

**Contessa Wolverton: I'm here today with Roger and Mary Ann Wagner. Tell me a little bit about your family, children you have, and where you live?**

*Mary Ann Wagner: There's three of us, we live in Mountain Rose Estates, the retirement community. We just moved there recently.*

Roger Wagner: And her sister lives up here

*MW: Yeah, we wouldn't be up here if it wasn't for them. They helped a lot.*

RW: She's got nephews and nieces too.

*MW: Yeah my sister has two kids and they each had two.*

**CW: And you recently moved into town from.. Funny River? Pretty much at the end right?**

RW: Oh yeah PAST the end! We lived out there 15v years. Dave Petersen built our house out there. We retired and moved up here and rented in town for a year while he was building the house.

**CW: Did you meet Dave at church?**

RW: Actually I came up the year before and had gone to the other baptist church, I asked the pastor at the time if he could recommend a good builder and he recommended Dave. So I contacted Dave, we lived in Chicago at the time and his mother was in Wisconsin, so we met him there when he was visiting her and had lunch and got started.

**CW: Wow neat! So that was about 15 years ago?**

RW: Yes 2003, so 16 and a half years ago. That's when I retired. I worked in trade all my life, I was a Chicago retail sales manager for Minnesota printing company.

**CW: Oh that is neat I had no idea. Mary Ann did you ever hold a job, or stay home?**

*MW: I worked for a little bit after we first got married but then I got hurt and had to quit. Before we got married I worked at a publishing company. It was quite a job! They delivered books and magazines to stores throughout the area. It was an interesting and busy job!*

**CW: So you came to Alaska to retire, and your sister was already here, and you guys probably came to visit her and liked it?**

*MW: Yes we came here and he (Roger) fell in love with it!*

RW: We bought the lot the house is on in '79, we planned for it a long time!

**CW: When did you start attending College Heights?**

RW: After we moved up here we visited College Heights, Rob saw the drums up on the stage and we never left!

**CW: It is such a blessing to have you and Rob up on the stage every Sunday! What do you guys enjoy about our church?**

RW: It's really friendly, we enjoy having so many kids around. It is a family place. The first Sunday we came here Rob saw the drums up there and no one playing, and as soon as he saw Kenny afterwards he nailed him and said "Don't you have a drummer?" and Kenny said no and that he had been praying for one. Barb Cocklin was standing there next to Kenny and said "I've been praying you WOULDN'T get one, it's too loud!" (laughs) But she liked Robby playing. Not too long before she passed away she came up to Rob and said "I really like your drumming!"

*MW: That made Rob feel real good*

**CW: Oh my gosh that is so cool. Do you guys want to share about any hobbies or things you have been passionate about throughout your lives?**

*MW: I don't know that I really have any hobbies, besides collecting dolls.*

RW: She has several hundred dolls, she has dolls all over the place!!

*MW: Yeah I do (chuckles) Oh and I love putting up Christmas! When we lived in Illinois I really decorated, and when we moved up here the house was a little complicated to decorate for Christmas so I had to cut back. Christmas is one of my main hobbies, I LOOOOVE to decorate!*

**CW: What about you Roger?**

RW: Oh I'd say Bible study and fishing.

*MW: He used to be a hunter too!*

**CW: Do you still go down to the river and fish?**

RW: Well, I didn't this year. I'm not able to walk in the river anymore, I lose my balance too easy, so I have had to cut back my fishing. But I love it up here, I'll never leave the state.

**CW: What's the biggest king you've caught?**

RW: 46 lbs., not humongous but pretty good. I caught it on 8lb line! The biggest fish I caught was a 169lb halibut.

**CW: That's pretty good! Mary Ann, what has been your single greatest joy in life?**

*MW: My single greatest joy in life has been seeing my husband and my son up there on the stage doing what they do best, that is their God-given talent. My son doesn't read, and he doesn't read music that for sure, but to sit in that row every Sunday and watch him play it my greatest joy. They both have amazing talent. And Roger can sing too! He sang in a quartet one time!*

**CW: They are so talented, it is such a gift that they share with us. Roger do you have anything to add to that, what is your greatest joy?**

RW: I guess just all the things the Lord has done for us. You get this old and everyday you are thankful for getting up each day with decent health. We have so many in our family that aren't doing well, so health is a blessing. My brother in law just found out last week that he has inoperable brain cancer, and Mary Ann's brother is probably in his last days, and he is younger than she is, so we are just thankful that we have good health.

**CW: Roger we know you play the bass, do you play any other instruments?**

RW: If it's brass I have played it, except for trombone.

*MW: He used to play the drums too, when you were in highschool!*

RW: Yeah I did, in marching band.

