

ALFANO, Sam
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Interview with: Sam S. Alfano
Interviewed by: Larry Hornberger
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[Begin CD 1.]

LARRY HORNBERGER: We're here at the residence of Sam Alfano in Santa Barbara. I'm the interviewer, Larry Hornberger. It's August 24th about nine o'clock in the morning.

Sam, we'd like to start off with a brief biography of yourself, kind of leading up to your Forest Service career. We'll start off with that. I understand you were from New York.

SAM ALFANO: Yes, I was. Sam is S-a-m. However, to go back to the Italian derivative, it's Salvatore, but we won't talk about that.

HORNBERGER: Do I have the wrong name, then?

ALFANO: It's Sam.

HORNBERGER: It's S-a-m.

ALFANO: Yes, S-a-m.

HORNBERGER: S. Alfano.

ALFANO: Right, yes.

HORNBERGER: Thank you.

ALFANO: Yes, I was born in Buffalo, New York, Larry, in 1930. My folks were immigrants from Sicily. They moved there from Sicily in 1920. Dad put up with the snow for many, many years and finally decided in 1944 to move out to Southern California, so we traveled as a family in July of 1944 to the San Gabriel Valley. We found quite a difference in culture, in that Buffalo is a very large city, and when we moved to San Gabriel Valley it was more of a rural area, which was quite a difference in our whole pattern of living. That's where I started to feel the interest in the outdoors at that time.

I also was involved with a group called Woodcraft Rangers, which was an outing group founded by Ernest Thompson Seton, who was one of our greatest naturalists. Many books are written by him. As a matter of fact, Disney used his stories within their productions. It was a program whereby we had camps throughout Southern California: one at Lake Arrowhead, one at the Angeles National Forest, and one out here at Castaic. So we did quite a bit of camping as youngsters, and so that's where I got the interest to go in the field of forestry.

We were a family of five children. I have an older sister, older brother. I'm the third. And then we have twin sisters as well. It was interesting growing up in the San Gabriel Valley area.

HORNBERGER: What did your father do for a living, Sam?

ALFANO: Dad was a jig and fixture maker with Douglas Aircraft. He was in the aircraft industry for about thirty-five years. Back in Buffalo he was with Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Industry, and he came out here and worked for Douglas in Long Beach and worked with them for many years and really enjoyed that very much.

HORNBERGER: So that was part of the war years.

ALFANO: Yes. Part of the war years. It's interesting to note that in 1944, the war was on at that time, and at that time gasoline was rationed, so his friends back at Curtiss-Wright gave him ration stamps for us to come out to California. It was quite a trip for us, and it took us about five days in an old 1939 Dodge sedan. We pulled a little trailer with all our belongings.

HORNBERGER: [Laughs.]

ALFANO: We finally arrived in the San Gabriel in July of 1944. So that was my start of interest in the outdoors, coming into the rural setting, the San Gabriel Valley. At that time a lot of the orange trees were growing there, a lot of orchards. Openness. Basically no freeways except the freeway going from Los Angeles to Pasadena. Later the San Bernardino Freeway came in, so that was the influx of large population growth.

I went to school at El Monte High School and finished there in 1949. As a matter of fact, we're celebrating our 55th reunion coming up here in October, in Buellton. We're putting that together. So it's just going to be a lot of fun. From El Monte I went to John Muir Junior College in Pasadena, which had a program pretty much attuned to the Utah State University's program in the field of forestry, so from John Muir I went to Utah State University at Logan, Utah, and finished up there in 1954.

I was fortunately deferred from the Army while I was going to school, and then as soon as I graduated, however, I was inducted in the Army for two years: one year here in the States and then one year in Germany. I was attached to the 7th Army Aerial Reconnaissance Support Company. We were making maps from aerial photographs and doing interpretive work on photographs as well. I had a very interesting time in the Army as well as in Germany.

