



Interview with Schultz and Wenner

**Under the Auspices of the
Monmouth County Library Headquarters
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Benjamin Schultz: March 9, 1911

Ms. Higgins: Mr. Schultz, you've had a lifetime involvement in pharmacy, and one of the highlights of that lifetime is your efforts at poison control. Would you tell us a little bit about that effort?

Mr. Schultz: It started in 1952 outside the New York City Health Department. It came to the awareness of the pharmaceutical profession that children would die in great numbers. It was a sickness that started right after World War II. It was due to the sweetening of aspirin tablets, baby aspirin. St. Joseph's put it out. More children died from baby aspirin than diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles, whooping cough, and polio combined. I worked with Dr. Morton Rodman, who was the Professor of Pharmacology at Rutgers University, and we developed a chart in category form of the toxic ingredients in household chemicals, such as furniture polish, cleaning fluids, Clorox -- all the things that people use for household things. And in those days, the toxic ingredients didn't have to be put on the label, so where did you get information? So, this is the project of Dr. Rodman and myself. We put it in categories. We could identify about 100,000 chemicals around the home. Believe it or not, but each one has a different brand name. I remember a baby who swallowed Parker's Fountain Pen Ink. They called up the emergency room. We extended these Poison Control Centers to the Jersey Shore Medical Center. At that time, it was called Fitkin Hospital. Also, we extended them to Monmouth Memorial Hospital, Monmouth Medical Center, and there was another hospital, Riverview Hospital, what they call Riverview Medical Center today. We sent an old index card file with all the different items to the emergency rooms, because there were not computers in

those days. And if it wasn't on the index file, I would get calls in the middle of the night and the morning. I remember eating supper at home, and Robin, or my other daughter, Leona, would say, "Daddy, they want you in the hospital." I knew what it was. They wanted to know what the toxic ingredient in certain chemicals involved. Well, I had my master list. I would tell them sometimes you could pump the stomach or you could give an enema. With some substances you couldn't give an enema, because the fumes, like the petroleum products, all those fumes, that included the cleaning fluids, would get into the lungs, and they would cause low bile pneumonia and, of course, the patients would pass away, not from the toxic substances but from the fumes. So, we had to teach them how to use things with the tube and wash out the stomach and all that other stuff that goes with it.

Ms. Higgins: Did you get any help from the county government?

Mr. Schultz: No. It wasn't around in those days. We did it all independently and it emanated from us. At that time, we had the blessings from the Monmouth County Medical Society and the Monmouth County Society of Pharmacists. I was the key coordinator and I had the burden, but it was a labor of love. I'll tell you one little incident. It happened with little Joey who was two years old in Long Branch, NJ. His mother was pregnant again, and she was taking prenatal capsules once a day as ordered by the doctor. And all of a sudden, she looked at the bottle, and it was half-empty. Little Joey had swallowed a lot of prenatal capsules, which contain iron. Iron is very toxic to a young child. We didn't have an antidote for iron, once it was in the blood. We didn't have the chelating agent. There was a Dr. Press from Belmar, NJ, a pediatrician who went to the University of Chicago Medical School, and he had developed a formula, which given intravenously, drip by drip, would be an adjoining agent and take out all the excess iron from the blood. I called Dr. Press. I said, "Give us the formula fast. I have a child who is in a coma!" We did it, and six days later the hospital called me and said, "Little Joey is out of the coma," and I still get a thrill down my back when I hear it -- "Little Joey is out of the coma!" Little Joey now is about fifty-five years old, walking the streets. But we in Monmouth County started poison control with the three hospitals. There wasn't any other place in the United States. All the fifty states have poison control now. Now we have a center open 24 hours a day at Saint Barnabus Hospital in Newark for the entire state. Most drug stores today have that 800 poison control number, and it is opened 24 hours a day with a pharmacist and a physician in charge.

Ms. Higgins: Do they get a lot of calls from people who were unaware of what's going on regarding medication or something related to that?

Mr. Schultz: Overdose and drug regimen, yes, that also is included now.

Ms. Higgins: So it's narcotics as well.

Mr. Schultz: Anything that has to do with the cause of death of any human being.

Ms. Higgins: Who takes these calls?

Mr. Schultz: There is either a pharmacist who answers the phone, or a physician. Sometimes they have to have a combination. Of course, they also have to tell the hospital how to treat the patient, whether they give an emetic or drain the stomach out, you know, a stomach tube and all this other stuff of washing the stomach out. And, of course, some medications are depressants, and the patient must have a stimulant to keep him or her alive. That is the whole process with the poison control. And now it is in all fifty states. In Arizona, we have trouble with poisonous snakes. We don't have any in New Jersey.
(Laughter)

Ms. Higgins: So you can make calls about poisonous snake bites?

