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Maurice Carillo interviewed by Nicholas Nasser

Speakers: Maurice Carillo, Nicholas Nasser

Date: December 7, 2021

Scope and Contents: In this interview, originally recorded in person, Maurice Carillo speaks with Nicholas Nasser, a member of the Watsonville is in the Heart team. Maurice describes his childhood, specifically memories of traveling with his father, Pacifico “Frank” Cabegon Carillo, as he engaged in seasonal migrant agricultural work, staying in labor camps with his father and other Filipino men, and living with other mixed-race Filipino families while his father was away working. He also discusses the other white women his father had relationships with after separating from Maurice’s birth mother, Ethel Patheal. Most notably, he talks about his step mother, Louella Carter, who was the primary caretaker for Maurice, his brother, James, and three other children from mixed-race, Filipino families whose parents had separated. Throughout the interview, Maurice reflects on his mixed-race identity as well as experiences of exclusion from the Filipino Community of Watsonville due to his identity. He also discusses his passion for community service which began with his involvement in the Filipino Youth Club during high school and continued throughout his life through leadership roles in organizations including but not limited to the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz and the Santa Cruz AIDs Project. Finally, Maurice shares stories regarding his business career in downtown Santa Cruz, his extended family, and coming out as a gay man in 1986.

Maurice Carillo 00:01

My name is Maurice Carillo, and I live at 126 Pacheco Avenue in Santa Cruz, California.

Nicholas Nasser 00:10

Could you say— Your— where you're born and how old you are?

Maurice Carillo 00:13

Yeah, I was born 1943. I'm now 78 years old. My birthday is on July 11. So we're right in the middle, almost. And born in Watsonville. California.

Nicholas Nasser 00:32

I guess we could start with that. So could you tell me a little bit about Watsonville, your childhood, just start anything specific that comes to mind.

Maurice Carillo 00:41

Okay, start with when I— my first memories, actually were in— very young in Watsonville. And my dad was separated from my mother. So he was raising two sons, my younger brother and myself. And we have a sister but she— our mother took her to Fresno. And so she raised her in Fresno. But we followed the crops with my dad from Watsonville throughout California, to

Stockton, to El Centro, to Yuma, Arizona, and, and other places. I think Oxnard, maybe were was one of the areas. Westmoreland was another one. So, again, we followed the crops. And then my dad finally realized we were getting too old to drag around and took us– took us to a Mexican, well, actually Mexican-Filipino family to live with when he was away working in the fields. And he was a cook sometimes for the camps. And we would visit him during the winter months or during Christmas time when we could, but mostly he– we wouldn't see him for months on end.

Maurice Carillo 02:14

And then he met our step– stepmother to be and her name was Louella. Her maiden name was Carter. And I guess back in the– well, because back before that– actually, we had another stepmom in between, we had to step– we had a step mom somewhere along the [unintelligible] along the way, and I can't tell you her maiden name, but her first name was Lucky. And we, for a while, we lived in Stockton, and we were not able to live with her because she had a home in a restricted area of Stockton, and it was whites only. So during the week we lived with a Filipino who was married to a Black woman. And I can't remember his name, but her name was Arlena Moon, and she had a daughter named Thelma. And we got to visit our stepmom, Lucky, on– on holidays and on the weekends. Kind of strange, and think about it now. And then later on, we moved to– back to Watsonville and we had a home there and Lucky took care of us for a while. And I remember when she disappeared, she was not part of the family anymore, but she wasn't. And then we went on for a while with my dad, having to stay with different– another family a Mexican-Filipino family for a while, probably for several years before he met Louella Carter and she became our stepmom and we moved to Pajaro which is across the bridge from Watsonville. And she was our– our– was the stability of our family and she would be the one who would take us to visit our dad and at Christmas time in Yuma, Arizona when he would be working there.

Maurice Carillo 04:10

I remember my dad he will have the long days and the clothes that he had to wear you were head scarf, a hat, always lots of clothes, maybe a couple shirts and so on and for a while he worked with the with a short hoe and–and that became an issue with workers because of so many workers having problems with their backs and they fought–they fought to get the long hoe so they could work in the fields with the long hoes. He cut lettuce when he was with some of the camps he would cook– cook for the camps and I remember being with him when he was– when we lived with him in a house in Watsonville called The Big House. This is before our step mom and– and he would get up early in the morning and maybe two or three o'clock in the morning and begin the breakfast session and then go to–and then feed the boys breakfast and then clean the dishes afterwards. And then we would go with him for what was called compound or a break in the morning before lunch, and then go back to the camps and he cooked lunch meal and then– and then take all that– all the dirty dishes home and then

have to prepare another compound for the afternoon and then go back and get dinner ready. And it was just— he was just constantly working, just never stopped.

Maurice Carillo 05:46

Then there were Filipino families in our neighborhood too at that point that I can remember. There was the Tabasa', there was the Lucas family the Aguigum's, the Ragsac's— the Ragsac's became— they were my brother's godparents. And my godparent was— godparents was Tek Ramirez and his wife was Connie Ramirez my ninang. Both very well known in the community, and the Mexican family that my dad had us living with were the Santa Ana family. And they had a son that was the same age as my brother. And so we became like brothers and my brother still is in close contact with him after all these years in Salinas and and— You want to stop it for a second?

Nicholas Nasser 06:53

Oh, yeah, sure.

Nicholas Nasser 06:54

All right. I can start.

Maurice Carillo 06:57

Okay, starting and getting in again. So starting, for a while we lived on a street called Bridge Street that was with our— with a Mexican family. Then we lived on a street, think it was Maple Street and it was near— right near Lynn Scott school in Watsonville. And we lived on Marchant Street. It was where "The Big House" was. "The Big House," which was a camp had— had a— in the back of the house on the property, there was a corral of— of fighting chickens that the— that all of our uncles had to take care of all of their fighting roosters, and we would watch them prepare— prepare and train their chickens to fight— fighting the fighting chickens. The cockfights that we grew up with happened many weekends in the summertime. And of course they were illegal and there would be times that we get raided while we were at— during the cockfights but the cockfights were— were a big party, there's a lot of gambling of course that went on. But it was also a big food fest, all the Filipino food and— and then butchering cows and goats and pigs and chickens and being part of all that culture. The old Filipino culture was— was just normal to us. It wasn't anything special. But looking back on it now was a special time and— and then going forward. Of course, it was a scary time for all the Filipinos because they had the cops chasing them. And I know that there were times when they would pay off the sheriff ahead of time so they wouldn't get raided. Those were the days when you could buy off the cops. And the Filipinos did.

Maurice Carillo 06:57

And one of the things that the Filipinos did that was pretty, pretty regular were the social boxes [unintelligible.] Social boxes, which were the— I think it was the Saturday night dance and it was either Saturday night or Friday night, I don't remember. But as kids we would go with our— with our moms and dads and run around at these— at the Veteran's Hall, they're in Watsonville. And right across— that's right across the street from the high school and there would always be someone singing live. And they were the tunes of the day. I should be able to tell you some of those tunes but I'm not going to take that out of my— out of my file at the moment. But anyway, there were also some ceremonial things done with the— with the Dimas Alang, that would be the— the— the fraternal organizations, they were the Caballeros de Dimas Alang. And my dad was a member of that. And they wore these funny aprons and these funny hats and braids. And they had long swords that they would use to create a— an arch for people to walk under, especially the women that were in the social box. And the social box was a way of raising money for the community, as well as giving money to the girl who made the most money in the dances. There could be as many as 12 young girls sitting in their chairs all dressed up. And when their time came then everybody danced with them and gave them some money. And then there would be the social box Queen at the end, the one that won the most money. And one year, my sister who came from Fresno, my dad got her into the social box and dang if she didn't be the one to win the social box. And then she got to be the queen on the Fourth of July float that year. So that was a treat for us. And then we didn't even know we had a sister until I was about 10 or 11. And my step mom found out that she existed because my dad and my uncles never talked about it. But then, afterwards, they knew all along but they— I don't know why they didn't tell us and my stepmom said that we should know who our sister is, took us the meet her and— and— of course our birth mom was with her as well. And then two other half brothers that she had.

