

TEXAS AFTER VIOLENCE PROJECT

Interview with Ireland Beazley

Date: April 3, 2008

Place: Grapeland, Texas

Equipment: Sony 1080i mini-HD DV camcorder;
Sennheiser external microphone

Recorded on: Sony mini-DV cassettes

Interviewer: Virginia Raymond

Videographer: Gabriel Solis

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ABSTRACT

Ireland Gene Beazley is the father of Napoleon Beazley, who was 17 years when he fatally shot John Luttig in Tyler, Smith County. The death sentence and execution of Napoleon Beazley sparked international protest; within three years of the U.S. Supreme Court banned the practice of executing people who were juveniles at the time of their crimes. In Video 1, Ireland Beazley describes family life up until the time Napoleon was arrested; the apparent determination of officials to execute Napoleon before he was even arraigned; the trial and legal proceedings; and the effects of the tragedy on the family. In Video 2, Ireland Beazley additionally describes how faith, prayer, and the support of Black churches, family, and community enabled him to get through these tragic events. This interview took place on April 3, 2008.

[TAPE 1]

VIRGINIA RAYMOND: For the tape I'm going to say who we both are and who else is in the room. And then I can either— then you can just start talking. Say who you are or I can— we can back up into it and I can ask you your name and where you were born and a little bit about your family, and then—

IRELAND BEAZLEY: Whichever way you wanna go.

RAYMOND: How do you wanna do it?

BEAZLEY: You have to ask me questions. You get me started.

RAYMOND: All right I'll get you started. I'll get you started. Okay, are we ready?

SOLIS: Yeah.

RAYMOND: Okay. All right, here we are in Grapevine and it's April fourth, 2008. Thursday. We are at the beautiful home of Ireland and Rena Beazley. And we're about to begin an interview with Mr. Beazley— Mr. Ireland Beazley. Also in the room— my name is Virginia Raymond, the voice. Also in the room is Mr. Gabe Solis who is running the camera, Mr. Papa Diallo; both of them are seniors in college at the University of Texas in— and Huston-Tillotson, respectively, and they work with our project. They're volunteers, interns. Also in the room, I should have said first, is the lovely and talented Ms. Rena Beazley and Walter Long. Okay so that's who we are and where we are. Okay, and you understand what this interview is about—

BEAZLEY: Yes ma'am, yes ma'am.

RAYMOND: Okay great, thank you. Now you're not gonna hear my voice very much now, hopefully. Ireland, I wonder if you could just tell us a little

bit about when you were born? Where? Who your parents were?

BEAZLEY: Well, I was born and raised here in Grapeland, not Grapevine—

RAYMOND: Oh, thank you.

BEAZLEY: Grape— Grapeland, Texas and I was born thirteen west— west of Grapeland here. And my father— he was a farmer. Had six kids. And we basically, back in the sixties— fifties and the sixties— we grew up working on a farm. Making our own living from the farm. We grew most of our own food, and well, we did— we raised chickens, hogs, pigs, and corn. That's the stuff that we ate and grew up on. But, I guess, after graduating high school I— I didn't have that farm blood embedded in me so I wanted to move uptown. And so I moved uptown, got married, got me a job at Vulcraft, and— and— I've been with my wife ever since. And from the union we had three kids: Maria, Napoleon, and Jamaal. And I—I ain't got very much to say about myself.

RAYMOND: Okay, all right.

BEAZLEY: You know.

RAYMOND: Well, thank you. What – Vulcraft was what kind of work?

BEAZLEY: That was a steel plant.

RAYMOND: Okay.

BEAZLEY: Where we built steel joist girders to go with big shopping malls and schools and places like that. I worked there for thirty-four years.

RAYMOND: Thirty-four years. From about when to about

when?

BEAZLEY: From 1971 to 2005.

RAYMOND: Okay, great, thank you. So, how'd you meet your wife?

BEAZLEY: (laughs)

RAYMOND: You don't have to go there if [inaudible]—

BEAZLEY: Oh, I was blessed— very fortunate that one night. I was sitting at the movies by myself and she came walking through and I kinda helped her to sit down beside me, and it started from there. And we've been together ever since— think I was a sophomore in high school when we started courting, and we've been together ever since.

RAYMOND: Okay. Well, I wonder if you could tell me about the kid's growing up, all three of them, and their—

BEAZLEY: Well, Maria was— she was the oldest. Then Napoleon came practically— almost less than a year behind her. And so they were pretty close, so they were practically almost like twins. We almost treated them like twins; whenever one got something, the other one got something. Whenever one had a birthday we had to buy something for the other to appease the other. They were just that close. And— and— they were— they were typical, normal kids growing up. Of course we loved them. I just was working hard trying to provide for them, give them everything and we just had the normal— normal life [inaudible]. I think my wife dealt more with Maria than I did, but I kinda dealt more— more or less with Napoleon being the— being the first son. I was his t-ball coach and all of— and all that. And I took him fishing and all those different types of things. Help him to ride his bike the first time and all that good stuff. So he was pretty— he was pretty close to me but I think he was a little bit of a mamma's boy. But it

was—he was pretty close to me, too. And, later on came Jamaal. And we kinda was not expecting him. But, he—he—he also was a great kid coming up. And I didn't—I didn't do quite as much—I did do a little bit of the baseball and stuff with him. But I didn't do as much with him as I did with Napoleon. But that's because the situation with Napoleon. I think Jamaal was eight years old when the situation with Napoleon came up and so we missed out on a lot of things. No, he was eleven years old—eleven years—ten years old. Okay, he was ten years old. And so we kinda missed out on a few things with him that I—that I did with Napoleon. And—but—it was a great life, enjoyed it. I thought I was living the American dream and everything.

RAYMOND: Why don't you tell me about— a little about Napoleon as he was growing up? I mean, what— what school—?

BEAZLEY: Well, he was— he— he was— I mean, we never got any bad reports on him. He had plenty of friends. And we went to all his— I— I practically went to all his games and he was into basketball. Wasn't quite as into basketball as much as he was football and baseball, but he played basketball briefly and then— but his favorite sport, I think, was football. And I definitely tried to make all his games. He—he made me so proud. I think his— his sophomore year he made the— the varsity squad, which it made me real proud of him, and I think he— I thought he was a decent little ol' athlete and I think the coaches thought so as well. And he had a— he had a good football career, I think. But being with him in t-ball and all that kinda stuff, I kinda loved to see him in baseball more than anything else and he had – he had – he had good talent in baseball, as well. And I just – I just enjoyed those days and those times with him— I thought he was pretty good.

RAYMOND: Can you tell me about his baseball career a little bit?

BEAZLEY: Well, he started out in t-ball. I – I never will forget his – his first game in t-ball where the ball went way out there and he went chasing after it and— just little bitty steps and he was running and, he was just, he— he seemed like he was just dedicated. He— he loved to— loved to— loved to run— loved to chase the ball and stuff like that and one of the— but one of the most important thing— things about him

— I remember his first homerun that he hit. It just didn't get over the fence by that much but you thought he had hit the World Series homerun. He was just jumping up and hollering— he was— that was— that was one of the main things I remember about his baseball career. I never will forget. I was his coach at that time, too. That's the only one he got to hit. But when he got in high school he had a - he had a stance that reminded me of Ron Gant at the time and I just— I just wished he had stuck with baseball more than what he did but he was more into football at that time.

