, and his kid had gone through the program and was too old, and he worked with us last fall. Dynamite! And he's on board again this spring, so it's nice to get people like that.

**DEUTSCH:** You ever have trouble getting coaches? Has there ever been a time when you ...

**PARKER:** You know, periodically I've got to get on the phone for the T-ball group, but that's the only time. But that's just a phone call. What are you going to do, say no? No one says no.

**DEUTSCH:** I guess there's no one who doesn't have the skills to be a T-ball coach.

**PARKER:** The only skills you have to be to be a T-ball coach is be able to lift a 20-pound bag. It's the only prerequisite.

**DEUTSCH:** And tell me a little bit about girls, the difference. Because your career has spanned probably a huge increase in girls in sports. I mean, when we were young—

**PARKER:** Yeah, I mean, you know, you think about girls' sports, and I have two sisters that were both athletes too. They're younger than I am. My brother was not. My two sisters were. And ...

**DEUTSCH:** What were their sports? What did they play?

**PARKER:** They played basketball and softball. And, you know, I remember when there were three girls on one half of the court and three girls on that half of the court, you know. Great game. It wasn't

basketball, but it was a terrific game, and I think until a year ago they still did that in Iowa. Which was the most attended state playoff or tournament in that state.

**DEUTSCH:** Really? Was the girls ...

**PARKER:** Yeah, oh yeah. Well, people were coming to see that hadn't seen it. You know, I want to see that one more time before I die. (laughs) So you had people in the stands from Timbuktu, not necessarily from Ames, Iowa, or Iowa City, you know. So you look at that as a benchmark, and you see where they started to go, and I mean, I coached some really terrific women athletes. I was a track and field coach, which makes no sense whatsoever in this whole scheme of things. It makes no sense whatsoever. But I did that for a long time and had a lot of success with it. And I coached both the boys and the girls' high school team when I was coaching in high school, and I coached a track team at Gallaudet, too, which was separate teams but they all practiced together. So you were coaching the men and the women. Didn't coach just one, so saw a lot of really good female track and field athletes. I've just watched, you know, the spectrum grow for women. It's more the opportunity has been provided and it was force-fed through Title IX, but that's okay because that's the only way it was going to happen. Otherwise, I'm not sure how aggressive—and I want to say this right—across the board, women would have been. There was going to be a few that would of said, by hook or by crook I'm playing this game whether you take a woman or not, I'm here and if you don't say yeah I'm going to sue you, or whatever. But I think that that made it very invitational for a lot more women to get involved in sports when the doors were opened. And, you know, you want to feel embraced. You don't want to feel like you're crashing a party. I remember once at college, at Maryland, I registered for the wrong class. I registered for a field hockey class. It was only for women! And I showed up for the class and I thought, 'whoa'. (laughter) And I was told that 'you're not welcome.' So I kind of ...

**DEUTSCH:** You know the feeling.

**PARKER:** I know the feeling. I was told I could not participate because I was not a female. So (laughing), that was kind of funny. And I see these young guys today, they're feeling slighted because there's a volleyball program in their high school for girls, but they can't play. And they're challenging that now too. A lot of like, Georgetown Day, the private school sector around here. So I've watched ... and most importantly and most noticeably, I've seen them right here under our nose, you know. These girls would have had zero, I think, until they got to high school, or maybe Capitol Hill Day School. They would have had zero chance of participating in competitive, on a relatively high level ...

**DEUTSCH:** Well, I guess they had soccer.

**PARKER:** They had soccer, they did, that's true. That's true. But it wasn't for the girls. It wasn't just — and these girls. I can't tell you how tight knit and bonded, I mean, you know, plugged in these girls are with one another. It's so cool to watch them. It's so cool. You know, until last year we used to have a fundraiser up at the Legion Hall every year. And the girls would show up, and that place would be like a ghost town, and all of a sudden it was rocking. And, you know, they're just—it's just so cool to see that. So they have something they can call—you know, it's a game of their own, like the movie was, you know. It's their thing. They don't have to feel like they're coming in the back door or crashing a party or you know, doing it because a court order made the opportunity happen for them necessarily, but it's their own thing. And that's the biggest difference in girls' sports that I've seen. I think that women professional athletes are grossly underpaid. Grossly underpaid, except for golfers. You know, they make a lot of money. You know, the women's NBA. That's ridiculous what they're paying those women, you know. And they're filling the arena at MCI, too. They're filling it. They had the best attendance in the league ...