Coming out of the service in 1956 and then went back to the Forest Service. Prior to my time starting with the Forest Service in a professional basis, I was working with them during the

summer months as a hot shot on the Oak Grove Hot Shots, 1951-'52, and then the following season I was on the Red Box tanker crew as a foreman, both at Red Box and Clear Creek Stations.

HORNBERGER: Red Box is on the Angeles Forest?

ALFANO: Yes. On the Angeles. So that was my early introduction to the Forest Service, working on a hot shot crew and also on tanker crews.

Coming back to the Forest Service, I came back on the Angeles, the Arroyo Seco District, in 1957, as recreation assistant, and then from that I went to the assistant district ranger and then transferred from that job on the Arroyo Seco District to assistant district ranger on the Greenhorn Ranger District at Bakersfield.

HORNBERGER: I think you said that you graduated from Utah State at Logan?

ALFANO: Yes.

When Lee and I married in 1958, we had an interesting time. At that time, we were provided a residence on the Arroyo Seco Ranger District in the Arroyo Seco Canyon, and it was the first time Lee had a chance to get out in the wilds, in a sense, because she was a "city" girl. We had to drive up the canyon to a locked gate about a mile and a half, and at that time we had a ranger station in the canyon. It was interesting to see our first venture out together as husband and wife.

HORNBERGER: That was your honeymoon cottage.

ALFANO: That was a honeymoon cottage, right.

HORNBERGER: [Chuckles.]

ALFANO: With some other neighbors we had there as well. But then from there, as a family, we moved to Bakersfield. However, our first daughter was born in Pasadena, we then moved to

Bakersfield, we were there for three years, from '59 to—'62. Our son, Mark, was born in Bakersfield. At the Bakersfield Headquarters I served as assistant district ranger, working on the Sequoia Forest, the Greenhorn District, which was very interesting. We were pretty much getting into timber management on the Kern Plateau, and also getting involved in doing quite a bit of planting. We had some very large fires, and we were planting after fires, during the winter and spring months.

Then from assistant district ranger on the Greenhorn, we moved to Lake Arrowhead as district ranger in '62, 1962, which was quite an interesting assignment. We were there for four years. Our daughter, Vicky, was born at Lake Arrowhead. So we've had children at all different locations where we were stationed, except here on the Los Padres.

The assignment on the Arrowhead was just a fantastic assignment. Our children grew up there. We lived in a forest setting, pine trees, many wild animals around—looking back, that was one of our more interesting and pleasant assignments as a family and children recall it as very favorable times, especially Mark and Nancy, who grew up there.

The community at that time at Arrowhead was a relatively small year-long population. Probably during the winter months it was probably about three or four thousand people. However, during the summer months it would go up maybe 15,000 to 20,000 people. A resort town, of course. But the atmosphere was very pleasant. People got along very well, and it was a very enjoyable kind of assignment.

HORNBERGER: The forest supervisor then was [Donald] "Don"—

ALFANO: Don Bauer.

HORNBERGER: Bauer.

ALFANO: Yes, Don Bauer, right.

From Arrowhead we moved on to the Los Padres Forest here in 1966, as the recreation management officer, including other duties as well as wilderness management and, at times, a land management officer and timber officer and a few other assignments.

HORNBERGER: Fire assignments. You were in plans.

ALFANO: Yes, I was in plans, yes, right.

HORNBERGER: Put that photo interpretive skill to work.

ALFANO: Right. So we were here on Los Padres for twenty years. Retired in 1986. And through the period of time it's been an excellent opportunity for us as a family to grow—as well as myself, in forestry. The Los Padres is probably one of the most unique forests—of course, I say that because I've been at it for so long—it has such a variety of vegetation and such a variety of topography and such a variety of interests socially, going from Fillmore on the south to Carmel on the north, so it has a whole range of influences by different peoples, different interests and cultures. That's why I found it so interesting. The Los Padres is one of the few forests that adjoin the Pacific Ocean.

HORNBERGER: Right, from the redwoods to high desert, too.