RAYMOND:

But when did he switch to football?

BEAZLEY:

Well, high school. I think— I believe it was his sophomore year or his junior year, I can't remember. But they had— they had went to— the team had went all the way to the semi-final game down at the Astrodome. And he had played in it. And then the next— but the next year he was the starting running back they didn't do as well because all the seniors had graduated and everything so— but he had a good career.

RAYMOND:

You said that he had a lot of friends—

BEAZLEY:

Yes. Oh, yes. In the neighborhood that we— where we stayed at— that was one of our biggest problems. It's cause all the kids that was coming down there playing with Napoleon and Tim. Tim Warfield stayed right next door and they'd get out of school and I guarantee you there'd be five and six kids just coming down there just wanting to play with Napoleon and Tim— had all these neighbors round here in Grapeland, they'd wind up right down there. We'd have a yard full of kids every— everyday and every evening. And they— they'd— they'd play— try to play baseball in the backyard which wasn't big enough for anything but they'd be out back out there trying to play baseball and everything. I mean kids from just all around the little neighborhood, they would all be coming down there and I— he— that was just his type of personality. He always had friends. I - now he may have had fights with— but I— I don't know about them. At least he didn't run home and tell us about it or anything like that. He had plenty of friends. And then also because— I really— I really can't explain it but the teams that he

played on in t-ball and stuff like that most of the friends he had on there were white because generally nine times out of ten there wasn't but no— no— no black on there but him or maybe one – one somebody else or something like that. So he— he had plenty of white friends that he would be associated with. He had plenty of friends all— all around.

RAYMOND: And when you talk— that— that period you're talking about with a little backyard, that's obviously a different house than where we are right now –

BEAZLEY: Yes ma'am, yes ma'am, yes ma'am.

RAYMOND: Can you— what— what neighborhood was that?

BEAZLEY: It's probably about— about what?— a mile right down the road here, if that far.

RAYMOND: And— and tell me about that neighborhood and your house and—

BEAZLEY: Well, it's— well, this is Grapeland. It's just a little small country town. And we live right next to— to a church and there was just— well a neighbor on this side and a neighbor behind us. It's just a small little old neighborhood there. And it's— it's a— what you would say a city-neighborhood, what we would— country folks would call a city-neighborhood.

RAYMOND: What was the church that you were by?

BEAZLEY: Oh, St. John Baptist.

RAYMOND: Is that your church?

BEAZLEY: No ma'am. I attend Mt. Zion Baptist that's thirteen—

that's thirteen miles west out of Grapeland where I grew up at— in that community.

RAYMOND: Okay. Well I want to move into asking you about Napoleon in high school. And is that high school here in—

BEAZLEY: Yes ma'am, Grapeland High School. And about the only— when he was in junior high is the only time that I knew of him having— I think one time he missed a no class no play rule. But all the time during his high school I found him to be a little bit more stud— he was— he studied pretty good which was kind of a shock to me cause generally you don't have young kids— young black kids— willing to do much study— studying at home. But he did— he did study and he— he had— he had pretty good grades in high school, as far as I know. It may be different, they— they— they may know different. But I didn't have no problems with him passing or anything like that. Like I said, I guess he was dedicated to sports and he knew without the— he couldn't play if he didn't pass. So, he— he never did get involved— he wasn't involved in say going out every night and stuff like that. Now on Saturday nights, and I'm talking about junior year now, he went out on little dates and stuff like that. But we never had any problems out of him as far as being distrustful. We didn't get no calls from the school about him getting in trouble, about him getting in fights, or anything like that. As far as we saw, he was just an all around kid and— and real— pretty popular. Well, and this is— being a small community, he got some popularity I would think from Maria. Maria was a cheerleader and you know how kids are: if one sibling is— is pretty popular then they expect the second sibling to follow in that same footsteps. So I think he got a little bit from that. And then also he had his nephew— his first cousin, Kevin, which was, I think, he was about two or three years older than him— kinda laid the foundation. He was good at running back coming through. He was a Beazley, so they kinda expected him to follow that same line, the same footsteps. He was all round pretty good. We didn't have no problems with him.

RAYMOND: Well, you talked about how things changed and how Jamaal's childhood was different. Can you tell me about how this— what was going on in your family and what— how did this find out about—

BEAZLEY: Well, it was not anything going wrong, in my opinion. And as far as all the things that came out after everything started, and everybody about this little old incident to your attention and stuff like that, we didn't have—it just—the whole little situation just caught us off guard—we did not see it coming. If you have—if he had been a kid that was being disrespectful to his parents, staying out all night long, and all different types of things, we probably would've kinda, it wouldn't have been such a shock to say to him, "Well you got in trouble." But it didn't happen like that. We just going along with our regular life, and then all of a sudden all of this just started unfolding right before our eyes. And seemed like once it started it wasn't anything we could do to stop it—

FBI come in. I was at work when my wife had called me and told me that the FBI had come and confiscated our car. And the first thing I did is I called Napoleon and said, "Napoleon, why are they taking— why are they doing that?" And he said he didn't know so I stayed at work. And it wasn't until probably about seven o'clock that evening that my wife called me again and said that I needed to come home. And when I got home and that's when she told me the FBI was looking for him because they was accusing him in some case. And—and I mean, you really don't know where to turn, you don't know what to do. Well the first thing Napoleon went home, he went to his grandma's to spend the night, so now we gotta go find—my first impression is I gotta go find him. And I get to Crockett and he's not at his grandmother's. And so I'm kinda panicking right about now. I gotta find him. I think I went to the police station and they says, "We need to find him before he hurt himself." Well, oh my goodness, what you mean 'before he hurt himself?' You know? So I don't know what's going on and they ain't giving me no information so I'm running around Crockett trying to find him. And by the time I find him I'm probably goin'—done just about lost my mind. But we go to the police station and they release him. And we think it's over. Everything's gone but it wasn't three or four hours later they come back again. It was just a whole whirlwind situation. And all that night up until, well, finally after all the trips up and down the road and everything, they decided they were gonna arrest him. And that's when we find out what they were accusing him of—and of course the other two boys have supposedly pointed the finger at him, and all this good stuff. And what can you do?