Mr. Schultz: Anything that would cause the death of an individual.

Ms. Higgins: When you go to school to be a pharmacist, do you learn all this?

Mr. Schultz: We take a course called toxicology. I graduated from the College of Pharmacy in 1931, and that was sixty-eight years ago. We took two years of toxicology, because most of the drugs and medications were poisonous. You're talking about arsenic, elixir quinine, and strychnine. Strychnine is poisonous. And a lot of the herbal remedies that are used today were all the official drugs. There were very few chemicals in the pharmacopoeia in those days. Today, they use them as alternative medicine.

Ms. Higgins: What is your opinion of St. John's Wort, for example?

Mr. Schultz: What do I think? How do they market it? I'll tell you how. They say because it is a nutritious substance, it is not under the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration. So, you take the medicine, mix it with prescription medicine and you could die. One hundred thousand people have died from drug related accidents. Another way to say it is experimentation. Also with some prescription drugs there was a lot of drug interaction.

Ms. Higgins: Of course, there are even some foods that cause harmful drug interaction.

Mr. Schultz: Yes.

Ms. Higgins: Are you a pharmacist, Mr. Wenner?

Mr. Schultz: No, he was in drug rehabilitation. This also was developed in Monmouth County before it went nationwide.

Ms. Higgins: Has Monmouth County over the past century been aggressive with narcotics rehabilitation? How did you get that established?

Mr. Schultz: I had my first discourse with Joe Irwin in 1966 or 1969. The Monmouth Board established an interim drug committee, and I was on that committee, to advise the Board on the promotion, development, establishment, and coordination of unified programs for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and control of drug addiction.

Ms. Higgins: How did you know there were drugs in the county? Mr. Irwin once said there was no problem. He was from Middletown wasn't he?

Mr. Schultz: He changed his mind. I think he also had a boat business or something.

Ms. Higgins: I remember Mr. McCarthy was the chief of the Middletown Police. And he also affirmed there were no drugs in Middletown.

Mr. Schultz: I taught thirty police departments in Monmouth County, and we had them combined. I gave them lectures on the controlled drugs. The Federal laws came out about controlled drugs that were addicting and all this other stuff. I had to teach thirty-five police departments. I taught the police. They didn't know about drug raids. This was new to them.

Ms. Higgins: You mean information about controlled substances like marijuana and cocaine.

Mr. Schultz: You got that right. Cocaine is legal. It is still legal, unlike illegal marijuana or heroin. The Federal Narcotic Act came into effect in 1910. It had the narcotic laws. Then later on, Hubert Humphrey, who, by the way, was a pharmacist besides being Vice President and a senator from Minnesota, and Durham, who was a congressman from North Carolina, created the Humphrey-Durham act, which clarified two classes of drugs in the United States. One for which you had to get a prescription and the other that you can buy over-the-counter with the proper labeling. Until then, there was no control over the drug traffic, I mean the patented medicine market. Lydia Pinkham Tonic is an example.

Ms. Higgins: I remember buying elixir of terpinhydrate and codeine right over the counter.

Mr. Schultz: That was official to sign for it always. Before it became elixir terpinhydrate and codeine, it was elixir terpinhydrate and heroin.

Ms. Higgins: Really?

Mr. Schultz: That's right. And in those days, they found out that heroin was more addicting than any of those narcotics. It is part of the opium group, you understand? So, codeine you could control and you had to sign for elixir terpinhydrate and codeine. And pharmacists could not sell more than a bottle of those types of cough medicines to any one person within a certain time frame. Then, later on, we got drugs that weren't addicting, like dexamorphon, as they called it then, that eliminated some of the problems. But we had addicts that used to go from one drug store to the other buying elixir of terpinhydrate and codeine.

Ms. Higgins: How about the phase of cleaning fluid highs in the 1950s?

Mr. Schultz: Kids used to get high on the vapors, the solvent of the cleaning things. And if it's in a closed area, you can asphyxiate yourself. They used to put a hood over their heads and they thought they'd get the euphoric effect they wanted. They got it all right. Some were lucky and some were not. Then they used to put a big plastic bag over their head. We tried to educate the public, and this effort stemmed from me and the Monmouth County Pharmaceutical Society working with the Monmouth County Board that later on became known as the Monmouth County Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services.

