Begin Tape 1, Side 1

John L. Horak: The date is October 17, 1985. This is John Horak interviewing Edwin Fauver in the Physical Plant at Southwest Texas State University.

Mr. Fauver, can you tell me approximately when the Speech and Drama Center was completed?

Edwin M. Fauver Jr.: It was completed in 1972. It was designed by Harvey P. Smith from San Antonio.

Horak: Does that particular building create any special maintenance problems?

Fauver: Well, it does because of the fact it’s sitting in the middle of a lake, and we use that pond water for the condenser water for our air conditioning, and that creates high humidity in the building because it’s sitting over water. Plus, every fall of the year, the aquatic growth floats to the top of the pond, and our pump picks it up in its screen, and it stops the pump flow. We have to clean it six or eight times a day for a month, and every now and then the air conditioning is off because of that in the fall of the year, which has been a great problem to us and the occupants of the building.

Horak: In your opinion, how has the university’s growth affected the growth of San Marcos?

Fauver: Well, we, the population of the university, have traditionally been one third live on campus, one third commuter, and one third live in town. So, starting fifteen years ago when there were eight thousand students, we could probably say less than three thousand lived in town, and now with twenty thousand students, probably seven thousand live in town. And so that growth has affected San Marcos, plus the additional faculty and staff that’s been added through the years, and the addition of businesses that are supported by student consumers.

Horak: Do you remember anything about World War II when you were a child?

Fauver: I only look that old—No, I don’t.

Horak: Okay. What was Padre Island like when you went to Corpus Christi University?

Horak: No condominiums?

Fauver: Nothing. Bob Hall Pier was the only thing out there off Corpus.

Horak: When was Jowers Center completed?

Fauver: Jowers Center was completed in 1976. A very valuable addition because it provided physical education, gym space, and handball courts that were all needed.

Horak: I was wanting to ask you about the old gym, Strahan Gym. Did that used to be where the Music Building is today?

Fauver: Right. The Music Building today is where Strahan Gym was.

Horak: Okay. When did that building come down?

Fauver: Well, we really just rehabilitated the old gym, and the dormitory wings that stood out in front were converted to offices. Another floor was added in the main gym area to make the second floor of the Music Building.

Horak: What was the major type of transportation when you grew up?—trains, boats, and the automobile?

Fauver: More or less what we have today, just earlier models.

Horak: How about the old football stadium? What was it like?

Fauver: Evans Field?

Horak: Yes, sir.

Fauver: Evans Field could seat about 7,200 people, and at a lot of the A&I games we probably had 10,000 people standing around the end zones and the sides of the field. It was just basically a small high school stadium.

Horak: And is that basically why it was replaced—because of the growth?

Fauver: Yeah, uh-huh.

Horak: When your father worked at the White House, did you happen to meet any of the presidents or see any of them when you were a child?

Fauver: The only president I remember meeting was Dwight Eisenhower, and that’s when I was in the Navy and I met him out at Del Rio when he was visiting here one time.
Horak: I was wanting to ask you where you were stationed with the Navy, in Texas more specifically, and where you were trained?

Fauver: Well, I went to OCS [Officers Candidate School] in Newport, Rhode Island, and then I went to Civil Engineers Officers School in Port Wynnee, California, and my first duty station was Kingsville Naval Air Station. Then I went down to the Naval Air Station at Port Isabel as a public works officer.

Horak: What do you remember about floods in San Marcos history since you have been here?

Fauver: Well, I remember the flood in 1970 because I lived out on Barbara Drive, and my wife started to take the kids to school, and they had to come back. They were going to school at Travis, and that morning they had to put the kids on the roof of the school and a lot of the cars floated—a real hassle. I was glad she had made the decision to stay at home that day. What happened was all the water came down, and the debris blocked the railroad trestle right there by Hopkins Street, and that created a dam, and it backed all the water up between the railroad tracks that are raised, so through Evans Field all the way back to Travis School was like a dam. [Phone ringing]

Horak: Do you have any more stories about the more recent floods?

Fauver: No, the recent floods haven’t been that bad. And, of course, here recently we’ve had some of the flood control dams in place, which has helped control the water flow. But that flood I was telling you about, all the big catfish in Aquarena Springs Lake got loose, and some of the big ones they used to have were five feet long. Even the alligators got loose, but they were able to capture the alligators; but the big catfish were gone forever.

Horak: That’s interesting. I was wanting to ask you a little bit about the Physical Plant today. Do computers handle much of the work around the Physical Plant today?

Fauver: Well, basically, we’re using the computer for our energy management, to control our air conditioner blowers, cycle them on and off, and to give us status in the different buildings or temperatures. We also use the main frame computer to do our cost accounting and to maintain our shop store’s inventory and our accountability of purchase orders and the expenditure funds on work orders.

