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Janet Kirwan
October 22, 2014

Interview conducted by Lilli Tichinin
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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

JANET KIRWAN

By Lilli Tichinin

October 22, 2014

Estes Park, Colorado

Transcribed by Lilli Tichinin

[START OF TRACK 1]

Lilli Tichinin: Ok, so, this is Lilli Tichinin here on October 22, 2014, at Association of National Park Rangers Ranger Rendezvous in Estes Park. And I'm here doing an interview for the oral history project. So, Jan, if you could just introduce yourself.

Janet Kirwan: My name is Jan Kirwan.

Lilli Tichinin: Great, and if you could tell me just – we're going to do a little bit of biographical info first, so, you know, where were you born?

Janet Kirwan: Okay, I know that one. [laughs] I was actually born in Manhattan, in New York City, but my folks moved to Florida when I was a year and a half old, because my brother had been sick. So that had been a blessing in disguise because we moved to a part of the country where you could be outside and not in concrete canyons. And my mom was – became the avid birder and would do, you know, always outside, always doing something outside. So, she went from being raised in Hell's Kitchen in New York City when it earned the name Hell's Kitchen, to being this South Florida, let's get out and do things, and I spent a lot of times playing in Everglades National Park because of that.

Lilli Tichinin: So, umm, did you visit other parks? Did you spend a lot of time outdoors? Did you travel much and go to some other National Parks?

Janet Kirwan: Well, when we were kids, we didn't. That was a financial based issue, but we grew up playing in Everglades. My grandfather, for a while, had a house that was about ten feet to Everglades. The house my parents moved into was about two blocks from Everglades. Now it's like, you know, twenty miles to Everglades from that point, but – so we grew up outside and we grew up just exploring and playing. We were all in Scouts, so we all went camping. As families we went, we went camping all over South Florida. So, we were always outside doing something, getting into trouble somehow.

Lilli Tichinin: So that started early for you that love of the outdoors.

Janet Kirwan: I blame being a park ranger on my mother because when we went to scout camps mom did the bird walks and because my sister is five years older than me, when she was starting with scouts I was always dragged along, and if I couldn't go with my sister, my dad was a Boy Scout leader, so I was – I went to Boy Scout camp. And I learned by Boy Scout camps were a lot more fun than Girl Scout camps. You got to be dirty and muddy and yucky at Boy Scout camps, Girl Scout camps not so much. [laughs]

Lilli Tichinin: So, you have an older sister and a brother you mentioned.

Janet Kirwan: Correct.

Lilli Tichinin: And what did your parents do?

Janet Kirwan: My dad was an airline pilot – not airline pilot, sorry, he was an airline mechanic, for Pan Am, that is no longer in existence. My mom was pretty much a stay at home because we had cousins living with us, so we were five kids running through the house. But when I got to be old enough to go to school she started working in the school cafeteria just because she'd have the same schedule as me, which was not always a good plan, but hey, what can I say? [laughs]

Lilli Tichinin: Well, with that many kids in the house it is great that you were able to be outdoors.

Janet Kirwan: We'd get kicked outdoors on a fairly regular basis. Tiny house, too many kids, outside, do not come in until lunch. [laugh]

Lilli Tichinin: So, how – when did you know that you wanted to maybe work in a park? When did you first think that you might want to pursue that?

Janet Kirwan: I always knew I wanted to be outside. I was the kid – and I went through Catholic schools – that if you got in trouble in class, they would make you sit outside under a tree and read a book.

Lilli Tichinin: Sounds lovely!

Janet Kirwan: I spent a lot of time outside under a tree reading a book. And my parents would try to explain to the teachers, like, "You do not get it. She wants to be outside under the tree reading her book." And "Oh no, she'll be humiliated because the whole school can see her." And like, "Trust me, she doesn't care!" It was true, you know, so I'd intentionally do something to get myself kicked out so I could sit outside under a tree. So, I think somewhere innately early on, [laughs] I knew. What I hated about school was being inside, if they'd moved class outside, I'd have been fine. But, you know, just innately I knew, like outdoors, I want to be outside. So, when I was at school – I got my bachelors from Wyoming – I went to a career fair and I met this really neat lady, she was the administrative officer at Walnut Canyon, and I didn't think – you know the Park Service was like "Ahhhhhhhh." When I was a kid we'd go to the programs with the rangers and slough slogs and all kinds of stuff. And I thought, "There's no way. I don't have a [science] degree." I was one course short of a Zoology degree, but, you know, I don't have the hard science as much as those people do. And she was like, "No, you know, apply." And my- unheard of a that time because there were so many people applying, I applied to Walnut Canyon that next summer and got a seasonal job. And it was like, people like, "You got a seasonal job? You just – I mean your first time out?!" Yeah, but it was because the administrative officer remembered me from the interview, but she sat there and talked to me and said, "Of course, you can apply, of course you can be a park ranger!" And I'm like, "Really?" Because they were just like up on this, you know,

pedestal in my world. And I'm like, "Really? I can? I can really do that?" So.

Lilli Tichinin: So, what were you doing? What was the seasonal ranger position? What sort of stuff were you doing there?

Janet Kirwan: That was at Walnut Canyon, so it was a little staff. And it was a funny staff because everybody was either Catholic or Mormon. And so, we'd play volleyball every Friday night, Catholics against the Mormons. We'd play baseball in town and stuff like that, but everybody did something of everything. So, you were the fee collector, you did the, the interpretive hikes down through the ruins, you did maintenance, you carried visitors up all those steps – like it's three hundred and something steps up out of the ruins at Walnut Canyon. What I did, I redid all the signage along the trail, and did some work in the back part of the museum. So, it was fun. It was a great job; if you didn't know what you wanted to do in life it was the perfect job. [laughs]

Lilli Tichinin: And was that while you were still in school? Was that a summer—

Janet Kirwan: That was the summer after I graduated from Wyoming. I went to community college for two years and to my parents' horror and disbelief; I had a full-ride journalism scholarship, for the two years in community college and then on to Florida State. And I gave it up when I decided that I was done being a managing editor of a college newspaper. I loved writing, I loved doing all that, but the who-hah just drove me nuts. I wanted to be outdoors. Stepped out of school for a year, conned two friends that I grew up with to go to school in Wyoming, and they both needed another year to get their credits in line, I needed a year to save money, and then three girls packed up at nineteen, in a Toyota Corolla and drove from South Florida to Wyoming, never having seen snow, never—

Lilli Tichinin: [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: Our parents either really didn't like us and wanted you to be like gone, or like "Good those kids are gone!" You know, no cell phones, no nothing. Or it was our parents [cell phone vibrates] – sorry about that – or our parent just trusted us. And so, the three of us packed up and moved to Wyoming together.

Lilli Tichinin: Wow.

Janet Kirwan: And I majored in outdoor recreation land-use planning. So that's – that's how I ended up at the interview at the University of Wyoming. My dad was like, "Give me a plan, how are you going to pay for school?" because my parents couldn't pay for it so, "This is how I'm going to pay for school." I worked a total of six jobs at one time. [laughs] It was nuts, a little nutty. But, you know, I was an arts and crafts director, I was a lifeguard, a swimming instructor. I'd lifeguard for big events at the big country clubs in Miami, because they'd have these big parties by the pool, so there'd be people dressed to the nines in these evening gowns, and I'm

in a lifeguard stand in a little Speedo swimsuit going, "Mmhmm, okay." [both laugh] One of the many jobs I had during that period of time, in order to afford to go away to school.

Lilli Tichinin: And then, so after your first seasonal position, you continued – you moved around to a couple different parks after that, is that right?

Janet Kirwan: When I left Walnut Canyon, it's a blur. I actually went back to Florida and had applied for a job at Everglades. There were over a hundred and fifty applications that scored a hundred or more. So, they just stacked them alphabetically. So, they didn't reach the Ks, at all. So, I looked around for another job that would keep me outside and I became a 4-H program assistant. And then when the program manager's job came open, I applied for that, not thinking I was going to get it, solely because I figured, you know, I wanted some input in who I'm going to work for because the last person was a little looney-toon. I ended up interviewing for it and I actually got the job. So, I was a county 4-H agent for about two and a half years. And then they – they offered me the job heading up the state camps – do you see a trend here? – that I hadn't applied for, and then they discovered that not only did I not at the time, have a master's, I didn't have a PhD and you would be on staff at the University of Florida and that just wasn't going to work. I said, "Hmm, handwriting on the wall." So, I went back and got my master's.

Lilli Tichinin: And where did you go?

Janet Kirwan: Texas A&M. So, my master's is in Recreation Park Administration and Visitor Management basically. But my research was in interpretation, [exhibit planning and design, evaluating] the Charley Harper exhibits.

Lilli Tichinin: Okay, yeah.

Janet Kirwan: So. [laughs]

Lilli Tichinin: Wow, and then, so after that what was – what was the next step after that?

Janet Kirwan: Next step after that I started working summer season, because I did my research in Everglades, so I started working summers while I was in grad school at Everglades as an interpreter, at the north end of the park, Shark Valley, with the tram tours. The first day I walked in, the gentleman who I worked for, who turned out to be just a sweetheart and a half, walked out and like, "What are you standing outside for?" Because there was no sign on the door, I'm like looking at three trailers going, "Well, I don't know which one is which!" "What are you standing outside for, just get in here! If you're going to be shy you can't do this job!" And I'm like, "Okay." [laughing] "I'll come in." I'm going like, "Oh, what did I just get myself into?" But he was extremely skilled at teaching people the craft of interpretation. And, and some people would say he was ruthless because you would outline your program and run it by him, and then he would come out and audit your programs. You had to have a hardcore reference for every single fact in your two-hour tram program. And he would ask

you just a random fact and you couldn't say you got it from another ranger. You had to be able to pull out a book, pull out a paper, and reference exactly what you said. But you learned to do the facts, and you learned the resource and had a lot of fun. They left a bunch of seasonals alone, unsupervised because he went away to do National Guard stuff, so they left four seasonals unsupervised.

Lilli Tichinin: [Laughs]

Janet Kirwan: —with the environmental education trunk, in the summer. There would be plastic pink flamingos stuck out in the slough. I did a tram tour one day and I come around – there was a guy – one of my coworkers, Brian, comes up, and this is when Mother Nature in the butter commercial was a big thing – he had on Sandy Dayhoff's yellow chiffon dress that she dressed the kids up in for some reason, this big old like bridesmaid's dress or something – he comes up, he's got periphyton on his head, he's got it hanging all over him – in the middle of my tram tour he comes up, "I'm Mother Nature." [both laugh] And he does this whole narrative on being Mother Nature. It was – I was like falling off the tram – because we used to do talk drives. We not only did the talk, presented, the program, we also drove the trams, which was a lot of fun because you could kind of adjust to what you needed to do but, I almost fell out of the driver's seat because here's Brian, just kind of going, "I'm Mother Nature." With just periphyton hanging off his head.

Lilli Tichinin: [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: Sandy took the trunk away from us. [laughs] You shouldn't leave it with the seasonals with lots of imagination unsupervised on Tamiami trail in the middle of the summertime. You never know what's going to happen. [both laugh] So, I worked that until I finished my master's degree. Where did I go from there? I ended up getting a dispatch fee collection job at Everglades. Our AO [administrative officer] was a woman named Marie Rust, was a sweetheart, she came in from the military. And there was like six of us working, term appointments, no benefits, no nothing, crazy hours, you know, GS-3s, all of us just slowly financially sinking into the western sunset, living in neighborhoods – Mike finally had to leave his badge at work because he'd been broken into so many times in that neighborhood he'd found a place to live he could afford. So she [Marie Rust] actually hand carried all our applications to the OPM [Office of Personnel Management] office in Orlando and stood at the door when they opened the door and watched them hand stamp every one of our applications so we would be on the top of the cert – because those there were days when they did the OPM certs and they'd open it for the day, but they'd only take – decided they'd only take fifteen applications, and then they'd close it. So, it was like this Russian roulette of, did you get in? So, Marie actually drove from Miami all the way to Orlando in the early, early morning until she was there when the doors opened and she walked in and watched them stamp, time stamp, every one of our applications. And we

all ended up – all the jobs went permanent; we all got those permanent jobs. So that was our first, all of our first permanent jobs.

Lilli Tichinin: Wow. It's amazing to have someone in your corner like that.

Janet Kirwan: Otherwise it was nuts. You'd get these things, you'd send these little post cards off to see if the OPM offices were opening the certs and then you'd get them back and then, you know, work in a crew of people doing it and then somebody would get one back for a really special [job] – and they wouldn't tell anybody else. Yeah, stuff like that would happen, so it was hard, it was hard to get on because so many people were trying to get on. So thankfully for her, I got my first permanent job.

Lilli Tichinin: And how long – how long were you there?

