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Caval Ordde
January 30, 2002

Interview conducted by Mark Schoepfle
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September 11, 2001
Oral History Documentation Project
Northeast Region, National Park Service

INTERVIEWEE: Caval Ordde
Procurement Technician
Statue of Liberty National Monument
(Interview No. 25)

INTERVIEWED BY: Mark Schoepfle, Ph.D.
Ethnographer
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Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEW DATE: January 30, 2002

PLACE: Ellis Island
Statue of Liberty National Monument

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START OF TAPE

Mark Schoepfle: — with Caval Ordde —

Caval Ordde: “Or-day.”

Mark Schoepfle: “Or-day?”

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: Thank you. And the date is 1/30/02, and the interviewer is Mark Schoepfle. So, my first question, Caval, is from the moment you were aware that something had happened, what happened?

Caval Ordde: Okay. The first thing that happened is one of my coworkers came downstairs and said that a plane just went through one of the towers, and so we all ran upstairs in the hall, looking to see what exactly — where the plane hit, and what sense we could gather from that, and we was just standing there looking at it, and probably I said, “oh, maybe that’s just someone that’s trying to stunt between two towers,” because here at the Statue you see all types of situations — you know, people try to do a lot of things, because this is New York City. So, that’s what we thought. You know, I thought it was someone just trying to glide their way in between two towers and missed.

Mark Schoepfle: Oops, yes.

Caval Ordde: And so, we looked at it for a little while, and then we ran back downstairs, and my coworkers got on the phone and started calling their family members — you know, did you hear this? Blah, blah, blah. And I was on the phone with my husband at the time, and he said to me, “it’s not an accident, because the traffic is backed up, and so forth and so forth, something else is going on.” And at the same time, I’m like, no, it can’t be anything else — you know, this is New York City. It’s crazy. We need to get used to this.

Caval Ordde: I heard a boom, and that is the time when the second plane had hit, and we had lost all communication and power at that time. The cell phones were down, and everything. And at that time all the employees was running — running frantic in the hallways, and they was trying to tell us where to go, and it was like a — it was chaotic, because you have a sense of not knowing what was going on, and as human beings, we always have a need to know, and that was not the case that particular moment, and so finally, Cynthia said, “you know, we will meet outside,” and — Cynthia who is the Assistant Superintendent.

Caval Ordde: So, we — finally we met by the flags, by the walls, and we were standing there just looking — coworkers were crying, and some have family members on the other side that didn't yet — was on the 9:00 o'clock boat to come across, and they was wondering what happened to them. And it was just something that you just feel as you were standing there, even though they were trying to talk and joke about things, and stuff. You could see it was like concern on people's face at that moment. Okay?

Mark Schoepfle: Go ahead.

Caval Ordde: And finally, one of the maintenance staff — I think it was Walt Fleming — came and said that we was going to go back inside, or something like that, or get your belongings, if you have it with you. They might send us home, we're not sure yet. We're waiting on words, and then at that time, we walked from the flags, and we was walking around to the area where the staff would normally catch the boat, which is at the canopy area. And then, we were standing there and I was talking to our former AO, Delores, at the time, and I said to her, "wow, I'm so concerned," because my husband was on the bus, and the bus was close to where he works, because he works at Trinity Church, which is a few blocks down from the Trade Center. And she said, "oh, Caval, don't worry about it. Everything is going to be okay." And I said, "yes, I have no doubt about that," and at the same time the first tower came down.

Caval Ordde: And when the first tower came down, is like at that time the employees — especially the ones that worked for the concession stand, some of them wanted to jump over the wall — you know, they just wanted to get off the island, and go someplace, and at that moment, because I'm a believer that God has placed us here for reasons and purposes, I started to console the ones that wanted to jump, telling them it's not worth it, and one of the employees almost fainted, so I helped her to a bench.

Caval Ordde: I ran back inside the building, even though I was told that we're not supposed to go in the building, to get some water and towels and stuff like that — just as a need of assisting — and at the same time we got word that there's a lot of other places that have been hit at the same time, and it's a terrorist attack. And the superintendent — Superintendent Dayson said that, you know, she's going to have everyone that's non-essential, who don't have EMS, who can't provide any type of service was going to go home, because she would prefer to know that they are safe at home, instead of being here. So, her concern was for her employees at this time is just get them to safety. And I don't have any of these backgrounds that she was naming out, and I just stood there and looked at her, and I just said I'm not going anywhere. And I said I'm going to help somehow.

Caval Ordde: And so, with that I start moving — help move the stretchers that they was going to set up for the triage center — get the gloves all together, you know, because we was told that they was going to bring the injured — injured people here, and then transport them to whatever hospitals, because everything in the city is so congested. So, they start transporting the people here, and I start assisting them like that. But not necessarily trying to administer any type of medical, because I don't have that background. So, I was just handing them their water — make sure they was getting water; clearing the aisle so as the boats are coming in, people would not be trampling over each other.

Mark Schoepfle: Clearing the aisle? Yes.

Caval Ordde: Clearing the outside because we was outside. So, make sure they was not all standing where the boat docks. But clear people away, and then we start taking — we was told that if we're going to stay we need to take name, address, social security, telephone number, contacts — so that we could call family members, or if someone is missing, that we'll have a listing of who came through the island on that particular day. So, I head that up, and I ran back inside, and I got some note pads, and pens, and hand them out to a few more employees that was here.

Caval Ordde: And so, we started taking their names and stuff, forming lines. There was a few young ladies that was pregnant. One was just about three weeks, and you know, she said she feel like she's going to lose her baby; she's so stressed, so I went and I got a chair, and have her sat out — sat in some shade; give her some ice-cold water, and you know, try to calm her down, and then once she was calmer went back to help wherever I can. And so, that was now later on in the day, and the fire fighters and the EMTs, and the island was just swamped with people.

Caval Ordde: The people was coming through with lacerations on their arms and legs, and to their face, and some people, they're just covered in ashes. You look at them, and you would think that you see a movie or a ghost, you know, they're so white with everything, and they're frantic, and babies, that heart is just racing, because the parent is running with them, and they themself looking at the parents, like what is going on? It seems like everyone have this sense of, you know, shock and disbelief, and you know, this can't be happening; this is New York. We should have the best government, and then you — at that time you hear people start, you know, blaming — pointing fingers, and that was not the time for that, but we — two of my coworkers downstairs, Linda DaVoe, and Cathy Aiello — we went back into the concessions office, and we started — whatever they had as far as food was concerned, we started preparing food to feed the firefighters, and the EMT personnels, and whoever that needed something to eat, basically.