Our lives— my wife isn't at home and I'm dealing with all this. And so I'm thinking, 'what can I do?' All I can do is follow them, they gonna take him to Tyler. So I say, "Well I'm going, too." I ain't got no game plan of what to do. I ain't got no lawyer. I ain't got—I don't know what's going on. But I'm following them to Tyler because they got my son. Cause I know my son ain't done nothing like that. I know they got the wrong person and— (sigh)— but they held us there all night and I didn't sleep at all that night. And they never did take him to jail. But next thing you know they got him up there in that court room the next morning and they're charging him, and all this good stuff, so it just— everything just went wrong all of a sudden. All that good life that we was— we been experiencing the years before, it went— just kinda went sour. And personally, why I say that because in '89 I was blessed because my job I had become line supervisor. So financially I was bringing in more money than I had ever brought in my life. Things were going good. Bills were no problem. Maria, she had already graduated so I was able to financially support her to get into Rice University in Houston. And now Napoleon he's getting ready to graduate, he's decided he wants to go to the marines, he's gonna try to be a lawyer, all those good things. So that's why I say life was going good and then all of a sudden this— all of this comes up. So you know we're headed down a different road than I had prepared for— and just I don't know what to say. I can't remember. I just can't remember how— what I was thinking about. I really just didn't know which way to turn. I did not know what to do.

And then when I look back on it, there's possibly some things we could have done that maybe could've prevented some of this because— just looking back, I think the justice system just took over and did whatever they wanted to. The way they wanted to. And as you look today and you know what's going on, and you see and hear of cases where things went different because they had— people had lawyers to go in there and defend them— stuff like that. I think that if I had known some of these things back then I probably could've—I ain't gonna say it could have been avoided, but it may have been. I don't know.

But after that— after all of that talking that they'd done that morning— and why I say some of the things of what I just said, is mainly this: because when they took him to Tyler one of the things that I did was I called Rena. I said, "Rena, they're taking him to Tyler. Call Tyler and get me a lawyer, and tell the lawyer what's going on." And at the time she was—

she was working for the county courthouse and so she had called a fellow that she knew that knew a little bit about lawyers. So supposedly she called. He had recommended one of the top lawyers in Tyler. And so she had called him and I was supposed to meet him in his office at seven o'clock that morning. And they had taken Napoleon away and I didn't know where they had taken him. And they told me I couldn't go so I had to leave that place. And so I went to meet the lawyer and I got there at seven o'clock and was sitting in his office. And—but—the man wasn't very sympathetic. You know I was upset, I ain't gonna tell you no lie, I was crying and boo-hooing and bawling like a little baby but—one of the things he said to me was that, "Mr. Beazley, we're gonna kill your son." This lawyer, he was an investigator that was a part of the case. The friend who had recommended him didn't know that. But we're talking about before he had any—had even been in court before a judge. And for this lawyer to say, "Oh you'd prefer for your son to die?" Or something like that, it was pretty cold-hearted. And from that day on, from that minute on, I knew—I stopped crying when he asked me that, I looked at him and I stopped crying because I realized, 'boy you in trouble, you in trouble.' I never will forget that's when I—well—there you go isn't it? We were in trouble. But personally resolved, okay you wanna fight? We're gonna fight. Okay. But if we knew things different we could have attacked it different. That's what I'm trying to say.

But anyway, the little—the little old—I don't know how to say it—the court-appointed attorney. I would tell nobody to go with court-appointed. If you got your money you spend it. Although they tell you that it's kinda ridiculous to spend it. But if you got your money, you'll feel a lot—if you got any money, spend it. I didn't have none to spend. But if I'd had it, I would have. They called it "the perfect case". The prosecutor the year after Napoleon was—they gave him an award for being the best lawyer in the state of Texas—Jack Skeen, but he's a judge now. But anyway, what I'm saying is that I think that throughout the whole trial, it was—I don't feel like fairness was done in my opinion. But I guess you know I'm gonna be like that because—but I think the justice system just kinda overran and took it and did whatever they wanted to. And things that would have been beneficial for Napoleon I think they were ignored. And when I say that, it's just like Napoleon was pretty dedicated, he was a power-lifting champ, he went to the state power-lifting meet and he would get up out of bed at six o'clock every morning before school to go and do his exercises and all

those different types of things. So he had real muscle. And they said he used—that he used that to be a brute over this—the victim. In other words, not seeing the good in this kid working to achieve a goal, working to achieve something. They just said that he was a violent person, that didn't—he was not. That was just something that he had worked hard, he would get up out of bed at six o'clock every morning for good, work out before you go to school, working out after school, and all those good things. That was a personal achievement. Not something he used for crime.

But anyway, that's just the way they did things in the whole— throughout the whole court system. Persecuted him for a little bit of everything. I don't think they even took into consideration his age. And they did not even take into consideration how much of an influence those other two gentlemen played upon the whole scenario. They just bluntly accused Napoleon of doing everything without having— without realizing that he was probably under peer pressure from them. So that's why I say the system it just didn't—it just didn't work properly. And I don't know what else to tell you.

RAYMOND: How do you— thank you for sharing this with us. How did you actually survive this period from the time that Rena called you about the FBI to—

BEAZLEY: I don't know. I was doing a lot of praying to be honest with you. And that's one thing that I did do also when we got to Tyler. I knew my pastor's number by heart. When they gave me access to a phone, I did call my pastor, and I got him to pray with me. So I can only say by the grace of God from that day and up until this day it's only been by of the grace of God that we've been able to go through the whole thing. You know? That's it, I mean. Really I did not know what to do. I didn't know which way to turn. I did not know anything. Like I said, looking back on it— that morning they had appointed two sets of attorneys. They had federal attorneys and then they had state-appointed attorneys. And I'm sitting there and they asked me— they asked me some questions that I answered them but I didn't know, for all I knew I was giving them consent to do whatever they wanted to with Napoleon.

And nobody in all that process said anything about him being a minor. They just— they just ignored that— just completely ignored that. And I really did not— I didn't know what to do. I didn't know which way to turn. Didn't— really didn't know who to trust. I was just going through the motions to tell you the truth. And it was— it was— pretty heartbreaking. It really was. This was my son— just I couldn't believe it. I really couldn't. I really couldn't believe it that it was happening to us. And then the hardest thing was having to come back home and having to tell everybody about this. Because my wife didn't know— she wasn't in there. It was just me, you know? And I was, oh boy, it was tough having to come back home and tell her that, you know?

RAYMOND: You were alone in Tyler?

BEAZLEY: Yeah. It was—I did not want to come back and tell her that. I really didn't. But anyway, we had—we had to fight, we couldn't—by the grace of God we made it. We made it. I ain't no weakling. (Laughter)

RAYMOND: Were you able to talk to Napoleon that day in Tyler?

BEAZLEY: No. Let me see. It wasn't until the next day, if I'm not mistaken. We were able to go up there and see him in the city jail. And I don't know—yeah that's when it was, the next day before we were able to go up there and see him. And at the time we had contacted—another friend of ours had contacted us and tried to persuade us to get away from the court-appointed attorney. Well, so the next day we went to Tyler to talk with this fellow. And he seemed like a good fellow. But we didn't have the money, you know? He was willing to do it, but we did not have the money, you know? And so—and basically the little court-appointed attorney, the state court-appointed attorney, he come running down to the jailhouse talking to us—tried to convince us that he was the right way to go and stuff like that. Since we didn't have the money, we went with the court-appointed attorney, you know? But when we did see him— you got— he was still our kid. I didn't see it in him before and I didn't see it in him that day. Shucks, he was still my kid. That's all I can tell you: he was just still my kid.