Janet Kirwan: I wasn't in that job even a year, because I had my master's from Texas A&M, Walt Dabney was head of resource management at Everglades at the time, and he would talk, you know because they have to come through the entrance gate every morning, and we'd chit-chat, and combined with Walt going, "You can't stay here." The rangers used to call into dispatch at two o'clock in the morning and ask you to look up regulations. It always made me nervous – here I am reading something that depends on whether this person is going to get arrested, get a ticket, do whatever. I'm reading USC [United States Code] and I'm reading CFR [Code of Federal Regulations]. So that job was a furlough job, so I sent myself to seasonal law enforcement school, so I had a clue. And then when I came back, Walt was like – Dabney was like, "Okay, I have a friend who is hiring a seasonal law enforcement position at Crater Lake. You need to apply." And it was one of those times I asked for a couple days off because I was exhausted at work, because I was also – to make ends meet we were all working initial attack fire, and I was working with helicopters and doing fire behavior and everything else at the same time. They put a cot in the fire cache so you could sleep. You'd get off of a shift, go into the fire cache, put on your Nomex, and curl up on the cot and prayed that nobody called in a fire or that Sue Husari was our FMO [Fire Management Officer?], called in an exercise kind of fire, something like that. So, it got kind of old, kind of fast. So, I resigned my permanent job and went to work at Crater Lake as a Law Enforcement Ranger.

Lilli Tichinin: Wow.

Janet Kirwan: [laughs] Remember, I'm the kid from Florida, do you know how much snow there is at Crater Lake!?

Lilli Tichinin: Oh yeah! [laughs] Yup!

Janet Kirwan: Oh, geez!

Lilli Tichinin: If you can handle Wyoming you can handle Crater Lake.

Jent Kirwan: Well, Wyoming see, is different. Wyoming weather report was always blowing and drifting snow. So, it was never in Laramie, you'd go up in the

mountains and you'd have a foot or two of nice soft powder. Crater Lake it'd be like thirty feet of snow and then driving in going—

Lilli Tichinin: There're snowbanks on either side of my car.

Janet Kirwan: —"Oh, this is interesting!" But I went for a run my first night there, got lost. And just had to keep listening for traffic on the highway, Highway 11, because I thought I was following a trail, and I was initially and somehow got off on a deer trail because it was early in the year and the trails weren't that clear, in shorts and t-shirt in Crater Lake, in May. Went, "It's going to get real cold real fast." But managed to make my way back and I had told my roommate, my housemate, you know, "If I'm not back by a certain time come look for me" because we had worked together in Everglades. And she said – when I finally got back, muddy, freezing cold, made my way back – she's like "Oh, I didn't think you were serious." [laughs] It's the, "God watches over fools, children and Park Rangers." It was one of those. So.

Lilli Tichinin: So that was your first night.

Janet Kirwan: That was my first night and it got interesting from there. We – there was six seasonals – became – our boss did just a quick introduction to all the seasonals and then gave us our schedules. It became apparent to him there was two of us that he could trust to actually work and the other four were hanging out in the dorm partying with the concession employees and giving them our schedules and stuff. So, Kevin McMillian and I would partner, we'd just ride opposite each other and he'd have the night shift. And I was in there – I was just talking to Yvette about this last night; we were laughing, the things we got ourselves into – I was in my second week doing law enforcement ever in my life, at night, and I get a call from – they were working construction on the road going up to Bend from Crater Lake, from the loop around the lake – and this guy had gotten part way up there, the road was closed, it had been marked as closed, started backing up and trying, almost hit a bunch of people and trying to back up through all the construction, and in a fit of temper, you know, high speeds and all this kind of stuff. So, Crater Lake at the time, at a certain hour, the rule was unless there was an emergency call, no one patrolled around the backside of the lake, because it's a one-way road, you stay on the front side.

Janet Kirwan: Kevin was riding with one of the other rangers and I was by myself. Kevin called out he was going to stop for dinner, so the other ranger had the car. He went around the one-way road that he wasn't supposed to go around – this was one of the seasonals giving out our schedules – and I get a call about this guy on the top end of the lake. So, I go up there, and you know stop him and get his driver's license and everything else and talk to him and stuff. For our dispatch we'd have to go to a payphone with a quarter and call the local, the local sheriff's office. [laughs] So we, you know, picture, two weeks doing law enforcement, ever, and you're out there

going, "Okay." So, I take the guy's ID and I get my ticket book out, and then he goes ape, and we are in a fight to end all fights on the side of the road and I'm thinking, "This isn't good." The Watchman in the fire lookout tower, a retired New York state police officer, got on the radio and yelling, talking me through the fight. What to do, what to look out for, and just mentored me all the way through that fight on the side of the road. And finally pushed clear of the guy and he was like, "Let him go, you have his driver's license, let him go." He ended up eventually getting picked up back in Indianapolis for that. But that night I did more traffic stops but the guy I rode opposite, Kevin, was just horrified. He was sitting at the house, his girlfriend had his car, he had no way, even a personal car to come up and get to me to help. So, he's listening to this on the radio. All the permanent staff are listening to this on the radio but can't get anywhere near me in time. And so, I just did traffic stops all night long going, I was "Okay, I've got to do this, otherwise I'm going to be scared in my boots and I'll never do the job."

Janet Kirwan: So, did that. My boss called me in first thing the next morning, you know, long before my shift [for that day]. He sat down and he goes, "We need to talk." I'm like, "Okay." He goes, "I want to, you know, tell you something." I go, "Can I say something first?" "Yeah." I said, "I was up all night and I made a list of all the ways I could have died last night." And I read it to him, and he goes, "Yeah, you pretty much covered it." [laughs] But to make it worse, at our mid-year, at our summer seasonal evaluations, he came to me and was like, "I'm having a hard time. When we did your checkout when you first got here and I took everybody out and we drove around and we rode a couple shifts together," he says, "I can't find the paperwork for you, you know. I can't find all that, that whole information sheet I did my mid-year evaluation on it. I looked at him and said, "We didn't do it." He looked at me and says, "You mean I turned you loose with a gun, patrol car, shot gun, out to do law enforcement—?" And the year before was the year the guy tried to bomb the ranger's car, you know, on a traffic stop, so it was pretty intense law enforcement from that. And he goes, "I sent you out with nothing?" "Yeah, pretty much." God watches over fools, children, and Park Rangers.

Lilli Tichinin: And how long was the law enforcement training that you did when you were still at Everglades? What was that training like?

Janet Kirwan: The seasonal [training] was in Sylva, North Carolina, and I think it was six, maybe four or five weeks, something like that. It wasn't long.

Lilli Tichinin: So that was the extent of your experience going in?

Janet Kirwan: Yeah, that and growing up in Miami. [laughs] Pretty much, that was the extent. But remember before they had FLETC [Federal Law Enforcement Training Center] and had formal training, they did that to permanents. They'd get a job, they'd show up, with no training at all and they'd hand them a gun and a ticket book and a CFR. "Go forth and do." That wasn't

that many years earlier. So, yeah. [laughs] Some things my mom never found out about, that was one.

Lilli Tichinin: I'm sure. Wow. So, how long were you at Crater Lake?

Janet Kirwan: I was there as a seasonal and they extended my season. They extended Kevin and my season. We went in through the fall hunting season. And so once again, the kid from Florida – my shift started doing, get up in the morning, go down, dig out the bay to get the car out, get the truck out. Go around, dig out all the fire hydrants, dig out all the doors to all the buildings. By that time, it was time to go back, dig out the bay to put the truck back in. [both laugh] My feet were freezing. My boss had to take me down to buy mukluks. I had never seen them before in my life, you know so my feet wouldn't freeze to death. It was pretty funny, but that was the fun part. They had an annual party – and I don't think they do it anymore – they had an annual champagne and cheesecake party. And we hosted it at our house, which was the old hospital building. Everybody'd come up dressed in their best that they could find at the thrift store. So, I had on this wonderful yellow chiffon, like wonderful bridesmaid dress, and we actually had to go out and respond to an emergency call. Everybody – our supervisor wearing a yellow and brown buffalo plaid suit, [laughs] and I had my chiffon dress on.

Lilli Tichinin: What was the call, do you remember?

Janet Kirwan: I think it was something like a suspected drunk driver and it wasn't, it was just somebody was lost. You know, and our thing was like we're not doing law enforcement; we're just making sure everybody was okay. I'm sure that guy still talks about the two rangers, [laughs] "Yeah these people pulled up and – big buffalo plaid brown and yellow suit and the other one in the yellow chiffon dress." Then I ended up going back to Everglades, into fire, working resource management, working exotic plants and fire and prescribed fire and everything else in South Florida. Then I got offered a term appointment – because I had had my permanent status – in Haleakala. I was like "Oh, it's going to cost me a ton to go there." And everybody's like, "Are you nuts!? You're going to do horse patrol on Maui, and everything else." So next thing you know, I was on a plane to Hawaii, and working at Haleakala, which was a blast. You know, somebody had to do it; I sacrificed myself. Worked with an amazing staff. The field rangers and the maintenance, some of the maintenance guys were a blast and a half. It was a park of just real interesting things going on. It's beautiful and you know, horse patrol down into the crater and back into the back country Paliku cabin. I don't know, I just had to suffer through that. [Both laugh] It was a blast. And a lot of details to Hawaii Volcanoes and stuff like that while I was there, so it was fun.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah. So, what sorts of things would you come across doing horse patrol, I mean what, what sorts of things did you have – did you encounter?

Janet Kirwan: Well, I think the big things we did, we actually hauled all the wood in, the pressed logs. If we didn't fly them in on the helicopter, we hauled them in on mule trains. So, we led mule trains in. We'd have to take out all the garbage and do all the water samples so that all the cisterns and all in the crater were safe to drink. So, we'd do all that, and then we'd find lost people. We found a guy from Chicago who had been lost for three days just before he headed down into the rain forest. We found him and he was funny because we brought him out of horseback, because you can only take the horses to the edge and then we had to hike in, and we followed his tracks in and we found him. Literally, inner-city Chicago guy and he had just walked into a fog bank off the Halemauu trail and just kept walking. He figured he could get down sooner or later. And the rainforest there is beautiful but it's thick and lush, and it's – how we found him is he wasn't that far in. Got him out, put him on horseback.

[Portion of transcript and audio recording removed at request of the narrator.]

Janet Kirwan: He was, "I'm on a horse! This is really a horse. Can you take my picture?" [Both laugh]. So, we did a lot of that. At the time they did, and they're still doing it I think, the bicycle tours from the top of the mountain down. Lots of EMS, lots and lots, because you took people and put them on bicycles with hand breaks and a lot of people, their hands would get so cold they couldn't move the hand breaks and they'd go down and they'd hit the curvy spot and they—

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Janet Kirwan: —would go like thirty-five miles an hour and go shooting right off the edge and end up in a boulder field. So, a lot of para[plegic] and quad[raplegic] injuries and things like that, sometimes cars doing the same thing as the bicycles did. I worked with negotiating a lot of those special use permits and managing those special use permits while I was there. And I did a lot of – trying to clean up the aviation aspect. If you've ever seen the video where the guy picks up a cow and puts it in the back of a truck in Hawaii?

Lilli Tichinin: Yes!

Janet Kirwan: That was our pilot.

Lilli Tichinin: Really?

Janet Kirwan: He would intentionally try to make our helmets fall out of the back of a helicopter because he didn't think it was necessary to have helmets on while you're in the helicopter. One day he shot a pig. And I'm like going, "Okay, I'm out. I'm completely out." He set the helicopter down and he tied up the back legs of the hog. And they were an exotic – we would hunt them as part of a resource management program in a very organized fashion, to get the goats and the—

Lilli Tichinin: To control the population.

Janet Kirwan: He tied the back legs and hooked it on the skid, and he was going to pick up. And I'm like, "I'm hiking! Tell my boss to meet me at the trailhead in like nine, ten hours. I'm walking; I am not getting back in that helicopter." And they were like, "Well, if you're just going to be a chicken about it." "No, I want to live. These things fall out of the sky. You know, there's a safety for a reason." And so that was always a battle. That was one of the things I battled with quite a bit, was to make sure that they clean up the aviation and try to make people safe. Of course, when I wasn't looking what they were doing is, they would do things – they were fencing the crater to keep out the goats and try to keep out the hogs, and one day one of the seasonals came back talking about – they had hung from the helicopter a spindle and put the roll of fencing on it and that's how they were feeding out the fencing along the crater. And the fence got hung up, so she was trying to work with it, and she ended up getting pulled up and off the ground and out until he [the pilot] realized what had happened – she was holding on – and brought her back and set her back down. I'm like, "Do you want to die?"