Caval Ordde: Because they was sitting there, just waiting for word as to how they was going to get off the island, because we couldn't — the bridges was closed, highways were shut down, so now people had to think, you know, because if you had to take a car, where you're going to drive, because I couldn't get home. I live on Staten Island. So, the bridges were closed at that time, and I actually stayed here up until 10:00-11:00 o'clock at night, feeding — cooking food for — cooking whatever was left in the kitchen to be cooked, so that these people could have something to eat, because everyone came into a joint effort, and I think that's one of — in the light of all the bad situation, I think that's what I would want to stay with me forever, is that it took a bad situation to bring everyone together, so there was a sense of togetherness, and everybody was working and helping each other.

Caval Ordde: And it's like no more "this is not my job; this is your job; I don't work in the kitchen; I don't do this" — and now it's like you chip in wherever you could help out. That joint effort; that came through, just because — you know, of a bad situation. And because of — I guess, with me always wanting to help — help in whatever situation I could help out in, I was in the kitchen not realizing that the crew that lives in Staten Island, the Chief of Interpretation, Danny Brown, and Superintendent Dayson, and Cynthia Garrett, all of them got police escort home, and I was still in the kitchen, and so I'm calling everyone, I'm still here. How am I going to get home? So, finally they arranged for — one of the police officers who was getting off duty to keep his uniform on so he would not be stopped, and to keep my vehicle here, and to ride with him, and so I could get home at that time. So, I actually got home like about 1, 2 o'clock the next morning.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Just backing up here a little bit; this was quite something. At the point where this had occurred — at first nobody quite believed what was going on. Surely, this wasn't — you know, this was some kind of accident, or some stunt man trying to fly in between the buildings —

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: And apparently that does happen a lot here at the —

Caval Ordde: Yes. We normally — because it just was a few months prior to that a guy got caught up on the Statue — a glider, and he just wanted to glide onto the Statue and stunt down, taking pictures and stuff like that, so we see that here all the time, so that's what — the first thing that came to mind. It's like terrorist thing — from my mind — or suicidal anything, was the furthest thing. It was just like this is New York; we are on Statue of Liberty; this is where we are, and people try to do the craziest things around here. So, that's what came to mind.

- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Yes. All right. Then, you all had gone over to the flagpole?
- Caval Ordde: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: And then had moved over — I think you had —
- Caval Ordde: To the canopy area.
- Mark Schoepfle: Right. To the canopy area, and that was an expectation for getting off the island, or some of the people off the island?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. To arrange for — because at that time the Superintendent came on the scene, and she was like, okay, now, we're going to have to start transporting people off of the island.
- Mark Schoepfle: Right.
- Caval Ordde: You know, I want you guys to — she called the boat — have them radio the boat captain — whoever needs to get on the boat, however they need to get home, take them to the closest point so they could get home, and not be here. I prefer them to be off than here, and that's when we have start drifting from the flagpole, and some people had already left, before the bridges and stuff closed. Once the second plane hit, quite a few of my coworkers just jetted.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Just took off?
- Caval Ordde: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: Then you basically stood your ground?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. And it was funny — because — she'll be cracking on that with me, because she said, "I sent everyone home, and you just stood there and looked at me." I was like, you sent them because they was frantic. You sent them home because they was walking around like they didn't know what they was going to do. But that was not me. I'm a firm believer that if there's a situation where you could help, you're supposed to help.
- Caval Ordde: I didn't have what she was looking for, but I know what God have placed inside of me, and that is to give a helping hand, and to help the sick, and to — just do whatever you've got to do. I didn't have the EMT background, but I know I can hand you a glove. I didn't know if I could look in the eyes, and tell if something is in it, if I can't see it, but can give you a bottle of water. If you want your face to be washed, we could — I could have provide that for you, and so that's why I stood there and said, "well, she's not talking to me."

- Caval Ordde: And I was standing right next to her, and she was telling everyone I want everyone off the island if you don't have this, if you don't have that. I just stood right there, and I turned around and I was like, okay, well I'm going over here to get some water, and I just start running around [laughter]. That's what I did.
- Mark Schoepfle: That's great. Now, about what time was this? I mean, do you sort of remember what the time — what the timeline was like, or was it all just happening too fast?
- Caval Ordde: The first — I think when the first plane hit, it was probably after 8:00, because my husband is supposed to be at work for quarter to 9:00, and he was running late, because I asked him to drop the baby off. So, he was late, and I was talking to him, and he was on the bus, and he was not working, and it wasn't at 9:00 o'clock. And then when the second plane hit, I think it was after 9:00; I'm not sure. So, by the time they start transporting the people over, it was probably 10:30-11:00 some way, but it was way before mid-day.
- Mark Schoepfle: Right. Okay. So, then by about — then you were mentioning people got off the island, and you just immediately started in getting ready for the incoming.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. They said they was going to set up a triage center, and they start roping the areas where they was going to do that, and the EMT guys start bringing out the stretchers and stuff like that, and the wheelchairs. So, then I said, "well, where are they going? Where are you setting up the triage?" And they're pointing. And I just start loading things on the wheelchairs, all the boxes that I can, like the gloves and the face masks, and stuff like that, and start pushing that over to the area that they was setting up the triage, the beds, and everything like that.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Then what happened during this time? I mean, you said that you were basically going around giving people water, offering support; being supportive — you had a list of things here; clearing people away from piling up front on the boat decks.
- Caval Ordde: Exactly.
- Mark Schoepfle: Can you give me some examples of things — like what happened? I mean, you've given me — that's a general idea of what was going on, but anything kind of stand out and strike your memory. It doesn't have to have, but I mean, if it just did.

Caval Ordde: I think what I basically — looking back what I could really remember is just that the — looking at the people coming off the boats, and they're coming to an island some people have never been to, even though this the place where probably their ancestors came to, but they have never had a chance to visit. They're away — no we're on an island, so you're basically cut off, because you're surrounded. You can't walk down the block and talk to someone that you know, so they basically was like strangers in a foreign land. So, then with everything else that was going on, it's like why am I here? I want to go home. This lady said to me, "I want," to me, "I want my husband," and she had the cell phone.

Caval Ordde: And I had to say — I said, "ma'am the lines are down, we can't get out." I said, "even if I go in and use the regular telephones, you cannot get through. All the lines are down," but I said, "the best thing that we can do is that as soon as we have connections, because we was going to try to set up a mobile connection somehow" — the IT person was working on — "is to let them know that if you're looking for anyone, we could probably have their name and — because it was going by social security number — to identify people by." So, because there was strangers here, and they're already frantic because of what had happened, you, yourself, need to calm them down, and to give them an assurance that you are safe here. We're going to get you home as soon as we can, but — you know, there's other people that are going to come on the island, and so we don't need you to be trampled on, and — you know, and people will just — as soon as they get off the boat, they just want to pass out right there, and so you need to pick them up, and put them on the steps to sit.

Caval Ordde: And as they was going back and forth with the stretchers and the wheelchairs, you need to let them know that there are other people that are coming that are more seriously hurt than you are, so we need to clear this area for the stretcher, and so forth and so forth, and so those are the kind of things that I remember.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. And so, some of these people that were coming in, you mentioned that some of them were just white with ash?