Maurice Carillo 11:53

Another Filipino family, another half Filipino family— so their last name is Pame, or Pame, P-A-M-E. And she had two boys with him. And she—our—our [unintelligible], our birth mother married two other Filipinos. I guess after my dad, she married two other Filipinos along the way and had kids with each one of them. So all half-breeds and I know that part of the family I don't know— I don't know, the first children that she had before me. But that's a whole other story on my mother's side.

Maurice Carillo 12:37

But with my dad, and the Filipino community we had—we had a close connection because the community was— we're always having these social boxes, and so the Filipinos were getting together, and they would teach us the folk dances of the Philippines as well. The girls doing the— I can't remember the name of them— but the water dance, where they would do a very graceful dance holding a glass of water on each hand and and moving it back and forth, raising it over their heads and then— or they be— or they would have candles— lit candles in their

hands. And then there were the couples dances that we also learned how to do. And the most fun and exciting one was the tinikling where you dance between the two bamboo poles. And that was a lot of fun and so us Filipino kids also got together on our own and we taught each other some of the dances of the day, Cha Cha being one of those and we would get in someone's driveway and all learn how to Cha Cha together, and then go to the dance— go to the— go to the social boxes, the regular dances and do the Cha Cha. We were—we thought we were cool stuff.

Maurice Carillo 14:06

I went to—the schools I went to were Lin Scott, which is in—within a block of Watsonville High School. I went to Pajaro Grammar School, which was over the bridge in North Monterey County. And back in those days I learned how to play the cornet and I joined the marching band at that Pajaro and then when I got to high school I was in the marching band at Wat— at Watsonville High as well.

Maurice Carillo 14:37

And—along the way my my dad in the meantime is—we're kind of anchored in Watsonville and my dad well in the meantime is—is following the crops, and sending money home, and coming home, and being home when the crops were being—were being picked here in Monterey County and Santa Cruz County in Salinas Valley, and all that. And— and as we—from our grammar school days and through high school, our stepmom taught us how to work in the fields as well. So we did strawberries, we picked apples, we did green beans, tomatoes, and—and so on. It was a lot of—a lot of stuff. But even as kid—as kids though we still had our—our fun. We used to go to the levee, Pajaro River, and we'd play cowboys and Indians down there with our BB guns and so on, because we were allowed to have you be guns back in those days. And my brother and I would even shoot—shoot at each other. But I think once one of us got hit, then we didn't do that again. So, but we did swim in the river, Pajaro River, and who knows how dirty it was back then, but it probably was pretty grungy, but we didn't care.

Maurice Carillo 16:16

See, I learned how to do the roller skates. I remember when I did, I couldn't—for some reason I couldn't get the roller skates off my feet, and I crawled home because I couldn't skate anymore. And it was a long—it was like a couple of blocks probably, but still crawling as a young kid that was not fun. Even though we were in the hands of different families along the way, we—again—we didn't know that it was different than—that it was not normal life. So, I remember my dad taking me to my first grocery store, which was in the neighborhood, because he had to go buy groceries to cook dinner. And for the first time I saw canned goods—didn't know such thing existed at that point. And he bought me—I begged him for two things, which were—which were canned corn and Vienna sausages. And—and so those were the first two canned goods I've ever had in my life. And so previous to that it was all naturally

cooked food. My brother was—my brother and I were together the whole time up until high school, at least till his junior year.

Maurice Carillo 17:40

He was not able to finish high school. My dad and my mom separated when I was a senior, he was a junior. And—and—they—with the separation my dad took my brother with him to work the fields, and they went to Illinois. And I had to finish high school, which I did. My dad was around and got to see me graduate but my mom was—was not. Trying to remember where my brother was at that point, but he may have already been gone with uncles and so on and worked the fields. So he didn't finish his senior year. And then I graduated from Watsonville High School in 1961.

Maurice Carillo 18:32

My dad had girlfriends here—we—as long as I can remember my dad always—if he was not married to a woman, he had girlfriends. Because—because he was a womanizer. It seems to me somewhere or somewhere along the way between Louella and Lucky, my dad met a woman whose—her name. Her name was Jean and she was a brunette. And she came to live with us in the camp, well, came to live with us. She stayed with us for about a week. But the police came and took her away because it was illegal for a white woman to be with a Filipino in those days. But— so, all of the women that I knew up to that point were all white women and—and my stepmom came along I didn't even know that our birth mom was a white woman. We just knew that we were brown skin Filipino on my dad's side. Stepmom, she was white. But you know, we didn't know until my sister came and told us that we were mostly Irish descent on my mom's side, our birth mom's side. So, I know my dad was around during the riot—during the riots in Watsonville and there's documentation of what a horrible time that was.

Nicholas Nasser 20:07

Did he ever talk about it to you?

Maurice Carillo 20:09

No, he didn't. I think there was something they just didn't talk about. My dad was a cigar smoker, I got a picture of him smoking a cigar on Main Street in Watsonville. Some of the benchmarks for us growing up would be the fourth of July parades in Watsonville. Every fourth of July, there was always a float that the Filipinos would do, a float. And then when I was in high school, we started our own Filipino youth club. And we would have decorated car in the parade as well. And I think I even drove one year, drove the car. We would get a fancy car from one of the dealerships and I think we had an [unintelligible] or Plymouth or something like that. That was a convertible that they would loan us for the parade. Amazing. That wouldn't happen today. But that's how it was. Back in those days. We just go to the dealerships, and they were happy to loan out their cars because it was advertising down Main Street,

Watsonville. And the big focal place during the parade, of course, was the the old plaza, Downtown Watsonville on Main Street.

Maurice Carillo 21:24

And oh, let's see. So I had—so from my dad was there with my, his, his brother, Uncle Pete, who we kind of lost track of, but he married a Mexican woman, and I think moved to just south of the border. Before that he was in Oxnard. And then Uncle Max, which is my dad's first cousin, actually, they were first cousins. He had he, we lost track of him all together don't know what happened to him. But they all came from the Philippines on the same boat back then. So.

Nicholas Nasser 22:07

I was gonna ask, how much time—when you were a child—this is from you know, when you're born to say when you started high school, were you with your dad traveling as opposed to being in school in Watsonville?

Maurice Carillo 22:25

Well, I don't think it was that much time where I can remember living in Westmoreland with my dad. Westmoreland and there was my—I think that my two uncles helped my dad take care of us. So it was all men only. We didn't have any women around. Although, I found—I found some documentation from Westmoreland, that—that with my picture—picture ID on it that said Mother was Margaret. And I have no recollection of any woman named Margaret. My dad always had women in his life. So I'm not surprised. So there was a time that my—that I have no memory of. I don't even remember going to school there. But I know there's a picture of me with a diploma or something at that school. So it truly happened. So my brother had to be with me at that point as well, because he was keeping the two of us together. And the Mexican family that we lived with—Mexican-Filipino family that we lived with for our time in Watsonville were probably a major—major contributor to our upbringing, because they were some stability because we got to live with them while we were going to school. And then my dad would come home for holidays to visit us. There was no such thing as phone calls back then. We didn't think—we weren't even aware that a phone call was possible. But.

