

Name of Interviewee: Liz Garibay  
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Name of Interviewer: Theresa McCulla  
Length of Interview: 00:58:37 minutes

Theresa McCulla: It's January 4, 2019. This is Theresa McCulla of the National Museum of American History. I am interviewing Liz Garibay. We're meeting at the Weston Michigan Avenue Chicago Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. And this interview is part of the American Brewing History Initiative, a project to document and collect the history of beer and brewing in America. So, Liz, uh, when and where were you born?

Liz Garibay: Uh, I was born in Chicago, Illinois, in a small, little neighborhood called Old Town. Um, in November of 1973.

TM: And, uh, what were your parents' names?

LG: Uh, my mom's name was Carolina. And my dad's name is Augustine. And they were immigrants from Mexico City.

TM: And, uh, what did they do?

LG: Um, my, they're both, my dad was a kind of a jack of all trades. Sometimes he'd, uh, get jobs in construction. He was definitely a custodian, as was my mother.

TM: And, um, what prompted them to come to the United States?

LG: Um, they had three little rascals, uh, in Mexico City. And my brother was born, um, with this eye disease. And, um, I think at the time in Mexico City my dad was a cab driver. And they couldn't afford to have the operation for my brother. So, my uncle, who was my sister's brother, uh, was already in Chicago working in a factory. And he basically said, he told my dad to come to Chicago. He'd get him a job. Make some money. And get that operation done. And he did. And operation was successful. And he actually stayed longer than he needed to because it was just really good money. And about two years later he basically said to my mom, "Well, you know what? Come here, too. Because then you can work as well. And we'll start a new life in, uh, Chicago."

TM: And, uh, and so then you were born after?

LG: So, I was born here, yeah.

01:47 TM: Okay. And, uh, do you recall, um, growing up, them talking about their initial impressions of Chicago? Or, um, how they decided to settle here apart from employment?

LG: Yeah, you know, I think, like any immigrant story, it was a little bit, uh, it was a risk. It was a, probably very scary. I mean, neither of them spoke English. Um, at, neither of

them had ever been to the United States. Um, so I think it was definitely a culture shock for them. Um, but my parents were always, always embracing the opportunity. You know, we were raised in a household that, we were raised bilingually. Um, and it was sort of like in our house you speak Spanish and you are Mexican. And you, um, learn about our culture. But the minute you leave the house, you are American and you speak English and you learn that culture and, uh, you are just grateful for the opportunities that we have.

02:37 TM: And, um, so, when you talk about learning Mexican culture within the home, uh, what were the components of Mexican culture that you?

LG: Uh, a lot of food. [Chuckles] A lot of beverage. Um, a lot of, you know, I really think that my parents, uh, taught me, um, both of, to have a very strong work ethic. And to have a love of life. I think those were just the really, really, um, very solid takeaways from my upbringing.

TM: And, uh, with relation to food and beverage, which, um, you know, eventually might lead to beer in some way.

LG: [Chuckles] Yeah.

TM: Um, what, what, what dishes or, or drinks do you remember in your?

LG: Um, I remember, I remember, well, we grew up drinking a lot of Coke. [Chuckles] Coca Cola. My parents drank a lot of, um, Old Style, um, when they were drinking beer. Um, when they were not drinking beer they did, there was always tequila around. And, um, there was a, a, the drink that's still around today called the Paloma, uh, which is basically grapefruit, is, actually Squirt and tequila. Um, and that's kind of what I remember drinking. And of course, they always had what is now known, known around the world is a Cuba Libre which is basically rum and Coke. Or some sort of, uh, you know, spirit and Coke. That's what I, that's what I always kind of remember.

03:48 TM: And how about the food that you ate?

LG: Um, food, you know, traditional Mexican dishes. Um, I grew up, uh, I had a best friend who's very American across the street. And she used to love coming over to our house for dinner because, you know, we always sat down for dinner together. And always started with soup, uh, every single meal started with soup. And then it was just some traditional Mexican dish. Usually like a stew, a meat and potato, stews of sorts. Um, you know, a rice dish. Um, you know, be-. All the things that you think about in, in Mexican cuisine is certainly things that we always had around. Tortillas. Um, very, very Mexican food always. I used to long for going to my best friend's, Jenny's house, as much as she came to our house to eat Mexican food. I used to just die to go to her house and just have like a pot roast, you know? Something very American.

04:38 TM: And did you feel, um, was there a Mexican and Mexican-American community in which you grew up?

LG: You know, not really. Um, we, eventually, uh, uh, my bro-, my mom's other brother came to the States. And actually for a while they did live next door to us. And we kind of were around them a little bit. But, honestly, that was kind of it. You know? Um, it was really interesting, I really grew up in, Old Town in the seventies and the eighties was not the nicest place. It was very blue collar. Um, there was, um, the Cabrini Green Housing Projects were not far away. And our block, um, our couple blocks in my neighborhood were really sort of, um, a unique little melting pot of, um, it was us, um, there were some definitely, uh, various African-American folks around. Some that lived in our little area. Some that lived in the housing projects. And then very, like, you know, white Midwestern blue collar folks. And that was really kind of, like, you know, it was kind of like nitty gritty, but in a great way where you could always just, I mean, we were outside, you know, fifteen hours a day and got yelled at for not coming home. Things like that. So, yeah. That was really kind of it.

05:47 TM: And so, where did you go to, um, school when you were in Chicago?

LG: Um, in grade school, um, I started at a school called St. Michael's, which is in Old Town. And then that school ended up closing. So, then I went to a, a school called St. Theresa's. Um, which is not too far away in Lincoln Park. And then, and to high school I went to a school called St. Ignatius College Prep.

TM: Okay. And at what point did you start to, um, feel like you were being drawn to particular academic subjects? Or, or topics?

LG: Yeah. You know, it was really early on that I felt like I had this little like weird like history nerd moment. And at, it was really rooted in the fact that I was Mexican and, and my parents were from Mexico. Um, you know, my parents worked all the time. And they, they only had sort of three, um, focal points when it came to money. And it was paying for, you know, living costs. Right? All the kids. They loved having parties. They loved making food and having people over and just being social. And then they always tried to make it so that we would all go to Mexico City every year, so that we could actually be, um, within our culture. But also see family. And it was going to Mexico City very young that I remember being surrounded by so much history. And I went to, um, these pyramids, Teotihuacan, when I was, uh, I don't know, maybe like nine. And I don't know. You have a moment where you kind of feel like you belong. And that was sort of the beginnings of me feeling like I really wanted to, I don't know, I don't know what I wanted to study, but I felt something. Um, and then when I was about, I think a year later, uh, I found out that the Field Museum offered classes, like, night classes. And I convinced my older sister, who's ten years older than I am, to take me, to take this class with me, which was like Introduction to Egyptian Hieroglyphics. And so, I started taking this class and I just fell in love. I knew that, I knew that museums or, I don't know, anthropology or something, was gonna be in my world at some point.