Caval Ordde: Yes. They were just covered.

Mark Schoepfle: So, some of them just injured. Did you — any of the really serious cases? I mean, what kind of cases did you see? Mostly people just covered with ash, and just lacerations and things?

Caval Ordde: There was one — one particular one that I remembered — that they brought him over on a stretcher, and I think he could not move. Something fell on him, or people fell on him — it was — something fell on him, whether it was people or objects, something fell on him.

- Caval Ordde: So, he actually was transported from the city here on a stretcher, so they had to maneuver him with care, because they didn't know at that time what was wrong with him. So, I think he was the first person to be transported off of this island to the hospital, but I don't know exactly what went wrong.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mhmm. So, this occurred — what? — throughout the afternoon, or what?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. Well, there was — I mean, constantly coming. It slowed down like the later part — later on in the afternoon. And then the firefighters, they was coming, too, because they was exhausted, and some of them haven't had any water or anything to eat, and so at that time all the sandwiches and stuff was finished, so now we was making pizza. So, we was walking around with trays like we were Park Service waitresses — (laughter) — feeding the people, and some of guys was so sick to their stomach by seeing all the blood that they have seen, or all the dead bodies that they couldn't eat.
- Caval Ordde: One guy said to me, he said — he looked at the piece, and he said, “all I see is blood,” and he just couldn't deal with it, and so I said, “I think I have a few more turkey sandwiches or tuna in the back, would you like one of that?” And he said that would be better. And at that time, the other people that was still sitting here that was not firefighters or EMT workers, they were still hungry, and I had to let them know for a moment, well, we'll have to take care of the fire fighters, and stuff, right now, because they haven't had anything all day, or anything like that. I said I'll see what else I can get for you, but this batch that I'm bringing out will be for the crew, and stuff like that. So, you had like ladies that were still here with their young ones, that was hungry, it's like you were tossed between like who do you feed? Can the adult hold out? And you know, he was working all day with nothing, or do you feed the baby? So, you know, it turned into a humanitarian situation, also.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mhmm. So, it was triage in many ways, kind of, because you had people just coming in that were being cleared off from nearby. You just had people coming onto the island. First, the Park Service people — those non-essentials who had gotten off.
- Mark Schoepfle: Who were sent home.
- Caval Ordde: Who were sent home.
- Mark Schoepfle: You elected — you chose to be an essential, so you stayed.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. I elected myself to be essential.

- Mark Schoepfle: Yes [laughter]. And then, after the people came on, then in came the injured; some — first the very serious, and then the less serious one later on. Then came the fire people.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. Then later on in the afternoon, there was like two boatloads of fire fighters, still in their gears and stuff. And at that time — I think it was like after 3:00 or after 4:00, we was told they were going to set up a morgue in the back by the field dock, and they was clearing out one of the orange bins that we have back there, so that they could store the bodies, and stuff like that.
- Caval Ordde: And at that time, when I learned of that, I was taking a tray of — I was taking a tray of food around the corner, and I said to a guy — I said, “What are you guys doing back here?” And he said, “We’re setting up a morgue.” And I pushed the tray at him, and I said, “Well, you can have this, because I’m not coming back here.” And I ran back inside the building [laughter]. And I saw — someone met me in the hall, they said what happened? And I was like, “Oh, they’re setting up a morgue here. I want to go home now.” [Laughter]. And I said, “I’m not going to stay here for these bodies to come over.” But I don’t think it made it that day.
- Mark Schoepfle: No?
- Caval Ordde: And I said, “Thank God.” But it was funny, because the guys started to laugh at me, because I throw him the tray, but he was like, but there’s like food on there. And I said, then come in the back, I’m not staying out here, and I just throw the whole thing at him.
- Mark Schoepfle: Did — so there were — but there were civilians in all sorts — I mean, basically, there were people, injured, firemen, everybody mixed up in there together for quite a while?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Okay. And then —
- Caval Ordde: Because we had the whole of the — I don’t know if you’ve ever been on the outside, where you could look over to Governor’s Island, so to speak? That entire side, more to the parking lot, we had that grassy area where you could overlook the Superintendent’s office, that entire area was like for the triage area. They had — one area was like for the critical, where the stretchers and the wheelchairs and stuff that was set up. And then we had another area that was roped off. Once — we called it checkpoint — once they already given us their name, social security number, contact, and so forth, and so forth, then they could move over to that area, and relax until we figured what we was going to do with them.

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Caval Ordde: And then if something is hurting or whatever the case, but they're not serious enough to be in a bed or chair, then we would — I will go over, or someone will go over, and let one of the EMT guys know that you need to check her next. She's complaining for something in her eye. And there was a baby — the lady said — well, the baby came and the baby was totally covered, and so the mother was concerned, so I had the EMT guy check the baby out to make sure everything was fine, and so he just washed the baby's eyes out, checked the heart, checked to see if there was any cuts, because there was so many ashes. And he said the baby was fine, so she was relieved at that point.

Mark Schoepfle: Did any attempts get made to wash the babies off, or anything like that? Or just get — clear the things away from the eyes, and [inaudible]?

Caval Ordde: Yes. Basically clear, like your nose — the nostril area, your eyes, and your mouth. You know? And then by the time they was relaxing and stuff like that, I had like the towels from the bathroom. And then we started making bathroom runs, so people was able to go in, and we was doing like ten at a time — supervised — they cannot be in there by themselves. If a group comes in with me, they have to leave with me; they are not left unattended.

Caval Ordde: So, they go to the bathroom. The men's bathroom and the ladies' bathroom is like side-by-side, so we would stand in the middle of the hallway, let them go use their respective johns, and then they would come out, and they would all line back up, and we will escort them back out. And so, at that time they were able to wash their face and use the bathroom at that time.

Mark Schoepfle: This is pretty organized. Did you know how to do all this before, or did you just follow orders as you got them?

Caval Ordde: No. Just as we received orders, we just carried out.

Mark Schoepfle: I see.

Caval Ordde: And then before we start even going to the kitchen, this lady was like I'm so hungry, and because in admin sometimes we will buy stuff and keep in the office, and so we had the little tuna with the crackers, and so I went and grabbed everything that we had in admin. And so, okay, you can snack on that for now, I'll come back to you — so, doing that type of stuff.

Mark Schoepfle: So, you were there, well, into the evening working in the kitchen as it turned out.

- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Making pizzas and becoming a concessioner in your right.
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: I gather the concessioners took off pretty fast?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. They — because there's a lot of young people that work in the concession, and some of them have probably never dealt with any type of serious situation, and most of them probably lived home, and so they were crying for their mommy, and I want to go home, and my husband is standing over there, what's happened to him?
- Caval Ordde: So, it was wise when the Superintendent says it's time for people to leave, for them to go, because two of the young ladies from the concession wanted to jump the wall. You know? She's saying, well, I prefer to be on the water, and I was like, well, if you can't swim, then you drown. Do you prefer to be wet, or dry? I said here you're standing in an open space, you can see everything over you, but if you go in the water, then chances somebody is going to save you, because there's nobody out there. Everybody is attending to something else. I said, well, stay here. You know? So, I had to keep my eyes on everything at the same time, and all of that — my head was cleared, because I believe in prayer and stuff like that, so when the tower fell, I just closed my eyes, and I start praying loud, you know, just asking God to intercede, and to just show us a way and — you know, whatever, whatever, so at that time — by the time I was finished praying, it's like I start looking at things different, and then I'm into the mode where you're going to help, and you're going to support, and you're going to do this, and you're going to do that — you know, be the Good Samaritan that you're suppose to be, and so that's where the support and stuff came up, once I got all of that stuff up.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. Well—
- END OF SIDE 1
- START OF SIDE 2
- Mark Schoepfle: — from what you're describing, I mean, that sounds very important — the very idea that through the prayer, you just — you kept your head clear the whole time, then?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Very significant. So, you remained in the kitchen — well, the afternoon and well into the evening. You didn't make it home — you didn't get out of there until 10:00 o'clock, you were saying, right?

- Caval Ordde: Well, probably closer to midnight, because I think the young man was getting off of the midnight shift.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, they told him — they, meaning who?
- Caval Ordde: His superiors told him not to change his uniform, because the bridges were closed, so no cars could get over the Bayonne Bridge. And so, if he had on his uniform, and his badge, they would know that he was an officer, and they would let us through, and that is how we got home, because there was cars that were lined up along the highway. They would not let anyone through. And so, he drove to one point, and he had to show his credential, and they shined the lights in the car, and they checked, and he said, “well, she works with me. She lives close to me, so I’m transporting her home, also.” And they flag us through, and then about a mile or two later there was a second checkpoint, and so it’s like the cars was communicating with each other, and so the other police car behind us flash his light to say they’re okay. You can let them through, and that’s how we got across the bridge. And we were saying once we crossed the third checkpoint that maybe if he didn’t have on his uniform, we probably wouldn’t get through.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes, yes. That sounds very reasonable. So, you got home probably 1:00 or 2:00 o’clock.
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: What then?
- Caval Ordde: And when I got home, my husband was still not home. My kids — I have three kids — my daughter was picked up by her schoolteacher, who reassured me that she was okay, so not to worry about her. Then my next-door neighbor, also, that worked for Park Service at Gateway, she said, “I have the boys with me, don’t worry about them.” So, when I got home, that’s the first thing that I did was ran over to her house, and my oldest son was still up, and he was like, “mommy, I wasn’t going to sleep until you get home,” and so I hugged them. I said, “Oh, I love you guys.” I thank her, and then she said, “well, you go ahead and get some rest. We’ll talk about this mess later,” and I said no problem, and then I walked in the house, and then I played the machine, and there was quite a few messages on the machine, and everybody is calling, because my husband is a ordained pastor, so all his clergy friends from Ohio, and everything is calling. How is Rev doing? Is everyone okay? And at that point, I couldn’t call anyone back, because I didn’t know where he was, what happened to him.

- Caval Ordde: The last time I had spoke to him is that — we was talking about, oh, he was like this is no accident, whatever, whatever, which was about 9:00 o'clock in the morning, or before 9:00.
- Caval Ordde: Then around 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock in the morning, the phone rang, and it was my husband, and he said that he's across the Bayonne Bridge, and I said, "well, what are you doing over there?" Because he don't take the car. I said what happened? He said, actually, he called his office after he got off the phone with me, and he spoke to his boss, and his boss told him to go home.
- Caval Ordde: And so, he turn around and he went back home, and walks into the house and the phone rang and he answer it, and it was two of his coworkers, they were stranded. And so, he took the other vehicle and went back to the city. He took his coworkers home, and in the process of him coming home, he got trapped across the bridge. So, he slept out there. He said a neighbor opened up her — their doors to them — to about twelve guys. They cleaned their den out. She fed them. She had them take showers, and gave them blankets and pillows, and said you guys could rest until whenever the bridge is open. So, he probably didn't get home until about 12 o'clock the next day.
- Mark Schoepfle: Wow. So, you were up most of the night, I imagine? Is that it?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: You didn't really — you didn't think you could sleep?
- Caval Ordde: I couldn't really go to sleep, even though I was trying real hard to do so. His mother — they're very close, and she just keep calling. And at one point I didn't want to answer the phone, because she's going to ask questions that I can't answer. And I didn't want her to get worried, or basically anyone to get worried, so I basically answered the last call that came in from her, which was about 4:00 o'clock, and I say, "Ma, he's fine." She said, "Well, where is he?" And I said, "I don't know, but I know he's fine."
- Caval Ordde: And she said, "Well, how can you say?" And I said, "God is going to take care of him. He's fine." I said, "Well, you go to sleep." And she said, "What are you doing?" And I said, "I'm praying." And basically, I think that's what I did. I read the word; I read my Bible, and I prayed, and I just asked God to just secure him, and just to bring him home safe. And that happened. So.
- Mark Schoepfle: Very good. Well, what happened the next morning? Keep going. This is interesting.

Caval Ordde: He came in, like around mid-day, and the kids was excited to see him, and we hugged each other, and I said, — I said oh — because I was teasing him — I said, “oh, how does it feel like to sleep out?” He always wanted to sleep out. So, how was that? And he said, “girl, this is not the time to joke around. This is serious.” [Laughter]. I was like, “well, you need a sense of humor somehow, you know?”

Caval Ordde: And we started watching the TV together, and my husband said at that time I think we need to have a conversation with the kids, so that they basically know what was going on. I just asked them what happened at their school, and stuff like that, and then my son starts saying kids were crying, once the principal told them what happened and they was all in the gym, and he said, “mommy, the kids was just running around crying every which way,” and he said, “I felt sorry for them.” And he said, “I know where you worked, and I know where daddy worked, and I just said, Lord, just bring my mommy and daddy home safe.”

Caval Ordde: And he said he told his friend — he said, “my mommy is going to be all right, because I know my mommy, and my mommy is going to be all right.” And my husband said the lady that — the house that he slept in, the lady said, “well, aren’t you concerned about your wife, that she work at the Statue.” And my husband say, “knowing my wife, she’s okay. She can handle herself.” [Laughter]. So, I’m like, oh, I’m here, falling apart, trying to stay strong, and everybody think I can handle myself, right? [Laughter]. So, we just watched TV; had a family conversation with the kids, let them know exactly what’s happening; asked my three-year-old to — you know, if she could describe what happened, and she said the plane — she basically with her perception put it into a cartoonist, and she said the plane came up — “ssshhhh” — and it went down and it hit the building, and it said, “ppphhhffff.” And that’s all she knew. And so, she was able to — you know, not — and she was laughing about it, running around with paper planes, you know, and then she would go towards the TV, and she would hit the paper plane into the TV, and then she would say, “ppphhhffff.” And that’s what happened. And so, I told my husband let her do that —

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Caval Ordde: — because she can’t identify with anything else. And then my eight-year-old, he also was able to put it into a cartoon-type situation, but the twelve-year-old now understand what was happening, and so then we had to have more discussion with him to make sure that he was fine with what was going on; that’s he’s not going to get too stressed out over it, and don’t want to go outside.