Janet Kirwan: But it was a fun park. We had a lot of fun. A lot of cool people. We had people come up and a lot of southern California haoles who wanted to be Native Hawaiian and embrace the whole Hawaiiana which would general tick off the local folks, this one visitor, I think he was just playing his music really, really loud up at sunrise – and I went up and talked to him and he's going on and on about Pele and everything and so I'm like, "You know, Pele wouldn't want you to do this. Pele would not be happy with you desecrating her sunrise with your really bad music." Because he was actually playing, bad, really bad. And he was like, "Oh, I've, I've angered Pele?" "Well, probably pretty much you've gotten her really a little upset with you." "Oh my, what do I do?" I found out from my boss that he'd like every so often he'd show up and I'm like, "You know what, just don't come back up on top of the mountain." And he's like, "Really?" "Yeah, I think you'll be okay if you don't come back up on top of the mountain." "Oh, okay!" [laughs] Never saw him again. But we had the great Harmonic Convergence was when I was at Hawaii and Haleakala is one of the seven sacred sites. So, that was – are you familiar with the Harmonic Convergence?

Lilli Tichinin: No.

Janet Kirwan: It had a lot to do with crystals and all the planets were going to align and the earth was going to end as we knew it and there were seven sacred sites around the world – Machu Picchu, I can't remember some of the others – but Haleakala was one of them. So, we would get carloads of people up and we had people burying their placentas out off the trail, we had people doing all kinds of interesting things. And, a week before the actual date we ended up bringing SET teams and we had to set up special places they could have fire rings and things, because they wanted to bring wood up

into the park and like, "No, because you're going to bring ants." The Argentine ants which were not native, they were down country, but they were not upcountry and if you bring wood up you're going to bring that up, so we had to screen to make sure nobody brought wood up and things like that. And just ran twenty-four hour shifts of people doing really interesting things. Look down one night and there was our superintendent dancing around a fire, like "Okay!"

Janet Kirwan: One of the rangers from Grand Canyon, if I think long enough, I'll remember his name, really nice guy, barely fit in our patrol car, he was just this huge walking wall of a guy, awesome ranger, he looked down and goes, "Who's that?" I looked and said, "That's my Superintendent." He's like, "You're kidding." I'm like, "No. Not kidding." [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: But the morning when the sun came up and everything, you know everybody was supposed to be up and doing everything, the only people awake were the park rangers. Everybody else, you know, between alcohol and other chemically assisted moments in life, were crashed out everywhere, all around the top of the mountain and the only ones who were up were the park rangers, going, "Huh, I guess it's just another day! The sun came up, everything is fine. Okay, we're done."

Lilli Tichinin: Did everyone kind of leave pretty quickly after that? I mean, did people stick around the park after that?

Janet Kirwan: It took about a day or two to get people out of there, but I mean people flew in from all over the world; we had people from all over the world. And we had things like people leave a – [interview interruption] – people would leave candles in their cars and lock their cars and the next thing you know the car as on fire. They'd bring their kids up and so we actually managed to find a source for a bunch of the cylume lights, you know break them and shake them, and we put strings on them and any time we saw a kid, because they were walking around at night, so anytime we saw a kid we'd give them one and hang it around their neck so at least you had a shot at seeing where the kids were. Everybody on staff got exposed to pink eye. As far as I know nobody ever got it, but we had a kid with pink eye, and we had child protective services up in the park almost all night every night because of the way people were just not taking care of their kids up there. So, it was kind of crazy.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah, that's a pretty intense influx of visitors, sounds like.

Janet Kirwan: Yeah, and everybody had their crystals and their – and you know, kind of stuff. But it was fun. Another life experience. So.

Lilli Tichinin: Well, how long were you there?

Janet Kirwan: About two and a half years. It was funny when I got there, some of the rangers wouldn't have anything to do with a haole ranger. And I felt pretty special in that, a couple times, I got sent around to the Kipahulu side, and one guy came up to me one day, after like the second time I was there, and

he goes, "You're not like the others." Because I'd always ask about plants and the uses and their families and the culture, because I thought that was just fascinating, amazing. The whole thing with Pele, but just family structures, and respect. There were a lot of things you may not believe but you learn to respect, and I thoroughly enjoyed. So, I'd get invited home for lunch in people's homes and things like that.

Janet Kirwan: The District Ranger on that side was a guy named Kimo Kabatbat and one right after the rangers built their ranger station-visitor center, a little contact station kind of thing, and got all moved in, they had ticked off some international visitors at the Seven Sacred Pools earlier in the day. Wrote them tickets and all. It turned out those visitors were the ones that burned down the ranger [station] later that night – broke into the safe, stole the guns, a lot of the guys' own personal weapons, and burned down the Ranger Station, within a couple weeks of it being finished. So, Kimo and I went undercover in Maui all over the tourist sites. The big thing was local boy-haole girl, kind of just this weird thing. We'd go undercover. I had wrecked my ankle, so I was on crutches. So, we were doing this local boy-haole girl undercover thing trying to track these guys down and we finally got some information on them the third or fourth day undercover. Unfortunately, and they actually managed to fly out of Oahu before they could be caught but got picked up when they flew into, I want to say they flew into either New Zealand or Australia – they were European. One of them finally admitted that he had done it. When Kimo was transferred over to the big island I was always invited to their homes, I was always invited to family – first birthdays are the big thing because there is so much mortality in the first year of life, so the first birthday is the big celebration. I'd always be invited to them and my boss could never understand why I was always being invited. And I was just like, it's the most fascinating culture in the world, and it's cool. Everybody is nice, nice people, and they share with me and I share with them, and just really enjoyed the folks that I worked with when I was there. So, they would embrace me and include me in their family celebrations. It was a lot of fun.

Janet Kirwan: So, I'd go, when Kimo was on the Big Island, and with our guys on Maui. His wife's name was Jan and he actually made sure, I had to meet Jan, so she knew who I was because they were not used to female rangers, at all. And, to understand that I was no threat to her, her husband, or anything else. After that, when I was on the Big Island I would go over and have dinner with the family and the kids and the cousins and aunties and all. But Kimo got diagnosed with an aggressive cancer and ended up passing away and Jan asked for me to come back over to the Big Island to be with the family and to be part of the family, the ranger family group over there during all that, through the funeral and everything like that. So that was an honor, sad, but it was an honor to be included in that, which was cool.

Janet Kirwan: While I was there, I also went to a Buddhist funeral. One of our interpreters passed away. He'd actually been in the Japanese internment camp; he was living in Hawaii, got sent to Wyoming, up outside of Cody, I actually worked for Wyoming Recreation Commission right out of college – I think I got my dates mixed up when we were talking – but I took care of the interpretive sign in front of the internment camp that Jitssumi Kunioki was at. So, we would sit and talk, and he's always take his patch and he'd look at me and he'd go, "What does that say? What does that say?" And I'd say, "It says National Park Service." "What's that last word? Service. That's what we do! We do service!" And he was just a sweetheart, just the nicest gentleman. He'd always go "That's what we do. We provide Service." So those are the people I learned to do my Park Service career from.

Lilli Tichinin: I was curious, you said that they weren't really used to female rangers. Were there any, you know, what was it like there? Were there other female rangers with you there?

Janet Kirwan: There was, my boss was a female ranger. And fortunately, I wasn't like her at all. Part of it was, she bought into the idea to be a female doing law enforcement you had to act like a guy. So, she wore men's clothing; even off duty she'd wear her boyfriend's clothes. I was like, you don't have to do that to earn anybody's respect. You can embrace being female and still do the job. She never could seem to get that, that you could do that. And these guys just couldn't figure her out. And because of that they would keep her at arm's length and at times she'd get really aggressive with them, especially when they would embrace me, and the seasonal before me, and they wouldn't embrace her.

Janet Kirwan: But that was an era, like when I was working in dispatch at Everglades and looking at trying to get out of dispatch, chief ranger at the time actually came in, sat down and flat out told me there was no way in God's green earth he would hire a female ranger. There was flat out no way. That things happened in those hunting camps that women shouldn't be exposed to. I'm looking at him, going, "My neighbors across the street growing up had a hunting camp. Just before hunting season, the weeks getting their camp ready they would, brave souls they were, pack up any kid in the neighborhood that wanted to go and we spent a weekend in the Big Cypress, helping them clean up their hunting camp. Muddy, when we got home our moms would take us out in the back yard and hose us off." I said, "I grew up playing in those hunting camps owners and their kids, they're nothing new." Unh-uh, he flat out would not hire a female ranger. When I eventually came back to Everglades I was in a, at the time it was split interp/law enforcement position. When I got offered the Everglades job, and came back depending on who you talked to, either Jan Passek or I were the first certified female airboat operators in the National Park Service. At that point in time the only other female law enforcement ranger that had ever been [in the Everglades] was Johnni Medford and she

had been at Flamingo and then at Ten Thousand Islands, then Johnni eventually went over to fire and then it was Jan Passek and I and that was it.

Janet Kirwan: So, when I worked at Tamiami I was the very first female ranger up there and the hunters couldn't figure out a female ranger at all. And, to the point, the guy who hired me transferred over to Big Cypress and the guy who was acting after him wouldn't teach me how to run an airboat. I grew up playing around them and occasionally on them, but I didn't know how to run them. It was the hunters who taught me how to run an airboat. The head of the hunting association, which was kind of an interesting crowd, but they taught me how to run an airboat like a hunter. So, I found out years later that they could always pick out the rangers by the way they ran the boat because they weren't paying for the gas. So, rangers will run full out, which means you're sucking down the gas. Hunters are paying for their gas, so they were much more fastidious. So I learned to run my airboat like them, so they could never tell, because we had a lot of Lycoming engines like most of them did, the aircraft engines, so the engine sound wasn't any different but I learned to run it like the hunters. I learned how to do hunting patrols and how to check the take and all by hanging out at the game check station. The women embraced me. The head of the hunting association actually had the job running the game check station, checking people in and out, so I'd go over there at night, after I got off work, and sit there and watch them with the carcasses and finding the sex, and making sure that every animal had four legs not five or six, and one back strap not five, that kind of thing,. That's how I learned because nobody would teach me.

Lilli Tichinin: Wow

Janet Kirwan: So.

Lilli Tichinin: So that's sort of informal mentorship not even within the Park Service, but within the community.

Janet Kirwan: Because I was local, I grew up in Hialeah, I treated them with respect. They hated some of the rangers. There was an outlaw hunting camp just down the road, and a year or two later I actually end up with a bullet hole in the back of my personal car. Driving from a ranger's house that I'd gone down to visit, he and his girlfriend had been my seasonal roommate for years. Coming back, they [the hunting camp] had been having a party and somebody popped off a round into the back of my car and into my back taillight I left that round in that car. That was my reminder. You'd be out in the swamp alone and they'd circle you. And, then they'd look at me and go, "Oh, it's Jan." You know, they'd think I was Mark or Bud or somebody else. But, because they never got a lot of brownie points when they went home and said or went back to camp and said they'd hassled Jan, because Jan was the girl [lots of times I was generally left to do my job. It may have helped that] Jan had a pistol grip shot gun in her lap.

Literally every time I went into the swamp, I had that pistol grip shotgun with me until eventually, policy changed, and they took the piston grip shot gun away from us.

Lilli Tichinin: Really?

Janet Kirwan: Oh yeah, it was the most practical thing cause it'd be—

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah, right.

Janet Kirwan: It would be right in your lap and when somebody got a little too intense in the middle of the night, you'd rack a round. [The sound alone would make people think.] And it's like, "Girl with Shotgun. Think." [At times I'd get asked], "Well what if somebody fights you?" [My standard answer would be] "I don't fight." "Well, what if—" "I don't fight." [laughs] "Well, you know what would you—" I was like, "They gave me a gun. I do not fight." "Oh." You know, it was my way of just backing them down.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah, yeah.

Janet Kirwan: So, it was interesting, it had its moments. I'd come home and find notes on my door saying, "You could be dead tonight." Umm, they made up bumper stickers that said, "Protect the Everglades, [Shoot] a Park Ranger." So, you know, you had to know the hunters. You had to know the mix. So, you had to learn their cars because they'd park along one road all up to where the boat launches were. You got to know who was out there. And if a certain mix was out there it wouldn't be a really good day. And I'd go through the game check station and you know, the head of the Hunting Association would look at me and go, his way of letting me know what's going on, he'd go, "Got your body armor on today, right Jan?" And that was to let me know that wrong mix was out there.

Lilli Tichinin: What type of day it was.

Janet Kirwan: Yeah, the wrong mix was out there. But we also had hunters that – there was this one, couple of hunters had this little, tiny camp and you could always find it in the middle of the night because it smelled so good. They'd always make stews and chili; they were a couple of fire fighters from in town. So, you would stop in and check with them and they would always give you something, like a hot cup [of soup or coffee]. It was the only camp I'd ever take food from. Some hunters would string piano wire across an airboat trails for the Big Cypress rangers. They [a few specific hunters] at one point in time threatened to kidnap and rape one of the ranger's wife. What finally got the leader of that outlaw camp of hunters – who was a hospital administrator of a major hospital in Fort Lauderdale, so you know people think these guys are all just dirt bags and they're not – this guy was involved in aerial hunting that went all the way up to Alaska. I was at the game check station one night and this guy Merle came in and I just faded back I'd always park my car where nobody could see it and I just kind of faded into the shadows and listened to him threaten to kill one my coworkers. And no doubt about it, he was threatening, if he ran into

him out there that night, he was going to kill him, I wrote a report. Something like two years later I got a call from the U.S. Attorney's office asking me if I remember this report. Finally, I remembered this report. [The person making the threat against my co-worker] been picked up for exposing himself to a thirteen-year-old girl in one of the hunting camps when one of the rangers was there. So, his retaliation was to go after the ranger. And to show his ongoing [hostility toward the rangers] and, that he had an axe to grind with rangers—

Lilli Tichinin: That it was a pattern.