*MW: He comes from a very musical, very talented family.*

**CW: Mary Ann what about you?**

*MW: I never played any instrument, but I used to draw once in awhile. My sister is a really good artist, she likes to draw, so there's art in my family.*

**CW: Mary Ann what is your favorite food to cook, or to have someone cook for you?**

*MW: Well I don't like to cook, but my favorite thing to make would be... We were talking about chicken a la king the other day, that is one I really like. We haven't cooked it since we have been in Alaska, I don't know why.*

**CW: Roger what about you?**

RW: Oh when it comes to food I will eat anything!

*MW: He likes food! He LOVES fish!!*

RW: I make Egg del Monaco, she likes when I make that. I make it once a month or so for her. That and french toast!

*MW: When we used to go camping in Canada, he would do all of the cooking. He is really good! If you are ever over a camp fire, have him do your cooking!*

**CW: Oh interesting! We are planning a church overnight campout this summer, we need to keep that in mind! Both of you, do you prefer being inside or outside?**

*MW: Well I like being outside once in awhile, but I am not a camper. I like to take walks and that kind of stuff.*

RW: Roughing for her is at Holiday Inn!!

*MW: No no no I can do a camper! But not a tent, tried that! But he likes all that.*

**CW: Well yeah I guess to like hunting and fishing you'd have to like being outdoors**

RW: Oh yeah I've slept out deer hunting in northern Minnesota at -20 and put a sleeping bag down in a snowbank and still had fun! I don't know if I could do that now though (laughs)

**CW: Where did you guys meet? Tell me a little about your love story**

*MW: I met him walking to work, he offered me a ride and I said yes! I didn't have a car.*

RW: Well it was in the winter time, we both lived in the same trailer park in Minnesota. She walked by and she was pretty easy to notice in her shiny red leather coat, it wasn't hard to see her coming! She walked by one day when I was scraping the snow off the car, I saw that she worked about 2 doors down from where I worked at the time. So when she walked by I said "I have the car warmed up, would you like a ride?" We went out to dinner a day or two later. That was in January we got married that December.

**CW: Mary Ann do you agree with all of those details?**

*MW: (laughs) Well I think so, it was a long time ago!*

**CW: How long have you been married?**

RW: 48 years, no 49 years

**CW: Wow so cool. What has God been teaching you guys, or how have you seen Him work lately?**

*MW: He has always been blessing me. Everytime I traveled I always felt God with me, and I did a lot of traveling when we lived in Illinois, I frequently drove back and forth to Minnesota by myself. I always felt that He was watching over me, I was always scared to death going through Minneapolis because it is crazy, but I always felt like God was with me and I made it! And every time I have been sick He has brought me back. There have been a couple times that I was really sick and He's been there, He is always there when I need Him.*

RW: When we were selling the house. We had it listed for 3 years, the first 2 years we didn't sell it, it was complicated because we didn't want to move twice (sell, rent, buy) and I just wanted to have it work out to where we could sell it and move right to the next place. It was a lot of details, but I committed it to the Lord and trusted that He would work it out and boy, it worked. The 3rd year we got a buyer right away, and this one we are in now is the 3rd one we looked at. We walked into this house, got about half way through, and Mary Ann said this is it! And I said if she's happy, I'm happy.

*MW: Robby isn't too happy but that's okay. He is in a smaller room than before.*

RW: Yeah he couldn't fit his drums in there. But for Christmas, Daniel Mahr searched and told us about an electronic set that he bought because he had the same space issue, so we bought one of those for Rob for Christmas and he is much happier now. But, anyway, it really worked out, the timing of the move. Every door opened perfectly.

**CW: That is awesome. To wrap up, could you each share a little about your salvation experience?**

*MW: I went to a very small church, in fact the minister was the minister and Roger's church too! I was saved by a Sunday school teacher and came to know the Lord and was baptized. When our church moved into a bigger church it was with Roger, and we actually met before we met!*

RW: Our church had a church plant on the other side of town, which was the little church she went to. Our pastor would go over there and preach. So our quartet sang at their church a few times. Then a gal that graduated highschool with me was the Sunday school teacher that led her to the Lord. Some people went to both churches. Actually I was saved when I was 8 years old, my grandmother led me to the Lord. And then I was baptized 4 or 5 years later at church.

**CW: So did you both grow up in Christian homes, going to church?**

RW: No actually, she's the only person in her family. How did you start going to that church?

*MW: I was raised in a strictly Catholic family, I don't remember how old I was but some friends of mine who lived nearby went to the small church and we would walk there. So I started going with friends and just really liked going. My family is not very religious.*

RW: My grandma and grandpa were very sound Christians, one of their sons was a minister. I have 4 brothers and sisters and they are all Christian.

**CW: Last question, do you have any regrets or anything in life that you look back on and maybe wish you had done something differently?**

RW: Well I don't know if it is a regret, there wasn't anything we could do about it, but we lost our son 8 days before he turned 16.

*MW: That would be Robby's half brother, Roger's son with his first wife.*

**CW: Oh wow yeah that is so hard. I didn't know that, thank you for sharing it with me. Several other families in our church have faced untimely losses, it is good to know there are people who have walked where you have walked. Well thank you both so much for doing this!**