ALFANO: Yes, right. So I found that very interesting.

My primary assignment on the Los Padres was in the field of outdoor recreation, which I enjoyed very much. At that time, the field of outdoor recreation was just in a sense moving forward in that we were just coming out of that cycle of the end of World War II, where people had a lot of leisure time, where they had vehicles to get out in the forest. Many people had Jeeps and those kind of vehicles. The economy was such that people of moderate means would also be able to have a chance to get out in the forest relative to the fact that in earlier days, only people

who were wealthy had a chance to get out. But the whole aspect of outdoor recreation changed after WW II.

And along with that, we found ourselves in the position of building new campgrounds and picnic areas, and establishing wildernesses. As a matter of fact, the San Rafael Wilderness was the first wilderness established under the 1964 Wilderness Act here on the Los Padres Forest. It took quite a bit of time to put that through. We were working very closely with not only our regional office here but also with personnel in the Washington office, conversing with them as the bill was going through Congress and working that out as far as the boundaries were concerned. The Ventana was another wilderness that was established here on the forest, and since that time there have been quite a few other wildernesses established. But the San Rafael was the first under the 1964 Wilderness Act.

HORNBERGER: It went in with a group of wilderness areas, I understand, under that original act. Is that correct?

ALFANO: No, it was the first one.

HORNBERGER: Oh, it was? Okay, mm-hm.

ALFANO: Along with the needs for outdoor recreation, of course we were very much involved in adjustments on summer homes, especially along the Paradise area, trying to adjust the use there rather from individual use to more public use, which was quite an adjustment. Over the years, we did do that, but maybe not as quick as some people would like. But those kinds of changes take time.

HORNBERGER: That was kind of a change where transportation increased so easily or so well that people could get to the Santa Ynez Recreation Area quickly, and the recreational cabin became kind of a solitary use. It shifted to more of a need for public use.

ALFANO: Right, especially along the Santa Ynez River.

HORNBERGER: Yes, water.

ALFANO: Where folks wanted to go to fish, they were obstructed by fences, and people who had clotheslines and all those kinds of appurtenances, these would indicate they were on private land, but it was not private land. It was for public use. So that was quite an adjustment. It's still going on, but it takes time to do that.

HORNBERGER: I recall that you were instrumental in the reduction of—which is a long-time process, ten-year notification and then carrying through that process, but you were successful, and that's a very difficult activity to reduce the number of recreational cabins because of all the politics that gets into it.

ALFANO: Yes. Well, even ourselves, the Forest Service—if you recall that one time we had quite a large horse corral on the other side of the river there, and here again, we were able to use that for our own purposes as well. However, eventually we decided that the horse corral would have to be relocated, and we constructed the great campground there—

HORNBERGER: Sage Hill.

ALFANO: Sage Hill Campground, which is being used by the public now very, very beneficially. So we were making those adjustments as well. So it's been a very interesting career.

With regard to other interests in outdoor recreation, we've been very fortunate in having the annual recreation programs for our recreation personnel on the forest. We started out with a recreation training program at West Valley College at Saratoga, CA, wherein employees throughout the forest and elsewhere would go to West Valley College and delve into specific areas of outdoor recreation Training.

And we also had our own recreation sessions here on the forest from year to year, traveling north at one time, traveling south another time, for our own personnel. And then beyond that, we also established a professional outdoor recreation program with Cal State, Northridge, in Los Angeles, wherein for five years we brought folks together—Park Service, the Forest Service, county personnel, city personnel—in the field of outdoor recreation and had programs each year providing this coordination of activities.

The last year I was there, in 1985, we had the chief, Chief [Max] Peterson, come out with us, and he was the keynote speaker, which was very nice.

HORNBERGER: That sounds interesting. I think the roles of urban recreation versus outdoor, rural recreation and that full spectrum in between then kind of got represented by all those agencies.