Mr. Wenner: The Monmouth County Board that established the Interim Drug Committee on October 18, 1966. So that is the official original date that you can document the beginning of a public effort in the county, outside the pharmaceutical association, which was known as the MOPS, the Monmouth Ocean Pharmaceutical Society.

Mr. Schultz: That's right. It was a bi-county organization.

Mr. Wenner: Two counties combined. They were the leaders at that time in the education about controlled drugs and drug abuse.

Ms. Higgins: The pharmacists. They were seeing the results of drug abuse.

Mr. Wenner: Exactly, in their drug stores. They got to know first hand working with the police because the police and pharmacists worked together. They got to see the problem spreading, so they really could take credit, along with narcotics officers, for giving this the attention it deserved. Then after four years of working with the police department, as Mr. Schultz said, other pharmacists and professionals, through the Monmouth Ocean Pharmaceutical Society and the police departments that wanted to cooperate, on September 1, 1970, the Board of Chosen Freeholders appointed a permanent committee of residents to further the work of narcotics control and treatment to be known as the Monmouth County Narcotics Council. Now for the record, I am just going through the types of people who were important. The members appointed were: George Bartell,

who was a Monmouth Medical Center Hospital Official; Eleanor Luhrs, who was a citizen, but she happened to be a nurse; Edwin P. Gage, who was a real estate executive; Earl B. Garrison, who was the County Superintendent of Schools and a former high school principal; Benjamin Schultz, a pharmacist; Thomas Totural, a school principal at the high school level; William P. Gannon, a business man; Dr. Rose C. Thomas, a professor; Robert N. Goger, a drug abuse worker; Robert Ansell, Esq., an attorney from Asbury Park; Robert S. Newman, a probation officer; Dr. Sandra Wolman, another professor in the human sciences; Robert Benham, an executive; Norma Klein, a Brookdale College administrator; Dr. Sid Leventhal, a psychiatrist; Frank Espolota from law enforcement. Benjamin Schultz was elected by this group as the first chairman of the Narcotics Council in 1970. I want to say this group comprised a wide range of citizens from various fields, which I think is the reason for the success they had. It included a lot of people with a lot of good minds.

Ms. Higgins: Was it one of the first times that a private sector had worked with the political body?

Mr. Schultz: Yes, in that field.

Mr. Wenner: Yes. There is a history of that. The history would be the nursing field, where Geraldine Thompson started, on her own, a private nursing organization. Later, they had to go public for the funding, because they didn't have enough nurses.

Mr. Schultz: This was the first organized attempt between the citizens of the county and the officials of the county. They created a structured attempt among physicians, pharmacists, nurses and schools to provide education, both for prevention and treatment and all the other things. Funding could be channeled and be responsible, because the Board itself monitored all the grant money given them: Federal money, state money, and the county money all went to the Monmouth County Board of Drug Abuse Service.

Ms. Higgins: Would you say that proportionately there is less drug use in 1999 in Monmouth County than in 1970, or was there less in 1970?

Mr. Schultz: Well, I can't answer that because I have been out of the statistical field, but I will say this, we forgot one little aspect, the social drugs that were never on the list. For instance cigarettes. Tobacco supporters are still talking from -- what do the Indians say? "Talking with forked tongue, from both sides of the mouth." But you have to look at the other side of the coin. We need money for social programs. Stop kidding ourselves. The cigarette industry is a lot of money. Prohibition was repealed back in the Roosevelt days. We regulated the alcohol industry. You don't hear too much about it, and they still talk about their limitations. Alcohol is one of the biggest social drugs. That is another social drug we are talking about. Nicotine and alcohol. What other things? How many cups of

coffee do you drink a day? There are drug interactions involved. These are exempted because they tax the dickens out of it, and they needed extra money to fund the social programs. So what do you do, you want to kill the golden goose that feeds the different organizations? And then you've got to walk a tight line.

Ms. Higgins: So now alcohol is included in the Monmouth County Board of Drug Abuse Service?

Mr. Schultz: Oh, yes.

Mr. Wenner: Yes, that came later. Let's just go back. The members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders at the time of the 1970 establishment were Joseph C. Irwin, Director, and Axel Carlson. Harry Larrison, Jr., of Ocean Grove was a member of the Board. Albert Allen of Aberdeen Township, and Ernest Kavalek of Middletown completed the then five-member Board of Freeholders, who saw the wisdom of appointing this group. The interesting thing that occurred was that, due to the professional experience and other widespread experience that they were willing to appoint to this counsel, within five months, this group headed by Mr. Schultz convinced the board that they should hire a staff to work on this. I want to say for the record, this was a record time. This was a very conservative county at the time, with a very conservative group of Freeholders. They didn't spend money freely. For them to come up with a full-time paid individual within five months shows their faith in the group that they appointed, and they were buying what the group was saying, that there was a problem, and they met it very quickly. So we can't be critical. We may be critical for the early stages of being closed to the situation, but they certainly adapted very quickly, and it within five months funded a staff and a full budget for the group.