Janet Kirwan: —That you know, I had to testify to the fact [he had threatened to kill a fellow ranger]. And he just looked at me and I said, "You know, I was there Merle. I was standing right there. I was just in the shadows behind the fire, and you didn't see me." He ended up doing some significant time, lost his job at the hospital. But these guys out there, some of them were firefighters, some of them were police officers. [Others would] do anything to threaten you and try to scare you. One afternoon, at a camp that was friendly to us way down on the south end, if we got stuck in a storm, we could always crash out there and they were all decent, really decent people. In front of the camp was a little basin so it kind of came in like the mouth of a small bay and I had brand – poor Craig, Craig Thatcher – had this brand new ranger on the boat, he'd never been up there, he'd just gotten a permanent job, he'd' been working at Pine Island doing road patrol and campgrounds and you know, kind of routine and sedate. So, he came up and he was going to ride with me for the day. I was taking him out, showing him around, went into this camp, stopped, for lunch. When we went to leave two [anti NPS] hunters pulled up at the mouth of that bay. And they're like, "Oh, look what we got, we caught ourselves some rangers." I just looked at this one guy, I can't remember his name and I was like, "You're going to need to move your boat because I'm coming through." He's like, "No, you know, we've got ourselves some rangers." And he's going on and on, egging, and I'm like, "Unh-uh, you need to move your boat." And we went back and forth for a little bit and I'm like, "I'm telling you; you need to move your boat. We're on our way out." And they're starting to [say], "We got ourselves some fresh meat; we're gonna have fun" and all this kind of stuff. "We got a newbie". I just tell Craig, I said, "Hang on." He's' like, "What are you going to do?" I said, "Just hold on." I told the guys, I said, "I'm making two circuits of this basin" and it wasn't that big, "and I'm coming through. If you're there, I'm coming through. If you're not there, I'm coming through." I spun the boat, made two circuits around that basin, and throttled it out and at the very last minute one of them moved their boats and we went through it. And it's like, if you let them win, you were toast, you were done, you would never get it back. But that's the kind of stuff – it wasn't just me; it was all the rangers out there. Hunting season we would sit there and look at each other, "You know, if they want to kill us, they just have to shoot

the pumpkin." Like, "Yeah, pretty much. If they're serious about it, that's what they're gonna do."

Janet Kirwan: But we were out one night on patrol is when [Ranger] Bob McGhee was killed up at Gulf Islands NS. We all got called in and we [the Rangers out in the swamp] had to group up in one spot and all come in together because on top of it that night it had been on the national news that McGhee had been killed and there was chatter on the police scanner picked up by the county, about hunting rangers. That there was a group out and they were going to find themselves a ranger that night so there would be two that day, instead of one. So, we all grouped together. We couldn't find one ranger; he was always lost, he was so funny, nicest guy, worst ranger, and we finally had to go find [the missing Ranger] – where is he? – get with him and everybody just trailed in to the ranger station together and got in off the water, in out of the swamp. My mom I don't think ever knew about that one either. But you know, a lot of the people were good, they were fun, but I should have gotten a clue because you know, the state game and fish guys got to know me, and they would help me out. In fact, one night I was in my park housing it was my birthday actually, and all of the sudden there were shots fired at my house it was a prefab house. Threw my dog in the bathroom and, okay, as a girl you can appreciate this, you know, I had this little nightgown with the bows and the pink and everything else right. Now I've got shots fired, so I grabbed my uniform gortex and put on my gortex and I'm belly crawling, out my house, trying to keep low. I had called dispatch and said, "I got shots fired at my house." You could hear the rounds going by and you know, "get whoever you can." There were no other rangers home, so they called Florida Game and Fish and the first comment dispatch got from Game and Fish is, "Which ranger?" And when they said it was Jan they were like, "Okay, fine." They all ran, full code out and found a couple guys who were – they said they didn't know that was a house back there, which we all doubted. The guys [Game and Fish Officers] called and say they've got it secured and so I come out and you know, here I am in my uniform the gortex and here's the little pink bow showing. They're going, "Nice uniform, Jan." I'm going, "Oh." [both laugh]

Janet Kirwan: But, you know, being a girl, doing the job. It was fun. For a while there were split interp/law enforcement positions in the Park Service [two in] South Florida. One was Bonnie Foist who eventually ended up as Chief Ranger at Everglades years later, and me. Bonnie had a choice, they asked her. I woke up one morning to a phone call and Mike Finley [park superintendent] used to call me at all hours of the night because I was the liaison to the Miccosukee tribe because they had exclusive jurisdiction over there so nobody, no state or anybody else could go over there, so when something happened and the state needed to get on my phone would ring at five a.m. and it would be Finley going, "You need to da-de-da-de-da." So, one morning I get this call from Mike going, "Oh, by the way, your full law enforcement now." Like, "What?" "Yeah, we had to make a

decision yesterday, so I just decided that you're no long doing interp, your full-time law enforcement." Like, "Okay!" At the time I didn't particularly like the interpretive district ranger I was working for so that worked out really well. But, during my time on the north end of the park Mike would call and say, "I need you go to over there, port arms [if necessary], and you need to escort Public Health over there and—" Because they had [a health crisis] outbreak and some kids had died, and a couple of kids ended up in the local county hospital but the county [didn't have jurisdiction on the exclusive federal lands where the community was located]. And I'm like, "I'll take care of it Mike." I pick up the phone, call the police chief, "Tony, I need help, this is what's going on." And they [the Miccosukee PD] would help me and I would help them. I would go on the community all the time, we'd relocate alligators for them, secure mean vicious out of control pit bulls that were like five weeks old. We worked together a lot. As and EMT, sometime in the community there would be nobody in the clinic and they'd call me to come to the clinic and helped out; or their officers would need back up. Because, of their beliefs, if there was a fatality on the Tamiami Trail, which happened fairly often – that was also the era of dead bodies, that would just appear, out of nowhere, from the drug trade – they, [the community members] could not be near [dead or dying individuals due to their beliefs] so we would take the call for them.

[END OF TRACK 2]

[START OF TRACK 3]

Janet Kirwan: We worked together a lot, and we'd all go get together and have coffee once a week and just kind of sit there and "Okay, how are we going to figure out this week?" But during that time is when we'd get people with their hands and feet duct-taped, we had a seasonal going back to their seasonal housing and the trunk in front of them opened up and the guy came rolling out. He was still alive, because they wouldn't kill him until they got him out there far enough, so his hands and feet had been duct-taped because he'd crossed somebody, and they were taking him out to execute him. There was an area referred to as "dead body road" the county coroner actually threatened to put a temporary morgue in, so he'd only have to come out once a week. One day I was driving by, I came back into the park and got a call from dispatch there was a reported body in the middle of the road and I'm like, "I just came from there, literally." "Well, we got a call – "I'll go check." And "Confirm that call."

Janet Kirwan: It was just nuts. We had a fire up there and we had a fire crew from North Carolina. They were somewhere nearby, and they saw a fire, a car fire. And they're like, "Oh" and they get the fire extinguisher and all, they pop the trunk, and somebody who had crossed somebody had been shot, doused with gas, torched. They [the bad guys] didn't process that when you close the lid there is no oxygen and the fire goes out. These poor guys from North Carolina had never seen anything like that. They popped the lid, there is this guy who had been shot and burned in the trunk, "You

guys work in a crazy place!" And that was the drug trade. Two guys I worked with – one was smart, one not quite so smart – raided a cocaine processing lab in Big Cypress NP and because they couldn't get anybody to do it, they just got with DEA and went in. It was a battle between Big Cypress and Everglades, Big Cypress rangers wouldn't do it, so two Everglades rangers got with DEA and in the middle of the night raided multi-millions of dollars of cocaine. And one of them got their face on the front page of the *Miami Herald*. He was gone within twenty-four hours. His entire house was packed, and we never saw him again. He ended up as an instructor at the academy at FLETC. It was the only safe place for him to be. So, it was crazy. So, we had a lot of airdrops, drug importations, things like that.

Lilli Tichinin: No wonder they needed you as full-time law enforcement.

Janet Kirwan: I kept busy.

Lilli Tichinin: I actually wanted to ask you more about what it was like to be the tribal liaison, and how you came into that position. Because it sounded like – it sounds like you kind of had a good relationship, in Hawaii, you sort of had this approach of respect and understanding a culture and that's part of how you can work together, is by understanding and being respectful. So, I was curious, you know, when you came back to Everglades, how you got into the position of tribal liaison.

Janet Kirwan: That was Mike Finley's doing. There was, an interpreter doing it, who had their own mission and would sometimes cause actual significant conflict between the park and the tribe. I grew up in South Florida. At the time, couple of tribal chiefs actually, elders of the community, lived not far from my elementary school. So, we'd go by their houses and stuff like that. But my parents, because they grew up in New York City, were always telling us, just because somebody is different doesn't mean they're better or they're worse. We were, as little kids, allowed to play with whomever – when I was little we lived on my grandfather's farm in Miami Springs – that give you a clue how long ago that was—and here was a kid across the street whose mother was Japanese, he was Japanese-American, literally on the other side of the railroad tracks there were some Black kids, and we would all play together, just kids. And one night the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross on our front yard – front lawn because we were not only Catholic, which they were against Catholics at the time, but, because we were allowed to play with Black kids. But my parents wouldn't back down. I remember as a kid, seeing water fountains that said, "colored water," "colored" and "white," and asking my dad, "Can I, you know – colored, wow!" You know, my thought is, the water is going to be rainbows; it's going to be colored water! My dad's "Yeah, you can drink out of it. No problem." And I was so disappointed because the water looked just the same. Like, what's the deal? My dad is, "Some people just don't get it."

Janet Kirwan: But we were always – whether people were different religions, Jewish, people who were Italian, my dad's parents emigrated from Ireland when "NINA" signs were a common thing, "No Irish Need Apply." You know that's why the police departments, which were the scuzzbucket jobs back then, and the fire departments were all full of Irish, the only jobs they could get. So, we were always encouraged that – so I grew up that way, so it was easy for me to be respectful, be curious and understand what people could share, what they couldn't share. To me it was really simple. If you have a meeting, you do not serve turkey. Turkey is a sacred bird [to the Miccosukee community]. You'd think it would be fairly simple to understand that, but people would have the tribal leaders come in and there would be turkey sandwiches. "No, you can't do that." But I think just because I was always willing to learn, I hired the first two members of the community as fee collectors at Shark Valley. One woman had been sent to the Indian schools out west, so, she spoke very little English. Scary bright young woman, and she was married already had a little kid. The other woman had gone to school in Miami, so her English was really good, but her Miccosukee wasn't all that great. They would try to teach me Miccosukee and they would teach each other, and we tried really hard to get the Park Service to allow – Miccosukee patchwork, skirts and jackets, patchwork is Miccosukee art – and each design has a difference story, and all, some are sacred designs, and we tried to get the Park Service, our Chief of Interpretation, to allow us to let them wear skirts. The two employees had designed grey and green skirts that were like cypress and saw grass, and what a neat opportunity! A: there were something they [both were culturally] comfortable wearing. Susanna wore pants a lot because she went to school in town, but Sally never wore a pair of pants in her life, and we made that poor woman put on a pair of Park Service Class A pants because the chief interpreter of the park would not even entertain the possibility. Like, you jerk. [laughs] But we had a blast. And that was part of the beginning in-road into the community, too.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah, yeah.

Janet Kirwan: There was the learning curve of, "No, your husband can't come get you just any time because he wants you home. You know, you committed to be here." That was a learning curve for the husbands. One of the young ladies, her dad was the medicine man, so I got to know Sonny really, really well. When we'd have conflicts over environmental issues, I would be the one to kind try to figure out how to make it work. And because the tribe was two-fold. There was the card-carrying members of the incorporated tribe and they were getting the oil rights. Then there were the very traditional members of the community who were generally the older ones. One man [Howard Osceola] worked for Everglades for a long while, and who believed that you own not own the land, you just use it. Therefore, because the card-carrying members would assert that they owned the land to get the oil rights, it went against their religion. So, there was that dichotomy over there as well.

Lilli Tichinin: Within the tribe.

Janet Kirwan: Within the tribe.

Lilli Tichinin: Wow.