ALFANO: Yes. Along with that, we also got involved in vandalism. We had a vandalism symposium here at the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1976, where, again, we brought in the different aspects of folks who were interested in vandalism. We brought in the man on the ground. We brought in the sociologists, we brought in law enforcement people, and we brought in other folks who had an interest in vandalism related to outdoor recreation. It was the first of its kind anywhere.

HORNBERGER: I attended that.

ALFANO: You attended that.

HORNBERGER: I did.

ALFANO: [Laughs.] You remember that.

HORNBERGER: I do. It was very interesting, and it was very well done, and I remember people could get college credit for that.

ALFANO: Yes.

HORNBERGER: If they desired to.

ALFANO: Yes.

HORNBERGER: That was good leadership, Sam.

ALFANO: Yes. We enjoyed it very much.

With regard to my activities after retirement, we've been here in town—

HORNBERGER: Sam, before you get to that—vandalism. The Forest Service, at least the Los Padres Forest, went through quite a—you talked about building a lot of campgrounds in almost every high-use area that were starting to show some wear and tear. We developed a campground there in order to start to manage that use a little better, but then the vandalism became so bad and our maintenance funding went down—but all those campgrounds disappeared, and basically a no-camping regulation on the forest has occurred, so there's been a big change there, to where camping [is permitted] basically in developed sites, unless you're in wilderness areas, appears to be a policy. And I don't know if that's true or not, but I know there's a big change, then, from lots of scattered little campgrounds down to just a few large, well-managed campgrounds.

ALFANO: That's right, Larry. Earlier on, we had many, many campgrounds that you would have to hike to, throughout the various parts of the forest. To maintain those became a very difficult job.

HORNBERGER: I remember lots of them along the roads, too.

ALFANO: Yes.

HORNBERGER: Like De la Guerra Springs and up on the summit, two or three on the way to Mt. Pinos, from Ozena to Mt. Pinos, and all those little areas just disappeared in time.

ALFANO: That was developed, too, early on, as a result of hunter camps. And then with regard to our ability to maintain these smaller hunter camps being very difficult, so in a sense we had to consolidate, as you say. We had to consolidate, which we did, which meant then folks were more restricted, in a sense, yes.

HORNBERGER: And I do remember the vandalism was horrendous at these little sites.

ALFANO: Yes, especially in the hunting season. [Laughter.]

HORNBERGER: Attributed to hunters. [Laughter.]

ALFANO: Well, they were enjoying themselves, to a great degree, which was great, but in some cases they got a little over-exuberant. But you're right: we had to cut back on some of those campgrounds.

With regard to our activities after retirement, which was in '85, why, I've been pretty much involved in our church here in Goleta. I'm involved as the building committee chairman as well as a lector and extraordinary minister, and that's been very interesting to me. I really have enjoyed that, and I'm still—as a matter of fact, Lee is a lector now, after many years, so we're doing that together, which is great.

HORNBERGER: I remember Lee has read to the schoolkids there for many years, too. I don't know if I mentioned, but Lee Alfano is here also. We'll ask her to add a little bit more at the end. But San Rafael [pronouncing it ra-FELL] Church, is that right?

ALFANO: St. Raphael [pronouncing it RAY-fee-uhl].

HORNBERGER: St. Rafael. Get the accent correct.

ALFANO: [unintelligible].

HORNBERGER: I'll transfer the mike to you a little later, Lee.

ALFANO: So along with our church activities, I've been involved with the Society of American Foresters as well, and just recently got my fifty-year pin. I started out as a student there at Utah State University in 1954. So this year marked the fiftieth year with the SAF. I've been the historical chairman for the SAF for many years, early on. At this time, helping out where I can.