- Caval Ordde: Because there was a lot of kids that did not want to go outside, and they hear a plane and they would run and hide, and stuff like that, and so it was important for us at that time to make sure that he also maintained a level head as far as what was going on.
- Mark Schoepfle: Hmm. Didn't want to go outside? I mean, people were really terrified?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. Some of my neighbors, their children did not want to go outside. They would hear the planes, and they would just — you know, run, and have that type of fear, because of what happened and it happened with a plane, and so — you know, anything that happened, they see a plane, they're going to identify the incident with a plane, and then they don't want to be where they could see the plane. And so, psychologically it affected children.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. How else did it affect the children at that point? I mean, they were very much scared. The young ones just saw it as a cartoon, very much like a ballistic cartoon.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. My oldest one, who just turned twelve, he basically — he was worried — and because I spoke with his teacher afterwards, and she said he got real quiet, and he was just sitting in a corner, and just keep saying, "My mommy is going to be okay. My mommy is going to be okay." And she said, "Yes, your mommy is going to be okay." So, when my girlfriend — my neighbor picked them up from the bus stop, he said, "did you hear from my mommy?" And she said no, but mommy will be home. But he said, "but did you hear from her?" And so, his concern was that no one heard from me.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Caval Ordde: Even though he kept saying to himself — playing psych game with himself, that mommy is going to be okay, no one heard from me, and she try to get him to eat, and she try to get him to go to bed, but he would not until I get home.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Caval Ordde: He said I'm going to stay up until mommy get home, and five minutes after I walked into my house with the kids, he was fast asleep.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, good.
- Caval Ordde: So, he just did — he was not going to sleep until I get home.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, this was like the first day, and the first morning, I guess right after all this occurred, right?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: What happened in the days ensuing?

Caval Ordde: Well, we was home for a while, looking at the news and everything that was going on. And I think the kids went back to school a few days later. And they had a few bomb scare at school, and so I had to go pick them up from school. Quite a few of his classmates have lost parent — either one or both parent in the incident. So, we started writing, like, encouragement cards and support cards to his classmates, you know, and give them scriptures, and — you know, what can you say to child that have just lost both parents, because you are not in that situation?

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Caval Ordde: So, the base — the only thing that I told my son, I said you could draw a picture of a dove with a straw in the mouth, which represent the word of God and comfort and support, and just let them know that every time they will see a bird or something flying that that's one of their parents and they can stay connected. But I couldn't figure anything else to say to them, because I haven't had that situation to deal with.

Caval Ordde: And so, it was hard at the school system-wise, but it also helped on the work situation, once we got back to work with the support team that we had here and the different handouts that they gave to us. How do you deal with your children and what do you say to them? I was able to make copies of two or three of the handouts that we had, and send it to my son's school to his teacher, so she could hand those out to the children and to the parents and stuff like that, because I don't know what else to say or anything to them, and so the support team that came here and the information and the materials they had was helpful, both here and abroad.

Mark Schoepfle: So, some of the — you got some of the handouts at work. I imagine this means that the counselors were all fairly active here?

Caval Ordde: Yes. Once we came back they was here, and we had a series of meetings and counseling sessions with them, and they gave us the handouts, and the ones that have kids, if you wanted to talk to them one-on-one, that was made available to you, so if you had a concern, one of the staff here said that their child pulled a chunk of hair out of their head, and you know, how do you deal with those type of situations? So, the support team was very, very helpful in terms of how do you deal with your children in times of crisis?

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. Once we came back they was here, and we had a series of meetings and counseling sessions with them, and they gave us the handouts, and the ones that have kids, if you wanted to talk to them one-on-one, that was made available to you, so if you had a concern, one of the staff here said that their child pulled a chunk of hair out of their head, and you know, how do you deal with those type of situations? So, the support team was very, very helpful in terms of how do you deal with your children in times of crisis?

Caval Ordde: Yes. It was scary.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes.

Caval Ordde: It was really scary, because now you know that the situation happened. It's not only affecting the adults, but it's affecting the children. And some adults can't deal with crises, let alone a young child, and if you don't have the mindset to deal with it, how do you expect a child to cope with it? And then if you yourself is not stable and can comprehend what is going on, how can you explain to that child?

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Caval Ordde: And so, it's like — you know, both parents and child is lost, and so the support team was really helpful in giving you some type of information or resources, that you could sort of at a glance sort of educate yourself, so you could go back and sort of educate your child, as far as how to deal with the concept of what is going on, and so that was helpful for us.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. What else was going on like that? You had the counseling. What else was — things like in the first few days back. When did that happen, by the way? If I can just —

Caval Ordde: When did we come back to work? Was it a week later? I'm not sure when we come to work.

Mark Schoepfle: That's okay.

Caval Ordde: But when we did come back, besides the counselors, we also had an accountability system going on, where we had to be accountable for everyone that was at work that particular day. We had a sign-in sheet. We're not used to signing in, but we had to sign in. There was various meetings and sessions going on. We met with the Superintendent quite a few times, so she could express her concerns for the employees. If we needed to take a day or two off, we need to express that also, because she understands that. Just the support that you have, knowing the nature of where you work, and that this place is always a target — it stays a target, and it will remain a target, just because of the symbol for what it is.

- Caval Ordde: Employees was given the opportunity, if they wanted to be detailed someplace else for the time being, until they're able to reassess the whole reopening situation, and so that was done. Quite a few employees went to different parks to work.
- Mark Schoepfle: Within the New York area, or just everywhere in the Park Service?
- Caval Ordde: Some people went to — I think two employees went to Philadelphia; some was in the New York area. I think Philadelphia was the furthest if someone wanted a little bit further. Oh, one young lady went to North or South Carolina, and to a park there. Yes. But basically, we just had a support system — accountability. Everyone's work schedule had changed, because we had the flex schedule at that time that was going on, and so the Superintendent felt at that time that everyone should 9:00 to 5:00 — everyone coming at the same time and we leave at the same time, and so you know, she wouldn't have to think that someone is here working until 5:00 and then we don't know what happened, and so we went together — quite a few people went to lunch together, and if one person is going down the hall, we started having the habit of saying, well, I'm going to make copies, I'll be next door, and stuff like that. And we started keeping our radio on and loud in the office, so we can know what is going on.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. So, this is all part of the accountability system? You had the sign-in sheets? You had various meeting sessions?
- Caval Ordde: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: You had — basically were looking after each other?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: The Superintendent provided options for people who didn't want to stick around, and notably no flex — that was the first thing that went by the board. How did — this was all part of what you were calling the accountability?
- Caval Ordde: The accountability system.
- Mark Schoepfle: Okay. How were — what were people's reactions to some of those things?
- Caval Ordde: At that time, it was fine. They would just know they work Monday to Friday and not on weekends. I mean, it would affect some people's pay, because you don't get the Sunday premium anymore. You're strictly eight hours — forty hours — eighty hours a pay period, but for security reasons, I don't think they had looked at their paycheck at that particular time. We were safe; we're going to come in and we're going to leave. So, I think it was fine. There was not much complaining — different from, you know, I don't think I want to be here right now; I can't take it.