But anyway, that's when— like I said, we just went day by day after that. We never had any good days. Just continued to go down, down, down. And the trial— the trial was— it wasn't— I don't know how to say it— well it's the only trial I ever been in— and I guess I don't know if I was expecting it'd be like the trials on TV when Perry Mason at the end jumps up and fools everything. But it didn't— it didn't come out like that, which is what we were hoping for. But it didn't come out like that. And things that we thought they shouldn't be doing, we saw them doing it. A lot of the statements that couldn't be proven being introduced as facts and all that kinda stuff. And just taking incidents to make it look like Napoleon was the worst thing that could live, you know? The prosecutor even described him as an animal hiding in the jungle that was hunting somebody to kill. And he was allowed to say that kind of stuff. I mean— and the judge sat there and listened to him. Let the jury hear all that kind of stuff. I don't know. I don't know what to tell you.

RAYMOND: Do you want to take a little break for a minute?

BEAZLEY: No, I'm fine. I'm fine. I'm fine.

RAYMOND: You're okay? You let me know if you want to do that.
What's your family doing between the time they charged him and the trial?

BEAZLEY: Okay. Well, we just— let's see that happened— all of this happened in June. Yeah, and I don't think they even started having the hearings for the jury selection until January or maybe February. I can't remember exactly when. I don't know, we had a lot of community support because none of our friends and family could believe that Napoleon— their— our Napoleon could do something like this. And it was just sort of our opinion that the Coleman boys were the ones that had done this and that Napoleon pretty soon was going to be released from jail. It was just the talk of the town to tell you the truth. But me myself— me and my wife— we just continued to work. And we put it in the good Lord's hands. And we just continued to work. I did— I had already— I had took a week off from work when Napoleon first got arrested. But I went back to work. Went back to the grindstone. And just— and just lived my life.

But it was something that we had to talk about— me and my wife. It was tough on us. It really was. It was tough on us. We comforted each other, consoled each other, and just got through it. A lot of crying. And we said a lot of what-ifs, what-ifs, what-ifs, what-ifs. And we took the blame for a lot of it. But we realized that we had to go on. It had happened and now we had to do whatever— we had to continue even though it had happened we had to continue. We couldn't just stop living our lives, you know? So that's exactly what we did. We continued working and living our lives. Maria stayed in school, and then we had Jamaal. He was ten years old and he was old enough to know what was going on. But we knew we had to protect him. We knew we had to keep him motivated and keep him going. So we had a lot of responsibility on our shoulders. And then also we knew some— we had to give Napoleon support. We did not feel like he should have been there. Well, we didn't want him up there moping around. So every day that that little old jail was open, they were going to have visitation. I was very fortunate I was working swing shift but at this same time they put me on a straight day shift, so I was able to— everyday I'd get off work at two o'clock and by three, three— three-thirty I'd be in town and we'd visit Napoleon for two hours, everyday. And I did that as much as I possibly could. And also that was— they would let him make phone calls, so we got a couple of phone calls from Napoleon back in those days, as long as he was in state jail. You know it stopped after he was in prison. But that's what we did. We kept right on chuggin'. Kept right on going and visit him. Tried to keep him encouraged. Tried to get him to keep his head up.

And we were hoping that it was gonna be— we were hoping something was gonna come up. That was gonna say that he didn't do this. But didn't happen like that. Didn't happen like that. I think—I'm not for sure— I believe in October or September, somewhere along there, they had already had the other two boys' case in federal court. Which, as you very well know, they elected from day one not to charge Napoleon with any federal crime. They decided, 'okay we just gonna turn him over to the state cause we want to give him the death penalty'. Which— if he'd got federal crime, he would have stayed in federal prison until he did all of that time. They politely dropped all of those charges. And that was unfair. That was just unfair. Well I don't know what to say about that. But anyway— but they had those two boys' trials. Each one of them that had gotten lengthy sentences. So we were hoping— this just me personally— I was hoping, hopefully, that's basically what's— that's the same

thing that was gonna happen in the state, that they would get lengthy sentences and then he'd just have to sit in jail for thirty, forty years.

I knew they were taking— were seeking the death penalty. But I just couldn't conceive it in my mind that they would give it to a seventeen year-old. First time he'd ever been in trouble and stuff like that. And his reputation that he did have in high school, like I said, and all of those different types of things, I just didn't feel like the jury would give him the death penalty, but I was mistaken.

RAYMOND: You were in the trial. You saw the jury. What— what do you—

BEAZLEY: Be honest with you, I was kinda disappointed in the jury. I also saw some ladies on there that I wouldn't of—I guess good thing I'm not a lawyer but—I never would have thought they would have voted for the death penalty for a kid. And it really just shocked the devil out of me. But you know when you look back on it and you think about all the things that were fed through their mind. All the negative stuff that they were given to make a decision—I think it's one of the reasons that caused it. I think the justice system should look into that and find a way to not let a lot of prosecutors who just sit up there and make all those negative statements about crime—talking about it's a deterrent from crime and it ain't. And they don't let them say the type of things that they let 'em say. And the fear factors that they use—it just shouldn't be—shouldn't be done. I think the justice system should be taking a hard look at the way they allow prosecutors—especially on death penalty cases. I think that's what helped with Ms. Yates. At least that time they did look at some of the statements that the prosecutors made falsely. Which gave her the opportunity to get a decent sentence out of that. But anyway—

RAYMOND: Well, you've talked about this— all of the negative stuff that people said about Napoleon and I'm looking at you— behind you, and we were all attracted to these photographs. I'm wondering if you could talk about who's in these pictures and your family.

BEAZLEY: Well, this is— [reaches for photographs] I think this is Napoleon in junior high, junior high, yeah. He's on the track team. He was a pretty speedy little old fellow. You remember I was telling you about how he'd be chasing the baseball—he ran— oh that's right, yeah, he was on the—he went to state on the four quarter relay.

RAYMOND: Oh, I didn't know that.

BEAZLEY: He was the first leg I believe. Yeah, he was the first leg course. That's where his old man started off— me. I was fast, too. He got that part after me.

RAYMOND: Can you show— maybe hold that up?

BEAZLEY: Oh yeah. This is his junior, I believe he was in junior high.

RAYMOND: What's he holding there?

BEAZLEY: That's the baton, the baton—the relay baton. And this is him— his graduating picture. He was a senior that year. Handsome young man, just like his daddy.

RAYMOND: Can you show that to Gabe?

BEAZLEY: Oh, Okay.

RAYMOND: Thanks.

RAYMOND: So when did he grow the mustache?

BEAZLEY: He did that in high school. They weren't quite as strict I guess. I don't know.

RAYMOND: Who else is back there?

BEAZLEY: This is just my wife's nieces here. That's their brother. This picture here is my wife, my mother-in-law, and this is my sister-in-law, and this is my father-in-law.

RAYMOND: Father-in-law?

BEAZLEY: (affirms)

RAYMOND: Okay, so that's Rena and her sister-in-law?

BEAZLEY: That's Rena, her mother, that's her daddy, and this is her sister.

RAYMOND: And where— are they also from Grapeland?