Nicholas Nasser 24:10

And this is in the 50s?

Maurice Carillo 24:12

Yeah.

Nicholas Nasser 24:12

Early 60s, late 40s?

Maurice Carillo 24:14

In the 50s, yeah. Could be—could be in the 50s, pretty much early 50s. Because I went to grammar school from oh, gosh, from the—it was fifth grade, fifth grade to eighth grade, three, three grades, I guess, fourth grade to eighth grade, at Pajaro. So that would be—I left in '57 left [unintelligible] School in '57. So the four years before that, so it was down to '53 I guess somewhere in there, I went to high school from '57 to '61 for my four years, and graduated in '61 and immediately went to work with my dad in the fields in Centerville, I think it was called in but it's—it's near—it's up near Hayward. There were lettuce fields there. And I worked for one—for a month or two months—cutting lettuce with my dad. And that was a lesson learned. Because it was such physical work. I had no idea that my dad worked so flippin hard. You could carry a water can on your back to water all the lettuce after it's been cut. Learning how to cut the lettuce and holding it with your hand in a certain position to get them all packed inside the boxes. And then the—the device—the metal devices you had to use to close the boxes was always heavy, and then you had to physically close the boxes down with that metal guide. And then you had to use a big tacker to staple the boxes closed back then. It's a lot of work and I had muscles or muscles that were sore that I didn't know could get sore. But they did, but builds you up after a while.

Maurice Carillo 26:21

But it certainly gave me an appreciation for how hard my dad worked. One of the things that later on that I accused my dad of was I told him he didn't love me because he never said he loved me. But that was that was the thing that most men didn't do back in those days. And that was the one time I made him cry. And I regretted that after—afterwards, realizing that his way of saying I love you.

Nicholas Nasser 26:55

Sorry. Oh my God, I'm sorry about that. Yeah, [inaudible].

Maurice Carillo 27:00

The way of his saying I love you was—was supporting us and working as hard as he did to say that we were cared for and then we had clothes on our backs and, and food in our stomachs and that we got to go to school and not knowing and even thinking back now that he only got to about the third grade in the Philippines if even that. So and then he immigrated here when he was 18, 19 years old. And and started his life.

Maurice Carillo 27:34

And of course Filipinos—Filipino women didn't come here back then because they were not allowed to. And the Filipino men sought out love where they could find it. And that was with American women. And that's one of the things that caused the rift between the Filipinos and the white community because the white men because they were jealous of how much attention

they gave the women and the women were just—they were white women were put on pedestals and treated nicely and and given things and made to feel special when maybe they didn't feel special otherwise. So that's kind of how it comes about.

Maurice Carillo 28:16

Anyway, so So yeah, learning about the Filipinos and of course that the Filipinos spoke their own languages, my dad was from was from Pangasinan. And their—their primary dialect was Ilokano even though Tagalog was the main dialect in the Philippines. So he spoke both Ilokano and Tagalog. And he spoke a little bit of Visayan, which is another dialect of southern part of the Philippines. And in growing up, we only knew it as the PI the Philippine Islands. We didn't call it just the Philippines, as it later became known as.

Maurice Carillo 29:02

Growing up, we didn't even know where it was. We just knew that we were different because we were brown skinned, and then going through high school, us half breeds, half Filipino and half white. Most of us have white, some Mexican. So I think there might have been a couple Japanese in there, because Japanese, the Japanese were a really strong community in Watsonville as well. So there was the Filipinos, the Japanese, and the Mexicans came on after that. And then the Mexican community began to grow. And us Filipinos could see that with so many Mexicans coming in, that the prejudice against them was building up. And because we were brown skin, that prejudice built over onto us as well. Thinking that we because we were brown skinned that we must be Mexican. And even having a Spanish last name, people assume Carillo, Carillo, Carillo has got to be a Mexican name. And so we experienced some of that spillover prejudice.

Nicholas Nasser 30:22

Did that manifest itself in school? In the community?

Maurice Carillo 30:26

That's where it was mainly in school. So yeah, that's where it was mainly in school.

Nicholas Nasser 30:34

How did it affect you?

Maurice Carillo 30:40

I don't think that affected us, or affected me anyway, that greatly because a lot of my friends or a lot of my friends besides us half Filipinos sticking together, there were also a lot of white friends that we had, and they were Japanese friends that we had. So I guess maybe because we really had a diverse school because of that, and so, well, okay, I guess how it affected us, it made us at least in my, in my estimation, it also made me prejudiced towards Mexicans. So

instead of being prejudiced against anyone who was who was prejudiced against Mexicans, I became prejudiced against the Mexicans, I didn't want to be Mexican. I had no way for a while of not knowing that maybe I was Mexican, they have an [unintelligible]. Well, maybe I'm one of them as well. And how relieved I was to find out that I wasn't. So that was a big, a big admission on my part to discover that about myself that I thought that I could feel that way. Now I look back on it, that that's kind of what how it was. And then as I got older, all of those prejudices just kind of melted away because it doesn't serve any purpose other than to divide us than unite us.

Maurice Carillo 32:14

So, so leaving high school and working with my dad that summer and learning that boy, that hard work is something I didn't want to do. I also work two nights at the, at the Shadowbrook, Shadowbrook restaurant that summer learning that that was another job that I didn't want to have. And then my cousin who lived with us for a short time, my cousin from Hawai'i, who is Filipino-Chinese descent, mostly Filipino, came and lived with us and and started school and he started Cabrillo College, when Cabrillo College was on the Watsonville campus. And, and that was interesting how he came to live with us as the older, the older cousin. And after I graduated, my cousin he'd already moved out and he found a job in Santa Cruz working for the park system, state parks and it was at, it was at Seacliff State Beach. Seacliff? Not Seacliff. Where the harbor is at that beach, he, he got a job with them, and they housed him. And there were Twin Lakes back then, the harbor wasn't there yet. There was no harbor. But there was Twin Lakes and he had a house that was, that the state provided him that was right on the lake and when I found out that he had a place that I could move in with where I could move in and live with him, I moved to Santa Cruz and lived with him for a while until he moved away and then I had to find my own place but I found a job downtown Santa Cruz at a place called [unintelligible] stationary and I started work there in February of 1962 and lived with my cousin for maybe two years while he had his job, then he was going to school as well and he started going to Foothill College over the hill and, and then I had to find my own place and so I had my own place on Seabright Avenue for a short time during the winter months until summer came and the rent change from I think I was paying, I was paying 55 dollars a month to live there. And then when summer came, it changed to 55 dollars a week. And I couldn't afford that. I had a car that my dad had given me that I had just had to make the payments on. And because I had such a low paying job, I had to make the choice on whether I was going to have a car or have an apartment. So the car had to go and I had there was the one and only time that I had something repossessed from the family, which was my dad's car. And I had didn't have enough sense to call him and say pop, I need some money to make the car payment. And he wouldn't help I'm sure, but I never called him. I don't think I even knew how to reach him by phone. Unless he called me first because he knew where I was. So the [unintelligible] stationary in 1962 and 18 years old, and, and I began my career at [unintelligible] stationary in downtown Santa Cruz. And, so can we pause for a second?

Maurice Carillo 36:10

Yeah, of course.

Nicholas Nasser 36:13

Okay, so I was gonna ask, you grew up in Watsonville up until about high school. I mean, you spend most of your time there, and then you move to Santa Cruz. What was kind of the differences that you saw? Did—How much time did you visit Watsonville what was kind of that dynamic?