- Caval Ordde: If we hear something over the radio, some people were like did you hear that? You know? So, we're constantly staying in tune with what's going on with Park Police. If they get a weird call, then, we're all looking at each other, like okay, so don't move from here. Let's see what's going on.
- Caval Ordde: And my coworker and I came in on a Saturday, because we both work in contracting, but there was some work that had to get done, and so we was here by ourself, but we let the Park Police know that we were here, and then we heard that there was a plane that was flying — unidentified plane flying in low zones, and so we just automatically grabbed our radios and we ran outside. And we went to the flagpole, because now we are taught that you go to the flagpole and you stay there. So, we walked outside, and we ran into the officers, and they was able — ten minutes later we came back in because they was able to identify the plane, which was a Coast Guard plane.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. So, these next few days that that accountability system was set up, how long did that last? Or is it still in affect?
- Caval Ordde: As far as the signing in, as far as my office is concerned, we don't do that, because we're so close-knit downstairs, but we will still — now, there's the tendency we will say, well, I'm going to make copies, or I'm going to lunch. So now, we tell each other where we're going, so if anything, they will know that I'm in Interp [Interpretation], or I'm over at Management or in Concession or something like that. So, we still do tell each other where we're going, but we don't do the sign-in anymore.
- Mark Schoepfle: I see. Okay. So, this — what we're talking about here is in the first few weeks after you got back?
- Caval Ordde: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: What went on then? How did — the things — what happened as time went on?
- Caval Ordde: We had a series of training — mastering of weapon training. Maybe I'm saying the name incorrect, but — then we had the identifying of — if someone have weapons on them. We start getting trained as how to deal with the visitors once the site is reopened to the public. How do we — if we see a package that is left unattended, what do we do with it? And so, they start teaching us techniques in which to identify things, even though we're not in Interpretation, per se, that have to deal with the general public on a day-to-day basis, but everyone in general will now, well, if you walk down the hall and you see a package left unattended, don't touch it. You go and you call someone else.

Caval Ordde: And if you see someone acting strange, don't confront them, but don't let them know that you're calling for assistance.

Caval Ordde: And then had a few drills — evacuation drills. We had tests running in different offices; people just walking in and asking for information to see how much you will give out. And so, they was conditioning our minds to start thinking different. Because you know you have to think outside of the box, and you have to start looking at everything in a different aspect, not to be paranoid about a situation, but just to look at it differently.

Mark Schoepfle: Sure. When you were mentioning this weapons training, this was mostly recognizing people who were armed?

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: I mean, you weren't — you didn't go out on the range or something, right?

Caval Ordde: No. No. [Laughter]. Just identifying the people, if someone have a rifle, how they would walk; if someone have a handgun, how their clothes would look on them. If they're carrying a knapsack, you know — so they show us one guy, a young kid, and they was like what was wrong with him, and we couldn't see anything, and then they start showing he had 21 pieces on him. So, how do you identify those things? And then they start showing the little bulge in the pockets and things like that. So, now I'm able to see these things that you wouldn't just normally look for.

Mark Schoepfle: Mhmm. Hold on just a minute, because I've got about nine minutes to go on this tape, so I think it might be wise to change at this moment.

END OF SIDE 2

START OF TAPE 2

Mark Schoepfle: So, you were getting training in these things?

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: What else was going on at this point? This was all part of the accountability?

Caval Ordde: With the different phases of training that we have, it's — that was — because the site was closed to the general public, so it was just the staff that was working at that time. So, it's basically to prepare us for when the site is reopened and for the visitors to be back here, and in the process of that, while we was here doing all of that, we had a few threats. We were sent home once, because they thought the threat was really serious, and it was giving times and stuff when things was going to happen, and so the Superintendent said to just go home.

- Caval Ordde: And they was going to stay just to see whatever happened, and here I am again. I stayed with the Superintendent. [Laughter]. Because she also lived on Staten Island, and so I didn't want her to take the ferry home, and so I say to her — I said, okay, once everyone is out of my office, I will gather my things, and I will come over to your office, and I will stay outside in your reception area and help with whatever I can until you're ready to go home, and so we'll go home together. And so, yes, we did that, and just a series of different trainings.
- Caval Ordde: Some people thought that — you know, okay, we're going to go to work, and we're going to have a whole bunch of training, but then if you look at it, the training was necessary, and so now that — if they were to see something, that they're able to deal with it.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. And what other — okay, you mentioned the weapons training, and that kind of thing. What other kinds of training did you have for this preparation for opening?
- Caval Ordde: We had the weapons. We had fire prevention, identifying where the hoses are, the different types of fire extinguishers, what works with water, and if you think something else could work with water, it's not. So, just education, which was important, because some things that we didn't know, because I didn't know where — because I'm new here too, to this particular site. So, I didn't know where the fire exits were, as far as the fire extinguishers were set up, and where was the water pumps and stuff like that.
- Caval Ordde: So, that was good, they was able to show you a layout of where things are, and how you get to any, and if you're in this section, what works in this section, and if you're in that section. And the different chemicals that we ought to stay away from, because of the chemical warfares that could be going on, the value. And so those are the types of things they started training us.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. That's — it sounds to me — the kind of thing you're describing, that's the kind of thing most of us ought to know anyway.
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: And you know, routine things like the fire drills, the fire extinguishers, where the hoses are located, it's stuff most of us don't know.
- Caval Ordde: Don't know. And then, also, to let you know that you might have a fire extinguisher in your home, and how can read it to see if it will work. If you have a potholder on the stove, and if it get caught on fire, if what you have will work or will it spread the fire?

Mark Schoepfle: Right.

Caval Ordde: And so, these are the — and I went home, and I was like looking at the book and looking at the — I was like, Harvey, we can't have this one in the kitchen. We need another one. And so, even though it was for the job, you were able to take it abroad, and I think that was very important.

Mark Schoepfle: Yes. No. That's something — at least those of us who know how to do it, we've had to go gather it on our own, because it's just not offered.