Ms. Higgins: Which has worked without interruption to this day, 1999.

Mr. Wenner: That's correct. Until today. In 1977, the Freeholders changed the name of the group to the Monmouth County Board of Drug Abuse Services, which it still is today. In 1984, the Freeholders created the Citizen's Advisory Committee for Alcoholism Services. So some seven years later, they began to include alcoholism in the overall work of that group. Finally, the two groups were merged in 1988 to create the Monmouth County Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services. Mr. Schultz was very instrumental in the pressure on the Freeholders. He was the chairman, but he was also the most outspoken in terms of the need. The others did not have the background in the street, nor in the pharmacy, of seeing the results, firsthand along with the police department. So, he had the best vantage point and took the lead. They all supported him and it was funded in 1970.

Ms. Higgins: During all this time, you continued to work as a pharmacist?

Mr. Schultz: Making a living.

Ms. Higgins: That's quite a heritage to leave now that you have gone to Arizona to do good things. You have created poison control first of all, and then the narcotics and drug awareness programs.

Mr. Schultz: And they still continue today.



Richard Wenner, 1971

Mr. Wenner: There is one thing that Mr. Schultz left out. Back in the early days, which I got to know as the first director of the Narcotics Council in 1971, and that is the early days of the poison control, the pharmacist used puppets and cartoons to educate young children very effectively. We incorporated that into the work of the Narcotics Counsel and we had a great deal of success because right away we were able to reach young children. It is one thing to turn the older kids and stop them from using or get them into rehab. It is another thing to prevent the core group that is coming up from starting, and this group did that very effectively with the cartoons and puppets.

Ms. Higgins: I think I may be sitting with the gentleman who helped me quit smoking. In the 1960s, my daughters were in the Highlands Public School, and they were shown a lot of these kinds of things about damage from cigarette smoke. The girls came home and begged and begged me to stop smoking. It was finally easier to quit smoking than listen to the children anymore, and I thank you for it. That was very effective.

Mr. Wenner: I can tell you, I was there at the Highlands Public School. I can give you the names of all the people. The mayor was a pharmacist by the way. This was Richard A. Stryker, who had a pharmacy in Atlantic Highlands. But he was at the school. He kicked off that program at the Highlands School because I was there representing, and we got those articles, including nonsmoking, into the school at that time, in that year. Jim White was Mayor of Highlands. Richard A. Stryker was a MOPS, who had worked under Ben. Even though he went forward with this group, he still had his Monmouth Ocean Pharmaceutical Society Group, and Stryker was the regional man in Atlantic Highlands, which is how he got us in the schools, and Jim Snyder was there too, as well as Buddy Bahrs. These were the famous people who were there to kick off the Highlands and Atlantic Highlands Initiative. They were both local officials.

Ms. Higgins: Mr. Schultz, tell us something about Highlands and clam digging.

Mr. Schultz: Well, I never dug clams, but I used to go crabbing in the Pleasure Bay and get crabs.

Ms. Higgins: And you could eat them then? For a long time you couldn't.

Mr. Schultz: Yes. We used to get the crabs in Pleasure Bay and get a whole bag full, and then we'd get a big pot to boil them in. We'd boil them until we'd see a red color. I said, "Now we can eat the crabs." We had to boil them. I wouldn't want to eat a raw crab or even a clam. Steamed ones I'll eat, but I won't eat a raw clam the way the waters are.

Mr. Wenner: There have only been four administrators over a twenty-eight-year period, and there is no other organization in the county that has had that continuity of administration. There was myself in 1971-77; Gregory C. Ulrich, who is deceased, 1977-86; Charles D. Brown in 1986-88; and Barry Johnson from 1986 to the present. So, there is a great deal of stability in a board that had had only four administrators in twenty-eight years.

Ms. Higgins: You mentioned something of the educational work that the Board does. What if you're confronted with some teenagers who have a drug problem or who have been arrested for dealing? Is that also within the jurisdiction of the Board?