Maurice Carillo 36:34

Okay. Watsonville was like a different era for me. Because I left in 1961 and moved to Santa Cruz about that time after high school or after the summer. Watsonville was the, was the was the agriculture connection for us and our family also it was the, the basic of our family our Filipino heritage, because that's where all the Filipinos were. Although we knew there were Filipinos in Santa Cruz as well. And all the names of all the names that I grew up with, like the [unintelligible] family, the—us being Carillo we had a Spanish name, but the differences with the two areas was like black, black and white or night and day. Because Santa Cruz is so much more white, I would say influence and and it was a it was a vacation—Santa Cruz is a vacation city, so there's lots of tourists and lots of summer trade that comes to Santa Cruz by comparison or Watsonville you're living within a community that is that is mingling with each other and, and pretty tight. Even though Santa Cruz has its own nucleus of families that that that made up the the diversity of Santa Cruz.

Maurice Carillo 38:30

But Watsonville again, I guess besides the Filipino families there were the Japanese families, one of my best friends growing up in grammar school was Gary Yura who was Japanese descent. And back then we didn't know anything about the Japanese internment camps camps. When I was in high school, I remember one of my dad's many girlfriends telling us what—because she was Filipina, and we didn't know very many Filipina women growing up. But this woman was Filipina. And she told us that when she—during the war time that she had to wear a button that said not Japanese so that people wouldn't mistake a Filipina woman for a Japanese woman because Japanese were just carted off to the camps or they were they were discriminated against as enemies of the state. So I remember learning about that in high school or almost at my graduation practically. And wasn't aware of all of that, all of that happening until later. As more and more history begins—start to be released or or open to us to learn all of those things that happened in this country and I didn't even know about the, the Watsonville Riots till much later as well. Either read about it or heard about it. And then, and then, of course today you can go online and find all information and back in those days someone might mention something but no one talked about it. I think I can remember my dad

saying something about somebody being killed early on, but so anyway, some of that some of that old history with my dad and all the old Filipinos.

Maurice Carillo 40:40

Oh, I guess I didn't mention that early, early on with my—when I was with with our step mom Louella. She was the primary person who helped my dad's friends who broke up and they're broke up with their wives as well. Filipino men married to white wives, or sometimes Mexican wives, and they would have broken families. So there was a man named Tony Alquiza, who had a son also named Tony. And, and Tony's mother was, was Aleut I think, which is Alaskan Indian, and, and they broke up and so he had to find someplace for his son to go and my stepmom took Tony at—he was three months old or six months old, I guess, six months old, and less than a year. And then shortly after that, maybe within a year after that another man named, named, I can't remember his first name, but Carancho, Johnny Carancho, had two daughters and his wife were having problems and they they split up and he had to find someplace for his two daughters to be taken care of. And so his two daughters Suzy and Sharon Carancho came to live with us. And we suddenly grew from a family of two boys, to a family of five and Louella raised all five of us, even though she was never able to have any children of her own. She was our mother, and, and is the mother that we remember today as the one who was most instrumental in raising us.

Maurice Carillo 42:34

So Susie and Sharon still live in Watsonville and they're half Filipino, half white. And Tony still lives in Watsonville and still working there, he's in his 60s now, I guess we're—they all are. And Tony is still a bachelor, he lived with his dad for a while cause his dad came and took him back from our family when Tony was maybe 11 years old and 11 years old after, after being with us since he was six months old. That was a heartbreak for our mom when he was taken away. And then we all remain close. So we're like brothers and sisters, even even today. So there's still that familial tie, even though we're not even though there's no blood tie. The tie is that we're all raised by the same by Frank and Louella. And, and so anyway, so I so I still have that family in Watsonville. Even though there's no, there aren't any Carillo's left there. My brother moved to—wound up in Salinas with his wife, and with me in Santa Cruz starting up my career, and I'm only 17 years old. And then didn't know that I was starting a career at the time because I think I was getting paid a dollar and a quarter an hour or something like that. And I always thought I was going to move on. I was going to join the military and become an airline pilot, a jet pilot. But when that opportunity came when I took the test, I was still working with [unintelligible] stationary, I was 21 at that point, your age. And so I had the I had, I was 21. And I had to either join the military or because I wasn't married, so I wasn't exempt from being being in one of the in one of the forces so I I had to join or be drafted and you were joined or you're drafted into the army. And so I joined what it is I went to the Air Force recruiter and took the test and almost signed on the dotted line. And I told him I wanted to become a jet pilot. And

they said, you don't have a college degree, so you can't, you won't get that far. You can be a crew member on a weather plane, maybe, but that would be it.

Maurice Carillo 45:26

And so I discussed that with my boss, Dorothy [unintelligible], at [unintelligible] stationary. And she was my she was sort of my mentor and kinda like another person in my life who was grooming me and raising me at that point in the business community, and and because I was now not, I now didn't have no, no adult supervision from my home in Watsonville. My mom's still, my step mom still lives in Watsonville. So I still stayed in touch with her. And with Susie and Sharon, and, and Tony. So those four, and they may they remain close. But James and I were gone pretty much. And I took the test for the Air Force. And they wanted me to go to Officers Candidate School because I guess I scored high enough on their test. But couldn't promise a jet, a jet plane position or pilot, so I joined the California National Guard instead. And [unintelligible] stationary promised to keep my job open for me and that meant six months away in training, and then I'd come back and I would have my monthly meetings at the at the Army National Guard at the armory for the National Guard here in Santa Cruz. And so at 21, I joined the National Guard, at 21 I also joined a club organization called the Santa Cruz JC's, which I was already familiar with because I was helping work on projects around Santa Cruz. They were a young men's business, young men's business organization that did community projects building parks. At one point, we help rebuild a foundation for a house for an old lady who couldn't help herself. We had a project for it was called, oh, it had to do with with getting rid of old refrigerators in empty lots. Because children were getting, were climbing into them and getting caught because once the door closed they wouldn't open and kill—kids were suffocating in them. So we would find them and get rid of them. We even found one that was laying on its back with roses growing over the top of it like a coffin. And then we also cleaned up old fields that were all at one time were parks. And were no longer parks because they were overgrown with brush. We put we built lots of kids equipment in many parks throughout Santa Cruz. So, so I formed lots of friendships with that club. And along the way I because I was [unintelligible] stationery, I became aware of the organization downtown, the Downtown Association, and got involved with that as well. Because we were promoting, promoting sales happening downtown Santa Cruz.

Maurice Carillo 49:03

And when I was 25, I met my, 25, 24 somewhere in there. I met my best friend through JC's and his name was Mike Fox. And he and I did everything together really. We were almost inseparable as friends. And, and, I think we didn't date other girls till about the same time. And I was 25 when I met my wife to be and her name was Sarge Soya. She was another half Filipina, half Filipino and half Portuguese on her mom's side. As it turns out we thought she was, not Portuguese, half Basque on her mom's side, and we thought she was Spanish, but it turns out it's Basque and her grandfather was still living in here in Santa Cruz with her mother's

sister. And her mother died young so Sarge was—didn't have a mother but her dad was still around, an old Filipino who worked for the Antonelli Begonia gardens here in Santa Cruz. And, and she had a younger sister, um, excuse me, an older sister, and a younger brother, and Joan Soya and Sam Soya. And so Sarge and I began our, our history in Santa Cruz together. She came from, she moved here from Arizona, I think when she was six years old, and had been here all that time. And she has other family, she has a cousin who is also half Filipina, her mother is—her mother is I guess, that would be her mother's sister. So they're first cousins. And, and she's still here. Sarge is not, she died in 2000.