Janet Kirwan: But we'd go over in the little Indian store and have coffee in the morning and sit there and talk with some of these ladies. There was this crowd that they wouldn't even let their picture be taken, for a long time, and things like that, so. It was just fun. Truly enjoyed people, enjoyed learning, enjoyed working with the kids. You'd learn the simple things. If you, you dare not say, "Oh your" – Somebody had a young child, or a newborn, or whatever, you dare not say, "Oh, what a pretty baby," because you now cursed their baby, because you've told the spirits, this baby is so pretty, and the spirits will come and try to take the baby away. You know, little things, but if you learn them then, people respect you because you've learned that. And to me it just made sense, it's just the way I was raised.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah.

Janet Kirwan: And I think people can genuinely understand if you really enjoy them. They're just people with different belief systems and you learn about them. But yeah, that was Mike and his calls in the middle of the night. "You need to…" "Mike, I can't do that." "Okay, Mike, I'll take care of it." I'd go over and have coffee with the Chief of Police, Tony Zeka, at the time. I'm like, "Okay Tony, this is what Mike told me I have to do this time, you know, how are we going to make this work?" He's like, "Let me work on it Jan, I'll get back to you." I'm like "Okay."

Lilli Tichinin: So, there was a lot of coordinating between the park and the local police and the tribe, and—

Janet Kirwan: Yeah, it was, you know they had their own—

Lilli Tichinin: Multifaceted.

Janet Kirwan: —police department and everything else, and then there was the Superintendent of the park, and the tribal leaders – and then there was Tony and I.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah.

Janet Kirwan: Kind of going, "Okay, let's make this work!"

Lilli Tichinin: Right

Janet Kirwan: And keep the peace. It was all fun, lots of really good people. Learned a lot, learned to appreciate people, learned to appreciate the community I grew up in more, because I was from there.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah.

Janet Kirwan: It was neat. You know, as opposed to the hunters who would come up and go, "You Yankees!" you know, and "you're tearing up the park" and "You

and your rules and ya-de-da-de-da." And I'm like, "Yeah, you're right, Hialeah is just a tad north of here." [laughing]

Janet Kirwan: They'd stop because they'd be from like Alabama. You know, like, Hialeah is just a tad north from here. I never told them I was born in New York City.

Lilli Tichinin: Right. [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: I moved down when I was a year and a half old you know, come on!

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah. Did you ever encounter that sort of animosity at other parks that you were at? Or, you know, I mean—

Janet Kirwan: To the Park Service?

Lilli Tichinin: —it sounds like that was an extreme level but—

Janet Kirwan: Yeah, but I mean I had these funny times. One of the guys, they went out – I have to tell you this story because I think it was just a crack-up. They went out and they spent all this money to have these vanity plates made for the front of their trucks. And it's not a very polite way to say this but anyway, the vanity plates said, "Rangers squat to piss." And it was aimed at the guys, going "Yeah, you're just a bunch of girls." And the one guy, he'd just gotten them, and I was at the game check station, officially there, and he came in and the two of them had them [the vanity plates] on the front of their trucks like, "What do you think?" "About what?" "Look, look at the plate." You know, like trying to get a rise, like, "Oh, doesn't bother me." And they're like "But, but, but, but—" "Note, girl!" "Oh." Just took the – it was so funny because they were like "Oh." You know, they wanted some kind of reaction – "Oh." [Laughs] "You might want to take that off, it makes you look bad, not me. Notice, girl." I didn't have a problem with it [laughs].

Janet Kirwan: But a lot of places you just had to earn your way. You had to earn your way with the locals especially. Because unfortunately, some people as park rangers would want to dump their cases, they'd call in the locals on something you should be able to handle on your own, and you're calling in people who are already overworked to within an inch of their life. I always kind of thought, you know, I try to earn my way and get them to understand that I'm capable I can do it. Because the first time they look and go "Oh, God a girl." She's not going to do anything. I always said it takes ten good female rangers to undo the bad of one.

Janet Kirwan: This is funny. I got sent to a DEA marijuana eradication course. When I was in South Florida, did a lot of drug eradication over the course of my career down there and I ended up actually assigned to the – South Florida high incident drug trafficking center. And so, half my time was spent doing interdiction, link analysis, sometimes in the back of Customs boats that ended up in the Bahamas.

Lilli Tichinin: [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: My chief never knew that because luckily those days would always be my day off, so he never like knew I didn't get back. Like, I'm on a boat and they're interdicting something. What am I supposed to do? Stop and say, "Will you let me off in the middle of the Florida Straits?"

Janet Kirwan: I also got to fly with the Coast Guard. We were official tracking the Texas fishing fleet, but we were also tracking the freighters coming from South America and doing aerial interdiction from backs of Gulfstream jets with the belly open and photographing, laying down and photographing. But early on, they had sent me to this DEA drug class, that required business attire and they listed out what business attire was. I'm like, okay, I have jeans and I have a skirt. Okay, we'll go for the skirt. So, I put on the skirt, kind of a nice pretty skirt, just cotton but nice. And I walked in the class the first day. There's me and one other female in the room with forty-five guys. And I'm like, okay. These are county sheriffs, state officers, a lot of county guys, city guys, you know folks I worked around the South Florida Big Cypress, Ten Thousand Islands, Naples, all that area. And I walked in and all of the sudden, I get "It's a girl." "What's she doing here?"

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah.

Janet Kirwan: And I'm like, okay, we'll just be quiet. So, the first, two days were classroom, and then the rest of it was going to be outside. So, I was in my business attire and I realized the guys were pretty much not in business attire per se. But I knew I was also going to have to do a bunch of fieldwork later.

Janet Kirwan: The guys started coming up to me later going "Hehe, you know you're going to have to be in the field, right? You know you're going to have to get dirty, right?" I'm like, "Yeah, I know." "Well, you know it's not gonna be fun and games, you know, you're really gonna have to get out there and work" and ya-de-da. "Yeah, I know." I'm sitting there going "rwa-rwa-rwa-rwa-rwa" You know, everywhere I turn for that whole day it was, "What are you doing here?" or you know, "You're a girl, you can't do anything." And ya-de-da, and I'm like, okay. So, I went to Walmart bought another skirt, went back the next day in anther skirt. The brat in me was coming out, the total brat was coming out. They gave it to me harder the next day. And I'm like, okay. At lunch the DEA guy coordinating the class comes up to me and asks, "What do you do for a living?" I said, "I'm a park ranger." He goes, "No, what do you physically do for a living?" I said, "I run an airboat in the Big Cypress and in Everglades, pretty much exclusively doing hunting patrol, out in the swamp in [the slough] – on a daily basis." He sat there and goes, "You're not telling them that's what you do are you?" I went, "No." He goes, "Oh, this is going to be fun." [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: So, we finish up the classroom part – and then the next day, we're supposed to head out into the field and I'm getting it ten times worse. "You can walk with me if you're scared of being in the swamp" and ya-

de-da-de-da, "We just don't want you to be afraid" and "If you really don't want to get muddy and dirty you don't have to" you know because we're going to go out and pull plants. We had done a bunch of aerial that afternoon, umm, spotting, flyovers, and found a bunch of plants and we were going to go in and get them. In that part of the country they would take what is called a pond apple, build up soil around it, and plant the plants around it. So, because the pond apple had sort of the right shade of green, you couldn't see it so well, you really had to look pretty close to find them. And some of them would actually put pot plants in Styrofoam and float them. You paint the Styrofoam black and green camouflage and then float the plants in the water, so the plants always had plenty of water, so you didn't have to go in and tend them as much. Very innovative ways of doing things. So, the day comes to go out in the field, and I put on my best go-to-work-out-in-the-swamp clothes and showed up and they all just went – the guy from DEA was laughing, because the looks were like – they didn't know what to say. On top of it the guy from DEA – they split us into two teams – made me a team leader. So, I had my guys and then there was the guy who gave me the most grief, had the other team. We go out, we get our assignments, and we head out, and I look at my team and I go, "Okay, before we head off of road, that plant indicates deep water; that plant, shallow water." And we just showed them how to know when they were walking through the slough, where they're going to see deep water, where they were going to see shallow water where they could walk, what the hazards were – what a cotton mouth would do, that kind of stuff. Gave them a briefing and we went out and we pulled a couple of hundred plants. Everybody was out hauling plants, bringing them back up to the road. Turns out the other team never left the road because they were afraid to go into the swamp.

Janet Kirwan: [laughing] It was like – I kind of felt bad because the guy was mortified, because he had been so blatant about it – just because I was a girl. And the guys on my team were like, "You know this stuff. What do you do?" And I was like, "This is what I do, day in and day out. I'm in this environment day in and day out. I run airboats; this is what I do." "Oh." [laughs] So, it was, it was evil, but it was fun.

Lilli Tichinin: Yeah, of course.

Janet Kirwan: After that the DEA, four of five different times tried to get me to transfer over to DEA, go work for them. Yeah, but their big selling point was "Yeah, we landed, somewhere in the Caribbean, guns blazing, we went into a hot spot—" I'm like going, "Do I look that dumb? I may be blonde, but do I look that dumb? Did that seem like it would be a really good recruitment technique from you?" You know, but they thought it was so cool but I'm going, "I manage to get myself into enough trouble doing what I do, I'm not sure being shot at in a helicopter and returning fire from the back of a helicopter with drug dealers—." And I kind of knew all about the undercover stuff a lot of the women were getting assigned to

they had so few women, got stuck doing some crazy stuff. And I'm like, "Eh, it's not for me." But after that I got a lot more respect along the Tamiami trail.

Lilli Tichinin: Well, I saw, you've done a lot of additional trainings, sort of outside of the realm of Park Service or outside of your Park Service training, and I was wondering, sort of what, what made you want to do that? Sort of, what was the motivation for doing so many of those?

Janet Kirwan: Which, like—?

Lilli Tichinin: Well, just like doing the DEA one, you know, is that something that you – sort of was your own idea of, "You know, I think I want more training in this specific thing" or—?

Janet Kirwan: They offered it, DEA offered it, but it was, at that time, it was never kind of offered to the female rangers. I'd find out about it and I'd be like "I want to go! I want to go!" They couldn't really deny me because I had the same quals [qualifications] as everybody else. So, as a female ranger especially at that time, for those kinds of trainings, like the FBI bomb training and things like that, you had to be a little bit more proactive to promote yourself and kind of earn your way. The day that guys forgot I was there, and I just became one of the guys was like, "Yes." I finally got to where they weren't looking at me as the girl. You know, at the time, South Florida had such a heavy drug trade; the more you knew, the better you could protect yourself. It was crazy, they knew who we were, you'd get weird phone calls at home. When I went down to the Florida Keys, it was the same thing. You'd sit in a restaurant and you'd look across, you'd know exactly who the drug runners were. They knew you knew. It was just kind of like, "Okay." It was a cat and mouse game, are we gonna catch you, are we not gonna catch you? That kind of stuff. Pretty much, early on they'd leave the rangers alone and after the drug trade got to be more blatant that wasn't quite the case. Rangers were moved because of threats and things like that. But the more you knew the more you could understand where you were and what you were doing and I was always like, I want to make sure I have the best skills possible. I don't want anybody to come back and say something happened because I couldn't do what I was supposed to do and make it harder for the next female ranger to come along after me. And it was always a battle, always a battle.

Janet Kirwan: The first body armor was men's body armor. I called mine "the turtle" because if I had to sit – luckily except for the airboat, I could usually sit up straight enough, but if I had to get into a vehicle it came up and I went into the shell because it was guys' body armor. They didn't make it for women, or the park service wouldn't buy it for women.

Lilli Tichinin: Well, and you mentioned also having to wear a men's uniform.

Janet Kirwan: They'd give us notebooks and things like that, nothing fit in the women's' uniform shirts. So, you had to keep a notebook in your shirt pocket

because if you kept it in your pants it'd get wet. The women's shirts were made so petite they had these little pockets, and you couldn't put your notebooks in them. At one point in time, literally the uniform company had put little arrowheads on the shirt sleeves for the women. They pulled those back eventually. Yeah, they made a whole set of smaller arrowheads—

Lilli Tichinin: Just for the females.

Janet Kirwan: Just for the female shirts. But you've got to admit, that beats those green polyester flight attendant uniforms.