BEAZLEY: No ma'am. My mother-in-law stays in Crockett. But they're not together— he stays in Alto and she stays in Crockett. That's my grandson here. I guess we have to show you him. That's him. Yup, that's my grandson. That's little Ethan when he was a baby. He's a big boy now.

RAYMOND: How old is he now?

BEAZLEY: He's ten years old now. He's a big boy. And this is all my wife's sisters. All of them.

RAYMOND: Can you say their names?

BEAZLEY: This is Shaun. This is Cherry. This is Dorothy. And this is Janie. And of course this is Rena. Rena right here.

BEAZLEY: Up there on top you have— this is me, and of course my wife, and this is my dog, Chris. He died in— I think it was 2004. Made me cry like a baby. But this picture was taken for an interview with a lady up in the— for the Jacksonville paper. She took a lot of pictures. But this picture winded up being pasted all over east Texas cause this is the picture that she put on the front page of the newspaper (laughs).

RAYMOND: And what — and you liked it?

BEAZLEY: Yeah.

RAYMOND: Yeah it's nice.

BEAZLEY: Yeah (laughs). Yeah, well but look its got the shadow of her holding the camera in it. But it was all over east Texas. And of course this is Napoleon. I think he was at this is the first— when we do visitations, this was one of the first pictures that we took. This was taken while he was at Ellis. That was when he first got in there.

RAYMOND: How old is he in that picture? He looks a lot—

BEAZLEY: He could be— he should be no more than eighteen cause it was in June of 2005 when he went in there. Yeah, well he may be nineteen. No he would be turning nineteen that August in 2005. So he was eighteen and he was— when he was— when they put him up there in Tyler, they gonna make him shave. He had never shaved before. So they gave him a razor and his face just broke out all the way out. That was the reason behind the beard cause they tried to, I suppose, to clean him up for court. And they gave him a razor and made him shave and it just broke his face out. All during court his face was all red. And I think when he got back in there they gave him a shaving pass while he was in prison so he didn't have to shave. So that's why he started growing a beard (rubs chin). And I think he must have clipper shaved after that cause I know he got

rid of it. I think he wore a little goatee and he had it all trimmed real nice, but all this (rubs chin) wasn't up under there.

RAYMOND: Did you get all the pictures over there? A beautiful family.

BEAZLEY: This is again, Ethan, his dad, and my daughter, Maria, here. That's them. But I have a wonderful family, a wonderful family. I thank God, just like I thank God for Napoleon. I was so proud of him. You know, I think, well I know in there, we talked more since he was in prison. We were fortunate. We were blessed to have that relationship with him. We had some great visits where we talked about just about everything— philosophy. And we had arguments sometimes about different things. It was very well. I got to know him pretty well over the course of those eight years that he was in prison. We got the two-hour— we visited him every Saturday. We got a two-hour visit. And we took advantage of it. And we kept him abreast of everything, all the family, especially the kids. Each of them— at the time we could take— if you was under sixteen I believe, you could take up to four kids with you. So all his nieces and nephews, we all got a chance to take them to visit with him in prison. And so the whole family kept abreast of him. My sister-in-law, Dorothy, went to visit him several times. My sister went to visit him several times. I have sisters in California, and they came out to visit him several times. So we definitely— we tried to keep it, we made it, tried to make it feel like he was just a part of the family with one exception: he was in jail. That's the way we tried to make it feel like. None of the family condemned him. We all showed him love and support, especially me and my wife. We never, never, never, never once wavered from our love for him, still do.

GABRIEL SOLIS: Four minutes.

RAYMOND: Four minutes of tape. You say you have a lot of— let me ask you this: If somebody was to listen to you, what would you want them to know? What are some of the most important things you would want people to know?

BEAZLEY: Geez—

RAYMOND: That's a big question.

BEAZLEY: Yeah, it is. I don't think you can do it in four minutes. I couldn't think of an answer in four minutes. I don't know. What would I want them to remember?

RAYMOND: Know. Remember.

BEAZLEY: Most important thing to me right now that I would like the world to know is that the death penalty is wrong. I'm serious. I think it's morally wrong. I've heard a lot of different viewpoints, and I'm open-minded and I see where some people do some terrible things and you want to give them the harshest punishment that you can give them. But I think when you— death, you're stepping over your lines. That's just my opinion. And that's important to me. I'd like for the world to know that. I really would.

RAYMOND: Thank you. We're going to need—I'm going to want to ask you some more questions now but we're going to need to take a break now. Thank you. But if you don't want you to you don't need to. Thank you.

BEAZLEY: Okay.

[END OF TAPE 1]

[TAPE TWO]

RAYMOND: An hour and fifteen minutes. We are here in Grapeland, Texas. Grapeland, east Texas. We are nowhere near Dallas. We're in the Beazley home and again my name is Virginia Raymond. Gabe Solis is at the camera. And Papa Diallo is also with us in the room. And Ireland is ready to talk some more. And I thank you again. As I was mentioning to you when we were off tape, Napoleon writes in his last statement, wrote in his last statement, about how he had changed and grown between the time of the crime and the time that he wrote that statement. And you've talked about how you got to spend a lot of time with him. So I wonder if you had any thoughts about that issue?

BEAZLEY: Definitely. I saw some change as far as his maturity. I can remember before the trial, and during the jury selection, I was talking to him during one of the breaks and he— as I was talking to him— I could, I saw, or I heard and felt like he did not realize, I don't think he even realized what he was into— how much trouble he was into. He was talking, “Hey maybe they'll send me to one of those boot camp training deals.” Where they'd send him to a boot camp or something like that. He was just that young. He did not realize what kind of trouble he was in.

But then over the course of the years you could sense that he started thinking about death. We had a few discussions about death and those type of things and— But as we got closer

and closer to 2002 and the trial thing, I sensed that hey, he wanted to live. And with his time in there I know he started thinking about life. And I could definitely see some changes in him. And they accused him of not being remorseful in the trial, which you know he was remorseful. I could sense that he was—he would always say that he was concerned about us, and it was genuine. And I could sense that he regretted the things that he was putting his mother through, more especially than me. I think he kinda expected us to be the macho type. But I could sense the feelings he had towards his mother, and all those different type of things. Before his last—when his last appearance was in court, that was the only time we saw him break down like he did. I knew he had changed from when this whole incident had started. I could sense that he regretted everything. And I really can't explain everything—all the details that I saw, but I guarantee it was there. He was very remorseful about the things that he had done. And then I do know for a fact that he was remorseful for the pain that he was causing his mother especially. He just wished it hadn't happened like it did. And we definitely wish that it hadn't happened like it did. It was one of them, one of them things that was throwed at us.

I remember they gave him an execution date in 2001 I believe—I'm not for sure. But when he came out of that, it gave him some hope. Because a couple of weeks after [inaudible] he throwed the question up to me about, "Do you reckon you could get me some college courses?" For a brief moment there he had some hope, you know? I think that happened in August, but it was January when they dashed his hopes. But for a brief period of time in there he felt like he was going to have a chance to live.