Horak: Okay. When you first came to Southwest Texas State University, did you use very many computers in the physical plant operations?

Fauver: Used none.

Horak: So this is a new development since your tenure.

Fauver: Yes.
**Horak:** What has been the largest power outage that the university has endured during the last fifteen years?

**Fauver:** I guess the largest power outage we’d had was when the contractor who was rehabilitating the Psychology Building dug into our electrical feeder and caused extensive damage to both the west and south feeder, and we had a section of the Science Building out for probably thirty-six hours. That’s the longest I can remember.

**Horak:** When, approximately, did they do that job on the Psychology Building?

**Fauver:** That was in 1978.

**Horak:** I was going to ask you where the main feeder came in and where they dug.

**Fauver:** It’s just, the feeder feeds from our substation through the Science Building over to Psychology. Between the Psychology and the Science Buildings was where it was dug up.

**Horak:** Okay.

**Fauver:** There’s still a lawsuit pending on that damage. It’s supposed to be in court next month—that many years before it finally came to trial!

**Horak:** That’s interesting. How has the budget for the physical plant grown? Well, mainly has it grown because of energy cost and inflation?

**Fauver:** The budget for utilities has grown because of energy costs. [Going through file] I will give you an example. If we compare FY ’85, which has just passed, to FY ’73, which was a base year, we consider before energy inflation and the necessity for energy conservation; in 1973, the cost per student for utilities on this campus was $37.10 per year. In FY ’85, the cost per student was $234.49 per year—a 532.1% increase.

**Horak:** I would say that was pretty significant. I know Southwest Texas State University has programs to conserve energy, but could you tell me about the major things you all are doing to save energy?

**Fauver:** The major thing is that we have an energy management computer into which we’ve programmed the cycling of blowers to maintain the peak demand on electricity; the shutting off of the blowers and air conditioners when the buildings are not used, trying to use some optimum temperature readings to where we can cut blowers off when the outside temperature allows the building to be comfortable.

**Horak:** Okay. I was going to ask you about when did Southwest Texas State University get its first indoor swimming pool.

Edwin M. Fauver Jr. Interview, October 17, 1985
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University Archives, Texas State University
Fauver: The first indoor swimming pool came online, I believe, which is the Aqua Sports Center, in 1972.

Horak: Before that what did the university use?

Fauver: They swam in the river at Sewell Park.

Horak: In the river—okay. Do the pools on campus create any big, major maintenance problems?

Fauver: Not any more than any swimming pool that you have to keep track of—keep the chemistry correct.

Horak: Are they heated pools?

Fauver: The heated pools are at Aqua Sports and the West Gym. And the unheated pools are at College Inn and Summit Oaks.

Horak: In front of the LBJ Center, there is a bell tower. I wondered: is there supposed to be a bell there?

Fauver: The tower is designed to have some speakers up in the tower and then a carillon-type system, which is really electronic bells, and no one’s ever purchased those.

Horak: Were you ever in Boy Scouts?

Fauver: I was in Boy Scouts about four years. I think, as I remember, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Horak: That was when you were in Maryland and the Washington, D.C. area? Did you go camping with the Boy Scouts with the troop?

Fauver: Yeah, the Boy Scouts had an excellent camp on Chesapeake Bay, and I went there a couple of summers.

Horak: So you went to summer camp with your troop. Do you happen to remember what rank you achieved in the Boy Scouts?

Fauver: No, I sure don’t. It was not very high.

Horak: I was wanting to ask you a little bit about what you did for entertainment as a child. Did you listen to the radio?

Fauver: No, I pretty well stayed outdoors most of the time, and my lifestyle is still the same; I spend very little time watching TV. My recreation, in the summertime I play in the city slow
pitch softball league, I like to go snow skiing in the winter time, and fishing and hunting when possible.

Horak: That was my next questions: What are your hobbies, but you already answered that. What did you think when the United States landed on the moon? Did you think—were you extremely happy; did you believe it was feasible?

Fauver: I thought it was a real amazing scientific achievement, and I was particularly brought to the realization of how much this country has changed in the past one hundred years. My wife’s grandfather was alive at that time; he lived until he was ninety-five. Here was a man who went from strictly horse and buggy to seeing people land on the moon, and he still had a clear mind and, uh, appreciated all the changes that had taken place during his lifetime.

Horak: Getting back to the San Marcos area, I was going to ask you, do you believe San Marcos will have any future water resource problems.

Fauver: The prophets of doom say the springs are going to dry up in 2020. I feel like we are going to have water problems but, hopefully, we will use our intelligence and modern techniques to provide some answers before the next two decades are over with and we have a problem.

Horak: Well, okay, I appreciate your time. That ought to wrap it up.

End of interview