Lilli Tichinin: Yes! [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: During that time there was a park superintendent who required all the female rangers to wear skirts and hose and pumps. They were like, "We can't do our jobs. A: there is nowhere to put your duty belt on a skirt." So, women were wearing duty belts with skirts and finally a couple of women, I think it was at Hatteras, actually rebelled enough and a couple of the guys showed up to work in skirts. And the women showed up in skirts with hiking boots on and all. And the superintendent blew eighty-five gaskets, but region went in and flat-out told him that, "No, it's a uniform item. If the men technically want to wear the skirts, they can wear the skirts." But it was neat that the staff got together and that kind of started breaking out of this requirement that superintendents could require female rangers to wear hose and skirts and pumps. But that was kind of the mentality in a lot of parks at the time still. You know, women were supposed to – if they got stuck were they had to hire a female ranger, especially in something other than an interp. position, they could do stuff other than just kind of look pretty and be useless kind of thing. So— [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: But yeah, it was always fun. The gear was always designed to men, sized to men. There's always assumptions made about stuff, umm, when we transitioned, from revolvers to the semi-automatics FBI did our transition at Everglades. It was hysterical, because it was the hottest day, it was August, it was like ninety-nine percent humidity, bugs everywhere, one-hundred degrees, sweat pouring off everybody. A bunch of us couldn't even hold onto our guns because between bug spray, sunscreen, and sweat. One ranger actually threw the gun at the target. [both laugh]

Janet Kirwan: She was a chief ranger, so she got away with it but, she was just so frustrated, the gun was empty, and she just threw it. She was so sick and tired of the whole thing because the FBI guys had made assumptions. And I couldn't qualify for squat and I was getting more and more frustrated. And this nice young FBI agent came over and goes, "Well, your hands – the gun is a bigger gun" and da-de-da-de-da and "you're probably – you just got to learn some better hand grip strength and all that kind of stuff." I'm looking at him like, he's here [gestures height], and I'm looking at him going, "I don't think that's the problem." "Yeah, that's it. Don't argue

with me, I know" da-de-da-de-da. His supervisor overheard; he was this huge Black man, and he comes over and he goes, "Do me a favor." And I go, "What's that?" "Just hold out your hand." And he put up his hand, and I put up my hand and my hand was just a hair under his hand. And he goes, "It's not your hand is too small, and you need more strength. The gun is too small for your hand and he took his grips off of his gun and put it on my gun so I could qualify. And it's like, "Just because she's female does not mean she's got a smaller hand." You know, it was constantly that kind of stuff. You know, some well-intentioned, some clearly not. But when I went to the academy, went to FLETC, I left the room at the wrong time. I went to the bathroom and when I came back, I was class president.

Lilli Tichinin: [laughs]

Janet Kirwan: "How did that happen?" To this day I honestly don't know how it happened. So, I was class president.

[END OF TRACK 3]

[START OF TRACK 4]

Janet Kirwan: And you know, FLETC still wasn't real geared up for women. It was an interesting place at times. They gave you a list, and literally the list they gave you outlined your underwear, what was acceptable underwear, and I mean, into minutia detail. What you could wear on base and da-de-da, even your shoes, what they had to be, but they never said the color. And I happened to go into like a Ross or some store and I found bubble-gum-pink high-top Reeboks. And I sat there and went, they fit all the criteria and not a beep-word one in there about color. So, I had my white sneakers I took with me, but I had my bubble-gum-pink high-top Reeboks and I showed up first day of class with those on. And I'd wear those the whole time. But we had a lot of locals as instructors and it was unusual for a female to be a class president, because you had to do a lot of stuff. If there was any complaints or whatever, you had to do all the paperwork for anything that occurred with your class, and we had somebody who caused a lot of issues. So, when everybody got to play; I spent my Saturdays on base, filling out paperwork. But one of the instructors, and this was pretty evil, he was teaching us handcuffing, he was a detailed local instructor. He pulled me up in front of the class and clearly had an issue when he found out I was the class president, he had asked who the class president was and they were all like, "Her." [The instructor] pulled me up, handcuffed me, had me do the kneeling thing, and handcuffed me and then walked away and left me kneeling in front of the class, handcuffed. And I sat there and thought, "We'll play this out a little while." So, I stayed there, and he went on, started talking about something totally different. Like, okay, I slipped the cuffs off, got up, handed them to him and went and sat down in my seat. And he just looked at me. My thought was, "You know what, if you're gonna be a jerk you should probably figure out how to put a pair of handcuffs on." Because I could always, until I had surgery on this hand

when I broke it, I could always slip cuffs, it was real easy to slip cuffs for me. I might sometimes bruise my wrist, bruise my thumb right there, but I could slip cuffs. So, I slipped the cuffs, handed them back to him, sat down. He was not happy with me. But you know what? You're going to play this game; I'll play it back. Because you had to stick up for yourself. But we got off topic, so what was your question?

Lilli Tichinin: No, that's good. Well, you know, I'm just curious also, during this time or at any point, did you have any mentors that kind of stick out to you as someone who was really influential to you – whether it was about a specific incident or whether it was just more generally as you developed in your career, were there people who mentored you in sort of informal ways?

Janet Kirwan: There's a couple people I would say closest – actually in a weird way, Mike Finley because he made a point of acknowledging I had the ability to do stuff, and he was a first. Looking back on it I realize he was the first one to really acknowledge that, as a permanent, I had value, and that he could count on me, and I had the ability and the skills to do what I needed to do. So that was pretty cool. Then really after that, I mean, in fire, yes, Sue Husari was really supportive of being involved in fire, in fact she got mad when I took a full-time law enforcement job. I said, "Sue, there's no permanent jobs in fire!" She was like, "Yeah, that's true." In fire and resource management, Sue Husari, big person; Bob Doran, more in resource management; Walt Dabney. They were the ones that stick out as ever encouraged me, instead of going, "You can't do it." And oddly enough, when I got to Lake Mead and they took literally almost six months to hire me because the chief ranger, I found out that the – deputy chief and the chief ranger did not want to hire another female. There was only one other female, only one female working in the park at the time, the one out of all of Lake Mead, on Mead and Mojave. And she had only gotten there a couple of months before me.

Janet Kirwan: Before that there was one woman there and, pretty rough woman, but my district ranger had gone to the CI (Criminal Investigation) school and actually, Bob Marriott was real instrumental in my going to Criminal Investigation School because of all the drug stuff I was doing in South Florida, and I'd met a CI at Lake Mead and he said, when the job came open he called me and was like, "It's the court officer job, so there's some new skills for you. And it will get you into a different type of law enforcement, away from the drug trade, interdiction work, things like that, into more hands-on law enforcement." Which is what I really didn't have a whole lot of, the traffic stops, the boat stops, the accident investigations, all the kind of stuff. So, I found out who the boss was, I called around and everyone I talked to would take down-grades to go back and work for him. And that was a guy named Ralph Patterson. And he was a crack-up from day one. I showed up at Lake Mead and there was never any doubt. He took me to headquarters, picked up my guns, took me back to the park and

he's like, "This other ranger, this criminal investigator assigned to our district, he's going to show you around the next couple days." And literally I'd been in the park two days and we rolled into a gang fight on the beach. Ralph never had a question on my ability to handle stuff. The next day there was another gang fight on the beach, it was the Norte and the South from L.A., full on guns, we pulled up going, "Well, so now what do we do?" [laughs] "Okay, we can do that." You know, and dealt with it, and he never questioned, which was neat. And so, when anything came up to do anything, he was always supportive, if anybody questioned it, a couple events happened where the chief ranger got involved and started to come after me.

[Portion of transcript and audio recording removed at request of the narrator.]

Janet Kirwan: But he stood behind me an incident and justifiably kind of let her take some serious heat over something she had done and the other ranger and I, he hid us from the chief ranger. Literally, he had the CI take us, turn in all radios and guns and cell phones over to him and, "You will not step foot back in here until—" you know, every couple of hours he'd have the CI call him on, his personal number and to see if it was okay for us to come back into the park; because the chief ranger came after us so hard, and came after me because the other ranger was a female ranger and by default, I was part of it. And it was a got-him-at-gunpoint, "Wait a minute; I'm the one who fought with the guy with the machete. Wait a second, how did this happen?" So, but he protected us, and supported us, so that was nice. That was nice. But there were no female rangers up the run at the time. The only one that stands out to me is Maureen Finnerty she was already a deputy – she was a management assistant and she had not been doing law enforcement or anything else. So, South Florida had very few, if any. And the other caveat was, like Jan Passek was married to a ranger, was married to a resource management guy, so they had cred because, sometimes because of their husbands. Not that they weren't great – they were very good in their own right, but when people first met them, "Oh, it's like, this person's spouse, or that person's spouse." And when you were single you didn't have that, so you were – there was a weird, you know thing, "You're taking a man's job who needs to make a living to support a family." That kind of stuff. But no, not really, which is kind of sad. But there was not a lot of people who were mentoring people as much, and being female especially, and where I worked and how I worked – Carolyn Wylie who ended up as chief ranger at Dry Tortugas, she was really supportive. She was the how I got involved doing the details to the Philippines because I'd work with her a lot on some interagency trainings when I was working with the [South Florida Investigative Support] Center down at Dry Tortugas, because gee, that's where all the drug boats were. And because I worked with them [the interagency team] a lot on interdiction work and drug intel and things like that, when that opportunity came up, she thought of me and put me in for that. So—

Lilli Tichinin: Do you feel that there have been people who you have mentored? You know, in your career who've come up?

Janet Kirwan: Most – you know, it's really funny, there's some but most end up leaving the Park Service. For one reason or another went to other agencies, did other things. Some stayed but I always tried – there are people out there who think that information is power, and don't share it. And that was never my way. If I learned it, I'll share it because that is the only way we all get better. And unfortunately, I worked around people who had that attitude where information is power. I was the staff ranger at Everglades and so sometimes I'd take people out, show women some of the tricks when working with long guns, how to do it. And I didn't have that trouble because I have gangling arms but could understand that sometimes you've got to do things just a little bit different because you're female with a little bit different stature. But also, to tell people, "Don't ride this train, get off the train that says I'm a female, so you need to cut me some slack. You signed onto a job; here are the skill base, you need to do it. If you don't want to do it, get off the train." And I would help people learn how to do that. Whether it be how to deal with boating, even people saying they couldn't back up a trailer. "Okay, you're a ranger. You kind of sort of do need to figure out how to back up a trailer, how to load a boat." Rangers were running in to some stuff no one ever taught them how to do it right and so they didn't, especially for some of the women, didn't have the upper body strength, I was like, "No, you don't need upper body strength to do it, it's physics. Figure that out." The stupid little stuff, like lose the earrings, studs are fine, lose the earrings and pull your hair back. I packed up a woman who was going off to a fire everybody had to lay out all their gear because it was first fire for everybody, I pulled hot rollers, hot rollers out of a red bag. Trust me, you're not going to need hot rollers. Try to keep people when they are new, from making the mistakes that I made or saw people make.

Janet Kirwan: But it was fun. I liked being a supervisor. Now I think I'm insane for doing that, but I like being a supervisor, I like mentoring seasonals, I had a blast teaching them and teaching them the culture. The difference between Park Service and Forest Service. It's amazing how many people as permanents still don't understand the difference between Park Service and Forest Service, and mandated purposes of agencies, and policies, and why things are done the way they're done. If you know that then you can succeed in your career. If you don't know NEPA compliance and you don't know here's the regulation book, what predicated – and I learned that from Maureen Finnerty, is to go back through the federal register and find out the reasoning behind a regulation, then you can apply the reg a lot easier and explain it and go to court. You know, try to instill that in people and when – it was a long time ago, when the Park Service started coming up with the common core and rangers had to go to interpretive training, and a friend of mine at Everglades and Big Cypress was teaching and she was frustrated as the daylights with the law enforcement rangers, she was

frustrated. [The LE Rangers would tell her] "I don't need this; I'm not doing programs." And I'm like, "Yeah, they are." She said, "What do you mean they are?" "Every time they go into court to testify, they are giving a program."

Janet Kirwan: I had a case in Florida one time where, the magistrate stopped me and he said, "Ranger Kirwan, I need to ask you a question." I said, "Yes, sir." I'm going like "Oh god, what did I do?" He hassled me, "Are you arguing the lifecycle of a butterfly in my court?" And I sat there and thought about it and it was like, "Uh, yes, your honor, I am." "Okay, just clarifying." People had stolen leaf litter from the hammock, and if you didn't know your environment the leaf litter what disturbing natural feature ticket. Reality is, the leaf litter is the only medium where endangered orchids and certain insects, certain butterflies could successfully breed or seeds could germinate, and the landscaper had stolen that medium and his specialty was native orchids and other rare orchids. So, it took the case of being just a disturbing natural features, CFR fifty-dollar ticket or – excuse me – whatever it was, to a whole different level. And so there I am arguing the life cycle of a butterfly. I told the interpretive trainer "Use that as an example." I had to go to court and explain in a way that people aren't going to zone me out, why it was this charge and not this charge. But that's why you go to interpretive training because every time you go to court you are giving a program. Whether it be FSTs or a boat accident investigation, you're doing a program that kind of stuff, that was fun to do. If I'm boring, you let me know.

Lilli Tichinin: No, not at all, not at all. Is there – what are some of the things you kind of see looking back over your career as a key contribution, or something that you feel particularly proud of having done in your career, having contributed?