I did have a chance to make a presentation to the SAF at our last convention in October, as a matter of fact, in Buffalo, New York, which was opportune. The subject was the 10th Mountain Division of the U.S. Army and how they had trained for three years here in this country, in mountain skiing and also rappelling and working on getting up to very sheer faces of slopes. They trained for three years, and then in 1945, around January of '44, they were shipped over to Italy, and they were the unit that broke through the German lines in the Apennine Mountains [Italy] there, wherein the 5th Army, and the 8th British Army, had attempted twice to break through that line, but it finally took the 10th Mountain Division to do that, and they pushed the Germans over to the Po River. And then in May of that year, '45, the Germans surrendered on the Italian front. It was based on the efforts of the 10th Mountain Division.

But along with that, the 10th—2,000 of those veterans came back to the States and became ski instructors in the ski areas throughout the United States, and they in fact were the group that really became the major thrust for skiing in the United States, through their activities, many of them started ski areas throughout the country, some here in California, some in Utah, some in Colorado, some back East as well. As a matter of fact, our own "Slim" Davis, who was the head of the Division of Recreation early on, was a member of the 10th Mountain Division, and he was one of those that had a strong interest in developing ski areas in Region 5.

HORNBERGER: I think you told me [Robert J.] "Bob" Dole was, too.

ALFANO: Bob Dole was, too. Right.

HORNBERGER: I think that's where he received his injury.

ALFANO: He was injured in Italy, right.

HORNBERGER: Yes.

ALFANO: So that was a very interesting aspect with regard to how they fit into our outdoor recreation picture. I found that very interesting.

HORNBERGER: That correlation between that unit and the advancement of ski areas on the national forest, which most of them are in the national forest.

ALFANO: Yes, very much so.

HORNBERGER: A lot of people both inside that unit, inside and outside the Forest Service, then, helped make all that happen, apparently.

ALFANO: Yes.

HORNBERGER: Well, Sam, you saw a lot of societal change and had to react to it or try to get ahead of it in terms of outdoor recreation, but I know Vietnam veterans would head for Sespe Creek on the Los Padres or Deep Creek on the San Bernardino Forest or Big Sur coast, try to get away and recuperate from whatever was ailing society at that time or how they perceived it, but there was a huge impact on recreation, and it changed things forever, I think. Maybe you could speak to some of that recreation change that you saw.

ALFANO: Well, Larry, with regard to the acceptance of visitors coming to the forest who complied with some of the regulations, particularly with regard to campfire use, wherein we'd come into a campground and people would have the campfires way too big, way too large and they could cause a problem, and we'd speak to them and they would say, "Yeah, sure. We'll put it out or reduce it," you know. But as time went on, we had different attitudes with regard to some of the folks visiting the forest, and they were more objecting to any kind of regulation.

This has been part of the problem with regard to vandalism; I think it's part of the problem with regard to folks visiting the forest.

Along with that was what I call a pretty good major upheaval with regard to society during the late sixties, early seventies, what we used to call the hippie era. At that time, why, folks, especially along the Big Sur coast, were going into the Ventana Wilderness using drugs, impacting other people's use of the forest, stopping people on Highway 1, asking for sugar cubes and so forth. It was quite a very, very difficult period of time in use of that particular part of the forest.

HORNBERGER: They actually had little communes set up in the forest.

ALFANO: They did, and it was very difficult to manage. Then along with that came the marijuana growth, wherein they were growing marijuana in the forest as well, which became another major impact with regard to how the forest should be managed.

HORNBERGER: And it still continues.

ALFANO: It became a law enforcement problem as well. And so the whole idea, then, of folks enjoying their forest became a little more difficult in that they were in a sense deteriorating the forest from the standpoint of polluting the streams, overusing the campgrounds, growing marijuana, which then led into more enforcement aspects. This led us into thinking about special law enforcement people, which led to thinking about carrying of arms, which we hadn't done very much in the past. The whole idea changed with regard to folks using the forest, which was quite a turn of events.

HORNBERGER: Right. And we went from a law enforcement group of, what, one or none to one of maybe seven or eight now.

ALFANO: Yes, right.

HORNBERGER: On the forest.