But then you go down after January, you go down there and you could see it in his face—he was back to worrying about the next day. What's going to happen? How is it going to come out? There was also a lot of attention directed toward this case during that time and I saw him—we discussed him talking to people and how he should say things and what he should say, and stuff like that. So I can't explain it really, but it was there. It was a change in him from '94 up until 2002 it was different. More like talking to a grown person now. Cause like when we were in Smith County, up there where he was in jail we talked about football and little bitty things, the other kids and stuff like that. But when we got down in Livingston, we had a lot of conversations about life and things. And it was just him

growing, getting older. Kids do that. Everybody does that. He had a lot to think about though.

RAYMOND: You mentioned earlier that one of the first things you had done in Tyler when you first found out what the charges were, you called your pastor. And you also mentioned that you had some community support.

BEAZLEY: Oh, yeah.

RAYMOND: I wonder—

BEAZLEY: It was the church that I went to and the church that Napoleon was a member of really rallied around us. Prayer changes things. There is no situation in this life that you can go through without God's grace and mercy guiding you through it. And the church prayed with us, for us and that brought us all close together. It really did.

And it started that my pastor, you don't wanna—he had us to start up prayer vigils in our home and we would just put it out there, tell anybody to come that wanted to come. And some nights, we generally tried to do it once a month, and some nights we would have so many people in the house that we wouldn't have chairs for them. We had thirty and the house was not as big as this one. We would have thirty or forty people in the house some nights. It wasn't like that every night. Some nights we might not have but ten, but once a month. We started in probably '96. Once a month we would come together and we'd pray. And we did that all the way up until 2002. Once a month we met at the house we prayed together, and it was just different people in the community. It wasn't all—it was about ten that was always going to be there no matter what. But you know every month it would probably be a couple of different faces come up, show up. So we had a lot of support from all different people in the community and you know if it hadn't been for that we wouldn't have gotten through this cause some times that we were down, that just having that prayer vigil would help lift us up and help us to keep going on and keep fighting the situation. And I think God really answered our prayers. We brought a lot of attention to the case. We

got a lot of help from people not just in this community, but his story was put on CNN. And, well his story, it went across the waters. I think all of that, the community support that we got through that helped us to survive this ordeal.

RAYMOND: What do you pray?

BEAZLEY: When do I pray?

RAYMOND: What, what did you pray?

BEAZLEY: Oh. One of the things is, “Lord, let your will be done, not ours.” We was not expecting him to change his will. But one of the things we were mainly asking for was just to spare his life. I mean it was— we ain't dumb. We went through the trial and we saw a lot of things wrong with the trial. But we also felt like the Coleman boys influenced some of the things that happened in the situation. But we had to resolve ourselves that maybe Napoleon was the one that pulled the trigger. So we was not expecting him— and we was not asking God to turn him loose. All I was asking God was that they would spare his life. That they would allow him a second chance.

And I felt, like me personally, I felt like he was very much rehabilitatable. He could have served his forty years had they given him a chance. He could have come out and been a productive society member. And I base my opinion on that out of fact because my dad was fifty-seven years old when I was born, you know? So I felt like Napoleon would have been fifty-seven years old if they gave him a forty-year sentence and he would have gotten out. And my dad lived till he was seventy-five. And I felt like he just— if you would have gave him that chance he would of come out and been a productive member of society. And forty years would have been a long time. That stupid decision that he made when he was seventeen would—I don't feel like he would have made it when he was forty-seven. But they were not willing to allow him that chance. And, gee, I don't know what else to say.

RAYMOND: So you had been praying with the group about once a month for almost eight years. Eight years. What about right at the execution and after?

Can you talk about that?

BEAZLEY: You remember I said that they had set the execution date the year before.

RAYMOND: Yes.

BEAZLEY: And I mean it was just we had a house full of people there and we were all prepared to go down to Huntsville. And we weren't going to do nothing but just continue praying. But as you remember they had cancelled that one that time. So it was just a big ol' ecstatic party that day. You know we were happy. We were praising God. And you know I felt like that very same thing was going to happen. But we made basically the same plans that day, the day of the execution. And we were going to the halfway house, and we were going to be there in prayer till the last moment. And basically that is exactly what we did.

I think it was probably about all of my family, well my brothers, my sisters, and her sister - well I can't even remember who all was there— it was probably about thirty of us that met up at the halfway house down there. And we were in there, having prayer when the execution— and Napoleon didn't want us there, and we definitely did not want to be there. But we felt like we were just going to be like (inaudible) we were going in the fire and we were going to continue praying. And so that's exactly what we did. On the way down, I never will forget that's when they had called us and told us that that's when— that same day Michigan had—I don't know the exact details but Michigan Criminal Court of Appeals had—

RAYMOND: —Missouri maybe?

BEAZLEY: Missouri, Missouri. Okay, Missouri had granted some inmate on appeal for the same reason that we had for Napoleon. And that was— that good news. We said, “Okay, gee, it was going to happen again, it was going to happen again”. But as you very well know even though Missouri did that Texas Criminal— they

said 'no' on the same issue. And as well as you very well know that issue is the one that got the other twenty-nine off of death row. And if they had just waited and gave it an opportunity to go through the appeals, then legally they wouldn't have been able to kill Napoleon.

But nevertheless we got down there and we didn't do nothing but continue in prayer. And I forgot the exact time that Walter called us and told us that—you know. We kept our head up. And I remember— but everybody— everybody started crying. My wife was very distraught. But you know I stood up and I told them that God hadn't failed us. I told them that we could still keep our faith and trust in God. Everything had worked out the way he wanted to. So we were going to continue living our lives and go right ahead on. And that basically was it. People— I don't want to talk about nobody—but you know people say, “I can't find closure until someday till you kill somebody for killing mine”. Okay well, after Walter called and I said God hadn't failed us, to me that was the end of it. And I know somebody— people got to view it like that instead of going out and seeking to try to kill somebody to satisfy yourself. They just got to— that's it and be done with it and move on with your life. That's what we've tried to do and by the grace of God we have, we've moved on.

RAYMOND: You said earlier when we were talking that one of the things you had to do was to protect Jamaal. He was a little boy when this began.

BEAZLEY: And that—(sigh) automatically you don't want to air no dirty laundry, but he accused us of not paying attention to him, cause of all the things that we went through with Napoleon. He had trouble in school because of it. And he even said to me one time, "You don't love me". And basically, I don't know how to tell you, it was a couple of times I would walk into the house— him and Napoleon (inaudible)— I would walk in and call him Napoleon instead of Jamaal. And you know that kind of stuff hurt him. And hurt me to think that he thought that I didn't even care about him. And it was tough. But he's doing all right now. He's doing all right now. He knows I love him and I'll do anything for him just like I would do anything for Napoleon.

RAYMOND: The community that helped you in supporting you and prayed with you— tissue behind you if you want, and one for me too— are you still close to those people?

BEAZLEY: Oh yeah. Oh yes. Oh yes. Those are the people I'll never forget, I'll never forget. They're people that I work with. People that I go to church with. People that I see driving up and down this road everyday. And so I'll never forget those people. After Pastor Clark, he was my pastor at the time, but he passed on in— shoot, 2005 I believe. But he— I will never forget him and the way he supported us and things that he said to encourage us, and things he said to help us through.