Janet Kirwan: That's kind of broad one. I headed up the Eastern National Critical and Stress Management team and through that really had an impact on a lot of people's lives. People who didn't know, especially at that time, that the Park Service treated their staff so well, after Hurricane Andrew and some of the [other natural] disasters in the islands and different incidents that had happened. People, got to see capable rangers reaching out and you know, working – I learned FEMA paperwork better than the FEMA people knew the paperwork to get the people the loans and whatever they needed to do stuff. And to be part of that [was an honor]; in a lot of districts, depending on where you worked, you'd sit down and you'd rehab your fire truck or whatever and you would sit around, have an iced tea, and talk about the incident. Very informal, but it was the same thing, a debriefing. That kind of fell away, and so it was nice to be able to bring that back because it has a long-lasting effect on people's lives, whether it's personally or professionally and things like that and being able to bring that forward, it's important. So, I taught classes for US Fish and Wildlife Service up and down the east coast that was pretty cool.

Janet Kirwan: But there's nothing really so cool as, I stopped to help a guy one day at Lake Mead – he had a flat tire – stopped and talked to him, and to help him get out of traffic. He looked at me and he goes, "You don't remember me, do you?" I'm like [thinking to myself], "Did I write you a ticket, did I arrest you — "[laughs] You know, usually it was like, uh-oh, "What happened?" He goes, "You saved my life. I had a heart attack out here. And you were the Ranger who responded." And he shook my hand. That's like, the coolest thing ever! You know, dealing with families after fatalities and having them come up and hug you. Or come back to the park. I had one family that would call me when their son's headstone got placed, and then come out to the park and just came up to me and gave me a hug. Okay, I'm doing my job. I'm doing what I was supposed to be doing, you know. I'm enforcing the law. People you take to jail who come back later to say thank you. That's pretty cool, that's pretty cool.

Janet Kirwan: So, on that level, that's the stuff I value. I never cared about keeping track of how many people you took to jail, or stuff like that. One group of folks, their best buddy was killed [on the lake] – your worst nightmare as a patrol ranger, running a boat by yourself is if you have an incident where you have to do two things at one time, and that is run the boat and do CPR. So, real life I respond to a boat accident, I have the victim now in the back of my boat who needs CPR, but I need to run my boat and I need to get back to a dock. I found visitors who jumped in and took over doing CPR, [I operated the boat back to the dock where I took over CPR while waiting paramedics began advanced life support for nearly 45 minutes. In the end, the victim was pronounced on scene] and I end up having to do the boat accident report later. That's something we unofficially never did. If you did the EMS, especially the fatality EMS, you didn't do the boat accident, but for a weird set of reasons [internal park politically based] I ended up [having to do the boat accident report when others were ranger were both available and capable]. I had to interview the people [victims friends] afterwards and I just felt hideous because I didn't realize I had the guy's [the victims] blood all over my shirt and I'm interviewing this guy and the guy stops and looks at me and goes, "Oh, my god, that's his blood." And I felt like that big [really small]. I felt so horrible that I didn't even notice it. And I quickly left the room and I stripped out of my uniform shirt and finished the interview. Once I could release the jet ski he was on, they came out later and just gave me the biggest hug. All the friends that were there that day all came back to pick up the ski and just gave me the biggest hug, like, I did my job, and I did my job right and I did everything I could for them. So that's – they got to see rangers doing things that – handling incidents and having off-duty officers from California, from L.A., high intensity people, SWAT team people come up to you, "Wow, that was really cool that you did that. We didn't even notice that you were coming in and hauling this guy out and arresting him. We didn't see it until the guy was in cuffs." Nobody noticed it; okay, I'm doing my job. I was an engineer driver on the structural fire truck and

sometimes [visitors would comment], "Okay did you put your turn outs on over you other LE gear?" Visitors would see you take off your turnout coat and they'd be like, "Really?" "It's kind of what I do." For people understand and visit with people and explain that rangers are different than traditional/regular law enforcement. I mean, you gotta do it, at times fight with somebody; I was in enough fights wrestling somebody to the ground and cuffing people and things like that, but the other half is why do we do it, why the regulations exist, walking beaches and kind of stopping people from doing the dangerous or stupid stuff.

Janet Kirwan: Like, stopping a late-night drinking party with a bunch of teenagers, getting out there and going [taps fingers on table]. [One night on at a beach camp this large group of teenagers] pull in, I was out there for some other call and a bunch of kids pile in from Bullhead City. And I'm sitting there going, "Okay, we'll wait and see. I'll stay here, in my patrol car." The kids are just kind of sitting there and one of the kids, I get talking I said "So, what'cha doing?" "Oh, we just came out to the lake." "Oh, you came out to watch the stars and the lake, at like two AM." The kid answers "Oh, yeah!" I say "Really?" The kid says "Yeah." I say, "Wow, that's cool. I think I'll sit here and join you." "Oh," says the kid. And so, we'd stay there for a while. And I'm like, "So, how much beer do you have with you?" "Oh, none" [the young man answers]." I ask, "Do you mind if I check your cars?" The young man answers "Oh, no, you can't do that." And I say, "Okay." A few more minutes go by, I look at him go, "Okay, you know that I know what you're doing out here. I know you know I know. Let's call it quits because this is how people die [out here at the lake]. They get drunk, kids get drunk, and they drown." The first summer I was at Lake Mead we had nineteen fatalities on Mojave. I put more people in body bags – I always thought I'd remember every fatality I ever dealt with, no. I put more people in body bags than I could ever count. There were times I had ask the interpreter ranger, because you can't leave a dead body unattended, I'd take the poor interpreter from our district and have him sit the with the deceased in the body bag in the booking office, waiting to for the coroner to show up, while I had another call of an infant in febrile seizure I'd got to run to, so it was like, "Robin, I need you to sit here." He'd be like, "Ehhh."

Janet Kirwan: But back to the kids [on the beach], after the kids started leaving the guy [I had been talking with] turned about looked at me and goes, "Rangers are pretty cool." And I'm like, "My job is to keep you from being hurt. If you stayed out here and started drinking something would happen, either somebody would make a move on some young lady or some guy and there'd be, next thing you know they'll be an accusation of sexual assault, somebody will get drunk and go swimming, somebody will crash their car and get hurt. There's a reason you can't drink at this age." You know, and they'd just be like "Wow, you're really cool." That's what being a ranger is about, not writing the ticket. How much goodwill do we get out of that? A lot. We'd run into those kids, "Oh, you're the ranger!" I'm like, "Yeah."

Yeah, that was fun. That's the part I miss. I don't miss stuffing people into patrol cars and taking them to jail. I never liked doing that; I never liked writing the tickets. If I ever wrote a ticket it was because I had to write a ticket. First ticket I ever wrote was to a guy tried to hit me with his motorhome at Crater Lake, and I'm like I literally had to dive between some road construction equipment [to keep from getting hit while directing traffic]. If I'd had my flat hat on, I would have been done because there was not enough room. And so, I looked at the construction guys and said, "I'll be back." His answer was "Please, do." I pulled the guy over – "Sir, do you realize you just nearly hit people back there?" He's like, "Well, I couldn't put my tires off the road it would damage my tires." It was a big, motorhome. I'm like, "No, let me make a point here. Do you realize people had to literally dive out of your way, because you didn't slow down and you didn't move over people, to keep you from hitting them, literally had to dive out of your way?!" And the guy was just like, "Well, do you know how much these tired cost?" And I said, "Let me try this again. Do you realize I was one of those people who had to dive out of the way?" He goes, "Well, I don't want to ruin my tires." I wrote my first ticket! I came back, my boss looks at me, says, "I really need to know what's predicated you to write this ticket for the first time." I had given him the enhanced fine for speeding through a construction area. "There is a story here," I told him, and he just laughed. He goes, "I figured it had to be pretty significant." I'm like, "the guy just kept – was more concerned about his tires than all the people he nearly hit, including me!"

Janet Kirwan: So, writing tickets was never my favorite thing, sometimes you had to. And DUIs that was a no-brainer, getting them off the road. But, helping people, helping families [was important]. We never took a dog to animal control, whether I worked at Everglades, or Lake Mead, or anywhere, we never took a dog to animal control. We would find homes for any of the stray dogs. I arrested people and kept their dog at my house, until they could make arrangements, because it wasn't the dog's fault. You know that I picked up the owner. One day a visitor sent a note over, [across the lake that], he was in medical distress. We got him into the hospital, and he had to be hospitalized long-term, but he had a small dog. We found a vet that would take a dog, only if, vet said the guy had to sign paperwork. So, I go back and forth to the guy at the hospital, in intensive care, to get him to sign paperwork for the dog. And we ended up getting the dog healthy, got him [the owner/visitor] reconnected to his family. Nearly half a year later he comes back with his dog [to say thanks]. He's living near his sister, doing really well.

Janet Kirwan: That's what rangers do, not take the dog to animal control or, at least in my mind that's what rangers do and that's the part I miss. You know, arresting the pedophile who was assaulting his grandkids, there was a little bit of satisfaction in that one. Arresting the guy who was trying to kill me, there was a lot of satisfaction in that one. When somebody looks at you

and goes, "You're gonna die tonight" and they mean it, arresting the person is a lot of satisfaction.

Lilli Tichinin: Was that in Everglades?

Janet Kirwan: No, it was Lake Mead. My boss ended up – we had to put a new hood on the patrol car, but it was – do you want to hear the story?

Lilli Tichinin: Sure!

Janet Kirwan: It was one of those nights, like this was the third call out of the night. It actually got to where I laid down on the couch in my uniform because I'd already been called out twice, after I'd gotten off shift all day. So, everybody was out on a call somewhere and I get a call—

[END OF TRACK 4]

[START OF TRACK 5]

[Portion of transcript and audio recording removed at request of the narrator.]

Janet Kirwan: —dispatch sent me. There was a guy in the campground, at North Telephone Cove, a beach campground, with a knife, threatening to kill people. Oh, my favorite calls. The other available Ranger and I were talking to people along the beach trying to get a description, figure out where he was. At the same time another ranger, Willie, who had the clown car full of drunks, had just got back from jail. So, Willie gets back and shows up and there's three rangers on scene looking for the suspect. People just camped, you know, beach camped, and he [the suspect] went into the desert, just to the north [of the camps]. We're like, "Well, we can sit here all day waiting or we can see if we can find him. So, we can spread out and walk out away from the camps after we figured out how far we're going to walk and see if we find him [the suspect].

Janet Kirwan: So, we spread out. So, we're walking out, and one ranger won't stay where she's supposed to stay, she's migrating toward Willie, so we walk out and we're not finding anything when all the sudden I turn and I look and he's like that chair from me [gestures to chair]

Lilli Tichinin: About ten feet.

Janet Kirwan: Barely that. And I'm like going, "Willie!" You know, because Willie is over here and I'm over here and he's here and I'm like, "He's got a knife. Actually, Willie, he's got a machete!" The guy stands up and goes, "Yeah, I got a knife, I've got a machete, and you're gonna die." I can't do anything because the other ranger is in my line of fire, she's right behind him. Willie's trying to get the other ranger to move. So, then the guy – Willie is like, "I'm coming," and Willie starts trying to come up to get behind the guy, which is one of the tactics we used to use quite a bit, is the one from the front takes the heat and somebody come from behind and tackles. The guy heard Willie come up the suspect booked. So now the chase is on. The guy is trying to get back to his vehicle. Willie got hung up

in vegetation, so now it's this other ranger and I chasing this guy down. He's just got shorts on, no shirt, no clothes or anything else.

Janet Kirwan: We finally get him as he's trying to get into his truck. He's just sweaty as all get-out and I'm wrestling him, trying to control the machete, which we figured out later he actually had tied to his hands, so that's why I couldn't get it out of his hand, trying to control him, and the other ranger decides to spray pepper spray. Pepper spray is oil based, not only that you should probably spray it on the subject, not the other ranger. I didn't really notice it, that I had gotten sprayed because adrenaline is just a little high, but now I can't, I can't hold onto this guy. He's like trying to hold onto a greased pig. You know, there's nothing to hold onto, his shorts aren't doing me any good to hold onto them. So, I managed to body throw him out of the truck, get away from the truck and he's off and running. Now people in the campground are just up and moving – because we're yelling. Willie finally comes around, people in the campground are throwing their kids in their vehicles and they're just booking out of the area. So, there's lights on, there's dust flying, we're trying to find the guy, he's running, he hides behind a tent full of kids, so we're chasing him through all of that. We finally get him, work him around a little so we can get us between the visitors and him. So, we work him around finally, arms are flying out and people are like going, "This is crazy!" and screaming, and like, yeah, this is not how I want the night to go. So, we finally get him. He's here, I'm here, Willie's here, the other ranger is back here. And the suspect is looking at me going, "You're gonna die tonight" kind of stuff and we're yelling "Put it down, we can work this out" kind of stuff. I was like, "Call dispatch; we got him at gunpoint." Willie comes over to me and says, "Jan, if we shoot, she's going to sound shoot and she's behind me," because that's one of the things people tend to do. He goes, "We need to figure this out.

Janet Kirwan: And I'm like, "Yes." So, we're trying to get the other ranger to come up even with us. The other ranger is not having anything to do with this. So, we called dispatch and were like, we need back-up, we need some other people out here because this is going bad fast. We got him at gunpoint. Dispatch responds back "We, talked to your DR, Ralph Patterson, who said, "Call me back if thing get ugly." That was his words to dispatch. My answer to dispatch was "Tell him it's ugly!"