Mr. Schultz: Now for instance, the changing structure of a family life. We need two salaries in order to support a family. This is both part of the Board too. I think it was Ocean Township High School that got the first grant. School lets out at 3:00 pm and there's nobody home to supervise. So, we funded supervision at the Ocean Township High School from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. The teachers would get paid by the Board, which would give funds to the Board of Education budget. It had nothing to do with the school budget. We funded them to supervise the children. They had to be in the auditorium or someplace where they could do their homework or something else, while being supervised by a teacher, who was paid for the three hours by the Board.

Ms. Higgins: Good prevention there.

Mr. Schultz: The idea was prevention. We looked at the picture. You have a lot of churches here and synagogues, and God knows, whatever.

Ms. Higgins: Is there anything further you would like to say about the poison control project?

Mr. Schultz: The State Poison Control Project is now coordinated at St. Barnabus Hospital, and all the hospitals know that if there is any overdose or any poison emergency to call St. Barnabus. Senior Citizens now have a lot of drug related problems due to drug interactions.

Ms. Higgins: So you have moved from identifying poisons to identifying these interactions you see, because a lot of people are on a lot of medications?

Mr. Schultz: Drug intervention, yes. I took a survey of the lifestyle habits of senior citizens, which was published in 1983 in the *New Jersey Journal of Pharmacy*. How many smoked cigarettes, how many had a drink, or drank, the listing of the so-called social drugs, and also the medications. But, we formed another thing. We call it Project SPIRIT. I got a group of retired and semi-retired pharmacists together. It's an acronym for Senior Pharmacists in Retirement in Transition. Our target was senior citizens, who take more medications than the rest of the population. Aging is not a disease, but you can develop diabetes, heart trouble, asthma, bronchitis, and many other things. We had the first brown bag program in the United States. They used to bring their pills in a bag and come to the Senior Citizen complexes where we had six or seven pharmacists, who asked the people, "How do you take this and how do you take that? This is eighteen years old. Do you take this anymore? No? Why don't you throw it away? Drugs deteriorate." So, we had to educate the seniors. You can't play around with drugs. It's just like in today's newspaper with the front page: A woman took one of these nutrition things that's for sleeping or something like that. It caused her death. And now they are going to have an autopsy. But they pinpoint her because three or four people have the same drug. This is the trouble with our laws. Congress passes laws, but they're not complete. Little by little, we are adding on to the problems, and we've got a society that likes to experiment.

Ms. Higgins: You think people take too many pills?

Mr. Schultz: Some do, yes.

Ms. Higgins: I worked in a pharmacy. I was convinced that everyone in America was constipated.

Mr. Schultz: Senior citizens, especially.

Ms. Higgins: Well, it was really quite an experience.

Mr. Schultz: That is because of their style of life. They sit in a rocking chair all day long, they don't walk. We don't expect them to run 100 yards and do aerobic dancing, come on. You can't take the pace. But, you can do it within your limitations.

Ms. Higgins: Would you tell me something about the war years here in the county?

Mr. Schultz: It was a question of my younger brother going into the Army or me. Of course, we had to enroll in the draft and at that time, my younger brother wasn't married yet, and I was married. I got married in 1937, and if they closed my drug store, there would be no drug store in all the borough. There was no drug store in Deal or Oakhurst, and there was no drug store in Elberon, either. What are you going to do when you needed a prescription? Then we had after

hours. See now, we have a little sign in some of the drug stores about after hours pharmacies. I started that too. We work with the Police Departments. In case somebody needed an emergency prescription, they would call the local police department, which would have their numbers. They would come and open their store, but the cop would come at the same time. Why? We had fellows with maybe a small gun but it looked like a cannon when they used to shove it in your belly. That happened once or twice. So not only do you call us, you want a cop there when the prescription is filled and make sure everything is okay. That was part of the after hour prescription plan, which was endorsed by the Monmouth County Board of Alcohol and Drug abuse. It was teamwork by everyone.

Ms. Higgins: Did you get down to the seashore much?

Mr. Schultz: I lived at the seashore in Deal. We have a beach casino, one of the biggest along the coast.

Ms. Higgins: It's not gambling?

Mr. Schultz: No, we just called it Deal Beach Casino. I think it's four blocks long, and then the Phillips Avenue Beach, the big end, is free. The back you had to pay for. The lockers, and all, and the pool. We had an oversized pool, bigger than an Olympic pool, and this daughter of mine learned how to swim there.

Ms. Higgins: You were too busy with the Pharmaceutical Society?