And then I had another friend from up in Dallas. And oh gee out of all the situations how could I forget to mention her? I mean she helped me raise— we raised funds to hire Walter and David Botsford and— they weren't free— and I didn't have the money so she helped us to raise the money to pay Walter and David. She had rallies at this church up here. And I mean she brought people from Dallas around and she drew people from Houston and we raised over twenty-something thousand dollars. And that was money that they *gave*. I didn't pay it back. They *gave* it to help us in this situation. And I was so thankful and grateful for that. It was a blessing and her name was Angie Dickson. I never will forget. She passed in 2006 I believe. But she helped us tremendously, and not only financially, but she was a friend. Well me and her grew up together to tell you the truth. She was a classmate of my brothers. And, so we didn't ask her to do it. She just called up one day and said— well she was a lawyer to be honest with you and she knew it would cost money. And so she took it upon her part to do that, and then to be honest with you she also contributed quite heavily to it, too. She was a great inspirational speaker. She was sort of a philosopher. (laughs)

RAYMOND: Let me see what did Gabe tell us? Language, metaphysics, ethics?

BEAZLEY: (laughs) I don't know. But she gave speeches at universities and stuff like that, and so she was pretty well known up in the Dallas area. But her help—and it seemed like whatever help we needed, by the grace of God, we got it. The

pastor gave us great— he kept our head up, he just always kept us involved in stuff, kept us— he made sure we kept the vigils up. He didn't— and that pastor he's still living. His name is Reverend Stallworth. He's out of Elkhart. He was the one that made sure that the prayer vigils went on every month. Every month I could always depend on him to give us a call saying, "When is it going to be?" I was the one who had to set it cause—and I would always set it to fit most people's schedule around here to where we knew everybody was going to be out off of work. If they was gonna have a football game, basketball game or something, and these people was gonna be going to the games, we didn't want to set one then. So I had to work around all those different types of things. But he was the one who would always call and say we need to have one. Then, another pastor out of Crockett there was (inaudible) Scott. He did a lot of helpfuls and he was a member of the NAACP. And he tried to do whatever he could through that organization to help us out. So, we had all kinds of support.

RAYMOND: So you've named at least three pastors—

BEAZLEY: It should have been more than that. Pastor Clark, Angie Dickson, she was a pastor, Angie Dickson, Stallworth, (inaudible) Scott, four, and Reverend Jones. He started that whole thing. And one of the reasons why I remember him so very well is that he was the one that I called that morning. And then I think I missed or did I? Yeah. No, I went to church that Sunday morning, and he was the one— he called a prayer vigil up here at Rising Star Baptist Church. He asked all of the people to come up and we was going to pray. And we did. And he came up there that morning and he— we put—I can't explain it to you. It was just amazing the way he conducted the service that morning, and the prayers that he said, it was just amazing.

RAYMOND: Now this was the morning when it first—

BEAZLEY: No ma'am. Yes when it first happened. This was probably somewhere in June of 1994. Now they arrested Napoleon I think either the last of May or the first of June in '94. I can't think of when it was. The church that I stayed right next door which was Saint John's Baptist Church. We knew all those members was

over there and they were always doing things for us. They opened their church doors two or three times and had prayer vigils for us down there. I probably forget some of the people that helped us, but in most black churches you have prayer lists, where every church they give names, and nearly every church around here in this community had our names on their prayer list, praying for us. Prayer changes things.

RAYMOND: For the whole family? For all of you?

BEAZLEY: For the whole family, and as well as Napoleon.

RAYMOND: Yeah. You said these were the black churches. Did you get any support from white churches as well? Or was it—

BEAZLEY: Yeah we are talking all black churches. I had some white friends that came and said that they had us on their prayer lists as well. I know the First Baptist church up here, I remember someone telling me they had prayed for us. And also, it's a white church up here on Lockhart road. I can't think of the name of it— San Pedro, that's the name of it. They said that they had prayed for us. And, I don't know. That was— we realized that if it was going to be any relief out of this situation it was going to come through the grace of God. We could tell by the way the justice system was acting they was not intending to give out any. So that's why we stuck with God.

RAYMOND: Well, to go back to the justice system for a minute, you mentioned that horrible moment when that lawyer first told you that there—

BEAZLEY: Well, like I said, he mentioned— the first thing that ticked me off so bad but I never will forget it because yeah I was crying and boohooing and he said that trying to comfort me. But when I went back out to my truck and that's when the courthouse, he was right next to the courthouse, so the courthouse was this way. Went back to my truck and I got out and I said, that's when I said, "Well Lord, it's time to fight." And I said, "Lord, if you go with me, we're going to fight." That's when— you remember I told you it angered me, but it dried up my tears cause, 'okay, it ain't time to be

crying big boy. You got other things you got to do.’ That’s when I said, “Lord, if they want to fight, let’s fight.” I thank the good Lord, put up a good fight.

RAYMOND: For that lawyer to say that right away, and you mentioned it very early on, very— very early on there’s a difference between how Napoleon was treated than the other two young men. Did you ever come to understand why they were so determined?

BEAZLEY: To?

RAYMOND: Well you said people seemed determined to pin it on Napoleon, and to treat him differently and to treat him harsher? And what— I think you said they were determined to kill him, what— what was that about? Why?

BEAZLEY: Well, it was that revenge factor that they say that’s not in the justice system. I think that *is* in the justice system. When they wanna do something they’re gonna do it. The individual that Napoleon had shot was a federal judge’s daddy. And also he was supposedly a well known businessman of Tyler, which was sort of rich, I’m assuming rich; a well known person there in Tyler. And so, ‘We gonna make you pay for what you done done.’ The FBI got highly involved in the case because the little federal judge thinking that somebody was out trying get him and stuff like that. So the FBI was highly involved in the case, cause Tyler’s not but, I don’t know how big it is, but it— it should’ve been just a case that went, but because of the notoriety of the individual FBI was brought in and all this good stuff, all that stuff happened. When the three white guys shot the black man on the street the FBI wasn’t involved in it. You understand what I’m saying? But, this guy here got them involved in it. So it was a big difference there.

RAYMOND: Why did they go after Napoleon specifically?

BEAZLEY: Because of the two brothers was supposedly have confessed, and— and fingered Napoleon as being the triggerman, as the one who had did

all the killing, who had did all the running up there, did all the planning, did all of this, did all of that. And they just sit back like innocent little ol' peoples. That's the way they put the story out there, that's what they throwed out there to the jury. To me, they did that just for the boy's sake so neither one of them got the death penalty. They got federal sentences as well as state sentences so technically they would never get out of prison, I don't think. But I hope they do. I knew both of the boys real well. I coached one of them on— on, him and Napoleon was on my baseball team that I coached. He was— wasn't no bad kid. But, I think they were just three kids out there and the situation happened neither one of them knew how to get out of it and they all got burnt for it. [Long Pause]

RAYMOND: Were you going to say something else?

BEAZLEY: No ma'am. No ma'am.