Maurice Carillo 51:21

But—so she and I—she and I started—well, I guess—Mike Fox and I along—he had his girlfriend along the way—along the way. But he died at 25. I was 27 when he died. And he had Hodgkin's disease. But that was devastating in—in my life because he was the closest person to me back then. But we were really active and had a lot, we had a big circle of friends and the JCs. This being as well as being both of us were well known in the business community as well. He was a member of the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz and asked me to [unintelligible], but I was too busy with the JCs and I wasn't ready. And—and then at one point because of the Downtown Association, I became involved with that. And through that, I became a—a call it a chairman of the board for the advisory board for the Salvation Army for several years. And I was—served on—served on as a member many years beyond that, but and then I was in the National Guard for six years and, and finished that off. And I was towards the end of—I guess towards the end of my National Guard commitment when I got married. I was 27. And Sarge was—that's not right—[unintelligible]—I guess I was—no I was 25 when I got married, and Sarge was 20, 21, I guess, 26, 27—somewhere in there anyway.

Maurice Carillo 53:16

Things can get a little bit muddy at this point. But being involved with things downtown I was also involved with—I was one of the first chairman for the spring fair that happened downtown Santa Cruz. I helped with promotions for downtown Santa Cruz. I was past president of the Downtown Association, I was on the parking commission for a while, I was on the design review committee that helped people with removing their signs that were sticking out from their buildings, all up and down Pacific Avenue. I became a member of the California Downtown Association which was through the— through the Santa Cruz Downtown Association and—and together my wife and I put on a successful conference in Santa Cruz to bring all of the other downtown associations to Santa Cruz back then. And then through my business I was involved with the National Office Products Association because [unintelligible] stationery, we were in that business, and I got well known through that and then also became an officer and became governor of the district for the National Office Product Association, which encompassed my responsibility was covering Washington State, Arizona, Oregon, California and—and Utah and—and I had a successful conference at The Konocti Harbor Inn that Sarge and I helped run.

And then with the Downtown Association, she was my, my right hand man to help me do the—the conference for the Downtown Association.

Maurice Carillo 55:20

We had three children, Michael, being the oldest, we he named him after my best friend, Michael Fox, because she was pregnant I think at the time that Michael died. And I already asked him to be god—the godfather when Michael was gonna be born, but he died before that. And then there was Dina and—our daughter, Dina, and then Daniel is the youngest one, Daniel was named after Papa Joe, grandpa, the—Sarge's dad, and—and—we—our household was a multi-generational family because— there was—in our—Grandpa Joe had saved enough money working as a gardener, for Antonelli Begonia gardens that he had property around town, and apartment buildings and so on. Little old Filipino you would never suspect. But he was frugal and had a nice piece of property that we were able to build our house on onto. But along with that, we had—her sister lived with us for a while, her brother lived with us for a while, and then when they went off, and although her brother died when he was only 35, her sister went off and moved out of the city. But then we had her dad living with us for a while, and then my dad lived with us for a while. So actually, her dad with us— lived with us until he died. And so my grandchildren—my—my children got to live up—get to live with their grandfathers. So they had a household full of older Filipinos that they—that they got to grow up with and understand a little bit about their heritage. From—that there was a heritage that they had, on the Filipino side, not so much on their white side, or their mother's side, because their—their grandmas were gone. So with Grandpa Joe living with us, he, I think showed them what it was like to be working every day in—in a physical way. And he worked up until he was probably 70. And also my dad working until he was probably 75, maybe. But my dad was a whole different story because with him living with us, he was no longer—he and Louella were no longer together. But there—I'm sure there were women who would come and go out of his life. He—once Sarge and I had our own home, he asked if he could live with us and he did and— and then Grandpa Joe was living with us. And so we had the three men, Sarge's brother, my dad, and her dad all living with us, and one half Filipino, that would be Sammy, Joe's son, and then the two Filipinos.

Maurice Carillo 58:40

And it was fun to have parties because every time we had a party the dads would cook the Filipino food. It would always be expected at our parties. And so we were able to maintain and touch our heritage that way through the food.

Maurice Carillo 58:58

And—and then eventually Grandpa Joe decided that he wanted to go back to the Philippines, and so did my dad to visit if nothing else. They both visited the Philippines and met women in the Philippines—Filipino women, and— and they both married a Filipino woman. And eventually they brought them—they both brought them back to Santa Cruz. But separately, my dad was

later, but Grandpa Joe brought his wife who lived with us for a while. So now we had an old Filipino with a young Filipino wife, she was very young, and he got her pregnant—and then a little boy. As old as he was, I think he was in his 60s at that point. And—and it's sort of the same thing happened with my dad. But Grandpa Joe would move back and forth between Santa Cruz and the Philippines. And he would spend a little bit of time in the Philippines and more time here—maybe nine months here in Santa Cruz. And then it reversed over time, he was spending nine months there and would come home for three months. And then got to the point where he was not hard—hardly coming home, but then he had his son there, and then his wife as well. And—and then—and then there was my dad who, when he met his wife in the Philippines and brought her here, and they—again, they lived with us in our home, and he conceived two children while he was living with us. So but those children are all full blooded Filipino. That sister and brother that I have are— or half brothers are 38 and 39 years younger than me.

Maurice Carillo 1:00:57

So I told Papa after the last one, "Papa stop having kids because you're not going to be around." And he was kind of insulted that I even suggested such an idea. But—but so here we are, he was 80 when he died, and the children I think were 9 and 10 years old. So they still remember their dad. And—and when they—when they were little they—they—when they got with—as he—as he had that family, we told him he had to find his own place, he could no longer live with us, because we had our young family as well. And so he moved back to Watsonville with his bride and two children. And—and well see—I had before that though, his wife also brought his—her mother to live with us. So we had Grandma Cassabar living with us for a while. And then they found their own—that they just there was no way they had to find their own place. Then she brought her brother from the Philippines as well. So they had to find their own place and they did in Watsonville and then they lived there and—and I know that that uncle that her brother taught my brother and sister how to speak—speak and understand Filipino, Ilokano because they came from the same province that my dad was from, Pangasinan.

Maurice Carillo 1:02:23

And so again, here we are all these decades later, the difference between our two families, my dad with his half white family and now with his full blooded family. So he—he had the opportunity to create his Filipino family even though when he came here he wasn't allowed to have a Filipino bride here. So that didn't happen until he met his white wives—white wives along the way. And I think my dad was married at least three times that I know of. So maybe four, I can think of, four actually. There was one along the way long before his last wife whose name is Dominga. We called her Domi. And there was another white wife along the way who was only 21, and my dad was 60 something and her name was Jennifer Stevens and she was a knockout, big bussed blonde gal. Turned out to be a disaster. But—but anyway, that was my

dad, he was a womanizer. And married her against our wishes. I guess he caught—she caught him in a weak moment when they were in Tahoe—in Tahoe.

Nicholas Nasser 1:03:53

I was gonna ask—you know, you seem to have like connections with both places, Watsonville, Santa Cruz. How—and of course, you know living with your family and extended family—how have you seen those places change, you know, from—

Maurice Carillo 1:04:10

Santa Cruz?

Nicholas Nasser 1:04:11

Area in general, Watsonville, Santa Cruz, whatever. I don't know, what have you seen? You know, I'm sure you spent time in Watsonville, of course, you know, since you've moved in Santa Cruz.

Maurice Carillo 1:04:21

Well, there was a lot of time when I was—when I was with my career and with the organizations that I belong with. My time was taken up with Santa Cruz primarily, with maybe a touch—touching back in Watsonville occasionally because my mom was there—my step mom was there and so I saw her on a regular basis. But outside of my mom and Tony I didn't have much connection with people or things that were there.