ALFANO: Yes. So that's one of the major changes we've seen, I think, with regard to Forest Service.

Another major change, I feel, of course, was the need—I think rightly so—to have more women involved in the Forest Service. Earlier on, the women were involved to the degree that they were clerks who did an excellent job, and kept the rangers in tow many, many times. [Chuckles.] But [it] more and more expanded beyond that to where they could be involved in other aspects of management. And I think to a degree also that—early on, the supervisory [sic] positions for the Forest Service was more related to graduate foresters. The rangers and supervisors earlier on were graduate foresters, but that's changed. The concept is that as long as the person is a good manager, they don't necessarily have to be a professional forester. So we have folks in all kinds of fields now of management positions, who are not foresters. That's a change I think that we've seen as well.

HORNBERGER: Thinking along that line, I know [William] “Bill” Hansen would have been forest supervisor when you came on the forest?

ALFANO: Yes.

HORNBERGER: And probably Frederik “Fritz” deHoll when you retired?

ALFANO: Fritz deHoll, yes.

HORNBERGER: So you saw quite a few good supervisors along the way.

ALFANO: Yes, of course, [Allan] “Al” West was a supervisor there as well, yes. Paul Barker was involved, yes, yes.

HORNBERGER: [Robert] “Bob” Lancaster, I was thinking of, yes.

ALFANO: Right. So that's been a change in thinking in the service. I don't know how much changed since then. I've been retired now, Larry, about twenty years. Other changes have taken place since that time, I'm sure.

So along with that, as we talked earlier on with regard to wildlife, of course, the Los Padres is the home of the California condor. We've seen the decline of the condor population and also we're starting to see an increase, which is just fantastic. The recovery program has ups and downs, but it's wonderful that we're able to at least continue the species. We're expanding that to other states, as well as other areas. I think we're also in Mexico as well. At one time, I was able to see at least ten California condors in flight on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District, and it was just a fantastic sight to see. As a matter of fact, at that time, I took photos and had them sent back to Chief Peterson. He had those in his office when I went back there to visit with him. [Chuckles.] So that's been a very interesting aspect of management of the forest.

HORNBERGER: Well, Sam, I always enjoyed going on field trips with you because you'd always time them so we'd arrive at Mt. Pinos at about five-thirty or six o'clock in the evening, just in time to catch a condor flying over.

ALFANO: Right.

HORNBERGER: And I remember a couple of Englishmen that were on a visit to the United States and found—one of their major objectives was to see a condor, and they had spent three days on top of Mt. Pinos, waiting to see a condor, and we arrived that evening, and almost immediately a condor flew over.

ALFANO: [Chuckles.]

HORNBERGER: These two were so excited, they called it a pip. [Laughs.] Remember that? A pip. I never heard of a pip before. [Laughter.] [Transcriber's note: Pip means the process by

which a chick breaks the shell as it emerges.] But they were just ecstatic. That was their major goal in visiting the United States, and they met it.

ALFANO: Right. But talking about the condor, when I transferred and left the San Bernardino, of course, they gave me a rock on which they placed a bronze casting of a bighorn sheep

HORNBERGER: Retirement and transfer gift.

ALFANO: As a retirement and transfer gift, and they had, of course, bighorn sheep.

L. ALFANO: I can't remember.

HORNBERGER: Bighorn sheep.

ALFANO: Bighorn sheep.

HORNBERGER: There was a bighorn sheep on a rock, yes. Not retirement but a relocation, a going-away gift.

ALFANO: Yes. Of course, the bighorn sheep is prevalent on the San Bernardino.

HORNBERGER: Unique species there.

ALFANO: Unique species. The condor was unique to Los Padres. So we developed a condor on the rock, which has been a gift. I don't know if it's still a gift.

HORNBERGER: Still is.

