

## **Transcript: Joe Schovajsa**

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*Today is Thursday, May 10, 2012. My name is James Crabtree. This morning I'll be interviewing Mr. Joe Schovajsa. This interview is being conducted in person at the Courtney Veterans Home in Temple, Texas, and it's being conducted in support of the Texas Veterans Land Board Voices of Veterans Oral History Program. Sir, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today for our program. It's an honor for us.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** You're quite welcome.

*Sir, as I mentioned before we started, our whole goal here is to try to save these memories for future generations. So people can listen to them and learn from them. The first question I always like to start with is just tell us a little bit about your childhood and your life before you went into the military.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, the only thing I can say about my life, beginning life, I was a boy on a farm, born on the farm. Done a lot of cotton picking and crop working and things.

*This was in Shiner?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes. Working with mules and horses. We didn't have no tractors, nothing like that in those days. Well, gradually grown up from there. Well, let's see. I was 19 years old when they drafted me into the service.

*This was during World War II, sir?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah, World War II. Oh yeah, this is all World War II. I went in in 1943, and served as an infantryman for quite some time in France, through France, Czechoslovakia, in Italy, and down in that area. From there, we went through parts of Germany. I was in the infantry all along.

*What unit or units were you with?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Gosh, I can't think of those now. I was in several of them. First place . . . This is crazy, but they sent me to New York from my home. We were supposed to be . . . It was 13 men. We were supposed to be depot operators in New York. Well, by mistake, they loaded us a boat and sent us overseas. From there on, the infantry somehow got a hold of us and tied us in with their units.

*As infantrymen?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes. More or less. And from there we went right on into war areas and all that, you know.

*If we can back up a little bit, when you were growing up in Shiner on a farm, I guess you would have been in high school when the war started, in 1941.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, I didn't go through high school. I went through the eighth. I started the eighth grade when I got drafted. I never did go back to high school.

*Okay. I got you. When the war started, though, in 1941, did you think there was a good chance you would be drafted at some point?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I didn't even think about it at that time.

*Didn't think about it?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, I didn't even think about it.

*So when you got the draft notice, did it come in the mail?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir.

*Was that a surprise to you at that point?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah, yeah. More or less, it was a surprise. It was a scary surprise in a way. The parents, well they were all shook up about it. But they all took it with a grain of salt, you know.

*Did you have any brothers and sisters?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes, I have three brothers. No, I had four brothers and two sisters.

*Okay. Were any of them in the service before you?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah. Two more. Yeah, the youngest and the next to the oldest.

*Had they already gone into the service?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, they were after. I was the first one.

*So you were the first one in your family to go in?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Right.

*Where'd they send you to boot camp?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, I was inducted in San Antonio. Then they sent me over here to Fort Hood right now. Used to be Camp Hood. They got me inducted there real well. From there I went to Cheyenne, Wyoming. Fort Francis E. Warren.

*Okay.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And that was a drastic change for me. From down here in Texas to going to Wyoming, you know. Cold country and all that. Oh, it's was terrible cold up there. Well, from there, I had my training. I guess you could say 13 weeks. And then they sent me home for about 11 days. They said, "You're fixin' to move on east." I don't know if they mentioned New York then or not, but we was going. I didn't know I was leaving really. And all of a sudden, I know I was getting on a train right on to New York. And that's where I was supposed to be a quartermaster depot workhand, you know.

*Kind of like a stevedore or something like that? Longshoreman?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah. I don't know what it would have been. Anyway, we were supposed to take care of that depot down there, us 13 men. It was an Army outfit, and instead, they made a mistake and they sent us overseas.

*What were your thoughts of New York? I'm sure you'd not seen a big city like that?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I didn't like it.

*Didn't like it.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, I didn't like it. Coming from a small little town, you know, in Shiner. I didn't like the big city. You couldn't visualize, you know, where everything was. It's so large.

*All the skyscrapers?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Even then it was large, yeah.

*Oh absolutely. Where did you live when you were there? Did they have a base for you? Some barracks?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah, they had barracks there. Well, we didn't last but, oh, I don't know, two or three days and we was gone.

*Pretty short.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir.

*So what was that like for you then, being on the boat, getting shipped across the Atlantic?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** It was scary. The first time on a big large boat like that, you know. Nothing but hundreds of men going over. I really . . . Well, it was scary. I'll just put it again that way. But then, when we got there, we landed in . . . By the way, the boat I went on was called the Marseilles of France.

*Okay.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Marseilles of France. Great big boat. I don't know how many thousands and thousands of men it had on it.