Maurice Carillo 1:04:52

When my wife and I were married, we—we did go back to Watsonville together and we went to the Filipino club that was there, just to check it out and see, maybe we need to reconnect with our Filipino roots in Watsonville. And the unfortunate thing that happened when we were at this Filipino meeting, they were all full blooded Filipino. And here we are half breeds. And someone stood up and said, "We don't want any coconuts in our organization." Well, that was a direct stab at us half breeds, we were the coconuts that were half white, half Filipino. So we—that dissuaded us from going back and we never did go back.

Maurice Carillo 1:05:44

I—well let's see—for — probably was in my somewhere my 30s when I was going to go back and make a connection. I got really active in lots of things and in Santa Cruz, but nothing that was Filipino based. And that was the one thing that we could do, possibly, because we were both very active, she was she was a great supporter, and in helping me with all the things that I did. But—so—so all of that happened, and I guess to make a long story longer, I don't know where we timewise here so.

Nicholas Nasser 1:05:44

And when was this?

Nicholas Nasser 1:06:41

About an hour in.

Maurice Carillo 1:06:42

Okay, so to make this long story longer—to go—because I was so involved with all the different things that I was doing in downtown Santa Cruz, that—that took precedence in my life at that point. And then having with Sarge—having a young family, and with three children, and having our home that we built next door to the house that her dad gave us was helping us build that—build our own roots here in Santa Cruz. Now with three children and then them going to school, and then we get involved with—with all of our children's things cause they were into all the different sports we—with baseball, and—and soccer and on and on, and Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and—and all of that stuff, we did it—we did it all because we—we were being responsible parents. We're doing the things that we thought were expected of us as parents, we had no guidelines, but we—we did all those things with our—with our friends around us as well. But then—but then—let's see, my dad moved out, he's in Watsonville, he's got his family, his young family growing, and the one thing that I noticed about my dad back then in deference to my brother and me is that my dad was never around us growing up as little kids, where here now he's pretty much a retired man in his 60s—his 70s, God, in the 70s because he was 80 when he died. And so he was only around for about 10 years of their life—lives. And so he was able to take them to school every day, and be there to pick them up, and bring them home, and be with them all day long. So they—the same thing with Sarge's dad and his little boy, he was there with his—with his son full time to take care of him, and so they had this really close bond, and you can see that as an adult. Well, we didn't get that because—and most people would not get that because most parents are young as well and they've got their busy lives where they've got to be taking care of making the money to support their families and doing all the things that you need to to be a parent. But being retired parents, they could be there full time and—and that—I think that that gave those children a different appreciation, and love, respect, and memories that we didn't get because most kids—most people don't get the almost 24/7 upbringing from their parents. So it was always teachers that we look to the to help raise those children, as well as daycare or whatever you need to get done.

Maurice Carillo 1:06:57

So—again, getting back to—then Grandpa Joe—see my dad had moved out and Grandpa Joe was doing all his traveling back and forth and he took his young wife back to the Philippines. At one point when she was living with us, we had a little bit of a—a little bit of a concern because after she had her—after she had little Jojo—the baby—our family doctor diagnosed her with—with leprosy, and so here the entire family was exposed to leprosy and—and that put us into some

kind of a VA hospital thing where we had to go up to San Francisco to the military hospital and get—once a month—and get checked out and make sure that there was no problem within the family, and these little tiny pills that we had to take every day for a month, maybe three months, I forget. But then we had to go, I think it was once a week, so it's once a week maybe—we had to travel to San Francisco and then get checked out. And we were just fine, there were no—even though there was the exposure. It's not that—it's not that easy to catch it.

Maurice Carillo 1:11:29

But our doctor was very astute in discovering it. And if he were still alive, he would tell you how proud he was of the moment that he diagnosed that made that diagnosis in Santa Cruz because it's the only one the only leprosy was ever probably diagnosed here in Santa Cruz. Bill Whetstone was his name the doctor.

Maurice Carillo 1:11:50

So I guess moving forward, things changed in my life. Because then I guess I was about 43 years old at this point. And I was one of the business owners that [Unknown] stationary by then, and my wife and I were beginning to have marital problems and, and she and I separated. And and when we separated, I came out. And and then my life changed entirely. I left, I left the business I left and she got the house, she got one of the cars, she got off everything else. And we maintained the home. So the kids would have still have a continuity and having their their home to be raised. And so that stayed the same for them. And I think they got to see me more because I made more of an effort to be in their lives at that point. Because the business was running me so much that I was at the store. Because we had several stores I was that I was working out the business for for so many hours that they didn't see much of me because I'm trying to keep the business going.

Maurice Carillo 1:13:18

But then also coming out was a big change in my life and theirs as well. And so that would be 1986 approximately. And I met someone that I was with for a while that turned out to be not a good situation. And that I met, in 1993, I met Kurt Kyer who was the man I'm still sharing home with although we're now we're no longer partners and haven't been for a long time. Because I now have a partner that I've been with for 18 years. And that's Larry Dwyer.

Maurice Carillo 1:13:59

And and and so I've been active because I because I think one of the things I discover about myself is that I've been passionate about my community service, starting with becoming president of the Filipino Youth Club in Watsonville. I guess that's kind of where I started maybe maybe even Boy Scouts when I was in Boy Scouts for a while in Watsonville troop 99 And, and till I did all of those all of those things and being involved in community and doing community things. Being in the boy scouts—and being in the boy scouts. Maybe that was where I learned

that there was prejudice and didn't realize I want to happened against black people. We didn't have many black people in our lives or you could probably count how many black families that were in Watsonville when I was growing up and probably three maybe there was the Starlink I mean, that's the only family I could name at this point, that we're the black family that we families that we knew Watsonville. But when I was in Boy Scouts, we were presenting the flags at the Elks Club in Watsonville. And the little boy who was carrying the American flag upfront, that was ready to march into a meeting for the, for the, for the Elks, when someone came and stopped our troop leader and said, he can't walk in with the flag, because he was black. I didn't realize it at the time. But that's that that was why so they had another little boy carry the flag down, I think it was a white boy, carry the US flag in. So I was seeing prejudice and I didn't know it. I realized that years and years later, then that's kind of soured me against Elks ever since. Even though we, my rotary club meets at the health club every week. That's different now. But you know, the times have changed.

Maurice Carillo 1:16:07

So I joined the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz back in 1979-ish. And through them, I got to go on an exchange program, a rotary exchange program for young businessmen, because then rotary was only men. And I got to go to Sweden for almost two months on an exchange program. And after I came back, maybe within a year, I joined the Rotary Club in Santa Cruz, and I have have been an unmaintained membership in that club ever since. And I'm still active in the club. Some of the things I've done with the club in the recent years is beach cleanup. Every Monday on Main Beach, Santa Cruz, I have helped be a counselor for youth exchange with the Rotary Club in Santa Cruz. And that's how I got my grandson to go. Kind of groomed him actually, when he was little that he had this, like this opportunity. And when the opportunity came, there were there wasn't a chairman in the club. So I, I took on the job, that I maintained that position. And he did probably maybe four years, I think of youth exchange, but then COVID had changed that. So we know, we don't have a youth exchange right now, because of the world parameters around that. We can't do that until things get better.

Maurice Carillo 1:17:39

And then and then then I through Kurt there was— because when I met Kurt, he had HIV. And I thought maybe— we had a situation where because he was sick, that maybe he might live for a year or two after we met. So we had a commitment ceremony. And so when you come out as a gay man, that's the difficult thing with your family and with your friends and was a community and you go through shame and you go through guilt and you go through denying your friends, your friends, because you don't think you deserve to be their friend. And all of that and then working through all of that and and determining that especially with my friends Sam Bishop, who was a friend and JCs also became my boss later on, when after I left [Unknown] stationary to Total Com Watsonville Okay, I think back to Watsonville with Total Com, I worked there for probably 18 years, even though I was working there, I didn't I didn't go out into the

community and meet the people I guess because of that one meeting at the Filipino club, community club, saying they didn't want coconuts so— But my friend Sam said to me, you have to let us be your friend. Because I had shut, cut myself off from my friends after coming out.