ALFANO: Folks who retire. I still have mine, which is great. So those are some of the things that we've done in the past. I have enjoyed the field of outdoor recreation because I enjoy being with people and working with people and having that social aspect, I think, which is so important, wherein people go to the forest to relax, to in a sense re-create themselves, to get away from the pressures that we talked about earlier, pressures of city living, and that's becoming even more difficult nowadays with increasing traffic, increasing people live in cities, and the aspect of tensions that are taking place throughout the world.

HORNBERGER: Okay, Sam. Maybe you could just kind of wrap up by giving us some thoughts on your overall career and thoughts about the Forest Service.

ALFANO: Looking back, Larry, I look back at it as a wonderful opportunity in my life to grow and to have a meaningful purpose in my life with regard to enjoying what I'm doing and trying to help other people as well, and I think in that regard, I'm very satisfied with what has been accomplished in the past and the associations I've had with other people in the Forest Service. The Forest Service allowed me to grow as an individual because of the many training programs they had, as well as meeting people, not only in this state but elsewhere as well and to get a feel of being yourself and doing what you want to do in life. So I have enjoyed it very much. Still very interested in the Forest Service and try to keep up with what's going on, but changes have taken place so rapidly that I'm not sure I know what's happening, but I still have a strong feeling for the Forest Service and what it's done for me and our family. It really has been a wonderful career, and I look back on it with great satisfaction.

HORNBERGER: Okay. Sam's wife, Lee, is going to say a few words. She's been listening to this entire conversation, and I'm sure she's got some things to add and also some perspective from a wife's standpoint towards this career of Sam Alfano.

L. ALFANO: Okay. I'm sitting here listening to Sam and, yes, I definitely was a city girl when we married. This was a whole new experience. I was lucky in that I kind of got my feet wet when we moved into the canyon in Arroyo Seco, and we were there for a short period of time, and it was a small group, a commune, so I got used to that gradually.

The one thing was—I was just thinking back—my father was in a trade, so he worked weekdays from eight to six and came home. That was the end of his job. So marrying a professional and somebody in the Forest Service, it was a whole different ballgame. That was

his life, and it was evenings, sometimes the weekends and many times that had to come before family, and that was an adjustment for me.

I think that Lake Arrowhead probably was, as Sam mentioned, the best time with the Forest Service. Our two eldest children have just wonderful memories, and I do, too. And there, I found what an extended family was like. There was always a friend. And also, because Lake Arrowhead was a small community, I had to learn to become a diplomat. I had to learn when to keep my mouth shut. I had to learn to keep secrets, and I had to learn to not respond sometimes to a pretty uncomfortable situation. But overall a sense that we've made wonderful friendships. We have friends now that we still see that we've known for over forty years, part of this extended family.

The one thing that I think Sam—and he probably forgot, that I think is one of the highlights of his career was when we were living at Lake Arrowhead, we got to know a family. They were not Forest Service. But he encouraged and guided their son, who just retired from the Forest Service, Tom, about a year or two ago?

ALFANO: Yes.

L. ALFANO: And I think that that is a compliment to him.

HORNBERGER: Who was this again?

L. ALFANO: [Thomas] "Tom" Hutchinson. He retired 2003, I think?

ALFANO: Yes.

L. ALFANO: And so, on looking back on that, I think that maybe that doesn't always happen to people in the Forest Service.

I think that both of you—you were very lucky to go through the Forest Service at the time you did, because it was a real family organization. Family was very important and was a

real part of it. I have the feeling that maybe that's changed a little? Now it's more of a job? I don't know, because I'm just looking back on a very special time. I know there are many times that Sam probably wished that I wasn't around [chuckles], because I'm sure I did my part in complaining, but looking back on it, we really were lucky that he had the job that he had in the time that he had it, and, as I say, I've got wonderful memories and so do our two older children. And our youngest one I feel has kind of followed in her dad's footsteps. She's city recreation supervisor, and that's been her field so I hear them talking from time to time, Sam asking the questions that I would never think to ask, and giving her advice.

I think that pretty much takes care of it.