TM: How old were you when you took that class?

LG: I think I was like nine or ten.

TM: Okay. Wow.

LG: Yeah.

TM: And so, eventually then, um, where did you go to college and, and grad school? And what did you study there?

LG: Um, I went to the University of Illinois. Uh, in Champaign-Urbana, Urbana-Champaign. Um, and studied Anthropology there. Um, and, uh, after that, so, it was in interesting kind of like path. When I was in high school, I had the opportunity have an internship at the Field Museum. I was fifteen years old. And I started in the anthropology department. And I was doing absurdly boring tasks. Um, but I had an amazing mentor, uh, Ben Bronson, who was the chair of the anthropology department. And I think, you know, he, I think he saw that I was genuinely interested. And so, every now and then he'd throw me a bone and say, "Hey, come with me. Stop what you're doing. Come with me." And he would just take me into the, uh, collections. And, you know, for a kid who was fifteen, he would open up these massive doors, or pull out these, you know, the big flat drawers that we all know now. Um, and just show me stuff. And instantly he'd like re-, reinvigorate my interest and help me better understand what I was doing. Or he'd tell a story. Um, and, I would, I just was fascinated by it. And so, that was a summer-long internship. But then I just really wanted to keep going back. And so, Ben and the team over at the Field Museum let me come back for two weeks during Christmas break. Or spring break. Um, you know, and I really kind of, uh, it was a great, it was, it was mutually beneficial in that I was able to do work for them. I was able to learn. It was also a time when a lot of the folks in my world who actually, the high school I went to had pretty wealthy people in it. And so, they'd all go to, you know, Paris for spring break or somewhere, and my parents certainly couldn't afford to send me to those places. But, I always felt really fortunate that this is where I was gonna spend my time. And so, I just kept doing it. And so, next thing I knew, it was sophomore year, junior year, senior year, and then all four years of college. Um, and the benefit of that was that when I graduated from Illinois, I actually got a job at the Field Museum, uh, in the anthropology department. So, I was I think one of like, you know, five people in the whole department to actually have a job in the field that we got degrees in.

09:58 TM: And in your time at the museum, um, what were the kinds of tasks or, or, or things that you learning, were learning there? How did your, um, role there evolve over time?

LG: Yeah, so, I started doing real menial tasks like, um, you know, back in the 19th century a lot of, when a lot of these museums started in early 20th century, um, the collections were recorded in these massive, giant ledgers. So, it was, you know, fancy handwriting that you don't see anymore, describing the objects, you know, provenance, all that good stuff. And so, this was, you know, now this is the, the late eighties, early nineties, and so, um, my job at first was to literally take each line of a ledger and enter it into some sort of card. Like a, you know, like a card catalog kind of thing, which

eventually would maybe go digital. Um, so that was the very first task. And there were so many ledgers. And each page had, like, you know, fifty lines. It just seems like it was never gonna get done. Um, so that was the first task. Um, I'd have to go, um, sometimes, you know, kind of like peruse the halls and, this was actually pretty cool, and just kind of give them my opinion on what I, you know, was seeing. Um, I would have to, um, you know, sometimes be a gopher for a lot of the, the, the anthropologists who were there. Um, and then eventually just got to this point where they were like, "Okay, write something about this." Um, or, um, "Interpret this." Which I think was really important to my future in really trying to want to have a lot of, um, education via public engagement. So, eventually, um, and of course there was always an opportunity to go digging. So, I did do a lot of, I went on a, a few digs in, um, Peru and in Belize. Um, and, you know, that, that translated into actual archeological work, which was fantastic, you know, being in the lab and sort of analyzing a lot of those things. But, eventually I actually got transferred into the exhibitions department. Um, to work on an exhibition. And that was really sort of the beginnings of writing labels and, again, interpreting stories, um, history for people in a, you know, more, in the more, of a public sector.

12:17 TM: Right. Right. And, uh, and so, grad school then, um, it seems that that, that's the time where your, um, your academic experiences kind of met beer. Is that, would you say that's correct?

LG: Yeah. You know, I did a, I spent some time, um, on the west coast, uh, at UCLA. Um, and I still wasn't really sure if I wanted to do academia. And I came back home because I wanted to work in the Field Museum again and I did. Um, and then I had one professor at the Field Museum who was like, "You have to go to grad school. Like, that's, like, that's, you have to. There's no question about it. That's what you're gonna do." And I remember having that conversation even when same guy, having the conversation with him to go to UCLA. I knew it was what I was told to do. I knew it was what I was supposed to do. But it kind of never felt right. You know? Like, I just, I don't know, it, it was, I don't know if it was somebody saying you have to do this. Or if it was because I knew that I didn't want to be, uh, an academic. Um, but I went to school. I did this, uh, program, um, between BU where I, they also, uh, had to spend some time at MIT and Harvard. Um, and it was really interesting because there were various fields that I was working in, um. But again, and I, we went on digs, you know. I, I had to lead actually a dig in Guatemala, um, and Belize, um, and had to, grad students. I loved the grad student interaction at the dig. Um, they were such great kids. And, you know, it was learning. It was all about learning and, and, and experiencing. And I think that that particular excavation, that moment, is when I realized I didn't want to be in academia. And it was because, fine, being in the classroom was great. Um, I loved personally learning. But being in that, in those pits, um, you know, in the space, uh, and just sharing stories. That's what I really loved. And I knew that I wasn't gonna be able to do that in an academic setting the way I really wanted to. Um, so I decided to leave, uh, grad school, and come back and figure myself out. And I decided that, um, what I was really interested in, um, again, was that storytelling but really focused on the beginnings of our country. And looking at, um, really kind of 19th century urban development. And of course, lo and behold, as much as I tried to leave Chicago, right? By going on digs or going to grad

school, um, I realized that I'm living in such a great city, I come from such a great city, that is a great example of 19th century urban development. And so I started working at the Chicago History Museum in, uh, public programming to do exactly kind of what I wanted to do is, it was take a lot of the histories and translate them, um, into ways that the public would understand them and also would appeal to them. Because, you know, a lot of times, and as you know, history can be a little, um, overwhelming. It can be a little bit daunting for some people. It can be a little intimidating. And, you know, I'm like, I was like, it doesn't have to be. It really is just talking about someone else's past. Um, so that's kind of how I ended up, I guess, doing what I do now.