RAYMOND: I'm not going to bug you too much longer I just— What do you tell Jamaal and now that you have this beautiful young grandson, Ethan, when they ask, or when you— do you talk— how do you see this and explain this whole set of affairs to them?

BEAZLEY: Well I really haven't had to— like I say Jamaal grew up in it. I think that it has been something that has affected his life. Made him— made him what he is. Haven't had no discussion with him. But as far as Ethan (laughs) you remember I tell you when we would take kids? When Ethan was two and three, he had the opportunity to go with us and visit Napoleon every weekend. So he got to know who Napoleon was. We never did— we never sat down and told him why he was in there. But, I'm quite sure somebody has told him now.

One of the things I've done with him, I would just say, "God bless." And I would expect him to fill— to fill in the sentence. I would say, "God bless," and he would say, "God bless Napoleon." I started that with him when he was probably two years old, when he first learned how to talk. I could go to him right now and say that and he remembers, and if I say, "God bless," and he'll say, "God bless Napoleon." I think that helped him. I don't

think he has any ill feelings about Napoleon. If, he knowed him, he knew him, although he never touched him, but he knew him. He had talked with him. We'd go down there, and you know how kids are, Napoleon would take time out and say a few things with him and everything. He knows Napoleon, he knows who he was. So I really haven't had anything, haven't had to have no conversation with him. I just hope and pray that, I'm a be honest with you, Jamaal's in— in school right now we all know he gonna be graduating. When he was here at the house, I'm gonna be honest with you, we kept a little bit more tighter rein on him. We didn't— he didn't have some of the freedom that we allowed Napoleon to have. He fussed and bawled at us about that. When he left— when he was down in Huntsville, I was just always scared of getting another phone call. And I— I still am. I still am. It was just devastating. He went out and made a stupid decision. And I worry. Yeah, I still worry whether or not he gonna go out and do something stupid.

And I find myself thinking about it about Ethan right now. Boy—I do try to have a little bit of ol’ conversation with him about doing the right thing at all times, now. Cause, boy, I couldn’t go through it again. I’m serious. I could not go through that again. So, we—and he saying we were bad parents at first. But I’m definitely trying to improve my parental skills a little bit with these two.

RAYMOND: Could you— just to kind of wind up. Can you tell me— tell us I guess just for the record, for the archives or whatever— a little bit about your life now? Your working— I mean your working now but— but what your looking forward to doing? What's life about now for you?

BEAZLEY: I really don't know. I always thought I wanted to quit work and retire. That's been always ever since I started working, that's been my goal. I was very fortunate to—I've been working on a job for thirty-four years and two months. I had an opportunity to leave that job. Didn't—really didn't know what I wanted to do or what I was gonna do. But after I left I saw this benefit that I thought I could get. So I decided to go to work for, of all places, which is the state of Texas as being a correction officer.

In the time period of when I started, I never even thought about it. I never associated it with having anything to do with the Napoleon's case, because I've known over the years plenty of people that worked for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. So I didn't think they were bad people. And at the time my sister-in-law was working down there. And another conception of this plan was that me and her was gone start, was gonna— she was gone be working there and me and her was gone ride to work together. But, I goes to work down there, and two months after I get there she quits (Laughs). Also I saw the benefit there that I was interested in— that I wanted the job that I had retired from did not give me any health insurance. So if I didn't go— if I didn't go back to work I was gonna be without health insurance. I could've retired and just sit down on my behind but I'm a little bit too young for that. So I wanted health insurance. The insurance was gone cost me over eight hundred dollars a month just for me and my wife, and my daughter, I mean and Jamaal, my daughter wasn't on there. So I said, "Nah." I saw this benefit so I went down there mainly to get the insurance too. And gonna be there for ten years. And then when I get to ten years my social security will kick in, and I'm gonna sit down, and go fishing, and enjoy this home that we built.

RAYMOND: It's a beautiful home.

BEAZLEY: Yep.

RAYMOND: Where do you go fishing around here?

BEAZLEY: Houston County Lake. Houston County Lake. And gonna do that kind of thing.

RAYMOND: What do you— what do you catch there?

BEAZLEY: They catch— I ain't no fisherman, I ain't the expert (laughs).

RAYMOND: You're a farmer, not a fisherman.

BEAZLEY: Yeah. I don't have a boat and all that. I fish from the bank (laughs). Yeah, you catch— you go places— if you go to some creeks around here you can catch some catfish or two out of it. Also you can catch bass whatever. But, I catch anything that I can clean and eat (laughs). Basically.

RAYMOND: Does Ethan go with you to some of that?

BEAZLEY: He's been a couple of times. He's been a couple of times. Right now I'm working toward it, don't have time. So I'm waiting till that day. By the time I retire, I think he gonna be getting ready to graduate. So he'll be moving on.

RAYMOND: Is Jamaal coming back here after he graduates from Huston-Tillotson— I mean from Sam Houston?

BEAZLEY: Sam Houston. I hope so. I don't know. I hope he finds him a job somewhere. Right now he's working at Wal-Mart and going to school. I was, just a father's dream, but I was hoping he would get in on the manager program with Wal-Mart. He's got this business degree behind him. Hopefully he get in on that. I know for a fact, I've heard of people talking about how those managers of those stores make some good time money. You always want your kid to do good. He's got to start somewhere. He ain't gone be manager wherever he go. And Wal-Mart's a pretty decent place to work for. I don't know. But I hope he does well wherever he go.

RAYMOND: I hope so, too. It's just a pleasure to talk to you, even though it's just painful, painful.

BEAZLEY: It's not as painful as it used to be honestly. It's really not. But I like doing these types of interviews. I like saying anything that will help eliminate the death penalty or help change somebody's mind about the death penalty. Help them to realize that it hurts. It hurts people. And you think you resolving a situation but you're not. You're just creating a situation for some more people.

I'm also very sympathetic to victims. I know the pain and suffering that they go through when something like the family that just happened to Napoleon. I know they suffered real hard. But killing Napoleon did not help them one bit. It did not resolve their problem. If that same pain and suffering that they had before, if they haven't released it, they gonna have it now.

So anytime I can say something that will help eliminate the death penalty I can. And help somebody else I can, I will. I will gladly do it. I was so joyful to hear all those guys that got off of death row. I wish we could've got it for Napoleon. I think it was a great thing. And I want to see it happen to everybody. See it happen to everybody. See if they can just stop it some kind of way. It's morally wrong. It ain't the right thing to do. I can come up with a dozen—dozen reasons (phone rings) to talk against it.

RAYMOND: Well thank you Ireland very much.

BEAZLEY: Thank you.

RAYMOND: You've taught me a lot.

BEAZLEY: I hope I did.

RAYMOND: Yeah. And that was exhausting but thank you very much. Thank you. You want to say something else? Before we turn off the camera?

BEAZLEY: No ma'am. Just glad to do it.

RAYMOND: Thank you.

BEAZLEY: And hopefully it'll help you out.

RAYMOND: Thank you.

BEAZLEY: Yes ma'am.

DIALLO: Thank you so much.

RAYMOND: Thanks. All right.

[END OF TAPE 2]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]