HORNBERGER: Okay. I had the stop button on while we were recording part of Sam's oration here, and so I'll start again, and we'll try to pick that up. Sam, I think it started with some of your most memorable moments and also your retirement activities, your broad breadth of things you've been involved with since retirement. Go ahead, Sam.

ALFANO: Well, Larry, looking back with regard to some of the most important moments, I think one of those, of course, was the establishment of San Raphael Wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964. That took quite a period of time to accomplish. It was the first wilderness established under the act, and so there was a lot of precedent setting, which allowed folks to really zero in on determining where were the boundaries going to be, who would be involved in everything that goes along with it. We had quite a bit of conversations and telephone [discussions] with the regional office as well as the Washington office at the time this was going through. So that was probably one of the larger important activities that we were involved in.

Along with that were the adjustments in the use in Paradise Canyon in that we had corrals across the Santa Inez River along with a summer use there, and we knew we had to make an

adjustment, so we decided to relocate our own corral as well as when the recreation use permit was expired, we decided to build a major campground there, which we did. That was the Sage Hill Campground. It's still in use today, the concept was not only for use by autos but also by trailer camping as well as equestrian use, and it's still very well used by the public. Then, of course, other campgrounds we established throughout the forest.

With regard to some of my other activities after retirement, Larry, I've been involved with Goleta Valley Beautiful, which is an organization that has been planting trees in the city of Goleta and also the county of Santa Barbara, and in the past year we planted 500 trees for the benefit of the community. We're also involved in anti-graffiti work and also anti-litter work. We did establish a cooperative project with Wells Fargo Bank, wherein we are maintaining fifty-three historical signs between Santa Barbara and Mattie's Tavern, which is the Santa Ynez Valley, and we're still working on that. That's been a great project for Goleta Valley Beautiful.

With regard to other activities, I've been involved with the Boy Scouts of America. I was on the Boy Scout committee with Catholic scouting for three years as chairman for the Mission chapter.

With regard to other activities, I've been involved with the Society of American Foresters, in the past have been their history chairman, and I enjoy that very, very much. Just recently was given a fifty-year pin for my duties with the society. I started when I was a student in 1954. So that's worked out very nicely.

I've been involved also with the Federal Employees Credit Union. I was on the board for about ten years and for about three years was president of the board, so that's been keeping me busy.

Very active in St. Raphael Church. Was the chairman of the building committee for four years. Also involved as a lector and an eucharistic minister, and have been involved with them since that time, since we moved to Santa Barbara in 1966. So that's been keeping us busy.

A very enjoyable part of my retirement is to get involved in these different kind of activities.

HORNBERGER: Fiesta Days?

ALFANO: Fiesta Days. I've been involved there. I've been announcing the parade for the last twenty years as the parade comes up State Street. We have 12 stations along the route. That's keeping us busy.

I've been very active in Toastmasters International. I've been with Club No. 5, which dates back to 1929. We celebrate our seventy-fifth anniversary here this year. And also we celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mission Toastmasters, which I started. Apparently you visited a number of times, too, Larry. You were there. So that's been keeping me busy in the community. We still enjoy it.

HORNBERGER: Did you get to announce the parade when your daughter, Vicki, was the Spirit of Fiesta?

ALFANO: I did. Well, actually, I didn't have a chance to because I was following her up and down the street with water.

HORNBERGER: [Laughs.]

ALFANO: Tried to keep her going. At that time, I wasn't announcing, but I followed after that. [Laughs.]

HORNBERGER: That's quite an honor.

ALFANO: Yes. That was fantastic. So this has been keeping us busy, and I still enjoy retirement, Larry, and being involved in the community. The Chamber of Commerce annually has an award presentation. In 1999 I was awarded, the Man of the Year plaque which I appreciate very much.

HORNBERGER: Quite a nice commendation.

ALFANO: Right.

HORNBERGER: That about concludes it, then. I want to thank you, Lee and Sam. Let's hope this turns out.

[End of interview.]