15:22 TM: And where, where was this particular dig where you had this moment of?

LG: Um, it was in. [Sighs] This was in, in Guatemala. Um, we started out, we did a three month thing where we spent some of the time in Belize. Um, and then we went to Guatemala. So, we started out in Belize at a more, like, a small little town. We lived in a small little town called Orange Walk. Um, and then we went to Guatemala where we were literally in the middle of the jungle. Um, and, uh, gosh, I can't even remember the name of the site anymore. Um, but we would have to take these, our trucks, drive like fifteen minutes into the jungle, and then we had to take all of our packs and hike like another, you know, fifteen minutes into the jungle. And the, the way it worked is that, you know, I would have like nine kids at a time. And then we would rotate. 'Cause there's different people working on different sites. And there were three site leaders. Um, and it was that, that latter half of that, of that experience that I realized that, you know what? I really just enjoyed being with them and sharing a lot of, you know, learning from them, too.

16:31 TM: Well, it's interesting that the way you describe that is about people talking to each other in a particular space.

LG: One hundred percent.

TM: And, and, and eventually you come to be a, a pub historian.

LG: Yeah.

TM: [Unintelligible] Describe this.

LG: Right.

TM: In ways. And, and so, um, so what were your first forays into, into the history of beer and brewing and pubs?

LG: Um, you know, so all along when I was in Boston and coming back home, um, I've always loved being in bars. Either just because I like to drink. [Chuckles] Um, or because a lot of the, I would love to hear a lot of the stories people were telling me. And then when I was in Boston, you know, I actually didn't, I didn't know anybody. And while

you're, you know, immersed in grad school and you have, you know, all of your fellow grad students, sometimes what you want to do is not talk to them. [Chuckles] You want to get away. Um, so I would find myself being alone a lot. And I would go to a bar and I would grab, you know, dinner at the bar and study. Or I would watch, you know, the Red Sox or, you know, the Cubs, um, whenever I could find them on T.V. Um, and just kind of hang out by myself. But I would do them in bars. And so, again, becoming a regular and listening to all of these stories, um, I just realized that these people who had been sitting there for twenty, thirty, forty, even fifty years, had some really valuable oral histories. And I just started to sort of write some stuff down, um, because I was fascinated. But also realizing that they had been drinking for that long. I didn't know how much of it was fact or fiction. So, I just, you know, the nerd in me started to sort of like look into some of these stories. And sometimes I would find them, sometimes I wouldn't. And a lot of times I would find new stories. Um, and that kind of piqued my curiosity. So, I just started collecting, um, you know, and doing like house history research on a location. And what I would try to do is focus on one bar. And, you know, sort of, um, have a mix of the research I had done, uh, a lot of those oral histories. Um, and kind of kind of create a, a picture. How to, try to paint a picture of the past to the present of that space. And I kind of just started doing it for fun. And when I finally got hired at the Chicago History Museum, I had, I don't, gosh, like eighty to a hundred of these histories in my back pocket already.

TM: Did you record them? Or you [unintelligible]?

LG: I wrote them down. I just wrote, I, you know, journals.

TM: Right.

LG: Um, and when I got hired, I, you know, one of the main tasks I was hired for was to, um, diversify the audience. You know, um, the Chicago History Museum was originally the Chicago Historical Society, and what they had discovered was that that term, you know, kind of was very off-putting to a lot of people. 'Cause it meant, it looked like a private club. So, you add the word museum and, and hopefully things change. And, um, I just really, they needed, you know, a more diverse audience, a younger audience. Um, so that was sort of my task. And one of the first things I suggested we do is introduce alcohol into what we were doing. And, and the very first program that I pitched was something called History Pub Crawls where, um, I would take patrons to four bars in an afternoon or an evening. And I used the, the bars as tools to talk about history. Um, it was an incredibly difficult, uh, task to have the history museum agree to, because at that, this was in 2006. And so, you know, a lot of internal staff were saying, "Well, basically, you want to take people drinking." And I said, "Well, that's part of it. But not all of it." And other people thought, you know, "Well, when you introduce alcohol, you're gonna dumb down history." And that, actually I think I'm doing the exact opposite. You know? So, it was a really, it was a battle for a while. Um, and eventually they let me do it. Uh, it, we launched it in March of 2007. And, uh, amazingly, when it was announced, it sold out in like a week. And anything selling out at the history museum, it never happened. Which was [chuckles] sort of an interesting, uh, thing to see. Um, and I did it. And people had an

amazing time. And they actually learned. And I did it again the following month. And again the following month. And it was sort of like a test period, I think, for myself, and, uh, from the museum. And they said, "You know what? Keep doing it." And so, I would do them every month. And, you know, I'm kind of like very particular about the facts. Um, you know, I mean, there's a lot of, of, of course as you know, there's a lot of, uh, tour operators and groups. And, you know, they all do a nice job to highlight the city. But, you know, when you're looking at some of these really layered stories, um, that's when I get real nitpicky about the facts. And so, and also about, you know, delivery. You know? We always say that there are some, um, great, uh, academics who shouldn't be teaching. Or there are some great teachers, you know, who should be doing other things. And so, same with sort of sharing information in that way. And so, I was really particular also about the delivery. So, I started doing them myself. And, you know, thinking, okay, I kind of know the information, so let's try to make it fun. And then I really enjoyed doing it, because I loved, again, talking to people in those spaces. And they were so interested. Genuinely interested. So, we kept doing it, um, and, you know, after a full year I wanted to do new things. Um, and so I started introducing, um, alcohol into some L tours and some boat, uh, experiences on the water. Um, and then into some lecture series. Uh, and then we created what is still today the history museum's biggest fundraiser of the year. Um, and, you know, they let me, they really kind of let me just go with it. Uh, and so I was there for seven years. Um, and really kind of just focused on using alcohol, um, as a means to, to teach people about history.

