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Reminiscing: Willie's Story

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MADDEN HILLS

It's everything. My neighborhood means everything to me.

I was born in Texas and served in the Navy. I was in the military for 30 years. I started working for the government in 1959. All the work I did in the government has probably changed by now. There's not that much to tell. I've lived a very short life. I'll be 90 in July. Finished high school 1947, I fought in WWII, went to college, rejoined the navy, and spent 25 months in Bermuda. I got married in Bermuda.

I'VE BEEN IN DAYTON SINCE 1957.

I've lived in two neighborhoods. The first neighborhood I lived in was Westwood and then my wife and I built a house in Madden Hills. We moved into this house in 1970. I moved to



Dayton because my wife was an alien per se and she went to school here, Central State, and started student teaching here, she was in the Dayton school system for about 45 years—she died in ‘08. We have four kids. I also have eight grandkids and seven great grandkids. **OUR HOME WAS ONE OF THE FIRST HOMES IN THAT PART OF TOWN. MADDEN HILLS IS BEAUTIFUL.** It is one of the most progressive neighborhoods in Dayton, very stable community; 99% of the houses, people own them, and we don’t have any for sale signs.

I am very active and avid about my neighborhood. I am a part of the Madden Neighborhood Club. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m., we had a meeting last night. We have a lot of things going on, we have projects, like we’re operating with the city to get the landfill squared away, that was one of my biggest headaches for the last year or so. I think it’s called the Stony Hollow Landfill, so right now it appears that they got control of the odor but you know that thing moved in and almost

destroyed our neighborhood. We haven’t had anybody come and build a house in the last 10 years, I’m sure it’s because of the landfill.

**DAYTON HAS CHANGED. RACIALLY, ECONOMICAL-
LY, THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS—WE’VE HAD A ROUGH
TIME AS FAR AS JOBS GO, ALL OF THE BIG INDUS-
TRIES LEFT.** Most of the people who work are gone because the jobs are gone. But really, if I could change anything, I would bring my wife back—she probably wouldn’t want to come back though. Dayton is very different now.