Maurice Carillo 1:19:29

But then things changed for me and I became active in the gay community. And Kurt and I build a strong circle of friends within this community. And then I learned that I could choose my family or friends if I wanted to, and I did. So I have a family of friends who are kind of scattered now that they moved out of the area but friends that I still maintain a close relationship— who were actually through they're a part of our bubble through all of the COVID stuff when it's all started, who live in San Jose. And they still are. There's three close friends there and one one in Fresno and we're a bonded unit almost along with my with my partner Larry. And, and Larry is— Larry has been a man who's always been out. Kurt has been a man has always been out. With me coming out later in life I was fortunate in that I was able to have a family and all that. But now I have six grandchildren. Sarge only got to meet, my wife, only got to meet one of our grandchildren before she died. And, and four the grandchildren are here. Two of them are in Kentucky. Our youngest son moved to Kentucky with his wife, because they couldn't afford to live in Santa Cruz. And so my children are half Filipino and half white. So my daughter and my son are brown skin, but my youngest son is about as pale as you are.

Maurice Carillo 1:21:23

So the white side has come out on him and his children, you wouldn't even know there's anything Filipino in them at this point. And probably the same for my oldest son's daughter, because he married a white girl. And so his daughter is three quarters white and a quarter Filipino. So even though she's has the Filipino, she says she has our name.

Maurice Carillo 1:21:51

And so now I guess at this point in my life at 78, I'm trying to trace my steps and check my roots. And I'm finding out some things about my mother's side of the family. Her maiden name was Patheal. And turns out there's lots of Patheals in thee world. But on my dad's side, it's difficult to find any any information because coming from the Philippines, they didn't have much in the way of records that I can find. Other than when they got on the ship there and then came to California. There are records from that point on. And, and so I can find things and my friend, Juanita Sulay, who I went to school with has helped me find some information about my dad's family, or not my dad's family, my dad, my dad primarily.

Maurice Carillo 1:22:53

So. So all through all of this I can I— I maintained connection with the Philippines with Juanita, part of it being part of it, because she and I have been close friends. She lived in Santa Cruz for a while that I knew her know her husband, and then I knew his mom. And and so we've maintained a close relationship over the years.

Maurice Carillo 1:23:25

In my gay world, I've I— because of Kurt and his, his being infected with HIV. I, we both became involved with the Santa Cruz AIDs Project. And and we help with a lot of the support things that they did for men with HIV. He was in lots of support groups, he was in support groups that were in that happened right here in this home, this home actually where they they would meet on a weekly basis. And the only way you could get into this group was when somebody died. And they did. Over and over and over. So there are men that came and went, and came and went, they came in, it was because they were dying so so quickly. And and so he and I over time, decided to get involved with or they came to us and asked us if we wanted to be involved with the with the Santa Cruz AIDs Project. And so he started off as a as a director. And then after he got out of it, they asked me and so I became involved as the director. I became president of the board, of course, because I have I have presidential experience with all the other things that I belong to.

Maurice Carillo 1:24:52

And and then the Diversity Center came along and, and we were we were having fundraising, fundraising parties in our home, we would raise money for the Santa Cruz AIDS Project. And, and there are large parties where we would have as many as 300 men that would come to our parties, and donate to the cause. And then over time, we started giving some of the money to, to the Diversity Center. And then, in recent years, we started helping the the Diversity Center, have fundraising parties here in our home, which were successful up until COVID. And so COVID has kind of changed everything. And now we've gotten to the point in our age. So I guess with all of that, I made me realize that I've had a passion for community service, without realizing, realizing it. So I've done all those different things through the years, the strong connections with the JCs and those, those people who became my close friends when I was married, and then through the Rotary and the things that I would have been involved with, with that and still am, and maintain some friendships with Rotarians as well.

Maurice Carillo 1:26:18

So I have my straight life, I have my gay life. And I have I tried to meld the two I don't make— I haven't compartmentalize them. They were compartmentalize for a long time. Until I had the commitment ceremony with Kurt in 1995. And, and then the political statement was our was our invitation to that party to that event. And letting everyone at work know that I was a gay man. I had women moment coming on to me at work and couldn't really couldn't understand why I didn't react to their— to they're trying to get me to ask them out for dances.

Exactly. So kind of meandering there, abouts some of the things in my life. But that's where it is.

Maurice Carillo 1:27:15

My children have have been part of my life the whole time. So we've maintained they know all about my, all about my gay side of my life. And my children were my, my two sons and my daughter were in my commitment ceremony as well. When I had that. And then then Kurt and I separated, but we still maintain this home together.

Maurice Carillo 1:27:42

And so now with this Filipino thing, I guess Roy contacted me a year—year ago or more, I guess, and my first connection with him. So. Oh, then somewhere along the way, there was the film that George Ow was involved with. And in that film, it's called \$1 A Day, 10 cents a Dance. And I'm not sure how many years ago that film was made, but it's about the connection between Filipinos and their white wives. And, and one of the families that they talk to is the Agbolay family and, and their daughter Judy was my girlfriend for a short time when we were very, very young. And her sister, Judy is now gone, but her sister still lives only a block away from me. And and they're, they were featured in the movie with their mother and she talked about her experiences as a white woman with a Filipino husband. That was the Agbolay and, and their daughter Dolly is still here. And I'm in contact with her. So and then I'm also in touch is still in touch with my wife's cousin who was a half-breed like me. That's closer to my age. Maybe five years younger or so. But that film \$1 a Day 10 cents a Dance. The very last clip and it is a picture of my dad in the fields in in his in his all his clothes that he was working on. He had a baseball hat cap and I think as a VW symbol on it, and his scars around his face, and and wearing several shirts and long sleeves, though. It's what he looked like when he went off to work in the morning and would come home at night and throw his clothes in the washer so—that was like my, my life in a in a flash. [Laughter].

Nicholas Nasser 1:30:16

if I just have a couple more questions. Um, so you seem like when you're growing up in Watsonville you have like this deep connection with your Filipino heritage. You know cookouts, the dances, your childhood, the cockfights. How have you, um, you know, and you kind of have this really negative experience, you know, in the 70s going, and, you know, kind of being ostracized a little bit by the— by this board.

Nicholas Nasser 1:30:48

yeah. Have you since then, you know, I You seem to have expressed, you know, interested in doing this project, and in touching, you know, speaking about finding out about your roots, have you? Kind of, and then you and you have your and of course your your most of your life here in Santa Cruz. How do you feel? Is this something kind of have you always been, you

know, as it seems like, always been a part of you. But, and then, of course, you know, you have this huge thing you came out with your family and kind dividing this life? Where has your? Where has you been Filipino? No, like, you know, or, you know, where it has this kind of come in, you know, have you with your family? You know, sorry about that. No, just just to the relationship Watsonville, I'm not sure what I'm trying to get at. But I'm trying to ask is, you know, have you seen, you've spent time spent your life, you know, kind of away from Watsonville, but you still have these incredibly deep roots, you know, visiting working there. But, you know, but you kind of you're kind of separate a little bit or from the community there, you know, is there do you feel more like you're from Santa Cruz? Or do you feel more, you know, you know, like, you're from Watsonville? You know? And where does your Filipino roots play into here?