22:13 TM: And now, so, I want to ask a couple of questions. You mentioned, um, the importance of delivery. So, what is, what is the right kind of delivery, um, for the history of Chicago?

LG: Um, I think you have to keep it light. You know? Um, and you're, the fact of the matter is, you know, people don't want to be lectured at. Like, you want to make it a conversation. So, I always am sort of trying to share information. And also ask questions back. Make it fun. Um, make it factual. You know, people also, at the same time, you know, they're paying a ticket to, to learn something. So, you want to also kind of, I don't know. I guess in a way, like, be some sort of like fun expert in a way. Um, and just, I think just engage, you know? Other people's stories matter. And knowing that you're also listening to them, I think was very important.

TM: Sure. And, uh, and so along those lines I'm curious about the, who, who came on these first tours? You know? Who were the people who signed up?

LG: Oh, that's the cool part, is that, I think the youngest person at the very first one was like 29. And I think the oldest person was about 70. And that was really sort of the scope, the range that we saw throughout the entire time at, at any of these alcohol programs. And that, I think, for me was a real indicator about how alcohol and the stories related to alcohol appeal to all audiences. Um, there's a great family, um, the Gardner's, um, Dave and Rita Gardner are now maybe in their seventies. And they came on the very first pub crawl in March of 2007. And they brought their two kids and their spouses. So, it was the six of them. And, um, they're such kind, both were, uh, teachers and principals, and now



retired. And they had such a good time that they came the next month. And then they came the next month. And they would come every month. And then what would happen were you would see that other sort of like core families like that would come together and use it as an opportunity as this is our monthly thing. And then what you would see, too, is that all of these people, they would see each other every month and then they became friends. And so, it was really kind of this weird little like family, monthly group that would come together. And again, all ages, right? Twenties to seventies. Um, the Gardner's, uh, today, still come on a lot of my stuff. Um, they still come to a lot of my lectures. I do a lot of, I still do a lot of tours and things, um, sometimes for the history museum, but a lot of times for other organizations. And sometimes just for myself. And the Gardner's still come with their kids. Um, I just, you know, I'm, I was invited to their Christmas party at their family's house, you know? And so, to me it's like you, A, you saw such a, a wide range of people. Um, but it was really neat that we almost like created this new community, uh, through these programs that we were doing.

25:00 TM: Well, and one, one thing that seems interesting and, and appealing is that, um, on bringing people through a historical pub crawl, you know, it's kind of about the journey itself.

LG: Yeah.

TM: And there are conversations that happen along the way between, between spots it seems, I'm sure.

LG: Absolutely. You know, just, yeah, and you know, not, now I feel like, why are you coming to these things? You hear me talk about the same stuff over and over again. And they're like, "No, we always learn something new. We promise." I'm like, "Okay. If you say so."

25:24 TM: What is, um, what's a sample itinerary for one of your tours? Either one of the early tours or, or something you do now?

LG: Yeah, so, you know, they, depending on, um, what I, the top-, I always started with what do I want to talk about? What aspect of history do I want to talk about? And then I would sort of, um, think about the bars that I want to visit. I never created an itinerary using bars just because it made sense. Like, I really wanted them to have real content and have real connections to the narrative. Um, so, we sometimes would focus on a neighborhood. And that means we would go by foot. And if we wanted to sort of tell a bigger picture story like, you know, um, I don't know, I, I created one, um, called, um, We're Off To See The Pubs. And it was about, uh, the Wizard of Oz. Uh, 'cause it was written here in Chicago. And there were a lot of connections to the 1893 World's Fair. Um, so, you know, I selected certain bars that would allow us to, um, tell the story of, you know, sort of why Frank Baum wrote this book. Um, and of course that requires transportation and our trolley is what I use. Um, so it just depends on the subject matter as to, as to what we do when, usually what we'll do is go to four bars in three hours. Um, I'll do a lot of my talking when I have everyone's attention either outside or, um, on the

trolley. And then, you know, once they're in bars, I'm like, you know, "This is a bar. This is living space. A living, breathing space. Go enjoy it. I know you want to drink. So, go to the bar. Grab a drink. And meet one another. Or come back here and, you know, I'll, I'll be around the bar and we can chat if you have any questions." And that sort of thing. Every now and then, you know, and I try to be very respectful about the fact that bars are, you know, operational. Um, and there's gonna be people in there who are not on the tour. Um, and don't want to hear me talk. Um, and I don't want to disturb them. So, that's why I never really chose to speak like in, in a bar. But there are moments when we were either in a bar where, um, they opened the doors just for us. Or there's nobody in there 'cause it's the middle of the day. Um, and if that, if there's really no one in that bar, then I'll usually talk in the bar, 'cause then you can look around and, you know, I can refer to certain things in it.

27:35 TM: Right. Um, and so, your, your focus on, on bars or pubs, um, first of all, is, is a pub the same thing as a bar? Would you say?

LG: Mmm. Um, well, you know, I think that, uh, a place that serves alcohol and it has four walls and a roof, um, you know, functions certainly in a, in a similar way. Um, but, you know, the way we sort of find, um, different spaces for different moods we're in or different occasions, um, you know, that's when they can vary. Um, I think if you're really looking at the nitty gritty, you know, a tavern is somewhere where you can find food. You know, whereas a saloon historically is just a place to get, you know, totally loaded. Um, basic drinks. And, you know, then you had, you know, of course like, ethnic bars and neighborhood bars and sports bars. So, you know, is a bar a saloon is a tavern is a pub? Uh, I guess yes and no. [Chuckles]

28:26 TM: What, um, and broadly speaking, Chicago might be similar to or different from other cities. But what roles have these pubs or these kinds of places played in Chicago history?

LG: Yeah, you know, for me I think, um, in, in looking at not just Chicago history but, uh, various city histories and pubs, is that really they're the, the prime meeting place, you know? This is, especially in the 19th century. Um, again, kind of thinking about those immigrant stories and thinking about the folks who came here, you know. A lot of them didn't speak English. Didn't really understand the culture. So, they went to these pubs where they could find people that were like them. You know? And dressed like them. Looked like them. Spoke like them. Um, behaved like them. Understood them. Um, and I think that was really important to not only acclimate to your new environment, but to sort of just have support. Um, you know? And if think, if you think about, like, oh, hey, my cousin might be coming next year. You know? You can start looking at these bars as a place to, to find him or her a job. I always call, um, these 19th century bars the original Facebook. Right? It's where you would gossip. It's where you would find information. It's where you would network. Um, and I really kind of, you know, believe they functioned as these really important community spaces. A lot of, you know, there's a, a saying that, you know, every good town has to have a church, a school, and a bar. Um, and it's kind of like while that church is being built the church services are in the bar. You know? So, I think it's really about that, that communal space. And we still do that, you know?