*Where did you disembark?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** It was in Marseilles too. Marseilles of France. We landed there and then we started going around there. Well, they couldn't figure out what to do with us men at first. Then they finally decided that they would keep moving us down along. We finally got into the infantry, and we went through a few parts. Went into Italy, I believe, first. Then they come up through Czechoslovakia and back up through France again and then partially into Germany there. I was more or less in the follow-up, you know. I didn't get no real front line. We stayed there and done all our duties. And they needed some cooks starting right there. I just more or less started helping them out and we even got some . . . We set up these kitchens, you know, out in the field. And we also had one of 'em, that I remember, we had it blown out from under us. We was cookin' out there in, like tents. We had tents set up, and we got the warning to take off and

leave, you know. Get out of the area. We left the kitchens like it was, just everything cookin' and boilin'. And we finally, we heard those shots or shells or whatever was coming over.

*Artillery?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And it tore up that kitchen altogether.

*It's good you got some advance warning to get out of there.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah. Then they had to relocate another section and get us new equipment and all that. From there, well, it was close to the end of the war, and they sent me to England. And the officers' club there in England. Westbury, Wilts, England. They needed a cook. Well, they had a cook there and they put me in as a cook's helper. Well, when they found out that I can cook, they started making changes. Especially one day, one of the officers came to me and he said, "I wonder if the cooks . . . Which of the cooks could make some homemade chicken noodle soup like my mother used to make it?" Well, no one said nothing. I said, "I can do it." He said, "Okay, that'd be great," he says. So I did. I cooked up a pot of that chicken, homemade style, noodle soup for him. Well, they liked it so well, they put me in charge of the kitchen. They sent the other guy someplace else.

*That's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** From then on, I cooked there 'til the war ended. Then they sent me back to Germany, and I became a screener, you know. We screened for snipers and this and that, for about a year, 'til the end of '46.

*And then you got discharged and came back home, right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I got discharged and I re-upped for another term. Re-upping, they sent me back to the United States. And then when I got here, back to Camp Hood, Fort Hood rather, now. They said they didn't need us anymore. So they sent us home. And that was it.

*How did you learn how to cook?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, at home. My mother used to cook. Grandmother, you know. I just learned how to cook. I also done some barbecuing for 'em up there. I learned that from when my mother was washing clothes. You know they had these old wash pots and stuff like that? Well, I would always set me some rocks or bricks underneath where she was, her fire was built. I would put stuff on there, you know, and cook it out there on that open fire like that. And everybody liked it. So that's where I learned how to barbecue.

*Do they let you cook at all here?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, not here. Well, I'm not able, see? Something, all my life, through marriage and all that, well. When I lost my wife, I had to live with my daughter. She had an extra house on her little ranch farm. I stayed in one of the houses there for a few years, about four years. Somehow I happened to hurt myself slipping in the bathtub. Hurt my tailbone. Four vertebrae got messed up. And I ain't been able to walk without anything since.

*I didn't know if they let you go in there and kind of supervise in the kitchen, show them how to make . . .*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I would have been glad to. I really would have.

*Tell them, "This is how you make some barbecue."*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I can't do nothing without this walker.

*Sure. I thought it was interesting, sir, that at one point, when you were in infantry, you went through Czechoslovakia, is that right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir. And I tell you, one I should have said earlier. I went through there and my daddy came from Czechoslovakia.

*I was going to ask you, being of Czech origin.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** His parents were there somewheres. And I couldn't find them nowhere. I even tried to check it out.

*You're trying to find your grandparents.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes, and they told me that Hitler musta got 'em. You know, he slaughtered so many people out there.

*Now, you spoke Czech, or do you still speak a little Czech?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, I used to speak it pretty good. When I started school, I couldn't hardly speak English. I had to learn everything over again, you know? I was mostly Czech 'cause my family was Czech.

*So when you were over there then during World War II, you could speak to the Czech citizens?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I even interpreted for a little while there, you know, where they needed something seriously. I wasn't the best Czech but I could speak it pretty good, sort of more or less what they call Bohemian type.

*What did the Czechoslovakian citizens think of someone being in the US Army being able to speak?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Oh, man, they were tickled pink.

*I bet.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** To see somebody from the United States speak Czech, you know, and all that, yeah.

*That's great. What are some of your memories of some of the men you served with? Are there any stories stand out about some of the different men you were in the Army with? Any friends or commanding officers, things like that, sergeants?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, no. The only thing I can say is I had some in the kitchen that were pretty good, and some of weren't worth five cents. It's just, like I say, my memory loss is right there it started out, and I couldn't remember half of what I did.