Maurice Carillo 1:30:48

That's how we felt.

Maurice Carillo 1:32:05

I don't separate the two, I just say, when people ask me where you're from, or how long have you been in Santa Cruz, I'll say I was born in Santa Cruz County. I incorporate Watsonville along with Santa Cruz, because Santa Cruz County is all of it. Yes, not just Watsonville is not just Santa Cruz. And I can't I can't define myself as being one or the other because I'm a product of both.

Nicholas Nasser 1:32:37

Yeah.

Maurice Carillo 1:32:40

My, certainly my birth and upbringing, and the, the, because of the birth connection, and now all the Filipinos that that we were raised with, and that we grew up with as well is still a strong part of my makeup. So I can't separate my white side from my brown side, and Filipino side, from my Irish side. My, my business side, from my gay side, from my straight side, all is it's all encompassing.

Maurice Carillo 1:33:22

So even though I haven't maintained a hook in Watsonville, the hook is still in me. Every once in a while there's a pull or tug on it. And I have to go back. It's like this, getting involved with this Watsonville is in the Heart. And, of course, I've written, I've read the book too America is in the Heart. And much of that I'm sure is, is probably a duplicate of my dad's life as well. I didn't realize that they had such a hard time back in those days. So but that's, you know. I think probably is probably that way with any family where there is strife or or if there's trauma within the family, that person is not going to share that with the rest of the family because they want

their, their children to be to have a more positive experience. The light, we always want our children to have a better life than we had.

Maurice Carillo 1:34:34

Yeah, so and I kind of feel like with me leaving Santa Cruz, me leaving Watsonville gave me the chance to do that. Not that I had anything against Watsonville. But the opportunities just opened up for me in Santa Cruz, because I had a cousin that worked for the state here. He was from Hawai'i. Now he's down in Pasadena.

Maurice Carillo 1:35:03

So again, like other Americans, we're dynamic, we move around. We move around the country. So probably that's part of it. I am an American. And that's how my dad, that's how my dad raised me. We were really young. We asked him if he would teach us how to speak Filipino. And he said, No, you're Americans speak Filipino. And then the way we pronounce our name Carillo rather than Carillo. That was the American way of saying our name. And we were taught not to be ashamed of saying our name that way. And then, of course, with the Latino, Hispanic community, they said, Carillo. I don't correct them. But. But, and then I think probably, rightfully so because somewhere along the line with King Philip of Spain, there's still some connection there. So I have a little bit of that European influence on my Filipino side. I didn't realize that until I have my blood test, my DNA test done. So there's a little bit of— when you separate my DNA, I discovered that I have 49% Filipino side 51% European. So I'm more European than I am Filipino. Although that's not the way I feel. Yeah. So. But I do, but I do remind people that I'm Filipino. Even with Rotary, I talk about Filipino this and Filipino that. That is something, something that someone brings up, that gives me the opportunity, then I'll certainly point out that I'm Filipino. Yeah, one of the only one in the club. The only gay one in the club as well, at this point. It was a lesbian, but she moved on.

Nicholas Nasser 1:37:06

Well, that's, that was incredible. Thank you so much for sharing. Is there is there anything else you'd like to talk about? You know, being American, a point in your life that you want to go back on a certain time?

Maurice Carillo 1:37:22

Gosh, you know, this this, this— I don't know. Maybe. Maybe some of the school time.

Nicholas Nasser 1:37:34

Is there anything specific? Oh, sorry.

Maurice Carillo 1:37:36

Yeah, I'm trying to I'm trying to think if there's what there is. If there were people that I was tied into, that might have been influential in my life. Learning how to dance with my friend, Teddy Areg. Another half Filipino.

Maurice Carillo 1:38:00

He probably didn't even remember that at this point. And then I think that my dad was godfather to [Unknown], I think, was another half Filipino.

Maurice Carillo 1:38:23

Oh, one thing I didn't mention it was my, my best friend in the same block that I grew up in. Dennis [Unknown]. How could I forget Dennis. Dennis was my closest friend in high school, I guess. Besides, well, [Unknown] another Filipino. We were all— Dennis was never part of our club. But [Unknown] was in the Filipino Youth Club. And also a past president, I think. But he later in life came out as gay. He was the cheerleader for Watsonville High School and died young, very young. Hodgkin's disease just like my friend Mike Fox did.

Maurice Carillo 1:39:12

Yeah, there's lots of friends I could talk about. I'm trying to think about the Filipino connection. So and, and besides family, because I guess the I guess the important the, I guess the thing to take away from all this is that no matter what the strongest bond is your family. And with us, because we were a multi generational family in my own home, my own grandchildren will are not experiencing that now and are missing out on that. And I think that that was that's something important in the past that my children got to experience and and I didn't get to experience because we were traveling from between different families, different mothers, different uncles, different different cities. We were around my brother and I were sort of a rambling family with our dad, up until we were 10. About. But But, but we were always with Filipinos at that point. Yeah. And all of us Filipinos got all those Filipino men around us, were our uncles. And we would see them go off to work in the morning and come back from work at night. And then, then when we're not living in the camps, then that all changed. And we had other influences from the women that were in our lives at that point. But, again, so many so many women came in, went out of our lives.

Nicholas Nasser 1:41:02

Is there any particular I don't know? This is probably my last question. But is there any Sorry, I keep on asking more. Um, is there any particular kind of like, you talked about the memories like the sounds, the smells? Can you just give me an average day? Maybe, let's say when you were a kid, at any time that you can clearly remember, you know, what did it look like? You know, you could help me visualize and Watsonville in the 50s or 60s. Or even Santa Cruz later on.

Maurice Carillo 1:41:33

If I go, if I go back to times when I was when I was a kid with my dad around. We had our we had our home on Florence Street and in Pajaro, it's a suburb, sort of a suburb of Watsonville. But, my Uncle Pete was around a lot, and there would be my Dad, Uncle Pete, there might have been a third person, but we didn't have a garage and so they built from scratch, they built the garage themselves. And then we had a garden that my dad and my uncle tended also. And so we always had fresh vegetables, potatoes, and tomatoes, and green beans. And and then there was a squash called chayote squash that I hated. But my my dad we cook with it. And then there was bitter melon that he would cook that I couldn't stand. There was this fish sauce called bagoong. I think it's a fish sauce. That smells god awful. I haven't smelled it in decades. But it's called bagoong and it's it's smells very rotten, whatever it is, but it could be used to garnish on top of your food. It was usually rice and meat. Our diet was usually some kind of rice and some kind of meat. I can't remember much in the way of vegetables other than rice and meat. And until my stepmom came along, but my dad was the cook in the family. So we always had Filipino smells. And he made the best ginger beef. I haven't, no one else has been able to match all my life since pop left. And he died in 1990. So he was 80 years old at the time. So born in 1909. And he died in 1990. So same numbers are still on today's but he was he was 80 years old. And the father of a ten year old and a nine year old, along with the rest of the other three of us. So I think— I guess, I guess part of what is stronger in my mind relates back to my dad. Then that was seeing the joy in his face having all of his family around.

Maurice Carillo 1:44:26

I can hear the laugh, I can hear his laugh now, laughter now.

Maurice Carillo 1:44:30

But he's certainly lived a full life and, and gave us a life and memories that are, that are positive ones. So God love him.

Nicholas Nasser 1:44:51

That's, that's amazing. It's good memory. Well, I think that was, I think we encompassed a lot.

Maurice Carillo 1:45:00

Okay. Yeah. Because I have lots of different lives to talk about.

Nicholas Nasser 1:45:04

Yeah. All right. Well, thank you.