Depending. We always want to be with people who are like us. So, um, you know, if I need to go to a bar where people are gonna love the Cubs because I'm really gonna watch that game, then I know exactly where to go and I know exactly where not to go.

30:05 TM: And, and along those line, um, I wanted to ask your perspective on just how the bar landscape has changed over time. I mean now, now we have craft beer taprooms.

LG: Yeah.

TM: Do they play a different role than, you know, the, the neighborhood bar that's been around for a century?

LG: Um, you know, I, no, I don't think so. Um, there're still places where, you know, you're like, with like people. Um, I think as we grow, um, as a, I guess craft beer community, um, I would hope that we're doing a good job with educating people about beer so that they're not intimidated by all these different styles. Which, you know, I will go to Binny's, a liquor store, you know, and I'm intimidated. You know? I, and I do a lot of work in beer and I'm intimidated, overwhelmed by the shelves and shelves and shelves of options. Um, so, you know, I think that for people who might not really be into beer, you know, going to a, a, a, a taproom or a brewery could potentially be like a little bit off-putting. But, um, I would think that people can still feel comfortable in a lot of these spaces. I think, um, they're still doing the same things. I think my biggest grief about, um, bars today is all the technology. Um, you know, I'm, I'm, I'm but, but I'm kind of an old soul. So, I would prefer not to have, um, T.V.s in certain places. Um, I don't think they're necessary. Or even if you all do have T.V.'s, like, I don't think it's necessary to have them on all the time. Um, I also, drives me bananas when I see, like, you know, people at a table, um, and there's a phone out. You know? Uh, it's like, talk to one another. And, geez, you know, I'm guilty of it. Of course. 'Cause you gotta check to see what's going on here or there. But, um, I think the technology part is, is the part that really kind of creates stress in my life. [Chuckles]

31:48 TM: Um, so, so still along the line, of, of pubs, um, historically pubs have been largely male spaces.

LG: Yeah.

TM: And, um, and so I'm interested if, you know, what, what role women have played in pubs in Chicago? In Chicago history? And, uh, you know, what, what experiences have you had in pubs here?

LG: Um, well, you know, women have always ruled everything. So, even though women weren't allowed to technically drink in bars, most women were actually running them. Or owning them. Um, and, and for a lot of taverns in the 19th century, you would see women, if you saw a woman in a bar, usually she had two purposes. Well, well, she was working. Um, but neither one was behind the bar. Or there was sort of a lady, you know, providing a different kind of service. Um, you know, and that really didn't change, uh,

gosh, until like way into the 20th century. Um, you know, and so I, for me, women were always sort of behind the scenes as they've always been with everything else. Um, and then, you know, one question I get asked a lot is about Prohibition. Um, people love to talk about Prohibition. That almost drives me bananas. But I always like kind of talk about the good sides of Prohibition and, and the role of women during that time period is certainly something that I love to talk about, you know? These, these illicit, illegal spaces sort of even the playing ground for everyone. So, it was really kind of the beginnings of women to have, be a little bit empowered, be able to drink, be able to change their fashion, be able to change their thoughts. Um, so, when I think about women in taverns, I think about empowerment.

33:20 TM: Um, so, these programs you created, um, the History On Tap and History Pub Crawls.

LG: Yeah.

TM: Uh, then, what, what came next? And, and what is the big project you're working on now?

LG: Yeah, so, what came next was, um, I always wanted to sort of say what's next? What's, what else can we do? And, um, I always pushed, uh, the history museum to do an exhibition about beer history in Chicago. And it just didn't, it was never the right time. The, the museum was going through initiative to really kind of focus on families and they didn't see the, the synergy with alcohol and families. Um, even though I always said, you know, child labor was a big. [Chuckles] Played a big role in, in all of that. Um, so, I kept pushing it. And it just never worked out, um, in my time there. So, when I left the history museum, I left because I was finding opportunities, um, with other organizations in that they wanted me to consult or, or do other things for them. And, you know, it was just the right time for me to go. And as I was doing this and thinking about the exhibit that I had sort of mapped out in my brain, a small, um, museum in a suburb of Chicago called Elmhurst, uh, called me up and said, "Hey, would you curate an exhibit on beer?" And I'm like, "Yes!" [Chuckles] I've already got it in my head. And so, we met and, uh, worked on that. And I created the exhibit. And as I was doing that, and actually, you know, it's one thing to sort of research and put something on paper. And it's a different thing to actually sort of put it into action. And as I was putting it together, um, that exhibit, and thinking about all of the research I had done and how much the beer community today, um, has grown and has really kind of grown, um, not just in quantity, but in quality. Um, you know, some great beer people, gosh, all over, all over the world. I thought, you know what? Is there a beer museum? And I started researching it and I, and I found that the only true, like, beer museums, from the museum, like, world that I had come from, right? A, a big building that you walk into. Um, were only tied to brands. Certain brands. Um, you know, the most famous brands are Guinness and maybe Heineken. But there was nothing that really just kind of told a global story. So, I started thinking about what it would look like to put together a beer museum. And I serve on a couple of boards, um, some amazing, uh, people involved in, in culture and arts in Chicago. And many of them are funders. So, I sat down with one of my mentors and said,

you know, "Here's my idea." And I remember sitting with him and I had the whole museum drawn out on cocktail napkins of course. Um, and I said, "Here's what I think it should look like. Here's what I want to do." And amazingly he said to me, "Wow. Uh, do it. Go do it." Um, and my questions to him were, "Does the cultural world need this? Does Chicago need it? Um, and more importantly, would you consider funding it when we got to that point?" And, you know, he said yes to all those questions. And the best advice he gave me was, "Go build a great team. You're gonna need a great team of people behind you. And you're gonna need a credible team when people see what you're working on and who you're working on it with. They'll realize that you're actually serious about what you're doing." And that's exactly what I did. And I started to pursue, um, a lot of people who I admired in the Chicago beer community. Beer makers. Um, also people who I admired, um, museum professionals. Um, and historians and documentarians. Uh, and created a, a board of directors and a national advisory board. And we met and sort of tried to flush out this vision for a beer museum. And we worked on it for about two years. And in May of 2016 we made the official announcement that we're working on the Chicago Brewseum. Um, uh, and the goal is to one day have a thirty-thousand square-foot museum, um, with three exhibition spaces, uh, classroom space, um, event space. And a very small nanobrewery.