Janet Kirwan: So, we're standing there, and the suspect is just – and Willie and look at each other, "Okay Willie says, we're at a point. He steps one foot, moves one inch in our direction we both shoot." The suspect hears us say this; we're not trying to hide it. And I'm like, "I shoot, you shoot; you shoot, I shoot." We got it, we both shoot, neither one of us is going to be the only shooter in this. "[The other ranger] stay off to the side." So, we see our boss' patrol car come down the road and we're like, "Cool, Ralph's here. We at least have help—" The town is going nuts so they can't send anybody out, City can't send anybody out, so it's just us. Our boss's patrol

car comes around, brand new patrol car, literally, like two-week-old patrol car, comes around and here's Willie and I and Ralph comes up in between us.

Janet Kirwan: We're expecting Ralph to get out with a shotgun. We find out later, Ralph looked around, goes "We've already got three rangers with guns on this guy, and he's not complying. Ralph guns the patrol car toward the guy and hits the guy with the patrol car. All we see is dust and lights, and then we see the machete coming down on the hood of the patrol car. The suspect is wailing on the hood of the car. Ralph backs up, the guy takes off running. Ralph gets back in the patrol car, takes off after him. Now, we're all going [cartoon running sound] across this parking lot. People are watching this and we're all like, Willie and I are [cartoon running sound] racing across the parking lot behind the patrol car. And the guy finally moves, and he gets up – next to the old wooden outhouses at Lake Mead. They were set in like a tear-drop shaped, berm around it and set up on top of that tear drop to try to keep the cars from running into to them, but they're the old wooden ones. The guy gets up next to the outhouse and stands up there. Ralph puts the patrol up next to the berm but can't get up to where the suspect is and the guy's threatening to kill us and he's waving the machete and it's not safe for any of us to get anywhere near him. We don't have Tasers or anything else yet and nobody can come out from town.

Janet Kirwan: Ralph backs up the patrol car, guns it, goes up over the berm, hits the guy, knocks him into the outhouse, the outhouse rocks backwards, comes back up, hits the guy in the back of the head knocks him out cold and he goes down, giving enough time for Willie and I, who are still going [cartoon running sound] to get there, try to cuff him which is when we realize he's got the machete tied to him. So, we looked at our boss and he said, "You guys had him at gun point, he wasn't going to comply." So, we stuffed him, got him into the patrol car. He was just out of his mind. Willie ended up taking him to jail and Ralph and I walked the beach camps and talk to all the visitors. And people are like, "Who was the old guy in the car? He was cool!" He was like the hero of Telephone Cove for the rest of the summer. That was the incident that the chief ranger came down on, justifiably on the other ranger. I didn't even realize I had been pepper sprayed until the adrenaline started to come down. I actually had chemical burns on me from the pepper spray. The suspect went off the jail, got put in the happy chair when he got to jail, the restraining chair and stuff.

Janet Kirwan: So what a ranger does, after that incident, we have to secure all of the suspect's gear, inventory all of this fly fishing gear, try to protect it so it doesn't get damaged, and walk the beaches, make sure everybody on the beaches, all the visitors are okay, explain what happened. People are like, "How come you didn't shoot him in the leg?" "Do you know how hard it would be to shoot someone in the leg? But that event made me go home and go, "Huh, that was an interesting evening." But there was actually no board of review done on that.

Lilli Tichinin: Really?

Janet Kirwan: Yeah. I don't know if it was because of the issue with the other ranger but whatever they said to the other ranger she wrote Willie and I an apology letter. It wasn't mean-spirited on her part; it was just never a job she should have been doing. Some people need to be self-aware, men and women, that law enforcement is not a game. We had a dispatcher who viewed dispatching as a video game and nearly got Willie and I killed over an incident because he didn't do his job correctly – he came back to us and said everything in a campsite was clear when actually everything in the campground was stolen and the guy was wanted for an armed home invasion. He actually drove off with me hanging out of his car window at one point in time. I pushed out, got out of it and then he nearly ran Willie over. I pursued him into California; out of Arizona, into Nevada and into California before Highway Patrol took over the pursuit. The chief ranger wasn't happy with me because he couldn't get me on the radio. "Well if you'd get radios that work better." [both laugh] So Las Vegas Metro was relaying because Metro could hear me, so Metro was relaying, dispatchers told me that, the chief ranger was apoplectic. [both laugh]

Lilli Tichinin: Did you – so this is actually kind of leads me to another question which is, what was the relationship between park law enforcement and other parts of the park? Were there sometimes, were there other people in the park, like this chief ranger, who maybe didn't – I don't know, I guess I'm trying to ask, I'm curious if, for the people who aren't involved in law enforcement at all, is it hard for them, even as park employees and knowing what's going on in the park, is it hard for them sometimes to understand the law enforcement aspect?

Janet Kirwan: I think it is, only in so much as when you have law enforcement rangers who are wanna-be cops. Because when I came up, we would have meetings with the area head of maintenance and figure out who needed help that week, and you pitched in and helped. You helped the maintenance guys out, even when I worked at Lake Mead; I'd run the fire engine and clean out the outhouses using the hoses on the fire engines for them. In turn they'd help me out with stuff. I think if you didn't have the self-perceived authority and that you were better because you were the one carrying the gun and you were just hot stuff, if you had that attitude, there was really bad relationships. But if you had the attitude of "we're all in this together and we'll all help out," then not so much. Some places yeah, some people just flat out hated law enforcement. I mean, there's those people everywhere. Some people didn't appreciate – we had an administrative person when we got the 6C [coverage], the enhanced retirement, she tried really hard to block it because her attitude was, "Well, you guys are out there doing nothing. You just get to ride around, and you don't do anything." It was like, "Uh." But you know, because her job was in the office and she didn't hear our radios so her perception of what we did was different. Trying to explain it to her, was like, "You're

sound asleep and the phone rings and the next thing you're doing is you're rolling into somebody's worst nightmare." That takes wear and tear on you and that's why the enhanced retirement.

Janet Kirwan: So, I ran into that kind of stuff, and there's some people that [didn't like LE rangers], especially if they got caught [doing something wrong]. Our maintenance guys at Haleakala were stealing the park blind, not all but a couple of them were. As a seasonal I couldn't do a whole lot in that situation and it was just kind of a weird park culture thing there at the time. I'd go for a run and that's how I'd find the stashes [of stolen items] alongside the park road, because nobody was going for runs. I'd go for runs, like, "Oh!" So, I'd go back, get the truck, go get the stuff and I'd leave notes, "Hey, Jan was here. Any questions, come find me." I'd leave notes and it got to be comical, but I earned a lot of respect that way. I didn't turn them it. It was like, "You know, you cannot be doing this."

Janet Kirwan: Two of them ended up being arrested for stealing after I left the islands. So there's ways to do things, and it's the difference between being a park ranger and being a cop too, is you don't break somebody's head over doing something; you talk to them and kind of figure it out. [Example:] "Yes, you do have to wear your seat belt in the park." "Well, I'm in the park." "Doesn't matter, you still have to wear a seatbelt driving in a vehicle. I don't want to have you roll it down a cliff in the park and try to explain to your spouse, yeah I knew you weren't wearing your seat belt, but I never said anything to you about it. You know, don't put me in that boat." "Oh." Sometimes the researchers, the only ones I ever ran into who were having issues [with the LE rangers were] because they were doing something illegally and they were trying to hide it. My dog caught researchers with wrung undersized lobster tails out of season at the Key Largo Ranger Station. We [my dog and I] were walking down to the ranger station; I was off duty, walking out to the dock, just getting some exercise with him. He [my dog] went nuts over these researchers' cooler. And I'm like, "Wow, he's really going nuts over that cooler." And they're like, "Oh yeah, it's just leftover lunch in it and everything else." And I'm like, "Oh really?" [I'm thinking] Oh, no. He [the dog] knows what lobster is. I had neighbors who would feed my dog lobster he would just think lobster was the coolest thing. Earlier we had gotten some reports of people seeing some stuff and finding wrung lobster heads in weird places not far from research sites. So, since I was off duty, opened the cooler and there it all was. I just kind of looked at them and my dog is going, "Can I have it? Can I have it?" They did not like law enforcement.

Janet Kirwan: So, I think the ones who were really doing something wrong are the ones who had an issue. Unfortunately, there are a lot of rangers out there who aren't rangers anymore. They're law enforcement, they're cops, they don't know how to be a ranger anymore, which is sad. So, anything else?

Lilli Tichinin: That's about it. But is there anything, is there anything else that you want to add before we wrap-up? Any last thoughts? That's a tough one. [both laugh]

Janet Kirwan: You know, it is. I had a lot of fun as a Ranger. On a kind of sobering note, there's a – and I've talked to rangers from different parks and different parts of the country, and there has become a mindset of rangers doing things in parks that shouldn't be done. And going after the rangers who are still holding to the standard, who are the gatekeepers of what's good and right. Unfortunately, I worked with some rangers who now are chief rangers/supervisors and all whose moral, ethical, and legal compasses declination was significant, and hurt other people. Park Service has paid out ridiculous amounts of money in lawyer's fees and settlements to [the solid] rangers [for damages done them by the others and the agency]. I think Cam Sholly [Associate Director for Visitor and Resource Protection] is trying to clean that up now but it has gotten to be such a problem, that it was let go for so long that that I find really disturbing. The fact that with the way the rules are set up now, if you go to a Board of Review, and I don't know if you're familiar with the process, it's like a court testimony, you swear that you'll tell the truth. If you're a law enforcement ranger, sworn officer, and you swear to tell the truth and knowingly lie, the U.S. Attorney's Office will no longer take your cases. That happened under Janet Reno, across the board, nationally, and so you'd end up losing your commission because you couldn't do your job. [With the Board of Review system] you can knowingly lie in a Board of Review, under oath, and nothing happens to you. You can go after another ranger, I mean, people say things because they truly think they're right/correct, and they're not, because that's their perception, that's one thing. People who knowingly go in and lie with intent to do harm, nothing happens to them, and that has happened and is still happening and is happening more and more in the Park Service.

Janet Kirwan: That's what I would love to see the legacy of this generation of park rangers who are just getting to the point where they can retire and things like that, who have either been victims of, or in some way come in contact with that and tried to do the right thing and felt the impact of that effort. There have been chief rangers who had it happen to them; there were people just patrol rangers had it happen to them. I know of one guy who actually got fired. They tried to accuse him of trying to break into a U.S. Attorney's Office when at the time he was on the radio on dispatch on light duty. But that tells you the audacity and nothing happened to those people who accused him. He ended up getting his job back, worked for the Park Service for two days and, wonderful to see, BLM hired him in a promotion job and he's doing amazingly well, but the Park Service lost such quality by that behavior. There are parks out there that are awesome, really good people, but there is this group of people that are starting to promote up the system. And until you hold people accountable for their sworn word, and deal with it, and deal with people who are

administratively breaking rules and going after people, supervisors that are telling front-line supervisors to fire somebody even if it is an illegal action and when the front-line supervisor says, "No," goes after the front-line supervisor. That's what's happening and that's the stuff that needs to stop. And that's the one thing I wish somebody would pay attention to. I understand it's pervasive, and how do you figure it out. From what I can find out, because I've been out of it now five years, Cameron is trying, I give him a lot of credit, that he is actually sounds like he is making headway.

Janet Kirwan: But it's a great job if you don't know what you want to do when you grow up. I left Park Service, trading on my experience and I became a Senior Environmental Specialist for a power company, making huge salary. Why a park ranger ever thought she could be inside in a cube farm was beyond me. You'd think I would have gotten that by then. My mom got sick and that's why I left and took family leave and when it came time to go back, I'm like, "I don't want to, can't make me!" So, I resigned, really well-paying job and now I'm state park superintendent. But, you know, at least in the era I came up in, if you were motivated you could do all kinds of cool stuff and you learned all kinds of cool stuff. You're always learning and always; promoting the park. There's a reason why the Park Service was always considered the, the best federal agency, is because people would see rangers helping out. Arresting somebody and then worrying about their dog. Just taking care of people and not breaking heads. When you work at Lake Mead and you can say you didn't try to break heads, people would witness you in fights and things like that and come over later and go, "Wow, I'm really impressed with the way you handled that."

Janet Kirwan: I was telling Yvette last night, the best tool any park ranger has is between your ears. It's not anything on your belt. It's your ability to think, think outside the box. I got a guy into an ambulance one night, he was tearing apart a house, because he thought I was his prom date, and we were going to the prom and the ambulance was the limousine. There's more than one way to do everything, and that's what people have to realize. I have a poster that says, "The greatest resource is the human [creativity]" That's the one that just needs to be nurtured. So, those are my words of wisdom.

Lilli Tichinin: Well, thank you so much.

Janet Kirwan: I hope I didn't bore you.

[END OF TRACK 5]

[END OF INTERVIEW]