Mr. Schultz: No, I did go too, but I found out years ago that I couldn't take the sun. I was so sensitive. When I married, we went on our honeymoon to Miami. We took a dose of Miami Beach. We went into the hotel and I signed up. We got on the beach and I got a big umbrella. I was about a half an hour on the beach. I get back into the hotel room, and I swelled up like a balloon. So, we called, and asked for the Miami, Florida doctor who came and looked. He said, "You've got sun poisoning." I said, "But I wasn't in direct sun." He said, "You are very sensitive to the sun." From then on, I was never a sun worshipper. They could get tanned, and browned and green and yellow, but I couldn't.

Ms. Higgins: But what about sun shield?

Mr. Schultz: They didn't have those. I got to a point where I said, "What do I want to play around for?"

Ms. Higgins: You know, actually, you have a very youthful look to you. I wouldn't be surprised if keeping out of the sun is a part of that.

Mr. Schultz: I see people my age and don't push it.

Ms. Higgins: I see people twenty years younger than you who look older.

Mr. Schultz: And they are all wrinkled and everything else. It is all caused by the sun. You see people who worked outdoors, and it's the elements.

Ms. Higgins: Tell me about Project SPIRIT again. What is the acronym?

Mr. Schultz: SPIRIT: Senior Pharmacists In Retirement In Transition. We used to go to Senior Citizen clubs, nutrition centers and the high rise apartments, the HUD senior housing, where they take disabled people because of the federal requirement; 90% were senior citizens. So, we took all that and we did our programs all over the county: Belmar, Middletown, etc. They had six or seven of those senior complexes. They brown bagged all the stuff. I worked with Boy Scouts, too.

Ms. Higgins: What do you mean, "Brown Bag?"

Mr. Schultz: They took all the medications; they took over-the-counter, nonprescription, and prescription drugs, and brought them down to us, and then we would ask them, "How did the doctor tell you to take this? Did they tell you to take it before meals? After meals? What foods are you to avoid? Do you know about the drug and food interaction?" We taught them medication planning.

Ms. Higgins: So, you could look at a person's bag of pills and make recommendations?

Mr. Schultz: And some of them were very outdated. They had big bags.

Ms. Higgins: And you knew right away what they were?

Mr. Schultz: Oh, yes, and if they were outdated, anything that was filled two years and you hadn't had it refilled you'd throw it away, because that could be a problem.

Ms. Higgins: That certainly is a consciousness raising program.

Mr. Schultz: And it is still going on today in the United States and more and more pharmaceutical groups are doing it. The Dean from the University of Arizona College of Pharmacy said the figure of drug-related accidents amounts to \$76 billion dollars a year. That means a fall, breaking a leg, it all started with the drug that was mistakenly taken. So we have to educate the public now. This is a new role, not roll pills or capsules. That is the scene of pharmacy today.

Ms. Higgins: Please tell us about the File for Life. Is there anything like that in Monmouth County?

Mr. Schultz: The File of Life is like the Vial for Life that I did with the American Red Cross. The fact sheet is the same. The principle is also the same. The fact sheet contains emergency information about you for anyone who has to enter your home. It contains information about your doctor, the medications you take, the nearest relative, your medical condition, health insurances, advance directives, health care, power of attorney, and living wills.



Benjamin Schultz with Middletown Police Explorers, 1988

Ms. Higgins: Who keeps this file? Is it at the police department or at a hospital?



Benjamin Schultz (seated middle) instructing seniors about medication

Mr. Schultz: No, it hasn't reached that yet. You have to ask for a new fact sheet in case the status changes, because over time you may develop a new disease, angina for instance. Well, the File of Life is good for everybody, but we are directing it towards seniors now. Aging is not a disease, but it invites disease. Over time, you get new diseases and new medications and taking the old medications with it. Some of them take seventeen, eighteen, twenty pills a day. They don't know how to manage their medication, that is when you get your overdoses and so forth and so on. It is a long process, and Steve Gross, who is the Dean of the Pharmacy in Long Island University, explains it. 100,000 die from drug-related causes, and we spend seventy-six point six billion dollars a year. What is our role now? Drugs are starting to treat diseases you never could think of. When I got married in 1937 and wanted to take out insurance, the life span of an individual was only fifty-five years. Today, a baby born will live to be in the middle seventies, and the women used to outlive us by eight years, but in those days the women didn't smoke, or drink, or take some of the other social drugs. But now they are going to be executives in our economy. Chief executive officers of big companies are women, and so they have to have the three martini lunch.

Ms. Higgins: That is another thing about drugs. You can beware of drug reactions, but if you take a beer, that could throw everything into an uproar.

Mr. Schultz: I'd hate to give you the list of alcoholic beverages that react with medications. But everybody says, "Well, one drink ain't going to hurt." You take a sleeping pill and take a nap. I'd hate to tell you how many actors and actresses forgot to wake up the next morning. You know as well as I know, you have a big list. That is part of my play that I rewrote.