*You've told us a lot so far, and I just wanted to . . .*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I'm trying to remember a little bit, some of the parts.

*Let me ask you one thing because I know I'm in the military, like Napoleon said, an army marches on its stomach, and being able to have the food is a very important thing. How would you . . . What was the trick for able to serve a good meal for so many men when you're cooking mass quantities?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I guess just a style. Just, you know, the flavorings and all that kind of stuff. That's about the only thing I can come up with, as far as accommodating everybody, you know. When I was in the kitchen, a lot of times, not just there but here in the States too for a little while, they would ask me, "Which cook is on duty?" And if they would say, "Well, I'm on duty," well, they would all come and eat. And when the other cook came on, they say, "Nah." Wouldn't go.

*That's quite a compliment to your cooking.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, yes, it was.

*That's great. Did you have a chance to see much of England while you were there?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Not really too much. I got to see part of London and most of the little towns that I went before I got to Westbury, Wiltshire. I went through a few towns but I wouldn't know what they are now. I seem to remember that. I remember that when I was cooking for them officers, that's when that officer . . . He was a major and he's the one that asked for that soup.

*Yeah, the chicken noodle soup.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And that's about what I remember about changing cooks over there, you know, when I came in.

*I should have asked earlier, during the war, you were a single guy, right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir.

*You weren't married right then.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No sir, I wasn't married.

*Were you able to write letters back home pretty often, get letters from home?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir. Yeah, we had quite a bit of opportunity to do that.

*I'm sure your parents must have been glad when you did get back home.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** They were really glad when I showed back up, you know, coming back home all in one piece.

*That's right. When the war ended, is that what you did? You went back home to Shiner?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir. Yeah, I went back to Shiner and from there I started moving on, you know. I couldn't do nothing there. My hometown is so small with no opportunities there so I started moving down the road. I started out like grocery work and different things, and kept on going down. I started out in Yoakum and Cuero, and Victoria. And from there, I didn't do nothing in Corpus. I started up the coast and wound up in Houston, and that's where I got me a job out there as an interior decorator and display builder and such, you know, show business, everything. We used to go . . . We traveled all over the United States and even out of the States with our displays and stuff. I didn't go overseas from then on though. I stayed in the United States with them. I'd go all over the United States though.

*That's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** We set up these shows and then tear 'em down, and haul 'em to another place and set 'em up again. Build exhibits. We have the great big shop in Houston.

*That's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Branch of Freeman Design and Display. That's what the branch was in Houston.

*How did you come to be here in Temple?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, we found out about the home being here, the veterans home, and my daughter applied for me. And we waited about . . . Well, see, how I found out about it . . . Let me back that up.

*Sure.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I was in the hospital here, the veterans hospital. And the doctor there, Dr. . . .

*One of the doctors?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Oh, gosh. I can't think of his name.

*Sure.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Anyway, he was gonna send me here. He said, "This is where you can get in without an application after you come out of hospital." They would accept you. Well, they didn't have no openings, you know, at all then. So they sent me home and then my daughter kept, you know, she had the application and kept it going until finally they called me about a year and something later and said they had an opening so come on by. We drove up here and I never went back home. I stayed here.

*Do you like it?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I love it, yes sir. It's a nice place.

*Yeah, that's what I've always heard.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I would say more . . . It's better than trying to live with family and all this and that. Really, you got your own privilege here, you know.

*That's true. You've got your own room I guess? Or a roommate?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, I have a divided room but two of us live in one room. But we get along fine.

*That's good. As long as there's no fighting I guess.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, we try not to do that.

*How's the food?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, the food, as far as I'm concerned, it's pretty good.

*Not as good as yours though, right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, no. But it's the same thing from week to week, over and over seems like.

*Not a lot of variety, yeah.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** You know, every day you got this. The next day you got this and that. And next week it starts all over again.

*Yeah, I can see where that could get a little monotonous.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Once in a while, a few changes but not too many.

*You ought to give them some of your recipes and see if they'll make maybe some barbecue or something.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, they try to barbecue here but they ain't got . . . They don't have a real pit here. They just got a couple small ones.

*Makes a difference, I know.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir, it does.

*What about chicken noodle soup? Can they make that here?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, they try to make it. Once in a while one of 'em comes in and makes a pretty good soup but a lot of 'em put vegetables in it, and you don't put that in the chicken noodle soup.