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: And I think it's very important. It's great that they were doing that. So, this is in preparation for reopening?

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: Keep going. What else was happening?

Caval Ordde: It was also approaching the holiday season, and —

Mark Schoepfle: This was in November? Or —

Caval Ordde: When did the park open? I went out in December. Yes. This was in November. So, we had meetings with the Park Police officers. We had meetings with New Jersey officials. We had briefings with the Superintendent, every time she would have a conference call with the Washington office, we had visitation from the Director of the Park Service. We had visitation from the Regional Director — everyone basically coming down — kept telling us, that they're supporting whatever we're doing, and basically the reopening was not left up to us; it was basically left up to the Regional Office, when they think that the employees was conditioned for the reopening, and it was deemed safe, first of all for us, and then for the visitors, then the site will be open.

Caval Ordde: So, it was just a series of different briefings and meetings, and briefing and meetings — divisional meetings, where the division will come together and talk about whatever conflicts we experience at that time, because here you're looking at — it was September — that's the time that the government close their books out, so now we was pushed to a timeframe where we had to close the entire park out, and now we would normally have the entire month of September to do that, and now we are cut short with a week and a half to do the work that you would normally do in 30 days.

Mark Schoepfle: Closing out?

Caval Ordde: Yes. Closing out the — it's called the close out of the budget for the fiscal year.

Mark Schoepfle: Oh, yes.

Caval Ordde: So, we have to close our books on the 30th, to reopen up on October 1st with a new budget. And so, that was one of the challenges that we faced. So, then we had to work extended hours, trying to get those type of things done, and then deadlines that was missed because of the park not being open, or that we was home, or because of the incident that happened, now you have to play catch-up, so even though in the midst of all the other trainings and stuff like that, you still had to plunge into your work, and I think it was healthy, because it didn't give your mind a chance to start wandering. And so, we were so busy in the office that now we are not even thinking of the plane that is going over, or anything like that. So, things — to us in our office it was getting back to normalcy. So, things was going to — you know, we was trying to have things fall back in place. And I think we're still working on that.

Mark Schoepfle: I was going to say, another question in that line is — you were mentioning that things were sort of getting back to normal. Do you feel that there is any point at which you have returned to normal?

Caval Ordde: No. We have not. And simply because you are not used to being stopped at Post Four, which is at the entrance, the ones that have to drive over, to be checked. You're not used to people going in under your hoods, and having the mirrors to check under your cars, and trying to figure what is in that bag, and that bag. And you have something in the back of your trunk. Do you know what it is?

Caval Ordde: You know, the trainings and stuff that we've started getting is that — I have a tendency of turning my car on in the morning and then going back into my house, while the car is warming. So, I don't do that anymore, because they said someone could be waiting out there for you — you know, follow you back into the house with a gun. One is going to stay with your family, and you are going to transport the other one to the island, because they want to get onto the island, and so they pick you as a target.

Caval Ordde: So, no — things have not gotten back to normal, and I don't think they will ever, because of that aspect, because now you have the checkpoints, and now in your own personal lives, you can't do something that you used to do, and so now that I have to be sure I have a ten minutes leeway to get outside, because now I don't have that ten minutes to cut the car off, and run back in the house to finish getting dressed. So, now, I have to be dressed completely to go, so I have to sit in the car and warm it, because I don't want to be the one that is picked to transport these people onto the island, and so — no, it will not get back to normal.

- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. But the park reopened some time in December from what you're saying?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. I think it was in December. Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Okay. Then what happened once it opened?
- Caval Ordde: Well, I was on vacation until January.
- Mark Schoepfle: Ah. [Laughter].
- Caval Ordde: But I think it was fine because I will call to the park, occasionally, just to check in with the office, and everything seems fine. I didn't ask, you know? We have less visitors than the norm, simply because the visitors now have to go through check points, and they have a window timeframe in which to do that. So, if they only could get ten people onto the island within that window timeframe, that's all it's going to be for the day is ten people. So, it is picking up. Since I've been back there's more people here yesterday than last week, so I guess the checkpoint is moving a little faster — the glitches; there are still glitches to work out. You don't know what is going to work, so they're just trying different things.
- Mark Schoepfle: Well, I've certainly encountered your checkpoint, and I'm kind of impressed with that.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. And I think it's good.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. They have the ID. They check under your hood; they check in the trunk, and they have a little mirror, and everything that goes around there. So, yes, we don't even have that in D.C.
- Caval Ordde: Yes. I have that here, and because I also live on Fort Wadsworth Military Base, so you also have checkpoints at home.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, you live over there at Fort Wadsworth?
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh.
- Caval Ordde: So, I have checkpoints in the morning; checkpoints in the evening. [Laughter].
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. I think I drive exactly the same route. I'm staying over there at that Navy Lodge.
- Caval Ordde: Okay. That's down the block from me.

- Mark Schoepfle: Yes. Well, what's going to happen? Where do we go from here? Let's put it this way — another way of answering the question — a year from now, what might be highlighted? Or maybe I should — I'm sorry. Let me ask the first question first: Where do we go from here, just in a general way?
- Caval Ordde: I think the best place for us to—is to head forward, and not to let the September 11th incident hamper the goals and the visions of the Park Service. I always said that here, working on the Statue of Liberty, you know what type of site it is before you apply for the position. It's a good place to work, even though it have all the threats that are attached to it.
- Caval Ordde: But I think that as employees here, or as the visitors coming to the island, is that you also need to just continue looking at Miss Liberty standing there protecting the harbor as a sign of freedom, just to look at that, and just to move on, and not to let this incident also put you into a shell, close you off from the world and let you be afraid and scared of a whole lot of situation; not to think that you're going to go to work one day, and you don't know if you're going to go back home because of where you work. You could step outside on a Saturday and get hit by a car and don't return home.
- Caval Ordde: And I think if we keep those concept, that we ought to move ahead — be safe, know your surroundings — but also, move ahead and continue to be the Americans that we are, stand firm and strong with pride. I think that would be beneficial to us, to move forward, instead of — we always will look back on September 11th. It will have its anniversary, and people will have its memorials and to reflect, and so forth, but I also think that we need to use that incident as training ground and learning curves, and to move on so we will not be caught asleep again.
- Mark Schoepfle: If we were to use as a training and a support for the learning curve, what would be some of the things to stress?
- Caval Ordde: Not to become complacent, and in your surroundings know your whereabouts, your surroundings. I would always say to my son you don't put total control in humans, because we have a tendency to making errors, because we're not perfect. You look at the sign, or Americans always say, "God bless America," but if we was to look at it, even though we say, "God bless America," yet still — they're putting their total trust into the government and into the FBIs and everything, and they themself was asleep when the incident happen, and so I always say put your trust in God, and let him direct your path. You know?