Ms. Higgins: Your play?

Mr. Schultz: *It's In The Cards*, and they are doing it today, but I can't be in two places at one time, or I would have been there watching them. It is a twenty minute play. There is a pharmacist there who talks about the medication with alcohol and with some of the other things.

Ms. Higgins: So, it is educational as well as entertaining.

Mr. Schultz: Very much so.

Ms. Higgins: Where is your play being played today?

Mr. Schultz: In Howell Township. I can give you a place.

Ms. Higgins: What are some of your more significant memories of the County? Has it changed much?

Mr. Schultz: In Ocean Grove proper, I've never seen so much building done in the summer time, and rebuilding. Every week. Not across the street here but every little block, there are two or three. To me, Ocean Grove is a fire trap; just one big thing and the whole city would come down, but at least they've got prevention. But they are building up. We took a ride to see Asbury Park, which was the key city when I first came down here during the Depression. Cookman Avenue was a busy drive. There were no malls. There were no other things that changed the shopping habits for people. They all came into Asbury Park to shop at stores like Steinbachs. Today, they are all empty buildings. We took a ride down to Steinbachs. If you shot a cannon, nobody would even bother you. Where else did we go? Ocean Avenue Boardwalk. It used to be a lot of what we have in Bradley Beach and Belmar. The little shops, you know, but they were all gone. All the rides are gone.

Ms. Higgins: We went down there in the 1950s with the children and it was a lot of fun.

Mr. Schultz: Miniature golf, they used to have the Susie van come down, you know play on the top of the one side.

Ms. Higgins: Have you taken a trip to Red Bank?

Mr. Schultz: Red Bank, yes. I used to go to Red Bank all the time. The little businesses add a personal touch. You went to a Red Bank Store, they knew every customer by his name.

Ms. Higgins: Probably knew his prescriptions by heart, too?

Mr. Schultz: I knew, and I would tell them, and I would counsel them at the same time. But I was maybe a little different. We did a lot of compounding in those days. We had a drug store in Allenhurst. Mayor Hague of Jersey City came down there.

Ms. Higgins: Mayor Hague?

Mr. Schultz: Sure, he had a home on Deal Esplanade.

Ms. Higgins: Some of the presidents used to come here too.

Mr. Schultz: Right after the Civil War. Now, Long Branch was going down and Asbury Park was taking all of the business.

Ms. Higgins: Do you see Long Branch picking up?

Mr. Schultz: Very much so, and Hilton just started. They built a promenade instead of the wooden boards and it goes a mile and a half until it gets to the public beach. It's lovely. They fixed it so it won't wash away, at least the promenade won't. The Army engineers are going fourteen miles out, dig up sand, and put it on the beach here. I remember when Ocean Grove on Sundays had a big chain that went right across the entrance road. You couldn't ride, you had to walk. And all the cars would be out on Main Street, and in all of Asbury Park. In Deal you have the Guggenheims, the Salemans, the Lehmans. Heck, Monmouth College was sold for taxes. *Annie*, the movie, was filmed at Monmouth College. There was also a girls school, a finishing school there, and I went there, and I got all their business. When I first walked in there, I hate to tell you, faucets were made out of gold, not brass, gold fixtures. They had a swimming pool downstairs.

Ms. Higgins: A lot of wealthy people would come here.



Benjamin Schultz,
standing right, in front
of his drug store

Mr. Schultz: Very wealthy. When I first came in the 1930s and I had my drug store -- well, it wasn't so little in those days, it was big. Today, a drug store is a mini-mart; some even handle milk and cheese and things. They played polo in Deal. Lehman from that little square behind.. real horses, a real polo field. Later on, they played it out in the west portion of the county.

Ms. Higgins: They play it in Colts Neck now.

Mr. Schultz: But I am talking about when I first came down in the 1930s. They all played polo. Lehman Avenue and North Avenue was a big polo field, it was

three blocks square, and they played polo for fun.

Ms. Higgins: How would they get down here?

Mr. Schultz: On Monmouth Road, they had horse stables.

Ms. Higgins: That is certainly a different flavor.

Mr. Schultz: And even on Roosevelt Avenue, we had one horse stable that went all the way back to the brook. Where the veterinary hospital is today, there used to be a horse stable. and on West Down Heister, there was a horse stable, too. The so-called class played polo and a lot of them moved out to the end of the county, to Colts Neck and other places. I'll give you an example. The Leads, who had Manhattan Shirt Company, bought a stretch during the War. You're talking about the War years. They wanted to live in a certain style. They bought Middlebrook. There were no Middlebrook apartments; it was a farm. They incorporated the farm, they grew vegetables. They had servants and everything else needed in a big house. The corporation paid all the help.