*It changes it up.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** You got to have that good taste to it.

*Just the noodles and chicken.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I can't even think of the spice now that my mother used to put. Chevron, I believe they call it. Something like that.

*Mix that in there.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Puts a color to it too, you know, real golden-looking soup.

*Yeah.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Oh, it's really good.

*Yeah, you don't want it to be too watery or anything.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, not too watery but again, you don't want it too thick either. You don't put no kind of thickening in it. It's just strictly broth and noodles.

*Yeah, that's great. Makes me hungry thinking about it.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Oh, it's good stuff.

*Yeah. Let me ask you a little bit too. You mentioned having been in Italy and in Germany during the war. What are your memories of those countries, of any of the people, any of the citizens you might have met while you were there? Or any of the towns you might have gone to?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** As far as the people was concerned, they were fine. They were welcoming us after the war ended, you know, because ol' what's-his-name, Hitler, he just . . . Well, he kept 'em on edges all the time 'cause of how he was operating there. They would invite us into homes and, boy, they would try to give us supper, you know. They didn't have hardly anything left in those days. They would . . . They was gonna feed us and everything else, what they could spare but we never did do any eating there 'cause we knew they didn't have nothing, you know. They were just barely making a living there. Other than that, everything was fine after the war. I mean, we didn't have no problem except a few snipers, you know. We had some snipers still hanging around. Sometime they took a potshot at us but we was prepared. We got them before they got us.

*That's the way to do it, right. Speaking of the enemy, the Germans, did you have a chance to ever deal with any prisoners of war?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir, I did. You know they sent a whole bunch of them here to the United States, you know, prisoners at that time. And they used them as cooks and everything else here. They were real nice to get along with. In other words, they trusted 'em in the kitchen and everything else. And then when they'd get through with their shift, well they'd go back to camp without any problems. They flat enjoyed being here in the United States.

*So for a lot of them, yeah, it was nice to get away from that.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir.

*Do you get back to Shiner much? Do you have any family still there?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Not anymore, no. Well, yes sir, but I haven't been there in years and years. I got two sisters in Yoakum, Texas. They're still living, my oldest and my youngest. They both still living there.

*That's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** But I have no chance of going down there. Well, I used to go down there at first when I lived in Houston. I used to go down there pretty regular. But when I got sent up here to VA and all that stuff, I haven't seen either one of 'em in quite a few years.

*I understand.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And they don't seem to want to travel.

*Yeah, it can be hard to travel.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, my oldest sister is, oh, she's probably 95 or 96 years old now. I can't remember quite how old.

*And how old are you?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I'm 89. I'm next to the . . . I'm actually next to the two youngest. I had a brother and a sister. Like I said, the youngest and the oldest sisters are still living there but I'm the third in the family. We had five boys and two girls.

*You mentioned that you had a couple other brothers that later went into the military during the war as well, right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir. If I'm not mistaken, I believe one of 'em went before me.

*Okay.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** He lives in Victoria. His name was John, and he was with the tank destroyers. And somehow I think he got hurt during the time he was . . . I forget where he was. Where did he go? Where did he go?

*Did you get to talk to your brothers much about their service or their experience after you got home?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, we didn't talk about that too much. Sometime we did but not too much. We was just kinda, forget that phase.

*Yeah, forget about it.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And then my younger brother, well, he went in later, and he went to Japan.

*In the Army?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes, in the Army. One of 'em in tank destroyers and the other two of us were in the Army. My one brother, he didn't qualify. He had some kind of problems. So he didn't pass the test.

*So he stayed home during the war.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yep. Not much else I can say here.

*Sure. I was going to ask you real quick, being from Shiner, I know that's a famous town for the beer.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes, it is.

*Tell us a little bit about that. Were they brewing that back when you were a kid growing up there?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, when I came back from overseas . . . Well, growing up, yeah. I used to go with the brewmaster from little town to little town, you know. He would advertise his beer. And he would carry a few cases in the trunk of his car. He had a big trunk on the car at that time, and we'd go to these saloons, you know, and he would set up everybody maybe one or two beers. Well, he was a rich man. He was a German too, by the way. That's a German beer actually. And so we'd just travel on. And later one he put me on, well, as I was growing fairly older, even after the war, he put me on the truck with the load of beer. Go from town, where he had it ordered and delivered. Well, another thing, we was allowed to carry our own drinking beer right there, out of the truck with us, you know. We're driving from town to town, and we had us a beer now and then.

*Yeah, they don't do that anymore.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** No, no, no. That's all forgot about.