37:10 TM: Great.

LG: Yeah.

TM: And there, and there's a lot of excitement in the beer world and museum world I would say.

LG: Thanks. Yeah. You know, it's been, um, you know, it's one of those things where it's been so much work, um, and. [Chuckles] There are days when I'm so excited by it. And there are days like, why am I doing this? Um, you know, starting a, a new museum is tough. But I think we're, we're sort of in, in, it's the right time. Um, in those two years, so 2016 is when we officially launched. And then I worked on creating a lot of great partnerships with other cultural institutions. Again, you know, I love beer. Um, I love the stories it can tell. And I love, um, that, you know, it's been more than just a beverage. It's been a true cultural, uh, force. Which is kind of like our mission statement. Um, but I definitely come from the cultural side of things. The museum world. And so, you know, my, my goal first and foremost is to make this a cultural institution. It just so happens that beer is our topic. Uh, we definitely want to be part of the cultural landscape. Not just in Chicago, but in the world. And so, when you come to Chicago and you think about some of the great museums, um, you, hopefully, we're, we're on that itinerary. And so, I started really building, um, support through a lot of the partners I had had throughout the years in different museums. And, again, that community has been fantastic and incredibly supportive. And started doing just events. Um, things that I, sort of were, sort of like the, you know, History Pub Crawls 2.0. Or a lot of just, you know, events surrounded with learning and drinking. Um, and started doing things all over the city. And one of the great partners was the Field Museum. And eventually that conversation turned into, "We should have an exhibit here." And kind of making, trying to make sense of it. And so, it

happened not fast, but then all of a sudden happened really fast. And so, we just opened, uh, November of 2018, we opened our very first exhibit at the Field Museum. Um, and yeah, there's been a lot of excitement about that. It's up through 2020. Um, you know, and it's a natural next step for us to hopefully, uh, one day have a museum of our own.

39:13 TM: And in, in putting together that exhibit, um, I would love to hear about, you know, how did, how do you go about telling the story of beer, you know? It's a sensory topic. It's something that is challenging.

LG: Yeah.

TM: For us at the Smithsonian, when you put something on display in a glass case, um, you know, how do you convey the sensory subject to people? And so, what are the sources or objects that you use?

LG: Yeah. It's definitely hard. Um, you know, uh, when I envision the future Brewseum, you know, that's definitely one thing that I wanna sort of. It's sort of like the museums of the future. I'm like, yes, you're gonna be able to drink while you're going through there, right? Um, but those are not necessarily the parameters we're working with today. So, um, there are so many stories to tell. And it was really about honing in on, um, figuring out what our main narrative was. And so, I put together a team. So, there's a man named, um, Dan Oliver, who's a senior exhibit designer at the history museum who's on our board. Um, everyone knows Randy Mosher. Um, Randy's on our international advisory board. And so, I started meeting with Dan and Randy. Um, Randy's such a, a, a wealth of knowledge. And he's such a geek about this kind of work. And so, um, he was so excited to get sort of into it. And so, the three of us started meeting on a regular basis just to try to figure out our narrative. And the original pitch to the Field Museum was actually let's talk about the beginnings of beer in the world and in Chicago, because I really wanted to highlight the Field Museum's collections. I really wanted to focus on the beginnings, the origins of beer, um, and then really kind of make it a collaborative sort of story. Um, but they had zero resources, uh, in terms of money, in terms of staff, in terms of just even identifying objects. So, we went back and sort of focused on just a Chicago story. And again, it's like, what was that story? And immediately the three of us said, "Immigrants." Um, and it really, really is because of what's happening in our world today. You know, a lot of these anti-immigrant, um, sentiments that are floating around our country. And we thought, you know what, in the 19th century, it was the beer industry and the German immigrants and the other immigrants who were working in that industry that were attacked. So, let's maybe tell that story. And so, that's kind of how we started. And then, um, early on in the process, um, I had just met Brian Alberts, um, who's a beer historian and he was, just gotten his Ph.D. from Purdue. And Brian and I had chatted. He actually, um, I gave a lecture and he was at the lecture. And he called me immediately and said, "Can, I just wanna learn about what you're doing." And I'm like, you know, "Great. It's cool. You know, here's what's, what's happening." And he was really genuinely interested. And I'm like, "Okay, well, you know, I would love to have you involved when I know there's something happening. There's nothing happening right now." So, the minute we kind of figured out this narrative, I called Brian and I was like, "Here's, here's

the opportunity." Um, and it's because that's what he had really focused on was German immigrant stories in, uh, the 1850's and '60's. And so, he was really excited. And so, the four of us, um, had a, he's in, he was in Indiana. The three of us are in Chicago. So, we had a phone conference every week to sort of hash it out, um, and tell that story. And I knew that, um, the objects that I wanted to feature were going to be from other collections. So, I reached out to, um, and I was doing some research along the way. And so, I reached out to the Pabst Mansion in Milwaukee. Um, Milwaukee County Historical Society. Um, Black Point Estate Gardens in Lake Geneva, which was a summer home for Conrad Seipp. Uh, who had Seipp Brewing. Um, and then, uh, we have of course, uh, the oldest beer school in the country, Siebel, here in Chicago. And then, of course, it's a German story. So, I wanted to reach out to DANK Haus German American Cultural Center. And all five organizations were incredibly supportive, um, and said, "Yes. We want to be a part of this. What do you want? What? What objects do you want?" And so, really kind of seeing what they had in their collections helped us really sort of, um, focus on, on what stories we were gonna tell.

TM: That's great.

43:16 LG: It was incredible, incredibly collaborative. And that's really kind of like the background that I come from. It's like, yeah, I, I have only so much information in my head. Um, and I love working with other people. I love with, working with other institutions and organizations and other experts, um, because that's when you can tell really, really sort of, um, an interesting story that has a lot of depth. And, you know, I don't know, I'm just a, that's just, I, I really love, love working with other people that can tell a greater story.

43:44 TM: How do you think your training in anthropology and archaeology has shaped your approach to building this museum?