- Caval Ordde: So, I always say don't put your total trust in the government, but also give them room to make whatever changes need to be made, and don't say, oh, they shouldn't pass this law, and they shouldn't do this, and they shouldn't do that, but just look at it as how it's going to benefit us, and then if you have something of importance to say, voice your opinion, and hopefully someone will hear what you have to say and take it into consideration.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. In other words — yes.
- Caval Ordde: I should say something positive to say that can change whatever Congress is about to do, then you go to the right people, the right sources, and you say those type of things, instead of just sit back and be negative.
- Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. What I forgot to ask was how's your family managed in between this?
- Caval Ordde: They're doing fine. They all are doing fine.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, they bounced back pretty quickly?
- Caval Ordde: My son is back into his games; he's back into the basketball. He's back into everything. So, they're fine.
- Mark Schoepfle: Oh, good. So, the immediate traumas were not —
- Caval Ordde: It was not long-term.
- Mark Schoepfle: Yes.
- Caval Ordde: It was not long-term.
- Mark Schoepfle: Good, good. Those are pretty much my questions. Oh, how long have you been with the Park Service?
- Caval Ordde: I started with the Park Service in 1989.
- Mark Schoepfle: '89.
- Caval Ordde: And I worked for Gateway National Recreation Area; then I went into the leadership — the Aspiring Leadership Program, and I came here as — to shadow Diane, the Superintendent, for my one-week shadowing, and then I stayed here and I did my 30-day detail assignment, and was detailed here indefinitely, and then I became permanent here.
- Mark Schoepfle: Very good. Congratulations.
- Caval Ordde: Thanks.
- Mark Schoepfle: Where were you before the Park Service?

- Caval Ordde: Let's see. I worked for the Department of Labor, which was a short-term for three months, but prior to that I worked as a Sales Manager for IBS in Manhattan for about a year or two. And prior to that I was in school. [Laughter].
- Mark Schoepfle: Where in school?
- Caval Ordde: In New York before — I came here to New York in 1986. I'm originally from the Virgin Island. So —
- Mark Schoepfle: You came to New York in '86? Very good.
- Caval Ordde: Mmhmm.
- Mark Schoepfle: So, what are your future plans? You going to stick around here?
- Caval Ordde: Yes. I'm not going nowhere. [Laughter]. Nowhere. They're not running me. I'm going to stay right here. Yes. I'm going to stay with the Park Service; it's a good agency to be in. There's a lot of growth and potential, but you just have to know what you want and how to get it.
- Mark Schoepfle: Good point. Good point for us all. Anything that I have forgotten to ask that I should have asked, that's important to you?
- Caval Ordde: I think we covered all grounds.
- Mark Schoepfle: Okay. Anything else you'd like to know about what we're up to?
- Caval Ordde: Sure. What is — I understand that you said that you guys are going to hopefully — you could get the tapes — remind me what you said about the tapes.
- Mark Schoepfle: Well, hopefully get the tapes transcribed. They're certainly going to be an archive. They're part of the Park Service record.
- Caval Ordde: Yes.
- Mark Schoepfle: There will be a centralized archive, as I now understand it, and I'll have to couch that "as I now understand it."
- Caval Ordde: Okay.
- Mark Schoepfle: There will be a centralized archive in Harper's Ferry, and then tapes will be archived here, as well. And then, I'd like a set of them, simply — you know, for the Washington office, so I can be working on them, and going through them. And hopefully, as many of them as possible can be transcribed. That's the big — what I would call the — that's the stumbling block, the bottleneck at this point, because listening to them would take a very long time to do.

Caval Ordde: To do it.

Mark Schoepfle: But then once that's going, then that transcription also, of course, becomes part of the archive. I think as the letter was explaining, they'll be important for later memorials, this kind of thing, and anything that the Park Service is going to do. They're going to be doing something, anyway. I mean, I can already see that happening; exactly what or how, I'm not really sure. In addition, we hope to be to write things up, so that basically the word of what happened comes out of what the Park Service did — very little known by the public; very little known, really, within the Park Service, itself.

Caval Ordde: Exactly, yes. Because that's one of the things that my husband had said to the church members. No one knew for a long time that we had a triage center here. No one knew that we was offering the support and the help that we were offering. The word — it just didn't get out. And in some areas, it was good, and in some aspect it was not good.

Mark Schoepfle: Some aspects not good? Meaning?

Caval Ordde: We are close to the incident. Even though we are on the island, we are right across the waters, and we are close to a lot of hospitals, and as I was home and I was listening to the numbers who was throwing out there, who went to this hospital, and how many people went to New Jersey City Medical, and the numbers was just extremely low, because they was not counting who came from here.

Mark Schoepfle: Ah!

Caval Ordde: So, that was not good. And at some point, it was good, because then you don't have — you have a few medias call that was trying to get information, but then if the word was out, you will have every media in the world would have been swarming trying to get over here, trying to videotape, so that was good in a sense that we didn't have that type of distraction, and so it was sort of like a paradox.

Mark Schoepfle: Good points/bad points?

Caval Ordde: Yes.

Mark Schoepfle: If the — coming down the line in that regard, what could we stress about these things? I mean, you mentioned the fact that we were a triage center; the fact that we served the public when they came over here, that we were an area of refuge. Looking a year down the line, looking back at this, what would be the important things to stress about what the Park Service did?

Caval Ordde: Just enlight the public that not only the mission of the Park Service is to serve and to protect the environment, but also that we are lending hand, and that we are also trying to bridge the gaps between the private sectors, and just look at people as part of the environment and that we are here to help in whatever area that we — that wherever we could lend our support that we are here to do that. You know, we have the — we just don't have — people look at Park Service, and they say Park — when they say Park Service they're not — they think of Park Rangers, and they think of City Park Rangers that walk around the City Parks. They don't really comprehend exactly what the Park Service is all about. So, I think that's one of the areas that we ought to head towards is to educate the public more on what is the mission and the goals of the Park Service. And we need to start in the school, because they are the future.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Just curiously, what is — you mentioned the City Park Rangers versus the National Park Rangers, what are some differences?

Caval Ordde: Our Rangers here — we have different types of Rangers. You have the Lead Interpreters; you have — what are the different types of Rangers? You have like the Supervisory Rangers. You have Rangers that do community outreach, that go out to different colleges, and do recruitments for volunteers and stuff like that. In the City Parks you don't have that. They just basically work in the Parks and keep the parks clean, and stuff like that, but ours in different, because we do — we have different types of Rangers that do different functions, and we just don't only clean the environment; we have also teachers and stuff like that. And even though 90 percent of us wear uniforms, we look — we are considered Park Rangers, but we are not Park Rangers. We work in different aspect of the Park Service, but we all are just uniformed.

Mark Schoepfle: Mmhmm. Excellent. Well, thank you very much. Anything else?

Caval Ordde: No.

END OF TAPE