*That's something else.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I enjoyed those days though.

*I bet. It's certainly a well-known beer now.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir. It's nationally wide. National wide now.

*When people think of Shiner, that's what they think of, the Ziegenbock, I guess.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, it's Shiner Bock.

*Shiner Bock.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Ziegenbock is a German beer.

*A German beer, okay. Interesting. Well, sir, I do appreciate you taking the time to talk.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I wish I could remember more but I . . . It's hard for me to speak about it nowadays 'cause my memory's so bad as it is.

*Well, you've told us a lot. I think we got a pretty good idea of where all you went and what all you did. One thing, one question I have going back to what you said earlier is, when you got to New York and they made that mistake and put you all on the transport ship, was there anybody*

*that tried to say anything to let them know, "Hey, we're not supposed to be going," or did they just tell you to shut up and get on the ship?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I guess they didn't know much better than I did. I mean, we didn't know where we was going in the first place.

*Just going where they tell you.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** They said that's where we was supposed to be. And when we found that out later on, well, then it kinda got to us a little bit.

*Yeah, the way they just tell you, "Get on the ship. Just get on the ship." Right?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Again, we got to see and also get into the war, you know, some of the time. And they start dividing us up, I guess. Some here and some there. There was 13 of us. That's why I always call it my lucky number.

*That's your lucky number?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Thirteen. The lucky thirteen.

*So of all of what you can remember from World War II, what's your favorite memory? What stands out the best.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** From World War II?

*I guess being able to cook there in Britain?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, yes, yes. That would be the most important in my time, yes sir.

*Yeah, that's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** The fighting part, the infantry, well like I say, I was never in the right front line. I was sort of follow-up. We still had some bad days but otherwise it was . . . The cooking was the best thing that happened to me.

*That's great.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Sent me to England and took me over there. I really found out that I can cook.

*It sounds like the troops appreciated it too.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I was more or less helping cooks during the fighting areas, you know, where you had to bring the troops back and feed 'em. What really that set me off is England, when they sent me there and I learned that really went to cooking right there. And being in charge of a kitchen too, everything.

*Did you ever have a desire when you got back to the United States, ever have a desire to be a professional cook or open a restaurant or anything like that?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Well, I thought I'd try it for a while when I reached Houston. See, there's another thing I forgot about. When I reached Houston, instead of going right to work for who I said I was, I did cook for the Rice Hotel in Houston for a little bit.

*Oh, okay.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** And gave them a hand. They had some vacationing time going, you know, so I just hired out as a vacation cook. I didn't . . . I cooked there probably over two weeks or so, something like that. Everybody liked the food, I mean, real well. I didn't have no problem with no hotel serving. Shoot, I just figured it out by myself and served good food. I guess what they liked, it was tasty. That's another thing. You can cook it, you gotta make it taste right.

*That's right. But you just stayed there for a couple weeks?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yes sir, about a couple weeks. And then from there on, well, I started looking for these jobs and I landed this . . .

*The decorating?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** What you call display builders and show business. That's what it was.

*So, cooking just from there on was in the background?*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Yeah, I could cook. I cooked for anybody that wanted to cook but on my off times, you know. Like even barbecuing, well, I even did that. And finally I got my own pit. Well, later on when I came back and started living with my daughter there in Bryan, well, I bought me a big trailer pit, you know, and I used to go out and cook for them too, for people, you know, parties and such. And they loved it.

*Absolutely. You can't beat that. Well, sir, I just want to thank you again for letting us talk to you today. On behalf of Commissioner Patterson and everyone at the Land Office . . .*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Done the best I could for you.

*Yes sir. Well, we . . .*

**Joe Schovajsa:** If it's not satisfactory, well . . . don't worry about it.

*Oh, no. This is great. We just want to thank you for your service to our country.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Appreciate it.

*This program is just one small way of saying thank you for your service. I think I mentioned before we started, in a couple weeks you're going to get a package from us that will have copies of this interview on CDs that you can give to friends or family along with an nice letter and certificate from Commissioner Patterson. And it's all just, again, just a small token of the State of Texas appreciation for your service to our nation.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I appreciate that.

*Yes sir. Thank you very much.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** I'm just glad to be here alive, you know, to tell these little stories.

*Well, we're glad you're here.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Of course, mine wasn't as bad as some of 'em.

*But still, you served and you were there during the very important time. So for us just being able to get this and document this, we're going to be able to save this interview for generations to come. So it all adds up.*

**Joe Schovajsa:** Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

*Thank you, sir.*