LG: Um, well, you know, um, instead of looking at spe-. Well, I guess, you know, instead of looking at specific cultures. Um, you know, you think about this community, which is very similar to, say, studying, you know, the ancient Aztecs. Um, so, I think looking at communities as a whole, and then of course material objects, um, to help form, um, those narratives, I think a lot of that was definitely rooted in anthropology for sure.

44:20 TM: Um, and, and so, thinking about Chicago in the context of other American cities or even further afield, um, what, what makes American, or Chicago, brewing history unique or different?

LG: Um, you know, I, I, you know, we're just like a great, a perfect example of, again, 19th century American city. A true melting pot. Um, such, so many immigrant stories here. It really kind of tells you the beginnings of our country. Um, and in every, in every way. You know? From, from, uh, economy and innovation, immigration, technology, industry, um, agriculture. I often call the Midwest the fertile crescent of the west, um, because, you know, so much agriculture started here. Um, you know, we actually start the, the exhibit at the Field Museum with the fact that Chicago wasn't drinking beer and it

was a swamp and a lot of these technological ad-, uh, changes in agriculture like the McCormick Reaper really helped things. Um, so, you know, I, I think that Chicago, um, is just a, a really great little slice, a little microcosm of, uh, the history of our entire country. That makes it quite easy to tell that story.

TM: That's true.

LG: Yeah.

45:29 TM: Um, the, um, you know, the, it seems The Great Chicago Fire is such a, um, point in its history. You know, you can even, you can have a counter-factual exercise in what would, what would Chicago beer be like now? You know? If the fire had not happened.

LG: Yeah. I know. It, it's, it's one of those things where I almost think of like what happened, what would've happened if no one ever found mold on that piece of bread. Or hey, I don't know. I'm sure we would've gotten there at some point. But I feel like, you know, they say that, um, um, invention is the mother of necessity. Or whatever the, whatever the saying is.

TM: Yeah.

LG: Right? Um, and I feel like the fire for us for sure, while it was a tragic thing, it really sort of hit the reset button in so many ways. And, and the beer industry was devastated by it. But certainly benefited from it. And so did your, your folks from Milwaukee.

TM: That's right.

LG: Yeah? [Unintelligible]

TM: Yes, it did.

LG: [Laughs]

46:18 TM: Alright. Um, so, I have, I have, um, a few kind of big picture questions.

LG: Sure.

TM: As we start to wrap up. Um, your, your experience also extends beyond Chicago. You.

LG: Yeah.

TM: You lead, um, people on tours of, of international watering holes.

LG: Yeah.



TM: And, uh, so, I was hoping you could just describe, you know, briefly some of the destinations that you bring people to. And, uh, and how, how knowing other beer cultures has changed your work?

LG: Um, people around this world are amazing. Um, I love to travel. Um, you know, I love eating and drinking of course. That's definitely rooted in, in just my heritage and my upbringing. Um, and, uh, you know, so, I know Chicago best, but I started to obviously live on both, both coasts and, and travel as a, as a kid. And then as a young adult. Um, and I realized that every city has a really interesting identity. And beer and beverage and food play a role in that. And so, I really wanted to get out to other cities and investigate. Um, and I did that initially on my own. And then was one day when I was planning a trip for myself and someone said, "Well, why don't, can I come with you? And can you just take me through some of your favorite places to eat and drink and maybe tell me some stories?" And I thought, "Oh, this could maybe be something." So, I started to, um, plan my very first trip, uh, with a colleague of mine here in Chicago who had lived in Scotland for a while. And we started to formulate this journey through Scotland, uh, eating, drinking, learning. Um, and that was the very first one I ever did. And we started out in Edinburgh and used that as a base. Did a day trip to Glasgow. And then we all went up to the Highlands and, and, um, used a small town in the Highlands as our, as our base for that part of it. And, uh, went to the Isle of Sky. And literally these experiences are about, um, going either, having special experiences at museums or going on a hike with a, with a expert guide who can tell us not just about the flora and fauna of the area, but how the flora and fauna of the area have affected the, the food and beverage in that specific area or region. Um, and that's what we did. And so, the first one was fantastic. Um, we had so much fun. I learned along the way, too, um, you highlight, you know, of course, um, the specific beverages found in those places. And that was so much fun that on the next one, I decided to focus on, um, Austria, uh, ending in Germany for Oktoberfest knowing that that would be an appeal for people to get to, you know, the big, the biggest party out there. Um, and that was, again, um, more of the same, um, I always, I always collaborate with people in those countries. So, someone doing similar work, um, you know, certainly trying to have access to a brewer. Um, trying to connect the history. So, in Vienna, you know, we went to the, to Ottakringer, which is the oldest brewery in, in Vienna. And met with their head brewer who gave us a special sort of VIP experience. And, um, you know, and then again, we add, add a little culture, uh, throughout the mix. Uh, and then the third one, um, was for Spain. Basque country. Um, that was sort of a, a more of a personal, uh, sort of journey. Um, Garibay, my last name, is actually Basque. So, um, there are Spanish influence, you know, when, when they, uh, ended up in Mexico. So, I really kind of wanted to do something through Basque country and, you know, of all places, a, a food culture. Um, it's pretty unbelievable. And, you know, it's the birthplace of cider and, um, they have great, um, beer, uh, culture right now. And of course there's wine and there's Rose and all kinds of stuff. So, that was sort of, um, a unique, uh, take on it. And so, right now I'm working on a few different ones. Um, I actually keep getting people to come ask me to do Scotland again. Ask me to do Austria again. Um, I'm actually working on one through Mexico City. Um, again, uh, sort of selfish reasons. Um, I've been working on one, um, through England. Um, I'm working on one in Italy. Um, so, there's always sort of, like, these one, these ideas bouncing around in my head. And it's really about finding

the right partners and having all the right partners in place before I actually, you know, uh, kind of like pressing go.

50:28 TM: And, so when you travel to these various places, um, how would you say American, American beer is perceived in, in these various destinations?