Ms. Higgins: They probably got farm assistance, too?

Mr. Schultz: Sure, being a farm, you get the pre-tax. There are ways of circumventing, no matter who was legislating.

Ms. Higgins: My first interview was a farmer who was trying to tell me all about how some people would use this to make more money.

Mr. Schultz: You take Shore Dairy with a Pollack. He had show dogs. He was a dairy farmer. Because of his connections, all the milk that he got was sold to all the hospitals. Now, there is Monmouth Memorial Hospital Board. There was another little hospital called East Hazlet Hospital. But, all the milk and all the business and the puppies and, of course in those days they delivered milk to your door. Today they don't do it.

Ms. Higgins: I can remember when we lived in Middletown, they delivered milk and eggs, and the Dugan Bakery would come.

Mr. Schultz: That's right to the door. I used to get a fellow from Lakewood. He would make his route to all the good people in Deal. We had a chicken farm. They brought fresh eggs from the farm. You'd get two dozen this week, a dozen this week, according to how you ate the eggs. Don't want to eat too many eggs with the yolk in it with the cholesterol. That was before Welsh Farms. Then we stopped. Borden, Sheffield, used to deliver milk too. They don't deliver anymore, but Welsh Farms still does it.

Ms. Higgins: Mr. Schultz, as we approach the end of the century, what would you like to say about Monmouth County History?

Mr. Schultz: People are getting older. Our population is growing older. It used to be only nine or ten percent. The fact is that the population is growing older; I think Federal legislation has to help older people. An active man should be allowed to work without anyone penalizing him if he took his Social Security at age sixty. You have to permit them to work until age seventy. You may have to increase the retirement age to seventy or sixty-five. It is happening now, federal legislation, but step by step. You can't do it all at once or you disrupt the entire country. Grow old gracefully, and maintain a quality life. Sure, I got high blood pressure, I had it for forty years. I didn't get it over-night, but I still walk. Walk all the time. My daughter takes me down to Belmar to the Arcade to play kids games that used to be in the Asbury Park Boardwalk. They pulled out the carousel. The family structure is changing too. I see if you want to buy your own home, and that's the idea, it can't be done by a one-income family. They both work. Now you have to find out how you establish day care. It is already here. They both work. They both come home and pick up the kids. The husband no longer sits at home and says, "You've got to do the dishes." It is a two way street. Give and take in life, and that is how it should be.

Ms. Higgins: Is there anything else you'd like to say? I have enjoyed talking with you so very much!

Mr. Schultz: There are so many things in this head of mine. What do I say? Charles Brown was the first director of the Monmouth County Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, but then the county health board needed a new administrator; because he could handle money, he is now director of the Monmouth County Mental Health Board.

Ms. Higgins: How about some final comments on the cooperation between county and state government and private organizations? You were apparently a pioneer in that. Did you find Monmouth County pretty progressive along those lines?

Mr. Schultz: The Federal government realized we were condemning cigarettes way far back. So now, they still can't put the cigarette industry out of business. All they said to the Federal government was, "Cut us down in the United States, but give us a free hand globally. The Muslims must smoke a lot of tobacco. Europeans all smoke cigarettes. Let us have that market." They all like American cigarettes, the combination of Turkish and domestic, and the same thing goes with cigars. They exempted cigars. Cigars are just as habit forming and just as dangerous as cigarettes; the coal tar goes into your lungs and causes cancer. It's a new ballgame, and they will have to experiment like we did. I lived through maybe eight decades. I saw a whole century of change from the radio in the early days to the TV set. We thought TV would put movies out of business, but

they are still making money. They adapt movies for TV. And the same thing goes with computers. Mr. Microsoft, smart Gates has got the control because he has control of all the software, not the computer itself. They had the antitrust act in existence since the railroad days. They had to put some minor changes to it so no one individual has control, so there is competition. With competition you have no problem.

Ms. Higgins: Well, I am hearing a message from you that we should encourage competition, which this country seems to do.

Mr. Schultz: And they tried. Don't kill the small guy.

Ms. Higgins: Your comments about encouraging people to work longer are thought-provoking, also.

Mr. Schultz: Have a retirement age, and at least don't penalize them because they are growing older.

Ms. Higgins: I am so glad to have to talked with you. I really am. Thank you very much for contributing to our archive.