**DEUTSCH:** Women's basketball?

**PARKER:** Yeah, the Mystics. Yeah. Washington Mystics. 60, 70,000. It's a three-month season, I realize that. But they've got to get on planning to go to Europe to continue working, you know, so, there's some injustices there, some imbalances there, but there's some other great, great stories, though. Annika Sorenson jumping in the men's PGA tour in golf, you know, and scoring, in a ... Women on television. College basketball, you know. You know, Duke University having 10,000 people in the arena for a college basketball game. That's awesome, you know. Awesome. So it's all good stuff. It's all good stuff. The growth is there and continuing, and, yeah. They're figuring it out. And I think that we are so lucky to be where we are, geographically. Because our kids are going to clinics—the girls and the boys—but the girls are going to clinics out at Maryland. You know, high-powered program out there, the softball program, Division One NCAA. We're going to have a girl from the Hill that's going to be playing Division One. That's the big stuff—that's Penn State, USC, UCLA, Maryland, in the next, I'd say, three years. And she's going to be on a full ride. We're going to have—we may have several. But there's a good answer.

**DEUTSCH:** That is good.

**PARKER:** There's a good answer. That's where we're heading. And that's in little teeny Capitol Hill, you know. That's not kids coming out of Florida or California. This is right here on Capitol Hill. And they're going to be in a batting cage on Sunday and it's going to be 38 degrees, but they're going to be getting ready to go to Florida for the nationals, and it's going to come back to them. Definitely going to come back to them. You're going to see that, and I'll see that as commissioner, so ... (laughs)

**DEUTSCH:** That's something you'll live for. (laughs)

**PARKER:** I guess that can lift me for three years. (laughs)

**DEUTSCH:** Alright, we'll hold you to that. Is there anything else?

**PARKER:** No. This thing fell off, so ... No, I think that's ... I think that's great. I mean, I ...

**DEUTSCH:** Do you still play?

**PARKER:** No.

**DEUTSCH:** Anything?

**PARKER:** Uh uh. I mean, you know, no. I play tennis, but I mean, you know, this is ... we just hit. I go to the gym about three days a week. I go into the—I go to Results. I go into the basketball court. I can still really shoot, you know.

**DEUTSCH:** I bet you can.

**PARKER:** I can still really shoot, you know. I like to get the young kids out there and play horses. Not one on one, or two on two, but horses, where you have to match shots.

**DEUTSCH:** Horses, I'm not familiar with that.

**PARKER:** It's a game called horses. It's a game called horses where you have to match shots with somebody. And if you make a shot, I have to follow your shot. If I miss it, I get an 'H'. And if I miss another one I get an 'O'. And if you spell out 'horses' ...

**DEUTSCH:** It's like ghost.

**PARKER:** Yeah, uh huh. So I can handle the young guys with that and I love doing that. That's fun.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, I guess shooting ...

**PARKER:** I just ... I can still do it. It's just one of those things where you still can. I took an ice skating class a few months ago, I just wanted to see if I could still do it, that's all. You know, I said, yeah, okay, I can do it.

**DEUTSCH:** Could you still do it?

**PARKER:** Oh sure, yeah. I mean, I would go to Fort Dupont, as a matter of fact, and then we would go—we're not going today, but me and a friend of mine would go there on Friday afternoons, they have adult skating from 12-2. It's fun. Just fun to do. I mean, I'm not doing stuff that's going to pull muscles or

stuff like that anymore, but I like going to the gym and shooting hoops, getting on a treadmill and lifting weights.

**DEUTSCH:** And isn't that great to have Fort Dupont like ten minutes from here? And it's the prettiest rink.

**PARKER:** It's great. It's great. What ... I mean ... you talk about a resurrection. Whoa, my gosh. And it's been—it's just been wonderful for so many kids. My best friend, who was the trainer at Gallaudet when I was there, he retired from Gallaudet and he's working—you know, he's too young to quit working—but his son pretty much grew up in Fort Dupont playing for the junior Caps. He can really skate. Well, he is now playing for an affiliate of the LA Kings in New Hampshire, and you don't lose your NCAA eligibility in the level he's in, and yesterday he spoke with the University of New Hampshire, and today he has an official visit to Providence, so he's going to be playing in the bigs, you know, next year. Fort Dupont.

**DEUTSCH:** Yeah, Fort Dupont.

**PARKER:** Had a lot to do with that. So.

**DEUTSCH:** I think that's it.

**PARKER:** Okay. Thank you so much for your time.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

END OF INTERVIEW