LG: It, truly, um, I mean I think it depends where you go. I think, you know, if we were having this conversation five years ago, it was probably considered sort of, like, um, not genuine. You know? Uh, um, there's a lot of tradition and history to a lot of these beers, you know, in, in Germany, in Belgium. Um, you know, purity laws and all that good stuff. But, um, I think a lot of the people who actually live there now are wanting something new. And I think that's why, today, you know, a lot of these countries and cultures embrace, um, what American brewers are doing. I'll never forget, it was the first time I actually had that little bit of an epiphany moment. I was, I do a lot of, um, media, um, tours for the city of Chicago. So, if a journalist is coming to do a story on history and beer and things or, um, some aspect of, of food and beverage, they ask me to sort of take 'em to some of my favorite places and share some stories. And I was with a German, uh, reporter from Berlin. And she was doing a story on American beer. And I took her to a few breweries. And I'll never forget sitting at the first brewery and I brought her a flight of beers. I'm like, you know, trying to explain some things. She turns to me and says, "You know, I really actually don't like beer." And I thought, "Wait a minute. A, you're German. B, you're doing a story on beer." And so, she's like, "I know, I know." I'm like, "Well, you have to try it anyway, because that's what you're here for." So, she took the first beverage, which was just a basic IPA. And I kind of saw that moment in her eyes where she kind of looked at me, and I looked at her, and she'd take another sip, and she's like, "This has flavor." And I thought, "What?" And she's like, "This actually has flavor." And I was like, "Wait a minute. You know, you're from Germany." And she's like, "Yeah. We have lagers. We have Pilsners. They all taste the same to me. They all taste like nothing." And I thought, "Wow, that's an interesting perspective." And of course it's because that's what she's had her whole life. Or been surrounded by her whole life. So all of a sudden this new, foreign beverage, um, to her, you know, this, these, you know, hop-forward IPAs that our country, uh, produces was, you know, a little, a little bit of a, you know, bedazzled her mouth in a way. And it was really neat to see. And so, I think it got her really excited. So, we continued on to a couple other breweries, a couple other bars that I love. And, um, you know, I think she, her takeaway was, like, "This is really fantastic. You guys are doing some really great things." And that was a while ago of course. Um, 'cause now you can find, I'm sure, you know, all that all over Germany. But it was really, just a really interesting moment to sort of see those two cultures come together through that, through that experience with beer.

TM: Well, also this moment of tasting something new.

LG: Yeah.

TM: Which is so hard to capture. But, you know, even, you describing it now, it's now, it's now been captured again, which is one of those, the sort of the kind of moments of change that are, um, so interesting.

LG: Yeah.

53:35 TM: And important in this history. Um, and so, when you do have these requests to, um, to bring someone to the, you know, the essence of Chicago's, you know, beer world, um, where, where would you take them?

LG: Um, [chuckles] funny you should ask. Because from, coming from that story I kind of love to sort of do, um, a history of Chicago, a history of the United States, through beer, um, to sort of be able to tell those stories and make those connections. So, one of my favorite places to go to in the city is Metropolitan Brewing. Um, you know, they started at a time, their, they do German only beer styles. And they started at a time when everyone was doing nothing but hops and IPAs. And so they were kind of, um, sort of, you know, the black sheep at the time. And then in 2008, um, 2009 when they started, um. But they make some fantastic, uh, beers. Uh, and they have a beautiful taproom, a beautiful setting right on the river. Um, so I love to take 'em there. Um, Off Color Brewing is one of my favorites, too. Um, John and Dave are making some unique beers. Um, also rooted in a lot of historical styles. Um, you know, often I'll go there and I'll read the description and I'll be like, I've never heard of this style. You know? And so, then that'll lead me sort of down another research hole. Um, and, you know, there's just, and they make great beer. Um, so, it's fascinating. Um, their, uh, 5 Rabbit, um, uh, brewery, uh, uh, the very first, uh, brewery to really do things, uh, inspired by Latin American culture. Um, you know, and they're very, uh, and they don't, not only make great beer and use, uh, these unique ingredients, but, um, they, um, are not afraid to sort of just, you know, use their platform as a way to also defend, you know, their belief systems, um, as a whole. So, I really like what they're doing, um, over there. Um, if I want just a really good pale ale, or a really good IPA, I'll go to, um, Peace, uh, Revolution, Half Acre. Um, you know, I know that whenever I go there it's gonna have solid, solid, solid beverages. Um, you know, and again, it really kind of depends on, on the story that the, the person I'm with is trying to sort of discover in a, in a sense, uh, where I take them. But those are some of my favorite breweries for sure.

55:51 TM: Alright, just a couple more questions. Um, uh, beer in America is getting more diverse, but, you know, statistics certainly show that most, uh, beer producers and consumers are white men. Um, what, what do you think can be done to diversify the brewing industry on both sides of the bar?

LG: Yeah, there's still a lot of work to be done. Um, I don't know, you know, I think, I think a lot of the work you're doing, um, for sure. Um, I think the Smithsonian did a great job by hiring a woman. [Chuckles] Um, they, I'm glad they did. Um, I think, you know, just having a, a strong female presence in the industry, um, is important. Um, and, and, you know, people being vocal. And also having men support that effort, too. You know? It, it makes, it, it, it's, it's helpful for people to sort of rally together. And it's one of the

reasons why I love 5 Rabbit and Metropolitan, um, is because they have very strong women, you know, kind of heading, heading a lot of their, their work. Um, and so, I think we just need to sort of get that out. And then that's same for people of color. You know? Um, there's so much work to be done in terms of having African American or more Latinos in the industry. And certainly not just making it. But drinking it. You know? If you go to any taproom you'll see that there's very little diversity. And, um, that's, again one of the reasons why I love 5 Rabbit is because they're actually in a, in a part of town that's, um, by Midway Airport. And it has, uh, a blue collar, um, and a Latino community, industrial community. And it's kind of refreshing to go there and you see a lot of Latinos. [Chuckles] Which is a very, very unique. Doesn't happen. Um, so, I think, you know, I, I think that, I don't necessarily think we have to put the burden so much on the beer makers and the beer industry. But everybody. You know? Um, just, I don't know, just go out there and, and be present.

57:45 TM: Great. Alright, so I, my, my last question is a, a simple one, but a big one. And so, that's, um, thinking about your work now and your career, um, to ask what you value most about what you do?

LG: Oh boy. Um, people. Um, uh, I love sitting here with people like you to, uh, share my story, but learn about yours, too. Um, you know. Later on I'm gonna ask you to collaborate on something, of course. Uh, down the road. Um, you know, I, there's so much value in everyone's work, uh, in everyone's story. No matter, again, what side you're playing it. Whether you're recording the story, you are actively producing the story, or whether you're just listening to the story. And, um, I think it's people who truly are, um, the thing I value the most.

TM: Great. Well, thank you so much for your time.

LG: Thank you. I appreciate it.